The Treatment of Sex Offenders within HM Prison Service: Responding to the Risks and Needs of a Diverse Population

Mir, M.

PhD

2016

The Treatment of Sex Offenders within HM Prison Service:

Responding to the Risks and Needs of a Diverse Population

Mansoor Mir

M00279811

A thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial

fulfilment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Psychology

School of Science and Technology

Middlesex University

September 2016

Abstract

This thesis considers the experiences of both staff and adult male prisoners involved in group-based sex offender treatment in prison, and explores the potentially diverse needs of different groups of prisoners. In-depth interviews were conducted with ten prisoner participants at a single prison, all of whom had completed the Core Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP) (Mann & Thornton, 1998) and identified with at least one of three specified minority groups (BME, physically disabled, gay or bisexual). These groups were identified on the basis of current knowledge gaps. A second study involved interviews with fourteen members of staff drawn from different establishments, all of whom had experience of delivering Core SOTP. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009) was selected as an appropriate method of analysis. For prisoners, super-ordinate themes relating to the therapeutic process, group membership and identity, and group dynamics are reported. For staff, super-ordinate themes relating to power relationships, responding to needs, and managing the group are presented. For each study, data are presented as descriptive, phenomenological accounts alongside substantive verbatim quotes from interviewees. Separate discussion chapters are included for the purposes of engaging in higher order analysis, interpretation, and making relevant links to existing theory. For prisoners, this allows for a more detailed consideration of various narratives of identity, both at an individual and group level. Connections between wider experiences of prison, and diversity issues in the context of treatment are highlighted. For staff, identity is also discussed, but framed in terms of interactions with prisoners, other staff and feelings of professional competence. The exploratory investigation of data from two small samples allows for a rich and detailed analysis of complex and under-researched issues. A consideration of both studies in tandem also makes it possible to engage in a process of triangulation, revealing commonalities and contrasts in the ways in which both groups experienced related phenomena. In conclusion, recommendations for both further research and practice are considered.

Acknowledgements

Table of contents

Tables and figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter begins with a description of the sex offender population in English and Welsh prisons, and an introduction to the psychological interventions designed specifically for this group. Knowledge gaps relating to the treatment needs of specific minority groups within this population are identified. Related knowledge gaps pertaining to staff that deliver interventions are also highlighted. The rationale for conducting research in this area, the overarching aim of the programme of research, and the specific research questions to be investigated are set out. Key issues will then be revisited in greater depth via an exploratory literature review presented in chapter 2.

1.1: Sex offender treatment in prison

A sexual offence can be defined as the '…commission of acts of a sexual nature against a person without that person's consent' (Hale et al., 2005). In this thesis, this is taken to cover the broad range of offences set out in the *Sexual Offences Act, 2003*. The Act covers rape, sexual assault and the abuse of adults and children, but also a broader set of offences, some which do not necessarily involve direct physical contact with a victim. This includes offences such as the abuse of a position of trust regarding a child or vulnerable adult, exposure, voyeurism, prostitution, trafficking, grooming, and creating, possessing or distributing indecent images of a child. As of June 2011, there were a total of 10,935 prisoners in custody relating to sexual offences. This population was predominantly male, with only 103 female sex offenders in custody. In the years preceding 2011, the number of sex offenders in custody rose at a faster rate than that of the general prison population. In 2005 sex offenders comprised 9% of the total prison population, whereas in 2011 this figure had risen to 14% (Ministry of Justice, 2013). As of March 2015, figures for convictions and proceedings relating to sexual offences indicate that the number of new prisoners continues to grow, but that this increase may have recently begun to slow down (although both convictions and proceedings are currently at their highest levels for a decade). In the twelve months to the end of March 2015 the number of convictions for a sexual offence increased by 10% as compared to the preceding year. In contrast, the number of individuals against which criminal proceedings were initiated increased by 3%. This discrepancy is attributed to the delay between proceedings being initiated and a conviction being

achieved, resulting in a lag between the two sets of figures (Ministry of Justice, 2015b). Several factors may have contributed to this increase, including changes to the law introduced in the *Sexual Offences Act, 2003* (including the introduction of new offences), increased use of custodial rather than community sentences, increased use of indeterminate sentencing for high risk individuals, and increased rates of media coverage and reporting prompted in part by high profile investigations such as Operation Yewtree (Ministry of Justice, 2015b).

Models of treatment

A series of paradigm shifts in offender rehabilitation can be identified in the decades preceding this increase in the number of sex offenders in prison. An influential meta-analysis of 231 studies published in 1975 (Lipton et al., 1975) exemplifies the discourse of 'nothing works' with regards to offender rehabilitation. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, a shift back towards a more optimistic discourse of 'what works?' was evident in the United Kingdom, and models of treatment structured around risk factors and individual needs began to inform policy and practice in the area of prison rehabilitation (Ward & Maruna, 2007). Such interventions had previously been applied in jurisdictions such as Canada. The Risk Needs and Responsivity (RNR) model (Andrews et al., 2011) draws on aspects of learning theory, and aims to pragmatically match individual risk with an appropriate level of intervention. Individual assessments of dynamic risk are used to identify areas to work on during treatment. The model is intended to ensure that the form of intervention delivered is not just matched to an individual's specific areas of risk, but also to their motivation to change, learning style, and other individual characteristics.

Andrews & Bonta (2010) note that this 'responsivity principle' in the context of offender rehabilitation operates at two levels. The variables listed above relate to what they define as 'specific responsivity', which operates at the level of the individual and includes a consideration of bio-social characteristics, such as gender or ethnicity. The principal of specific responsivity dictates that these variables should be taken into account when working with clients, with interventions being delivered flexibly to meet the differing needs of individuals. In contrast, 'general responsivity' relates to the adoption of a cognitive social learning approach. This involves a focus on problem solving skills, pro-social modelling in a therapeutic environment and positive reinforcement (Dowden & Andrews, 2004). These

aspects of treatment are held to be important for all clients, regardless of their individual characteristics.

Criticisms of the RNR model highlight a potentially narrow focus on criminogenic needs, one consequence of this being a similarly narrow focus on avoidance goals related to not offending and insufficient attention paid to protective factors. Whilst responsivity is specified as a part of the model, the initial narrow focus can also mean that issues of identity or personal agency are not given sufficient consideration (Ward & Maruna, 2007). The Good Lives Model (GLM) seeks to address these issues by drawing on principles of positivist psychology and a more explicitly strengths based approach. For example, this may include a widening of focus beyond explicitly criminogenic needs to include issues of identity, and the promotion of positive life narratives through the use of approach goals. The relative merits of RNR and the GLM (and the appropriateness of blending the two approaches) remain contested (e.g. Ward et al., 2012). However, both have been influential in the introduction and revision of sex offender treatment in the United Kingdom.

A suite of interventions: History and current developments

The psychological treatment of adult male sex offenders in HM Prison Service went through an important change in 1991 with the introduction of a group intervention called the Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP). Following the recommendations of both The Woolf Report (1991) and the *Criminal Justice Act, 1991* attempts began to be made to move sex offenders to specific establishments in order to better facilitate treatment. The initial version of SOTP was designed based on available research evidence, and adopted a clear cognitive-behavioural focus (Friendship, Mann, & Beech, 2003). A structure of accreditation for psychological interventions was formalised in the following years (McGuire, 1995), and aimed to ensure consistent and high quality programme delivery. The system of risk assessment that underpins the current version of the programme is tied closely to the principles of RNR, with the latter sections of the Core version of the programme drawing explicitly on the approach goals and positive life narratives that are central to the GLM.

There are currently several accredited variants of the SOTP intervention delivered nationally in both prisons and in the probation service. The Core version (Mann & Thornton,

1998) is the most commonly applied, and is delivered to groups of adult male sex offenders who acknowledge responsibility for at least part of their offence, who show some motivation to change and who meet a series of additional assessment criteria. Other versions of the programme include the Becoming New Me programme (Williams, 2014) (formerly referred to as the Adapted SOTP and delivered to those assessed to have limited cognitive capacity), and the Extended Programme (Mann, 1999) (which focuses on challenging distorted thinking and the schemata that can increase risk of reoffending). A version of the SOTP for deaf prisoners has also been developed and implemented at HMP Whatton (Payne & O'Connor, 2013). An additional variant suited to prisoners deemed to be at lower risk of reoffending, referred to as the Rolling SOTP, was divided into discrete units that allowed participants to leave or join the course as it progressed. However, the Rolling SOTP is currently not being delivered. Additional interventions complement the work carried out with groups of offenders. For example, the one-to-one intervention Healthy Sexual Functioning (HSF) focuses more narrowly on sexual interests. The primary focus of this thesis will be the Core SOTP (and thus any reference to 'SOTP' by research or participants should in in the first instance be understood to refer to Core SOTP). The other versions may also be referenced as appropriate, but will be explicitly named when this is the case.

As of 2013, the various forms of the SOTP were being delivered across 22 establishments in England and Wales. The figures summarised in Table 1.1.i represent the number of prisoners who 'undertook'[1] the various forms of SOTP in financial year 2012-13. Estimates for the period 2013-14 are also included. These figures are drawn from a National Offender Management Service (NOMS) response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act (NOMS, 2013), which includes a caveat stating that data have been drawn from administrative IT systems and may be subject to error.

---

[1] This does not necessarily represent the number that successfully completed the intervention.

Table 1.1.i. Numbers of prisoners undertaking SOTP interventions in 2012-13 and 2013-14

	2012-13	2013-14 (estimated)
Core SOTP	466	462
Rolling SOTP	200	72
Extended SOTP	122	100
Becoming New Me	75	68
Healthy Sexual Functioning	32	35
Deaf SOTP	3	4

These figures indicate a relatively stable number of participants taking part in SOTP year on year. However, a consideration of additional data indicates more changeable levels of participation. Beech et al. (2005) refer to 'around 1,000 men undertaking treatment in a year'. Therefore, absolute levels of participation fell notably in the period between 2005 and 2012. As discussed above, during this same period the size of the sex offender population in custody showed a notable *increase*, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the overall prison population. More recent figures indicate a steady year on year decrease in the number of prisoners completing some form of SOTP intervention between 2010-11 and 2013-14, with a subsequent increase during the the period 2014-15. This overall decrease has been attributed to the move away from delivering interventions to low risk offenders, and the consequent discontinuation of variants such as the Rolling programme (Ministry of Justice, 2015c).

At the time of data collection for the current study, the Core SOTP had been revised three times, with the fourth version introduced in 2011. The descriptions of course content in this thesis are taken from the treatment manual for the third version, also referred to as Core SOTP 2000 (OBPU, 2000). This is the version of the course that would have been delivered to prisoners receiving treatment from 2000 to 2010, and is the version that six of ten prisoner participants in the current sample were familiar with. The remaining participants had participated in Core 2011. This fourth version largely retains the structure and content of the third, with some amendments to the ways in which sessions relating to victim empathy are delivered. Each version of the manual provides detailed guidance on how the course should be run and structured in order to adhere to audit requirements and to ensure that programme delivery is consistent, ethical and of a high quality.

Following an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) planned to replace all variants of SOTP with new programmes. This was part of a large scale review of accredited programmes undertaken by NOMS intended to 'rationalise existing programme provision by identifying opportunities to introduce further savings and increase efficiency in programme delivery' (Ministry of Justice, 2012b). This included a move to replace the Core and Extended programmes with low and high intensity programmes, with prisoners assigned to the appropriate intervention based on factors such as their risk of reconviction for a sexual offence, and the nature of their offence. The development of these new programmes was designed to reduce the time taken for prisoners to receive treatment, and also to simplify the training of staff by moving away from separate training for each variant of SOTP (Ministry of Justice, 2013b). In November 2013, these new programmes were described as being in 'various stages of development, pilot or roll out', with the existing interventions listed above continuing to be delivered. By November 2014 a shift in policy meant that the development of the low intensity programme was abandoned, although the new intervention for high risk offenders continued to be piloted (Ministry of Justice, 2014).

The Core Sex Offender Treatment Programme (Core SOTP)

The current Core SOTP runs for approximately 5-6 months, and can be characterised as intensive, with half day sessions delivered 4-5 times a week. Group sizes vary but are unlikely to be larger than ten prisoners. The programme is made up of several units, but can broadly be divided into three sections, each of comparable length. The first section begins with a small number of sessions to introduce the programme and to allow prisoners to briefly present their life histories. Although some of the issues discussed here may be referred back to later, the principal focus of the Core SOTP is on current thinking and behaviour. Presentation of life histories does however allow group members an opportunity to become comfortable with speaking in front of others, and is intended to foster rapport and group cohesion. The remainder of the first section is taken up with a detailed examination of the events leading up to each prisoner participant's offence. Over the course of several sessions, facilitators assist with the construction of a 'decision chain', which describes thoughts, emotions and behaviours in the days, weeks, or months prior to

offending[2]. For those convicted of multiple offences, the index or most serious offence will usually be worked with, although some group members may be encouraged to construct a second chain to capture additional offences. The first third of the programme also incorporates a consideration of issues that across the life course for each group member. These pieces of work relating to offence-specific issues and life course persistent ones are frequently referred back to in the remainder of the programme to guide each individual's progress.

The second section of the programme focuses on victim empathy. Some sessions include activities such as responding to vignettes or letter writing, but the majority of this section is occupied by victim empathy role plays. Early versions of the SOTP included symbolic re-enactments of the offence itself. However, current versions focus instead on short, medium and long-term effects on a victim. Facilitators running these role plays are required to complete additional training, with a requirement to refresh this training on an ongoing basis. Group members are asked to take on the role of their victim, and to play out prepared scenarios before debriefing and receiving feedback from facilitators and the rest of the group. Facilitators prepare scenarios for each individual, and will tailor these based on the circumstances of the offence, as well as the emerging areas of risk that appear to be most relevant for each group member.

The final section of the programme has a more explicit focus on addressing risk and on planning to manage and reduce this. Group members are asked to complete a grid encouraging them to reflect on whether key risk factors prevalent in the sex offender population as a whole are relevant to them. Fifteen risk factors that have particular relevance to predicting sexual reoffending are organised into four domains: sexual interests, distorted attitudes, management of relationships, and self-management. Within each of these domains, additional specific risk factors are defined in order to provide a framework for dynamic risk assessment[3]. A similar grid is then completed by a member of

---

[2] The amount of time that a decision chain spans is negotiated with group members and can vary in order to best capture the circumstances for an individual.

[3] Dynamic risk assessment here refers to areas of risk relating to factors that are amenable to change within the framework of a cognitive behavioural intervention, and that require a degree of clinical judgement in order to assess. This contrasts with static risk assessment tools such as the RM2000, which rely principally on stable variables that can be ascertained from file information, and which cannot generally be directly changed.

staff trained in completing dynamic risk assessment. The final Treatment Needs Analysis (TNA) grid is then fed back to the group member, and is subsequently used both to plan treatment based on individual need, and to monitor progress through treatment. The final section of the programme concludes with sessions encouraging participants to reflect on 'old me' and 'new me' thoughts and behaviours. Additional role plays allow group members to practice strategies to manage their individual areas of risk in challenging situations that they might encounter in future, such as disclosing their offence at a job interview or challenging offence-supportive thoughts and behaviours. Although individual areas of risk guide this section of the programme, it is also underpinned by the principals of the GLM, with the manual directing facilitators to encourage group members to work with approach goals (such as maintaining healthy relationships), rather than avoidance goals (such as not offending).

Several months after completing the Core SOTP, a review panel is convened. Individual prisoners are invited to attend this review panel along with a nominated friend or family member (or member of staff from the prison), their probation officer, a facilitator and the supervisor from their SOTP group. The purpose of the meeting is to review progress made on the course and to discuss any recommendations for any further interventions.

The SOTP is based around the 3-stage Structured Assessment of Risk and Need (SARN) (OBPU, 2004) system of risk assessment, with the framework being explicitly referred to in the final section of the programme. Whilst the programme draws on the RNR model, with a focus on assessing dynamic risk and then addressing this through treatment, there is an explicit inclusion of many of the principles of the GLM. This is most evident in the final section of the programme, which seeks to develop achievable life goals for each participant that will not only reduce risk, but will also promote self-esteem and healthy relationships with others. The SARN framework running through the programme incorporates both specifically criminogenic needs and wider issues of self-management and wellbeing, which lays the foundations for this focus on approach goals (OBPU, 2004).

1.2: Diverse needs

The SOTP is designed to be delivered to adult male sex offenders (Thornton, 2002), and the SARN risk assessment framework has only been validated for this population. The audit requirements designed to ensure that the programme is delivered consistently across sites and to a high standard places emphasis on the area of responsivity. This is also a key competency focused on during the initial training of facilitators and in their ongoing supervision. The programme therefore has a strong commitment to responding to the diverse needs of individuals, whether this relates to learning styles, cultural issues, offence type, or other individual differences relating to demographics and identity.

There has been some work conducted that investigates the specific experiences of minority groups within the adult male sex offender population in prison, (e.g., Patel & Lord, 2001; Wakama, 2005; Forbes, 2008; Williams, 2014). Given the small size of some of these populations and practical issues with access (particularly when attempting to investigate issues of non-engagement), much of this work has been qualitative and exploratory in nature. It is therefore far from comprehensive, with some aspects of diversity (such as ethnicity of prisoners) having received relatively more attention than others (such as that of sexual orientation). One reason that ethnicity may have received relatively more attention than some other forms of diversity is that this aspect of identity is routinely collected as part of official data held on prisoners. The exploratory methods used to investigate these populations may be methodologically defensible, but they mean that moving towards a detailed understanding of diverse needs may necessitate a gradual and idiographic approach to addressing current knowledge gaps.

A greater focus on under-researched minority groups within the sex offender population allows for an exploration of issues relating to 'general responsivity' (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). As well as exploring potentially distinct needs themselves, there is also scope for studying the ways in which staff respond to and address these needs. An overly broad focus will however run the risk of obscuring the specific and distinct experiences of sex offenders belonging to specific minority groups, and risks ignoring the issue of 'specific responsivity'. The following specific groups have therefore been identified as potential areas for further exploration. These were selected and identified in consultation with staff at the national

Interventions and Substance Misuse Group (ISMG) (personal communication with Ruth Mann, April 2009), as well as from an initial exploratory review of current evidence:

- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group members
- Gay and bisexual group members
- Physically disabled group members

Groups that were relatively under-researched and yet were thought to be significantly represented within the current prison population were prioritised. Thus, group members with limited cognitive capacity are not listed here. Although cognitive difficulties and the related issues of learning disabilities affect a large number of prisoners much work has already been conducted in this area in order to support the design and implementation of the existing Becoming New Me programme (formerly referred to as the Adapted SOTP) and its variants (Williams & Mann, 2010). As noted above, ethnicity has begun to receive some attention in the literature on sex offender treatment[4]. It is however included here because there are still important knowledge gaps to address, and because of the relatively large size of this sub-population.

1.3: SOTP facilitators

Facilitation teams for Core SOTP (and for other variants of the programme delivered to groups of prisoners) are made up of three facilitators. These members of staff are drawn from a range of disciplines and grades, typically including a mixture of Trainee Psychologists and Psychological Assistants from an establishment's Programmes Department. Uniformed staff also deliver interventions, and can potentially split their time between therapeutic work and regular duties on the wing. When reporting on the findings of an independent evaluation of sex offender treatment, Beech et al. (2005) note a decrease in the number of officer facilitators delivering SOTP at one of their research sites, citing a lack of sufficient incentives and the particular demands of working with sex offenders as the reasons for this (a similar decrease in officers delivering other interventions was not observed). The three members of staff making up a facilitation team will alternate such that there are two

---

[4] Literature pertaining to the treatment needs of BME sex offenders is considered in section 2.4, as well as other sections through chapter 2.

delivering any one session. In addition, a more experienced member of staff will act as a group supervisor, overseeing the selection of the group members, and providing on-going, detailed feedback and guidance to the facilitation team. A Treatment Manager typically oversees all implementations of the programme at a particular establishment, and would be consulted if any serious issues arose. Additional members of staff may be involved in pre-group assessments, and in writing reports during and after the programme to assess the changing levels and nature of risk.

Clarke and Roger (2007) highlight the high turnover of staff trained to deliver SOTP, and the finding that higher rates of 'burnout'[5] may be evident for staff working with this client group, as opposed to the general prison population. In 2007 there were 289 current members of staff delivering variants of the SOTP, but over 1400 members of staff had been trained since the introduction of the programme in 1991. Clarke and Roger (2007) note that existing research on facilitator burnout and wellbeing focuses largely on external factors, such as those relating to the client or the context in which treatment is provided, and that there is also a dearth of information on the benefits of delivering sex offender treatment, which might contribute to 'burn on' (i.e., the avoidance of the negative feelings associated with 'burnout') and encourage staff to stay in post. They identify a key knowledge gap relating to the role of individual difference at the level of staff members themselves. Whilst they are able to construct validated scales of psychological wellbeing for staff that focus on individual difference, their sample is only distinguished in terms of gender and age.

Clarke & Roger (2007) report that the gender of staff members accounts for a significant difference in scores for one measure of wellbeing emerging from an exploratory factor analysis (negative reactivity to offenders). This leaves open the possibility that other forms of diversity unexplored in this study may play a role in determining how staff experience the specific challenges of their work. The quantitative investigation of measures of wellbeing may also preclude the identification of unanticipated issues. Whilst the novel focus on individual difference for staff makes valuable progress towards addressing a previous knowledge gap, there are therefore important further questions to be answered

---

[5] As noted by Maslach (1982), there are multiple ways of defining 'burnout'. It is here used to indicate negative feelings experienced by individual members of staff, such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment.

relating to staff-prisoner interactions, and how diversity issues can relate to treatment outcomes and well-being for both populations.

Beech et al. (2005) conducted a series of evaluations of the effectiveness of SOTP for offenders with specific offence types. During the course of these evaluations the experiences of 30 members of staff were also explored, with findings again identifying the role that gender can play when SOTP facilitators and group members interact. Issues reported by this sample included greater levels of hostility or inappropriate sexual remarks experienced by female staff. The way in which these issues were experienced were reported as varying based on the genders of the facilitators delivering any given session. For example, female staff reported more overt behaviour when both facilitators were female, and more guarded or subtle inappropriate behaviour when male and female members of staff were co-facilitating a session.

1.4: Rationale

The rationale for the current area of interest and specific research questions is outlined below. It should be noted that the researcher previously worked in the field as an SOTP Facilitator at a large prison. This involved a range of duties, including the delivery of Core SOTP and the completion of TNA grids for individual prisoners. During this time two 6-month Core SOTP programmes were run, with additional shorter duration programmes (focusing on thinking skills in general) delivered alongside these. It is acknowledged that this prior experience may have informed the nature of the work conducted, and that it certainly did inform the choice of research topic. As noted in sections 3.1 and 9.1, the method of analysis adopted allows for an explicit acknowledgement of and reflection on the effects of a researcher's prior knowledge and experience. For example, the choice of research topic itself was linked in part to the observation of how staff were required to balance meeting individual needs (such as going down to the wing to assist a prisoner outside of the regular programme sessions) against the structural demands of the organisation (such as targets relating to the number of prisoners attending groups, which potentially drove up group size and a created a need to avoid drop outs from the programme). As well as general reflection on the practical and ethical issues around finding this balance, there were also particular clients dealt with by the researcher that compounded an already pre-existing interest in investigating the needs of particular social

groups. More personal and methodological reflection on the choice of research topic and the research design is also included in section 9.2.

The SARN system of risk assessment has been validated for adult men but not for all specific groups within this population. This raises the possibility that there may be specific risk factors and treatment needs for a given sub-population that have not yet been fully recognised, because they may have been obscured when considering the overall population. The SOTP is underpinned by a strong commitment to appropriately meet the diverse needs of prisoners who participate in the programme. There is however a lack of knowledge regarding what the specific needs of some sub-populations might be.

The overarching aim of this programme of research will therefore be to investigate diversity issues in relation to SOTP. An initial study will explore the experiences of group members from specific minority groups in order to consider how their experiences of treatment differ from those of sex offenders in prison in general. The three specific sub-populations to be investigated with regards to issues of specific responsivity are: Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group members, gay and bisexual group members, and physically disabled group members.

A second study will consider the broader issues of general responsivity and how staff members delivering the programme manage and respond to all forms of diversity. As Core SOTP is based on the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy, therapeutic relationships between prisoners and the staff facilitators can play an important role in determining group dynamics (and thus may impact on group members' progress). Running through both studies will be a consideration of both personal and group identity for staff and prisoners, and how these relate to intragroup dynamics and participants' experiences of treatment. For example, the ways in which hegemonic norms of masculinity (e.g. Sabo et al., 2001) may interact with other aspects of individual identity in the specific social context of prison are considered in section 2.6. Similarly, ways in which Social Identity Theory (Hogg, 2006) may provide a framework for understanding the intragroup dynamics of a treatment group (as well as wider intergroup interactions across a prison) will be considered in sections 2.5 and 2.6. The overarching area of interest, and specific research questions are outlined below.

Overall area of interest

→ How do convicted sex offenders and the staff who work with them experience diversity and responsivity issues in the context of prison-based Core SOTP?

Study 1 – Prisoners and specific responsivity

→ How do sex offenders from minority groups experience engagement with the Core SOTP in prison?

→ How do they construct and maintain potential multiple identities, and how do these overlap or interact?

Study 2 – Staff and general responsivity

→ How do staff delivering the Core SOTP experience diversity and responsivity issues when working with sex offenders?

The literature review presented in the following chapter provides more specific background on current knowledge gaps that guided the construction of these research questions (and the research materials discussed in chapter 3). Theoretical perspectives that may provide a framework for subsequent analysis are also introduced in chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Literature review

In this chapter, relevant literature is reviewed to consider the existing knowledge base regarding diversity issues in relation to sex offender treatment. The rationale for the current study outlined in the previous chapter is expanded upon. The three previously identified minority groups within the overall population of convicted sex offenders were the focus of an initial, exploratory literature review. Ethnicity, physical disability, and sexual orientation were considered in relation to the needs and experiences of prisoners eligible for variants of the SOTP. Given the limited and inconsistent nature of the existing literature, some demographic groups are given more attention than others. Literature relating to staff delivering interventions is presented, with a focus on dynamics between uniformed and non-uniformed staff, as well as issues of welfare and wellbeing for staff working closely with sex offenders. The relevance of Social Identity Theory to understanding the dynamics of small groups, and the conceptual frameworks of masculinities and intersectionality are considered in order to develop theoretical frameworks through which to consider the above.

During the course of data collection, additional and unanticipated areas of diversity were discussed by both prisoner and staff participants. If an aspect of diversity was mentioned by participants, and appeared strongly after initial thematic analysis, but had not been included in the original review, then this was revisited during a supplementary review. Additional topics considered included the needs and experiences of transgender and older prisoners as well as issues of mental health, intellectual difficulty, and intellectual disability. The supplementary literature review conducted after data collection and analysis had begun, and was integrated with the initial review presented in this chapter. The lack of a linear and discrete progression from literature review, to design, to data collection, to analysis is in keeping with the methodology that was adopted for both studies. The idiographic principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al, 2009) allow for this more iterative and organic approach. The size and nature of a literature review appropriate for an IPA study are considered further in the next chapter (see section 3.6).

2.1: Definitions and terminology

One of the two research questions identified for study 1 relates to the ways in which prisoners see their own identities. For each of the groups considered within this thesis, a consideration of the particular terminology used to describe them is therefore important. Even without considering the distinct associations and connotations that various terms have, there are practical issues relating to clearly defining specific populations. Labels that are in some contexts used interchangeably can refer to overlapping but distinct groups. Terms such as 'old' or 'older' are imprecise descriptions of populations unless specific ages are specified. Moreover, some labels have distinct meanings in different fields or different countries (for example, 'intellectual disability'), or can be perceived differently over time (for example, the growth in the use of the word 'spastic' as a term of abuse that prompted the 'The Spastics Society' to be renamed 'Scope' in 1994). There is therefore an issue of precision and clarity regarding the populations that are being referred to that needs to be considered. Beyond this there are also the sometimes subtle distinctions between terms that are generally understood to refer to the same population, but which can carry radically different social meanings (for example, 'gay men' and 'homosexual men').

These differences can have important implications for how individuals construct their own identities, as well as the ways in which power relationships between different groups are either cemented or challenged. In such cases, the meaning attached to these different terms may also vary over time and place. There is again a need to consider the implications and connotations of different terms and to be mindful of this when preparing materials (such as interview schedules) and when reporting findings. Issues of definition also have implications for recruitment of participants. For example, it is possible that a prisoner might self-identify with one category but then might revise this when asked at a later date or in a different context. Therefore, even if consistent terminology is adopted through this thesis, there may be times when it is necessary to deviate from this when discussing or reporting on participants' responses. The labels used in the sub headings below have been adopted as the most appropriate (or least problematic) alternatives. It is acknowledged that some of these terms may still be open to critique, as will the system of categorisation adopted (such as the consideration of Deaf prisoners separately from those with other physical disabilities). These issues are considered below, and justifications of the terminology and definitions adopted are presented.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group members

Aspinall (2002) highlights some of the limitations of 'pan-ethnic' labels such as 'BME'. Similarly, he notes the way in which minority white groups (such as the Irish) can be subsumed into more general categories and potentially ignored[6]. Comparisons are also made with the USA and he briefly explores some of the differences from the British context. Reviewing previous thinking on collective terminology in Britain, Aspinall (2002) demonstrates that each of the three constituent terms making up the phrase 'Black and minority ethnic' have been contested and questioned. For example, a report from the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (Parekh, 2000) cautions against the use of the terms 'minority ethnic' and 'ethnic minority' on the basis that the word 'minority' has negative connotations implying lesser importance. Aspinall (2002) distinguishes between using the term to denote a *statistical* minority and implying a subservient power relation or particular social order. There are also issues regarding the use of the word 'black', for example the ambiguity as to whether this refers to current understandings of the term, or to historical ones that see it as a description of any ethnic groups that may be subjected to discrimination or disadvantage based on skin colour or physical difference.

There are arguments for refining or supplementing the potentially inexact term 'black and minority ethnic' (for example, by expanding it to 'black, Asian and minority ethnic' (BAME)). However, 'BME' has been adopted in this thesis as it is a term in current use in the field. It is cited in both training materials for staff delivering SOTP, as well as in statistical reports on prisoner demographics prepared by NOMS (e.g. Ministry of Justice, 2015a). Using this phrase to discuss ethnicity would therefore be appropriate when interviewing staff participants and reporting their experiences, as it is a phrase that they themselves would be likely to use, and thus serves the aims of presenting a phenomenological account closely rooted in the data collected. It is perhaps less clear as to whether prisoner participants would be familiar with the term, but given its usage in official documents that staff are exposed to and the use of the term outside the context of prison, it is likely to be as well understood as any alternative term.

---

[6] The data presented in Table 2.2.i are drawn from multiple sources, and therefore figures for some ethnic groups have been combined later in this chapter.

One additional issue in relation to ethnicity is that of mixed ethnicity. Again, there is the potential for certain labels to be perceived as pejorative or inappropriate. For example, in a British survey of people of multiple ethnic origin Aspinall (2009) established that terms such as 'half-caste' or 'dual heritage' were deemed by participants to be offensive, with the preferred term being 'mixed race' (although many participants cited other terms as their preferred way of self-identifying). Whilst BME may therefore be an appropriate way of introducing issues of ethnicity, the diverse labels that individuals may choose to apply to themselves suggests that the adoption of any single 'correct' set of category labels is not possible, and wherever possible it may be preferable to allow participants to define their own ethnicity in their own words.

Physically disabled group members: The social model of disability

Physical disability raises its own particular issues in relation to definition. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Equalities Act (2010) refer to a person being deemed to have a disability if "he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her or his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities" (Disability Discrimination Act, 1995), with long term taken to be a condition lasting (or expected to last) for at least twelve months. Cunniffe et al. (2012) note that the lack of specificity in this sort of definition, which beyond the social implications for disabled people can have important methodological ones as well. For example, in the absence of a clear, uncontested definition researchers may simply rely on self-report when attempting to estimate and study the proportion of a population who are disabled. Whilst legal definitions of disability themselves can vary there in an important wider tension between two contrasting ways of thinking about the term.

There has been a paradigm shift from a hegemonic medico-legal model, which locates both impairment and disability at the level of the individual, towards a social model of disability, which emphasises the socially constructed nature of disability (Finkelstein, 1980; Oliver, 1990). The latter has itself been further refined and challenged (e.g. Shakespeare & Watson, 2001). The at times interchangeable use of the terms 'disability' and 'impairment' in parts of the legislation cited above, risks masking what proponents of the social model of disability would regard as a crucial distinction. Under the social model dominant discourses of 'disability' (as a medical tragedy that creates a passive victim, and a problem

located at the level of the affected individual) are reframed as being socially constructed. This reframing is argued to be a necessary social exercise as the medical model of disability is seen as inherently oppressive. The social model seeks to expose the process by which disability is externally imposed, rather than accepting the idea that essentially arises from the individual themselves. Such socially constructed disability is seen as distinct from biologically determined impairment, the latter being defined by the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS, 1976) as 'lacking all or part of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body'. Shakespeare et al. (1996) draw an apt parallel here with the distinction between biological sex (e.g. female) and socially constructed and imposed gender roles (e.g. feminine).

Although emphatically supportive of the critical and empowering aspects of the social model of disability, Crow (1996) raises concerns that the theory's laudable focus on constructed and imposed disability runs the risk of ignoring important issues around impairment. Crow argues that is possible to recognise the problems of individual impairment without discriminating or oppressing, and that shifting the focus exclusively to the external, social world might reduce an individual's ability to give voice to and copes with important experiences of that impairment. By maintaining an exclusive focus on disability Crow also suggests that the disability movement may itself run the risk of ignoring the voices of those who are most affected by physical impairment, and they may be the ones who find it hardest to become politically involved. She therefore suggests a middle ground whereby some focus is shifted back to the importance of individual impairment, but without taking on the oppressive aspects of medical models of disability. Crow's point about the unrefined social model potentially excluding some people from political involvement is one that has added relevance when applied to physically disabled prisoners, who need to negotiate the additional physical barrier of imprisonment and the stigma of being an offender if they wish to have a voice in the movement.

Deaf group members: Deaf culture

Deaf group members are here considered separately from those with a physical disability because there is research that focuses specifically on treatment issues for Deaf sex offenders (as well as a newly developed variant of the SOTP for Deaf prisoners), and not because any qualitative difference from all other forms of physical disability is being

implied. The definition of physical disability outlined above would incorporate deaf group members.

Beyond the tension between the medical and social models of disability there are further important issues of definition and self-identification to consider. For example, Dolnick (1993) provides an overview of the concept of Deaf culture, which challenges the concept of deafness as physical impairment and instead conceptualises it as a trait shared by some members of the population. Whilst this critical deconstruction of traditional medical definitions shares much with the social model of disability there is an important difference in that Deafness is seen as a trait that is distinct from physical impairments in general. This raises potential issues of intersubjectivity regarding the ways in which Deaf people may view their own identity relative to that those with other physical impairments. Jones (2002) adopts a psychosocial perspective in order to explore Deaf culture and elucidate some of these issues of identity. For example, the rejection of the label 'disabled' by some Deaf people is explained by Jones in terms of an attempt to move away from a position of stigmatisation through the formation of a distinct and cohesive social group. Whilst the positive consequences of forming such social groups is acknowledged Jones does also touch on other less desirable effects. For example, the potential for prejudice towards the hearing is explored, and explained in terms of negativity towards an out-group being a common consequence of the formation of any in-group.

Gay and bisexual group members

As with other populations considered above, there are important issues relating to labels and self-identification when considering the issues around working with gay and bisexual prisoners. Perhaps most pertinent is the distinction between the broader category of men who have sex with men, and men who self-identify as gay or bisexual. Some prison-based research has sought to capture a wider array of experiences by adopting the former definition when recruiting participants. However, the narrower 'gay and bisexual men' has been adopted in this thesis, as this is a better fit for the methodology adopted, which lends itself to thinking about such labels in terms of self-identification. Whilst 'men who have sex with men' might have potentially broadened the number of participants who were eligible for the study, it also introduces a term that deviates from everyday language and does not represent the way in which many people think about their sexual orientation.

There are additional issues around the definition of bisexuality that are dependent on the view of sexual orientation taken. For example, Davies and Neal (1996) use the labels 'lesbian' and 'gay' to describe clients who are sexually attracted to people of the same sex. These labels are often taken to subsume clients who identify as bisexual, in part because bisexuality is seen as more difficult to define as a distinct and discrete sexual orientation on the basis that orientation is something that can, to varying degrees, alter over a person's life. This goes against the approach of viewing heterosexuality and homosexuality as a clear dichotomy. At the same time, Davies and Neal (1996) acknowledge that many individuals self-identify primarily as bisexual, and explore the specific issues that they may face. For example, having to negotiate possible homophobia from the heterosexual community, as well as 'biphobia' from the homosexual community. Therefore, whilst the way in which bisexual men privately self-identify and see themselves may be distinct in important ways from the ways in which straight and gay men see themselves, bisexual men could potentially feel an additional pressure to publicly self-identify as either 'gay' or 'straight', with the potential for this to be fluid and dependant on the social context they find themselves in at any given time.

Transgender group members

Lev (2004) notes that the term 'transgender' can be taken to encompass people who self-identify in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, transsexuals, cross-dressers, androgynes, or intersex. Beyond these specific identities, and also applicable to gay and bisexual men, is the self-identification by some transgender people as queer. This is often as a conscious effort to resist and question dominant discourses of sex, gender and sexuality. Hill (2004) describes queer identity as something that not only resists objective categorisation, but is also bound up with a desire to actively question, undermine and deconstruct binary and heterosexist frameworks of identity.

Group members with intellectual disabilities

In the white paper *Valuing People* (Department of Health, 2001) multiple criteria are set out in order to define the term 'learning disability'. These are: a significantly reduced ability to take on board new or complex information, a reduced ability to cope independently, and

the additional caveat that these issues presented themselves in childhood with lasting impacts on development. Moreover, a learning disability is defined as being generally more severe than the broader category of 'learning difficulty' in education legislation. As with physical disability there are potential tensions here between externally imposed legal definitions (which attempt an objective and medicalised definition) and the more complex ways in which people actually self-identify and construct their own identities. The term 'intellectual disability' is also used interchangeably with 'learning disability' in the UK, although in the prison system the use of the term 'intellectual disability' is more common (Williams, 2013) and has been adopted in this thesis along with the defining criteria from the Department of Health previously outlined. The broadness of this definition should be noted, as it incorporates a range of cognitive issues that are not all captured by a simple notion of 'intelligence' based on IQ. In the context of SOTP the most commonly used measure used to screen potential participants for levels of intellectual disability is IQ, measured using the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (Wechsler, 2008). However, assessment criteria for the programme stipulate that intellectual ability should not be conceptualised as a one-dimensional measure, and that specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or autism will not necessarily be captured by this measure. Some learning difficulties may manifest with a complex profile whereby individuals are highly functioning in some areas, but struggle in others. All of these issues will interact in complex ways to determine an individual's learning style and the way in which they will experience treatment.

Older group members

An immediate issue when considering older prisoners is that age is a continuous rather than discrete characteristic. Therefore, both in terms of self-image and identity, and in terms of issues faced during treatment the role played by age will necessarily change in gradual and subtle ways as prisoners age (although of course major life events such as coming to prison, or dealing with a specific injury may lead to discrete shifts in how prisoners *perceive* their own age). Changes in physical and psychological health associated with ageing may also be experienced to greatly varying degrees by individuals. A Prison Reform Trust briefing on older prisoners (Prison Reform Trust, 2008) adopts the cut off points of 50 and 60. Bearing in mind the points above, these provide convenient (if perhaps arbitrary) ways of defining 'older'. An additional point to bear in mind when considering

definitions of 'old age' in the context of prison is decreased life expectancy. No specific age is used consistently by NOMS or in Government statistics, and a report from the Justice Committee explicitly states that this group is not considered a distinct demographic category in the same way that young or female prisoners are (House of Commons, 2013). The Ministry of Justice submission cited in this report notes that the earlier onset of issues relating to physical and psychological health in prison means that there is a case for taking the lower of these two cut off points (50) as a more useful definition. This view was shared by the majority of charities and other organisation submitting evidence. As well as earlier onset of health issues reasons cited include NHS Healthcare services for healthy ageing starting to be provided at 50 for the general population, provision of services by organisations such as Age UK in the general population starting at 50, and the greater need to identify and support prisoners *before* they reach what would be considered old age.

2.2: The size and nature of prisoner subgroups

Available information on the size and nature of specific male sex offender sub-populations is inconsistent. In some cases, the adoption of distinct definitions and different data sources provide conflicting estimates. In others there is a dearth of information about a particular sub-population. Where data do exist, comparisons are drawn with the make-up of the wider prison population and with the general population of the United Kingdom, as captured by sources such as census data. Some reference is also made to the corresponding populations in other jurisdictions.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group members

Data on ethnicity in the general population of England and Wales are reported in the first column of Table 2.2.i below. These figures are taken from the 2011 census (National Statistics, 2012). The average total prison population (including female and juvenile offenders) over the period April 2010 to March 2011, based on data from 'administrative IT systems', was 84,920. The ethnic make-up of the overall prison population is reported in the second column for comparison (Ministry of Justice, 2011b). Although more recent figures on a range of 'protected characteristics' are available (e.g. Ministry of Justice, 2015) the period 2010-11 is considered here in order to best reflect the time and context within which research interviews were conducted, as well to allow for direct comparison with

census data. Cowburn et al. (2008b) estimated the size of the male sex offender prison population in England and Wales as 8106 and provided a breakdown, which is included in the final column. Beyond their relative underrepresentation (as compared to the general prison population) Cowburn et al. (2008b) highlight additional important differences in the nature of the BME sex offender population in prison, particularly in terms of age and offence type. They note that members of the BME sex offender population in prison are relatively young, and more likely to have been convicted of offences against an adult when compared with their white counterparts.

Table 2.2.i. General population, prison population, and male sex offender prison population by ethnicity for England and Wales.

	General population	Prison population	Male sex offender prison population
White	80.5%	72.1%	81.9%
Asian / Asian British	6.8%	7.2%	5.6%
Black / Black British	3.4%	13.5%	9.9%
Mixed heritage / Other	3.9%	4.9%	2.2%
Not stated		2.3%	

An American sample of juvenile sex offenders indicated significantly higher scores for juvenile black sex offenders as compared to white juvenile sex offenders on Static-99, the Rapid Risk Assessment for Sex Offense Recidivism (RRASOR), and the Minnesota Sex Offender Screening Tool-Revised (MnSOST-R) (Forbes, 2008). Data were collected pre-trial and pre-release and were obtained from the Sex Offender Research Database (SORD) held at Kentucky State Reformatory. Sample size and nature is unknown but as these findings are based on a non-UK sample and deal with juveniles, their relevance to the current study may be limited.

Physically disabled group members

Comparability of data on disability from different sources is a particular issue given a high degree of variation in the precise definitions used. Some surveys and studies conflate physical and psychological impairments, and even when these are considered separately there is often a lack of consistency in the exact conditions used to define 'disability'. The

2011 census included the question "Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?". Across England and Wales 9.4% indicated that their daily activities were limited a little, and 8.5% indicated that they were limited a lot (National Statistics, 2013). Whilst these figures for the general population provide a baseline against which to measure over- or under-representation in the prison population there are important issues with question wording that make any direct comparisons difficult. Census data make no distinction between physical and mental health. The relevant question in the 2011 census had been re-worded since the 2001 census. However, in its current state there is no clarification regarding the precise definition of 'health problem' (for example, to make it clear that this covers mental health). Similarly, the responses of 'limited a lot' and 'limited a little' give no indication of the cut-off point between 'a lot' and 'a little'. The Family Resources Survey (FRS) (Clay et al., 2012) uses a definition of disability based on the Equalities Act (EA) (2010), although the definition applied in the FRS is not entirely exhaustive and does not capture all individuals covered by the EA. Figures from the survey indicate higher proportions than census data, with an estimated 18% of men and 20% of women in the general population defined as disabled.

The Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction survey (Cunniffe et al., 2012) found that of a sample of 1,435 prisoners interviewed shortly after arriving in English and Welsh prisons 36% were considered to have a disability of some kind. This was based on data obtained from a battery of questionnaires covering various aspects of health, including mental health. A strength of the SPCR is that it does not rely on self-report alone, but does include these data for comparison (34% of the sample self-reported as being disabled). Eleven percent of the overall sample were deemed to have a physical disability but were not deemed to be suffering from anxiety or depression. An additional eight percent of the sample were deemed to both have a physical disability and to be suffering from either anxiety or depression. An overall gender difference was observed, due to female prisoners in the sample being more likely to suffer from anxiety or depression. These figures would appear to indicate a degree of over-representation of those with physical disabilities in the prison service, although the serious issues with comparability of census data mitigate against drawing more than tentative conclusions in this area.

Older prisoners were also more likely to be deemed to have some form of disability. Additional comparisons with non-disabled prisoners indicated a number of differences. For example, disabled prisoners were more likely to have used drugs, personally experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse as a child, and to have experienced feelings of isolation and confusion when entering into custody. It should be noted that these comparisons refer to all disabled prisoners in the sample, and not just to those with a physical disability.

Deaf group members

Due to a lack of systematic recording there is no accurate information available on the number of Deaf prisoners currently in prison, although a Department of Health report published in 2005 estimated the figure to be 100 (Department of Health, 2005). In response to a consultation document on the mental health needs of Deaf people, issues faced by this group were highlighted. These included difficulty accessing rehabilitative programmes, effectively resulting in more time spent in prison compared with hearing prisoners convicted of similar offences. Practical issues encountered on the wing were also highlighted, such as Deaf prisoners failing to take advantage of facilities such as hot water if announcements were only made verbally (Department of Health, 2005). The exact number of Deaf sexual offenders in the prison service is also unknown, and there is a similar lack of knowledge about other features of this population.

Regarding other features of this sub-population, Iqbal et al. (2004) report on a case file review of 137 deaf sexual offenders referred to a specialist mental health unit over several years (1969-2002). This cohort was found to have a range of distinctive features, including having offended mostly against children, to have had high rates of intellectual impairment, low rates of major mental illness, and poor relationships with caregivers. Whilst these features may be of relevance to Deaf sexual offenders in general there are issues with drawing more than tentative conclusions. The cohort investigated by Iqbal et al. (2004) may not be representative of all Deaf sexual offenders, given that referral to the specialist unit would not have been random. Similarly, the fact that referrals as far back as 1969 were included in the cohort raise further issues for representativeness, as the issues faced by deaf sexual offenders in the past may have been very different from those faced today.

Gay and bisexual group members

Large cross-cultural surveys of sexuality (e.g. Sell et al., 1995) suggest that amongst the general population between 7 and 12 percent of people acknowledge having sexual contact with someone of the same sex. For the UK sample in this study 7.8% reported same sex sexual behaviour, and 4.7% reported this within the last five years. In the absence of a question on sexuality being added to the 2011 census there is limited additional data covering the UK population. Official statistics on sexual orientation for the prison population are not routinely collected, and there is a similar lack of official information on issues faced by this group. For example, in contrast with some other diversity strands, there is no official national process for recording homophobic incidents, although these may be captured locally (Ministry of Justice, 2009). As such, the estimates for the general public cited above may provide the best possible indication for the proportion of men in prison who would self-identify as gay or bisexual.

Group members with intellectual disabilities

In a Department of Health report collating data from local Learning Disability Partnership Boards across England an average of 3.8 adults per 1000 were estimated to have a learning disability. This is slightly lower than the equivalent figures from GPs (4.33) and from local authorities (4.27) (Roberts et al., 2012). Loucks (2006) discusses the difficulty of identifying a comparable figure for offender populations, due in part to issues of non-comparable definitions of 'learning disability', with additional mediating variables affecting findings across studies (such as the measures used, the timing of assessments, the level of training for assessors, and local policies on diversion). Based on a meta-analysis of studies adopting a definition of learning disabilities that is consistent with the one set out in *Valuing People*, Loucks (2006) identifies estimates for prevalence in UK prisons that range from 1% to 10%. For specific conditions such as dyslexia estimates of prevalence are often higher. For example, Rack (2005) reports an estimated prevalence of between 14% and 31%, based on the assessment of prisoners across eight prisons in Yorkshire and Humberside.

Changes in sentencing have been linked to a rapid rise in the number of men aged over 60 in the prison system. Between 1996 and 2008 there was a greater than three-fold increase in the number of men over 60 (from 699 to 2242). This compared to a 50% increase in the male population under 60 (Prison Reform Trust, 2008). This trend has continued in recent years, with both the over 60, and 50-59 age groups identified as the first (120% increase) and second (100% increase) fastest growing age groups respectively (House of Commons, 2013). In a speech to the parliamentary All Party Penal Affairs Group given by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (Newcomen, 2015) the number of older prisoners was described as 'growing rapidly', with more than 12,000 over the age of 50, and more than 4000 over the age of 60. The Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey (Cunniffe et al., 2012) indicates relatively greater rates of physical and mental disability amongst older prisoners. SPCR data indicates that 50% of prisoners over 40 can be classified as having some form of disability, compared to 42% of 30-39 year olds, 32% of 21-29 year olds, and 18% of 18-20 year olds. Additional survey data also indicates that for older male prisoners the treatment of physical conditions is generally adequate, but that psychiatric or psychological needs are not always properly addressed (Fazel et al., 2004).

2.3: Initial engagement with SOTP

As well as the way in which members of specific sub-populations experience treatment, an issue that should first be considered is potentially distinct levels of engagement. Even with course content and delivery that meets the needs of all prisoners and a facilitator team that is well placed and resourced to respond to individual need there is still the possibility that individuals may face distinct physical or social barriers to accessing treatment, whether through a reduced likelihood of taking up treatment that is offered to them or a reduced likelihood of even being offered a place on a course when compared against the wider sex offender population in prison. As with some other areas of this review there is more information available relating to BME prisoners in this respect. Whilst it is this sub-population that is focused on in this section, issues for others are also considered.

Cowburn (1996) notes a significant under representation of BME prisoners on the SOTP programme. A Prison Service report from 2007 indicates that this has been a persistent problem, with Black and Asian group members highlighted as being under-represented in SOTP groups (H.M. Prison Service, 2007). Although some work has examined how BME prisoners experience SOTP (e.g. Patel & Lord, 2001) the reasons for this relative under-representation in initial engagement with SOTP groups has received less attention (Cowburn et al., 2008a). Cowburn et al. (2008b) propose four key areas that require consideration in order to understand possible reasons for a lack of participation: the response of parts of BME communities to the Criminal Justice System; cultural constraints in talking about sex; the impact of religious beliefs; non-western models of identities in communities. It should be noted that whilst these may be important avenues to explore they are partly predicated on some conflation between ethnicity and culture. Any strong attachments to a community may also be undermined or qualified for some prisoners because of the nature of their offence.

To further expand consideration beyond ethnicity, perceived conflict between religion and participation in SOTP may also potentially impact upon engagement. Coverage in national news media such as The Telegraph (Farmer, 2008) has erroneously reported that Muslim prisoners are 'exempt' from participation in SOTP. As well as misrepresenting the fact that the programme is one that prisoners opt in to, such reporting may make some prisoners wary of a course they would otherwise have engaged with.

In order to improve levels of participation, Cowburn et al. (2008) make several recommendations, including additional training for staff, encouraging greater numbers of BME staff (although they note that for some prisoners this could potentially be counter-productive by making disclosure less likely), and targeted groups (e.g. BME only groups of prisoners, or groups solely for young prisoners who have offended against adults). Further research and community engagement are also considered to be important. Many of these recommendations echo those of Beech et al. (1999). For example, they suggest running BME specific SOTP groups and the recruitment of greater numbers of staff from BME communities. The issue of running specific groups for different types of offenders is given further consideration in the next section.

Physically disabled group members and group members with intellectual disabilities

In the case of some physically disabled group members with limited mobility, physical barriers to engaging in treatment may exclude a willing participant. The age and design of some older prisons may mean that the location where sessions are held is not accessible for some, either because of the distance to be travelled or the need to use steps to access the room. Similarly, for prisoners with an intellectual disability there are additional barriers to accessing treatment beyond their own willingness to engage. For those with an IQ score well below a given threshold, or experiencing other issues that would make it difficult for them to benefit from Core SOTP, a recommendation to can be made to engage in Becoming New Me (formerly referred to as the Adapted SOTP). The provision of Becoming New Me is however relatively limited as compared to Core SOTP, and would therefore in most cases involve a move to another establishment where there are staff trained to deliver this specific intervention.

2.4: Prisoner needs and experiences of participating in treatment

This section considers the two distinct but related areas of how well individual needs are met by the SOTP for specific sub-populations, as well as how these different groups experience the programme.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group members

A systematic review of literature relating to treatment outcomes for adult male BME sex offenders (Hudson, 2013) identified seven studies, only three of which related to UK populations. However, widening the focus to include qualitative exploration of prisoners' experiences of treatment does yield some additional data. For example, interviews with a small sample (N = 24) of ethnic minority prisoners who had participated in SOTP revealed that most participants regarded the programme as mostly appropriate for meeting their treatment needs and did not feel that their ethnicity was a significant issue or barrier to treatment (Patel & Lord, 2001). However, there was some criticism of specific aspects of the programme, such as scenarios and examples that were not as relevant to them as they could have been. Cowburn et al. (2008b), when discussing the reasons for lower levels of

participation, raise the possibility that the cognitive behavioural model which underpins SOTP may be culturally specific and appropriate for white British clients, but not necessarily for those who come from a different cultural background. Thus, distinct experiences of treatment may explain the relative lack of initial engagement noted above in section 2.3.

On the subject of adapting programmes for specific ethnic groups, a Home Office report on the provision of targeted intervention in the Probation Service highlights some relevant issues (Powis & Walmsley, 2002). They identified some evidence to support the running of separate programmes. For example, avoiding feelings of isolation that might come about if a client is the sole minority ethnic group member. However, they concluded that the empirical evidence was equivocal. Running groups that are separated on the basis of ethnicity raises several possible concerns. Any benefits in terms of some group members initially feeling more comfortable or more likely to engage would not necessarily ensure greater progress over the long term. Moreover, this raises the question of organising groups based on other criteria such as age, religion, language ability or offence type. In some American jurisdictions such as Minnesota, those who have offended against child victims are treated separately from those who have offended against adults. This is justified in terms of the different risk factors that are most relevant for each offence type. Training for SOTP facilitators in England and Wales however emphasises the benefits of facilitators leading a discussion in which group members challenge and question one another. By reducing the diversity of a group (in terms of ethnicity, age, offence type etc.) there is a danger of diluting what may be one of the key benefits of group work for the client in this case; being challenged and questioned by peers who can use their diversity to offer an outsider perspective.

BME group members felt that facilitators did not always respond appropriately to their individual needs (Patel & Lord, 2001). This was found to be less of a problem when they were not the sole BME member of a treatment group. This provides some support for the current practice of avoiding placing a sole BME prisoner in any new groups. Current guidelines and audit requirements for the programme state that when this cannot be avoided, the situation should be discussed with the potential group member in order to ensure that they are comfortable with this. This stipulation is unique to ethnicity, and whilst treatment managers would be sensitive to the make-up of a group in terms of other demographics there would be no codified obligation to explore this in the same way with

a group member who was unique within their group in terms of sexual orientation or disability.

Wakama (2005) explores the perceptions of BME prisoners and white facilitators, and concluded that generic model of treatment was not necessarily appropriate for all sex offenders. Potential specific needs of BME group members were identified and specific training for staff was advocated in order to allow them to meet these needs appropriately. For example, Wakama suggests that staff would benefit from additional training in cultural diversity and religious beliefs, and that such training would help them to better meet the needs of some ethnic minority group members.

It is also important to consider how more media representations of ethnicity and offending may impact on the attitudes and behaviours of those who come into contact with convicted sex offenders. In November 2010 nine men were convicted of various offences including the rape and intimidation of a total of 27 female teenage victims in Derby (Symonds, 2010). This followed similar cases in Rochdale, Preston and Rotherham. The ethnicities of both victims (predominantly white) and offenders (predominantly Asian) was emphasised in some news reports (e.g. Britten, 2010). Speaking on the BBC's Newsnight programme in response to the case, former Home Secretary Jack Straw acknowledged that the majority of convicted sex offenders were white, but stated that 'there is a specific problem with Pakistani heritage men… ...who target vulnerable young white girls' (Telegraph, 2011).

Comparisons of a range of pre- and post-programme psychometric measures for a group of black prisoners indicated that their progress was comparable to that of a matched sample of white prisoners (Webster, et al. 2004). Measures covered denial or admittance of sexual interests, pro-offending attitudes about children, women or entitlement to sex, social competence and interpersonal relationships, and preparedness for relapse prevention. Some differences were observed, for example on the Sex Offence Attitude Questionnaire (Houge, 1994; Proctor, 1994) black prisoners were found to exhibit higher levels of denial of pre-meditation and repetition of offending. The former difference disappeared post-programme, but denial of repetition remained significantly higher.

In order to address the lack of any currently available interventions targeted at Deaf sexual offenders a Deaf SOTP has been piloted at HMP Whatton (Payne & O'Connor, 2013). The programme was based on the pilot version of the Becoming New Me (BNM) programme, incorporating aspects of Adapted Better Lives Booster (ABLB) programme as well in order to cover secondary relapse prevention. BNM and ABLB are designed for male sex offenders with intellectual disabilities. There were deemed as an appropriate basis for a Deaf SOTP in part because they both draw heavily on visual rather than verbal stimuli during programme delivery. The Deaf SOTP was delivered to four group members by a team of three facilitators and four additional BSL interpreters. For the three group members who completed the programme positive progress was identified in terms of acknowledging their own areas of risk, although there was no strong evidence of having addressed all of their specific treatment needs by the end of the programme. Facilitators were BSL trained, but the use of additional interpreters was deemed necessary as facilitators were not sufficiently proficient.

Facilitators were reported as finding the programme challenging to deliver for a number of reasons. Developing empathy and a supportive attitude amongst group members was felt to be particularly difficult. This was mirrored by a lack of empathy on the part of facilitators, exacerbated by the fact that interactions were mediated by interpreters. Given the lack of other forums in which to voice their concerns session time was often taken up by group members discussing issues they were encountering on the wing, causing issues with time management. The need for translation to BSL was also a reported problem in terms of sacrificing the subtleties of tone, wording and body language normally used to foster a healthy therapeutic relationship. Interpreters being present meant that group members were often not looking at facilitators, so efforts to provide feedback and re-enforcement through visual cues such as facial expressions were not effective. Despite these issues having a negative effect on facilitator wellbeing during the programme staff were more positive about it once it had concluded and they were able to reflect on progress made. The small number of prisoners and staff in the Deaf SOTP pilot again means that it is not possible to generalise these findings, but the outcomes of the pilot are instructive in illustrating some of the issues that warrant further exploration. Payne and O'Connor (2013) identify the use of interpreters as being the principal area of concern requiring further

attention, but reported that prisoner needs and staff welfare are also important issues to research further.

Transgender group members

O'Hara et al. (2013) investigated the transgender counselling competence of 87 counsellors in training via questionnaires, and subsequently conducted more in-depth focus groups with a smaller number of participants (N = 7). Participants were drawn from a different cultural context, and the professional relationship between a counsellor and single client is not directly comparable to the more complex relationship between a team of SOTP facilitators and a potentially diverse group of sex offenders. The results still suggest some important issues that may be of relevance to SOTP staff working with transgender group members. For example, the themes emerging from the focus groups identified that issues of concern to participants included using the right terminology, having to draw on both formal (e.g. training) and informal (e.g. knowledge picked up through friends and family) sources of information, and feeling unprepared to work with transgender people, despite being readily able to take an empathic and non-judgemental approach when working with this client group. All of these concerns and issues could potentially emerge for both new and more experienced SOTP facilitators. Considering the results from both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study (the latter including a measure of multicultural counselling competence) O'Hara et al. (2013) conclude that factors such as knowing someone who was transgender or working with this client group were both more likely to improve counsellors' self-perceived competence (much more so than formal training, or length of time in service).

Group members with intellectual disabilities

Amongst the adult male sex offenders eligible for SOTP in prison, those with an IQ score below a certain threshold were previously identified as candidates for the Adapted (rather than Core) version of the programme. The Adapted SOTP (ASOTP) followed a similar structure to Core, but with the method of delivery of exercises and discussions tailored to those who might struggle to take on board complex information. A threshold IQ score of 79 was used to identify those who might be eligible for the Adapted SOTP, although file information and clinical judgement were also considered (particularly for those with

borderline scores) (OBPU, 2004). Despite these additional factors being taken into consideration, it should be noted that the use of initial screening criteria based on IQ does involve a distinct, more discrete and less nuanced definition of intellectual disability than those discussed above. As discussed above, the Adapted SOTP ran until 2009, at which point it was revised in order to incorporate findings from new research, and to be applicable for use by the Probation Service as well as in prison settings. A new programme called Becoming New Me (BNM) with similar eligibility criteria was developed in order to address these points.

As part of a wider mixed methods evaluation of BNM, Williams (2014) reports findings from focus groups conducted with both staff delivering the programme and prisoner attendees. Based on this qualitative data, the experiences of prisoners who have completed BNM are characterised as positive. This related to the method and form of treatment as well as the content, with the adaptations to their specific needs being cited by many participants as valuable. Prisoners described feeling well supported by staff, indicating the formation of strong therapeutic relations. They also described processes of peer support and encouragement within the group. Whilst participants described experiencing some anxiety at the start of the programme, this was in most cases replaced by feelings of optimism about the future (linked to greater self-efficacy) once the programme concluded. Some participants did also discuss barriers to progress, or frustrations. For some, the material presented was at times confusing or over-whelming. Some negative experiences of interacting with staff were also reported, although this related to staff outside of the Programmes Department, and not to BNM facilitators. Whilst these findings are encouraging, and suggest that BNM largely succeeds in responding to the individual needs of intellectually disabled sex offenders, this raises further questions regarding the suitability of Core SOTP for those who are deemed not to be intellectually disabled, but who may still benefit from a clearer, less abstract form of programme delivery. For example, a prisoner may present with a IQ score well above the cut off of 79, but may have other learning disabilities or mental health issues that affect the ways in which they are best able to take on new information.

Older group members

As well as having specific health and social care needs, issues relating to resettlement are highlighted in a Justice Committee report, which identifies serious problems with providing adequate provision for older prisoners in this area (House of Commons, 2013). For those prisoners engaging with programmes such as SOTP this underlines the importance of tailoring provision to the specific needs of the individual. For example, role plays and scenarios employed during the final 'Future Me' sessions often relate to situations prisoners may find themselves in after release. Potentially distinct needs relating to social care, health care and housing would require scenarios to be adapted in order to remain relevant to the individual. Moreover, older prisoners on indeterminate sentences may be facing a high degree of uncertainty about whether or not they will be release in the short or medium term, and therefore role plays set on the wing might be more realistic and relevant for them when exploring how to manage their risk in future.

2.5: SOTP Facilitators

Size and nature of the population

In 2007 there were 289 members of staff actively delivering SOTP (Clarke and Roger, 2007). Facilitators are themselves a diverse population, both in terms of demographics as well as in terms of the various professional roles occupied with the organisation. Facilitator teams may be made up of non-uniformed Psychological Assistants, Trainee Psychologists, or Treatment Managers. Many institutions delivering SOTP also have some uniformed staff trained to deliver variants of the programme. There is however evidence that the number of uniformed staff delivering programmes has been declining since the programme's introduction in 1991, and that SOTP facilitators are increasingly relatively young, female civilian staff from Programmes or Psychology departments (Beech et al., 2005). In the case of SOTP there is also an audit requirement that facilitator teams are made up of both men and women (OBPU, 2000), thus ensuring a degree of gender diversity within any single team. This is not a specific requirement for offender behaviour programmes in general, and its inclusion in relation to SOTP is designed in part to allow staff to model pro-social interactions between men and women, thus challenging negative attitudes about women

that have been identified as common factors for sex offenders within the SARN risk assessment framework.

Officer facilitators and the SOTP

Crawley (2004) reports the findings from ethnographic fieldwork conducted at multiple prisons in order to provide an account of how prison officers working in various roles see themselves and their work. Specific attention is given to officers involved in the treatment and management of sex offenders, both in the context of delivering the SOTP to offenders on a Vulnerable Prisoner (VP) wing, as well as the in the context of working on a wing populated by sex offenders in denial of their offence (and thus not engaged with the SOTP). In some cases, officers who took on the role of SOTP facilitators described experiencing negative emotions such as disgust or anger as a result of their work. In cases where officers had children who were of a similar age to the victims being discussed by offenders these effects were often exacerbated. Some officers also described having to actively suppress an aggressive emotional outburst when confronted with particularly upsetting offences. Debriefing is mentioned as an important tool to control and manage these emotions, although for officers these supposedly mandatory sessions are described as being curtailed if wings happen to be short staffed. The experiences of the small sample of officers interviewed by Crawley (2004) are therefore consistent with the ruminative vulnerability and negative reactivity to offenders identified as being experienced by facilitators in general (Clarke and Roger, 2007). In contrast, the conflict between the therapeutic atmosphere of the programme and the unpredictable demands of working as a wing officer is an example of the kind of issue that is presumably less of a problem for non-uniformed psychology staff. For both officer facilitators (and for those responsible for managing sex offenders in denial) conflict with other officers in more traditional roles is emphasised. Crawley (2004) describes a recurring theme of officers in non-traditional roles being stigmatised for deviating from the hegemonic understanding of what an officer's role should be (this mainstream understanding being characterised by a high degree of machismo, and rigid boundaries that ensure constant emotional aloofness from prisoners). Attempts by these 'deviant' officers to renegotiate 'damaged identities' (Hewitt & Stokes, 1975) are identified by Crawley (2004). For example, when faced with challenges from colleague's officer facilitators are described as often highlighting the utilitarian benefits of their work and the prevention of potential future offences against children. These are

described as one way in which traditionally subordinate and non-hegemonic understandings of masculinity are developed and maintained.

The general experiences of female officers are also given some attention (although not in the specific context of SOTP, as most of the officer facilitators interviewed were male). Crawley (2004) reports the experiences of female officers who routinely experience expressions of resentment from male officers, as well as more explicit instances of bullying and harassment. In considering possible explanations for this, she considers the idea that for some male officers female officers represent a threat to the conflation of the prison officer role with masculinity. This draws on the idea that female officers may be resented because they disrupt the ways in which some male officers construct their own masculinity (Martin & Jurik, 2007). The dynamics between different groups of both staff and prisoners are considered further in section 2.6, in the context of social identity.

Facilitator wellbeing

Brampton (2010) conducted interviews with staff (uniformed and non-uniformed) responsible for the delivery of the programme in prisons in England and Wales, and concluded that greater consideration should be given to the screening of facilitators. Levels of support and training were also deemed to be inadequate in some cases. Amongst the facilitators interviewed it was emotional strain and the consequent impact on mental health that was reported as the most notable negative consequence of working with sex offenders. Positive consequences amongst newer facilitators related to perceived benefits for career progression. However, this theme was not as strongly present amongst more qualified facilitators. Brampton (2010) suggests that organisational demands may tend to frustrate the career progression that newer facilitators expect.

A larger sample of 182 active prison-based facilitators surveyed by Clarke and Roger (2007) revealed similar potential negative consequences for emotional health relating to increased ruminative vulnerability. In addition, findings from factor analysis of this data suggested that some facilitators may also be at risk of distinct negative consequences relating to marked increases in negative reactions to dealing with offenders, or to increased levels of frustration and dissatisfaction with the organisational structure of the prison as a whole. Dean and Barnett (2011) conducted interviews and focus groups with eleven

members of staff involved in one-to-one treatment of sex offenders. Potential issues relating to intrusive cognitions were identified within this small sample, which are comparable to the ruminative vulnerability identified by Clarke and Roger (2007). Consequences that appeared more prevalent amongst those conducting one-to-one work included a greatly increased sense of personal responsibility for a positive treatment outcome.

2.6: Prison masculinities, identity and intersectionality

Masculinities, prison and crime

The conceptual framework of masculinities has been applied in diverse contexts to consider issues of gender and identity. Hegemonic masculinity and the various forms of non-hegemonic, subordinate masculinities represent a range of ways in which men can conceptualise their own identities. Whilst the shifting nature of the relevant social discourses makes an exact definition problematic, 'hegemonic masculinity' can be taken to refer to dominant socially desirable characteristics in any given cultural or historical context. Connell (2005) lists education, health, violence (including sexual violence), fathering and counselling as key areas of applied research where a consideration of constructed masculinity may be of relevance. Research on masculinities in the context of prison is currently limited, and work focusing specifically on sex offenders is even more so although there are some examples of work in this area. For example, Cowburn (1998) contrasts the different ways in which constructions of masculinity impact on the experiences of male and female staff delivering sex offender treatment. Marzano et al. (2009) consider contemporary constructions of fatherhood, and how these operate in the context of the prison system (as well as in fathers' rights organisations, and in the military). Evans and Wallace (2008) utilise narrative analysis of interviews with nine male prisoners, and identify three distinct ways in which participants engaged with notions of hegemonic masculinity: acceptable and normalization, prior acceptance but later transformation and softening, and definition of identity outside of hegemonic norms.

Messerschmitt (2001) considers the ways in which masculinities and crime are socially constructed in the context of prison, paying particular attention to social context and the ways in which power relations can lead to hierarchical social structures amongst prisoners

and staff. The importance of affirming masculinity is described as being contingent on particular social situations. Thus any definition of hegemonic masculinity can potentially vary across social, historical or cultural contexts. Given that masculinity may sometimes be more salient than at others, there may therefore be some situations where there is a relatively greater need to assert masculinity. Crime, it is argued, can at these times, perform the task of reasserting threatened masculinity. Sykes and Cullen (1992) describe a form of 'inmate hegemonic masculinity' that can dominate within the context of prison, and defined in terms of self-reserve, restraint, toughness emotional balance and loyalty'. Given the importance of context in determining the ways in which specific masculinities are socially negotiated it is important to note that this is in reference to the American prison system, and that any equivalent definition of hegemonic prison masculinity in a British context may vary. Moreover, the definition provides an overarching picture of hegemonic masculinity in prison, and thus does not distinguish between the different ways in which identity is negotiated across the different social contexts within prison. Thus masculinity may well be constructed or asserted to different degrees amongst prisoners on a wing, between staff and prisoners in the context of a group treatment room, or amongst staff in a wing office.

There are several psychological theories that can provide a framework for understanding how individual men come to identify with either hegemonic or non-hegemonic masculinities. Role-based theories are historically one important way in which masculinity and femininity have been investigated in psychological terms. For example, Pleck (1981) conceptualises sex roles as being defined by external social expectations. The theory attempts to explain conformity and non-conformity with hegemonic conceptions of masculinity, and the experience of dissonance, or 'male sex-role strain', that can come about when social expectations are violated. Criticisms of role theories include an implicit underplaying of diversity amongst men and amongst women, overplaying the role of biological determinism, and not providing sufficient accounts of power relations or social cognition (Connell, 1987; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Positioning Theory (Davies & Harré, 1998), in contrast, places greater emphasis on the importance of social cognition in combination with individual thinking. The process by which a group of people jointly and cooperatively construct a narrative of that group's shared history is said to impact on how individuals conceptualise their identities, and the behaviours that they feel are expected of them, relative to hegemonic identities. This contrasts with role theories in that 'positions'

are conceptualised as taking far better account of power relations between social groups, and as being far more fluid than 'roles'. Thus, Positioning Theory allows for hegemonic masculinity to be something that can readily change over time and across different social or cultural contexts, and thus avoids one of the criticisms that have been levelled at role theories (e.g. Jackson, 1998).

Segal (1990) lays emphasis on the importance of situating constructions of male identity within a fluctuating historical context. She identifies this consideration of historical processes as something that is missing in psychoanalytic conceptions of sexual identity. Turning specifically to Lacanian analysis, Segal points to the importance placed on linguistics, making the case that this ignores the possibility of radical transformation over time in the way in which masculinity is socially constructed. Shifting power relations between men and women in different social contexts, as well as membership of other social groups (such as class, gender, ethnicity and sexuality) are both noted as key factors in determining any transformation. It should be noted that the historical account of shifting masculinities expounded by Segal is prefaced by a strong criticism of psychological attempts to investigate sex differences and gender roles. The positivist attempts to quantify and measure degrees of femininity or masculinity are described as being potentially circular and based upon the flawed assumptions that gender roles are distinct and stable. The critique of such approaches may hold some weight, but perhaps as a consequence of the historical and academic context within which she was writing Segal is working with a narrow definition of the 'psychological' that does not take account of more ideographic and qualitative methodologies, which are less susceptible to the problems of the nomothetic approaches that she is criticising. Moreover, theoretical perspectives such as Positioning Theory (Davies & Harré, 1998) provide a framework for understanding male identity whilst moving beyond the issues with Role Theory that Segal and others highlight.

Gay and Bisexual Men

Theories of intersectionality concern the ways in which multiple overlapping social identities co-exist and affect one another, potentially compounding mechanisms of oppression. For example, Crenshaw (1991) and Collins (2002) focus on the intersection between gender and ethnicity in an American context. The interactions between other types of group membership, including disability (e.g. Meyer, 2002) and sexuality (e.g.

Monro & Richardson, 2010), have also been integrated into the theory. Of the multiple specific intersections possible there are some that are of particular relevance here. Of most relevance to the current study are the intersections of masculinity with sexuality, ethnicity or disability. The ways in which these intersections operate in specific contexts, for example for incarcerated sexual offenders, will also be considered.

Segal (1990) provides a broad historical account of the intersection between masculinities and other social identities. As with her general account of masculinities, this is framed within the context of shifting power relations over time, and also draws on the social constructivist approaches of Foucault (1978) and Weeks (1977). This approach involves the ideas that social labels are not necessarily immutable and static. It is on this basis that a distinction is made by Weeks (1977) between 'homosexual behaviour' and 'homosexual identity', the latter only said to be coming into being (and leading to the emergence of a social sub-culture) once there was a shared understanding of the term. Social, legal and medical discourses of 'homosexuality' during the latter half of the nineteenth century are described as uniting to place gay men firmly outside of then hegemonic conceptions of masculinity and the closely associated ideals of family (e.g. Marshall, 1981). The situation during the first half of the twentieth century is characterised as more complex. Weeks (1977) describes the growing formation of a more stable collective identity, although one that is still devalued and stigmatised. Conducting interviews during the 1970s with elderly gay men Marshall (1981) identified a recurring theme of ongoing ambiguity up to the 1950s regarding the adoption of 'homosexual' as part of their identities.

The latter half of the twentieth century is again characterised by directly conflicting discourses. Growing calls for legal and social reform during the 1950s and 1960s are set against a context of notable moral panics over homosexuality, for example the rise of McCarthyism in America (D'Emilio & Freedman, 1988). Segal (1990) notes that whilst these conflicts and power relations served to maintain the status quo regarding the lesser status of gay men in society, there was also a wider process by which they also regulated what was acceptable behaviour for men and women in general. Thus hegemonic masculinity during this period was in part defined in terms of what was undesirable (i.e. femininity and homosexuality) as opposed to what was desirable. During the 1970s growing political movements in both America and Western Europe began to explicitly question traditional gender roles. Segal (1990) cites the Gay Liberation Front in the UK as one example of this.

Whilst these developments took place several years prior to data collection for the current study, this historical context may still be of importance when exploring the lived experience of participants. Given an increasing number of older prisoners (section 2.2), as well as the fact that the number of imprisoned sex offenders has been growing faster than the prison population as a whole in recent years, it was expected that there would be older prisoners within the sample recruited for study 1.

Physically Disabled Men

In reviewing the then existing work on gender and disability, Shakespeare et al. (1996) indicate a relative lack of phenomenological work focusing on disability and masculinity (as compared to academic work investigating the lived experiences of disabled women). They draw a distinction here between research involving male participants, and that which seeks to explore the specific subjective experiences of men. Similar gaps in previous research are also identified in relation to multiple overlapping identities (such as the experiences of gay and lesbian disabled people, and BME disabled men and women). In reviewing dominant discourses of disability and sexuality (and from the testimony of their own participants) Shakespeare et al. (1996) note that disabled men and women are often characterised as asexual. For example, Shakespeare et al. (1996) report the experiences of disabled heterosexual men who see themselves as being perceived as sexually 'safe' and incapable of violence towards women. Alongside this perception of asexuality is a seemingly contradictory perception of abnormal or deviant sexuality being associated with disabled people.

A key conflict between hegemonic masculinity and dominant discourses of 'disability' is that the former is traditionally characterised by independence and power, whereas the latter is connected with a state of helplessness and dependence (Morris, 1991; Shuttleworth, R. et al., 2012). Gerschick & Miller (1995) draw on data from a sample of ten disabled men to identify three common ways in which this apparent conflict might be resolved. Some participants went to great lengths to adhere to hegemonic masculine ideals, such as going out of their way to demonstrate sexual potency. Other participants either reformulated these ideals (with varying degrees of ultimate success), or rejected them outright. In terms of other aspects of identity, Shakespeare et al. (1996) identify a common experience amongst their participants of 'coming out' as disabled, which can

involve both social and political elements as individuals begin to identify more strongly with a wider community of disabled people, and start to see disability in terms of political oppression (in line with the social model outlined in section 2.1). The prison environment could potentially have an important effect on these processes. For example, if disability is viewed as as aspect of identity that is determined by the social and physical environment, then feelings of powerlessness or passivity are likely to impact on the degree to which individuals are able to identify with a masculine identity predicated on feelings of power and efficacy.

Older Prisoners

Based on interviews with male prisoners aged 65-84, conducted over two years across four establishments, Crawley & Sparks (2006) identify a range of issues reported by older male prisoners. As well as general difficulties with daily prison life and physical isolation from family, they report issues that relate to identity (such as taking on the status of 'prisoner', or the loss of a stable life narrative) as well as some that also represent direct threats to aspects of hegemonic masculinity (such as losing the role of a protector). The same study covered issues of resettlement, and identified that this was understandably a particular concern for those who had committed sexual offences, given increased difficulties with being able to seek support from friends or family. The notion of 'spoiled identity' is described as something that not only affects interactions with other prisoners and staff, but also participants' internalised beliefs about themselves.

Sex Offenders in Prison

Just as the interaction between hegemonic masculinity and other aspects of identity has shifted over place and times the social context within which these interactions operate is also of importance. For convicted and incarcerated sexual offenders, additional labels such as 'offender', 'rapist' or 'sex offender' (as well as more pejorative terms, such as 'nonce') will need to be integrated with the other overlapping aspects of identity discussed above, or rejected. In some cases, status as a sexual offender may be internalised whilst other aspects of identity are not. For example, amongst men who have raped men the majority of offenders do not identify as gay or homosexual (Nicholas & Burgess, 1980). Given the discussion above about the constantly shifting relationship between hegemonic

masculinities and other aspects of identity it is important to note the historical and cultural context of these findings. The separate issue of sexual assaults committed by men against men in prison represents yet another intersection of overlapping personal identities, structured within a rigidly hierarchical power structure. For example, Knowles (2002) concludes that sexual assaults in American prisons not only touch on issues of masculinity, sexuality and power, but also have a notable ethnic element, with the majority of assaults considered characterised as being perpetrated by black prisoners against white prisoners.

Group dynamics and power relations

The multiple ways in which aspects of an individual's identity might be negotiated and understood have been considered above, with particular reference to masculinities. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1969) is an additional theoretical framework through which identity in the context of prison can been understood, with greater reference to the dynamics that operate within and between salient social groups. In the context of the wider prison perhaps the most salient group identities are of 'prisoner' and 'staff' (a dichotomous division that is mirrored in the structure of the current programme of study). It may however be useful to consider the more nuanced ways in which group dynamics and social identity may operate in prison, and in the specific context of SOTP. SIT in its original form may not have necessarily been applicable to small interactive groups. However, Hogg (2006) notes that the dynamics *within* small groups have since received greater attention, and that there is now a basis for using the principles of the approach to understand complex interactions that go beyond macro-level in-group / out-group dynamics. As noted in section 2.5, staff working in a prison by no means represent a homogenous or even entirely cohesive group. Important distinctions exist in terms of job role, and other aspects of identity such as gender, all of which can determine how individuals see themselves, how they are seen by others, and the nature of interactions they experience with others. Thus, whilst 'staff' may indeed be a generally salient part of an individuals' identity, other aspects may become salient in specific contexts (such as an officer delivering interventions being viewed negatively by her colleagues). For prisoners, there are also multiple ways in which different aspects of social identity may be more salient. Again, this may be context specific, with different social dynamics evident when interacting with other prisoners in general, prisoners convicted of a similar offence, officers on the wing, or non-uniformed staff in therapeutic roles.

Closely related to issues of group dynamics (and also cutting across masculinities and identity) are the wider sociological characteristics of 'prisoner society'. Crewe (2009) uses this term to refer to the unique power dynamics and social norms that operate within prison, and explores the subjective, lived experience of prisoners at a specific establishment. This incorporates the ways in which power is deployed by the prison institution itself, and the ways in which prisoners experience and make sense of this. There is also a consideration of dynamic processes of adaptation, and the ways in which pre-existing aspects of identity and cognition are altered in the context of prison. This has particular relevance to the research question in the current programme of study focusing on how prisoners perceive their own identity. Finally, Crewe's work also incorporates an analysis of the social dynamics that arise as a result of these adaptations. Whilst these are framed in terms of prison as a whole, it may be instructive to evaluate their applicability in the specific context of sex offender treatment, and to consider whether the intra-group dynamics between prisoners attending treatment conform to or contrast with those previously observed in the wider prison.

2.7: Conclusion

The literature presented in this chapter constitutes a non-systematic, exploratory review. Thus, the rationale outlined in section 1.4 is placed within a wider context. The overall area of interest has been identified as an exploration of how convicted sex offenders and the staff who work with them experience diversity and responsivity issues in the context of prison-based Core SOTP.

There is evidence that some male sex offenders from BME groups are failing to engage with the various forms of SOTP, and that they may have some distinct needs that are not always met when they do access treatment (e.g. Cowburn et al., 2008; HM Prison Service, 2007). Relatively little empirical academic work has been conducted with gay, bisexual and physically disabled sex offenders. The large number of sex offenders who may be part of one or both of these last two populations means that it is important to explore the possibility of similar issues regarding lack of engagement, and distinct issues faced during treatment.

Treatment style has also been found to correlate with positive outcomes for prisoners on the SOTP (e.g. Beech, et al., 1998; Blanchard, 1995; Salter, 1988). One important aspect of treatment style is the ability to respond to diversity issues promptly and appropriately (OBPU, 2000); this is something that SOTP facilitators are evaluated on by local supervisors and national auditors (Perkins et al., 1998). By addressing knowledge gaps regarding the needs of particular sub-populations, the current study has the potential to inform training and practice for staff. Study 1 will relate to the experiences of prisoners, and will explore:

→ How do sex offenders from minority groups experience engagement with the Core SOTP in prison?

→ How do they construct and maintain potential multiple identities, and how do these overlap or interact?

The intended focus of this study is that of specific responsivity, and the specific sub-populations to be investigated in this study are gay and bisexual men, physically disabled men, and BME men.

Staff are themselves a diverse group. As well as receiving training on issues such as cultural and religious issues, it is possible that a staff member's own identity may be relevant in determining the nature of the therapeutic relationship with their clients. For example, there is evidence that gender does play an important role in determining the nature of prisoner-staff interactions, as well some aspects of facilitator wellbeing. Study 2 will therefore focus on the experiences of staff, and will move beyond a focus on the experiences of specific groups in order introduce a broader focus that encapsulates general responsivity in order to address the research question:

→ How do staff delivering the Core SOTP experience diversity and responsivity issues when working with sex offenders?

An additional reason for conducting research in this area is promoting compliance with the variety of laws, rules and guidelines that stress the importance of being responsive to the needs of minority groups. These include: the Equalities Act, 2010; the Human Rights Act, 1998; the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995; the publicly stated principles of HM Prison Service to 'Promote diversity, equality of opportunity and combat unlawful discrimination'

(Ministry of Justice, 2012a); internal audit requirements (OBPU, 2000); and the British Psychological Society Code of Conduct (BPS, 2009). This study therefore explores compliance with these rules and codes, and aims to identify best practice in terms of treatment style.

Finally, theories of masculinities and the concept of intersectionality provide a useful conceptual framework for considering issues of contested and overlapping identities for the various sub-populations discussed. This focus on identity is also appropriate given that the influence of the Good Lives Model means that the idea of positive life narratives (moving from 'old me' to 'new me') is something that prisoners who participate in SOTP will already be familiar with. Inviting them to discuss these issues in the context of the current research, with a focus on identity, will therefore allow them to build on the reflection and work begun on SOTP.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, a research strategy comprised of two linked studies is outlined. Given the variation in how analysis and case integration are conducted in some Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009) studies, the precise analytical procedure adopted in the current studies is outlined. Aspects of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (van Dijk, 2001) have also been drawn upon, and the ways in which this has been applied alongside IPA are discussed. The theoretical foundations of IPA are considered.

3.1: Overview of research design

Based on the literature reviewed in previous chapters, a broad area of interest and three more specific research questions have been established (section 2.7). Two of these specific research questions pertain to the experiences of prisoners from specific minority groups who have completed an SOTP programme, and one to the experiences of staff with experience of delivering sex offender treatment. Structuring the programme of research as two studies was felt to have several benefits. Given that issues of responsivity during treatment involve interactions between staff and prisoners, considering the experiences of both groups allows for triangulation and the identification of common experiences. In this way each study can be considered in isolation, but important additional insights may be gained when the findings from each are viewed alongside one another. This may relate not just to point of congruence, but also to the potentially distinct ways in which each sample experiences the same phenomena.

Study 1 involved the qualitative analysis of interviews with prisoners who had attended Core SOTP, and study 2 used a similar methodology to analyse interviews with staff who had delivered the programme. Ten prisoner participants were drawn from a single prison, whilst a slightly larger sample of fourteen staff were recruited from a number of establishments. A qualitative and idiographic approach was deemed appropriate given the limited existing research relating to the wide variety of diversity issues in the specific context of SOTP. The lack of comprehensive empirical work mitigates against a more nomothetic approach, and suggests an exploratory one. Conversely, a pure grounded theory approach was also deemed to be inappropriate as this would fail to fully draw on

useful existing data. For example, there has been some work in this area with regard to sub-populations such as BME prisoners, and there are also well established theoretical frameworks that may be highly relevant (for example, in the areas of masculinities, and social identity outlined in the previous chapter).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009) was chosen as the methodology best suited to balancing these concerns. IPA allows for an exploratory method of analysis that can produce unanticipated findings in a novel area of study, but which also explicitly acknowledges existing knowledge. IPA has previously been used in a variety of studies involving similar populations, including the exploration of lived experiences of sex offenders. Blagden et al. (2011) conducted semi-structured interviews with 11 convicted sex offenders, focusing on their experiences of maintaining and leaving a state of denial. In justifying the choice of methodology they highlight the ability of IPA to acknowledge the active role played a researcher, as well as to go beyond a simple consideration of language and to focus on the subjective experiences of participants. These two reasons for selecting IPA as the method of analysis also hold for the current study. Given that the researcher has previously facilitated SOTP, there are strong reasons for favouring a methodology that acknowledges the role that the prior experience of a researcher plays, and for paying particular attention to reflexive practice (an area that is considered in depth in chapter 9). As noted by Smith et al., (2009) IPA avoids an overly prescriptive analytic process. Analysis is instead guided by key processes that have their origins in the method's theoretical and philosophical underpinnings (see section 3.6). Thus, the foundations of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and ideography necessitate what Smith et al. (2009) describe as the defining features of IPA; the processes of gradually moving from individual experience to shared experiences of phenomena, and the 'double hermeneutic' involved in moving from the phenomenological to the interpretative, as well as a strong focus on how participants make sense of the world around them.

Amendments to the research design

Additional studies were considered for inclusion, but were not part of the final design. A study focusing on the experiences of prisoners who were eligible for the Core SOTP, but

who did not engage was one such example. Whilst this may have added valuable insight as to the reasons why particular minority groups were under-represented on SOTP, there were both practical and methodological reasons for not conducting this study. Prisoners who chose not to engage with treatment were expected to be relatively hard to recruit as research participants as compared to those who had engaged with treatment. In methodological terms, whilst a control group may have been important if a quantitative approach had been taken it was not required given the qualitative and idiographic approach that was adopted.

Similarly, a quantitative survey designed to capture the attitudes and behaviours of a larger sample of staff was considered. Again, this was felt to extend beyond directly addressing the stated area of interest, and to constitute a significant and separate piece of work. There is the potential for such a survey to provide valuable insights and to have its design be closely informed by the findings from the current research. As such, the potential design of a staff survey is briefly considered in the conclusion of this thesis in the context of avenues for further research (section 10.2).

3.2: Participants

Study 1

Table 3.2.i. Participant characteristics for study 1 (prisoners)

Participant	Ethnicity	Sexual orientation	Physical disability	SOTP version
P1	Black	Bisexual	No	Core 2011
P2	White	Gay[7]	No	Core 2000, Extended
P3	White British	Straight	Yes[8]	Core 2000
P4	White British	Straight	Yes	Core 2000
P5	White	Straight	No	Core 2011
P6	Black African	Heterosexual	No	Core 2000
P7	White	Gay	No	Core 2011
P8	White English	Bisexual	Yes	Core 2000
P9	Mixed – White / Black Caribbean	Straight	No	Core 2000
P10	White Irish, White British[9]	Gay, Heterosexual, Bisexual[10]	Yes	Core 2011

Ten adult male sex offenders who had participated in Core SOTP, and who self-identified with at least one of the three specified sub-populations (black and minority ethnic (BME), gay or bisexual, and physically disabled) were recruited at a single London prison (Prison A). As self-identification with a minority group (rather than independent assessment) was being used as a criterion for inclusion, staff at the establishment who had delivered SOTP were consulted in order to establish which prisoners to approach. A search of prisoner records would not necessarily have identified all potential participants. For example, data relating to sexual orientation is not routinely available for individual prisoners (Ministry of

---

[7] P2 self-identified as 'homosexual' rather than 'gay'.

[8] P3 did discuss coping with physical disability, but elsewhere in his interview this label is also explicitly rejected.

[9] P10 provided both answers, and explained how he felt about each label in the context of British and Irish political history.

[10] P10 was reluctant to identify with a single group, and described identifying his orientation differently in different contexts.

Justice, 2015a). No restriction was placed on how recently participants had completed the programme, or where. In all but one case (P2), SOTP had been completed at the establishment where the participants were interviewed. It was not required that the sexual offence should be the participant's current index offence. An attempt was made to recruit an equal number of participants from each of the three minority populations, although given the small nature of the target populations (and the fact that some participants identified with more than one of the three specified groups) it was acknowledged that this might be impractical. Participant characteristics are summarised in Table 3.2.i.

Local staff assisted with the identification of potential prisoner participants and with inviting them to participate in the study. The researcher first met with staff to discuss the study and pass on materials to potential participants. The rationale of the study and a brief account of what would be required was also given verbally at this time. Staff were made aware that prisoners would be invited to participate based on their self-identification with particular demographic groups. They were able to identify potential prisoner participants from the SOTP groups that they had facilitated, as this therapeutic contact would have provided opportunities to become aware of how individual prisoners self-identified. At least one week after being initially approached by staff and being given a chance to review an information sheet, potential potential participants were seen by the researcher. In each case, the potential participant's understanding of the what participation would involve was explored. The nature of the research was again explained verbally and prisoners were given an opportunity to ask any further questions before being invited to sign a consent form and participate. A process of snowball sampling, or 'respondent-driven sampling' (Heckathron, 1997) was also employed. Thus, after being fully debriefed, each participant was asked if they knew of other offenders who would be willing to be interviewed.

Table 3.2.ii. Participant characteristics for study 2 (staff)

Participant	Gender	Establishment	Interview type
S1	Female	Prison A	Face to face
S2	Female	Prison A	Face to face
S3	Female	Prison A	Face to face
S4	Female	Prison A	Face to face
S5	Male	Prison A (and B)[11]	Face to face
S6	Female	Prison A	Face to face
S7	Female	Prison A	Phone
S8	Male	Prison A	Phone
S9	Female	Other	Phone
S10	Female	Prison B	Phone
S11	Female	Prison B	Phone
S12	Female	Other	Phone
S13	Male	Prison B	Face to face
S14	Female	Other	Phone

Fourteen members of staff with experience of delivering Core SOTP and other variants of the programme were recruited from a variety of sources. All staff interviewed were non-uniformed psychological staff, and there were no officer facilitators within the sample[12]. Initially, all members of staff at Prison A (the same establishment where prisoners were interviewed) were invited to participate. Six members of staff working at Prison A were interviewed in person. Two of the members of staff working at Prison A who agreed to participate were not available to be interviewed when the researcher was conducting field work. These staff members were instead interviewed on the phone. Staff participants were also recruited via a second establishment (Prison B) in the South Central region that the researcher had previously worked at. All of the participants recruited via Prison B were former colleagues. Relevant issues relating to dual relationships are considered in chapter 9 (section 9.4). All of the participants from Prison B were interviewed via phone, except for

---

[11] S5 had also previously worked at Prison B, but at the time of the interview was working at Prison A.

[12] This lack of uniformed staff amongst the sample reflects the make-up of the workforce at Prison A, where the relatively small number of uniformed staff working in the area of interventions were involved at a more operational level, rather than with the delivery of interventions.

one who was able to be interviewed in person. Finally, three additional participants were recruited from a range of establishments across the country, with all of these interviews being conducted via phone. Participant characteristics are summarised in Table 3.2.ii, including information on method of interview and establishment. All staff participants self-identified as heterosexual and as white. No staff participants considered themselves to have a physical disability.

3.3: Materials

Study 1

A detailed schedule was prepared in order to guide semi-structured interviews with participants. This was designed following a literature review, and took into account the researcher's previous experiences of working with the client group. Three versions of this schedule were produced, each one tailored for one of the specific minority groups being considered. Some items were developed by synthesising and refining questions covered in previous qualitative research on diversity issues and SOTP (e.g. in Lord & Patel, 2000). In most cases these questions were not reproduced exactly. Instead they were often reworded using alternative terminology or restructured. This was done to ensure that questions were as clear and open as possible, and to tie in with the aims and research questions of the current study.

For example, the following question posed by Lord and Patel (2000) was one that was taken as a starting point for one of the most important questions on the final interview:

- In what ways, if any, were race and culture an issue on the SOTP?

Whilst this question is clearly of direct relevance to the current research question it was felt that it could potentially be rephrased in order to avoid the danger of being leading (by itself explicitly raising the possibly that issues may have existed). At an early stage it was therefore reworded as two separate questions - the first being more open:

- What were your experiences of SOTP?

- What issues, if any, did you encounter on the SOTP?

After more refinement the final item on the schedule appeared as follows, with several additional prompts added (main question in bold):

- **What was your experience of SOTP overall?**

  Good experiences? Any issues or difficulties?

  What did you feel that you brought to the group?

  What did the group bring to you? What did you take from the group?

  In what ways, if any, were your (ethnicity/disability/sexual orientation) an issue?

Additional items on the schedule were developed in order to fully explore the research questions (Appendix A). The schedule was refined in consultation with supervisors before being submitted for internal and external ethical approval. It was organised into three sections, with sets of questions and prompts covering the following areas:

1. Engaging with treatment
2. Experiences of treatment
3. Identity

The ordering of these sections was partly determined by a desire to achieve a natural flow from one section to the next (and an attempt to encourage a narrative account that moved from initial engagement to experiences of the intervention itself). However, in designing the schedule the greater determinant of structure was the need to build rapport before approaching potentially more complex or sensitive topics. Balancing these two concerns is consistent with Langdridge's (2007) on constructing an interviewer for phenomenological research. The section relating to engagement began with a question about how participants had heard about the programme, and therefore did not immediately focus on personal information or experiences. Questions relating to identity were placed at the end of the schedule. This was done so that participants would have more time to build rapport with the interviewer before being asked to reflect on how they perceived their own identities and the ways in which this might affect their experiences of treatment.

In developing an interview schedule for staff participants (Appendix B) the following structure was adopted:

1. Working in the field
2. Experiences of delivering SOTP
3. Identity

This structure again allowed for the building of rapport before approaching more complex issues. For example, under the section 'Working in the field' the first question related to how staff had come to work in their current role. This closely paralleled the question to prisoners about how they had come to participate in the programme, inviting a descriptive response that allowed participants to begin to establish a chronological narrative account, but did not demand a high degree of introspection or reflection. Where appropriate, some questions and prompts were carried over from the schedule for study 1, although many distinct points where included in the schedule for staff participants in order to ensure that the interview best explored the experiences of this particular sample. The design of the two studies and the specified research questions also meant that materials for study 2 required a greater focus on issues of responsivity in general, rather than the experiences of specific minority groups. This was reflected in the section 'Experiences of delivering SOTP', with staff questioned about their experiences of managing responsivity issues within the group, rather than being part of a minority group that may have distinct needs (as was explored with prisoner participants). It was also acknowledged aspects of their own identity may still have been important to participants. The final section, 'Identity', allowed for more exploration of how this may have affected both their experiences of treatment and of working in prison in general.

3.4: Procedure

Study 1

The first two prisoner participants were interviewed at Prison A in May 2012. After a break in data collection[13], a further eight prisoner participants were interviewed at the same location between June 2013 and February 2014 inclusive. The majority of prisoners were seen in an area of the prison designed for legal visits. These rooms allowed for a degree of privacy (for example, doors could be closed) although large gaps at the tops of the walls meant that they rooms were not acoustically isolated. Officers patrolled the corridor, and would occasionally pass by a large window between the room and the corridor. At times when neighbouring rooms were in use, the lack of sound insulation could mean that there was some ambient noise. This was not sufficiently loud to cause problems with recording and transcription, although there is a possibility that it may have impacted on the way in which participants experienced the interview[14]. As interviews progressed and the issue with ambient noise was identified, the researcher inquired about the use of an alternative room. A side room was then used for the majority of the later interviews. This side room was intended for use for video conferencing, and was therefore quieter (even when other rooms were in use). It was located adjacent to a staff office, and patrolling officers were still able to conduct occasional visual inspections. On two occasions, disruption to normal prison movements meant that prisoners could not be transferred to legal visits. When this occurred, the researcher was instead escorted to the wing and was able to interview prisoners in rooms used by Psychology staff when delivering interventions (one of these was a small interview room, and other was a larger room used for groups interventions, including SOTP).

Prisoner participants were provided with information sheets prior to the interview (via staff who were assisting with recruitment). The content of this was verbally reviewed before the interview began. This ensured that they understood the nature of the research, what they were being asked to contribute, and how their data would be handled. The interviewer's status as an external researcher, as opposed to a member of staff at the establishment,

---

[13] Changes in staff at Prison A caused a delay with data collection. For more information on this please see section 9.3.

[14] See section 9.3 for further details from field notes completed after one such interview.

was also clarified. An opportunity was provided for participants to ask any further questions before proceeding with the interview. At this stage, participants were reminded that interviews would be recorded and then later transcribed. Recording began once a consent form had been signed, and the interview then proceeded based on the interview schedule (Appendix A). As a semi-structured (Langridge, 2007) approach to data collection had been adopted, the researcher employed some flexibility regarding the precise order in which questions were asked, and also allowed some space for participants to discuss topics not directly mentioned in the schedule, but which were judged to be relevant to the wider area of interest and appeared to be of particular importance to participants. This was balanced against an attempt to adopt a consistent approach with each interview, and to ensure that all relevant sections of the schedule were covered. At the end of the interview participants were given the chance to add additional comments, or go back and clarify anything they had already said. Following this, a debrief was conducted to remind participants of what would now happen to their data, and to address any welfare issues raised. Each interview varied in length between approximately 60 and 120 minutes, not including time taken to obtain consent or to debrief.

Study 2

The fourteen staff participants were interviewed between May and December 2013 inclusive. As noted in Table 3.2.ii, 8 participants were working at Prison A at the time of data collection, with a further 3 participants having experience of delivering SOTP at Prison B [15], and another 3 participants having experience of delivering SOTP at other establishments across the country. For the staff at Prison A who were seen in person, interviews were conducted in the same area of the prison as for prisoner participants (legal visits). However, all staff seen here were interviewed in the side room used for video conferencing. As with study 1, written consent was obtained from participants before beginning recording and starting the interview, and a debrief was conducted once the interview schedule had been covered. One participant with experience of delivering SOTP at Prison B (but who had since left the Prison Service) was also interviewed in person at his current place of work in London. A meeting room was used for this interview, and the same

---

[15] Not counting the member of staff who had moved from Prison B to Prison A.

procedure for obtaining consent, conducting and recording the interview and debriefing was adopted.

For most remaining participants, interviews were conducted via phone. Recording began prior to the introductory discussion to confirm consent, but this was highlighted to participants. Rather than obtaining written consent, the content of the information sheet and consent form was read to participants, they were given an opportunity to ask any questions, and were then asked to verbally confirm that they were willing to proceed. In other respects, phone interviews did not differ from those conducted in person. The same semi-structured approach to addressing all points within the schedule was adopted, and a debrief was conducted once the interview had been concluded. All interviews with staff lasted approximately 45 to 80 minutes, not including time taken to confirm consent or to conduct a debrief.

3.5: Analysis

Within the guiding principles of IPA, there is a degree of flexibility as to how the analysis is actually conducted and presented (Reid et al., 2005). Individual researchers have themselves either altered the way in which they conduct and present IPA, or have taken the position that the method of application will vary depending on discipline, subject matter and the nature of the individual study. For example, Smith (2008) describes a method of case integration that contrasts with the revised method that he advocates in subsequently published methodological chapters (e.g. Smith et al., 2009). Given the potential variation in the method of application, this section will briefly review some alternative methods of free-coding, case integration, identification of themes, presentation of phenomenological accounts and higher order interpretative analysis. The most appropriate approach at each stage will be identified and justified. The six stages of the analytic process described by Smith et al. (2009) are as follows: reading and re-reading, initial noting, developing emergent themes, searching for connections across emergent themes, moving to the next case, and looking for patterns across cases. They also describe an additional seventh stage concerned with a deeper level of analysis going beyond the purely descriptive.

Stage one

The reading and re-reading of a single interview transcript is highlighted as an important means of keeping the analysis focused on the participant, and of actively engaging with the data. In the current study the data were transcribed and then re-read soon after the interview had taken place. This was done so that any important details regarding body language or the context of the interview not present in field notes could be recorded. This meant that analysis began before all interviews had been conducted. Engaging with the data immediately allowed for the most accurate and detailed accounts of participants' experiences to be recorded. A decision was also made to not use transcription services so that contextual information could be added where it was felt to be relevant, and also because it was felt that the process of transcription would itself be an important means of engaging with the data. Transcripts did not include the level of detail required for methods of analysis such as conversation analysis (for example, the exact length of pauses was not recorded). Instead, there was a focus on accurately recording the linguistic (rather than paralinguistic) data central to the chosen method of analysis. An effort was made to include all false starts, and hesitations for both interviewer and participants in order to provide a reflection of the structure of actual conversation.

Stage two

The second stage of analysis, initial noting, is described as 'close to being a free textual analysis' and a process of exploratory free-coding. It is broken down into descriptive comments, linguistic comments and conceptual comments. As such, detailed notes covering each of these areas were added to the transcripts within NVivo. In practice, this step overlapped with step 1, in that notes began to be added during the process of reading and re-reading transcripts. Descriptive and linguistic comments tended to be added initially, with more interpretative and conceptual comments added later as the data became increasingly familiar and it began to be possible to ask questions, make theoretical links, and draw inferences that went beyond a literal and descriptive account.

Stage three

The third stage, developing emergent themes, is a process described as involving a shift in focus from the transcript itself to the initial notes. As such, the notes from the previous stage of analysis were reviewed. Where appropriate relevant sections of text surround an annotation were identified and associated with a theme label that broadly characterised the meaning of the note. These initial themes reflected the nature of the notes they were based on. As such descriptive or linguistic notes often meant that a direct quote was adopted as a theme label. For example, 'opening the door' was a phrase highlighted during initial noting, and then adopted as an ordinate theme label (section 4.2). In contrast, conceptual notes tended to produce theme labels that suggested a relatively greater emphasis on interpretation based on pre-existing theory. For example, the term 'hyper masculinity' appeared in initial noting even though it was not routinely used by participants, and then appeared in a theme label (section 6.2).

Stage four

The fourth stage of analysis involves establishing connections across themes and establishing a meaningful structure within which they can be presented. The method of integration is emphasised as being non-prescriptive and multiple ways to establish patterns and connections are highlighted. These include abstraction (finding patterns across themes, so that they can be clustered under broader super-ordinate themes), subsumption (an existing emergent theme acquiring the status of a super-ordinate theme), polarization (identifying oppositional relationships amongst emergent themes, such as the positive and negative aspects of a particular experience), contextualization (making reference to time and place, or the narratives that participants construct), numeration (the frequency with which a theme is supported by citations within the data), and function (higher order interpretation that considers the purpose that a participant's meaning making may serve). The methods of integration drawn on most heavily in the current analysis to produce a phenomenological account of participants' experiences were processes of abstraction and subsumption. Emergent themes were grouped together and, where appropriate, combined into more general superordinate themes. In order to ensure that these combined themes were internally consistent and were not losing too many of the nuances from the original data all of the extracts falling under a theme were regularly reviewed.

Aspects of polarisation and contextualization were drawn on to a lesser degree, and numeration was used to refine the internal structure of super-ordinate themes (with frequency of representation noted in the relevant figures throughout chapters 4 and 6). A higher order examination of function was also incorporated, and is given greater attention in the discussion chapters for each study.

Stages five and six

The fifth and sixth steps involve looking for patterns across cases, and allow some freedom for different methods of case integration. Rather than attempt to fully analyse each case in isolation, it was acknowledged that the theme labels from the first analysed transcript could influence the theme labels established in the analysis of the second transcript. This meant that when analysing additional cases theme labels from previous cases were often used. The potential problem of imposing a pre-existing structure on the later cases was ameliorated by only doing this where very closely related experiences and concepts were being identified, by remaining open to revising and differentiating the theme label if appropriate evidence emerged elsewhere in the transcript, and remaining cognisant of differences between cases even when assigning the same theme label. For example, during the initial coding of transcripts for P1 issues of peer support within an SOTP group began to emerge. Closely related issues also emerged during the initial coding of a subsequent cases, such as P3 and P5. However, each of these participants talked about support in distinct ways. Rather than subsuming all these experiences under one theme of 'peer' support (and potentially obscuring valuable nuances and variation) the descriptive and conceptual notes were consulted throughout the process of case integration in order to distinguish appropriate theme labels that captured the distinct forms of peer support that participants described.

The additional step of going beyond a purely descriptive and phenomenological analysis was carried through each of the stages discussed. As such, emphasis was placed on making numerous conceptual notes at stage two. Themes identified and developed at steps three and four retained and developed this interpretative focus by making inferences (with clear roots in the data) whilst also drawing on relevant theoretical models and empirical evidence.

3.6: IPA: Theoretical background and methodological issues

The theoretical foundations of IPA are reviewed here, as well as methodological issues relating to sample size in phenomenological research. As aspects of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) were also drawn upon in the analysis the way in which IPA and CDA relate to one another is also given some consideration, and a case made for using them in tandem based on their distinct but compatible and complimentary theoretical roots.

Phenomenology

Despite being a relatively recent method, with the first studies being published in the mid-1990s (e.g. Smith, 1996), IPA has rich and well regarded foundations that overlap not just with methods of analysis that are of longer standing in the field of psychology, but also with important philosophical traditions. Key examples include the areas of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiographic research (Smith et al., 2009). It is useful to provide an overview of these philosophical roots. As well as clarifying the nature of IPA this will also serve to illustrate points of contrast and similarity with related qualitative methods. Smith et al. (2009) also note that these origins are not always clear-cut. For example, phenomenology is described in terms of being a 'pluralist endeavour' that was adopted by several key philosophers in distinct ways. In reviewing these competing perspectives below attention will also be given to highlighting those that are felt to be of most relevance to the current study, and that have therefore informed the specific way in which the method has been applied throughout this thesis.

Phenomenology in its philosophical context can be defined as the study of subjective, lived experience of any object. When discussing the roots of this tradition and how they relate to IPA it is Husserl who is frequently cited as the first proponent of the principle. Husserl (1982) makes a distinction between a 'natural attitude' to observing everyday phenomena, and a more introspective 'phenomenological attitude' that focuses on the individual and subjective perception of any given object. It is argued that in order to enter into this phenomenological attitude a person needs to put aside and 'bracket' ideas of the world as a fixed and objective system, and to instead focus on the subjective elements of consciousness such as memory, perception, values and judgements. Acknowledging that this bracketing out of a predictable and objective worldview is not something that can be

done absolutely and immediately, Husserl instead advocates an iterative process of 'eidetic reductions' whereby a given phenomenon is viewed from a variety of perspectives. This is done in order to move away from the individual biases that a single perceiver adopting a 'natural attitude' would ordinarily be subject to, and to ultimately move towards a clearer understanding of the true essence of a given phenomenon. This assumption that such essences exist has something in common with Plato's ideas of idealism and universality (Cornford, 1957). That is, that any given instance of an object in the physical world is an imperfect realisation of an ideal. Husserl's formulation of phenomenology effectively extends this to the perception of any given object or phenomena, arguing that any given conscious experience of an object is, to a lesser or greater degree, an imperfect version of the actual object.

Heidegger, a student of Husserl's, proposed a distinct conception of phenomenology. Heidegger's (1962 / 1927) concept of 'Dasein' refers to observers being necessarily always caught up in the physical and social world around them when observing an object. This represents a marked contrast from Husserl's assertion that it is possible to 'bracket out' this subjectivity and to iteratively move towards the Platonic ideals that represent the true and objective nature of any observed phenomenon. Heidegger deems these attempts to be futile, and argues that as a direct consequence of necessarily being rooted in the world an observer is subject to intersubjectivity, whereby perception and conscious experience are not something that happen to individuals in isolation, but in direct relation to other people and objects in the world around us.

Smith et al. (2009) identify two additional philosophers who made important contributions to the development of phenomenology. Extending Heidegger's emphasis on observers being necessarily part of the physical, social and linguistic world around them Merleau-Ponty (1962) emphasises the importance of the embodied nature of the way any observer interacts with the world around them. Given this focus on embodiment within phenomenological approaches, it is unsurprising that health psychology is the area of psychology where IPA was initially most commonly applied. Similarly, Sartre's (1956 / 1943) existential phenomenology extends Heidegger's concept of being necessarily caught up in the world around us, but places an additional emphasis on the nature, presence and absence of social relationships, and how these contribute to any individual's sense of self being an ongoing and fluid concept. The idea of individuals being subjective observers of

both the physical and social worlds is a key foundation of IPA as a psychological method. However, there is also an acknowledgement that an individual's lived experience is itself subject to a process of ongoing meaning making, both by the individual themselves and by a third party attempting to understand their experiences (such as a researcher).

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation (traditionally applied to historical and literary texts), is another key foundation of IPA. Schleiermacher (1998) was the first to explicitly consider the concept, advocating a dual process of grammatical and psychological interpretation when examining a text. The latter involves a holistic approach to the examination of the author's intention and meaning that might not be self-evident in the text considered at face value (and that the author themselves might not even be consciously aware of). The difference between these two types of interpretation is given further consideration below when examining the links between IPA and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Heidegger's conception of phenomenology based on the observer's inescapably subjective position has important implications for the processes of interpretation that are said to be occurring when the observer considers any given object. Whilst Husserl (1982) talks of bracketing out prior experience in order to move towards a purer understanding, Heidegger (1962 / 1927) instead acknowledges the effect that an observer's 'fore-conception' will have on the way in which a given object manifests itself. This is not necessarily an extreme form of relativism whereby each individual's perception is so unique that any shared understanding is hopeless. Instead, prior knowledge is seen as colouring perception but not entirely pre-determining it. If the process of interpretation is acknowledged and reflected upon then the possibility of moving towards a meaningful shared understanding of an object is still possible. In terms of IPA, this underlines the usefulness of reflective practice and the importance of keeping any analysis firmly rooted in the data, but also allows for the researcher to draw upon their prior knowledge and experience during the analytical process. The attitude towards remaining scientific and avoiding prior knowledge unduly influencing analysis is also a pragmatic one. Heidegger's position, as incorporated into IPA, is that this is something that should be attempted but that this is qualified by the acknowledgement that attaining a completely objective point of view is impossible.

The implied cyclical nature of the relationship between the observed and the observer is given further consideration by Gadamer (1990 / 1960), who describes a constantly dynamic process through which the way in which any historical or religious text is interpreted is contingent on the reader's fore-knowledge, but where the fore-knowledge will be altered and shaped with exposure to new data. Applied to using IPA in a psychological context this is consistent with Heidegger's position, again suggesting that a researcher cannot ever entirely divorce themselves from their own knowledge, experiences and biases, but that reflection on these is paramount. Moreover, Gadamer's description of ongoing interpretation provides the foundation for the iterative elements of IPA. This again underlines the importance for an IPA researcher to maintain a constant awareness of the various lenses through which data are being understood and interpreted, as these will determine the analytical choices that are made.

Idiographic research and sample size

Idiographic research is the 'bottom-up' synthesis of knowledge that contrasts with nomothetic approaches, which prioritise generalisability and the testing of specific hypotheses. Whilst the most obvious examples of nomothetic psychological methods would be quantitative and involve large samples it should be noted that this is not necessarily a clear dichotomy. Robinson (2011) also presents a history of idiography and nomothetics that constitutes a convincing argument for not seeing the two positions as being necessarily discrete or in opposition. Smith et al. (2009) identify idiography as having two important implications for IPA. Firstly, a commitment to the particular is said to manifest in the way in which the analysis itself is conducted, with an attention to detail that is designed to keep the final narrative account rooted in the data and the experience of the individual participants. There are links here with Gadamer's ideas about ongoing and dynamic interpretation. More detail on how this has been practically applied during the analysis for the current study is given above (Section 3.4). Secondly, as IPA is designed to investigate how particular phenomena are experienced by a homogenous group of participants this has important implications for the number of participants to be considered in any given analysis. No prescriptive guidance exists on the appropriate sample size for an IPA study, but there are compelling theoretical reasons to limit the number of cases considered. Brocki & Wearden (2006) reviewed 52 published IPA studies, and identified sample sizes that varied from one to 30. Significantly, the study by Collins & Nicolson (2002)

at the top of this range included a fully interpretative account of only one of their 30 cases, with the authors expressing concerns about being able to comprehensively apply IPA to a larger number of cases.

More recent reviews of IPA studies demonstrate increasing use of the method, but a very similar range of sample sizes. Focusing on studies published in the period from 2006 to 2009 inclusive, Cassidy et al. (2011) identified 136 interview-based IPA studies. Across these the mean sample size was reported as 12, and the modal sample size as 8. Beyond the precedent set by this large body of published IPA studies, methodological IPA articles often caution against overly large samples on the grounds that they negate the idiographic roots of the method, and result in a narrative account that is too distant from the subjective meaning-making of individual participants (Smith, 2004). Moreover, Larkin et al. (2008) note that many IPA studies represent an incomplete implementation of the method in that the narrative account is skewed towards being purely descriptive and phenomenological without fully addressing the interpretative contextualisation that should form part of the analysis; in effect, addressing the phenomenological aspect of the method but not the hermeneutic one. This adds further weight to the argument for limiting sample size, and thus endeavouring to present a detailed and sympathetic account of individual experience in participants' own words, whilst also subjecting individuals' meaning-making to a more critical and interpretative analysis that becomes harder to do as the number of cases increases.

The interface between IPA and CDA

As noted above, taking a critical approach to the ways in which participants use language is already an important aspect of IPA. A case can be made that any thorough implementation of IPA will necessarily incorporate the major elements of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (van Dijk, 2001) as an integral part of the analytical process (Smith et al., 2009). However, given the flexibility with which IPA is applied it will be useful to briefly consider to what extent the approaches share common assumptions and theoretical antecedents. It is acknowledged that any direct comparisons are complicated by the fact that multiple forms of both Discourse Analysis (DA) and CDA exist. For example, Potter (2012) identifies three distinct forms of DA, or discursive psychology including one that incorporates many of the more technical features of conversation analysis.

CDA is thus usefully defined as a range of approaches characterised in part by a focus on power relations and social problems. There are important contrasts between IPA and the various approaches that focus on discourse, and it will be important to consider these commonalities and tensions if elements of both approaches are to be drawn on. Biggerstaff & Thompson (2008) note that the acknowledgement in IPA of the researcher's inherently active and two-way engagement with the data, is not always present in traditional forms of discourse analysis. For example, Potter (1996; 2012) does highlight the importance of carefully examining participants' naturalistic and rich lived experience. However, the researcher is described as a relatively objective observer of the nature and syntax of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Biggerstaff & Thompson (2008) note that whilst traditional forms of DA focus heavily on a precise analysis of language and communication, IPA, with its phenomenological roots, is more principally concerned with the ways in which participants subjectively ascribe meaning to their lived experience. This is illustrated more clearly by the form of hermeneutics expounded by Schleiermacher (1998), which makes a clear distinction between grammatical and psychological interpretation. The former is said to be bound up with the way in which language is used, and in a psychological context can therefore be thought of as being a description of the type of analysis being done with DA. The latter involves a type of interpretation on the part of the observer that takes into account the wider context of a speaker's intention and their psychological state, and attempts to take a more holistic view that moves beyond the consideration of language and discourse.

CDA does have more in common with the hermeneutics of IPA, given its acknowledgement that academic inquiry is not necessarily independent of hegemonic social power relations (van Dijk, 2001). Both approaches are consistent with the view that the discipline of psychology as a whole both influences and is influenced by the wider social order within which it is practiced. IPA is however more explicit about the way in which analysis conducted by an individual researcher is inherently subjective, and involves the analyst making interpretations of participants' interpretations of the social world (a double hermeneutic). Additionally, moving beyond a consideration of language and externalised behaviours towards a greater understanding of this underlying meaning making is one important way that IPA can potentially lead to deeper, more nuanced understandings of a participant's experience of a given phenomenon than would be possible with CDA alone.

The two approaches have enough in common to be used side by side, and have sufficient distinct advantages to be more than the sum of their parts. There is therefore the potential to use CDA and IPA in tandem, the latter drawing on the researcher's transparently subjective interpretation of the data, as well as knowledge and experience to produce a narrative account that paints a rich picture of participants' lived experience, and the former being used to supplement this with an analysis of communication that focuses on power relations and social order.

Literature review

When and how to review literature when conducting IPA research involves similar ambiguity as with the debate over appropriate sample sizes. Smith et al. (2009) describe the purpose of a literature review in an IPA study as being a means to introduce the phenomena being investigated, and to highlight gaps in current knowledge to be investigated. If the type of IPA being conducted is one with more of an emphasis on the relatively pure phenomenology of Husserl (with the attendant attempts to 'bracket out' prior knowledge, assumptions and biases, as described above) then there is a strong case to be made for not going beyond a broad, descriptive initial literature review, and for actively limiting the degree to which pre-existing theory is considered at this point. In contrast, if the hermeneutics of Heidegger are given greater precedence, then the attempt to completely put aside prior knowledge should be seen as impossible, and as such there is a strong case for setting out the literature that the researcher is familiar with in order to acknowledge the influence that these will have on the collection and interpretation of data. However, even if the researcher's prior knowledge is documented in this way, this is more a case of engaging in the reflexivity that Gadamer advocates (1990 / 1960) than an exhaustive review of all potentially relevant theory, and the imposition of a nomothetic mode of analysis with overly narrow hypotheses.

Given that it is the latter form of IPA that was conducted (with elements of CDA also being drawn on) a broad literature review was conducted. This served the above goals of identifying important knowledge gaps to be explored, as well as identifying the perspectives that would be drawn upon during research design and analysis. The exploratory nature of the studies did mean that unanticipated topics would emerge during data collection, and as such, a supplementary review of literature pertaining to these new

areas (such as older prisoners) was conducted. Whilst the bulk of this supplementary review has been integrated into the main literature review presented in chapter 2, the sections that were added later have been acknowledged. This allows for the thesis to maintain a traditional structure with regards to the presentation of literature, but also maintains transparency (by not attempting to imply that unanticipated areas were in fact anticipated). It is also consistent with the idiographic tenets of IPA that unanticipated would emerge from semi-structured interviews, and that these should be given proper consideration in order to produce a phenomenological account that is rooted in the data. The strategy of including an explicitly supplementary review of literature also allows for higher order analysis and interpretation to be conducted in these areas.

3.7: Conclusion

Study 1 considered the experiences of ten prisoners who had completed SOTP, and who also self-identified with at least one of three minority groups within the overall population of incarcerated sex offenders. Two research questions focused on participants' experiences of treatment, as well as issues of identity. All interviews with prisoners were completed on site at Prison A.

Study 2 considered the experiences of fourteen members of staff delivering SOTP in prison. For this study there was no requirement for self-identification with a specific minority group, as it was participants' experiences of managing diversity issues that was the focus of the research question. The majority of participants were drawn from Prison A, with additional participants from other establishments (including three from Prison B).

This two-study structure allows for in-depth analysis of the data from each sample, as well as a subsequent exploration of the points of congruence and contrast between the two sets of data.

The method of analysis for both studies was Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which has roots in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography. The complimentary principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) were also drawn on during analysis. An exploratory approach was deemed to be appropriate given the complex nature

of the issues being investigated, the lack of existing research, and the specific nature of the populations being accessed.

Additional methodological issues relating to sample size and literature review have been considered, and a clear analytical process outlined.

Chapter 4: Experiences of SOTP group members – Analysis

Hierarchical themes identified in the analysis of prisoner participant transcripts from study 1 are presented. Substantive verbatim quotes are presented alongside a narrative account to present a rich phenomenological account of participants' experiences. Further higher order interpretation of these findings will be presented subsequently in chapter 5.

4.1: Introduction

The research question identified for study 1 are:

→ How do sex offenders from minority groups[16] experience engagement with the Core SOTP in prison?
→ How do they construct and maintain potential multiple identities, and how do these overlap or interact?

Superordinate themes relating to experiences of the therapeutic process and to the diverse ways in which participants constructed multiple (and at times conflicting) aspects of their identity are presented in detail. Each of these broadly covers one of the two original research questions for prisoners (relating to experiences of treatment, and to experiences of constructing and maintaining identity respectively). The phenomena described under each of these superordinate themes are closely connected, and multiple areas of overlap between the two are therefore identified. An additional superordinate theme relating to group dynamics was identified, and is reported given its relevance to issues of identity, and to the ways in which participants experienced social dynamics in a therapeutic context. In some cases, in vivo theme labels have been adopted, and these are denoted with quotation marks.

---

[16] Although recruitment criteria and the interview schedule make reference to three key sub-populations (physically disabled, gay and bisexual, and black and minority ethnic group members) the wording of the research question is consistent with an exploratory research design that might identify additional aspects of identity that are important to participants.

Citations from transcripts are numbered using paragraphs, with blank lines also being numbered. Redacted information (such as names of people or places) is indicated with square brackets. Paralinguistic features such as significant pauses, coughs, sneezes, repetition, interruptions, and overlapping speech were noted in the original transcripts and are reproduced here. Where it is included, the interviewer's contribution is preceded by 'I:' in order to distinguish it from that of the participant. The structure of ordinate themes for each superordinate theme has been represented visually in the following sections. Ordinate themes are arranged as far as possible based on the number of identified citations across all transcripts, which those occurring most strongly in the data towards the top of each diagram, although preserving the hierarchical structure of themes at times required some deviation from this pattern. Numbers in parentheses next to each ordinate theme also indicate across how many cases the ordinate theme was evident, in the format (number of cases, total number of citations). Whilst these numbers played a part in selecting themes to present in detail they did not play an entirely deterministic role. Qualitative richness of the data pertaining to any given theme, and moreover relevance to the original research questions, both played a larger role in this process of selection.

4.2: Superordinate theme 1 – The therapeutic process

This superordinate theme most directly addresses the first research question, relating to how participants experience treatment. This topic was often intertwined with that of identity in participants' accounts, and as such there are also several issues raised that are also relevant to the second research question relating to identity, both at an individual and group level. Figure 4.2.i below visually represents the hierarchical ordinate themes that were identified.
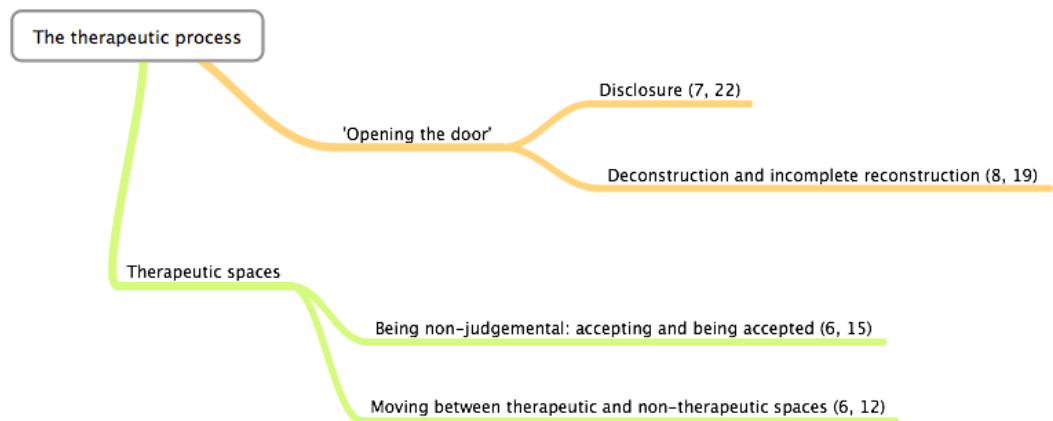
Figure 4.2.i: Superordinate theme 'The therapeutic process', with hierarchical ordinate themes. Figures in parentheses are (n,N), where n = number of cases, N = total number of citations[17].

'Opening the door'

Group members often used physical and visual imagery to describe their experiences of engaging in the therapeutic process. Most commonly, this was seen as a process of deconstruction and questioning of not just offence-related attitudes, but also of their wider identity, which was central to achieving change. Physical metaphors of opening a door or taking apart a brick wall were examples of how this experience was made sense of. The repetition of these images across several cases may indicate multiple participants independently making sense of their experiences using the same imagery, but equally it should be borne in mind that all participants had experienced treatment at the same establishment. This shared form of meaning making might therefore have a common origin. For example, it may have been expressed by a facilitator or group member during an SOTP session and then repeated by others.

A gradual process of becoming comfortable with disclosure of thoughts and feelings was described as a necessary prerequisite to honest and meaningful reflection. This was a novel and disconcerting experience for many participants. Finally, the process of reconstruction was described as potentially problematic, with participants describing a process of incomplete reconstruction that brought with it its own problems.

---

[17] 'Citation' here refers to an occurrence of a given theme within a transcript, and not simply to the occurrence of a particular word or phrase.

When asked about their expectations immediately prior to their first SOTP session some group members described concerns about having to answer difficult questions. Whilst this was sometimes borne out by their experiences of treatment, the specific nature of this questioning and the purpose it served was often distinct from that which was anticipated. P6 describes expecting an intrusive, manipulative and invasive process of questioning, but then talks about his actual experience as being as a more collaborative and invitational process. He goes on to note the importance of opening up, both to benefit his own progress as an individual, as well as to foster an atmosphere of safety and openness in the group as a whole, which encouraged others to do the same. There is a suggestion here, reiterated by other group members elsewhere, that active contribution also serves a social process linked to group cohesion, as well any specific pragmatic purpose related to addressing treatment needs. P6 himself questioning others is also conceptualised an important opportunity to make progress with his own issues. Thus, the collaborative and reciprocal process of questioning one another is one that is described as practically benefiting the progress of group member being questioned, the questioner, as well as the less tangible social characteristics of the group as a whole:

¶279: Um… From what I'd heard and everything I, I was expecting to be… Bit grilling.
¶280:
¶281: I: Mm.
¶282:
¶283: They, basically getting involved in your private life, or trying to know things, get, trying to get, force you to say things that you should, you don't want to say, or something of the sort.
¶284:
¶285: I: Right.
¶286:
¶287: And… I thought that was what it was like, but, starting the programme it was never like that.
¶288:
¶289: I: Hm.
¶290:
¶291: They never force you to say what you don't want to say. It's up to you to express yourself. And, before entering the programme, and I told 'em as well, for me personally, it's what you put in, that's what you're gonna get out.
[P6]

> ¶1407: Because at the end of the day, not only are you helping someone, you're helping yourself.
> ¶1408:
> ¶1409: I: Right.
> ¶1410:
> ¶1411: Because, I might be asking someone a question but the same time, his answer might be an answer for me myself that's asking the question. You know, so it's, it's always nice, and probably person that doesn't speak, he'll probably have something that he wants to say that would be quite helpful.
> ¶1412:
> ¶1413: I: Mm.
> ¶1414:
> ¶1415: But because he doesn't participate that much so it's, you losing… [pause] Basically… A whole person that's, could have been, able to ask questions that nobody else asks.
> [P6]

P4 describes a process of 'digging deep' in order to discuss his past, which he notes as difficult both because of his age and the fact that he was being asked to discuss his own experiences of abuse. Whilst this reflection is described as an important activity to engage in, P4 describes being uncertain about any connections between his own experiences of abuse and his own offending behaviour. This contrasts with other participants, who did draw more explicit causal links between these. Later he further discusses the importance of this process of disclosure. Ostensibly this is framed in terms of benefits for his progress as an individual, with disclosure described as an essential early step in the therapeutic process. Beyond this, a less tangible reason for engaging in disclosure is suggested by the phrase 'I done my part towards the course'. Beyond any benefits for himself as an individual, this suggests that engagement serves the social process of contributing to the group as a whole. This notion of shouldering an equal share of a burden is linked to the formation of a strong and supportive group:

> ¶387: You know, but, ah… Having to dig- Dig deep… You know, I'm 73 and I had to dig deep I mean but… Ah… And having to come out with things that happened years ago, I mean, I say, my, my father abused me, and everything else, I had to come out with all that, that was upsetting, you know, I mean but… And then I'm asked, 'Do you think that that had any effect on, my offence, what I had done'.
> ¶388:
> ¶389: I: Mm.
> ¶390:
> ¶391: I don't know, whether or not it did. I shouldn't have done it. You understand what I mean.
> [P4]

Deconstruction / incomplete reconstruction

Those participants who had completed their post-programme review (and would therefore have completed their final session several months or more prior to the date of the interview) described the long-term impact of SOTP as being largely positive. This is admittedly a key area where compliance could have potentially been operating to push group members to emphasise their progress, and play down any negative issues relating to their participation. Participants, regardless of what their actual experiences were, may have seen presenting an image of a prisoner who had engaged well and learnt from the programme as important. Being in prison would also necessarily limit participants to practice some of the risk management strategies practiced on the group. Nevertheless, some participants did still describe experiences characterised by equivocation and ambivalence, which suggests honest and often nuanced reflection. They were also able to point to improvements in coping with problems, as well as their interactions with staff, prisoners and (where there was some contact outside of the prison) family. It should also be noted that at this stage the presentation of a rich descriptive account does involve a degree of taking participants' experiences at face value. Rather than ignored, issues such as compliance will be considered in greater depth in later chapters, whilst engaging in higher order interpretative analysis and discussion.

Furthermore, in some cases treatment was directly linked to explicitly negative consequences. Whilst this does raise ethical issues relating to harm, it should be noted that in all cases where negative or unpleasant experiences were described that these were balanced against largely positive long-term outcomes. For example, a lack of adequate follow-up and support immediately after the end of relatively difficult sessions was identified by P1, who used the image of a door being opened, but then not being properly closed again. The implication here is that having raised issues that could bring out strong emotions in individuals and cause intra-group conflict facilitators should have then done more to anticipate and deal with the consequences:

> ¶422: But I think there were just one or two, there was one guy who was very manipulative and very, ah, you know, there was another guy like me, [name], but he, he, ah... He was borderline mental health. And I think he just caused a lot of problems in the group. There was [name], another Asian guy, who, um, he strongly in denial and he had anger management issues, and we clashed, and then I, I came out being aggressive, verbally, because, you know, the facilitators was, um... They was opening the door and when it was time for them to close the door they weren't closing the door.
> [P1]

Whilst this does appear to be an implicit criticism of facilitators it is important to note that it could also be read as a more general critique of the structure of the programme. The 'They' described as 'opening the door' might potentially be meant to refer to psychological or prison staff in general, rather than the specific SOTP facilitators from the participant's group. P1's tone is not explicitly accusatory when talking about staff, and the focus in the extract above is instead on the challenging behaviour of other prisoners.

Rather than referring to such intra-group conflict, other participants, such as P2, instead focused on the consequences for their own well-being and state of mind. The forceful image of P2's self-esteem being demolished but then not being immediately built up again has strong parallels with the image of a door used by P1. In both cases there is an implicit acknowledgement that there are potentially unpleasant aspects of treatment that are nonetheless necessary. For P1 this is the process of 'opening the door' on unpleasant issues, whereas for P2 this is the process by which both facilitators and other group members aggressively attack and deconstruct an individual's sense of self in order to unpick unhelpful attitudes and beliefs. P2 describes a profound loss of control during this process

of being questioned and challenged by others in the group, going on to describe learning to drop his defences in order to answer these questions. He also notes that being selective regarding which questions to respond to fully (and thereby retaining a degree of control) was important for his wellbeing:

¶211: And it was only after several courses that really the thought of control became the main focus, right. Ah, because, when I went on the SOTP I found that I wasn't in control, right, um, so what they do is they demolish ya. Right, but they fail to build you back up. And that was a problem-
¶212:
¶213: I: 'Fail to' you say?
¶214:
¶215: They, they, they don't have, um, like a group that builds your self-esteem back up. Right. Um, same with [previous establishment], you know, you'll sit on a group, SOTP, and you'll have questions coming from all over the place. And what you learn to is you learn to answer the questions that are not too piercing. Right, that's the first thing you learn. Defending yourself all the time you see. And, ah, it's only after time that you do answer them questions because your defensive, um, feeling whatever, have dropped. And you, you accept- Because you've sat on that group, they've had a go at ya, and ya feel totally demoralised, you hate everybody on the group. You know, and you go away and as soon as you stop out the door from the group everyone's your mate again.
¶216:
¶217: I: Mm.
¶218:
¶219: Right. So that was a great feeling. And I found I was- When I was going in the room and it was somebody else's turn, I was demolishing them.
[P2]

Notably, this process of aggressive deconstruction is something that he describes experiencing both from the perspective of the group member being questioned and that of one of those posing the questions. There is also an implication that this difficult but necessary process simultaneously involves strong social support from fellow group members (experienced as a 'great feeling' [P2, 215]) as well as a form of questioning and challenging that could become aggressive and demoralising.

Mixed feelings about treatment in general are evidenced by P1 when talking about engaging with further interventions, specifically the Extended SOTP:

> ¶102: Even now I don't really want to do the Extended, I've been given the extended to do.
> ¶103:
> ¶104: I: Hm.
> ¶105:
> ¶106: And ah, um, you know, it's done be some good, but it's done me some damage as well.
> ¶107:
> ¶108: I: Have you started the extended?
> ¶109:
> ¶110: No, I'm waiting to get on it for two years. You know the SOTP's done me good, but it's done me damage as well.
> [P1]

This is a point of contrast between some prisoner participants. For example, P1 speaks in the present tense about dealing with both negative and positive consequences of engaging with the Core SOTP. P2 instead outlines a linear narrative spanning decades, which involved him eventually moving from a position of resistance to one of positive engagement. It should be noted that the progression described by P2 was not a smooth or fast one. There is consistency here with models of desistance that acknowledge ongoing processes of lapse and relapse, rather than an immediate cessation of criminal activity (Maruna 2008). Whilst P2 describes an overall improvement this included several instances of reoffending and reconviction. Other explanations for this apparent difference could relate to individual differences in personality, as well as contrasting life experiences. P1 had completed Core SOTP relatively recently prior to being interviewed (just after a revision of the programme in 2011), whereas P2 first completed Core SOTP 17 years prior to the interview and had since engaged in a range of other programmes. These different ways of talking about negative or harmful consequences could also simply be attributed to differing ways in which the participants constructed their progress in the interview.

Therapeutic spaces

The value and importance of being non-judgemental, and experiences of transitioning between the therapeutic locale of SOTP and the wider prison are explored below.

P6 describes experiencing and observing a variety of behaviours that could be seen as the components of a strong therapeutic alliance. One aspect of this was a lack of judgement towards others, whilst others included his motivation to change, and openness to feedback. By mentioning these various aspects in close proximity there is an implication that it is the cumulative effect of these various transactional behaviours and attitudes (framed in terms of giving and receiving support and constructive criticism) that is important:

> ¶625: I: Um, and what do you think you brought to the group?
> ¶626:
> ¶627: Um... I brought to the group my openness.
> ¶628:
> ¶629: I: Right.
> ¶630:
> ¶631: And willing to learn. And then, I know... I'm there to get, gain something, others are there to gain something as well.
> ¶632:
> ¶633: I: Hm.
> ¶634:
> ¶635: And by asking question and not being judgemental, I got, um, I asked various questions and accepted criticism, as long as constructional I accepted it.
> [P6]

One of the most important aspects of the therapeutic environment established by SOTP was a lack of judgement from peers and from staff. When asked what they contributed to their groups, participants often noted their support for others. For some, learning to not be judgemental of others (based on their offence type, or aspects of their identity such as age, ethnicity or sexual orientation) was a process that was prompted by engagement with SOTP. P1, who had offended against an adult, here describes learning to empathise with those in his SOTP group who had offended against children:

> ¶586: But, um, you know, but then I, I, I can't judge nobody because I'm a sex offender myself, so I kept having to use that to [inaudible].
> ¶587:
> ¶588: I: So given your past then, how did you deal with that, how did you not be, judgmental?
> ¶589:

¶590: Very hard. Very hard. But, um, I had to say to myself, 'Look, you know, you know I don't wanna be- I don't like being judged by others in the prison population, or, you know, the rest of the world, for something that's happened, so, you know, I can't really then be judging other people'.
¶591:
¶592: I: Mm.
¶593:
¶594: And you know, I think with the SOTP once you started to do the group you started to see people for people, and not their offence. And then you start to see how the offence had come about, and how they ended up doing what they done.
¶595:
¶596: I: Mm.
¶597:
¶598: You know, and, and pitying them more than being angry at them.
[P1]

The operation of group dynamics relating to offence type, and the ways in which hierarchies were either reinforced or challenged, are explored further in the superordinate theme relating to group dynamics.

Moving between therapeutic and non-therapeutic spaces

Most group members who discussed the contrasts between being in the SOTP group room and being on the wing drew a clear distinction in the way that the two spaces were experienced. Although the majority of prisoners were housed on vulnerable prisoner wings at the time of their interviews, experiences of being on main wings and amongst prisoners with a range of offence types were also discussed. There was congruence regarding the therapeutic atmosphere of SOTP (characterised by an atmosphere of support, openness, and lack of judgement), which was typically lost when group members left a session and moved back to their wing. There was however notable variation in how the transition between these different spaces within prison was experienced. There was a distinction drawn between different types of wing, as well as the degree to which different establishments were conducive to meaningful engagement with psychological treatment. P3 here initially plays down the differences in how he experienced the wing compared to an SOTP session, but then quickly goes on to describe a constant state of anxiety on the wing that is dealt with by subsuming what he sees as his true identity. Not only is the atmosphere of the wing described as encouraging this lack of natural, unguarded behaviour, but what replaces it is described in explicitly gendered terms, such as a drive on the part of prisoners to persuade others that 'I'm a big man' [P3, 626]. Thus, the wing is

seen as encouraging homogeneity, the suppression of individuality, and the expression of a narrow and hegemonic masculine identity, whereas SOTP is seen as being relatively free of such restrictions:

¶530: Obviously, if I was on the landing our voices would be a bit hushed because we're talking about offence, if they want I'd go in my cell, and sit down and talk about it. But there's, there's no difference in the interaction whatsoever.
[P3]
¶616: I: What's it like being on SOTP compared to being in prison in general?
¶617:
¶618: [long pause] It was, it was different because... [pause] When you come out your prison cell you put up a wall.
¶619:
¶620: I: Mm.
¶621:
¶622: You know, you put up a front. You have to to protect yourself. And this is only from me, but, you know, I've seen it on other people, that I've shared cells with. Ah... but when you end up going on a course, you open up, and you can actually relax and be yourself. Ah, you know, you can be... The true individual that you are.
¶623:
¶624: I: Mm.
¶625:
¶626: So you don't have to, you don't have to put on a show all the time, you don't have to put on a front, you know, that, 'I'm a big man', or whatever.
[P3]

The image of building a wall is returned to several times throughout P3's interview. He here notes that this is done primarily in order to protect himself from being drawn into conflicts and to remain impartial. There is a use of the phrase 'non-judgemental' here that contrasts slightly with the explicitly therapeutic sense of the term explored in the relevant ordinate theme above. Here, rather than using it to describe a lack of condemnation which encourages others to engage and disclose, P3 instead uses it to mean a process of being careful and guarded for the sake of self-preservation, something which is less necessary with the safer environment of an SOTP group room. He shows an explicit awareness of the social dynamics that need to be carefully negotiated on the wing; avoiding groups that pose a threat, and mixing with others around whom he feels more of a social bond:

¶710: [pause] Again, you, I mean you... You put up, you put up that wall. You got, you got to be, you got to be seen to be, ah, non-judgemental and not take sides. Because it can come to bite you in the backside.

¶711:
¶712: I: Mm.
¶713:
¶714: Ah…
¶715:
¶716: I: Tell me a bit more about what putting up that wall means. How does that-?
¶717:
¶718: Pro, protecting yourself from others.
¶719:
¶720: I: Hm.
¶721:
¶722: You know, ah, and, you know, you can't, you can't be seen to be taking sides either.
¶723:
¶724: I: Hm.
¶725:
¶726: You know, it's, ah, I…
¶727:
¶728: I: Why is that?
¶729:
¶730: Why… Because you know, you can have- It creates enemies. You know.
¶731:
¶732: I: Hm.
¶733:
¶734: And it's something I don't want in prison. Ah, I like, I like to get on with the people that I get on with, and I like to keep the people which I, I feel that I'm really wary of, away from me.
[P3]

P3 refers to 'a course' [P3, 622], raising the possibility that the therapeutic atmosphere of openness he describes has also been experienced on other psychological programmes. This is not the case for other forms of purposeful activity however, as he describes having to revert to being guarded when engaging in education, especially during tea break when hyper-masculine forms of identity based on power and dominance (and exemplified by those described as 'big I ams' [P3, 666]) are more freely expressed. Elaborating on why programmes felt different, he also notes that this is in part due to the non-judgemental atmosphere established, but also cites a commonality of purpose for being there, which can be read as reference to being in an environment with prisoners who have all committed sexual offences. Thus, whilst the homogeneity of masculine expression on the wing leads to an atmosphere of caution and defensiveness, a different kind of homogeneity on SOTP (relating to offence type) has a more positive outcome:

¶650: It's, even in education I had to put up a wall, because you're working with cons.

¶651:
¶652: I: Okay.
¶653:
¶654: And, you know, you're seeing a lot of, you see a lot of aggression, in, in the education sector because, ah… The lack of understanding, and, it doesn't matter how simply you try to put, ah, a task like, ah, turning a percentage into a fraction and to a decimal, you know and they can't take it on board, and no matter how simplified you put it…
¶655:
¶656: I: Mm.
¶657:
¶658: …that aggression comes out and, you see 'em snap so much you [inaudible], but, you, ah, I got, I got to the stage 'cos I did a, I did a peer mentor tutoring class with, ah, a woman that came up from [one prison to another].
¶659:
¶660: I: Hm.
¶661:
¶662: Ah, to get my certificate and I had to try and bring myself down to a level of understanding, which they could, they could do. But you still have that wall.
¶663:
¶664: I: Okay.
¶665:
¶666: You still have that wall, because it's, you have a tea break and it's all the big I amps all walking around.
¶667:
¶668: I: So it was only programmes where you felt-?
¶669:
¶670: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, because you're more open about your offence, you know, you're relaxed and you know that people aren't going to be judgemental and you're there for the same reason.
[P3]

P4 expressed a contrasting point of view regarding the safe and anxiolytic atmosphere of SOTP. Whilst generally positive about the programme, he does describe it as being in some ways a more difficult environment to be in, compared to both the wing and to activities such as education. Initially he attributes this to the difficulty of disclosing offending, but he also refers to the perceived 'official' [P4, 757, 761] nature of SOTP causing a heightened level of anxiety. This is not seen as insurmountable, and he describes drawing on the social support of the group by using humour as a coping mechanism. Again, the feeling that the group shares a common bond regarding their offence types is noted as important:

¶751: I: Um… And now this is about how does SOTP compare to your experiences in prison generally. So when you're sitting in that group room, what's that like compared to being on a wing? Being in education, or…?
¶752:

¶753: [pause] Yeah, it's, [sigh] how can I put this? Obviously it's more… [sigh] Not worrying, but it's easier on the wing, or in, education, because this is talking about, what you done wrong and one thing and another, and it's… It's not hard but it's a good thing to come out with it, but I found it's easier doing education than it was this.

…

¶765: Slightly anxious, yes, and slightly anxious having to do it, but, as I said, in the end, it come out alright, slightly anxious, more so than education or doing health and safety and all that sort of thing. But mind you, even there, we used to have a laugh and a joke.

…

¶775: I: So what was it about… About it that made you sort of a little anxious, and worried [inaudible]?
¶776:
¶777: [pause] Because we had to come out with everything we'd done wrong. Although I did. It makes you feel anxious having to come out with it, and all these others hearing what you done.
¶778:
¶779: I: Okay.
¶780:
¶781: Although they must have been in the same boat. You know. But, you know, having to say that and, ah… Their reactions afterwards, which wasn't too bad, you know.
[P4]

P6 describes a similar initial anxiety regarding questions on SOTP being invasive and adversarial, but unlike P4 he makes it clear that this was quickly dispelled. Instead, he describes his experiences of treatment as being invitational rather than directive, with group members being given the opportunity to contribute towards their own progress rather than being forced to do so:

¶277: I: Okay. And, so what were your expectations, so think maybe a few days before the first session. What were you expecting this programme to be like?
¶278:
¶279: Um… From what I'd heard and everything I, I was expecting to be… Bit grilling.
¶280:
¶281: I: Mm.
¶282:
¶283: They, basically getting involved in your private life, or trying to know things, get, trying to get, force you to say things that you should, you don't want to say, or something of the sort.
¶284:
¶285: I: Right.

¶286:
¶287: And… I thought that was what it was like, but, starting the programme it was never like that.
¶288:
¶289: I: Hm.
¶290:
¶291: They never force you to say what you don't want to say. It's up to you to express yourself. And, before entering the programme, and I told em as well, for me personally, it's what you put in, that's what you're gonna get out.
[P6]

Further illustrating the variation in how the transition between SOTP and the wider prison was experienced, P1 describes an angrier and more aggressive reaction to moving between the two spaces. The difficulty in adjusting is initially framed in terms of a lack of understanding from staff, but he goes on to note the difficulty of being around other prisoners who may not have knowledge of SOTP, and how challenging it can be for those who are in the process of participating in a group. This is echoed by other participants. Where others highlighted the benefits of being amongst a supportive group who had committed similar offences and who were facing shared challenges relating to participation in SOTP, P1 makes the related point that this lack of shared understanding from other prisoners back on the wing was problematic:

¶1080: I: So what's it like having, like maybe having a difficult session then coming back, to that, to the wing, to that environment?
¶1081:
¶1082: Hard. Want to smash up the wing sometimes. Sometimes, you just wanna, you know, um, you just wanna smash up the wing. Sometimes you just- You know, it's, it's, it's not a safe environment at all, you know, and I think, you know, the fact that, you know, I struggled in TC where everybody was engaging in therapeutic, but I've managed to come on the wing where some people are in therapy and some people aren't.
[P1]

4.3: Superordinate theme 2 – Group membership and identity

This superordinate theme encapsulates the role of group membership in group members' experiences of both SOTP and of the prison environment in general. Whilst this superordinate theme extends beyond SOTP, participants' experiences of identity in contexts such as the wing, or life outside prison often represent important contrasts with the way in which these same aspects of identity are experienced on the programme. Taking in this wider context is therefore helpful in building up a rich account of how participants construct identity in the context of treatment. The four key ordinate themes illustrated in Figure 4.3.i are organised around objective labels denoting group membership, but the lower order themes are more phenomenological and firmly rooted in aspects of subjective experience. Organising data in this way therefore strikes a balance between reflecting the individual lived experiences of participants whilst also being informed by the original rationale for the study and the structure of initially reviewed literature.
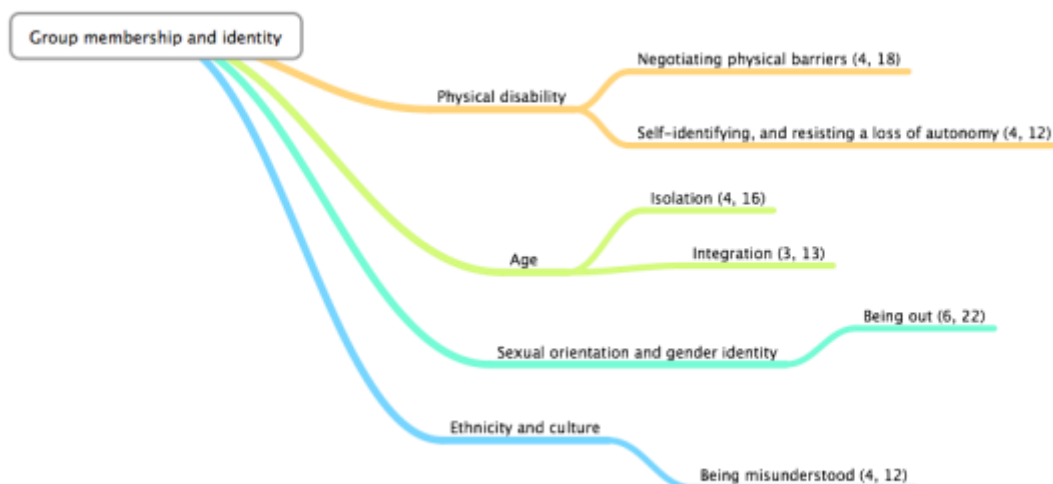
Figure 4.3.i: Superordinate theme 'Group membership and identity', with hierarchical ordinate themes. Figures in parentheses are (n,N), where n = number of cases, N = total number of citations.

Physical disability

Negotiating physical barriers

Amongst the four prisoners who discussed living with a physical disability or ongoing health condition, the impact of physical restrictions on free movement around the prison was the most commonly cited shared experience. Issues both within and outside of the SOTP group room were discussed. The former revolved around issues such as visual impairment, and facilitators were described as being generally successful in supporting the needs of group members in this regard (for example, arranging seating so that those with difficulty seeing the board were at the front of the room). Issues outside of the group room were described as more difficult to overcome. For those who discussed dealing with mobility issues, being assigned to a cell some distance from the SOTP group room, or on a higher landing accessed via stairs, was seen as a potential barrier to engagement. Whilst this was not insurmountable for those prisoners interviewed it may be that an exploration of the experiences of non-engaging prisoners would have yielded very different findings.

Beyond specifically accessing the SOTP group room, P4 here discusses his more general experiences of physically negotiating the prison environment. At times his account is characterised by a feeling of resignation and passivity, denoted by a sigh and the notable repetition of the phrase 'I've got to'. Immediately following this is an apparently contradictory assertion that being out of his cell is a choice that he actively makes. His motivation to be moving around and out of his cell is expressed in terms of agency, and social and psychological benefits, rather than physiological ones. Whilst there is no directly link here with SOTP, it can be inferred that any purposeful activity (such as psychological programmes, education or work) can serve a social purpose for some individuals. Whilst feelings of isolation or frustration are not explicitly cited, there is a clear contrast drawn between mixing with others, 'chatting and having a laugh', and the marked absence of these social activities when alone:

¶1517: You know, but I've accepted the fact that I've got to do it, whether they, my knees are bad or not.
¶1518:
¶1519: I: Okay.
¶1520:

¶1521: I've got to do it, otherwise I'm, I'm just sat in me cell all the time, and I don't want to be sat in my cell.
[P4]

Self-identifying, and resisting a loss of autonomy

Less common, but described here as a noteworthy outlier, was the active resistance to taking on the label of 'disability' demonstrated by P3. Whereas most participants who discussed physical barriers did so in and around the context of physically accessing treatment, P3 instead demonstrated a strong desire to avoid integrating the notion of disability into his sense of self. When this was explored with him it appeared that that he was drawing on discourses of passivity and vulnerability that he associated with disability, and which he conceptualised as being anathema to core beliefs about his need and desire to remain as autonomous as possible for as long as possible. Gender is not discussed in relation to this, but it is possible to infer a connection here with hegemonic discourses of masculinity that draw on strength and independence, and that are potentially undermined by the acknowledgement of dependence on others. P3 goes to lengths to emphasise the areas in which he is currently competent and independent (such as cooking and cleaning in prison), whilst also acknowledging his concerns about this changing in the future. Use of the phrase 'can't take any of that away from me' [P3, para 1084] further illustrates the way in which P3 perceives the attempt to retain a sense of autonomy as an active struggle, or fight.

¶950: I: Um, and the last part, how would you describe your disability?
¶951:
¶952: I don't see myself as disabled. I do, I do with eyesight now, because it's really worrying me, but my leg, I don't, and, ah, I don't know if that's because... I'm in the establishment. Maybe it'll come home more when I'm released and I'm trying to get from A to B.
¶953:
¶954: I: Mm.
¶955:
¶956: And, ah, I'm relying much more on, you know, getting around, getting to the shops and seeing what I- 'Cos at the moment, you know, I, I, everything's basically done for ya. You know, I don't, I don't move far off the wing.

...

¶1024: I do think to myself, I won't let people do anything for me. Because I don't see myself as disabled. I don't want to, I don't want to rely on anybody

else, you know, I want to do things myself if I can't do it, then I'll, say, you know, 'Can you do this for me?'.

¶1025:

¶1026: I: Hm.

¶1027:

¶1028: But, you know, um, I don't actually see myself as disabled, not at the moment.

...

¶1084: You know, the more I do things, you know, my cells nice and clean, I can do things, I can cook for myself, used to cook for myself in Parkhurst. Can't take any of that away from me, it's just getting from A to B.

¶1085:

¶1086: I: Okay.

¶1087:

¶1088: And getting my shopping done, that's gonna have a big impact. But. at the moment I still don't see myself as disabled, because I don't have to do them things.

[P3]

The process of resisting the label of disability is here described in terms of an active and ongoing struggle. The social model of disability appears to have some relevance here, as P3's ability to meet these challenges and maintain his sense of independence is described as being a function of his environment. Rather than talking about prison as being a physically challenging environment, his experience contrasts with that of other disabled interviewees in that he talks about prison as a finite, contained, and controlled space that is relatively easy to negotiate compared to the unpredictable and unknown outside world. How he is perceived by others is also emphasised as a key factor, as demonstrated by the different ways in which he views different forms of impairment in different contexts. When an impairment or condition can remain hidden (such as his artificial leg in the finite and controlled environment of prison) then it is not conceptualised as a disability. However, the same impairment in a different context is conceptualised very differently, and is linked to vulnerability, and anxieties relating to perceived weaknesses being exposed.

¶978: I: I mean, you said just now that, that was quite interesting, you don't see yourself as disabled, but-

¶979:

¶980: I don't-

¶981:

¶982: I: With your leg.

¶983:

¶984: Yeah.

¶985:

¶986: I: But things started to change with your eyes.
¶987:
¶988: Yeah, my eyes.
¶989:
¶990: I: What's different between your leg and with your eyes now?
¶991:
¶992: Because I get round from A to B, people come up to me and say they don't realise, you know, that you had a false leg, you don't look as though you had a false leg.
¶993:
¶994: I: Okay.
¶995:
¶996: The only time I feel vulnerable about my disability is when I'm, having a strip wash, or I take it off at night.
¶997:
¶998: I: Okay.
¶999:
¶1000: And that's, that's, that's two things. They say I've got a low self-esteem about that, I don't think I have, I think I've got a well-balanced self-esteem. [P3]

An anxiety about how he will cope with mobility issues following release appears to be exacerbated by the length of time spent on his current sentence. Using strikingly visual imagery he describes observing a transient and fast-moving prison population, whilst he himself is static, and disconnected from everyday activities such as using public transport. By implication, these everyday experiences that are taken for granted by those moving in and out of prison on short sentences have have become anxiety provoking for him. This sense of disconnection and loss was earlier used to explain the importance that P3 places on fighting to maintain a sense of independence and control:

¶1068: People come in [inaudible], people come over, they're only, they're only come over on, on release, 'cos they're due for release, you know, I've seen a lot of faces come and go.
¶1069:
¶1070: I: Hm.
¶1071:
¶1072: They're all going and they're all looking forward to it, and I'm thinking, you know, I haven't been on public transport since the early eighties.
¶1073:
¶1074: I: Hm.
¶1075:
¶1076: You know, the only transport I've ever been on is when I was flying away to another country. Ah, so I don't know, I'm not going to be able to drive. I was going to be able to drive, because I could have got away with an automatic. Or, you know, something with paddles, ah, shift, ah, gear. But, ah, now my eyesight's deteriorating there's no way I'm gonna drive.

> …
>
> ¶1030: I: From what you're saying it sounds like being independent and resisting that label of being disabled, from what you're saying.
> ¶1031:
> ¶1032: Yeah.
> ¶1033:
> ¶1034: I: Yeah.
> ¶1035:
> ¶1036: Because I think it's the only thing I've really got.
> ¶1037:
> ¶1038: I: Right.
> ¶1039:
> ¶1040: You know, that, that independence, that's all I've got left. I've lost everything else.
> [P3]

Age

Whilst a sense of disconnection was not strongly cited by other participants in relation to physical disability, it is something that older participants did discuss in relation to age.

Isolation

Most participants had participated in SOTP groups where there was a wide range of ages amongst participants. There was some variation as to how participants experienced this diversity within the group. Whilst P5 describes a generally cohesive group there is also a description of an isolated older prisoner. The direct role of age here may be ambiguous. Age is mentioned, but so are behaviours and personality traits such as 'argumentative' and 'cantankerous' [P5, 641]. The finding that these are mentioned alongside the group members age could be read as P5 ascribing the observed group member's social isolation to problematic personality traits that were independent of age. Equally, this could be read as an implicit invocation of a stereotype of older people that suggests that these traits are associated with greater age:

> ¶633: 72 is the oldest… And the youngest was probably him and he's only about 23, or 24, so…
> ¶634:
> ¶635: I: Quite a range.
> ¶636:

¶637: A good 50-year age range there.
¶638:
¶639: I: And did I guess did different age groups bond with each other, or would did it make quite separate?
¶640:
¶641: Um, I mean apart from the very oldest one who was the argumentative one who would probably describe as cantankerous [slight laugh], um, I would, I would have said the age groups mixed fairly well actually.
[P5]

Beyond SOTP there were aspects of the prison environment that were described as contributing to a more general state of isolation and passivity. P4 here contrasts his current prison with a previous one. Earlier he had discussed the challenges of negotiating the physical space with mobility issues, but here he focuses more on the way in which age, as well as physical disability, contributes to a process of isolation (which he tries to resist by making and maintaining social bonds). A reference here to 'grey cells' emphasises the effects that boredom and isolation can have on mental health. The age of the prison itself is cited as important, although it isn't made clear whether this is because of better designed, physical layouts, improved provision of work and education, or other factors:

¶633: Newer prisons, ten to fifteen, fifteen years old the prisons, which felt very comfortable and I got to know some of the prisoners very, very well, and if it wasn't for the fact… Of not seeing my family, my sister and my friends I've got in London… I wouldn't have minded staying there to do the rest of my sentence.
¶634:
¶635: I: Okay.
¶636:
¶637: Because, [sigh] it's a hard prison this is. There's nothing for us to do over on [inaudible] wing. Nothing for us to do, you know, I mean I've done, health and safety, I've done food safety. Hoping to get onto, computer?
¶638:
¶639: I: Mm.
¶640:
¶641: It's a long waiting list. But, ah, especially for us senior citizens, there's not much for us to do. There is kitchen work, yes, but, I couldn't stand on my knees, all, all day long. But other men, it's just, sitting round chatting to, other prisoners. That's, and that's what I do, I'm getting very good at it now. You know, just chatting, all, all day. Like to keep… You know, those grey cells, a bit, you know, do, do something.
[P4]

It should be noted that for P4 this sense of isolation was not restricted to prison, and at one point he notes that he has actually been able to become less withdrawn since coming

to prison. Here he describes feelings of isolation whilst in sheltered housing, prior to committing his index offence, and also cites this isolation as an important factor in contributing to his offending. This isolation is described in the context of not socialising with other older people, but he doesn't link this explicitly to his own age, instead describing it as a stable and long-standing personality trait:

¶1129: And, ah, [sigh]. I, [sigh] as I've said I've realised that part of my offence was, getting too close to a family. I've never been married myself, so... Ah, when... Like, somebody I worked with, ah... his wife and his children. And [sigh] I've always been a lonely sort, but this is as I say, this is where I went wrong.
¶1130:
¶1131: I: Hm.
¶1132:
¶1133: My offence is, I've always been a bit of a loner, so therefore I used to, ah, I used to like this company, but, I got into, I got into sheltered accommodation eventually.
¶1134:
¶1135: I: Hm.
¶1136:
¶1137: And, which, is, well you know what sheltered accommodation is, senior citizens. And, although I didn't, take part in, to say [inaudible] where they used to play cards and my, being as I was that was me, you know, I didn't go out, but, now I can't wait to get out so I can go and do that again and not get involved with the family.
[P4]

Whilst P4 goes on to state that prison may have helped him to 'come out of my shell' [P4, 1145] this is balanced against these other clearly negative effects. Here, following a discussion of how the nature of his offence and not being on a Vulnerable Prisoners (VP) wing caused him anxiety about being physically attacked he goes on to note that his age also contributed to this feeling of anxiety and vulnerability. Closely related to this are issues of health and disability, further compounding fears of the impact that any physical attack might have. The description of young prisoners moving rapidly in and out of the prison is strikingly similar to that given by P3 when discussing the impact of his disability. A point of contrast here is that for P4 it is age that is described as the factor separating the static and passive participant from the transient and young population that he describes, and that he is implicitly socially disconnected from:

¶1289: But, when you first come into prison, you get all of these things go through your mind. What's gonna happen, you know. Especially... I mean at 70

years of age my first time coming in prison, you know, it, it has that effect on you, you know.

¶1290:

¶1291: I: So your age was a factor as well in terms of that anxiety.

¶1292:

¶1293: Coming in, yes, coming in to prison my age had a, had a lot to do with it. 'Cos some of these youngsters, they're backwards and forwards all the time, you know. To me? No, once I get out, that's it, I, I, I don't want to come back to prison, you know.

…

¶1319: I: But there was that anxiety.

¶1320:

¶1321: Anxiety about it all when you first come in, you know.

¶1322:

¶1323: I: Okay.

¶1324:

¶1325: Especially being a senior citizen, you know and a lot of youngsters about.

[P4]

Integration

Typically, participants felt that a diverse range of ages does not harm group cohesion, with several participants describing strong and supportive groups with a wide variety of older and younger group members. Close integration and support was emphasised by many, and P6 notes that this was evident both within and beyond the context of treatment. Here the references to team work suggest a professional and problem-focused approach, with group members always keeping sight of their goal of making progress in treatment:

¶1041: Yeah, we- [inaudible] Yeah, we did, we did. We did, we did support each other. In a sense because there's some times when, even when we are outside of the group.

¶1042:

¶1043: I: Hm.

¶1044:

¶1045: Like if you see someone and something is bugging him within the group.

¶1046:

¶1047: I: Hm.

¶1048:

¶1049: Then you have a discussion about it, and then, everybody's helping each other out.

¶1050:

¶1051: I: Mm.

¶1052:

> ¶1053: Because, um, we're just one team. Everybody's in there for one purpose, to help themselves.
> [P6]

Even in a strong group, P6 notes the danger of individual needs not being met by the life history section covered early on in the Core SOTP. The problem of younger group members not having a great deal of life history to relate is touched upon briefly, and in contrast the potential problem of those with long and complex life histories using this complexity to avoid directly addressing their offending behaviour is also discussed. The discussion of the benefits of participation (and conversely, the issues with non-participation highlighted here) again invoke the ideas of group members supporting one another in a reciprocal or transactional way. Similar issues were discussed above under the ordinate theme of Disclosure, but here the blame ascribed to the older group member is more ambiguous. The process of important details becoming lost seems to be described as being an intentional attempt to obfuscate and obscure difficult issues, but there may also be an implicit acknowledgement that a longer life history simply makes it more difficult for older group members to reflect on and concisely articulate the most relevant details:

> ¶1011: [inaudible] Um… [overlapping]. It, in a sense it's, it's okay but there's some certain times when, it could be a difficulty because if somebody's only twenty-two.
> ¶1012:
> ¶1013: I: Hm.
> ¶1014:
> ¶1015: Their life history, there's not much they could say.
> ¶1016:
> ¶1017: I: Hm.
> ¶1018:
> ¶1019: But if somebody who's fifty, sixty or fifty, there's too much to say about their life history.
> ¶1020:
> ¶1021: I: Mm.
> ¶1022:
> ¶1023: And then if that person is not willing to… Open up, probably about their offence, they could get the offence lost, within that life history, I don't know if you understand what I mean.
> [P6]

P4 makes a passing reference to a prisoner who was removed from his programme. His belief that the prisoner was the youngest on the group is noted, implying that the problems

arose due to a lack of maturity. This is however not explicitly explored, and the comment is made in the context of emphasising good group cohesion, despite the spread of ages:

¶677: Ah… [first name] and I was the oldest. 72. But the youngest… I suppose 30. And it ranged, from upwards to 45 in that…
¶678:
¶679: I: A mix.
¶680:
¶681: A mix, a mixed aged group.
¶682:
¶683: I: Right.
¶684:
¶685: But the youngest one, is the one… Got sent off.
¶686:
¶687: I: Right.
¶688:
¶689: [laughs] You know, he was the youngest, but, but, no thinking about it now, we all got on well. We all got on very well, yes.
[P4]

Whilst being around young prisoners on the wing was characterised by P4 either in terms of social disconnection or even physical threat, he spoke very differently of being around prisoners of a similar age to himself. His preference for interacting with prisoners of his own age was explained in terms of reduced conflict and more natural social interaction (the latter based on greater shared experiences and frames of reference). When probed, P4 notes that interacting with younger group members was not a problem within SOTP, and instead repeatedly emphasises the degree of group cohesion that he felt existed. Here his repeated use of the word 'family' [P4, 1357, 1361, 1365, 1373] within a short space of time is a marked contrast with the way in which age difference is described as a barrier on the wing. What could be seen as source of social division is reconceptualised as a source of unity, support and group cohesion, but only within the specific context of treatment:

¶1341: And they want to have music loud and, they want their programmes on the television, whereas- I'm with a youngster now, he's only 25, but he's good, we never row about television or anything else, but my experience in prison is it's better being with somebody of your own age group.

…

¶1349: [sigh] That's only my experience, you know… If you're with your own age group you've got more to discuss as, as well.
¶1350:

> ¶1351: I: Yeah. [inaudible] with the group, so how did that work on SOTP when you've got a range of ages?
> ¶1352:
> ¶1353: Oh yeah, yep, ah, um, as I said... I got on well with the younger ones...
> ¶1354:
> ¶1355: I: Mm.
> ¶1356:
> ¶1357: ...it's because we become a family. Yeah, and we always said that.
>
> ...
>
> ¶1367: I: Okay, so that's interesting, so on group that's slightly different from on the wing...
> ¶1368:
> ¶1369: Yes.
> ¶1370:
> ¶1371: I: ...where there's maybe more of a barrier.
> ¶1372:
> ¶1373: Very much different. But, as I said, we, we felt as though we become a family and it was easier to speak to them than it was anybody else on, on the wing.
> [P4]

It is notable that the mechanisms of support are described as operating in a mutual and horizontal fashion, with P4 noting that he would go to other group members for support, rather than automatically taking on a paternalistic and authoritative role due to his relatively greater age. The mutual structure of this support is consistent with the experiences of other group members, although P4 describes the nature of the bond as explicitly familial, rather than the slightly more boundaries support described by P6, and implicit in the latter's use of the more corporate terminology of teamwork (which captures the professional nature of the relationships, as well as the possibility that connections formed will be transient and temporary as compared to familial ones).

Sexual orientation and gender identity

Being out

The most common theme amongst participants who discussed sexual orientation was that of coming out and being out, both in the context of SOTP and in the wider prison establishment. Many felt comfortable with talking about sexual orientation in the context of SOTP, but expressed anxiety about doing so on the wing. External factors, such as being

on a VP wing, or being in an establishment that was perceived to be more accepting, also played an important role.

P2 here expresses some initial concerns about discussing his sexual interests with his SOTP group. He describes a slow process of becoming more comfortable with this (and reflects on the idea that his own preconceptions may have allowed his irrational thoughts to determine his behaviour). There is however ambiguity as to whether he is referring to his sexual interest in children, or being gay. Despite specifically being prompted to discuss his feelings on being open about his sexual orientation, his responses over the course of this exchange appear to be more focused on anxiety about discussing the details of his offence:

¶973: I: How did you think that they saw you, at the start.
¶974:
¶975: Uh, dirty paedophile.
¶976:
¶977: I: Mm.
¶978:
¶979: You see, I couldn't break that barrier down. Because I was different from them. Only in the offence. Not in what leads to it or whatever. You know, how we attain, our goals. That seemed to be the same. But the offence was different.
¶980:
¶981: I: Mm.
¶982:
¶983: And some of these chaps were married, and had children of their own. So, I always felt very, very defensive, you know, when I was in the hot seat. I mean you're defensive anyway, but, um they were asking questions that I didn't want answering.
[P2]

As this section of the interview continues, the use of the term 'strongly heterosexual' [P2, 999] by P2 to describe others on his SOTP group implies that orientation is seen as being a continuous variable rather than a discrete category. This can be read as an allusion to either a display of hyper-masculinity or to other strong expressions of what P2 regards as typically heterosexual male behaviour. Regarding his own identity, P2 also notes that being 'homosexual' [P2, 991] is a label that he did not apply to himself at the time in question. Instead he describes being a 'paedophile' [P2, 995] as the primary way in which he perceived himself. His initial anxiety that the other group members thought of him as a 'dirty paedophile' implies a fear of meeting with aggression or confrontation. This did not appear to have been an issue on the group, and this fear perhaps illustrates more about

P2's self-image at the time than the way in which others perceived him. A positive narrative of identity that shifts from one defined in terms of offence-related sexual interests to one focused on consensual adult relationships is constructed by P2's account as it continues. Such as shift demonstrates a positive life narrative of the kind that the Good Lives Model actively seeks to encourage. The ambiguity earlier in the interview however suggests that this transition has not yet been fully completed:

¶989: I: ...what was the make-up of the group, all heterosexual or was there a mix of homosexual ones-?
¶990:
¶991: No, no, I was the only one - Homosexual.
¶992:
¶993: I: Right.
¶994:
¶995: And at that time, I didn't realise that I was homosexual. I still saw myself as a paedophile. Alright, so... The rest of them was- I mean as far as I know, I mean nobody stood up and said, 'Ooh, I'm homosexual'.
¶996:
¶997: I: No one said. [overlapping]
¶998:
¶999: The way they come across all... Heterosexual. Strongly heterosexual. [P2]

One issue with investigating issues of sexual orientation in the context of treatment is that the experiences of those who choose not to self-identify may not be captured, particularly if participants such as P2 are drawing on hegemonic ideas of heterosexual masculinity in order to make an assessment as to others' sexual orientations. SOTP does represent a special case amongst treatment programmes in this regard, as its focus on moving from offence related to healthy sexual interests actively encourages disclosure in this area. As well as disclosing their thoughts and feelings in the lead up to offending, participants are also required to discuss issues such as the role of sexual fantasy in their general lives. Even so, some participants were not entirely certain as to the make-up of their groups in terms of sexual orientation, suggesting that some participants may choose not to discuss this if possible. P5 describes a process of actively deducing group members' orientations, based primarily on the characteristics of their victims. The validity of these assumptions is implicitly questioned with the use of qualifying phrases such as 'I, um, was pretty sure' [P5, 441] (as opposed to certain) and 'as far as I know...' [P5, 445], but at other points his assessment is stated with a degree of confidence:

> ¶439: I: Okay. What was the makeup of the group like in terms of sexuality?
> ¶440:
> ¶441: [pause] There was one... two... three... there was four on there that I, um, was pretty sure were either bisexual or gay.
>
> ...
>
> ¶451: I: Okay. I mean did that so they didn't actually didn't disclose in the group...?
> ¶452:
> ¶453: Yeah. Not everyone discloses that, but you could have some kind of evidence from the type of offending they are doing and who they are doing.
> ¶454:
> ¶455: I: Right.
> ¶456:
> ¶457: And who they are doing it against.
> ¶458:
> ¶459: I: Okay.
> ¶460:
> ¶461: So, um, for instance for some of the child offenders are boys and girls.
> ¶462:
> ¶463: I: Hm.
> ¶464:
> ¶465: So you could obviously assume straight away they're bisexual.
> [P5]

Ethnicity and culture

Of the three sub-populations from which prisoner participants were recruited (and around which the interview schedule was based) issues affecting BME group members received the least attention from participants during interviews. This was the case both for the three participants who identified as being BME, as well as for the remaining seven who identified as White.

Being misunderstood

The only issue to emerge strongly as a theme regarding experiences of SOTP was a pattern of cultural (and at times linguistic) misunderstanding. This was not generally ascribed to perceived prejudice or the fear of discrimination in the context of SOTP (although racism was more freely and explicitly identified in the wider prison). A typical situation is described here by P6:

> ¶689: Because there was a, a particular statement I made which was misinterpreted. And that's one thing that seemed to be happening in the group a lot.
> ¶690:
> ¶691: I: Okay.
> ¶692:
> ¶693: Because I'm, I'm, I'm from Africa. I'm an African, got an African background.
> ¶694:
> ¶695: I: Mm.
> ¶696:
> ¶697: And, where I come from, most families, the man is the head of the house, where in the woman doesn't work.
> ¶698:
> ¶699: I: Mm.
> ¶700:
> ¶701: All the woman does is cook, clean and look after the kids.
> ¶702:
> ¶703: I: Mm.
> ¶704:
> ¶705: That was misrepresented because I told them as well, I said for my family, my mum and dad works.
>
> …
>
> ¶717: So, that's sort of, um, where the men being over dominant and the woman doing all the work didn't happen in my household. And, I was always taught to treat everybody with respect.
> [P6]

Following this section of the interview P6 goes on to reiterate several times that he does not hold the view that men should dominate women, and even touches upon the possibility of his comments during the interview being taken out of context and misinterpreted in order to illustrate his point:

> ¶735: I: [pause] So, with that misinterpretation, how did that, come about? I mean, how did people get that wrong?
> ¶736:
> ¶737: Um, [overlapping] um, it's just like, I'm telling you now, but when you're writing it out you write it, that's my view.
> ¶738:
> ¶739: I: Yeah.
> ¶740:
> ¶741: So, by writing it as that's my view, it's like I'm saying that's how I was brought up, which, that's not how, that's not how I was brought up.
> [P6]

P4's insistence on clarifying his lack of prejudice perhaps suggests a comparable anxiety to avoid being seen as racist in the context of the interview itself:

¶1025: Oh I'm white British, yeah obviously, yeah I'm white British, but as I've said there was other nationalities there, and, ah… [pause] I've never been race prejudiced.
¶1026:
¶1027: I: Yeah.
¶1028:
¶1029: So, therefore this has helped me, and it helped me very well on this, 'cos there was, different nationalities, and I'm not race prejudiced.
[P4]

It may be that the lack of focus on ethnicity across all interviews simply reflected the finding that this was not as salient for participants as other forms of diversity and aspects of identity. Extrapolating from P4's concerns to explicitly clarify a lack of racism, it could also be inferred that other participants restricted what they said on the topic, not necessarily in order to conceal racist attitudes, but because of a fear of inadvertently appearing prejudiced that was particularly salient for ethnicity. Given the issues of misinterpretation raised by some group members the possibility of not being understood may have further exacerbated concerns about being viewed as prejudiced.

4.4: Superordinate theme 3 – Group dynamics

This superordinate theme did not appear as strongly in the data (as compared to the two reported above). Figure 4.4.i illustrates that subthemes were evident across fewer cases, and involved fewer citations. It is however reported here because of its relevance to the research questions. Ordinate themes relating to group dynamics provide context and additional detail on how participants subjectively experienced social interactions and power dynamics within the group, touching on aspects of social identity. Whilst considering group dynamics involves a widening of focus beyond the individual, these issues are framed in reference to the experiences of individual participants, maintaining a strong focus on subjective phenomenology.

Figure 4.4.i: Superordinate theme 'Group dynamics', with hierarchical ordinate themes. Figures in parentheses are (n,N), where n = number of cases, N = total number of citations.

Disruption and conflict

Several participants discussed the behaviour of their fellow group members causing disruption and conflict during treatment. There were also instances of participants acknowledging their own challenging behaviours during treatment, and describing their experiences of either coming into conflict with others, or having more helpful experiences of being challenged.

Coping with disruption

Disruption could be experienced both in an active form (with disrespectful or aggressive behaviours from other group members) or a distinct but often equally troubling passive form (involving a lack of active engagement). P5 describes examples of both here. The active form of disruption is described as causing feelings of anger and frustration, but P5 initially finds it harder to describe his emotional reaction to another group member who was falling asleep and showing minimal levels of participation. As well as his initial lack of participation, it is this person's inability to take on board feedback from facilitators that appears to upset P5.

> ¶370: I: Um, were there any issues or difficulties along the way that stand out?
> ¶371:
> ¶372: I mean, for me personally the only real issue I had on the group, um, we had one guy on the group who was argumentative with almost everybody on

the group cos he really didn't wanna be on there, and there was one guy on there who was falling asleep almost on a daily basis.

…

¶388: We knew he would be confrontational and it would go on and on…
¶389:
¶390: I: Right.
¶391:
¶392: …and on and on and on. Right, so that person you could see people were, not angry but frustrated by, by that individual and the other individual who was kind of lazy didn't really want to participate hardly ever spoke kept falling asleep in the class um, I'm not sure what the emotion is that you would describe it but he was like he was constantly pulled up on that.

…

¶404: Um, he was confronted in the group on a couple of occasions by direct challenging from inmates and more, um, more passive kind of challenging from the facilitators, where, where they are actively encouraging him and saying, 'We know you are on medication and stuff but you kind of have to focus and give respect to the other guys by, uh, listening and watching what's happening when they are doing their pieces…
[P5]

P3 describes a group member whose behaviour had a direct effect on him, causing him to become angry and twice leave the group room. There is a reference here to this person being 'judgemental' [P3, 474], but it is the lack of free and honest disclosure that is most strongly condemned here, again appealing to an implicit transactional group contract relating to equal participation. P3 describes his personal frustration and resentment, but also uses the idea of 'an atmosphere in the room' [P3, 506] to underline the impact on the group as a whole.

¶486: I got angry. I got really angry, I walked, I stormed out, I stormed out of that section twice because of the same individual.

…

¶494: You know, he, he- When you would ask him what he's done he'll say, 'I had sexual contact'.
¶495:
¶496: I: Mm.
¶497:
¶498: And that was it. That, that was all we knew about this guy. This, this, this underage girl, came to his house. It was raining. He, and according to his story, she asked if he could, if she could stay there, until her parents got home.
¶499:
¶500: I: Mm.

¶501:
¶502: There was some sexual contact, and he was arrested.
¶503:
¶504: I: Okay.
¶505:
¶506: That's, and it didn't matter what question, every time we asked him a question he would go off to a beach in, in the Caribbean and say somebody would be walking round with a mobile phone. And it was some stupid, stupid thing, and you wouldn't get an answer. And it was really, really annoying and every time it came to his, one of his assignments everybody just... [sighs] You can feel an atmosphere in the room.
[P3]

The breaking of this rule within the group contract, and the reasons why P3 finds this upsetting, are further discussed here. Again, the problem is not with directly aggressive or unhelpful behaviours, but with a *lack* of participation, both when called on to honestly disclose and when questioning others. The observed group member's refusal to engage in the correct way is here linked not just give a negative impact on their own progress, but on the dynamics of the group as a whole:

¶1047: You get the people who you know don't want to be there.
¶1048:
¶1049: I: Okay.
¶1050:
¶1051: Right. And I found that, the people that didn't want to be there, I didn't really ask a lot of questions. 'Cos I felt I was wasting me time. Because they weren't gonna take it on board anyway.
¶1052:
¶1053: I: Mm hm.
¶1054:
¶1055: You know, so, why bother? I've got other problems, you know. If they're not interested then I'm not gonna waste my time on them.
¶1056:
¶1057: I: Mm.
¶1058:
¶1059: So that was part of the dynamic. And the, the other problem was of course, because they was sitting there and they weren't interested, they weren't asking questions either...
¶1060:
¶1061: I: Mm.
¶1062:
¶1063: ...you know, of other members. And that was, was... I felt that was, they were letting the group down.
¶1064:
¶1065: I: Mm.
¶1066:

¶1067: Because the whole idea of the group is to challenge. To learn. I mean you're only there for a couple of hours a day. And if you can't use that time, you know, to the best of your ability, then you're wasting time.
[P3]

Not all reactions to limited participation were characterised by anger or frustration. P2 describes a process of disengaging from those who were not felt to be contributing, and 'letting the group down' [P2, 1063]. P6 presents a seemingly more sympathetic account of a group member who struggled to contribute, attributing this to a lack of the tools that could be picked up on other programmes to help with articulating difficult thoughts.

¶1121: For my own particular group I think there was one individual that was, he found it very difficult to, express himself unless the, ah, facilitators, ah... Prompt him to say something.
¶1122:
¶1123: I: Alright, and before you linked that to not going on TSP, that that can make it harder for...
¶1124:
¶1125: Yeah, yeah [overlapping] because if, I think if he had done TSP, probably would have just sort of given that form of release to help him to express himself, because there was, some exercises that you did.
¶1126:
¶1127: I: Hm.
¶1128:
¶1129: Within TSP that helps you to, communicate.
¶1130:
¶1131: I: Okay.
¶1132:
¶1133: It's sort of forces you to communicate, and if then it becomes natural.
[P6]

P4 notes a more direct example of aggression and conflict that he found upsetting, and that eventually led to a group member being removed. The reference to 'a couple of little conflicts' [P4, 303] at first appears to downplay the seriousness of the incidents. Although the issues was between two other group members P4 talk about how this did affect him and made him feel uncomfortable, attributing this to his own personality. The finding that the conflicts carried over between the wing and the group room is highlighted here, implying a troubling transgression of the implicit understanding that the group room is a safe and therapeutic space.

¶303: We had a couple of little conflicts, happen during the course.

¶304:
¶305: I: Okay.
¶306:
¶307: Between, two of them, you know, didn't happen in the class room it happened off of the wing. But, it came back to the classroom and, you know, that got to me as well.

...

¶327: Yeah, and but, um, it, the, it carried on in the, in the class, so it was cancelled and I think we had a week or so off.
¶328:
¶329: I: Okay.
¶330:
¶331: While it was resolved with, whether they came back on the course or- But to me, that was... [sigh] I'm that sort of person, I don't like, I don't like, like things like that, you know conflict...
¶332:
¶333: I: Sure.
¶334:
¶335: ...like fighting and thing. So that did get to me, but I, I did settle down once we got going again.
[P4]

When describing conflict with the SOTP group, this was generally discussed in relation to other prisoners rather than staff, although P3 does discuss instances of both here. In this example the conflict reported with facilitators stems directly from the conflict with a challenging fellow group member. It may be that prisoner participants felt less able to directly criticise staff during the interview, but the general lack of reported issues is notable.

¶600: I: Right. Um, and so your experiences with facilitators were always positive? Was there any sort of conflict at any point or was it all...?
¶601:
¶602: Only, only conflict was with me and a certain individual, and, ah, the two times that I walked out of the sessions, I did go, I did go back, but I had to go out. It, it's, it's my way of protecting myself, ah, from, ah, aggression.
¶603:
¶604: I: Okay.
¶605:
¶606: It's, it's, it's the way I've coped with it, I'll walk away from conflict. Ah, and, ah, it's, it's the only way I can deal with it. And then I'll come back to the situation. But it was always, it was always the same facilitator was all the time it was the female [first name].
¶607:
¶608: I: Mm.
¶609:

> ¶610: She come up, she came out and actually, ah, talked, you know, talked to me, and she agreed with what I was saying, but… It annoyed me that a man was still on the course and he actually still on the course and he actually got, he got… He… [pause] He did, ah, thingy for it, and he never opened up for anything. Ah… And, ah, he, he came off the course in the end. But yet he actually went through the post-review even though they told him he'd have to do something on the outside.
> [P3]

Being challenged

This was a feature of several accounts but appeared more strongly in some. As well as attributing this to clashing personalities of group members P1 here discusses his own problems with trust, and expresses both implicit and explicit criticisms of staff.

> ¶118: You know, everybody's got different treatment needs and different issues, you know, and I think, some people, you know, some people's issues are way out there. You know, my issues, I have a lot of trust issues. A lot of, ah, a lot of, um, impulse, a lot of, ah, paranoia, extreme thinking and stuff like that. And then you're putting other people who are sky high up there like me on the group. And you're getting clashes, and you're getting some people that are strongly in denial. Some people that are denying their offence,
> [P1]

There is also an apparent process of inter-subjectivity at work here, whereby P1 was defining his own personality and identity in relation to others. For example, he acknowledges his own issues with trusting others, impulsiveness, paranoia and extreme thinking, all of which he describes elsewhere as obstacles to engaging with treatment that he eventually began to negotiate and manage. Others in the group are described as having similar traits but these are seen here as being 'way out there' and thus implied to be stronger than his own. The suggestion is that levels of denial amongst some of his fellow group members were so high as to make any engagement with treatment extremely difficult. Although not stated outright, the focus on the presence of such group members could be read as a subtle criticism of staff responsible for assessing prisoners and establishing the group make up prior to the programme. When discussing disruptive behaviour, P1 explicitly described this as not being managed optimally by staff. Here he describes facilitators dealing inappropriately with resistant or problematic group members (see theme 'Opening the door' for more on this).

¶122: Some people are denying their offence and people are trying to push them, push them. Some of them are lying, some of them are not. You know, and it just, and it- You know, it's starts becoming a personalisation and thing, and you know, I think facilitators, some facilitators, um, some facil- Some facilitators, don't, wanna take responsibility for their behaviour sometimes you know, their, their flaws in, you know in the group and in their, in their behaviour. And they, they, they, don't wanna- When you're supposed to take control of a situation they're not taking control of a situation, and it's letting the situation go off, and then it's affecting other people who have come to the group.
[P1]

P2 discusses fellow group members whose behaviour is described as unhelpful. Rather than problematic group members who actively disrupted the group as a whole and caused conflict, P2 instead talks about an unhelpful lack of engagement, linked to a low level of motivation. There is a clear link here to the social function of equal and active contribution touched upon by P4 and P6, when discussing the issue of disclosure, although here it is widened to encompass other forms of participation. Given that P2 viewed peers actively challenging others as an essential element of a successful SOTP group, this lack of engagement was described as having a negative impact on the group as a whole, but clearly distinct from the type of disruption described by P1. This could be evidence of an underlying difference in the way that P1 and P2 each viewed the roles and responsibilities of group members and of facilitators. P1 highlights the shortcomings of facilitators when controlling problematic group members, thus implying a conception of treatment that is staff-led. P2, by focusing on the damage done by a lack of participation on the part of group members, appears to prioritise the importance of peer-led support.

When discussing being questioned or challenged themselves, participants often framed this in positive terms. For example, P1 noting that it was appropriate for him to be challenged when he overstepped boundaries. At other times, what was originally experienced as an aggressive or uncomfortable line of questioning was reconceptualised as a form of support. P3 reflects on being questioned by others:

¶432: I: Okay. And kind of on the flip side of that what did you take from, from the other group members? What was, um, what did the group bring to you?
¶433:

> ¶434: [pause] They give me support, when it was, when it was my turn because I felt like it was a one man show, but I felt like I had the whole group against me. Because… My offence was against, against an adult, so they was asking questions… About that, you know, maybe they were thinking if an offence had happened to themselves, something like that, or their partner. Ah-
>
> ¶435:
>
> ¶436: I: So you say you, you were getting support from but also used the phrase, they were against, against you.
>
> ¶437:
>
> ¶438: No, they weren't really against me, it felt, it felt as if, I had everybody coming at me.
>
> ¶439:
>
> ¶440: I: Right.
>
> ¶441:
>
> ¶442: Yeah, because, because they was so many of them, where, where I was asking questions about their offence, it only seemed to be me, because I felt that, maybe they would leave themselves open if they're asked a question like I've asked a question to somebody else because it may reflect on their offence.
>
> [P3]

Being supported by other group members

There is some significant cross-over between the areas of support and challenge within the group room, and as noted above challenging others through respectful but uncomfortable questions was seen as a positive form of contribution by many. Here the structure of various forms of support are considered, with a distinction made between group members seeing themselves as sharing their knowledge and experience with others and leading the group, and those who saw themselves as part of a more mutual and reciprocal social structure or peers without a clear leader.

Leading the group: Hierarchical forms of support

This role of the expert and knowledgeable group member can extend across groups as well. P5 describes being approached by staff to be a named programme graduate and to mentor group members on new programmes. What this means for P5 is not explored further, but there is a parallel to be drawn with the way in which P1 discussed the importance of 'titles' and special roles within prison, such as 'equality rep'. P1 talks explicitly about how these roles were an important part of his identity, how they bolstered his sense of self-esteem, and how he experienced a difficult process of adjustment when they were taken away. It

may be that there is a similar process at work with P5, whereby the role of a responsible and knowledgeable expert is something that forms an important sense of self-worth and has been integrated into his sense of self. Certainly, the terms in which he takes about this are consistent with such a reading. For example, he highlights positive feedback from a facilitator that pertains to his level of understanding of SOTP. Caution should be taken to not conflate the experiences of these two participants, as they could equally be read as distinct in important respects. For example, P1 reflects thoughtfully on the importance that holding these roles hold for him, although he says relatively little about what he gains from sharing that expertise with other (which P5 does at greater length).

¶298: I: Okay. Um, um, ah, would you recommend it [SOTP] to other prisoners that you come across?
¶299:
¶300: Absolutely and I've, I even one of the psychology team who actually who was my facilitator on one of my groups, um, she approached me and said like um we think you done well on the course and you understood the course material really well.
¶301:
¶302: I: Mm.
¶303:
¶304: Is it okay if we put your name on the poster for any new inmates that are coming in.

…

¶320: I've had two or three come up and ask, and ask different questions like, about what kind of material do you cover on the group, and do I have to talk loads about my offence. Um, and, them kind of questions.
¶321:
¶322: I: Okay.
¶323:
¶324: How long does the group run for? Do they do loads of homework? Things most people are concerned about.
[P5]

Mutual, horizontal forms of support

Whilst P5 did note his role in mentoring new SOTP group members, his language also reflects a very mutual form of peer support experienced on his own SOTP group. Taken together these suggest a positive narrative of gradually moving from the position of learners supporting one another, and then later progressing to passing on knowledge to new learners.

¶603: I: Um, so what was it like when you went out after a session and you walked back on the wing.
¶604:
¶605: Um, basically come back on the wing everyone got on with their own lives, but when it came to um, things like homework there were 'bout half were really really supportive of other members...
¶606:
¶607: I: Right.
¶608:
¶609: ...and we used to kind of um bounce ideas off of each other and stuff, sometimes on a one to one basis but sometimes there might be two or three of us in the room and we get together and say right how I tackle this or do you think this is a good approach I just done a victim letter, how do you think that reads?
¶610:
¶611: I: Right.
¶612:
¶613: Yeah do you think that can be improved, um, or, um, I'm not sure I've done this right, how do you feel about that do ya know what I mean?
¶614:
¶615: I: Yeah.
¶616:
¶617: And we just kind of bounced things off like that so yeah most of the group outside of the sessions were quite supportive of each other.
[P5]

Others described more tension between the two structures of support. P3 here discusses being seen as providing a hierarchical form of support, explicitly drawing on the idea of family and noting that he was perceived as the 'daddy' [P3, 1232] of the group. There are at least two distinct ways in which the use of this word in this context can be interpreted. 'Daddy' can be read as evoking a familial-type relation, or might be equally be interpreted as a term interchangeable with words such as 'Boss', with more of a focus on authority and power. P3 is uncomfortable with the use of the term and discusses wanting to provide a more equal and mutual form of support.

¶1230: I: How did you see yourself, while, while you were interacting with other group members?
¶1231:
¶1232: [pause] I just seen myself as... A key member. Ah, there was one guy on there that he used to refer to me as the daddy, and it used to really, really annoy me.
¶1233:
¶1234: I: Mm.
¶1235:

> ¶1236: And as I was rolling off he was next one to roll off and he, he said he was gonna be the daddy now, and he, he had the big, he had a big thing about that. This is the same guy who was, who was the, ah… Who was the bisexual.
> ¶1237:
> ¶1238: I: Hm.
> ¶1239:
> ¶1240: I: Why did that annoy you?
> ¶1241:
> ¶1242: Because I didn't see myself as a daddy. You know, I see myself as equal to everybody else was there.
> [P3]

The idea of a family dynamic is explicitly discussed by P4. In contrast to P3, the relationship described is that of siblings or close friends, rather than a parent. P4 describes receiving support with difficult issues, as well as everyday social contact and interaction:

> ¶603: I: Okay. Say a bit more, more about that. You say like a family. What does family mean to you?
> ¶604:
> ¶605: Well… It, you know, not necessarily what we done on the course, but if we had anything wrong we could go and talk to them. You know, and one or two of them because of my age, they were younger, you know, ah, we got very friendly, you know we were talking about what we done on the course and everything else, you know, how we felt about it, you know and, you know, we really got to be friends, good friends.
> ¶606:
> ¶607: I: Okay. So you felt supported?
> ¶608:
> ¶609: Supportive, very supportive. Yes, very. Very much so.
>
> …
>
> ¶617: Two or three of them always used to come down and have a chat with me. [inaudible] [first name] and I were both on the 1s, they used to come down and chat with us, and… Have a laugh and a joke with us, and which I felt was good, and I only got that out of by doing the course.
> ¶618:
> ¶619: I: Hm.
> ¶620:
> ¶621: You know. As I say, we become like brothers.
> [P4]

The desire to directly support fellow group members within the group room was present in some cases, but not universally expressed. P6 is more ambivalent about the utility of peers directly challenging each other. He does note the role of a strong and supportive group in creating an atmosphere that is conducive to making progress in treatment, but

individual agency and a pre-existing motivation to change are also emphasised as being crucial first steps towards addressing offending behaviour. The words 'respect' or 'respected' [P6, 958] are used five time in quick succession, illustrating the form of support that P6 values highly. Respect is described as a mutual process, and in mutual, pragmatic and transactional terms. Distinct from purely altruistic motivations for showing respect practical benefits of doing so (being treated in the same way) are spelled out.

> ¶953: Um… I got on with everybody because, um, we all there to help ourselves, because entered that, class, that classroom is a first step to helping yourself. Because, um, it's just like if you're an alcoholic. If you don't realise that you're an alcoholic, you're never gonna be able to help yourself.
> ¶954:
> ¶955: I: Hm.
> ¶956:
> ¶957: So by entering that classroom was a first step of helping ourselves, you know. So I respected everybody as an individual. And then, I treat them with respect at all times. Because I wanted to treat them with respect and respect my view, and I respect their views. But that doesn't mean that we don't have a clash of opinions.
> ¶958:
> ¶959: I: Yeah.
> ¶960:
> ¶961: We'd have that clash of opinions because I could voice my opinion now, it's up to you if you're not taking it, you know, not, I'm only trying to help you, and whenever you've got an opinion about me and what I'm saying, it's always nice to voice it out. I might not like it, but, I might go back in my cell and think about it then appreciate what he just told me.
> [P6]

Mixed offence types

Participants reported being on SOTP groups involving those who had offended against children and those who had offended against adults. Rather than causing conflict this diversity was construed by some as a strength. Whilst some reference was made to hierarchies of offence types on the wing, this was not reflected in the way that participants experienced group dynamics in the context of SOTP.

Participants experienced some initial anxieties about disclosing the details of their offence, but generally discovered that these were unfounded. There is a connection here to the way in which participants saw honest disclosure as important, although there is specific fear discussed here that disclosing the nature of his offence will lead to rejection by or conflict with the group. P4 here describes what appears to be a greater degree of acceptance than he was initially expecting. As he continues, he does introduce an implicit question regarding the degree of acceptance. His reflection that he was indirectly inferring acceptable because of a lack of conflict following his disclosure makes adds a tentative note to his account:

¶347: They was all different offences, mixed offences. Mixed, yeah, very much so, a mix. Mixed offence. But, um, [sigh]. But obviously you have to come out with everything that, that, that you done, what your offence was.
¶348:
¶349: I: Hm.
¶350:
¶351: But, yes, I mean, alright I thought to myself, 'It could be hard', but then again it wasn't. By coming out with the truth… With everything it made things better.
¶352:
¶353: I: Mm hm.
¶354:
¶355: The class accepted it, you understand what I mean?
¶356:
¶357: I: Okay.
¶358:
¶359: They accepted it, you know. Well… There was no, conflicts to me afterwards, you know.
¶360:
¶361: I: Okay.
¶362:
¶363: You know, I mean I [sigh]. I don't know whether I consider that mine was a bad offence, or theirs was a bad offence, but I didn't think about anything, just accepted what one another came, came out with, we accepted it, you know.
[P4]

P3 notes that a group that is less diverse with regards to offence type can be experienced as a more challenging environment. He discusses feeling as though he was required to constructively question and challenge others, and that that this task would have been more equally distributed if the group was more balanced. Conversely, when it was his turn to be questioned P3 describes feeling somewhat overwhelmed, because of the number of

questions he was being asked. When this is explored he clarifies that he did not see this as a deliberate attempt to overwhelm or upset him, but that this was merely a consequence of the number of questions he was dealing with. This appears to be an example of active reinterpretation, whereby P3 is making sense of and re-evaluating his lived experience at the time (characterised at the time by feeling more at odds with and separate from the group). This is consistent with both the double hermeneutic underpinning IPA (Smith et al., 2009) and an 'active interview' characterised by transparent forms of meaning making on the part of both interviewer and participant (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Diversity is instead considered as an advantage here, because a lack of congruence with regards to victim characteristics allows group members to more readily challenge one another.

¶844: It was yeah, there was more, it wasn't so much, I think it would have been better if the offence type was more mixed.
¶845:
¶846: I: Okay.
¶847:
¶848: Then, you know, I felt, like I said I felt a bit, a bit of a loner.
¶849:
¶850: I: Why, why would it have been better if you'd had sort of a better mix of…?
¶851:
¶852: Because it wouldn't have only been me asking the questions all that time.
¶853:
¶854: I: Right.
¶855:
¶856: If I had somebody who's on, maybe another two or three people…
¶857:
¶858: I: Hm.
¶859:
¶860: …who was the same, offence against an adult, as I was, then there would have been, no, a different perspective to ask different questions [inaudible]. Yeah.
[P3]

Initial perceptions about SOTP are also discussed by P5, who talks explicitly about the expectations that specific terminology generate amongst the wider prison population. The term 'sex offender' is implied to be understood by many to refer only to those who offend against children, again appealing to an implicit hierarchy or scale that deems some offences to be more deserving of stigma than others. Rather than disproportionately stigmatising those who offend against children, this hierarchy can alternatively be viewed as one that minimised the seriousness of sex offences committed against an adult. A direct corollary of

P5 account is that offences such as the rape of an adult are construed as merely violent offences, rather than sexual offences.

> ¶174: I: Um, did you hear anything about it from other prisoners before you went on?
> ¶175:
> ¶176: Um, I almost certainly did hear about groups and stuff. I don't remember specifically what I'd heard about SOTP and stuff. But, um, the general consensus was they was all molesters and stuff like that, they never mentioned anything about, ah, adult rapists.
> ¶177:
> ¶178: I: Mm.
> ¶179:
> ¶180: That was general consensus, all sex offenders do children basically. That was general sort of amongst the prison population.
> [P5]

Challenging the hierarchy of offending

P6 here challenges an incomplete or uncritical understanding of the term 'sex offender', such as the one discussed by P5 above. Framing in comments in the context of being non-judgemental, he talks about his own identity as 'just a sex offender with an adult female' [P6, 371]. As well as a clear acceptance of the nature of his offence, this phrase directly challenges any division or necessary qualitative difference based on the age of a victim. Rather than construing those who offend against children as a separate out group, worthy of greater stigma or presenting with more serious risk, P6 instead talks about the whole group as being homogenous.

> ¶367: All, for me, for me personally it's, where there's someone- If I've done it, and somebody's done whatever they've done, I cannot judge that person.
> ¶368:
> ¶369: I: Hm.
> ¶370:
> ¶371: Because, doesn't, it doesn't mean that because he's a paedophile or... I'm just a sex offender with an adult female.
> ¶372:
> ¶373: I: Hm.
> ¶374:
> ¶375: That doesn't make any difference between me and that person, then I'm not gonna judge that person because I've wrong myself.
> ¶376:
> ¶377: I: Okay.
> ¶378:

> ¶379: So, I'm open and willing to help anybody that's there, so.
> [P6]

P1 here discusses using the insights he has gained to challenge hierarchical social orders based on offence type, similarly rejecting the idea that some sexual offences are more worthy of disgust than others. He reports directly challenging related assumptions about heteronormative masculinity that would seem to make his offence acceptable to some other prisoners, or at least not worthy of explicit disgust. Here, he rejects the idea that being heterosexual and sexually active precludes him from viewing himself as a sex offender. Instead he emphasises his similarity with other sex offenders, rejecting the idea that there is a hierarchy of acceptable offences. He notes that this is a realisation that he came to after leaving a previous establishment where he had engaged in treatment.

> ¶1118: People say, 'Yeah [inaudible] fucking nonces, rapists', I'll say, 'Yeah, but I'm in here for the same thing'. But people say, 'Yeah, but you're not like them, you're different. You've got kids, you've got 'nuff girlfriends and ting'. I was like, 'Nah, nah, there ain't no difference bruv, you know, we're all the same at the end of the day', you know, but, um...
>
> ...
>
> ¶1130: When I first came in, you know, everybody was tell, telling me, 'Oh, you're different to them-', and I'd be like... I think when I left [previous establishment], I realised I'm no different, you know, we're all the same. We've just got treatment needs, I think, I think probably, it more dawned on me while I did the SOTP.
> ¶1131:
> ¶1132: Mm.
> ¶1133:
> ¶1134: I've had to be challenging SOs and senior officers on the wing. 'Ah these fucking paedophiles', and that, and I'm like, 'If you understood, you know, if you understood, you know, the, um, the reasons how people become the way they become, then you'd understand'. You know, and they'd be like. I'd say to the SO 'I'm struggling with being on this wing with paedophiles, where sometimes I see them on the news and then I see them on the landing. I'm thinking of my kids and that'. But then I remember the group work that we were doing. I remember my offence. And I remember, you know, the people that are genuinely engaging in the course to better themselves. And, you know, I'm not here to judge no one, I'm just here to sort myself out. But, um, I think, um... Some people say it works, some people say it doesn't work, you know, but I, I, I can definitely testify that it's helped me
> [P1]

4.5: Conclusion

In this chapter, a narrative account of prisoners' experiences of the Core SOTP has been presented. This has included an exploration of how the therapeutic process itself is experienced, issues of disclose and deconstruction, and a consideration of the importance of therapeutic space (in both a physical and a social sense). Participants generally expressed positive sentiments about the programme and appeared keen to emphasise the progress they had made. The motivations for self-presenting as a 'good' group member are touched upon in section 8.3 in the context of considering suggestibility in the research interview. The particular experiences of prisoners self-identifying as BME, gay or bisexual, or physically disabled have also been explored. As emergent themes relating to age were strongly evident in the data, they have also been included under the super-ordinate theme of identity. In contrast, there was relatively limited emphasis on ethnicity amongst spontaneous responses from participants. The third and final super-ordinate theme for prisoner participants covers the complex group dynamics experiences amongst prisoners. Challenge, disruption, support, and a social order based on offence type are all issues to negotiate alongside participants' individual progress through treatment. Complexity arises from the many ways that each of these can manifest, as well as the ways in which they can combine.

These superordinate themes have addressed both of the original research questions, touching on their general experiences of treatment, issues of individual and group identity, as well as inter- and intra-group dynamics. As well as discussing these issues, additional unanticipated points were also raised. For example, although not an aspect of diversity highlighted in the interview schedule and research design, age was something discussed by a number of prisoner participants. These have been included because of their importance to participants, and their relevance to the overarching area of interest for the programme of study (diversity and responsivity in the context of Core SOTP). In the following chapter, selected aspects of this narrative account are subjected to higher order analysis, with a focus on social structures, dynamics of power and support, and narratives of reconstructed identities.

Chapter 5: Experiences of SOTP group members – Discussion

Data from study 1 (prisoner participants) are subjected to a process of higher order interpretation in order to draw additional inferences and to go beyond the phenomenological account presented in chapter 4. Issues running across identified themes and relating to treatment and identity (at both an individual and group level) are discussed in the context of existing literature.

5.1: Introduction

In chapter 4, a phenomenological and descriptive account of the data obtained from prisoner participants was presented. This was combined with some discussion and initial analysis, but was structured around the themes that emerged from the data. This chapter builds on that foundation to focus on higher order interpretation, seeking to make further inferences and theoretical links across themes, but doing so in a way that remains rooted in the lived experience of participants. The original literature review is drawn on to consider the explanatory power of theoretical models and to explore how consistent participants' experiences are with existing research. Literature considered as part of the supplementary review is also incorporated in order to more fully interpret findings relating to unanticipated topics. For example, participants' discussion of the processes of social isolation or integration relating to age differences with a therapeutic group.

5.2: From 'the big I am' to 'therapy head'

As described in chapter 4, prisoners experienced distinct norms regarding acceptable behaviour in different contexts within the wider prison. The contrasts drawn between the typically guarded and threatening atmosphere of the wing and the more therapeutic SOTP group room can be understood in terms of different expressions of hegemonic masculinity. Thus, the environment of the wing was characterised as discouraging the display of genuine emotion or any aspects of identity that could be perceived as a weakness, such as being open about being gay. The narrow set of acceptable behaviours and identities expressed (as well as the related proscribed behaviours and identities) in the context of the wing is consistent with the 'inmate hegemonic masculinity' described by Sykes and Cullen (1992).

Those who were housed on main wings were also guarded about the nature of their offence. It can be inferred that the reason for this feared or actual aggression from fellow prisoners was due to their 'otherness' in relation to a hegemonic form of masculinity in which sexual attention should be focused exclusively on adult women. It should however be noted that whilst participants did contrast the wing and the group room in this way the comparison may serve to obscure or over-simplify the situation. For example, Stevens (2015) conducted interviews with 24 male former prisoners, and established that whilst neither consensual or coercive sex in prison were openly discussed, many gay or bisexual men did feel able to be honest about their sexual orientation. In contrast, participants from the current sample expressed a fear of being physically attacked, and such a fear of violence provides support for the existence of highly structured power relations amongst prisoners and staff. Messerschmidt's (2001) emphasises the socially constructed nature of these power relations. This is consistent with participants' experiences of differences across establishments, across different wings within an establishment and in other contexts such as work or education.

In each of these settings it is suggested that the need for and salience of hegemonic masculinity varied depending on the social context. A cohesive and supportive SOTP group minimises the need to mask emotion in order to avoid showing weakness, being socially 'othered' or being physically attacked. The aim of the SOTP and other accredited interventions is to develop a therapeutic environment that actively discourages this by emphasising the need for disclosure and encouraging group members to openly discuss thoughts, emotions, and sexual interests. Staff participants often described a process of setting clear ground rules and eliminating any hierarchies of offending within the group (see staff theme 'setting up the group', section 6.4), thus working to maintain the safe and therapeutic environment that prisoner participants described and valued. If required, staff actively challenged those who had offended against adults and who displayed excessive hostility towards those who had offended against children.

The majority of prisoners interviewed described a narrative that involved moving from having their behaviour closely dictated by the norms of hegemonic masculinity (and often being personally invested in these norms) to rejecting some or all of these norms as they progressed through treatment. In most cases it was Core SOTP that was identified as a crucial period of change, but there was variation with some going through this process of

revaluation on previous programmes, such as Enhanced Thinking Skills. For those with experience of Extended SOTP, it was the later more intensive programme that brought about great change. Whilst these narratives vary in shape, there are notable qualitative commonalities in terms of the nature of the change experienced with regards to identity, both at an induvial level and in terms of the social groups that participants identified with. The usefulness of Social Identity Theory in understanding these dynamics is explored further below (section 5.4). There was also a connection made between the parallel processes of changing self-image and making progress in treatment, with causal relationships running in both directions. The Good Lives Model (GLM) (Ward et al., 2012) provides one possible framework for understanding how these causal relationships operate, and why considering issues of identity may be important for ensuring the effectiveness of the SOTP. The final third of the Core SOTP is taken up with the management of future risk, with a strong emphasis on encouraging the establishment of positive approach goals, rather than avoidance goals. The reformulation of identity being linked with reduced risk of reoffending coheres with this emphasis placed on positive life narratives within the GLM and adopted in these sections of the SOTP. Additional concepts central to the GLM, such as the promotion of a sense of agency, self-esteem and self-expression are all consistent with the more individualistic and natural expression of identity that prisoner participants in the current sample described being able to discover and express during and after their engagement with treatment.

The data presented here provide some evidence for the usefulness of these aspects of the GLM in the context of the SOTP, and more specifically demonstrate that creating a safe environment within which prisoners can express their identities can potentially improve their progress towards increasing their wellbeing and self-esteem, which may be important for reducing levels of risk. This was not a straightforward process for all participants, and the theme of 'deconstruction / incomplete reconstruction' (section 4.2) suggests that for some the positive, forward looking work at the end of the programme was left unfinished. It should be noted that whilst this change was for many described as striking and significant there is a question over its duration. For some participants, the processes of transformation and softening described by Evans and Wallace (2008) may better explain how moving from the wing to the therapeutic space of the group room was experienced. This is consistent with the less linear narrative presented by some participants of having to mask emotions and identity on the wing, and then being able to be more transparent and less guarded

whilst participating on SOTP. For participants, this change was then often described as being quickly reversed upon return to the wing from an SOTP session.

5.3: Spoiled identity and reconstructed masculinity as an ongoing process

The issue of 'spoiled identity' identified in existing research with prisoners (Crawley & Sparks, 2006) is another narrative-based way of framing the experiences of treatment reported in the current study. Rather than the effects of imprisonment itself in bringing about this change, the current sample focused on the effects of engaging with treatment, but also talked about other important period of adjustment, both before and after engaging with treatment. What this suggests is an ongoing disruption and reconstruction of identity and masculinity, rather than one single disruptive event (such as committing an offence and entering prison) or a single reformative event (such as engaging with SOTP). Instead, prisoner participants discussed several types of change that required significant adjustments to the way in which they perceived their own identity. Moments such as entering prison, engaging with treatment, and reconceptualising the meaning of labels such as 'sex offender' or 'prisoner' can therefore be conceived as a series of events with the potential to disrupt a prisoner's sense of self. SOTP can be viewed as an opportunity to reconstruct a stronger sense of self, but only after an uncomfortable period of honest reflection and deconstruction of existing identities and core values. Whilst treatment was described in positive terms by the sample, there is therefore an important qualification to be made here. For some individuals, treatment was described as further disrupting their sense of self in the short term before they began to experience any long term benefits.

The aspects of identity and positive sense of self promoted by the GLM may therefore involve a complex process of negotiation not just to be achieved during treatment, but also to be maintained once active support from staff and regular access to a safe, therapeutic environment has ceased. There is also an important question regarding the permanence and stability of positive change achieved during treatment. All participants described SOTP in positive terms, but this raises the potential importance of ongoing support, both for the welfare of participants and for maintaining progress made. If the process of reconstructing a coherent sense of self is left unfinished and a participant is unequipped to complete this task (or encounters further disruption and challenges), then it is conceivable that the work done to promote a positive sense of sense and the associated reduction in risk will be

undone. Willis et al. (2013) provide an overview of different ways in which the principles of the GLM can be integrated into sex offender treatment, noting that poor integration can fail to address risk of reoffending appropriately, or even increase it. Responsivity in relation to factors such as personality or mental health are highlighted as an important basis for effective integration, as is the setting of positive, realistic and achievable life goals towards the end of treatment. Whilst the final sessions of the Core SOTP are indeed forward looking, and encourage a collaborative process of identifying individual approach goals, the uncomfortable or incomplete processes of reconstruction described by the current sample indicate that some prisoners may benefit from more substantial follow up. Willis et al. (2013) note the importance of release planning in applying the principles of the GLM to reduce rates of sexual recidivism. The difficulties faced by some interviewees in the current sample suggests that a similar form of follow up may be of benefit to those prisoners who have much of their sentence left to serve. An awareness of the particular social environment within which an individual will need to practice and maintain their learning would also be important in order to successfully apply the principles of the GLM, with different staff being involved in this process in prison and in the community. This may go some way towards addressing the concerns raised by the current data regarding the permanence of positive change.

5.4: Social identity: support and leadership

The SOTP groups described by prisoner participants could be sub-divided along multiple dimensions relating to group identity. Diversity in relation to offence type, and various demographic characteristics were reported, however participants rarely explicitly referred to their interactions with others as being principally determined by these differences. This lack of social separation within groups extended to how prisoner participants perceived SOTP facilitators, suggesting that Social Identity Theory (SIT) in its traditional form (e.g. Tajfel, 1969) may not fully capture the complexity of the interactions described by prisoner participants. Prisoners did not describe staff in terms that would suggest an out-group, which contrasts notably with the reported experiences of staff participants who in some cases reported explicit challenges to their ability to relate to prisoners' concerns (see section 6.2 for data from staff participants relating to relevant gender, age and class dynamics). There were some exceptions to this reported when discussing dynamics amongst prisoners, such as the social isolation discussed by some older group members.

There are explanations consistent with SIT as to why prisoner participants' social perceptions of treatment were not generally framed in terms of in-groups and out-groups, and that instead most participants described mutual support extending across the group. Firstly, the number of ways in which groups were divided may have meant that no one single characteristic was relatively more salient. That is, the in-group and out-group dichotomy becomes an overly simplistic way of understanding dynamics within a group that can be separated in many different ways based on a range of different characteristics. Group size would also be a factor here, and the number of prisoners making up a group may be insufficient for clear social separation. Group dynamics are also not allowed to develop unchecked, which represents a contrast with the ways in which social dynamics may operate in other settings. Facilitators and supervisors make an active effort to monitor and manage these. It might also be the case that prisoners did show some in-group favouritism to a specific sub-set of a treatment group, but that an awareness that this is not a socially acceptable stance prevented it from being reported. An example of this sort of group management is the challenging of hierarchies of offence type. Thus, whilst some SOTP groups may initially demonstrate a degree of social separation between prisoners based on the ages of their victims, prisoner participants in the current study described these dynamics being questioned and challenged by staff.

It is notable that in the cases where participants did discuss division and conflict, this was framed in terms of a lack of participation or an active disruption of sessions. Thus, a social identity approach could still be a useful way of understanding the data, if the most salient characteristic is taken to be the degree to which a group member engages with the therapeutic process (rather than identification with a specific demographic category). Those who disrupt or fail to contribute to this process (and to act as a good group member) would therefore form the out-group for the participants in the current sample, who largely identified as being active participants and supporters of the therapeutic process. This raises the related issue of how participants saw facilitators sitting within this dichotomous structure. If an in-group was indeed constructed on the basis of participation in and support of the therapeutic process, then it could be inferred that prisoners would see staff as falling within the same in-group. Whilst this specific point was not discussed by the sample as a whole, some participants did talk about seeing themselves as a third facilitator, lending some tentative support to the idea of staff being viewed as part of the in-group rather than sitting outside the dichotomous division of the group as a whole. This apparently

cooperative relationship with staff is one of many contrasts with the dynamics reported elsewhere in relation to inmate solidarity. For example, Crewe (2009) draws on data collected at HMP Wellingborough to explore the social dynamics in operation amongst prisoners and between prisoners and staff. Where examples of prisoner solidarity at Wellingborough are identified, these are framed in terms of an adversarial or resistant stance towards staff (who thus form an out-group), and this solidarity is described as weaker when the experiences of individual prisoners diverges (for example, as a result of the Incentive and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme). The current data therefore may suggest that the aspects of group identity that are most salient and the power relationships that exist between staff and prisoners will vary depending on the precise context within a prison, with the relatively therapeutic environment of SOTP allowing for more collaborative interaction.

Haslam & Reicher (2011) consider related issues of social identity, drawing on data from the BBC Prison Study (a partial replication of the Stanford Prison Experiment), as well as from three real prisons (although it should be noted that the variety of establishments considered and the dates from which data are drawn may not necessarily be representative of the current social dynamics within prisons in England and Wales). These data are used to developed a refined version of Social Identity Theory that is intended to better model processes of resistance and change. The three factors that are held to determine the emergence of a shared identity within a group are a common experience of subordination, sufficient time to develop group cohesion, and permeability. The second factor of time is consistent across all SOTP group given that prisoners and staff will interact with one another regularly for approximately 6 months. Examples of permeability were evident in the current sample in the ways in which prisoners discussed support and disruption (section 4.4). For example, supportive group members who asked appropriate questions were perceived as helpful, and disruptive group members were described as having a negative impact on the cohesion of the group and on individuals' abilities to achieve change. A common experience of subordination is less explicit in current participants' responses. There are multiple ways in which this may have operated. For prisoners participating in SOTP the nature of their offence may have set them apart from the wider prison population. Whilst the hierarchy of different sexual offences was something that participants described as being challenged during treatment, their lower social status relative to prisoners not convicted of a sexual offence could fulfil the criteria for a feeling

of shared subordination. Another way in which this could operate is through their shared experience of the more oppressive aspects of treatment itself. The uncomfortable process of deconstruction that many group members described going through (see section 4.2) can be conceptualised as a form of shared oppression (even though participants acknowledged that this uncomfortable process was necessary and useful). The most salient form of group membership for participants was therefore not related to demographics, but simply to their shared status as participants of the SOTP.

Such an understanding of group dynamics based on Haslam & Reicher's (2011) refined model of SIT is also consistent with the way in which participants who did not participate in an acceptable way became isolated from and viewed negatively by other prisoners. To understand the perception of such individuals as making up the out-group the salient aspect of group identity is not simply being a part of an SOTP, but moreover participating in a group in what is perceived to be the right way. Hogg's (2001) social identity theory of leadership, which posits a correlation between being a 'prototypical' group member and adopting a leadership role, provides a further way of understanding this dynamic. Just as the group members who contributed poorly or insufficiently were described as being ostracised, some participants described themselves as being exceptionally good group members, which involved actively participating, being non-judgemental and asking difficult but supportive questions (section 4.4). These behaviours could be interpreted as evidence of their prototypical status, which is consistent with the way in which many of these prototypical group members would discuss helping and advising others, and being seen as an authority figure. However, whilst this social identity approach provides a theoretical framework for understanding these cases of participants providing hierarchical support, it provides a less satisfactory explanation for the explicitly more mutual forms of support described by other participants. Alternatively, a transactional approach (Berne, 1966) may provide a further way to understand the complexity of group dynamics experienced by both staff and prisoners that goes beyond social identity. Given that it was staff participants that more frequently cited transactional exchanges, these dynamics are explored further in chapter 7.

Regarding the questioning of other group members discussed in relation to themes of support and criticism (section 4.4), prisoners described a tension between this being simultaneously a form of support (assisting a group member to gain insight and make

progress) and a potentially intensely uncomfortable process when questions were felt to be particularly searching or invasive. Although participants did not describe the most aggressive forms of questioning as bullying there are parallels to be drawn with processes of bullying in military contexts, particularly given the apparent synergy here between close social support and aggression. For example, Orme (2011) notes that in Australian military training establishments bullying is justified by some on the basis of the pragmatic function of identifying individuals who are judged to be psychologically unsuitable for active service, but that it may be more to do with the reinforcement of individual and group identities. Similarly, the aggressive process of deconstruction described here could be seen as serving a social process of identity reinforcement as much as the pragmatic goals of addressing treatment needs (such as challenging distorted thinking and offence-supportive attitudes).

5.5: Conclusion

Higher order analysis of data obtained from prisoner participants in the current sample allows for the exploration of a number of issues of relevance to prisoners' experiences of treatment. Narratives of individual identity, masculinities, the processes governing group dynamics in the context of treatment, and the ways in which the salience of social identity interacts with the context-specific power relationships that exist between prisoners and staff are all areas that not only affected participants' experiences of life in prison in general, but that also had the potential to impact on the quality and nature of the therapeutic process of Core SOTP. Some of these issues will be revisited in chapter 7 in the context of higher order analysis of the data obtained from staff participants.

Chapter 6: Facilitating SOTP – Analysis

Hierarchical ordinate and superordinate themes identified in the analysis of transcripts from the staff based study 2 are presented. Substantive verbatim quotes are used to construct a phenomenological account of participants' experiences. As with the analysis of data from the prisoner based study 1, this predominantly descriptive thematic analysis will be complemented by higher order analysis and a greater degree of interpretation in the subsequent discussion chapter (chapter 7).

6.1: Introduction

The superordinate themes presented in this chapter show many points of connection to those for study 1. The way in which ordinate themes have been structured is however distinct, and is intended to reflect the different way that issues relating to the research question where discussed by this particular sample. For example, whilst it was possible to structure some ordinate themes around demographic groups for study 1, a different approach was taken with study 2. A superordinate theme with a focus on issues of diversity and responsivity is included, but with a distinct hierarchical structure based on the dynamics of support (and conflict). This may also reflect the different design of the two studies, including study 2's stronger focus on general (rather than specific) responsivity. Whilst prisoners were recruited based on their identification with at least one of the three specified demographic groups, this was not the case with staff. It is therefore unsurprising that the analysis of data for study 2 should be made sense of in a different manner.

6.2: Superordinate theme 1 – Power relationships: social identity and knowledge

This superordinate theme directly addressed the original rationale for the study and the research questions. As expected, the three areas that were more explicitly explored in prisoner interviews (and which were still made reference to in staff interview schedules) were represented within participants' accounts. Ethnicity was the ordinate theme with the highest number of references. Discussion of other demographic characteristics featured throughout many staff transcripts, often more strongly than both physical disability and sexual orientation. Throughout these ordinate themes, the role of knowledge and expertise

in determining power relationships within the group was also evident. Figure 6.2.i illustrates the ordinate themes that were strongly represented in a majority of cases. Ordinate themes present in a borderline number of cases (between seven and nine) were included or excluded based on their relevance to the research question. Themes are ordered according to total number of references across all transcripts of staff interviews. They are organised under the areas of power relationships, and vulnerabilities, although sexual orientation has been included separately.

As with the corresponding visual representations of superordinate themes for study 1, the figures included below should be interpreted with caution and should not be taken to be a definitive representation of what was necessarily most important to participants. Facilitators showed a widespread awareness of the power relationships that could exist within an SOTP group. These were described as potentially running in both directions between staff and prisoners, as well as amongst staff and amongst prisoners.
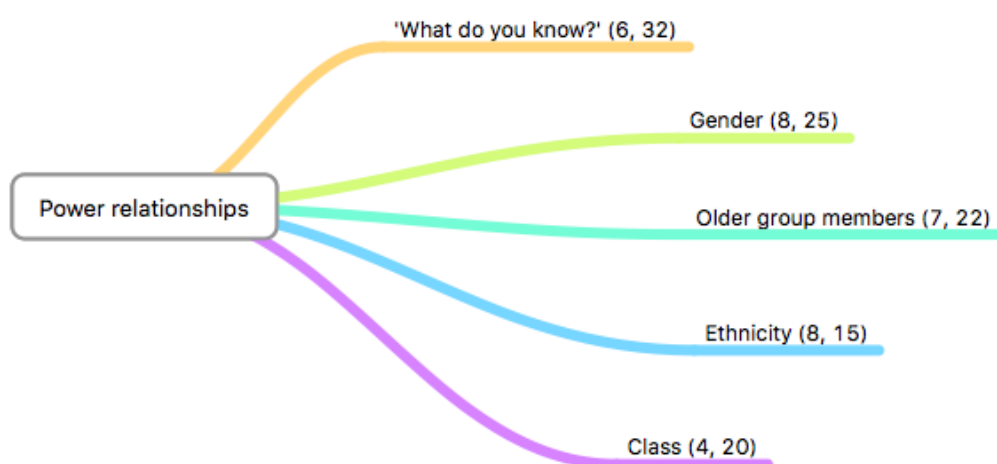
Figure 6.2.i - Superordinate theme 'Power relationships', with hierarchical ordinate themes. Figures in parentheses are (n,N), where n = number of cases, N = total number of citations[18].

---

[18] 'Citation' here refers to an occurrence of a given theme within a transcript, and not simply to the occurrence of a particular word or phrase.

Several participants described an awareness that their own identity could potentially be a barrier to forming a strong therapeutic relationship with some group members. Often this was framed in terms of speculation, or the interpretation of implicit behaviours on the part of group members. Some members of staff also noted that the subjective perception of such barriers, or challenges to their authority, could also be accentuated by an internal pressure to appear competent and knowledgeable (this is explored further in the other ordinate themes presented in this section). However, some staff reported challenges to their authority that were far less ambiguous, and that were specifically couched in terms of identity.

This related both to stable features of identity, as well as to life experiences. This was evident across most aspects of identity touched upon, but with the eleven female staff in the sample reporting this most acutely in relation to their gender, perceived age and class, as well as (to a lesser extent) their ethnicity. The three male members of staff described similar challenges in the areas of perceived age, class, and ethnicity, although the confluence of all these was not as acute as that experienced by their female colleagues. Here a female member of staff links prisoner perception of a lack of shared experience to a fragile therapeutic relationship, explaining this in terms of distrust and eroded authority. The interaction between different aspects of identity is also afforded significance, with the implication that whilst a group member may struggle to trust female staff, this distrust is ameliorated when the facilitator is older:

> ¶642: I: Okay. Um, and, what would be, um, in your view some of the benefits of having a more diverse treatment team?
> ¶643:
> ¶644: Hm. [pause] I guess from a treatment perspective, some group members respond differently to older women than they do younger women.
> ¶645:
> ¶646: I: Mm.
> ¶647:
> ¶648: Some group members respond better to, I guess men their age.
> ¶649:
> ¶650: I: Mm hm.
> ¶651:
> ¶652: Um, because I think, sometimes it's often come up in group that, you know, bearing in mind a lot of us are around 30, that, for us kind of saying, saying to a group member, 'oh, maybe, this and this is maybe the reasons why,

um,' you know, that you've identified that maybe things changed in their lives. It's like, you know, I think they feel quite like, 'well, how would you know? 'Cos you're only 30 years old, you know, you don't know what it's like to be married, you don't know what it's like to have children...
¶653:
¶654: I: Mm.
¶655:
¶656: ...you've never lived those experiences so how is it you can relate to me?' So I think sometimes- And they verbalise that with us, so I think sometimes, sometimes I think, 'hm, is that therefore affecting the therapeutic relationship, how well you feel supported by us.
¶657:
¶658: I: Hm.
¶659:
¶660: ...in that sense, because actually if you're saying that you don't think I can relate to you, on a level, then, how are you going to be able to trust me, how are you, you know, going to... Feel that I understand your experiences'. I know obviously you don't have to experience everything, I guess, that's something that's come out, based on what they've said.
[S6]

At the same time, the finding that these examples of resistance have been vocalised is made clear through phrases such as 'they verbalise that with us' [S6, 656]. By using this language, the member of staff suggests that this is not a case of subjective interpretation, and instead grounds her experience in explicit and unambiguous challenges that she has experienced. There is a theoretical acknowledgement that a lack of shared experience should not necessarily be a barrier to supporting a prisoner through treatment, but there is a tension between this and the reality of the participant's experience that is left unresolved here.

A male member of staff here notes that the potential lack of trust due to limited shared experience is distinct from being perceived as enthusiastic and knowledgeable. In this case, the lack of connection is attributed more to age than other factors, and there is less of the complex interaction between different aspects of identity affect rapport as described by S6 above. S8 also ties his perception of disconnection more to his own slight anxieties about his competence, thereby taking a step back and engaging in some reflection on and deconstruction of his lived experience:

¶673: I: Um, is there anything else you wanted to add, to that, ah, and one, one question I had was how would, how would, ah, group members or other staff, describe you, when you're, when you were delivering?
¶674:

¶675: Oh, I dunno. Ah... [pause] I think they'd probably describe me as sort of -
And this like totally shows where my, um, preoccupations are, um, like that
really young guy who's well enthusiastic and knows stuff...
¶676:
¶677: I: Mm.
¶678:
¶679: ...but can be a bit, too... But sometimes doesn't understand where I'm
coming from. I think, they, they might, they might think like that. And when I
say they, they don't understand where I'm coming from I think it's, it's more -
It- I, I, again, it's my preoccupation, I think it's an age thing where, 'He doesn't
understand where I'm coming from because he hasn't lived as much of a life
as I have.'.
¶680:
¶681: I: Yeah.
¶682:
¶683: Um, and, so I, so I, I don't know whether I've noticed it more with - May,
may, maybe for the guys [inaudible], but I don't think I noticed it more with
guys from different cultures or, different backgrounds, to my own. I think I see
it more with guys who are older than me.
[S8]

Strategies for managing such challenges varied, with carefully controlled disclosure being one approach to challenge the perception that facilitators lacked any meaningful shared experiences. Even amongst staff who advocated a level of disclosure, there was a universal awareness that this needed to be limited[19]. Alternatively, some members of staff described being transparent and simply acknowledging that they may share very few life experiences with group members, whilst also attempting to convince the group that that was not the barrier to effective treatment that it was perceived as being.

In discussing how they felt they were perceived, most members of staff discussed ethnicity in conjunction with many other aspects of identity, such as gender, class, and age. Here S5 talks about his identity as being unremarkable because of his membership of notable majority groups with which he identifies, specifically being 'white British and heterosexual' (S5, 829). As well as citing these specific demographic characteristics, he goes on to describe them as 'standard', but then quickly qualifies this to indicate that he is referring to perception, thus implicitly recognising the socially constructed, subjective and ambiguous nature of labels such as 'standard'. Reference by S5 to him conforming to a 'standard' identity can be interpreted as referring to an additional barrier to building trust and rapport with prisoners. He explicitly talks about the barrier that he feels some clients

_____

[19] Participants' perceptions of appropriate levels of disclosure are considered further in section 6.4.

may perceive because of the differences in their identity, but beyond this his words can be interpreted as referring to a secondary barrier in relation to power relations and the fact that he belongs to a specific demographic group that possesses a relatively greater amount of power within British society in general (although the inferential nature of this finding should be noted, as he does himself refer directly to issues of power here):

¶829: Ah, in relation to me being white and white British and heterosexual it's- I guess it's very run of the mill if you like [slight laugh]. Um, that, that's, ah, ah, that's, that's kind of standard. Or what is perceived as standard really, within, within Britain. Which I guess doesn't necessarily bring any kind of, um, you know, ah- I, I, I can bring that, in as, as myself. That is who I am.
¶830:
¶831: I: Mm.
¶832:
¶833: Ah, but it doesn't kind of- I'm not able to, to kind of- It's not that I'm not able to relate to anyone who's not that, 'cos that's not true. But they may not be able to believe that I can relate to them.
¶834:
¶835: I: Okay.
¶836:
¶837: If, if you see what I mean.
¶838:
¶839: I: So that, that perhaps lack of [inaudible] in the other direction of them sort of...
¶840:
¶841: Yeah, I would say that I would worry, that, that maybe they would feel that I don't understand them. Which is not true. Um...
[S5]

Gender – Attitudes towards women and hypermasculinity

Gender was described as playing an important role in interactions between group members and staff, and issues in this area were experienced in a variety of ways (with some notable variation in the issues focused on by male and female staff). This is consistent with the prominent place given in the SARN risk assessment framework (OBPU, 2004) to adversarial attitudes about women. Most commonly gender was reported as affecting the way in which group members were felt to perceive the competence or maturity of female staff.

As well as explicitly adversarial or confrontational comments from group members some female members of staff also reported having to challenge less overt gendered comments. For example, they observed gendered norms relating to swearing, with some prisoners

tending to direct apologies for this towards female rather than male facilitators. Although staff were alert to comments based on gender stereotypes, there was also an awareness of the part of some that challenging every problematic statement was not always possible. This member of staff notes that whilst this could be very uncomfortable to hear, to challenge every comment rigorously would jeopardise achieving the central aim of a session. Another thing that here mitigates against direct challenges to comments about women is S2's understanding that they are a manifestation of offence-related risk. The implication of this is that attitudes directly related to individual risk need to be challenged in a more circuitous and subtle way, in contrast to the straightforward direct challenges to racist remarks:

¶447: Um… I think like, when it was against women, I- In my normal life I would always challenge those beliefs, and in groups I'm used to challenging those things as well, so in this group although we did challenge anti-social beliefs, but sometimes there was so much, um, like so many things to work with that you had to kind of not… Ah, I dunno, it's hard to say. Um… Not like ignoring things that people said, but if you picked up on every single word that people used that…

…

¶457: I: And how would you make that decision whether to challenge or not, because, yeah if you don't- Obviously you can't challenge every single…
¶458:
¶459: Yeah.
¶460:
¶461: I: …thing like you say, but how would you make, that choice?
¶462:
¶463: Um… [pause] Ah… Mm. Well one, one of the guys did make a few racist comments. Those I did challenge every time 'cos I couldn't, couldn't help myself anyway. Um, but I guess the, distortions about children and women was more part of the actual offence…
[S2]

The three male facilitators in the sample focused less on gender when describing their experiences of interacting with group members, although they did report the same gendered behaviours and language when observing interactions between prisoners and female colleagues. Whilst male staff did not need to negotiate issues around working with clients of a different gender, there was a suggestion in some cases that this congruence was not without its own problems, particularly with prisoners who were felt to display

hyper-masculinity[20]. One male member of staff identified a way of thinking on the part of some group members that revolved around the maintenance of an 'alpha male' role, which was potentially threatened by the presence of male facilitators who represented another man with a degree of power. Taking in conjunction with prisoners' experiences of support reported in section 4.4, it can be inferred that these conflicts were often framed in terms of knowledge and expertise. Thus, whilst prisoners such as P1 talked about the altruistic reasons for supporting others, the experiences of staff such as S5 suggest an alternative reinterpretation; that is, by asserting their knowledge and expertise by supporting others, some prisoners may have actually been engaged in the act of attempting to assert dominance over facilitators. As with the selective challenging of stereotypes noted above, this member of staff here describes a process of 'rolling with resistance' when encountering such challenges in their explicit form, remaining calm and professional, and not always meeting confrontational behaviours with a direct challenge:

¶295: Um, ah, sometimes, um, men with quite, ah, hyper masculine, attitudes sometimes are a bit averse towards me.
¶296:
¶297: I: Mm.
¶298:
¶299: Um, but I guess that would be, that would be, for most males within this- Working within this environment, if somebody's got very strong beliefs about being the kind of alpha male if you like, they're gonna clash with, with male facilitators, so, they're, they, they've been the only ones that have been really difficult I think.
¶300:
¶301: I: Okay. And how have you managed it when that, sort of stuff comes up?
¶302:
¶303: Just got- [overlapping] Just got to roll with it. And often, often people will, will kind of reflect on, on what happened and if, if you do your best to, to kind of deal with the situation professionally, they, they haven't got a lot to kind of deal with, they'll go back, reflect on it, and then come back and see you next time, they may even apologise or something like that.
¶304:
¶305: I: Mm.
[S5]

For both male and female facilitators learning not to be personally affected by such challenges was described as a process that required time and effort to complete. For this

[20] Issues of hyper-masculinity are returned to in section 6.4, and are considered in the context of therapeutic boundaries.

member of staff being the only woman present initially made it more difficult to not internalise and take personally the generalised and negative attitudes about women expressed by some group members:

¶159: At times being the only woman in the room…
¶160:
¶161: I: Right.
¶162:
¶163: …could be quite difficult. If you've got men who, demonstrate certain attitudes to women, or, um, yeah, yeah [slight laugh] demonstrate certain attitude towards women. Um, I had, had to try really really hard to realise that they're not aimed at me, it's got nothing to do with me.
¶164:
¶165: I: Mm.
¶166:
¶167: Um, and just mirror it back. And now I feel like I'm developing that, a bit better now. That actually it's got nothing- That's their attitude and I'm here to help to change that but it's not actually anything to do with me.
[S1]

Older group members – Feeling challenged

Discussion of the impact of age focused largely on issues relating to the treatment of older group members. Various challenges of working with relatively older group members were highlighted, including difficulties with building trust and forming rapport, and the use of age as a means to negotiate and contest hierarchies of power between staff and group members (as well as amongst prisoners). At other times age was linked less to actively challenging and problematic group members and more to passive ones who faced possible issues of social isolation, at times also interacting with issues of disability. In this respect, there was some congruence between some of the experiences reported by staff, and those of older or disabled prisoners who described varying degrees of social isolation, both within an SOTP group and in the wider prison (section 4.3). Rather than the absolute age of group members being raised as an issue it was age relative to generally younger members of staff that was most often cited by staff as potentially problematic. Several staff members described having their authority or professionalism directly challenged by some older group members. Whilst staff described a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with such challenges some of them described being confronted by this as an unpleasant experience, which led them to either questioning their own ability, or reacting in a more emotional way (albeit without losing control and overtly displaying this during a session):

> ¶519: Where I kind of get my self-esteem from, also affects what kind of things trigger me off, and what kind of things, push my buttons, ah, in group, um, and so- 'Cos a lot of my self-esteem and my values are based on being clever and good at what I do and, you know, know what I'm on about.
> ¶520:
> ¶521: I: Mm.
> ¶522:
> ¶523: When that gets challenged in group, which, you know, is often to do with how old I am, therefore how much experience I've got of life, that... That, that- I- That's when I get my least- That's when I'm at my least empathic, that's when I can potentially get- You know, I don't think I've ever potentially got aggressive, that's when I get very standoffish, you know, when I start getting, annoyed and, and, and that's when I think a lot of my- When I can feel conflict starting, I think that's definitely when, it's when those kind of self-esteem issues about, how clever I am, get, get challenged by group members.
> [S8]

Such concerns about their own abilities were not always linked directly to the perception of inexperience on the part of group members. Here a member of staff is less clear about the source of the insecurity regarding a lack of experience, suggesting that for some this may be more to do with self-doubt rather than external challenges and attacks. S9 places learning to deal with such challenges within a narrative of increasing skills and confidence, without making any reference to external factors, such as group dynamics or power relations, that might be used to make sense of these experiences:

> ¶853: Being, coming straight from uni and not really having a huge amount of experience, doing what, what I'm doing. Um, it's something that I feel like - I probably felt a bit kind of like concerned about how I came across when I first started but wasn't really able to think about why that might be or what, what specifically it was that I thought might, um, people might perceive. Um, so now I feel a bit more, able to reflect on how, who I am and how I come across without getting defensive about, so maybe when I first came out of uni I would have been unsure what it was and not really able to put it into words, but I feel a bit more, able to reflect on stuff now and, and just know that people come across differently to different people and it's just alright, it's not, it's no biggie.
> [S9]

All staff members who described such challenges (either internal or external) to their competence generally talked about these uncomfortable feelings as something that they experienced initially, but that they had subsequently been able to move past. The non-random nature of the sample may well have played an important role in the uniformity of

this particular experience, given that those members of staff who were unable to negotiate such uncomfortable experiences would have been far less likely to stay in role, and therefore would have been under-represented in the sample.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity of group members or of staff was rarely discussed in isolation, unless interviewees were directly prompted. For example, here a member of staff identifies an interaction with age when discussing group members on a Rolling SOTP group. It can also be inferred from the way that the discussion moves quickly onto sexual orientation that this member of staff conceptualises ethnicity as one of many aspects of diversity to be mindful of, and not one that has any disproportionately large effect on how group members experience treatment:

> ¶281: I: And obviously the make-up of the group changed, but you sort of characterised it as, um, like older white men.
> ¶282:
> ¶283: Yeah, yeah, it was mainly. Um, over the time I was on there we had one, one African guy. Um… Ah, can't remember what country he was from now. But, um, and then we had one Indian guy.
> ¶284:
> ¶285: I: And were they all at separate times?
> ¶286:
> ¶287: Um, they would've- If they were on together it would have only been for a few sessions.
> ¶288:
> ¶289: I: Okay.
> ¶290:
> ¶291: They sort of started at different times. So yeah generally, if there was anybody who was in a minority they would have been, on their own. Same for the guy who was bisexual, he would have been the only person on the group at that time, yeah.
> [S2]

This begins to be made more explicit later in the same interview, when the member of staff plays down the impact for any one prisoner, of being the sole BME group member, citing small group sizes on the Rolling SOTP often reducing the impact of this, and noting other forms of diversity, such as occupation, that were particular to individuals. The importance of group members' occupations is not explored further here, but it may be that there is also an implied link to social class here. More tentatively, it might be inferred that the

particular occupation of 'teacher' has importance, given the role that knowledge and support appear to have in determining power relations within a group:

¶481: I: Okay. Um, and coming back to sort of group dynamics, and we touched earlier on- With all the different types of diversity there was a moment when, um, there was a lone member of that...
¶482:
¶483: Yeah.
¶484:
¶485: I: ...ah, group in the programme.
¶486:
¶487: Yeah.
¶488:
¶489: I: How was that work, working with those, those group members?
¶490:
¶491: Um... I think because sometimes the group was quite small anyway. So the biggest number was eight.
¶492:
¶493: I: Right.
¶494:
¶495: But for, you know, the first few weeks and the last few weeks it was only four people, then five, then six. So, I think, it didn't seem- You know, like there might only be, like for example one guy from India. But, there might only be one guy who was, I dunno, a teacher or whatever, like within the group everybody had their different things anyway, so I don't think it seemed as, as um- You know, everyone just had their own stories and their own background...
¶496:
¶497: I: Right.
¶498:
¶499: ...which they discussed in group.
[S2]

Audit requirements for SOTP stipulate that if only one BME prisoner is placed on a group then group make up should be discussed with the prisoner in order to ensure that they are comfortable with this. This process was generally described as being straightforward for staff who had encountered this situation, with no prisoners stating that this would be an issue. One member of staff did note a feeling of powerlessness or lack of preparedness should any problems arise, but later states that whilst it may be a problem on the wing the impact of racism in the group room is not obvious:

¶521: Um, in terms of ethnicity, that was, that was a bit of a worry more, for me more, because what, what- There's not much we can do about, um, apart from giving a bit of support about having only one, one ethnic minority on the group.

¶522:
¶523: I: Mm.
¶524:
¶525: Um, unless we actually changed the group once we started it problems started to occur, which they haven't done but if they did, that's a worry.

…

¶563: And, ethnicity… Yeah, it, it is, it is definitely an issue, but it's not something I no, I don't notice it as much, being- 'Cos I'm not- I think on the wing it's an issue. Um, but, I don't, yeah. Can't pinpoint where I don't notice it that much.
¶564:
¶565: I: Okay. [overlapping]
¶566:
¶567: Apart- I know- Actually, the only, the only time I've really openly noticed ethnicity problems is, um, when people talk about, um, Eastern European offenders.
[S4]

Whilst S4 notes that the only instances of overt racism relate to Eastern European offenders, this does leave open the possibility that other groups are also impacted in less obvious ways that could be harder to detect. Regarding Eastern European group members, there is an interaction between ethnicity and nationality operating when this member of staff talks about them. Here it is not just self-identification, but also country of birth that means that a group member who is initially described as Polish is then reconceptualised as being British, and merely having a Polish name. Implicit in this is a tension between country of birth and parents' nationalities that is described as being resolved in a dichotomous fashion. That is, for the group member to self-identify and be perceived as more British the Polish aspect of his identity needs to be minimised:

¶405: And that, that was quite an issue at the start. But we spoke with the, um, the black group member, and, um, just explained the situation, um, and he said he's got no worries, he wants to do the programme, um, that he was there for one reason, that's to look at his offence. And that been, there've been no, we've had no issues. It was something we were concerned about at the start. We had, there was a, a Polish guy on there, he's the one that dropped off. But he, he was very, very British. He'd been born in Britain. So, the only like kind of Polish thing about him was his surname. So it wasn't- So you couldn't really class him, he'd class himself as kind of white British.
[S4]

Whilst some members of staff discussed issues of racism, there were a diversity of opinions regarding where, how, and to what extent this was an issue for SOTP. S5 discusses the use

of racism as one means by which group members maintain hierarchical power relationships in prison in general, or challenge staff. An instrumental form of racism is here connected to instrumental aggression by the use of the term 'intimidation'. The suggestion here is that in an environment where physical attacks against staff would carry immediate consequences, intimidation takes on new forms. That is, rather than threatening the physical safety of staff, S5 describes a type of prisoner who instead threatens a member of staff's professional reputation by questioning their ability to conduct their work in a non-discriminatory way:

¶597: Ah, I found that, um, some prisoners may use, ah, racism as a mode of, ah, of getting things done, um, maybe to intimidate other people. Maybe to, to, um, intimidate staff with at points. I think it can be, it can be used very negatively. Um, but also very instrumentally.
¶598:
¶599: I: Okay.
¶600:
¶601: Um, it's not… It's often not, not kind of the straightforward kind of, um, non-prosocial attitudes that you would expect somebody to just come out with, it can be used as tool. Um, in relation to the prison, prison environment, ah, I would imagine that, I- Well I wouldn't say that, that I could, factor every, um, [tut] every, ah, prison staff member, and say that, you know, I'm sure that, you know, they don't have those sorts of attitudes…

…

¶613: I've met offenders who, ah, if you disagree with what they've done, or you write a report which you, you presented the facts, rather than, rather than their opinion often they will, they may come back to you and say, you know, 'Is it because, is it because I'm of a different ethnic origin? Is that why you think that?'. Which isn't the case.

…

¶621: Um, and, that's, that's the way that, that some people - It, it's clearly based in in kind of distorted thinking, but it's also very instrumental at the same time. It's, um, 'You're not doing what I want you to do. Therefore, I'm going to, to attack your character indirectly by, by suggesting this'.
[S5]

Some members of staff described class as a barrier to forming a strong therapeutic alliance with group members. Often this related more to what they felt their perceived class was, which did not necessarily correspond to their actual background or how they self-identified. Closely related were the issues of staff members' accents, and to a lesser extent their level of education. These three issues were described as often being conflated and confused by group members, and playing a role in perceived levels of competence, as well as status within the group.

Whilst accent was something that several staff described being conscious of there was little agreement as to what the ideal accent was. Some members of staff described not wanting to seem too upper class or overly educated so as not to alienate group members. Others described not wanting to have an obvious regional accent, as this was felt to threaten the level of professionalism perceived by some group members. However, staff who did not feel that they had a strong or easily discernible accent still reported some potential issues:

> ¶701: I think well- I, I've always had quite a kind of neutral accent and…
> ¶702:
> ¶703: I: Mm.
> ¶704:
> ¶705: …often people, like- And I grew up in [city in South Yorkshire] so I kind of spent a lot of like in [city in South Yorkshire] with my friends who've got quite strong accents. And I think, I often think, 'Ooh, people think I'm really posh, and would they discount what I'm saying because I sound kind of -', you know, I don't, I don't think I do sound too posh but it, kind of having a neutral accent, you know, being kind of, fitting that kind of bland stereotype of being, middle class and, you know, just how what I'm saying is just coming from somewhere which doesn't really have, ah, a genuine relation to what some of the guys in here are experiencing.
> ¶706:
> ¶707: I: Mm.
> ¶708:
> ¶709: I think that is something that would be a bit of a hang up for me. Whether- You know, whether I, maybe that's because that's I'm, I'm judging what I, what I think other people see more than they do. Um, I'm not sure but, um, you know, sometimes I do think, oh, you know, it's kind of, 'Will people just discount what I'm saying because I sound like, you know, just- I dunno, middle class and bland?'. [slight laugh]
> [S9]

S3 here illustrates that the issues of accent and perceived class can operate in distinct ways in different contexts. Whilst her accent is noted as a possible advantage when working with group members, it can become a source of anxiety when in contact with other staff. Although not made explicit, there appears to be a hierarchical structure operating relating to class amongst staff, albeit one that is not so strong as to motivate S3 to consistently change her behaviour in an effort to counter it. She also uses her own experience to reflect on how some group members may feel when dealing with professionals, implying a multi-layered hierarchy incorporating both prisoners and staff:

> ¶827: I: Is [your accent] ever an advantage, would you say?
> ¶828:
> ¶829: Um- Only working with, I suppose, suppose guys when they feel that they can relate to you or that... I don't know because you do read into things like accent, you know, where someone's from or what they might get up to. Um, and sometimes they might see someone, you know, that, that, speaks differently or, sounds posh or however they might describe it, as being [slight sigh] more difficult to relate to or less, ah, less like them or less able to understand them.
> ¶830:
> ¶831: I: Okay. Um, interestingly as well, you started to touch upon how, how that's like interacting with other staff as well.
>
> ...
>
> ¶841: I feel really conscious of it.
> ¶842:
> ¶843: I: Yeah.
> ¶844:
> ¶845: Um... It's, it's something I've discussed in coun-, in supervision in counselling before. It doesn't concern me so much as to make efforts to change it but it is something I'm very aware of, that people will, read into my accent or, you know, being [redacted]. Because there's certain stereotypes around stuff like that. Um... [pause] Yeah. And actually thinking on the flip side I wonder then for a group member that has the same accent or different, differences how comfortable they might then feel in an environment where you've got Psychologists, and we have assumptions about Psychologists as well. So, it, it could likewise be the same for them on group.
> [S3]

Although less common, these implicit power relationships did not always operate in the same direction. Some staff described prisoners using either class or education in an actively divisive way, in an attempt to assert their own authority over staff. Again, as with all of the ordinate themes presented in this section, the related areas of knowledge experience or expertise appears to be deployed not simply to bolster an individual's self-esteem (as

suggested by some prisoner participants), but to actively challenge staff and to manipulate the power dynamics of the group:

> ¶521: Um, in terms of class... I think- Yeah, there were several instances. I mean it goes back to this particular group member, who kind of personifies that seeing, seeing class as a divide and seeing themselves as, as better...
> ¶522:
> ¶523: I: Right.
> ¶524:
> ¶525: ...than another group member. Say that, you know, maybe hasn't had as much education or, or presents very differently, maybe, you know, struggles in terms of literacy, or isn't as articulate, as someone else...
> ¶526:
> ¶527: I: Mm.
> ¶528:
> ¶529: ...I mean I think that particular group member lumped that into a, into a class divide.
> ¶530:
> ¶531: I: Mm.
> ¶532:
> ¶533: And that was really detrimental. Ah...
> [S13]

6.3: Superordinate theme 2 – Responding to needs
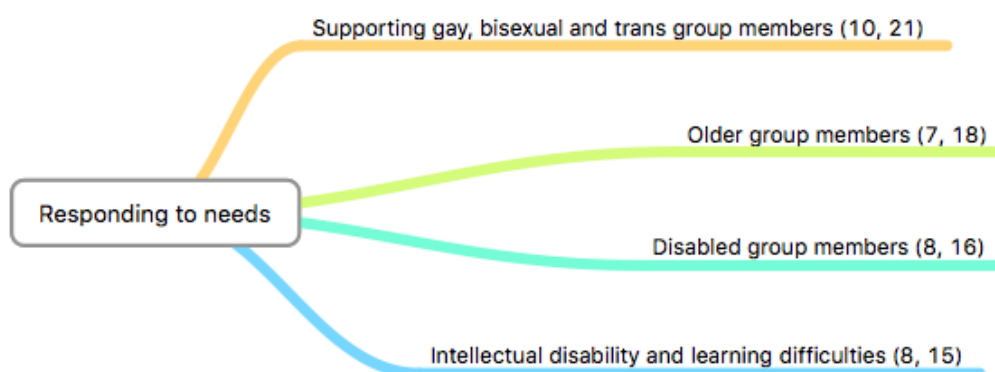
Figure 6.3.i: Superordinate theme 'Responding to needs', with hierarchical ordinate themes. Figures in parentheses are (n,N), where n = number of cases, N = total number of citations.

As well as issues relating to gay and bisexual group members' needs this theme also incorporates experiences of treating transgender prisoners. At the time that interviews were conducted, Prison B housed a relatively high number of transgender prisoners in the Vulnerable Prisoner unit, so the majority of experiences of working with this specific client group came from staff who had worked at this prison.

As with other aspects of diversity, difficulties with managing feelings of isolation were noted by S7 when work with a group with only one group member who openly identified as being gay. Discussing the challenging of homophobia in a group, S1 indicates that consistently challenging inappropriate remarks can be impractical, paralleling the selective challenging of derogatory comments about women noted under the theme of gender.

> ¶393: I remember there was a particular case where, um, a guy was homosexual and no one else on the group was.
> ¶394:
> ¶395: I: Mm.
> ¶396:
> ¶397: And, um, I think a group member outside of the group had made a comment about homosexuality. And so already he had felt that that wasn't a place he could be open.
> ¶398:
> ¶399: I: Right.
> ¶400:
> ¶401: And because there wasn't any other group member like him, as he felt it, he, he felt like there wasn't anyone kind of on his side is how he put it at the time, but, yeah. So he felt like that kind of stopped him from being able to be open.
> [S7]

> ¶633: I: Okay. Um, and in terms of other sorts of issues that came up, you touched on homophobia and having to deal with that.
> ¶634:
> ¶635: Yeah, there was a little bit of that, there wasn't loads, it was just kind of like a little, thread of that running through. Um... But the group members challenged it, and we challenged it as well, so...
>
> ...
>
> ¶647: I don't know. [laughs] I'm not really sure. I think with so much else to take on board you have to really pick- We're not there to challenge- That's not, that's not a treatment need.

Notably, the issue of supporting gay and bisexual prisoners required more prompting in order to elicit responses from staff. S2 here illustrates the lack of salience of sexuality, taking a moment to recall that she had in fact worked with a group member who identified as bisexual. Later in the interview she also notes that sexuality can at times be an uncomfortable subject to discuss:

¶271: …while I was on the group so that didn't come up at all. Um- Oh no sorry, that's a lie, we did have one person. [slight laugh] We had one person who was bisexual. Yes, we did. Um, and it didn't- It wasn't really an issue, but I guess he just explained to the group, how he felt. Um, he, he had a theory that he was bisexual because of abuse that he'd suffered from a man.
¶272:
¶273: I: Mm hm.
¶274:
¶275: So I guess that was, um, tried to manage that a bit, 'cos obviously that, that was his, understanding of why he was bisexual but it's not necessarily… That we might not all have agreed with that theory of why that, you know…
¶276:
¶277: I: Yeah.
¶278:
¶279: …obviously people have different theories about sexuality. So we kind of let him give his opinion obviously because he was talking about himself, but didn't really go into a massive discussion about why people are gay or not, or- It wasn't really, um, part of the group. Um…
[S2]

The importance of context is evident, as she uses the example of assessing a prisoner on the wing prior to a programme, implying that the barriers to openly discussing orientation are stronger before group members enter the therapeutic context of the programme. This varying willingness to discuss sexual orientation is consistent with the experiences reported by prisoners (particularly so for P10, who explained that he defined his orientation differently in prison generally and in the context of treatment). Here, S2 discusses asking prisoners about their orientation. She identifies not just some context-specific reticence on the part of prisoners to disclose this information, but goes on to describe this as being awkward thing for her to have to ask. Again, this is context-specific, and she ascribed her

own unease to the lack of an existing therapeutic relationship, and the fact that this might be the first time she has encountered a prisoner. This implies that in the context of SOTP, and after rapport and trust have been established, both of these barrier to discussing a prisoner's orientation would be greatly reduced:

¶783: Um, yeah, I mean like with, like it's hard to say how comfortable people would feel, um, yeah with the sexuality question [in a pre-course interview] people say, 'Oh just straight'. Yeah like a bit defensive sometimes, or they really don't know why we're asking the question. Um, and - Trying to think, I've hardly ever had anybody say that they're not straight and I'm sure that's not, representative of the numbers of people I've spoken to [slight laugh] so, perhaps there's an element of people not really wanting to...

...

¶793: I: ...what's it like when you ask that question to a prisoner?
¶794:
¶795: Um, it can feel a bit awkward, because it seems like a, quite a private thing to ask somebody, when you've just met them perhaps for this interview. Um, yeah we try to explain that all of the things we're asking are, you know, with the aim of trying to work out who we've got on the group and what the best way to work with them is. Um... That- Yeah, personally I do also say like, 'If there's something you're not ha- Co- Happy answering then let me know'. Like...
[S2]

In some respects, S5 echoes the reported experiences of S2, by noting that homophobia, and consequent difficulties for group members being asking to openly discuss sexual interests, has not been problematic during the running of SOTP (although he does express surprise that this is the case). Discussions of sexuality in the 'hyper-masculine' context of a wing, prior to the start of a programme, are again noted as potentially more difficult. There is however a point of contrast here with the experiences of S2. The assertion that 'they have a big concern' indicates that S5 has not only come across more than one prisoner who identified as something other than straight during pre-course assessments, but that these prisoners then went on to discuss their concerns about the consequences of disclosing this within an SOTP group:

¶449: Um, sexuality... Not really. Very, actually very rarely and quite surprisingly, I don't often come across, um... Many negative, kind of attitudes towards differing kinds of sexuality actually.
¶450:
¶451: I: Okay.

¶452:
¶453: But, but whenever we do we do exactly the same… Um, some pepo- Some offenders, ah, are kind of hesitant to, to engage on courses because they're worried that they may be discriminated against…
¶454:
¶455: I: Mm hm.
¶456:
¶457: …because of their sexuality. Um…
¶458:
¶459: I: Have you come across that during initial assessments?
¶460:
¶461: I have, yeah, I have, ah… They have a big concern. Especially, wi- Within the kind of prison environment where, where it can be very hyper masculine and, and things like that. They're worried that there'll be jokes or bullied especially if, if they haven't made it public knowledge, ah, about their sexuality [S5]

In explaining why a transgender prisoner felt comfortable enough to express her gender identity, and to engage with the group, S10 cites group make-up as an important factor. It can therefore be inferred that the lack of problems observed by S2 and S5 above is contingent on an appropriately constructed and managed group. Such a conclusion should however be considered as tentative, as it is predicated on the assumption that the acceptance of gay and bisexual group members discussed above will correlate with that of transgender group members. S10 also describes this prisoner as wearing female clothes less 'noticeably' than other transgender prisoners. The mentioning of this implies that dressing in what was perceived to be a more feminine way would either increase the likelihood of hostility and inappropriate challenges from other prisoners, or would make the prisoner herself fell less comfortable and able to engage fully with the group:

¶895: But sometimes she will wear female clothing, but she's not as noticeably- She doesn't wear female clothing as noticeably as some of the others, prisoners in our prison.
¶896:
¶897: I: Okay. Um, so the supportiveness of this group, would you put that down to, just having a good group make up from the start, or can you point to things you've done as a facilitator team that have, helped that along?

…

¶903: Really I think the make of this particular group's been really good. Um, and it's also- We were quite clear, in the set-up of the group. We spent a lot of time sort of, when we were sort of setting up the group contract, and expectations and sort of giving people feedback when they'd given supportive feedback to others and, um, when they'd asked appropriate, explanatory questions…

S4 also notes the effect that being on a Vulnerable Prisoners (VP) wing can have on a transgender prisoner's ability to express their gender identity, as well for gay and bisexual prisoners to be open about their sexual orientation, again highlighting the importance of context within the prison in determining the extent to which prisoners can freely express or discuss their orientation or gender identity. Whilst the VP is described as being a less threatening environment, there is a qualification here that the difference is only relative, and that a gay prisoner might still experience 'a lot of grief', but not as much as on a main wing. In raising the importance of context, S4 initially reflects on whether the right terms are being used to describe a transgender prisoner, apologising to the interviewer for this lack of certainty. As well as demonstrating the staff member's awareness of the importance of labels, this apology can be interpreted as evidence of the pressure to maintain a perception of professional competence and to demonstrate an ability to use the 'correct' terminology (see section 8.1 for further exploration of this issue). The words 'open' and 'openly' are also used several times throughout the extract below, both to describe the degree to which a prisoner might express their sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as the degree to which any given environment might be seen as accepting of this:

¶591: And, so no we've had like, we've even had on this wing, um, a trans… It's not a transsexual, she- She- Oh, I'm calling her she because she looks like, she really looks like a woman, but she's not had the operation yet.
¶592:
¶593: I: Right.
¶594:
¶595: So trans… [slight pause] Oh, sorry I don't know the right, the right term! But, transgender, but she hadn't had the operation…
¶596:
¶597: I: Right.
¶598:
¶599: …so pre-op. Um, and, and she's been on this wing quite- She comes in and out. Um, as well it's open, I think it's quite an open wing in terms of… Well, maybe not open but a bit more than other wings. So when I used to work on the main wing, the main wings and, if you were gay or homosexual you could, you could be beaten up or…

…

¶607: I still think that somebody who was openly, um, homosexual would have a, a lot of grief, but I don't think as much as the main, wing.
[S4]

Finally, although not represented strongly across cases, some members of staff did note a potential issue regarding internalised homophobia, and the effect that this could have on both the prisoners in question, and the group as a whole. In this example provide by S8, cultural norms and nationality are also cited as factors affecting the way in which an individual may understand their sexual orientation and the ease with which it can be integrated into a cohesive sense of self:

¶783: …the group liked him, he was a really popular group member. But he, he was, ah… Latvian guy, Lithuanian guy? One of the two. Had very very strong views about sexuality. And look at the Russian games and how they, how they view sexual people.

¶784:

¶785: I: Mm.

¶786:

¶787: But he had very strong views about sexuality, but he was gay! [slight laugh] Um, and so he came out on group, had such massive issues with shame. Um, and, you know, his offence was part of it- Part of it was down to- His offence was about, you know, wanting to, have gay sex, but just had so much shame and anger boiling around, that it just didn't, you know, couldn't have a, you know, hated the guy he was having sex with because this guy was gay and he hated gay people.

¶788:

¶789: I: Right.

¶790:

¶791: He hated himself, and all that sort of stuff. So he had such a massive [in]- Shame around it. And I think, one issue was being like, being who I am and being, living in London, being a twenty-first century man. Having lots of gay friends, being fine with it and knowing, you know, generally we accept, we accept peoples' sexualities in, in, you know, most, most right thinking people accept that there are gay people and there are straight people and bi people and transgender people. We're all happy with that. And, and coming to it from that perspective, I think maybe what was the issue, what became the issue was the fact that, we didn't appreciate how hard it might be for him to come out, and how hard it might be for him to accept his sexuality…

¶792:

¶793: I: Mm.

¶794:

¶795: …because we were all so, happy clappy, 'You know, you're gay, so what! Great!', you know, 'Be gay!', you know, 'Enjoy it…

¶796:

¶797: I: Mm.

¶798:

¶799: …it's a good thing to be!'. And we didn't necessarily maybe- Not take him seriously, but maybe didn't consider how much shame he was going through. Or how, big a deal it was for him to come out.

[S8]

This confusion or ambivalence about sexual orientation was described as operating in distinct ways for other group members. For example, S10 describes a prisoner who presented as being more passive or inadequate, but was able to overcome this barrier, as well negotiating the challenge of a group that was not overly supportive or stable:

¶425: I think, one guy that really stood out to me, he was on a particularly difficult group where the majority of them had, were very distorted.
¶426:
¶427: I: Mm.
¶428:
¶449: And he's got to the point he's become a peer mentor. And sometimes if you haven't got a supportive group it's not really that easy, to make the progress that he did. So it just shows the motivation that he had.

...

¶461: But on the cycle of change, he was ready...
¶462:
¶463: I: Yeah.
¶464:
¶465: ...to accept it, he knew that it was something that he needs to do, and he just kept going, regardless of the times we had people shouting, we had people running out the room. We had one guy in there, um, who would- We'd been looking at new me, we were doing the new me block and we were trying to get to the stage of like motivating people to set these goals for where they wanna be in the future. And he- This was this guy [indistinct] he said, 'Well I don't know why we're bothering, I don't know why we're bothering. We're just gonna be vilified when we leave prison, they're gonna hang us from a lamp post, they're gonna hang us from trees.'. And he was one of the, um, alpha kind of group members.
[S10]

Older group members – preventing isolation

At other times older group members were discussed less in terms of challenge and resistance, and more as being vulnerable, both socially and in terms of increased health issues. One member of staff discussed a group member who deselected himself from the course. Here both issues of social isolation due to a lack of shared experience, and ill health, worsened by the sometimes stressful experience of treatment are highlighted. Regarding the former it is unclear whether the bullying that the group member reported himself experiencing was something overt on the part of other prisoners, or simply an unintended consequence of an inability to connect with the group and make them understand his own life experiences. Regarding the latter, the member of staff describes an uncomfortable

tension between the desire to 'push' the group member to participate, and being uncomfortable with having to observe the physical and psychological impact of this:

¶593: Yeah, his, ah- Well now again this is my point, he presented his, considerably longer than the rest of the group, and that offset him slightly as well because, yeah... Because he was telling like, war stories and things like that, for the younger group members, aren't, aren't gonna receive that in the same way, so, yeah.
¶594:
¶595: I: Yeah. What, what's it like working with, sort of, that one older group member, and, sort of, I guess, trying to integrate them into the group, what's that like for you as a facilitator?
¶596:
¶597: It's difficult, I don't know how successful we were on it. I mean he, he come off. I, I, I believe he come off because he was- And he did pretty much report that he felt, bullied by the group. Um, but I mean even little things like in terms of his health. So there was a session that was particularly stressful for him, like he was acknowledging sexual interest in children. And, he- You could see he was visibly shaken by it, and quite anxious, so- That, that's another consideration, you know, in terms of things that you might need to consider. That, that was difficult. To what extent, can you push someone to look at the things that they need to. I mean he was quite willing to do that, but you could see, it was physically affecting him.
¶598:
¶599: I: Mm.
¶600:
¶601: That, that was quite scary for us, knowing that- I mean his eyes literally rolled in session, we thought he was gonna pass out. So, yeah.
[S3]

Disabled group members – working against organisational limitations

Even when prompted, a minority of staff identified significant issues within the group room relating to physical disability. Any discussion of how being physically disabled could affect a group member's experience of actually being on SOTP when it did occur often conflated the issue of monitoring and managing social isolation that was felt to be a risk with older group members. Accommodating the needs of those who were partially sighted, or who had other health issues was something that staff members were mindful of, but which generally only presented challenges when there was a reliance on staff from other departments. Here S1 and S6 relate contrasting experiences with attempting to allow group members to go to the toilet during sessions, with S6 noting that facilitators' ability to be responsive could be hampered by wing officers:

¶433: Um, I don't think so, I think if there were any issues we did try and, support people, make sure that everyone felt comfortable within the group, and that they could always come and tell us if there was something that they needed, you know, if, if they needed to talk about it we would be there.
¶434:
¶435: I: Okay.
¶436:
¶437: Um, yeah.
¶438:
¶439: I: Did you have any group members with a disability on there…?
¶440:
¶441: No, no, no. I mean, we had a guy who was quite old, but we made allowances if he needed to maybe nip to the loo or whatever, and, kind of…
[S1]

¶668: [pause] Um… [pause] I mean we've had issues such as, um, we had one group member who had a problem with his bowels. And, he had to keep leaving the group room to go to the toilet.
¶669:
¶670: I: Mm.
¶671:
¶672: But, the officers, and this was a while ago, wouldn't unlock, wouldn't leave the bathroom, there wasn't a bathroom on the ones. So every time he needed the bathroom, he had to go up to the twos. But the way that the wing was set up was he couldn't use the stairs because they were staff only, so he'd have to walk all the way down the wing, up the stairs, and then all the way along the landing…
¶673:
¶674: I: Right.
¶675:
¶676: …to go to the bathroom.
¶677:
¶678: I: Okay.
¶679:
¶680: So, you know, it's not a massive issue, but when you need to go to the toilet and you've got that kind of issue, like that's not very responsive to what his needs were.
[S6]

S6 goes on to describe related 'operational' [S6, 692] issues with ensuring that group members had access to important medication. The negative impact of failing to provide this in some cases is described as not only directly affecting the group member's mood and engagement with the session, but also as undermining the perceived efficacy of the social skills that are covered during the programme. Moreover, S6 describes their own feeling of frustration at not being able to do more to help to alleviate the group member's discomfort:

¶684: Um, I guess there are other issues such as like medication, things like that. We had one guy, he needed his medication before he came into group. And, quite often, the officers would be like, 'oh, the nurse is late, you can't have it this morning,' or, 'actually we can't get it sorted out at the moment, can you come back at break?'

¶685:

¶686: I: Hm.

¶687:

¶688: And that again wasn't very helpful for him, 'cos actually he needed that to stabilise his mood and he needed to have it at least 45 minutes before…

…

¶700: I: Um, and those sorts of, um, ah, operational issues with getting, um, group members, support and- Ah, in what way does that affect the actual treatment, um, day to day?

¶701:

¶702: Because on the one hand we're teaching these skills about being assertive…

¶703:

¶704: I: Mm.

¶705:

¶706: …and being open, in the group room. And everything's nice in the group room and people are supportive. But outside of the group room all of that falls away.

¶707:

¶708: I: Okay.

¶709:

¶710: And actually, it's like actually, that 'actually you're not that important and actually, um, you just need to cope and just get on with it.'

…

¶718: But also it makes them unhappy, it makes- I've seen them like, you know, the guy who had to go up to the toilet, he felt really bad 'cos he had to keep interrupting the sessions, was gone for a while, and, it also made him feel bad about himself. So actually, [pause] he wasn't, his needs weren't important.

¶719:

¶720: I: Mm. Okay.

¶721:

¶722: And it may- The facilitators made, it made us feel really guilty that actually there wasn't something we can do, and quite helpless about that. [S6]

S8 here uses the metaphor of a 'battle' [S8, 663] to describe the challenges of working around organisational issues to support group members with a physical disability or health condition. This isn't framed as a direct conflict with other departments in the prison, but rather a fight to maintain a healthy rapport and therapeutic relationship with a group

member. Physical barriers to accessing the group room are construed as a potential threat to the work that SOTP facilitators do to encourage prisoners to engage with treatment. The potential impact of attending SOTP groups on a prisoner's ability to engage in religious observance or to attend education are also cited here. S8 notes that if SOTP threatens these other aspects of prisoners' lives that they may value, this will further reduce the strength of the therapeutic relationships that successful treatment is predicated on:

¶659: So for instance, you know, if we want to make sure that we - It's like it's impossible to put a disabled - Unless it's a disabled guy who's currently in the prison, it's impossible to put a disabled guy on a group, unless he's currently on a, you know, intake on cell that's a disabled cell. You, you can't access that. Um, you know, we can't put stuff on the ground floor for, for guys who are disabled because there's not enough room that we're able to access the ground floor. Ah, so there's certain, you know, certain assessments, um, that's we'd like to do that involve certain equipment, we can't do because the only room we can have is on four so we can't let disabled guys do them. Um, [sharp exhale] a lot of like the things going on in the prison, there's a lot of inflexibility with when things can happen. So for instance, health appointments, if we ask for a guy to, have a health appointment rearranged so he can attend a group. 'No, that'll go down as an IEP because he's not attended his appointment and we can't rearrange, and…'. So guys who have [inaudible] because they're down as missing sessions regularly.
¶660:
¶661: I: Mm.
¶662:
¶663: Um, yeah, it, it, it, it definitely affects delivery in a massive way. Just in terms of people's ability to get to session, but I think wider than that, it, it, it - I think people think - Sometimes people think that if they can't live their life, in a way that - You know, if they can't live their life and express their religion and attend SOTP, if they can't live their life and see to their health concerns and do SOTP, um, if they can't live their life and, you know, do their education course and do SOTP, it sort of, it sort of lessens the, I think lessens the reputation of doing group work, it sort of makes it more of a, more of a chore than opportunity. Um… Yeah, so it, it definitely weakens the, the view of doing our kind of work in prisons and it, um, um, from a logistic point of view it just - 'Cos everything's seen as a hassle or something that has to be done. There's never anything like, you cooperate to get people into treatment. It's, it's not, it feels like a battle.
[S8]

In contrast, S7 is here more positive about the responsivity of the organisation as a whole, but identifies a different barrier at the point of prisoners asking for help and allowing their individual needs to be identified. She talks about staff being able to deal with some issues, but perhaps not being as mindful of identifying additional hidden needs, or being aware of these but worrying about how to assess these appropriately. This process of self-

monitoring and concern to use language appropriately are explored further in section 6.5 below:

¶973: Um, I think the training's improved in that area. I think people are more, are better at kind of, um, making areas more accessible and things like that. Um, so for example we, um, managed, you know, did a lot of work to sort of change our classroom location to try and allow flat location so that people in wheelchairs could access programmes that never could before. So I think people are generally more, aware, um, and try and do more. But, I think, I think what, what people don't understand is that- So it's not that they don't, they don't understand or are not aware that people have disability, and that they might need something else, I think it's that people don't always know what they need, or, or what they would need to do, to work that out. [S7]

Thus, issues relating to disability in general are talked about as being external to SOTP, either in a physical (e.g. the layout of the wings) or organisational sense (e.g. barriers put in place by other departments). The one form of physical disability that was more directly linked with issues affecting progress in the group room was deafness. Unlike the issues described above, which are externalised, or if not are described as being relatively straightforward to deal with, supporting deaf prisoners during treatment was seen as more directly problematic for facilitators. S3 notes both practical issues regarding accurately conveying meaning via signing, as well as issues of social isolation (although age is here emphasised as being as important a factor as having a hearing impairment), whilst S6 cites deafness as a barrier to even being assigned to a Core SOTP group:

¶565: So I mean things like, it would be nice if you could consider getting a nice age range, or people that- But, as an older group member people occasionally did make jokes, I mean he made them at his own expense.
¶566:
¶567: I: Hm.
¶568:
¶569: But being that he was so inadequate I wonder, if that was just trying to fit in with other people and things like that. But sometimes there was this uncomfortable, like… But you know, like he had difficulties with, um, with his hearing, he didn't really interact with the rest of the group very well. Um, and also, it's difficult, like what would his motivation be. Like for other people are a little bit younger, like maybe getting released soon, compared to him, his life's going to be quite different when he's released.
[S2]

> ¶270: Um, so I guess there's the environmental things, and actually the impact of the programme in terms of how well [inaudible] disability. Um, I think in terms of, we've had a couple of men who've been deaf, who haven't been able to access the programme because - I think they've just started one down, deaf SOTP, I think it might be in Whitton. But before that there was no provision for them, to engage in treatment programmes, because they didn't have facilities for people who are deaf, because we couldn't have a sign language, a signer in the room.
> [S6]

Here a staff member contrasts supporting a deaf group member with support a partially-sighted one. For the latter, a clear practical solution is outlined. In contrast, with the former the problem is outlined, but the lack of a stated solution implies that this is relatively harder to address satisfactorily:

> ¶497: Hearing. Hearing is quite difficult if somebody's, somebody's very hard of hearing. It can, can obviously be a, be a big barrier to them engaging in programmes. Um, because if we can't, we can't communicate, um, it's mostly through group discussion and things like that, it's difficult for them to absorb, what's going on. Probably quite frustrating for them as well.
> ¶498:
> ¶499: I: Okay.
> ¶500:
> ¶501: Um, vision we can usually kind of do something with that. Um, be it kind of, um, get- Place them close to the board or if they're totally, um, if they're, if they're not able to see at all, um, then, then we'd be able to just talk them through it and things like that. But, but there are many different kinds of disabilities that can impact on it.
> ¶502:
> ¶503: I: Okay.
> [S5]

S9 describes how the combination of age and deafness might affect the way in which facilitators might treat a group member, implicitly drawing on the discourses of vulnerability and passivity associated with disability, and describing how this could manifest in a tendency to both infantilise and avoid challenging a group member:

> ¶475: ...and I think there was a tendency to respond to him in a, in a- Can't think. In more of a... Not child way, but you know, you know sometimes people, people respond to people who are older and they're softly softly. Kind of a bit condescending and kind of how someone might talk to somebody if they were a child. There was kind of a- There was a bit of that going on.
> ¶476:

¶477: I: Right.
¶478:
¶479: I think [inaudible] because he was seen as being more vulnerable, because of his hearing. And you know, there are issues around age that people can, you know, definitely need to be supported. But it was the feeling that, that was probably quite belittling and not the way that someone - You know, should be responded to in the same way that anyone should.
[S9]

In contrast with other aspects of identity, physical disability was instead more strongly tied to an inability to physically access treatment, rather than there being any major psycho-social barriers to overcome. This was also one of the few themes where there were notable differences in the responses of staff from different establishments, with the physical layout of wings at Prison A cited by many as problematic:

¶635: Um, so for instance, disability is like, there, there- On the wing we used to facilitate on there was only two disabled cells. The wing we're on now there's only one. [sigh/exhale] Peoples' quality of life really, you can see peoples' quality of life really suffering because, there's just not the facilities, available to cater for their disability.
¶636:
¶637: I: Mm.
¶638:
¶639: There's a guy [inaudible], guy, guy who was on SOTP, who finished it. He went to another prison and came back to Prison A. The other prison he was in he had regular remedial gym, physiotherapy. He was walking around, bouncing around. Now he's come back here, and he's just - He doesn't get access to the same sort of, um, rehabilitation, rehabilitation, he doesn't get a [in] exercise time. He, so it's like walking with a kid again, you can see that, like his- Unless, unless he's fallen down stairs, or unless he's, he's producing a, a serious health risk to himself or other people, the fact that he's regressing in terms of his disability, you can see him regressing…
[S8]

¶258: So whilst we've always tried to make sure we've got one on a flat location - We had a guy who, who had a wheelchair, who actually the door frames was, were barely wide enough to fit him in.
¶259:
¶260: I: Right.
¶261:
¶262: And, and obviously by kind of health and safety we weren't meant to wheel him in and out.
¶263:
¶264: I: Okay.
¶265:
¶266: So that in itself was a massive issue, trying to make sure we've got a disability orderly to wheel him in and out. The group room was quite small

anyway, so that impacted the amount of space he had. So as much as we tried to, ah, um, adapt the group to kind of fit in with him, in, in terms of things like written work and things like that it was really difficult for him to do on his lap, we'd have to support him with that. It was really difficult for him to do role plays because he couldn't move out of his chair.
[S6]

¶579: And the, on the 1s, on the ground floor, there is only, one cell that you can have three people in. Um, so it's like a group cell. Um, so say if you get, um, a prisoner coming in that's in a wheelchair, or needs a walking stick or finds it hard to, get upstairs they've only got a few places, really…
¶580:
¶581: I: Mm.
¶582:
¶583: …on this wing to accommodate some of them. Um, so I think that's, that can be a real issue in some of the prisons. Um, especially if we want a group member to transfer in from other prisons in order to do our programme…
¶584:
¶585: I: Mm.
¶586:
¶587: …um, but say if they've got disability issue then they'll be unable to do that. Because we haven't got the facilities to accommodate them. So, I suppose that's impacting on how they've been able to address their offending, because they've got a disability.
[S14]

Intellectual disability and learning difficulties

Whilst none of those interviewed had delivered the Adapted SOTP, several had had experience of working with group members whose IQ scores were on the threshold for the Adapted programme, or who had a learning difficulty that impacted on their ability to participate in sessions and understand material covered. Supporting these types of group members was something that several staff members discussed at length, and often without any prompting beyond a general question about what responsivity issues they had encountered in their work. The success with which such group members' needs were met was mixed, with S1 here describing a creative approach to presenting course materials as being useful when working with group members who are dyslexic, but S3 noting that a lack of time and resources sometimes prevented simple steps from being taken in order to support a prisoner with relatively low IQ as fully as possible:

¶611: And there were times when guys didn't understand what was going on, so I'd go off and I'd make like - We had guys, when we were doing Decision Chains, he didn't understand the questions we were asking so I drew like a little man, um, like a stick man and on one side I had these are the questions we're gonna be asking you, and these are the kind of responses. So, 'What are you thinking?', 'What are you feeling?', 'What are you doing?'. Different arrows pointing to different things. I know it sounds quite basic but for some of the guys who I, whose IQ was lower, they needed that support. I did loads of different faces, of different emotions and stuck em on the wall. Um, what else did we do? Like a timeline to show how - Where we, [slight laugh] where we go...

[S1]

¶529: Um. [inaudible] So, ah, so the recent group we had two guys on low IQ. Um, so we had a WAIS, on them. We had the recommendations from the WAIS, if I'm being entirely honest, as much as we were mindful of these guys low IQ I think that that, that that was- We, we made as much effort as we could- Sorry I'm just thinking this through. We knew they were like low IQ so they needed extra support. I don't think we took enough time to consider, specifically for that individual what would work best. So you know when someone has a WAIS...

¶530:

¶531: I: Yeah.

¶532:

¶533: ...there'll be particular recommendations about specific deficits of their cognitive functioning. And it- With hindsight, had we paid more attention to those, we could have customised the group perhaps a little bit better than we did. That's not to say that we didn't, you know, look to... You know, change some of the exercises or role plays, or just the way that we delivered session, but I think that maybe we could have gone that little bit further with some of, some of the guys.

[S3]

Engaging with individuals in order to negotiate appropriate forms of tailored support was advocated by S5, who indicates that dyslexia is common in the prison population as whole. Linked to the suggestion that such learning disabilities are widespread is the assertion that this is one of many variables that needs to be considered in a holistic fashion when establishing how best to meet the needs of an individual. The finding that facilitators 'never highlight an individual in a group' suggests that this is something to be avoided. It can be inferred that this is to avoid making an individual's needs unnecessary salient, and accommodating them as discretely as possible:

¶517: It does, it doesn't necessarily, impact on how, how I deal with them. It's just another, factor that comes into, to kind of the equation. It's like, I deal with them normally…
¶518:
¶519: I: Yeah.
¶520:
¶521: …but I also know that they have that, um, that issue that, that, that needs to be, needs to be assisted with, maybe they just need somebody to visit them once a week, to help them with the out of session work or something like that. We always, we always make it a very general thing, we don't say, 'That specific person needs help'. We always say, 'Okay, so, as a group if anyone needs help…
¶522:
¶523: I: Right.
¶524:
¶525: …just ask us'. We may have a chat with them privately and just say, um, you know, 'Would, would you like to meet once a week?', y- 'Cos often, they will identify, you know, 'I find it difficult to read or write'.
[S5]

¶705: Some people learn better through visual rather than verbal so often there's a lot of work trying to kind of make sure you're getting the right, um, way of learning for the right person. So often adapting a lot of the material, um, sort of changing exercises slightly. That kind of thing is the experience I've had with that.
¶706:
¶707: I: Mm.
¶708:
¶709: Um, sometimes adding more help for people that struggle to understand, certain ideas or concepts, or where English is not their first language, or they can't read or write. We've often given extra support outside of group, um, either by the facilitators or somebody else on the team…
[S7]

¶669: I think people with, with particularly low IQ…
¶670:
¶671: I: Mm.
¶672:
¶673: …were, were really difficult. So people that really should have done the Adapted, SOTP but were kind of shoehorned onto the Core programme, to boost numbers or- You know, because it was felt that they would benefit from being on it in a particular, group.

…

¶693: So yeah I think when you get to a- When you run out of, of ways to try and explain something, and, and you literally can't, can't simplify it anymore- Or you think you can't simplify it anymore. I think that's when you get quite

frustrated because you're, you're saying, 'Look, you know, this person just shouldn't, be in this position…

¶694:

¶695: I: Mm.

¶696:

¶697: …whereby-'. You know, it's obviously uncomfortable for them. They're in a room with eight or nine other people, people getting quite frustrated and, and seeing that this person's really struggling and hasn't actually got the intellect, intellectual capacity to, to, to do this work.

[S13]

Variation in IQ within a group is noted below by S4. The description of the group member with a high IQ can be read as complimentary, based on the emphasis placed on his openness and ability to reflect on his own behaviour in the group room. However, an alternative reading could be taken to imply a level of boundary pushing on the part of the group member, or the maintenance of self-esteem by demonstrating his own knowledge to staff and other prisoners. The example of this prisoner correcting facilitators' spelling mistakes is cited by S4 and could be interpreted as a challenge to the intelligence and authority of staff. This possible use of knowledge in order to assert status within the group would be consistent with the various examples cited previously in relation to power dynamics within the group (section 6.2). The group member in question is however reported as explaining that he does this because the mistake bothers him and he feels compelled to correct it, raising the alterative explanation that this behaviour relates to the prisoner's own personality, and is not necessarily intended as a challenging of authority:

¶433: So we've got a guy who's got, he's very pleased about his WASI [IQ] score, it was 139 on it…

¶434:

¶435: I: Right.

¶436:

¶437: …so he's nearly in Mensa. [both slight laugh] He's very intelligent, but he, and he has to do things like, um, if there's a spelling mistake on the board for instance, he has to pick it out. But he's explained to us that it's not because he's being picky, it's because he can't sit there with it, with it wrong, he has to, he has to say it. So he's been very open with the group. 'Cos he's got quite high intelligence in that way. And we've got another guy who's, who's got quite low intelligence. He's the one who says certain comments like, 'I'd shoot them all', or, 'I'd-'.

[S4]

Here two members of staff discuss the challenges of supporting a group member with a diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome. It is unclear whether both accounts refer to the same

group member, but there are notable differences in the way that each staff participant talks about providing support. S10 describes working around issues of reduced comprehension, and simplifying the nature of feedback (to the point of using visual feedback characteristic of the Becoming New Me programme). S8, in contrast, focuses on the issues with social interaction and group discussion that the prisoner faced, showing a clearer awareness that Asperger's and autistic spectrum disorder represent a unique set of issues distinct from those of reduced intelligence and comprehension. A reference to this prisoner appearing to be 'annoying' [S8, 555] indicate the way in which this member of staff experienced working with them, but simultaneously acknowledges that the prima facie way that someone presents may not always be a straightforward indication of their intended behaviour. There is a connection to be made here with the prisoner considered above who was described as compulsively correcting facilitators' spelling 'because he can't sit there with it' [S4, 437]. It is unclear whether S8 and S4 are referring to the same individual here, but in both cases a behaviour is described that could be interpreted as intentionally challenging or disruptive without if aspects of the individual's personality are not taken into account:

¶763: Um, we- I, I've worked with one guy who [in] learning ability, he was- He had Asperger's.
¶764:
¶765: I: Mm.
¶766:
¶767: So we were having to reword our language. And they were encouraging us, we needed to do thumbs up signs.
¶768:
¶769: I: Okay.
¶770:
¶771: And, sort of, really kind of address the way we spoke to deal with him. But I got, a concern that we felt as well was, if it would make him stand out more if we were doing the thumbs up sign, if we weren't doing the thumbs up sign for other people.
[S10]

¶551: Um, I suppose from being a facilitator, which is quite a recent one is a guy who had, is a guy who, um, had a diagnosis of Asperger's.
¶552:
¶553: I: Mm.
¶554:
¶555: Um, which was a real learning curve, for, uh, how we interact with him and how we model interactions with the guy in the group. So, you know, some of the, the presentations that people give with Asperger's can, can just look

like someone who's well annoying. With this guy that was particularly the case, like he'd always be, um, he'd, he'd question everything [inaudible] control over saying what he wanted to say, because he had a point that needed to be made so it had to be said right then.
[S8]

6.4: Superordinate theme 3 – Managing the group
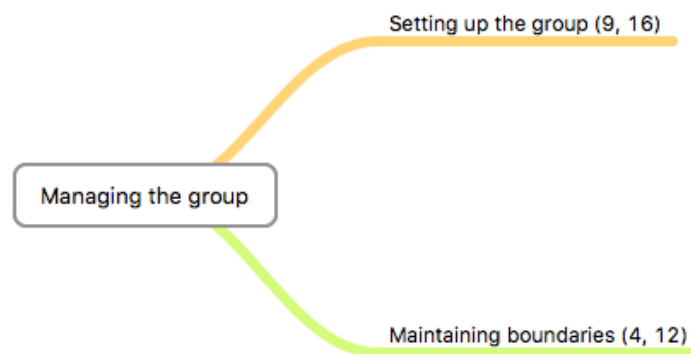
Figure 6.4.i: Superordinate theme 'Managing the group', with hierarchical ordinate themes. Figures in parentheses are (n,N), where n = number of cases, N = total number of citations.

Setting up the group

Cutting across many of the other themes was an over-arching one of group make up. The majority of staff members emphasised either the dangers of a poorly balanced group, the benefits of a well-balanced one, or both. Many were actively involved in the initial establishment of groups, either by initially assessing potential group members, or in some cases making final decisions on group make up as Treatment Managers. Here a member of staff highlights multiple benefits of a diverse group, such as addressing the concerns of group members who may have felt that their background was a barrier to progressing in treatment, and reducing isolation. Another benefit relating to the chance to observe and challenge discriminatory attitudes that may have otherwise gone unnoticed closely parallels the rationale for having a mixed gender facilitator team.

¶303: Um, but again they were, they all had similar offences, so that- Yeah. It's difficult because you can't, you know, you can't pick and choose completely…

¶304:

¶305: I: Right.

¶306:

¶307: …who you're gonna want on the group. Um… Just based on that.

¶308:

¶309: I: So-

¶310:

¶311: But then it's not my decision, so.

¶312:

¶313: I: Okay, um, so why, why was that helpful to have a mix of…?

¶314:

¶315: Because I think, it re- It helped us, show that no matter where you come from, or how old you are or what offence you've done, you're still able to work on it and you're still able to progress, and you're still able to address your sexual offending. Um, and I guess as well, with a mix of ethnicities it lets others feel supported, a, a mix of ages as well, it lets others feel more supported, and also if there are elements of sexism, racism, ageism, within the group…

¶316:

¶317: I: Mm hm.

¶318:

¶319: …then, it's- You can challenge that as well. And it kind of brings that out as well, you can kind of challenge those unhelpful views as well.

[S1]

Avoiding the isolation of group members in a minority was echoed by others:

¶317: Um, because often if a make-up isn't considered correctly or enough time given to it that's where in my experience the groups have been…

¶318:

¶319: I: Mm.

¶320:

¶321: …most challenging…

¶322:

¶323: I: Right.

¶324:

¶325: …to run.

¶326:

¶327: I: Okay. What sort of issues can it, um, lead to?

¶328:

¶329: Um, I think it can lead to group members feeling isolated.

¶330:

¶331: I: Right.

¶332:

¶333: Um, particularly if they're, the sort of minority in some way. So either they're the only child offender for example, or, um- Where else have we had problems? Age, so if they're very old or very young.

¶334:

¶335: I: Mm.

¶336:
¶337: Compared to everybody else.
¶338:
¶339: I: Okay.
¶340:
¶341: Um, we had an issue with a guy who was, um, Muslim and he felt very isolated and felt that people didn't understand him. Um, where else have we had issues? Ah, mental health. It's often led to people feeling kind of on their own.
[S7]

Despite the importance placed on having a group that was diverse and balanced across various demographic dimensions there was also a pragmatic acceptance that this was difficult to achieve in practice. Key barriers that had to be negotiated included the pressure to meet performance targets relating to the number of prisoners receiving treatment, as well as to the over- and under-representation of certain groups within the populations that they were selecting group members from. For example, some stated that older, white men were over-represented in the sex offender populations that they were drawing group members from. In general, staff showed a level of acceptance that decisions regarding selection had to sometimes be made in a pragmatic and opportunistic way that did not always produce an ideal group. However, some did feel more strongly about the need for better decisions to be made at the selection stage, noting the impact it could have on the already difficult role that facilitators were performing:

¶341: But I think as a facilitator I've been left feeling grievance at how the group was put together, and that things might have been overlooked…
¶342:
¶343: I: Mm.
¶344:
¶345: …early on. That's later on made our lives more difficult.
¶346:
¶347: I: Mm.
¶348:
¶349: And, you know, for the group. I'm not- It's not- It sounds quite selfish when I describe it in that respect, you know, it was difficult for me. SOTP is difficult period.
¶350:
¶351: I: Mm.
¶352:
¶353: But, to such an extent that a facilitator's come off the course, things perhaps could have been done a lot earlier.
[S3]

> ¶445: So we've got a guy on the group, ah, recently, who's in for, um… Exhibitionism, so repeated offender. And to some degree he was marginalised as well because he, because there was no one else who could relate to that on the group, so little things like that- Yeah I know it can be difficult to find enough group members that might have that, but it's certainly worth being mindful, of that. So, I think the groups that work best, are the ones that would- I mean it's difficult. Would ideally take account of different offence types, different ages, um…
> [S3]

Staff noted similar benefits for promoting engagement with treatment, and also mention reflecting the make-up of the general population. For example, S5 notes the benefits of a diverse group to encouraging therapeutic disclosure, but point out that the small population from which there are drawing their participants sometimes limits the control staff have over group make up (here using the example of ethnicity):

> ¶347: I: And, what has been the sort of mix of the groups you've worked with, in terms of ethnicity, or sexuality or, other aspects of, diversity?
> ¶348:
> ¶349: Often, often it's, it's attempted to, to make it, ah, mixed.
> ¶350:
> ¶351: I: Mm.
> ¶352:
> ¶353: In reality, it's to, to make that happen. Um, often, [slight laugh] often I would say some, some people may decide not to engage, who are we were considering, as you know those, maybe, maybe ethnic groups, different ethnic groups other than white because I guess predominantly, um, predominantly within, within particularly in this prison the V P wing, um, it's, a lot of people are white…
> ¶354:
> ¶355: I: Mm.
> ¶356:
> ¶357: Uh, British white. So, and the other, the other kind of ethnic groups, there's, there's fewer so it's difficult to get, to get them on board as well. Um… Not, not just, not just because of them but because actually, there's few, fewer to choose from or fewer to assess so, so that kind of process is more difficult. Um, we always try, but in reality it…
> [S5]

In terms of factors to consider when forming a group, motivation to change was discussed less often but did receive some attention, with S13 making reference to participants needing to be showing at least partial motivation to address their behaviour. Whilst this discussion begins with a consideration of individual motivation, it moves on to the ways in

which modelling can improve motivation to change for individuals in the group who may initially be less oriented towards achieving change:

¶489: Um, I think ultimately- It sounds really simplistic, but people actually want to- Have to want to be there in the first place.
¶490:
¶491: I: Mm.
¶492:
¶493: Um, and have to be at that kind of ready stage, um, where, wherever on the spectrum they are in terms of readiness. Even if they're minimising or, or not accepting complete responsibility or denying some elements of the offence, but...
¶494:
¶495: I: Mm.
¶496:
¶497: ..you know, readily accepting others. I think it's about- Yeah, being prepared to listen, um, also being prepared to, feel uncomfortable. And, and think, 'I'm at the right place now where I can manage it.', or that's gonna be difficult.
¶498:
¶499: I: Mm.
¶500:
¶501: 'I know that in the long term it's, gonna be best for me and, and best for everyone else if I, if I put myself through this.'. Um, I think if you have, even a couple or, three or four people in the group that have that attitude and kind of adopt it consistently all the way through then...
¶502:
¶503: I: Mm.
¶504:
¶505: ...then that does have a positive effect on, other group members that maybe are slightly kind of more borderline or, or a bit rocky or, you know, get emotive.
[S13]

There were some counter-examples to the general consensus regarding the importance of initial make-up, with a minority playing down its role in determining the quality of treatment, or group dynamics. Given the nature of the programme group-make on Rolling SOTP was necessarily more dynamic than that of Core SOTP programmes (the former changing regularly, and the latter only changing if a group member were to deselect themselves). This necessarily limited the degree of control that facilitators had over group make up:

¶293: Um, and obviously with the Core there's a, like a stipulation about if there's a single person…
¶294:
¶295: I: Yeah.
¶296:
¶297: …who's minority ethnic you need to have, need to speak to them before going on.
¶298:
¶299: I: Yeah.
¶300:
¶301: I: How do you, you feel that that works in terms of the Rolling you've delivered in terms of…?
¶302:
¶303: Um, to be honest I don't really know because I wasn't involved with kind of assessing people for the programme necessarily…
¶304:
¶305: I: Right.
¶306:
¶307: …so I don't know- I'm not sure how that worked.
¶308:
¶309: I: In terms of making up the groups?
¶310:
¶311: Um, I mean I think the… It was hard to find enough people to do Rolling so I think we kind of probably took everyone who was suitable, it wasn't really a case of saying, 'We'll have you and not you'.
¶312:
¶313: I: Yeah.
¶314:
¶315: We'll just have everyone who's suitable. [slight laugh]
[S2]

Tied closely to the cross-cutting theme of group make up, offence type was seen as playing an important role in how group members related to each other. Whilst some reference was made to specific offences staff most commonly talked about victim age as being the most important factor to be aware of, broadly separating group members into those who offended against adults, and those who offended against children. A need to set ground rules to prevent the establishment of a hierarchy forming between these two groups, mirroring the one seen as the norm in the general prison population, was emphasised by several staff members:

¶331: Um, I think it's [group make-up] really important. I think it's one of the key, kind of, key bits of putting a programme together.
¶332:
¶333: I: Mm.
¶334:

¶335: I mean I've worked on groups that have been put together very last minute and therefore some of, some of them have been very detrimental.
¶336:
¶337: I: Mm.
¶338:
¶339: Um, whether it's about individual's motivation or it's about putting together group members with offences, most of them with offences against women, or, um- You know, one group I worked with was actually all the guys, there was probably eight people, seven people out of the group that had offences against adult women. And so they had quite strong attitudes about women. So facilitating that group with two women was very difficult.
[S9]

¶287: Yeah, [overlapping] I think the group- Well the groups that I've seen so far. Um, of the ones that we've recently put together, it's really important to make sure that, if there is, um, a range of offences that [clears throat] you try to dispel that kind of hierarchy of...
¶288:
¶289: I: Mm.
¶290:
¶291: ...who's done what. Um, and that they- The group members, ah, are comfortable discussing whatever their offence is and maybe working out the reasons why they're not comfortable, but making sure that the guys who may have internet offences or, um, child offences, um, feel comfortable talking around the guys that have offended against adults.
[S1]

¶345: So that kind of isolation effect happens. I think sometimes people also feel, bullied by other group members. That seems to happen more when you too many adult offenders compared to child offenders.
¶346:
¶347: I: Right.
¶348:
¶349: So if the balance is not right there the child offenders often feel bullied by the adult offenders.
[S7]

As well as the challenges of working with a group that was imbalanced in terms of offence type, the benefits of working with a diverse group were also noted. Just as collusion and the re-enforcement of distorted thinking was a danger of an imbalanced group, a desirable process of constructive challenging was noted in groups that were more diverse.

Whilst differing experience, gender, or age were all discussed as potential barriers to forming rapport to be negotiated, the problems that could arise from congruence (relating to gender or age) was also touched upon. There was some limited discussion of working with younger group members, although this was evident only in a minority of staff interviews. In contrast to the challenging behaviours that many staff attributed to older group members, younger group members were seen by those who did discuss them as being surprisingly compliant and less disruptive than anticipated. Here the straightforward and successful challenging of problematic behaviour contrasts with the more complex (and less readily resolved) potential barriers to working with older prisoners:

¶493: Yeah, and the only other thing's 'cos we've got a couple of younger guys on it, we thought there might be problems with motivation, 'cos a lot of them go to the gym.
¶494:
¶495: I: Mm.
¶496:
¶497: Um, and they might miss sessions, and there, there've been a few times when they've said, 'Oh, I've got this appointment and that appointment'. We've gone and checked it out, and they haven't got the appointment…
¶498:
¶499: I: Right.
¶500:
¶501: …it's because of wanting to go to the gym. But, we expect that they might have just gone anyway to the gym.
¶502:
¶503: I: Hm.
¶504:
¶505: Um, but so far if we've said, 'No, you're not going', then, they've been in session.
¶506:
¶507: I: Okay.
¶508:
¶509: Which has been really, really good, so yeah. There's a couple things we thought about at the start of the group, that could be, concerns, but…
[S4]

There is a tentative connection to be made here with the way in which another member of staff describes predominantly young groups as being more 'impulsive' and 'challenging' [S7, ¶361]. Both S4 and S7 suggest in different ways that issues with younger group members tend to manifest in overt behaviour that can be directly managed, contrasting

with the more complex and sometimes intractable barriers to forming a rapport with older group members.

One particular issue that was described as needed more nuanced consideration when working with younger group members was the problem of too much age congruence between facilitators and prisoners potentially leading to a problematic blurring of professional boundaries. Here the member of staff notes that this was not necessarily intentional, but nevertheless was something that needed to be carefully attended to, implying that it could have harmful or undesirable effects if left unchecked. The behaviour in this case is explicitly stated to not be a process of intentional grooming [S1, 761], although the later use of the phrase 'not with him' [S1, 773] suggests that the participant may have experienced more intentional forms of boundary transgression:

¶759: I: So what was it like working with the younger guys in the group, then?
¶760:
¶761: Um, they were fine, I think, you've just got to be careful with your boundaries because if they're similar age to you, um, and they know that they're a similar age to you they kind of ask you- We had one guy who asked more personal questions. He was doing it not because he was tryin' to groom us in any way, but I think it was more- He was just generally quite interested in what we were doing.
¶762:
¶763: I: Okay.
¶764:
¶765: And, you- We had to be quite like, 'Okay, so, um, yeah, I'm gonna go do this'. And he'd sort of say to my other facilitator, 'You gonna be playing golf at the weekend? What you doing here, what you doing there?'. You know, generally quite interested.
¶766:
¶767: I: Okay.
¶768:
¶769: Yeah…
¶770:
¶771: I: So you didn't see any ulterior motive-
¶772:
¶773: No, not with him. No, not really.
[S1]

Where to draw appropriate boundaries was something that also went beyond the direct relationship between facilitators and group members. Here a member of staff discusses how the prison environment itself impacts on the nature and degree of appropriate disclosure:

¶883: I: Okay. Um, so it's interesting there, 'cos you talked about sort of two things almost- Just to see how they work together, 'cos it's- 'Cos you disclose sometimes around your dyslexia...

¶884:

¶885: Mm.

¶886:

¶887: I: ...to make them feel more comfortable, but, there's also that tension there it seems with, leaving yourself vulnerable you said.

¶888:

¶889: Yeah, of course.

¶890:

¶891: I: So how do you, how do you resolve that tension between how much to disclose and how much to keep back?

¶892:

¶893: Um, it, it... It has to be, um- Because the- You have to feel comfortable about, about kind of disclosing that. I would never disclose anything about my private life...

¶894:

¶895: I: Mm.

¶896:

¶897: ...or, or where my family's from, or, or, or things like that because they're- It's more about security then, it's more about... Those kinds of issues, it's about them find- Because prison is an environment where, ah, everyone likes to gossip and that might be quite innocent, um, ah, initially but if the wrong people get hold of that gossip it can be quite harmful.

¶898:

¶899: I: Mm.

¶900:

¶901: So, I wouldn't disclose anything, ah, in relation to my outside life. About me as an individual I would say I would kind of disclose a bit more.

[S5]

6.5 – Conclusion

The data presented in this chapter have been used to explore the experiences of staff delivering SOTP programmes, with themes organised around overlapping issues of power dynamics, support and group management. Running throughout these is a consideration of the therapeutic environment of a treatment group and the dynamics that can operate between specific members of staff and prisoners. The ways in which identity of both staff and prisoners can strengthen, threaten or change therapeutic relationships has also been reported. In the following chapter, wider issues of gender, the operation of dual relationships and a psychoanalytic model for understanding these intragroup dynamics are considered.

Chapter 7: Facilitating SOTP – Discussion

The data obtained from interviews with staff participants are here subjected to a process of higher order analysis. As with the higher order analysis of prisoner participants' data, this involves going beyond the phenomenological and descriptive account presented in chapter 6, with a greater focus on drawing inferences and making theoretical links. The ways in which staff modulated their approach for different group members and different situations (and the particular responses that were deemed to be successful) are considered through the framework of transactional analysis (Berne, 1964). Wider issues governing the ways in which staff participants interacted with other staff are considered, with a focus on issues of gender highlighted by participants. Practical and ethical concerns in relation to dual relationships and boundary crossing are discussed, with reference to the dual relationships that existed between the researcher and participants.

7.1: Transactional analysis and cognitive behavioural therapy

As described previously (section 1.1), the variants of SOTP delivered in prison are based on the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy, with a strong focus on exploring current thinking, behaviour and attitudes, and a central aim of addressing future risk. Whilst group members are given time to discuss their life histories towards the start of the group (and may often refer back to their past experiences) this is designed in part to assist with developing group cohesion early on, rather than to necessarily identify key experiences in a group member's past that could be linked to their offending behaviour. Staff participants showed a clear understanding of and strong commitment to the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy, with a clear focus on the risks and needs of each individual and with much of their discussion of group members focusing on cognition at an individual level for their clients. However, the way that they discussed and approached facilitation was also in part consistent with a more psychoanalytic approach, specifically the form of transactional analysis developed by Berne (1964).

Transactional analysis reformulates Freud's three components of personality (id, ego and superego) as three personality states (child, adult, parent). These states are defined such that they correspond to the lived experience of social interaction. This offers a framework

to understand group dynamics in the context of treatment, and also supplements the focus on individual cognition that interventions typically draw on. Whilst transactional analysis was not explicitly cited by any participants, what they described as good practice was consistent with Berne's (1964) approach. In the context of SOTP this provides a meaningful way of understanding the various interactions between individuals and amongst the group that facilitators experienced or observed.

Responding to difficult group members with patience as well as with the setting of clear boundaries was one example of an interaction that several members of staff discussed (section 6.4). These shifts in how staff dealt with group members who became disruptive are consistent with Berne's (1964) concept of complementary transactions. Thus, group members behaving in what was seen by staff to be an unreasonable or overly emotional way could be characterised as exhibiting the 'child' ego state. In such cases staff typically described the appropriate response as staying calm and emphasising that the given behaviour was not acceptable. Such a response can be characterised as complementary under transactional analysis because in these situations staff took on the 'adult' ego state and responded to the social stimulus in a way that took account of the group member's ego state. Another type of interaction that might be understood through the framework outlined above is the issue of rolling with resistance (Miller & Rollnick, 1991). S2's description of being selective with regards to direct challenging of inappropriate behaviour (section 6.2) is one example of this, and in transactional terms can be thought of as involving the member of staff making a pragmatic decision as to the costs and gains of adopting different responsive states.

The rare occasions when facilitators felt that they had responded to challenges inappropriately could similarly be understood in terms of a 'cross transaction' involving inappropriately matched ego states. Thus, if a member of staff was emotionally affected by challenging behaviour and allowed this to unduly affect the nature of their response they could be said to be taking on a 'child' ego state to respond to the group member's 'child' state. Transaction analysis dictates that in such as situation mirroring the client's state represents an incongruent and inappropriate response, which would be associated with escalating personal conflict and ineffective communication. Staff participants' awareness of the need to respond appropriately and the reported consequences of occasionally not doing so are consistent with this.

Transactional analysis has been explicitly applied in forensic settings in the United Kingdom, but in the context of psychotherapy with individuals (e.g. Hay, 2009) rather than in the treatment and management of groups. The applicability of the approach in making sense of the current data is therefore notable for two reasons. It suggests that experienced practitioners delivering treatment that does not explicitly draw on Berne's (1964) approach will still develop and implicitly endorse its principles, providing support for transactional analysis as a whole. It also indicates that it is an approach that provides a useful framework, not just for individual treatment, but also for making sense of the complex ways that a group of clients experiencing intensive treatment interact with staff. Putting thought into group make up and the management of issues around group dynamics were described as essential prerequisites for a cohesive group and the development of a therapeutic environment. As such, an exploration of alternative models for understanding the dynamics operating within a group may be of great value to those responsible for reviewing, supervising and delivering sex offender treatment in prisons. One caveat regarding this is that transactions can often occur through non-verbal and paralinguistic means, and thus the transcripts of the current studies perhaps provide a limited means by which to further explore the applicability of the approach, although the video monitoring conducted during sessions does present opportunities for conducting further work in this area.

7.2: Gender and prison – interactions with other staff

For staff delivering SOTP, the importance of their own gender in determining interactions with group members was noted in chapter 6 (section 6.2). Although framed largely in terms of the challenges faced in the group room by both male and female facilitators interacting with prisoners, there was also some reference to issues when interacting with other members of staff in the wider prison. Of relevance here is the fact that none of the staff interviewed were officer facilitators, and that all of them were working primarily within departments that focused on psychological interventions (in roles such as Psychological Assistant, Trainee Psychologist or Treatment Manager). As such, the existing work on the experiences of female prison officers (e.g. Crawley, 2004) is not necessarily directly applicable to understanding the distinct experiences of non-uniformed staff. However, some of the hostility from male colleagues that Crawley (2004) identifies in the experiences

of female officers was present in the accounts of female participants in the current study, albeit to much lesser degree and in specific contexts. Crawley (2004) also identifies a process by which male officers conducting therapeutic work such as SOTP may be stigmatised or perceived as deviant by other officers. Some of the experiences of non-uniformed female staff reported in the previous chapter indicate that the combination of their gender and the therapeutic nature of their work with a stigmatised group of prisoners may have interacted to heighten unhelpful or inappropriate behaviour from some officers. Female staff in the current sample reported no issues with male colleagues in their own department, but some of them did discuss experiencing patronising or dismissive behaviour from male officers when interacting with them on the wing. Just as group members were sometimes reported as being resistant to working with young, female facilitators it was a combination of age and gender that was reported as playing a role in how they were treated by officers. It should be noted that whilst these negative experiences of interactions with uniformed staff did concern participants (and are certainly worthy of attention here) they were not described as the norm. Participants also described being able to cope with these situations appropriately and not being unduly affected by these interactions, for example assertively giving officers feedback about unhelpful behaviour. However, any wider impact on the well-being for non-uniformed staff may have been reported as limited purely because Psychology staff would not have as much regular contact with male officers as would female officers.

The small number of male, non-officer staff in the current sample did also report some resistance from officers, but this was never framed in the explicit and direct form experienced by some female facilitators. It can be inferred that the analysis of an overly masculine environment being treated by the presence of female officers (Martin & Jurik, 2007) is one that can be applied to interactions between male officers and female non-uniformed staff as well, and that for those officers involved in these inappropriate interactions the gender of the facilitator was the more salient 'deviant' feature (as opposed to the nature of their work itself). Alternatively, both factors may have been salient for officers interacting with male facilitators, but additional gender-specific social norms may have limited or modified the overt expression of their disapproval. An additional interpretation that is not explicit in the data is that male participants in the current sample may have experienced similarly inappropriate interactions, but were less willing to recognise or disclose this. For example, if male staff participants were motivated to present

themselves as being comfortable within a working environment that encourages a strong culture of masculinity they may have been motivated to avoid emphasising problematic interactions with male prison officers, as this would highlight their deviance from hegemonic masculinity in prison (Connell, 1987). There is however strong counter-evidence for such a critical reading of male participants' responses. Male participants did not show any explicit endorsement of any narrow, hegemonic masculine norms and when describing their interactions with prisoners would make direct reference to issues of hyper-masculinity, showing a nuanced understanding of culturally determined or irrational ways of perceiving gender.

Interactions with prison officers do fall outside of the experience of delivering a specific session of SOTP, and thus could be said to be of lesser relevance to the research questions under investigation. Some acknowledgement of these wider issues of prison work does however provide important context for the reported experiences of delivering an intervention to prisoners. For example, staff discussed the importance of modelling pro-social behaviours for prisoners and encouraging group members to develop and practice these. Staff reported that whilst they were supporting prisoners, they were often highly conscious of the likelihood that a prisoner may have to interact with an unhelpful member of staff. This could result in frustration at feelings that the therapeutic work they were conducting could potentially be threatened, undone or made harder if they were not supported by colleagues in other departments. Interactions between staff therefore did not operate in isolation from how facilitators felt about the material that they delivered to prisoners.

7.3: Dual relationships and shared professional identity

The concept of an 'active interview' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) was cited in chapter 4 in reference to prisoner participants. It may be useful to consider the complex process of collaborative meaning making between interviewer and participant, and whether this operated in a distinct fashion with staff participants. A key difference is the shared professional identity of research and participants in study 2, with the former having previously worked in the field that was now the subject of study. Staff participants from Prison B were also former colleagues, raising potential issues of dual relationships. A dual relationship is here taken to refer to situations where a therapist, researcher or other

professional has some significant secondary relationship with a client or participant. This can range from inappropriate and harmful abuses of power to subtler and less clear-cut cases (Moleski & Kiselica, 2005; Levine & Risen, 2009).

Some researchers highlight the potential benefits of certain kinds of dual relationship, even going as far as to argue that being over-vigilant can be counter-productive (Zur, 2002). The closely related issue of boundaries can cover issues such as levels of self-disclosure on the part of the professional, physical touch, or gift giving. Others such as Hewitt (2007) are more cautious about such benefits in the specific context of a qualitative research interview. Although acknowledging the advantages of forming a rapport with a participant in terms of yielding potentially useful insights, she also notes the potential for exploitation that can come about through role confusion. She also raises the issue of participants potentially sacrificing autonomy at the stage of data analysis, at which point the researcher is potentially imposing a narrative on an interview transcript, which is necessarily itself an imperfect and partial representation of the actual interaction.

Much of the literature on dual relationships focuses on the therapist-client relationship. Although closely related, the researcher-participant relationship presents additional specific issues to consider. Martin & Meezan (2009) review some of the relevant guidance on ethical research with LGBT populations. Making reference to the American National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and in contrast to the more equivocal position of Zur (2002), they suggest a cautious approach to allowing dual relationships to occur, for example avoiding the recruitment of a participant who is known to be a previous client in a therapeutic or professional context.

Three members of staff interviewed for study 2 were former colleagues. A fourth staff participant had in the past worked at the same establishment as the research, but this was after the researcher had left the prison service. Graham et al. (2002) highlight the important role that shared professional identity can play in the context of a qualitative interview. An analysis of two sets of interviews of GPs suggested that when interviewers were perceived as also being clinicians the interviews yielded broader and richer data. Conversely, potential negative effects such as 'shared conceptual blindness' can occur.

Even in the absence of any obvious dual relationship, the way in which a researcher presents themselves can have had a bearing on data obtained from interviews (Gillham, 2000). For example, in the current study early disclosure of the researcher's previous professional role could have affected the way participants viewed both the research and the interviewer. The position taken with all participants was to discuss this openly if the participant appeared interested in the researcher's background, but otherwise not to focus on it. If the issue was discussed then care was taken with all participants, familiar or otherwise, to distinguish the previous professional relationship from the current role as a researcher. Field notes completed after interviews indicate that a shared professional background had positive outcomes in many cases. For example, helping to facilitate rapport and trust. When framing a research interview in a particular way (for example, by making this shared experience less or more salient) it is possible that this might therefore have important effects on the power relationships that exist. One particular consequence of a dual relationship that is considered further in the following chapter is that of suggestibility, with contrasts drawn between staff and prisoners (section 8.3).

7.4: Conclusion

In chapter 6, ordinate and superordinate themes for staff participants were described. These were structured around the power relations that cam operate during treatment (with a notable emphasis here on prisoners attempting to challenge or exert power through aspects of identity), staff experiences of attempting to meet individual needs, and the experiences of managing the group. Tensions between competing goals were sometimes evident. For example, the tasks of managing the group and covering all necessary material sometimes reduced the capacity for challenging more minor examples of inappropriate language or behaviour.

In this chapter, higher order analysis of these themes has established an alternative framework for understanding the therapeutic dynamics in operation within an SOTP programme. Transactional analysis represents a novel way of understanding group dynamics and establishing best practice in the context of an intervention that is explicitly based on cognitive behavioural principles. SOTP manuals, training and supervision already focus heavily on the cognition of individual group members, as well as the development of facilitation skills for individual members of staff. Transactional analysis combines these two

aspects to explicitly consider how the interactions between specific prisoners and staff in different situations may operate, and thus has great relevance to exploring issues of responsivity and diverse individual needs. Interactions between prisoners and staff are given further consideration in the following chapter. Wider issues of gender, and how these impact on interactions between uniformed and non-uniformed staff provide important insight into not just how non-uniformed facilitators experience their work, but also the wider context within which prisoners are expected to practice and maintain their new skills each time they leave the group room. Finally, the consideration of dual relationships in this chapter not only touches important aspects of methodological reflection, but also the dynamics between staff (exemplified by trust and rapport) and how these may translate to the distinct context of a research interview.

Chapter 8: General discussion

Some of the issues considered in previous discussion chapters are revisited to explore points of contrast and congruence across the two studies, including contrasting meaning making in relation to professional competence, relatively greater overall congruence amongst staff participants, and the distinct ways in which suggestibility may have operated.

8.1: Narratives of identity: Reconstructed masculinity vs. professional competence

Issues of identity were expressed in markedly different ways across the two studies. Prisoners described how they experienced various discrete shifts in their own identity (brought about by notable life events such as coming to prison, or starting an SOTP group) (section 4.2). These typically involved a shift from what could be characterised as hegemonic masculinity (typified by a lack of self-reflection and adherence to narrow gender norms) towards a more reflective and therapeutic self, which was evident in the way that many participants acknowledged and reflected on their ongoing areas of risk during the interview. The narratives of identity constructed by staff were instead more stable and broadly structured around steadily increasing knowledge and experience rather than the discrete shifts described by prisoners. For staff, being a competent facilitator was central to their professional identities and to maintaining a positive sense of self, with any active questioning of their competence described as an uncomfortable threat to this identity (section 6.2). Developing a sense of competence and confidence as a facilitator was associated with wider psychological benefits, whereas instances where they doubted or criticised their own facilitation were at times linked with wider anxieties and dissatisfaction. In general, staff reported a positive narrative that, with each SOTP programme they delivered, steadily shifted from a positon of self-doubt and anxiety to one of competence and confidence. In contrast, prisoner participants typically described a less linear and more chaotic ongoing journey through treatment (and the wider prison system).

There is some notable congruence between the ways in which some participants from each study viewed the importance of learning. For example, a minority of prisoners described aspirations for their future that were strongly focused on the development of their own skills, or emphasised their current roles and responsibilities within prison in a way that

highlighted their competence and knowledge. When discussing the acquisition of these skills the language used by these prisoners did in some cases mirror that used by staff in that these skills were described as something to be gained slowly and steadily over time, and moreover that building up these skills and knowledge contributed to maintaining a positive sense of self. The Core SOTP has a strong focus on modelling pro-social behaviours, which may have contributed to this mirroring on the part of some prisoners. Facilitators modelling appropriate ways of interacting in the group may also be modelling pro-social values and goals. A focus on approach goals as dictated by the Good Lives Model is also heavily drawn on towards the end of Core SOTP. In the therapeutic environment of a cohesive group, where prisoners trust and respect the staff that they are working with, is therefore perhaps to be expected that the aspirations of the two sets of participants would overlap in these ways. The finding that many prisoners expressed interests in developing skills that were analogous to or related to those of staff delivering programmes (for example, being involved in mentoring or coaching other prisoners) may indicate that the process of modelling was working successfully to encourage the development of pro-social approach goals.

8.2: Intra-sample congruence and diversity

During the process of combining cases to develop themes for each study it became apparent that there was relatively more diversity and variation in the issues that prisoners were concerned with. This difference was recorded in notes made during the process of data analysis, and was also evident in the number of distinct themes that emerged after the process of initial coding. For prisoner participants, this meant that a number of themes that were of importance to a small number of participants were discarded during the iterative process of case integration (although some notable examples are still referenced in the final narrative account). In contrast, the initial thematic analysis for each staff participant yielded more repetition of themes across cases, and therefore less need to discard themes during case integration. Although a grounded theory approach was not adopted, a process of saturation can be said to have been observed during the integration of the final staff cases for study 2, such that the final cases had a minimal effect on the ordinate and superordinate themes that had been constructed for the sample as a whole. This was not the case for study 1, where it was felt that even when prisoners discussed the same issues and experiences these phenomena were made sense of in notably distinct

ways. For example, many prisoner participants discussed group cohesion and support, but showed variation in the types of support that they valued and how they saw their role within the group with some advocating for hierarchical forms of support, and others favouring mutual and horizontal forms of support (section 4.4). In contrast, staff generally demonstrated far more congruence in how they felt group dynamics should operate and how they saw their role in managing the group (section 6.4).

There are several explanations for this apparent increased congruence amongst staff participants. The design of the two studies, and the variation in the interview schedules, may account for some of this. Prisoner participants were recruited on the basis of their membership of at least one of three specific demographic groups. This was not the case for staff, who were recruited on the basis of their experience of delivering programmes, with no reference to aspects of their own identity (although this was then explored during the interview). Whilst some increased variation with respect to issues of individual and social identity might therefore be expected amongst prisoner participants, this does not in isolation explain the differences observed with regards to issues such as group cohesion and support. The degree of shared experience may also have been an additional factor. The standardised training and supervision that all facilitators experience would encourage some uniformity with regards to responsivity and effective group management in the context of treatment. Staff also referred to their learning as ongoing and learning from other more experienced facilitators (section 6.4). Thus, ideas about best practice may have been communicated to staff both through the formal processes of training as well the more informal processes of negotiation and internalisation that operated when observed more experienced colleagues.

Whilst this perhaps provides a plausible explanation for congruence amongst staff it does raise the question as to why the same process did not operate for prisoner participants, and does not fully explain the contrast being highlighted here. It might be expected that some prisoners experience parallel processes of learning from more experienced peers, and that just as this has the potential to have negative consequences and increase rates or severity of reoffending (e.g. Hutcherson, 2012) it should, for those engaged in treatment, also lead to some uniformity in relation to experiences of and attitudes towards treatment. It can be inferred then, that such processes *did* operate for prisoners, but that other variables such as more diverse prior life experiences or methodological differences across

the two studies allowed for greater diversity in the expression of individual lived experiences on the part of prisoner participants. Additional issues that might explain the greater congruence of staff responses relates to expectancy effects and suggestibility, and these are explored further below.

8.3: Suggestibility and power relationships: Treatment vs. research

Issues of compliance and suggestibility may have played a role in determining the responses of both prisoners and staff during interviews. Many prisoner participants described negative life events, both inside and outside prison, and such stressful past events may increase an individual's degree of suggestibility. Drake (2010) examined potential correlates of the Gudjonsson Suggestibility Scale (GSS; Gudjonsson, 1997) and concluded that amongst a sample of undergraduate students higher GSS scores were correlated with greater experiences of adversity, as well as with higher degrees of neuroticism and trait compliance. Beyond the level of individual personality, it is also important to consider situational factors. For example, the specific situation of conducting research interviews with prisoners who may have been serving lengthy and possibly indeterminate sentences. The *Criminal Justice Act, 2003* (and the subsequent amendments introduced in the *Criminal Justice and Immigration Act, 2008*) includes provisions for indefinitely detaining those deemed to be "dangerous offenders" until such time as the risk of harm to the public is deemed by the parole board to have been satisfactorily reduced.

For such prisoners, there was a particular potential external motivation for presenting an account that suggested positive progress and lowered risk of reoffending. These prisoners would be aware that their release date was partly dependant on their perceived level of risk, and as such may have had an interest in emphasising the effectiveness of interventions that they had participated in. The interviewer's role as an external researcher and the anonymity of the final report were emphasised prior to each interview in order to reduce the likelihood of this occurring. Despite this, participant may have felt that their comments would somehow impact on their progress through the prison system (or may have become habituated to emphasising their progress towards rehabilitation when discussing interventions with any member of staff) and may therefore have been motivated to present themselves in a more positive light. If this did occur, the degree to which it was a conscious process is uncertain. Certainly, many of the prisoner participants emphasised the

progress they had made, made positive comments about SOTP and often used the nomenclature associated with SOTP.

One reading of such behaviour might be that it was a conscious attempt to convince the interviewer that the content of the SOTP had been internalised and understood, whether or not this was the case. Whilst such a reading is not indefensible there is evidence throughout the interviews that participants did have some genuine insight into their offending and areas of risk, acknowledged their own ongoing issues, and were not entirely uncritical of the programme. The image presented was not uniformly positive, which provides evidence against a conscious attempt to manipulate or deceive. Participants such as P2 spoke about the uncomfortable processes of deconstruction and partial reconstruction of his sense of self during treatment (section 4.2). These acknowledgements of ongoing risk factors and of incomplete progress towards a cohesive and coherent sense of self do not indicate an attempt to exaggerate. Instead, they seem to indicate an attempt to honesty reflect on the complexity of the process of rehabilitation, without making overly optimistic claims about the speed, extent or durability of any progress.

Moreover, the repetition of terminology from the programme may simply indicate participants taking on board terms for previously unfamiliar concepts, which may therefore be harder to express in their own words. This cannot in isolation be taken as evidence for a lack of genuine understanding, and it could be argued that it indicates the opposite. P1's discussion of his issues with maintaining appropriate boundaries (section 4.2) acknowledges not just that it contributed to his offending, but that it was an ongoing issue that he still needed to be conscious of (and was to some extent displaying during the interview). Just as interviewees acknowledged the continuing areas of risk that they were working on, there was also some criticism of specific aspects of the SOTP, such as a perceived lack of aftercare, or the confusion over the definition of 'treatment' that P7 felt created inaccurate expectations about the remit of SOTP.

This point regarding the distinction between a medical intervention and a psychological one was not explicitly discussed by the prisoner sample as a whole, but does raise important practical and ethical questions in relation to both adherence and power relations. The range of factors that can influence the likelihood of patients adhering to instructions from medical professionals (Myers & Midence, 1998) may indicate some useful

best practice applicable to the distinct context of psychological intervention. In particular, the value of professionals adapting their method of communication based on the attitudes and beliefs of individual clients has particular relevance to the current research questions relating to responsivity. These issues are revisited in section 10.3 in relation to recommendations for practice. However, beyond these practical considerations is a wider ethical question about how both staff and researchers *represent* themselves and their work. P7 described an initial misunderstanding of the term 'treatment' to indicate a more clinical or medical intervention than the one he actually experienced. Although this topic was not widely discussed, the importance of how an intervention is described is worthy of further consideration as this could have important implications for non-engagement and for prisoners' expectations of interventions. The use of terms that imply a medical rather than psychological focus may also risk misrepresenting the role of staff delivering interventions, implying a level of clinical or medical training that is not necessary in order to deliver the SOTP. Whilst it appears that staff who came into contact with group members were entirely transparent regarding the nature of their work and training (demonstrated in P7's case by the way he quickly revised his understanding once actually participating in a group) the important role of language in determining prisoners' initial perceptions may still be important for understanding non-engagement.

For staff participants, there were possible indicators that could be used to infer a degree of impression management, suggestibility or compliance, but these manifested in distinct ways. Prisoner participants spoke positively of the value of the programme and emphasised their own progress towards addressing their offending behaviour, often echoing the terminology used on SOTP. In contrast, staff tended to ask for more clarification when questions were put to them, which could be interpreted as earnestness to provide an accurate response. It could also be inferred that many staff participants were keen to construct an ideal image of being a competent and knowledgeable practitioner, closely paralleling the inferred desire of prisoners to present themselves as 'good' group members. S8's discussion of his self-esteem being closely linked to his sense of professionalism (section 6.2) makes this explicit, but the same can be inferred from the responses of other staff participants who emphasised that when faced with challenges in group they had acted appropriately, or who questioned and corrected their own use of language when discussing different aspects of diversity.

As noted above, prisoner participants were informed that the interviewer was an external researcher and that their responses would be reported anonymously. However, they may still have perceived him as someone with a degree of power over them, in the same way that an SOTP facilitator writing a report or assessing their level of risk would have the power to influence their progress through the prison system and their eventual date of release. In contrast, staff participants may have been more likely to view the interviewer as a peer, creating a less hierarchical power relationship. A lack of power imbalance is desirable for limiting participant suggestibility. However, this connection between the researcher and participants has the potential to bring with it its own associated problems (such as the shared assumptions that can arise from what is a form of dual relationship). Field notes taken during data collection do illustrate that rapport was established very quickly with members of staff, and as well as interview style this might be attributed to the interviewer's experience in the field and a shared professional background with participants.

Whilst the above does broadly characterise a key difference in the two sets of interviews that is borne out in field notes and in the data itself, there is a danger that this provides an insufficient level of detail for considering the additional complex ways in which power relationships may have been operating. For example, whilst staff may have generally been more at ease than prisoners, power relationships still existed. Even with interviewee and interviewer regarding one another as peers, the act of taking a participants' data away and subsequently analysing and presenting it without their direct involvement means that the degree of control is not symmetrical, even when a participant's seldom exercised right to withdraw their data is taken into account. This could potentially lead to the type of ethnographic authority identified by Geertz (1988). Regardless of the fact that the method of analysis used eschews the positivist dichotomy of a passive interviewee and active, objective interviewer the perception of this type of power imbalance may have been enough to have affected the way in which participants experienced the interview. During the free coding of staff interviews, it was noted that in comparison to prisoners, staff frequently asked clarifying questions before providing responses during the interview. This may simply have reflected a more nuanced understanding of the issues being discussed (and thus a greater need for the interviewer to be precise when asking questions), or it may have reflected a relatively greater desire to provide an acceptable, or 'correct' answer. Thus, the power dynamics within the research interview provides one additional explanation for greater congruence of staff responses.

Interviewing prisoners convicted of a sexual offence raises a related set of issues. As some sexual offenders have problems with recognising personal or sexual boundaries it could be argued that keeping these boundaries clearly defined benefits both client and researcher. This could include a researcher not disclosing personal or biographical details that they might have done if interviewing participants from a different population. Conversely, given the discussion of sensitive issues, it could be argued that appropriate and carefully controlled boundary crossing could help to promote rapport and generate rich data.

Moving beyond a focus on the power that the interviewer may have had over the interviewee, it is useful to consider that the relationship may have been more reciprocal. When the interview is considered to be a complex, two-way social interaction that is a function of both interviewee and interviewer's lived experiences, then power relationships can be conceptualised as being more multi-faceted and complex. Power differentials may also be expressed across multiple dimensions simultaneously. As well as the control over selection and analysis of data noted above these may include factors such as age, class, control over the physical location of the interview and control over the commencement and ending of the interview (Limerick et al., 2006). The effect of some (but perhaps not all) of these factors may be ameliorated by a warm and collaborative interview style and a methodology that acknowledges the effects of the lived experience of the interviewer.

8.4: Conclusion

The individual discussion chapters for prisoners (chapter 5) and for staff (chapter 7) have presented higher order analysis of data from both studies that seeks to go beyond a purely phenomenological account of participants' lived experiences. The current chapter has explored additional points of contrast and congruence in the data across both studies, as well as wider issues that pertain to the programme of research as a whole. A consideration of the contrasting broad narratives evident across the two samples illustrates the distinct ways in which prisoners and staff attempt to establish (or re-establish) a cohesive sense of self (masculinity and professional competence for prisoners and staff respectively). A relatively higher degree of congruence within the staff sample has been noted. The reasons for this are speculated on, with a consideration of more shared professional and personal experiences amongst the staff sample. Finally, the important issue of suggestibility within

the research interview has been considered, with an acknowledgement that important power dynamics might have operated in distinct ways with each sample.

Given the degree of inference involved in going beyond a purely descriptive narrative account, several possible points of further inquiry are apparent. After a consideration of reflexivity issues in chapter 9, the final chapter will revisit the issues raised in these discussion chapters to consider the extent to which the research questions have been addressed. Recommendations for both further research as well as for practice will then be considered.

Chapter 9: Reflexivity

This chapter begins with a general consideration of the value of reflective practice when conducting IPA, and a description of the ways that this was implemented during the current programme of research. As well as issues relevant to data collection, analysis, and write up, attention is given to initial aspects of topic selection and research design. Field notes and a reflexive diary are drawn on to develop this account.

9.1: Reflexivity and IPA

As well as interview style, Knapik (2006) notes that interviewees' 'responsive participation' plays an important role in shaping the direction of a research interview. This is of particular relevance to data subjected to an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Conceptualising the interview process as a two-sided process of meaning making; shaped by *both* interviewer and participant, is in keeping with the double hermeneutic of IPA (Smith et al., 2009). The implications that this layered process of shared meaning making has for the importance of reflective practice also extend beyond the point of data collection. Discussing the hermeneutic tradition in general, Derrida (1988) notes that a particular text can be read in multiple ways. With the two-tiered process of meaning making that is integral to IPA, the potential to read and analyse a text in multiple ways is increased. An IPA researcher in engaged in the subjective process of making sense of a participant's subjective lived experience.

Brocki and Wearden (2006) note that reflexive practice is of particular importance when conducting IPA. Whilst an attempt to empathise with participants and to explore their perspectives will encourage rapport (and the collection and nuanced analysis of a rich phenomenological account) it may also encourage the operation of shared assumptions. Conversely, an aloof position is equally undesirable, as it will hamper the construction of a narrative account that allows for detailed reporting and analysis of participants' experiences. Reflective practice was adopted throughout the analytical process in order to better tread this line between a critical hermeneutic and the hermeneutics of suspicion (Smith, 2004). Combining the advice on reflexivity in phenomenological psychology given

by Langdridge (2007) with the techniques of learning journals (Moon, 1999) a combined reflexive journal and field diary was maintained throughout the research process.

Given the many multiple forms of reflexivity that have been adopted or advocated by those conducting research in the social sciences (Maton, 2003) it will be useful to clarify the aspects of the practice that have been adopted in this chapter. A brief account of my personal and professional background is presented. Maton (2003) highlights the possibility of this sort of autobiographical reflection being 'brief and disconnected'. The identification of important links here with the research topic and the experimental design helps to keep this section connected to the rest of the material presented in this chapter. When discussing the process of data collection, a narrative account of how the research process was experienced is adapted from field notes. This is supplemented with elements of methodological and personal reflexivity. Although it featured in field notes, reflection on issues of dual relationships is not considered here, as this has already been considered in the discussion chapter for the staff-focused study 2 (section 7.3). When considering the process of analysis, a similar structure is adopted, but here with reference to the less linear processes of iterative analysis. Wider issues of epistemological reflexivity (Nightingale and Cromby, 1999; Willig, 2001) are considered throughout, but are explicitly focused on in a final section spanning the programme of research.

9.2: Selecting a research topic and developing design

The rationale for the current programme of research and the chosen methodology has been outlined in previous chapters (section 1.4). In this section, biographical details from my own professional and personal history will be used to reflect on some additional reasons why I may have chosen the topic and approach that I did.

Immediately prior to beginning this PhD I worked for two years at a prison delivering the Core SOTP. I was also involved in completing pre-course assessments, and conducting static and dynamic risk assessments for participants who were already part of an SOTP group. Conducting research in this area was, in part, a decision made on pragmatic grounds. I reasoned that knowledge and experience of being a practitioner in a particular context would be an advantage when designing and conducting research in the same area. I was also conscious of developing a proposal that would make a unique contribution to the

literature. I felt that research focused on SOTP would allow me to do this, as I had first-hand experience of some of the issues that staff encountered and I was also aware that the programme was periodically being revised. I felt that there was the potential for new research to have an impact on a future revision of the programme and to identify best practice for staff delivering interventions. This focus on practical outcomes was emphasised in my original proposal, and can be attributed in part to my interest in identifying best practice. Recommendations for practice are also explicitly addressed in the concluding chapter (section 10.3).

All well as these practical arguments for conducting research in the broad area of sex offender treatment, there are further aspects of my professional and personal experience that contributed to my decision to focus on the specific issue of diversity. There are compelling reasons to conduct such research in order to address a notable gap in the literature. There are however many other gaps that I could have equally explored, such as the equivocal evidence regarding the direct efficacy of victim empathy work in reducing reoffending for this client group. I believe that I was drawn more readily to exploring issues of responsivity because along with boundary crossing, these were the issues that I noticed being raised most frequently as points of discussion during group supervision. This applied to all forms of diversity and not just to the three demographic characteristics focused on in study 1. How best to support group members who presented with intellectual or physical disabilities, with specific mental health issues, or presenting with other challenging behaviours in the group room, were often topics for discussion with supervisors and other facilitators during the groups that I facilitated.

At times, I also perceived a tension between organisational needs, such as treating enough prisoners for the establishment to meet its targets, and client needs, such as keeping group sizes down to allow more time to respond to individual needs. For example, I was cautious about decisions to place individuals on a group within which they might struggle (based on their IQ score being identified as borderline for the Core SOTP). I felt that this tension was almost always resolved in an appropriate way, given the rigorous process of pre-course assessment, and close ongoing supervision of SOTP groups, but that there was still the potential to explore how they might be perceived from the point of view of both other staff and the prisoners we were working with.

This balancing of organisational needs and individual needs is something that I believe I have been sensitive to for some time. I am aware of the importance of achieving a pragmatic balance, but also of the unequal power relationship that can operate. In a previous role working as a police Intelligence Analyst I recall feeling uncomfortable about the occasionally crude forms of profiling using by some colleagues. For example, the identification of young black men as being disproportionately represented amongst a spate of offences on buses, with comparisons drawn against local census data, but without reference to baselines for the demographics of typical bus users. I would like to think that this critical stance, and sensitivity to power imbalances came principally from an innate sense of fairness and compassion, although in an early entry in my reflexive journal I also attempt to reflect on the role that my own identity has had in shaping my attitudes (concluding that specific professional experiences, as outlined above, played the most direct role). However, I do acknowledge that being part of a minority group myself could have made these examples more salient to me throughout my life. Whilst this sort of reflection is something that I asked all of my participants to engage in in the final section of both interview schedules, I found it difficult to do. Looking back at this entry after data collection and analysis, I now feel some sympathy with those participants who struggled to provide a clear and unequivocal answer when asked directly about the role that their identity had played in determining their thoughts, attitudes and behaviours.

My subjective experience of managing diversity issues experienced by clients in the context of treatment was by no means always a negative or problematic one. In the SOTP groups that I facilitated I was struck by how well group members of different sexual orientations, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds and offence types worked with one another. I felt that difference in the context of group treatment could sometimes be an obstacle, but at other times was either not a problem or was instead an asset. A lack of knowledge of unfamiliar social groups meant that participants often asked exploratory questions that helped to stimulate discussions that then led on to addressing important treatment needs. This observation of groups that were conducive to treatment meant that I embarked on the process of literature review and research design with an interest in exploring how diversity could contribute to intra-group cohesion as well as group conflict.

9.3: Interviewing prisoner participants (study 1)

I made field notes before and after interviews in order to record initial thoughts on analysis, to document any impact that the research had had on me, or that I felt I might have had on the research, and to allow me to make the research process as transparent as possible. As well as notes on specific interviews this diary contained more general reflection. The content relating to a selection of the fieldwork with prisoners is discussed here.

Although ethical approval for the research was granted by NOMS in January 2012, the first two prisoner interviews did not take place until May 2012. This was due in part to the fact that many psychological staff were in the process of moving from a nearby establishment following the recent relocation of sex offenders from the same prison. Understandably, this caused a degree of disruption in the short term, and the effects of the move turned out to be something that was touched upon by both prisoner and staff participants during interviews. In terms of the impact on myself, whilst this delay of a few months was frustrating, I also felt reassured that staff would make efforts to assist with my research. My point of contact at this initial stage was always responsive and helpful, and readily agreed to my suggestion that I attend the prison to meet with her, set out my requirements, and plan how these could be met whilst working around the prison regime and minimising the impact on staff. Having personal experience of working in a prison environment I understood that many, if not all, staff would most likely be coping with a large workload. I therefore embarked on data collection with what I felt were realistic ideas about how much time they would be willing to set aside in order to assist me, but with a degree of optimism given the helpfulness of my contact. I had already gained experience of organising and conducting fieldwork in relation to a separate project at several different establishments (Adler & Mir, 2012).

Interviews were conducted in the rooms set aside for legal visits, rather than on the wing as originally planned. This meant that there was no need for a member of staff to escort me on and off site. Once staff had assisted with recruiting participants, I was then able to call legal visits myself and book in interviews directly. Although recordings were generally entirely audible the noise coming through from adjacent rooms was at times distracting for me as an interviewer. The majority of prisoner participants did not appear to be significantly affected, except for P1, who after speaking at length and without much need

for prompting suddenly broke off whilst answering a question in order to express concern that our conversation could be easily overheard. Whilst the abruptness with which he came to express this concern did surprise me I felt that the concern itself was understandable. Whilst he appeared generally relaxed speaking to me, I could see that participants might feel anxious about prison staff or other prisoners being able to hear the interview.

Once the first two interviews had been conducted, I felt a sense of relief that data collection had finally begun, and that both interviews had felt rich and multi-layered, making me confident that there was sufficient depth to allow for a nuanced analysis that would touch on the research questions as well as a number of additional emergent themes. I felt that in both interviews, rapport was formed quickly, and both participants shared a great deal of relevant information, often without needing to be prompted. P1, despite his briefly expressed concerns about the interview venue, spoke freely throughout and felt as though he could have continued when we reached the end of our allotted two-hour slot.

After these first two interviews, there was a gap of 12 months before I was able to see further prisoners (although some staff interviews were conducted before prisoner interviews resumed). I was always prepared for the possibility that the highly specific criteria for participation might limit the numbers of potential participants at any single establishment. However, changes in staff responsibilities appear to have contributed to the delay in seeing further prisoners. After several months, I eventually established a new main contact. Again, they were friendly and approachable whenever I got in touch. However, my new contact was a senior manager with operational duties, and whilst they were supportive of the work taking place, it was difficult for them to set aside time to assist me directly with recruitment. Falling into a pattern of checking in with them every few weeks I began to become increasingly disheartened regarding the possibility of seeing any more participants at all. Whilst I was conscious of the need to do everything possible to resume actively collecting data, my efforts to chase up my contact were also ameliorated by an anxiety about appearing too insistent and exhausting their good will.

Eventually, in April 2013, I was able to arrange another visit to meet all the managers and supervisors involved in SOTP delivery. It was after this meeting that I was assigned a new primary contact who was able to assist me with recruitment and data collection. Another four prisoner interviews were conducted over the following months. As I became

increasingly familiar with the facilities and processes at the establishment I began to make efforts to improve the quality of the interviews being conducted. For example, being mindful of the previous issues with noise, I began to request that I was placed in a room that was not adjacent to other occupied rooms. During busy periods this was not always possible, but on the occasions that it was, I felt that it could only have helped to make the participant and myself feel more comfortable and less distracted by ambient noise. For the last two interviews in legal visits I was able to see prisoners in a room just off from the main area. This was much quieter, and was also adjacent to the constantly occupied staff office, so there was not impact on security or personal safety.

The seventh interview simultaneously highlighted the chaotic nature of collecting data in prisons, the lengths to which staff went to in order to facilitate the research, and the need to sometimes adapt certain aspects of the research as a response to unpredictable circumstances. Upon arriving at the prison in the morning as arranged I discovered that there was no power throughout the whole establishment. This was due to scheduled maintenance, but a problem with backup generators meant that there was no movement taking place, with all prisoners confined to cells. My contact on this occasion went out of his way to allow an interview to take place. After negotiating with wing officers and seeking out a senior manager in order get approval (not an easy task with phones not working) I was allowed to see the prisoner on the wing provided my contact sat in on the interview with me. This represented a departure from the previous interviews both in terms of interview location and the fact that there was a member of staff present. I considered not going ahead with the interview on the basis that having a member of staff present who themselves delivered SOTP might have an impact on the prisoner participant's willingness to talk openly about their experiences of treatment. An additional complication arose when I discovered that the prisoner I was seeing was P1, and had already been interviewed. I took the decision to conduct the interview, but made a point of involving the participant in the decision to do this. Before proceeding I asked the participant if he was comfortable with having a member of prison staff present, and also with being interviewed a second time. As the first interview with this participant had taken place more than a year ago I followed the structure of the interview schedule, but adapted the structure and probes to turn the interview into a follow up that explored how things may have changed for the participant since being seen previously. This also gave me an opportunity to further explore topics that had emerged as major themes during the initial analysis of the first interview,

such as boundary crossing. This second interview with P1 was not counted as a separate case. Given that the second session was used to follow up on the first the transcript was appended to that of the original interview with P1.

Reflecting on this seventh interview after it had been transcribed a few weeks later, I considered again whether the correct decision had been made. Interviewing a participant twice represented a deviation from the experimental design. An argument could be made that this involved both ethical and methodological issues that needed to be considered. For example, if similar material was covered in the second interview with this participant then the data from the later interview might go largely unused. I also reflected on whether my decision-making had been influenced in any way. As my contact at the prison had gone to a great deal of effort to arrange the interview, it may be that I felt some obligation to go ahead with it. Similarly, at this point I was conscious that I still needed to recruit and interview four more participants for study 1 (the second interview with was appended to the transcript of the first, and did not constitute a separate case for the purposes of analysis). Whilst a second interview with an existing participant did not represent a new case, I still may have felt a generalised need to collect data at every opportunity. Whilst these influences may have been operating at some level, I feel that the decision was justified. Importantly, the decision to proceed with a second interview was discussed transparently with the participant. As noted above, the first interview with this participant ended with him feeling as though could he have continued talking, and if I had not been restricted by the end of our allotted time at that first interview I believe I would have allowed him to do this so that I could clarify some of the issues he had raised. As such, I felt methodologically justified in conducting the second interview, viewing it as a continuation of the first (despite the amount of time that had passed since then).

9.4: Interviewing staff participants (study 2)

My experience of interviewing staff and prisoner participants contrasted in several ways. Staff at the principal data collection site were initially seen in rapid succession, with seven interviews conducted over the space of a week. Given the more drawn out process of accessing and interviewing prisoners, this speed was something that I welcomed, although I did reflect in notes made at the time that this did perhaps present its own challenges. Conducting up to four interviews per day meant that there was less time to reflect between

seeing each participant. For study 1 the time elapsing between each interview allowed me to transcribe and analyse cases in an overlapping fashion. For study 2, transcription of the earliest cases did not begin until the majority of interviews had been completed.

A recurrent theme in my field notes on interviews with staff is reflection on the issue of dual relationships. I was particularly conscious of this when interviewing the three participants who were also former colleagues. Two of these were phone interviews and the third was conducted in person. In all three cases, the discussion before and after the interview did not simply cover the practicalities of explaining the research, obtaining consent and debriefing. For these three participants, there was notably more social interaction, as we briefly discussed personal and professional developments since I had left the establishment. Once the recorder was switched on I felt that I was making a conscious effort to conduct the interview in exactly the same way as I would with any other participant. For example, I determined that I would be careful to ask participants to elaborate if they made any superficial reference to details about the prison we had worked at. I did this to ensure that their account was presented as fully as possible in the transcript, without the need for me to draw on shared knowledge or experiences that were not explicit. When later transcribing and analysing these interviews I was again very conscious to identify any examples of this familiarity affecting the interview itself, but felt that in this respect there was very little to distinguish these three transcripts.

Even when I had not previously met the member of staff I found myself considering in what ways our common experiences of working in prison might be influencing the interview, and subsequent analysis. Just as my own past experience meant that I had a personal reason for conducting research in this area, I speculated that staff might be particularly keen to be compliant participants, and to provide rich data as they may have recognised the potential for the results of the research to ultimately benefit practitioners. Even if they did not recognise this admittedly perhaps distal benefit for themselves and their colleagues, I also considered that they may have been motivated to participate as fully as possible for more altruistic reasons. As many of them had experience of conducting their own research, I suspected that some of them may have empathised with the challenges of recruitment that I had experienced, and were simply motivated to assist for this reason.

One final process that I reflected on following interviews with staff was the construction of professional identities. As noted in the narrative account presented in the results chapter for study 2, some participants explicitly reflected on this in relation to their work as SOTP facilitators. Taking a step back from these explicit accounts, I considered the ways in which participants implicitly maintained these professional identities in the interview itself. In many cases I considered that the careful use of language, the use of clarifying questions, and the time taken to carefully consider some questions before responding would all be consistent with participants who were motivated to maintain the image of a knowledgeable and intelligent professional. I initially felt that each participants' career history may have been a factor here as well. For example, I considered that those who had left, or were about to leave, the Prison Service may be less guarded when discussing any negative experiences, and may have been less invested in projecting an impression of professional competence if further therapeutic work with prisoners was not something they were planning to pursue in the immediate future. Reflecting on these observations now, it is possible that I am to some extent drawing my feelings as to how I would feel if I was being interviewed about my own work. I believe I would be motivated to strike a balance between highlighting my ability and skills, whilst also demonstrating a capacity for honest reflection and the identification of areas in which I needed to develop. Some aspects of this were I believe evident in the way I conducted the interviews. Similarly, I feel that if I were now retrospectively interviewed about my own past experiences of delivering treatment, my responses would be different from those I would have given if I was interviewed while I was working in the field. Rather than prejudicing my analysis of the data, I feel as though my awareness of the importance of these situational factors in determining the outcome of each interview allowed me to better acknowledge the subjective livid experience of each individual participant.

I was highly motivated to conduct high quality interviews for several reasons, including obtaining rich data that would allow for a nuanced and detailed analysis to be conducted. However, in the context of the interview itself I felt a slight but pervasive motivation to present myself as a skilled researcher. I felt this with both prisoner and staff participants, but slightly more keenly with staff. I would attribute this to my awareness that many of those I would be interviewing would have a detailed knowledge of research and interviewing skills. Whilst this did not cause me to feel anxious at a conscious level, I did consider the possibility that it may have had a subtle subconscious effect, that I was able

to reflect on later. The balance between a positive, yet honest, reflective and fallible professional identity later emerged as a recurring theme when members of staff described the narrative of their careers in the prison service.

9.5: Analysis and write up

The latter stages of analysis and write up presented an additional set of issues. I felt most comfortable with the earliest stages of analysis; free coding and exploring the data. I was struck by some of the richness and complexity that I had not initially been conscious of, particularly when analysing data from prisoner participants. For staff, my field field notes reflected more areas where their experiences were in line with my expectations, but again there were still many novel and unexpected issues raised that made data collection a particularly interesting phase of the research process for me. It may be that in the moment of the interview I was more focused on preparing my next question and considering what would be an appropriate level of prompting or probing. Whilst this was interesting and exciting, I was also considering that the volume and breadth of rich but messy data would be difficult to consolidate into a neat and cohesive analysis.

Gee (2011) presents a reflective account of analysing data on male retirement, which includes a foregrounding of issues of identity. In describing the analysis of data, and particularly the formation of themes, she reports feeling disloyal to the participants. I felt something very similar, but perhaps slightly earlier at the level of interpreting aspects of linguistics. I became conscious of my own subjectivity, considering whether I might make different analytical decisions from one day to the next (perhaps dependant on my mood, level of concentration, or how I felt about the participant or the issues at hand). I slowly became more comfortable with this, as I began to observe links and patterns emerging across themes and then across cases and started to perceive some reliability in the types of observations I was making. Receiving feedback from my supervisors on drafts of my analysis also means that I have not conducted this work on my own, and that there has effectively been a process in place for checking that my higher order analysis and inferences do have a firm basis in the data.

My concern with not being 'disloyal' to the data (and to participants who had invested time and effort to contribute to my research) continued into the stages of identifying and

structuring themes. Initially this had the consequence of trying to include too much, and when I began the process of writing up, it became apparent that I would have to reconsider my approach, or risk presenting a comprehensive but superficial account of the analysis. Going back to the research questions allowed me a consistent and meaningful way to determine which themes should be written up, and which could be discarded. Knowing that I could potentially return to the data to prepare additional articles was something that helped me to become comfortable with taking a more focused approach. I also reflected that if I had a desire to honestly represent the experiences of participants, then this would not be best served by a broad write up that did not allow space to consider and explore nuances, and to engage in the higher order analysis that is presented in chapters 5, 7, and 8.

Gee (2011) highlights guidance by Smith et al. (2009) that write up should follow immediately after analysis, and comments that she felt motivated to engage with this as soon as possible. For the reasons outlined above, I did not initially feel the same way, and was much more comfortable with returning to the data in NVivo, to review coding or refine the hierarchical structure that I had established for ordinate themes. Even when I did move on to writing up I felt the need to go back and reconsider my analysis. For example, the structure of ordinate themes for study was reconsidered after I started writing the relevant chapter.

The idea of IPA as a road map is something that Gee (2011) considers when reflecting on these latter stages of analysis. The approach to analysis presents clear guidelines, but also involves multiple valid choices and paths that can be taken through the data. Whilst I do like this image, and feel that it also reflects my understanding of what IPA is, it also makes me aware of my own desire to be analytical and scientific. To extend the analogy of a map, if I have a journey to make I will tend to not just look at a map, but to carefully consider the alternative routes, and factor in the effects of variables such as traffic at different times of the day. When I do this in daily life I often find myself highly preoccupied with finding the best possible route, and spending a sometimes unnecessary amount of time rechecking and establishing this. In the context of conducting IPA, this drive to plan, prepare and find a single 'optimal' route is perhaps reflected in the way I took time to carefully spell out my proposed analytical process relatively early on (and well before I actually began any analysis) (section 3.7). I feel that this reflects my anxiety about ambiguity (and not missing

the optimal way of completing a task), and was an attempt to operationalise a worryingly subjective process of analysis. Whilst it isn't something I consciously reflected on at the time, this tendency to over-plan may have resulted in avoidance in terms of moving on to the next stages of analysis and write up. Paradoxically, any instinctive desire to frame processes in a safe, predictable, mathematical or algorithmic way sits alongside the excitement that I felt when conducting a lively and unpredictable interview, or finding rich and unanticipated avenues to explore during the process of free coding.

Finally, my own health issues presented additional challenges to conducting this stage of the research process. Reflecting on these now, I view these as physiological obstacles that interacted with the cognitive ones outlined above. This was not a straightforward separation between the biological and the psychological, and although the strength of the stress-disease causal link has been contested (e.g. Cohen et al., 2007) I subjectively experienced a two-way relationship between these. For example, periods of illness sometimes left me feeling frustrated at my lack of progress, and compounded my anxieties about optimisation outlined above. Conversely, periods when I felt I was making progress with analysis and write up were characterised by feelings of cognitive clarity and physical wellbeing.

9.6: Conclusion

The reflective practice engaged in throughout the current programme research has for me been an instructive exercise in its own right, but has also allowed me to reflect on any questions my decisions at each stage of the research process. I feel that this therefore allows for a degree of transparency with regards to how I have engaged in the complex and potentially subjective processes of research design, data collection. It has also directly informed decisions I have made. For example, ongoing consultation of the notes reported on above informed the analytic process, and encouraged me to question and justify the decisions that I was making.

Chapter 10: Recommendations and conclusion

In this final chapter, limitations are discussed before considering avenues for further research and making tentative recommendations for practice. Concluding remarks are presented.

10.1: Limitations

Research design: generalisability

When researching issues that have relevance for both policy and practice at a national level, generalizability of findings is desirable in order to be able to draw conclusions about the population as a whole and to make recommendations based on data drawn from large samples. The rationale for adopting the current idiographic methodology (which is appropriate for the exploratory investigation of under-researched issues and hard to reach groups) has been outlined elsewhere (sections 1.4, 2.7). Whilst the appropriateness of the methodology for investigating the chosen topic of research has therefore been considered, this does leave a potential further issue relating to making specific recommendations for practice. As noted in section 9.2, the desire to produce findings that would identify best practice was an important factor in selecting the research topic.

A case could have been made for adopting a mixed methods approach here, with initial qualitative studies with small samples being used to identify complex and unanticipated issues. These findings could then have formed the basis for the design of a larger quantitative study, that sought to operationalise relevant measures and explore causation and correlation at a statistical level. A third quantitative study was at one stage considered for inclusion in the current programme of research. Just as Clarke & Roger (2007) conducted an exploratory factor analysis relating to issues of psychological wellbeing for a large sample of SOTP facilitators, it was anticipated that a similar methodological approach could be adopted to explore the ways in which staff experienced negotiating diversity issues in the context of treatment. Following up phenomenological research with subsequent statistical analysis of larger samples is an approach advocated by researchers investigating other distinct, but similarly complex, issues such as political inter-group

conflict (e.g. Darling, 2014). Whilst such a mixed methods approach would be resource intensive and would present practical challenges, such as negotiating access to participants, there were compelling methodological reasons to maintain a narrower focus on two qualitative studies. The most pressing of these was the need to engage with the data in sufficient depth. Even with the current research design, the richness of the data collected has meant that it has not been possible to exhaustively explore all of the issues identified during initial coding. As well as allowing the space to present findings relating to complex issues, the unanticipated areas that emerged as impotent during interviews with both prisoners and staff adds weight to the argument that an idiographic approach is not only acceptable, but adds value and allows for unique insights that would have been missed if an exclusively nomothetic and and quantitative approach had been adopted.

Thus, whilst generalizability is one area in which there is perhaps a need to defend the current methodology, there is an idiographic counter argument to this that superficial analysis of a large number of cases should be avoided, as this will seriously impede the researcher's ability to present a rich phenomenological account, and to engage with the data in sufficient depth. That is, it could be argued that there were *too many* cases considered in the current studies, rather than too few. With the current design of two qualitative studies, it has been possible to strike an appropriate balance here. Following initial coding, some themes that were of limited relevance to the established research questions were discarded, or were not reported on in full in the final narrative account presented in chapters 4 and 6. This meant that it was possible to address *both* the phenomenological and interpretative components of the methodological approach adopted, something which is not always evident in IPA studies (Larkin et al., 2006). Whilst it was possible to strike this balance with the current research design, this would have been harder to achieve had there been a need to present data from a substantial third study. Issues of sample size in the context of idiographic and phenomenological research are considered further in section 3.6.

The current design therefore adopts an appropriate methodology in order to investigate a complex and under-researched area, and avoids a mixed methods approach that would risk broadening its focus and reducing the depth of engagement with the data. Whilst it is not appropriate to over-estimate the generalizability of findings, it is also important to acknowledge the value that small scale phenomenological research and this particular

study do have. Whilst a statistical component was not included in the current design, the findings reported would prove useful if designing such a follow up study. This and other possible avenues for further study are considered in section 10.2 below.

Recruitment of participants and sample bias

Non-random, opportunistic sampling is coherent with both the methodology adopted and the research design for the current studies themselves. As discussed above, no excessive claims regarding generalizability are being made, but there is still the potential to allow for valuable insights that may inform both research and practice. However, there is a distinct criticism that might be levelled regarding unintended sample bias. In both studies, the intended participants were defined as specific homogenous groups. For study 1 this was adult male prisoners who had participated in an SOTP group and who also self-identified with one of three specified demographic groups. For study 2 the target population was staff who had delivered SOTP. In each of these cases it is possible that the sample procedure meant that samples were not only non-random, but were skewed in particular directions. For example, it may be that staff who had negative experiences of practice may have been less willing to participate in a research interview[21]. Similarly, the prisoner sample may have been homogenous in unintended ways. It is plausible that any prisoner participants who had particularly negative experiences of interacting with staff during treatment may have been less likely to take part in the study, again potentially introducing an element of bias.

Even if such biases did exist, it is sufficient to acknowledge these as a caveat in relation to sampling. It may be that samples tended towards homogeneity in unintended ways, but this does not necessarily diminish the validity of the findings for this particular group, and the utility of these findings in understanding the wider populations of both staff and prisoners. The diversity of experiences discussed and issues raised by the current samples also demonstrates that an acceptable balance was struck between intended homogeneity and a rich diversity of individual experience. This was the case in both studies, and was particularly evident amongst prisoners. Whilst there was enough congruence and commonality of experience to allow for a thematic analysis across each sample, there were

---

[21] Conversely, it is also possible that the sample may have been skewed in the opposite direction. Staff participants with negative experiences may have been relatively more motivated to discuss their experiences so that working practices could be improved.

also important points of contrasts and disagreement between cases (and sometimes within a single transcript). For example, many participants discussed peer support, but often advocated markedly different forms of this that demonstrated contrasting attitudes about how group dynamics should operate (section 4.4). Finally, it should also be noted that without a control group and a method of operationalising and comparing the issues mentioned here any bias is speculative.

10.2: Recommendations for further study and dissemination of current findings

Several methods of dissemination of current findings have been identified. As well as peer reviewed journals, implications for practice mean that there is also value in reaching staff and officers beyond the academic community via other publications. The *Prison Service Journal* has been identified as a publication that is distributed across the organisation, reaches a large number of people and presents current research findings in an accessible manner.

The literature cited in the Core SOTP Theory Manual (OBPU, 2000) and the SARN Manual (OBPU, 2004) both demonstrate a precedent for small scale pieces of qualitative work being used to iteratively build a more nuanced body of knowledge, which can better support the delivery of a valid framework of risk assessment for sex offenders. As such, the current findings are likely to be of interest to NOMS staff nationally. The choice of populations focused on in study 1 was guided in part by initial discussions with NOMS staff, and there is therefore the potential to at least tentatively address important knowledge gaps. As the researcher is, at the time of submission, employed by the Ministry of Justice this may facilitate communication of findings (for example, by offering to set up a short meeting with the NOMS research team).

Many participants asked to be informed of the findings. These participants will therefore be informed of any publications based on the data. A short executive summary of findings will also be prepared, and provided to those who expressed an interest in this. The main research site will also be contacted and asked if staff would benefit from findings being fed back in person. There is also the potential for a workshop on best practice to be delivered, although for this to be sustained and to feed into the work of staff across the organisation there would be a need to establish support for this centrally. The discussions with the national research team would therefore be the best way to explore any long-term input

into improving best practice (and would also allow current findings to be integrated with other emerging work that the national team have recently conducted or are aware of).

The strengths and limitations of the current findings mean that there are several avenues for further research that would either build on the current findings, or adopt related methods to further investigate important issues raised by participants that were only of tangential relevance to the stated research questions. With regards to latter, there is a great deal of potential for secondary analysis of the data in the current studies, although such an approach does raise its own practical and ethical considerations, which would need to be considered (Thorne, 1990). Following on from the idiographic defence of the analysis of small samples alluded to above (and previously in section 3.6), several of the transcripts in the current samples would be rich enough to allow for presentation as individual case studies. IPA would again be an appropriate method of drawing out the complexities of a single individual's experiences here, and there is a precedent for using to analyse a single case to consider how issues of identity may interact with an individual's experiences of the criminal justice system (e.g. Meek, 2010) and in more diverse contexts to investigate complex phenomena such as anger (e.g. Eatough, 2006).

Distinct methods could also be adopted to consider related issue in more depth. For example, a narrative analysis of how SOTP facilitators working in prison experience their wider work for the prison service, acquisition of skills (initial and ongoing training), professional and personal relationships with other staff, and the factors increasing or decreasing the chances of staff experiencing 'burnout'. Such a study would allow for a more focused consideration of how individual members of staff experience both the positive and negative aspects of their work, how these develop through their career, and what implications this has for both their own wellbeing and the nature and quality of their work with clients. There are also opportunities to conduct narrative analysis of the data from prisoner participants. Given that their interviews were often closely structured around progress through the prison system and the Core SOTP programme itself, it is likely that these would provide the broad structure for any narrative analysis of data from study 1. Within this, the longitudinal shifts in identity could be charted, as well as levels of motivation to change and readiness to engage with psychological interventions.

Specific approaches to research design would also allow for a closer consideration of some of the models considered in discussion chapters. For example, to further explore the applicability of transactional analysis (Berne, 1964) in the context of the SOTP, an analysis of both the linguistic and paralinguistic could be conducted. Whilst recordings of actual SOTP sessions do exist, there may however be ethical issues with using this material for the purposes of research. Given that group members participating in a group are informed that the purpose of these recordings is principally for supervisors to monitor the work of facilitators, it would be necessary to obtain consent from all staff and prisoners involved in a session if the data were to be used in this way.

Lord and Patel (2000) advocate an action research approach to dealing with the investigation of diversity issues in the context of sex offender treatment (involving the implementation of a change in practice to address issues, and the observation and investigation of the effects of these changes). This was beyond the scope of the current programme of research, which was orientated towards a detailed exploration of diversity issues through the conceptual frameworks of masculinities and intersectionality. In doing so it should also be possible to establish recommendations for best practice in the field. The kind of approach suggested by Lord and Patel (2000) could form the basis of a follow up study. For example, this might involve working with a treatment manager at a specific establishment, in order to implement some of the key recommendations, and then repeating some of the qualitative and quantitative data collection from each of the three studies in order to assess the impact on the previously identified issues. Given the possible influence of national news media and current affairs such follow up work would also need to carefully distinguish the effects of the implemented changes and of other external, potentially confounding variables.

Although challenges with recruitment would need to be overcome, prisoners who do not engage with treatment are an important group whose experiences have not been directly considered in the current experimental design. Both the findings from the current studies and previous work (e.g. Lord and Patel, 2000) indicate that issues of identity may play an important role in determining engagement, and as such it may be instructive to conduct further research with this group.

10.3: Recommendations for practice

As noted above, unambiguous generalizability of findings is not being claimed. It is however possible to consider the prima facie implications for practice, and to make tentative recommendations that still have utility. Rather than influencing radical or immediate changes in national policy or training practices, these recommendations may provide useful points for staff to consider during programme delivery, or when reflecting on their work during supervision sessions. Considering the practical corollaries of the current findings also provides a framework for the further research discussed above, assisting with the consideration of further experimental hypotheses relating to specific aspects of best practice, making it possible to inductively build upon the current findings and move towards great generalizability.

The opportunity to implement change will also be constrained to some extent by the ongoing modernisation of the prison estate (House of Commons, 2015). A drive to replace old prisons with new establishments that are cheaper to run may have some benefits, some of which would address issues raised by the current findings. For example, newly constructed prisons are likely to be more accessible for both prisoners and staff with some form of physical disability or mobility issue, thus addressing one of the key concerns raised by both prisoner and staff participants in the current studies. A focus on larger and more cost effective prisons may however present several serious challenges to conducting effective therapeutic work with prisoners and to implementing some of the recommendations outlined below. Jewkes (2014) raises a specific concern with a reduced ability to meet diverse individual needs in the context of increasing large establishments. Warr (2014) also discusses the possible effects of the spacial conditions of larger 'Titan' establishments on staff, highlighting potential negative consequences for intra-staff dynamics as well as their interactions with prisoners. The current findings indicate that for some participants being housed in a vulnerable prisoners wing rather than a main one was an important step towards meaningful engagement with treatment. Added to this context of finite resources and move towards larger and prison populations (possibly more heterogeneous in terms of offence type), is the possibility that the percentage of the prison population convicted of a sexual offence will continue on its current upwards trajectory (section 1.1). For example, the Goddard Inquiry (IICSA, 2015) continues to investigate the possible failure of public bodies in relation to child sexual abuse, raising the possibility of further victims and perpetrators of historical offences being identified.

Group interventions possess pragmatic advantages over individual interventions (for example, less demand in terms of staff). However, findings from the current studies indicate that they may also have unique features that encourage progress through treatment. One notable example of this is peer support, and it is therefore recommended that facilitators should encourage this during a group wherever possible. This in itself is not an entirely novel recommendation, and current training for SOTP facilitators already emphasises the utility of appropriate challenges and questions from fellow group members. The current findings do however elucidate the diverse ways that support can be expressed, and the different forms of support that each individual may value. Peer mentoring and guidance does exist in prisoners via structures such as the listening service. However, given the discussion by many participants of the power relations in prison related to offence type (and misconceptions expressed by some about the content of SOTP) there may be a role for considering offence type when matching individuals with an appropriate mentor. Whilst this might have benefits, it should also be considered that those eligible for SOTP may themselves express hostility or suspicion towards other prisoners who disclose that they have committed a sexual offence.

Whilst study 1 focused on three specified aspects of identity none of these were directly implicated in participants' discussion of the dynamics of support. The unanticipated issue of age was however a factor here, with age differences amongst the group meaning that in some cases peer support amongst prisoners on a group was experienced as hierarchical or patriarchal. It is therefore recommended that as well as attending to appropriate expressions of challenge and support in the group room, facilitators are attentive to the dynamics that may develop within a therapeutic group, particularly along the lines of age. Given that participants expressed notable shifts in how these dynamics where expressed in the group room and on the wing, facilitators would benefit from speaking to group members themselves and to wing officers about how prisoners are experiencing mutual support on the wing and in other contexts where they might interact with one another (such as work or education). Dynamics that they are finding helpful could thus be positively reinforced, and those that they are not could be addressed.

Related to the issue of appropriate support amongst prisoners, staff should also remain vigilant to the emergence of unhelpful power dynamics that might emerge between

prisoners and staff within the context of treatment (such as those discussed in section 6.2). Thus, whilst peer support and active engagement are to be encouraged, this should not be allowed to occur at the expense of allowing challenging group members to assert their authority over the group and take ownership of it, thus undermining the control that staff can exercise. Identifying the distinction between appropriate and inappropriate behaviours may involve attend to subtle aspects of behaviour. Issues of boundary crossing should therefore be a topic considered as a recurring agenda item in group supervision. Whilst using the group appropriately is covered in facilitator training, these skills should also be refreshed periodically with half or one-day training events (in the same way that facilitators are required to regularly re-attend training in relation to the specialist skill of running victim empathy role plays).

In cases where a proposed SOTP group contains only one BME prisoner, there is a current audit requirement to discuss this with the prisoner in question and to establish that they are comfortable with this. Given the potential for feelings of isolation to be present in relation to a range of aspects of identity (most notably in relation age for the current sample), this practice should be expanded to all protected characteristics. If incorporated into paperwork used during pre-course assessments or when obtaining consent from potential participants, this wider requirement would not necessitate a great deal of additional resource. Such an exploration would necessarily be dependent on prisoners feeling comfortable enough to discuss aspects of identity such as sexual orientation, but even if there are barriers to disclosure the attempt to explore the issue would have the benefit of immediately demonstrating that staff are responsive to diverse needs. Gay and bisexual prisoners in the current sample discussed issues with coming out in prison, or being out to different degrees in different contexts. Discussion of these issues prior to the commencement of a group might therefore be particularly useful for this group, establishing that an SOTP group is a space that is not discriminatory and can be considered as being relatively 'safe'. As well as staff ensuring that they model being comfortable with issues of orientation (and gender identity) there are wider structural ways in which this message can be reinforced. A wider shift in practice regarding the collection of prisoner data at an establishment or national level would support this. If information on orientation and gender identity were to be routinely collected alongside other protected characteristics this would allow to rates of engagement to be statistically investigated, and

would challenge the taboos relating to discussing or acknowledging these issues in prison that were discussed by prisoners in the current sample (section 4.3).

Physical barriers to accessing to treatment were cited by many of the prisoner participants who identified as having a physical disability. Given that this relates to the running of the wider prisoner (and often to aspects of the architecture) there is a limit to the extent to which individual SOTP facilitators would be able to address this. Where possible, senior management within a programmes department should advocate for the installation of adaptations to improve the general accessibility of an establishment (such as ramps or lifts). Where such adaptations are not possible, moving prisoners to wings closer to their group room for the duration of a programme should also be considered prior to the start of a group for those with mobility issues. There is the possibility that such a move may have negative consequences, for example a prisoner may find moving to an unfamiliar wing presents its own challenges, particularly if they are moving from a Vulnerable Prisoners wing to a main one. Being isolated from other prisoners attending a specific group would also limits the forms of peer support that could operate outside of the group room. Prisoners should therefore be involved in this decision making process, with the costs and benefits of a move being proactively discussed with them at the point of a pre-course assessment (in the same way that there is a current audit requirement to discuss how comfortable a BME potential group member would feel with being the sole BME prisoner in a group).

With regards to aspects of identity relating to disability, the finding that a loss of autonomy (section 4.3) was evident amongst disabled prisoners in the current sample has important implications for the management of future risk, particularly if risk factors within the SARN framework such as that relating to self-esteem are identified during their treatment needs analysis of dynamic risk. Given that the final sections of Core SOTP increasingly draw on aspects of the Good Lives Model (encouraging the identification of approach goals and the construction of a positive life narrative) any anxieties about dealing with disability in prison or in the community should be addressed at this point. The individually tailored Future Me role plays present an excellent opportunity for both directly addressing identified risk factors, but also exploring prisoners' anxieties about the future. Using Future Me role plays in this way may have benefits not just for those with a physical disability, but also for older prisoners or for those on long or indeterminate sentences. In all of these cases there may

be significant barriers to feeling positive about the future. Whilst it is not realistic to expect these to be resolved within a single intervention (even a long one such as Core SOTP) there is still scope to begin to acknowledge and explore these issues.

The gender imbalance amongst staff in the current sample was greater than that which has previously been reported in the wider population of SOTP facilitators, but samples in previous studies indicate that women outnumber men. In the current sample there were also ways in which staff were homogenous (such as sexual orientation or ethnicity). The lack of any officer facilitators in the staff sample is another dimension along which there is the potential to address homogeneity. Including more uniformed staff would have multiple potential benefits. Through increased contact and co-working it may be possible to reduce the moments of intergroup conflict that staff in the current sample described when coming into contact with officers (such as the dismissive comments relating to age or gender alluded to in section 7.2). Prisoner participants also spoke about the difference between the therapeutic environment of the treatment room and the more guarded environment of the wing (section 4.2). By involving uniformed staff in programme delivery, there may be opportunities to challenge this discrete boundary between therapeutic and non-therapeutic spaces. This skew and homogeneity raises the question of whether efforts should be made to establish a more diverse workforce. In considering the value of this, the benefits for staff themselves and the utility for improving the quality of SOTP treatment should be considered separately. As in any organisation, an equal opportunities employment policy and efforts to encourage applicants from a diversity of backgrounds are to be valued. In relation to improving treatment, it might be argued that a more diverse workforce will then also be more equipped to deal with the needs of a diverse population. The latter is not however self-evident, and balanced against this is the finding in the current analysis that shared characteristics can for some be as much of barrier as difference. For example, some prisoners discussed feeling more comfortable with disclosing offence specific information to staff of a different ethnicity to their own.

Differences between the identity or life experiences of staff and prisoners may also have its own benefits. Just as the programme is designed to model positive professional relationships between men and women (by required a mixed gender facilitation team) this diversity may help with identifying and challenging other preconceptions and distortions that prisoners engaging in SOTP may possess. For example, staff in the current sample

discussed experiencing challenges to their authority on the basis of class, education, ethnicity and age, as well as gender. By responding appropriately to these challenges the core beliefs and preconceptions held by prisoners can be called into question.

In order to support this issues of power dynamics should be a standing agenda item for supervision, with supervisors assisting staff with identifying and working on the attitudes and beliefs that might underpin challenging behaviours. More widely, staff in other sections of a prison should be encouraged to develop an awareness of appropriate behaviour in relation to issues of gender, so that the modelling demonstrated in the context of treatment is not undermined by behaviours that prisoners may observe when SOTP staff interact with staff in other departments. This also has benefits for the wellbeing of SOTP staff who in the current sample described dealing with inappropriate behaviour, such as being treated negatively by wing officers on the basis of their gender or age. Thus, rather than recruiting more male facilitators, ensuring that the current workforce is consistently supported by other departments may have more immediate benefits for both treatment efficacy and SOTP facilitator wellbeing.

Whilst several recommendations have been made above, it should be noted that many of the findings support the efficacy of current aspects of practice. For example, the staff referred to putting thought into constructing appropriate groups (section 6.4) and then managing the dynamics of these going forward (section 6.2). Prisoners in turn generally described experiencing a safe and therapeutic environment compared to the wider prison, that allowed for a generally freer expression of identity as well as encouraging offence-related disclosure. Based on the current findings, current practices appear to generally be having the desired effects. These recommendations should therefore be considered as ways to refine and improve these practices, and to further tailor them to the needs of particular minority groups.

10.4: Concluding remarks

The current programme of research has allowed for the collection and analysis of two rich data sets. Findings have successfully addressed research questions relating to staff and prisoner experiences of Core SOTP. A range of theoretical models have allowed the experiences of both staff and prisoners to be understood in ways that are novel in a forensic

context, with a focus on issues of masculinities, gender and other aspects of (social) identity. It has been possible to make tentative, but specific, recommendations in relation to practice. In addition, if the current work is regarded as part of an ongoing inductive and idiographic process, then there are also multiple opportunities for further research that have the potential to build on current findings, and to move towards greater generalisability.

There is value in the current work for contributing to the development of best practice that will benefit the welfare and wellbeing of both prisoners and staff. There is the potential to protect the rights of marginalised groups within the already stigmatised population of sex offenders in prison, and to better meet their specific needs. Moreover, given the ways in which issues of self-esteem and future life narratives are mobilised within the Core SOTP, improving prisoner wellbeing is likely to have positive effects on the effectiveness of the intervention. Staff in the current sample expressed a great deal of investment in their work, and thus identifying and encouraging best practice will also have important implications for staff wellbeing (and reducing instances of burnout). Implementing and continuing to research best practice discussed here would also have the pragmatic benefit of making interventions themselves more cost-effective, as well as reducing financial burdens on the criminal justice system as a whole associated with relapse or reconviction.

References

Adler, J.R. & Mir, M. (2012). *Evaluation of The Forgiveness Project within prisons. Project Report*. London: Forensic Psychological Services, Middlesex University.

Allam, J., Middleton, D., & Browne, K. (1997). Different clients, different needs? Practice issues in community-based treatment for sex offenders. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health, 7*, 69-84.

Andrews, D.A., & Bonta, J. (2010). *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct* (5th ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Andrews, D.A., Bonta, J., & Wormith, J.S. (2011). The risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model: Does adding the good lives model contribute to effective crime prevention? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, *38*, 735-755.

Aspinall, P.J. (2002). Collective terminology to describe the minority ethnic population: The persistence of confusion and ambiguity in usage. *Sociology*, 36, 803-816.

Aspinall, P.J. (2009). 'Mixed race', 'mixed origins' or what?: Generic terminology for the multiple racial/ethnic group population. *Anthropology Today, 25*, 3-8.

Beech. A.R., Oliver. C., Fisher, D. & Beckett, R. (2005). *STEP 4: The Sex Offender Treatment Programme in Prison: Addressing the Offending Behaviour of Rapists and Sexual Murderers*. London: Home Office.

Beech, A.R., Fisher, D., & Beckett, R. (1999). *STEP 3: An Evaluation of the Prison Sex Offender Treatment Programme*. London: Home Office.

Bennett, J. & Mann, R. (Eds.). (2008). Sex offenders [Special Issue]. *Prison Service Journal*, July 2008.

Berne, E. (1966). *Principles of Group Treatment*. New York: Grove Press.

Biggerstaff, D.L. & Thompson, A.R. (2008). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA): A qualitative methodology of choice in healthcare research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 5*, 173-183.

Blagden, N.J., Winder, B., Thorne, K., & Gregson, M. (2011). 'No-one in the world would ever wanna speak to me again': An interpretative phenomenological analysis into convicted sexual offenders' accounts and experiences of maintaining and leaving denial. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, *17*, 563-585.

Blanchard, G.T. (1995). *The Difficult Connection: The Therapeutic Relationship in Sex Offender Treatment*. Vermont: Safer Society Press.

BPS (2009). *Code of Ethics and Conduct: Guidance published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society*. Leicester: The British Psychological Society.

Brampton, L.L. (2010). *Working with Sexual Offenders: The Training and Support Needs of SOTP Facilitators*. [Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, Birmingham]

Limerick, B., Burgess-Limerick, T., & Grace, M. (1996). The politics of interviewing: power relations and accepting the gift, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 9*, 449-460

Britten, N. (2010). Asian gang prowled streets searching for rape victims. *The Telegraph Online*, 25 November 2010.
[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8157739/Asian-gang-prowled-streets-searching-for-rape-victims.html, accessed January 2011]

Brocki, J.M. & Wearden, A.J. (2006). A critical evaluation of the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in health psychology. *Psychology and Health*, 21, 87-108.

Cassidy, E., Reynolds, F., Naylor, S., & De Souza, L. (2011). Using interpretative phenomenological analysis to inform physiotherapy practice: An introduction with reference to the lived experience of cerebellar ataxia. *Physiotherapy Theory and Practice*, *27*, 263-277.

Chew-Graham, C.A., May, C.R., & Perry, M.P. (2002). Qualitative research and the problem of judgement: lessons from interviewing fellow professionals. *Family Practice, 19*, 285-289.

Clarke, J. & Roger, D. (2007). The construction and validation of a scale to assess psychological risk and well-being in sex offender treatment providers. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, *12*, 83-100.

Clay, S., Evans, D., Herring, I., Sullivan, J., & Vekaria, R. (2012). *Family Resources Survey: United Kingdom, 2010/11*. London: Department for Work and Pensions. [http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/frs/2010_11/frs_2010_11_report.pdf, accessed March 2013]

Collins, K. & Nicolson, P. (2002). The meaning of 'satisfaction' for people with dermatological problems: Reassessing approaches to qualitative health psychology research. *Journal of Health Psychology*, *7,* 615-629.

Connell, R.W. (1987). *Gender and Power*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Connell, R.W. (2005). *Masculinities (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Cornford, F.M. (1957). *Plato and Parmenides*. New York, NY: The Liberal Arts Press.

Cossins, A. (2000). *Masculinities, Sexualities, and Child Sexual Abuse*. The Hague: Kluwer Law International.

Cowburn, M. (1996). The black male sex offender in prison: Images and issues. *The Journal of Sexual Aggression, 2*, 122-142.

Cowburn, M. (1998). A man's world: Gender issues in working with male sex offenders in prison, *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice, 37*, 234-251.

Cowburn, M. (2005). Hegemony and discourse: Reconstructing the male sexual offender and sexual coercion by men. *Sexualities, Evolution and Gender, 7*, 215-231.

Cowburn, M. (2006). Men Researching Men in Prison: The Challenges For Profeminist Research. *Howard Journal of Criminal Justice, 46*, 276-288.

Cowburn, M. (2010). Principles, virtues and care: Ethical dilemmas in research with male sexual offenders. *Psychology, Crime and Law, 16*, 65-74.

Cowburn, M., & Dominelli, L. (2001). Masking hegemonic masculinity: Reconstructing the paedophile as the dangerous stranger. *British Journal of Social Work, 31*, 399-415.

Cowburn, M., Lavis, V., & Walker, T. (2008a). BME sex offenders in prison: The problem of participation in offending behaviour groupwork programmes - A tripartite model of understanding. *British Journal of Community Justice, 6*, 19-34.

Cowburn, M., Lavis, V., & Walker, T. (2008b). Black and Minority Ethnic Sex Offenders. *Prison Service Journal, July 2008*, 44-49.

Crawley, E. (2004). *Doing Prison Work: The Public and Private Lives of Prison Officers*. Cullompton: Willan.

Crawley, E. & Sparks, R. (2006). Is there life after imprisonment?: How elderly men talk about imprisonment and release. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, *6*, 63-82.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*, 1241-1279.

Crewe, B. (2009). *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation and Social Life in an English Prison*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crighton, D. (2006). Psychological research into sexual offenders. In G.J. Towl (Ed.), *Psychological Research in Prisons*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Crow, L. (1996). Including all of our lives: Renewing the social model of disability. In C. Barnes & G. Mercer (Eds.) *Exploring the Divide*. Leeds: The Disability Press.

Cunniffe, C., Van de Kerckhove, R., Williams, K., & Hopkins, K. (2012). Estimating the prevalence of diability amongst prisoners: results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey. *Research Summary 4/12*. London: Ministry of Justice. [http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/publications/research-and-analysis/moj-research/estimating-prevalence-disability-amongst-prisoners.pdf, accessed July 2012]

Darling, C.A. (2014). *Numbers to narratives: A journey through the epistemological landscape. Working Paper Series n°4: Numbers, Narratives and Justice*. Liverpool: Liverpool Hope University. [http://tutu.hope.ac.uk/media/liverpoolhope/contentassets/documents/archbishopdesm ondtutucentre/media,36674,en.pdf, accessed January 2016]

Davies, B. & Harré, R. (1998). Positioning and personhood. In R. Harré & L. van Langenhove (Eds.) *Positioning Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Davies, D. & Neal, C. (1996). An historical overview of homosexuality and therapy. In C. Neal & D. Davies (Eds.) *Pink Therapy: A guide for counsellors and therapists working with lesbian, gay and bisexual clients*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

D'Emilio, J. & Freedman, E. (1988). *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*. New York: Harper Row.

Dean, C. (2008). *Sexual Offending, Masculinity and Psychology: A 'hidden' relationship*. Paper presented at the University of Bradford Department of Social Sciences and Humanities Departmental Presentations. [http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/socsci/news/archives/00000013.php, accessed July 2011]

Dean, C., & Georgia, B. (2011). The Personal Impact of Delivering a One-to-one Treatment Programme with High-risk Sexual Offenders: Therapists' Experiences. *Journal of Sexual Aggression, 17*, 304-319.

Dennis, M., & Baker, K. (1998). Evaluation and treatment of deaf sexual offenders: A multicultural perspective. In W. Marshall & Y. Fernandez (Eds.) *Sourcebook of Treatment Programs for Sexual Offenders: Applied Psychology*. New York, NY: Plenium Press.

Department of Health (2001). *Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century - A White Paper*. London: The Stationary Office.

Department of Health (2005). Mental Health and Deafness: Towards Equality and Access. Best Practice Guidance. National Institute for Mental Health in England. [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4104005.pdf, accessed November 2013]

Derrida, J. (1988). *Limited inc.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dolnick, E. (1993). Deafness as culture. *The Atlantic Monthly*, *September 1993*, 37-53.

Drake, K. E. (2010). Interrogative suggestibility: Life adversity, neuroticism and compliance. *Personality and Individual Differences, 48*, 493–498.

Eatough, V. & Smith, J. (2006). I feel like a scrambled egg in my head: An idiographic case study of meaning making and anger using interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, 79*, 115-135.

Ellis, H. (1910). *Studies in the psychology of sex*. Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Co.

Evans, T. & Wallace, P. (2008). A prison within a prison?: The masculinity narratives of male prisoners. *Men and Masculinities, 10*, 484-507.

Farmer, B. (2008). Muslim sex offenders may opt out of treatment. *The Telegraph Online*, 8 April 2008. [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1584335/Muslim-sex-offenders-may-opt-out-of-treatment.html, accessed November 2010]

Fazel, S., Hope, T., O'Donnell, & Jacoby, R. (2004). Unmet treatment needs of older prisoners: A primary care survey. *Age and Ageing, 33,* 396-396.

Ferguson, K. & Ireland, C.A. (2006). Attitudes towards sex offenders and the influence of offence type: a comparison of staff working in a forensic setting and students. *The British Journal of Forensic Practice*, *8*, 10-19.

Finkelstein, V. (1980). *Attitudes and Disabled People*. New York, NY: World Rehabilitation Fund.

Forbes, S.M. (2008). Race differences in scores of actuarial measures of sex offender risk assessment. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences and Engineering*, 68 (12-B), 8395. [Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Louisville, USA]

Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Friendship, C., Mann, R., & Beech, A. (2003). The prison-based Sex Offender Treatment Programme - An evaluation. *Findings 205*. London: Home Office.

Gadamer, H. (1990 / 1960). *Truth and Method (2nd ed.).* New York, NY: Crossroad.

Gee, P. (2011). 'Approach and sensibility': A personal reflection on analysis and writing using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. *Qualitative Methods in Psychology Bulletin*, *11*, 8-22.

Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and lives: The anthropologist as author.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Gershick, T.J. & Miller, A.S. (1995). Coming to terms: Masculinity and physical disability. In D. Sabo, & D.F. Gordon, D.F (Eds.) *Men's health and illness: Gender, power and the body*. London: Sage.

Gillham, B. (2000). *The Research Interview*. London: Continuum.

Goddard (2015). *Statement by the Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse – 27/11/2015*. [https://www.iicsa.org.uk/sites/default/files/update-statement-november-2015_0.pdf, accessed April 2016]

Gudjonsson, G. H. (1997). *The Gudjonsson Suggestibility Scales Manual*. Hove: Psychology Press.

Hale. C., Hayward. K., Wahidin, A. & Wincup, E. (2005). *Criminology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harry, B. (1984). A deaf sex offender. *Journal of Forensic Science, 29*, 1140-1143.

Haslam, S.A. & Reicher, S.D. (2011). When prisoners take over the prison: A social psychology of resistance. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *16*, 154-179.

Hay, J. (2009). *Transactional Analysis for Trainers (2nd Edition).* Hertford: Sherwood.

Heckathorn, D.D. (1997). Respondent-Driven Sampling: A New Approach to the Study of Hidden Populations. *Social Problems*, *49*, 11-34.

Heidegger, M. (1962 / 1927). *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Henry, G. B. (1986). *Cultural diversity awareness inventory*. Virginia: Hampton University Mainstreaming Outreach Project.

Hewitt, J. (2007). Ethical components of researcher-researched relationships in qualitative interviewing. *Qualitative Health Research*, *17*, 1149-1159.

Hewitt, J.P. & Stokes, R. (1975). Disclaimers. *American Sociological Review*, 40, 1-11.

Hill, R.J. (2004). Activism as practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *102*, 85-96.

HM Prison Service (2007). *Impact Assessment: Sex Offender Treatment Programme*. London: HM Prison Service.

Hogg, M.A. (2001). A social identity theory of leadership. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *5*, 184-200.

Hogg, M.A. (2006). Social Identity Theory. In P.J. Burke (Ed.), *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Hollin, C.R. & Palmer, E.J. (Eds.) (2006). *Offending Behaviour Programmes: Development, Application and Controversies*. Chichester: Wiley.

Holstein, J.A. & Gubrium, J.F. (1995). *The Active Interview*. London: Sage.

Houge, T. (1994). *The sex offence information questionnaire: The development of a self-report measure of offence related denial in sex offenders*. [Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Wales, Cardiff.]

House of Commons (2013). *Older Prisoners. Fifth Report of Session 2013-2014, Justice Committee*. London: The Stationary Office.
[http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmjust/89/89.pdf, accessed February 2014]

House of Commons (2015). *Prisons: Planning and Policies. Ninth Report of Session 2014-2015, Justice Committee*. London: The Stationary Office.
[http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmjust/309/30902.htm, accessed January 2016]

Husserl, E. (1982). *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* (F. Kersten, Trans.). Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Hutcherson, D.T. (2012). Crime pays: The connection between time in prison and future criminal earnings. *The Prison Journal, June 19*, 2012.

Iqbal, S., Dolan, M.C., & Monteiro, B. (2004). Characteristics of deaf sexual offenders referred to a specialist mental health unit in the UK. *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology, 15*, 494-510.

Jackson, J. (1998). Contemporary Criticisms of Role Theory. *Journal of Occupational Science*, *5*, 49-55.

Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G.H. Lerner (Ed.) *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin.

Jewkes, Y. (2014). Perrie lectures 2013: Prison contraction in an age of expansion: Size matters, but does 'new' equal 'better' in prison design? *Prison Service Journal, January 2014*, 31-36.

Johnson, P., & Johnson, R. (1996). The role of concrete-abstract thinking levels in teachers' multiethnic beliefs. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, *29*, 134-140.

Jones, M.A. (2002). Deafness As Culture: A Psychosocial Perspective. *Disability Studies Quarterly 22*, 51-60.

Knapik, M. (2006). The qualitative interview: Participants' responsive participation in knowledge making. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *5*, 1-13.

Knowles, G.J. (2002). Male prison rape: A search for causation and prevention. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, *38*, 267-282.

Lacombe, D. (2008). Consumed with sex: The treatment of sex offenders in risk society. *The British Journal of Criminology*, *48*, 55-74.

Langdridge, D. (2007). *Phenomenological Psychology: Theory, Research and Method*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*, 102-120.

Lev, A.I. (2004). *Transgender emergence: Therapeutic guidelines for working with gender-variant people and their families*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Clinical Practice Press.

Levine, S.B. & Risen, C.B. (2009). Professionals who are accused of boundary violations. In F.M. Saleh, A.J. Grunzinskas, J.M. Bradford & D.J. Brodsky (Eds.) *Sex Offenders: Identification, Risk Assessment, Treatment, and Legal Issues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lewis, A.D. (Ed.) (1999). *Cultural Diversity in Sexual Abuser Treatment: Issues and Approaches*. Brandon, VT: Safer Society Press.

Lipton, D., Martinson, R. & Wilks, J. (1975). *The Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment: A Survey of Treatment Evaluation Studies*. New York, NY: Praeger.

Lord, A. & Patel, K. (2000). Using action research to study ethnic minority sex offenders: Experiences of the Sex Offender Treatment Programme. *Prison Service Journal, May 2000*, 28-31.

Loucks, N. (2006). *No One Knows*: *Offenders with Learning Difficulties and Learning Disabilities. Review of prevalence and associated needs.* London: Prison Reform Trust.

Mann, R.E. (1999). The sex offender treatment programme HM Prison Service England & Wales. In S. Hofling, D. Drewes, & I. Epple-Waigel (Eds.), *Auftrag Pravention: Offensive gegen sexuellen kindesmibbrauch*. Munich: Atwerb-Verlag KG Publikation.

Mann, R.E. & Thornton, D. (1998). The evolution of a multisite sexual offender treatment program. In W.L. Marshall, Y.M. Fernandez, S.M. Hudson, T. & Ward (Eds.), *Sourcebook of Treatment Programs for Sexual Offenders*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Mann, R.E. & Yolanda, M.F. (2006). Sex offender programmes: Concept, theory, and practice. In C.R. Hollin & E.J. Palmer (Eds.), *Offending Behaviour Programmes: Development, Application and Controversies*. Chichester: Wiley.

Marshall, J. (1981). Pansies, perverts and macho men: Changing conceptions of male homosexuality. In K. Plummer (Ed.), *The Making of the Modern Homosexual*. London: Hutchinson.

Marshall, P.L. (1996). Multicultural teaching concerns: New dimensions in the area of teacher concerns research? *Journal of Educational Research*, *89*, 371-379.

Martin, S.E. & Jurik, N.C. (2007). *Doing Justice, Doing Gender: Women in Legal and Criminal Justice Occupations*. London: Sage.

Martin, J.I., & Meezan, W. (2009). Applying ethical standards to research and evaluations involving lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations. In W. Meezen & J.I. Martin (Eds.), *Handbook of Research with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Populations*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Maruna, S. (2008). *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Marzano, L., Capdevila, R., Ciclitira, K., & Lazard, L. (2009). Justice and care: Theorising the 'New Man' and the 'Caring Father'. *Psychology of Women Section Review*, *11*, 11-20.

Maslach, C. (1982). Understanding burnout: Definitional issues in analyzing a complex phenomenon. In, W. Pain (Ed.) *Job Stress and Burnout: Research, Theory and Intervention Perspectives*. London: Sage.

McGuire, J. (1995). *What Works: Reducing re-offending – Guidelines form Research and Practice*. Chichester: Wiley.

Meek, R. (2010). The experiences of a young Gypsy-Traveller in the transition from custody to community: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, *12*, 133-147.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge.

Messerschmidt, J.W. (2001). Masculinities, crime and prison. In D.F. Sabo, T.A. Kupers, & W.J. London (Eds.) *Prison Masculinities*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Meyer, B. (2002). Extraordinary stories: Disability, queerness and feminism. *NORA*, *3*, 168-173.

Miller, W.R., & Rollnick, S. (1991). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People for Change*. New York: Guilford Press.

Miller, K., & Vernon, M. (2003). Deaf sex offenders in a prison population. *Journal of Deaf Education, 8*, 357-362.

Ministry of Justice (2009). *Promoting Equality in Prisons and Probation: The National Offender Management Service Single Equality Scheme 2009-2012.* London: Ministry of Justice.

Ministry of Justice (2011a). *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2010*. London: Ministry of Justice.
[http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/statistics/mojstats/stats-race-cjs-2010.pdf, accessed July 2012]

Ministry of Justice (2011b). *Equalities Annual Report 2010-2011*. London: Ministry of Justice.
[http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/publications/noms/2011/equalities-annual-report-2010-11.pdf, accessed August 2012]

Ministry of Justice (2012a). *About HM Prison Service*. London: Ministry of Justice.
[http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmps, accessed July 2014]

Ministry of Justice (2012b). *Implementation of the Deliver Accredited Programmes Specification*. London: Ministry of Justice.
[Joint PI / PSI issued on the authority of the NOMS Agency Board March 2012]

Ministry of Justice (2013a). *An Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales – Statistical Bulletin*.

[Issued in conjunction with the Home Office and the Office for National Statistics, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214970 /sexual-offending-overview-jan-2013.pdf, accessed August 2015]

Ministry of Justice (2013b). *Response to Freedom of Information Request 86525.* [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/25904 4/sex-offender-treatment-programmes.doc, accessed September 2015]

Ministry of Justice (2014). *Response to Freedom of Information Request 94074.* [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/39103 8/sex-offender-treatment-pilot.docx, accessed April 2016]

Ministry of Justice (2015a). *National Offender Management Service Offender Equalities Annual Report 2014/15 – Statistics Bulletin.* [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/47996 6/noms-offender-equalities-annual-report-2014-15.pdf, accessed January 2016]

Ministry of Justice (2015b). *Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly Update to March 2015 England and Wales - Ministry of Justice Statistics bulletin.* [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/45330 9/criminal-justice-statistics-march-2015.pdf.pdf, accessed January 2016]

Ministry of Justice (2015c). *Accredited Programmes Annual Bulletin 2014/15, England and Wales - Ministry of Justice Statistics bulletin*. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/44958 7/accredited-programmes-annual-bulletin-2014-15.pdf, accessed April 2016]

Moleski, S.M. & Kiselica, M.S. (2005). Dual relationships: A continuum ranging from the destructive to the therapeutic. *Journal of Counselling and Development*, *83*, 3-11.

Monro, S. & Richardson, D. (2010). Intersectionality and sexuality: The case of sexuality and transgender equalities work in UK local government. In Y. Taylor, S. Hines, & M. Casey (Eds.) *Theorizing Intersectionality and Sexuality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Moon, J. (1999). *Learning Journals: A Handbook for Academics, Students and Professional Deveopment*. London: Kogan Page.

Morris, J. (1991). *Pride Against Prejudice*. London: Women's Press.

Myers, L.B. & Midence, K. (Eds.) (1998). *Adherence to treatment in medical conditions*. London: Harwood Academic.

National Statistics (2012). *Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales 2011*. [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_290558.pdf, accessed November 2013]

National Statistics (2013). *Disability in England and Wales, 2011 and Comparison with 2001*. [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_296743.pdf, accessed November 2013]

Newcomen, N. (2015). *Learning lessons from PPO investigations about older prisoners. Ombudsman's speeches All Party Penal Affairs Group 08/12/2015.* Prisons and Probation Ombudsman: London.
[http://www.ppo.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Ombudsman-address-to-APPAG_Older-Prisoners.pdf, accessed April 2016]

Nightingale, D. & Cromby, J. (Eds) (1999). *Social constructionist psychology.* Buckingham: Open University Press.
[http://www.psy.dmu.ac.uk/michael/qual_reflexivity.htm, accessed November 2012]

Nicholas, G.A. & Burgess, A.W. (1980). Male rape: Offenders and victims. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *137*, 806-810.

NOMS (2013). *Response to Freedom of Information Request 86708*. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262122/prisons-sex-offenders.doc, accessed August 2015]

O'Hara, C., Dispenza, F., Brack, G., & Blood, R.A.C. (2013). The preparedness of counselors in training to work with transgender clients: A mixed methods investigation. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*, *7*, 236-256.

OBPU (2000). *Core SOTP: Theory Manual 2000*, London: Offending Behaviour Programme Unit, HM Prison Service.

OBPU (2004). *Structured Assessment of Risk & Need (Sexual Offenders): Manual - Version 2* (November 2004), London: Offending Behaviour Programme Unit, HM Prison Service.

Oliver, M. (1990). *The Politics of Disablement*. London: Macmillan.

Orme, C.W. (2011). Beyond Compliance: Professionalism, Trust and Capability in the Australian Profession of Arms. Department of Defence, Commonwealth of Australia.

Parekh, B. (2000). *Report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*. London: Runnymede Trust.

Patel, K. (1997). Evaluating the sex offender treatment programme: Does it meet the needs of ethnic minorities? [Unpublished Prison Service Report, cited in Cowburn et al., 2008b]

Patel, K., & Lord, A. (2001). Ethnic minority sex offenders' experiences of treatment. *The Journal of Sexual Aggression, 7*, 20-50.

Payne, N. & O'Connor, H. (2013). Treating deaf sexual offenders: Theory, practice and effectiveness. *Prison Service Journal*, *208*, 37-42.

Perkins, D., Hammond, S., Coles, D., Bishopp, D. (1998). Review of Sex Offender Treatment Programmes. [Report prepared by Department of Psychology, Broadmoor Hospital for the High Security Psychiatric Services Commissioning Board (HSPSCB).]

Pleck, J. (1981). *The Myth of Masculinity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Potter, J. (1996). Discourse analysis and constructionist approaches: theoretical background. In J.T.E. Richardson (Ed.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences*. Leicester: BPS Books.

Potter, J. (2012). Discourse analysis and discursive psychology. In Cooper, H. (Editor-in-Chief). *APA Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology: Vol. 2. Quantitative, Qualitative, Neuropsychological, and Biological* (pp. 111-130). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press.

Powis, B., & Walmsley, R.K. (2002). *Home Office Research Study 250 - Programmes for Black and Asian Offenders on Probation: Lessons for Developing Practice*. London: Home Office.

Prison Reform Trust (2008). *Doing Time: The Experiences and Needs of Older People in Prison, a Prison Reform Trust Briefing*. London: Prison Reform Trust.
[http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Doing%20Time%20the%20experiences%20and%20needs%20of%20older%20people%20in%20prison.pdf, accessed February 2014]

Proctor, E. (1994). *The Sex Offender Attitude Questionnaire*. Oxford: Oxford Probation Service.

Rack, J. (2005). *The Incidence of Hidden Disabilities in the Prison Population*. Egham: Dyslexia Institute.

Reid, K., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2005). Exploring lived experience: An Introduction to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. *The Psychologist*, *18*, 20-23.

Roberts, H., Copeland, A., Glover, G., Hatton, C., Baines, S. (2012). *Learning Disability Partnership Board Progress Reports 2010/11: A thematic analysis*. Improving Health and Lives: Learning Disabilities Observatory.
[http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/securefiles/140213_1430//IHAL%202012-06%20PB%20report.pdf, accessed February 2014]

Robertson (2001). Separating the men from the boys: Masculinity, psuchosexual development, and sex crime in the United States. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, 56*, 3-35.

Robinson, O.C. (2011). The idiographic / nomothetic dichotomy: Tracing historical origins of contemporary confusions. *History & Philosophy of Psychology*, *13*, 32-39.

Sabo, D.F., Kupers, T.A., & London, W.J. (Eds.) (2001). *Prison Masculinities*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Salter, A.C. (1988). *Treating Child Sex Offenders and Victims*. London: Sage.

Sartre, J-P. (1956 / 1943). *Being and Nothingness*. New York, NY: Washington Square Press.

Schleiermacher, F. (1998). *Hermeneutics and Criticism and other Writings*. (A. Bowie, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Segal, L. (1990). *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men*. London: Virago Press.

Sell, R., Wells, J.A., & Wypij, D. (1995). The prevalence of homosexual behavior and attraction in the United States, the United Kingdom and France: Results of national population-based samples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *24*, 235-248.

Shakespeare, T., Gillespie-Sells, K., & Davies, D. (1996). *The Sexual Politics of Disability: Untold Desires*. London: Cassell.

Shakespeare, T., and Watson, N. (2001). The social model of disability: an outdated ideology? In S.N. Barnartt & B.M. Altman (Eds.), *Exploring Theories and Expanding Methodologies: Where We Are and Where We Need to Go.* New York, NY: JAI.

Shelby, R.A., Stoddart, R.M., & Taylor, K.L. (2001). Factors contributing to levels of burnout among sex offender treatment providers. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *16*, 1205-1217.

Shuttleworth, R., Wedgwood, N., Wilson, N.J. (2012). The dilemma of disabled masculinity. *Men and Masculinities*, *15*, 174-194.

Smith, J. (1996). Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis in heath psychology. *Psychology & Health*, *11*, 261-271.

Smith, J. (2004). Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *1*, 39-54.

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. London: Sage.

Sykes, G. & Cullen, F. (1992). *Criminology (2nd ed.)*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Stevens, A. (2015). *Sex in Prison: Experiences of Former Prisoners*. London: The Howard League for Penal Reform. [Research report prepared for the Commission on sex in prison]

Symonds, T. (2010). Derby rape gage 'targeted children'. BBC News Online, 24 November 2010.
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11819732, accessed December 2010]

Tajfel, H. (1969). Cognitive aspects of prejudice. *Journal of Social Issues, 25,* 79–97.

Telegraph (2011). Pakistani men see white girls as 'easy meat', claims Jack Straw. The Telegraph Online, 8 January 2011.
[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8247607/Pakistani-men-see-white-girls-as-easy-meat-claims-Jack-Straw.html, accessed August 2012]

Thorne, S. (1990). Secondary analysis in qualitative research: Issues and implications. In J.M. Morse (Ed.) *Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods*. London: Sage.

Thornton, D. (2002). Constructing and Testing a Framework for Dynamic Risk Assessment. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, *14*, 139-153.

van Dijk, T.A. (2001). Critical Discourse Analysis. In D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin & H. Hamilton (Eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell

Vess, J. (2009). Fear and loathing in public policy: Ethical issues in laws for sex offenders. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 14*, 264-272.

Wakama, S.B. (2005). *The Impact of Race and Culture on the Sex Offender Treatment Programme: From the perspective of Ethic Minority prisoners and White Facilitators*. [Unpublished MSc thesis, University of Leicester, Leicester]

Warr, J. (2014). Perrie lectures 2013: Does prison size matter?. *Prison Service Journal, January 2014*, 25-30.

Ward, T., & Maruna, S. (2007). *Rehabilitation: Beyond the Risk Paradigm*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Ward, T., Yates, P.M. & Willis, G (2012). The Good Lives Model and the Risk Need Responsivity Model: A Critical Response to Andrews, Bonta, and Wormith (2011). *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 39*, 94 -110.

Webster, S.D., Akhtar, S., Bowers, L.E., Mann, R.E., Rallings, M., & Marshall, W.L. (2004). The impact of the prison service sex offender treatment programme on minority ethnic offenders: A preliminary study. *Psychology, Crime & Law, 10*, 113-124.

Wechsler, D. (2008). Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (4th ed.). Psychological Corporation: San Antonio, TX.

Weeks, J. (1977). *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in Britain from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*. Quartet: London.

West, C. & Zimmerman, D.H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society, 1*, 125-151.

Williams, F. (2014). *The assessment and treatment of intellectually disabled sexual offenders: The development and evaluation of the Becoming New Me treatment programme.* [Unpublished PhD thesis, Roehampton University]

Williams, F. & Mann, R.E. (2010). The Treatment of Intellectually Disabled Sexual Offenders in the National Offender Management Service: The Adapted Sex Offender Treatment Programmes. In L.A. Craig, W.R. Lindsay, & K.D. Browne (Eds.), *Assessment and Treatment of Sexual Offenders with Intellectual Disabilities: A Handbook*. Chichester: Wiley.

Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology: Adventures in Theory and Method*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Willis, G.M., Yates, P.M., Gannon, T.A., & Ward, T. (2013). How to integrate the Good Lives Model into Treatment Programs for Sexual Offending: An Introduction and Overview. *Sex Abuse, 25*, 123-42.

Zur, O. (2002). In celebration of dual relationships: How prohibition of nonsexual dual relationships increases the chance of exploitation and harm. In A.A. Lazarus & O. Zur (Eds.) *Dual Relationships and Psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Springer.

Zur, O. (2004). To cross or not to cross: Do boundaries in therapy protect or harm. *Psychotherapy Bulletin*, *39*, 27-32.

Middlesex University School of Health and Social Sciences

Psychology Department

Information Sheet

**The treatment of sex offenders within HM Prison Service:
Responding to the risks and needs of a diverse population**

Researcher: Mansoor Mir

Supervisors: Joanna Adler, Karen Ciclitira, Lisa Marzano

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully. Please send a memo to Programmes staff if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take your time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

The study relates to SOTP and exploring how well it meets the needs of specific minority groups. The study will also explore why some prisoners decide not to take part in the programme. This will be done by speaking to prisoners who have been on the programme, those who are eligible but have not taken part, and to members of staff who deliver it in order to build up a detailed picture. You are being asked to take part as you have participated in an SOTP programme and you also belong to one of the minority groups that the study will be focusing on.

As well as adding to academic knowledge it is intended that the results from this study will eventually be fed back to SOTP facilitators in order to help them to deliver the programme to the highest standard possible.

If you agree to take part you will be interviewed on the wing for 1-2 hours. There will be some set questions but there will also be time to explore any issues that you feel are important or interesting. The interview will be recorded. This is so that it can later be typed up to accurately reflect what you say. Making a recording will also allow the researcher to focus on the interview rather than taking notes.

If you have any further questions (before or after taking part) please send a message to your SOTP Treatment Manager. This will then be forwarded to the researcher at Middlesex University. You are welcome to retain this information sheet, but if you would like to return it please send it back to the Programmes Department.

All proposals for research using human participants are reviewed by an Ethics Committee before they can proceed. The Middlesex Psychology Department's Ethics Committee have reviewed this proposal.

Middlesex University School of Health and Social Sciences

Psychology Department

Written Informed Consent

The treatment of sex offenders within HM Prison Service: Responding to the risks and needs of a diverse population

Researcher: Mansoor Mir

Supervisors: Joanna Adler, Karen Ciclitira, Lisa Marzano

I have understood the details of the research as explained to me by the researcher, and confirm that I have consented to act as a participant.

I have been provided with an information sheet that advises me on how I can contact the researcher via staff in the Programmes Department.

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, the data collected during the research will not be identifiable, and I have the right to withdraw from the project at any time without any obligation to explain my reasons for doing so.

I understand that if I discuss any information relating to undisclosed past offending or prison security this information will need to be passed on to prison staff.

I further understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis and subsequent publication, and provide my consent that this might occur.

_____   _____

Print name   Sign Name

date: _____

To the participants: Data may be inspected by the Chair of the Psychology Ethics panel and the Chair of the School of Social Sciences Ethics committee of Middlesex University, if required by institutional audits about the correctness of procedures. Although this would happen in strict confidentiality, please tick here if you do not wish your data to be included in audits: _____

Middlesex University School of Health and Social Sciences

Psychology Department

Debrief Sheet

**The treatment of sex offenders within HM Prison Service:
Responding to the risks and needs of a diverse population**

Researcher: Mansoor Mir

Supervisors: Joanna Adler, Karen Ciclitira, Lisa Marzano

Thank you for taking part in this research study.

If the interview has raised any personal issues that you feel you would like to discuss further then please make use of resources in the prison, such as the Listeners service, healthcare staff, or staff on the wing.

If you have any further questions then please send a memo to a member of staff from the Programmes department, making it clear that your question relates to this research study. If local staff cannot resolve your question then it will be forwarded on to the researcher, who will send a response back to you.

If you would like to see a summary of the results from this study then please also send a message to the researcher via Programmes staff. A short summary will be available approximately 6 months from the date of this interview.

Prompts are in italics. Sections to be amended based on participants are in parenthesis.

1. ENGAGING WITH TREATMENT

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. As you know, it relates to SOTP and exploring **how well it meets everyone's needs. To start off with,** can you tell me a little bit about what you know about the programme?

I'd like to ask you some questions about your decision to go on the Sex Offender Treatment Programme.

How did you first hear about the programme?
Was it through staff (programmes induction), or other prisoners?
What were your initial feelings about the course (or programmes in general)?

Thinking back, what were your initial reasons for deciding to take part in the course?
Reasons for and against. Importance of aiding progression through the system, preventing reoffending, general personal development, word of mouth.
For each point covered explore further to establish how and why it was important in influencing decision making.

Again, thinking back, what were you hoping to take away from the course?
Explore individual factors, offending behaviour, external factors (e.g. progression through system) and other motivating factors.

How important were staff in influencing your decision to take part?
(If yes) In what ways did they influence you?
Experiences and expectations regarding programmes staff - other courses, induction, word of mouth etc.
Follow up question on whether experiences/group membership of staff affected decision making.

Before you went on SOTP, what were your expectations about going on the programme?
- other group members
- facilitators
Prompt regarding diversity issues. If make up of the group noted as important, then explore why. Any expectations or issues around mixed offence types?
Follow up question on whether experiences/group membership of other group members. Prompts regarding worries/concerns and feelings about it.
Prompts regarding hopes for self and a priori understandings of programme.

Looking back, how do you feel about your decision to take part in SOTP?
Would you (have you) recommended it to others?
How does that compare to the way you felt before/during the course?

2. EXPERIENCES OF TREATMENT

I'd now like to move on to ask you about the course itself.

What was your experience of SOTP overall?
Good experiences? Any issues or difficulties?
What did you feel that you brought to the group?
What did the group bring to you? What did you take from the group?
In what ways, if any, were your (ethnicity/disability/sexual orientation) an issue?

What are the things you remember most about being on SOTP?
If focused on repeating course content give this some time - exploring why they feel these aspects have stayed with them – explore experiences of being in the group.
What was the most important part for you?
What did you take away from the programme?

How did you feel about other group members?
How did this change over the course?
What were some of your good and bad experiences?
How important was the make up of the group?
How did your interactions with other prisoners during the group compare with how you got on with them back on the wings?
Importance of experiences/group membership. Positive/negative/indifferent?
Explore group dynamics - for example, establish whether other group members were felt to be either overly dominant/passive.

How did you feel about the SOTP facilitators?
Did this change over the course?
What were some of your good and bad experiences of the facilitators?
Importance of experiences/group membership. Positive/negative/indifferent?

How did SOTP compare to your experiences of prison generally?
For example, contexts such as the wing, education, work etc.
Recap some of the key points from the interview so far and explore to what extent these apply in different contexts.

From your point of view would you say that (ethnicity and culture/disability/sexual orientation) is an issue in prison generally?
Can you describe any specific issues you have experienced or observed?
If you had a problem how would you deal with it?

How aware were the SOTP facilitators of your individual needs?
How well do you think facilitators understood you?
How well did they respond when issues came up for you?
How important was it for facilitators to deal with individual issues that people experienced?

How useful were the examples and situations used on SOTP?
How relevant were the situations that were discussed in the group (by facilitators and other group members) and in written materials?
How easy did you find it to relate to these examples?
If you had the chance, what would you do to change them?

How do you feel the course could be changed?
Rephrase depending on answers to previous questions.
*How could it be adapted to ensure that it meets **everyone's needs?***

3. IDENTITY

In this last section I'd like to ask you about yourself, and also how you feel that you might have changed since this prison sentence and the SOTP.

How would you describe your ethnic identity?

How do you think this impacted on your experiences of SOTP?

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

How do you think this impacted on your experiences of SOTP?

How you describe your disability (if applicable)?

How do you think this impacted on your experiences of SOTP?

Tell me a bit about your situation outside?
Before coming to prison on your current sentence.
Cover points such as work, relationships, attitudes.
If still limited response follow up by asking for a description of a typical day.

Thinking about yourself in the past, how do you think people around you would have described you back then?
Perhaps a friend or family member. If they had to sum you up in a few words what would they say about you?
Do you feel that that would have been a fair description of the way you were then?
If others perceptions are felt to be inaccurate or unfair then explore why this is.
How did you see yourself back then? Looking back, how do you see yourself back then?

Thinking about some of the issues we've discussed, did you come across these in your life before coming to prison?

Recap points already covered when discussing SOTP, or prison generally.
If same issues have been experienced in general life then probe further to explore differences.
Particularly probe and explore issues relating to identity or diversity.

We've discussed how you got on with the facilitators and other group members on SOTP. How do you you think they would have described you at the time?

Again, do you think that that would have been a fair description?
If others perceptions are felt to be inaccurate or unfair then explore why this is.
How did you see yourself back then? Looking back, how do you see yourself back then?

How would you describe yourself now?
How do your attitudes/behaviours now compare to how you were back then?
How/why is that different from the way you saw yourself in the past?
How has the way that you think about your (ethnicity/disability/sexual orientation) changed?
How do you see yourself changing in the future?

How would others describe you now?

Is there anything else that you'd like to talk about relating to the topics we've discussed?

Middlesex University School of Health and Social Sciences

Psychology Department

Information Sheet

The treatment of sex offenders within HM Prison Service: Responding to the risks and needs of a diverse population

Researcher: Mansoor Mir

Supervisors: Joanna Adler, Karen Ciclitira, Lisa Marzano

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully. Please email the researcher at the address below if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take your time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

The study relates to SOTP and exploring how well it meets the needs of specific minority groups. The study will also explore why some prisoners decide not to take part in the programme. This will be done by speaking to prisoners who have been on the programme, those who are eligible but have not taken part, and to members of staff who deliver it in order to build up a detailed picture. You are being asked to take part as you have delivered the SOTP to prisoners.

As well as adding to academic knowledge it is intended that the results from this study will eventually be fed back to SOTP facilitators in order to help them to deliver the programme to the highest standard possible.

If you agree to take part you will be interviewed for about 1-2 hours. There will be some set questions but there will also be time to explore any issues that you feel are important or interesting. The interview will be recorded. This is so that it can later be typed up to accurately reflect what you say. Making a recording will also allow the researcher to focus on the interview rather than taking notes.

If you have any further questions (before or after taking part) please contact the researcher by emailing:
• M.Mir@mdx.ac.uk

All proposals for research using human participants are reviewed by an Ethics Committee before they can proceed. The Middlesex Psychology Department's Ethics Committee have reviewed this proposal.

Middlesex University School of Health and Social Sciences

Psychology Department

Written Informed Consent

The treatment of sex offenders within HM Prison Service: Responding to the risks and needs of a diverse population

Researcher: Mansoor Mir

Supervisors: Joanna Adler, Karen Ciclitira, Lisa Marzano

I have understood the details of the research as explained to me by the researcher, and confirm that I have consented to act as a participant.

I have been provided with an information sheet that advises me on how I can contact the researcher directly.

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, the data collected during the research will not be identifiable, and I have the right to withdraw from the project at any time without any obligation to explain my reasons for doing so.

I understand that if I discuss any information that could impact on the security of the establishment then this information will need to be passed on to other prison staff.

I further understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis and subsequent publication, and provide my consent that this might occur.

_____   _____

Print name   Sign Name

date: _____

To the participants: Data may be inspected by the Chair of the Psychology Ethics panel and the Chair of the School of Social Sciences Ethics committee of Middlesex University, if required by institutional audits about the correctness of procedures. Although this would happen in strict confidentiality, please tick here if you do not wish your data to be included in audits: _____

Middlesex University School of Health and Social Sciences

Psychology Department

Debrief Sheet

**The treatment of sex offenders within HM Prison Service:
Responding to the risks and needs of a diverse population**

Researcher: Mansoor Mir

Supervisors: Joanna Adler, Karen Ciclitira, Lisa Marzano

Thank you for taking part in this research study.

If you have any further questions about the study then please contact the researcher via email:

• M.Mir@mdx.ac.uk

A short summary of results will be available approximately 6 months from the date of this interview. Please contact the researcher at the email address above in order to request this. More detailed reports and articles on the study will also be available at a later date.

1. WORKING IN THE FIELD

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. To start off with, can you tell me a bit about your experiences of delivering SOTP?
How many groups?
Delivering for how long?

I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences of coming to work in the field of sex offender treatment.

How did you come to delivering SOTP?
Role sought specifically on recruitment?
Delivering other programmes and then began delivering SOTP?

How long have you been delivering and/or managing the programme?

What is your current role?
Facilitator, risk assessor, supervisor, treatment manager?

What were your expectations before delivering your first group?
- group members
- other facilitators
Prompt regarding diversity issues. If make up of the group noted as important, then explore why. Any expectations or issues around mixed offence types?
Follow up question on whether experiences/group membership of other group members. Prompts regarding worries/concerns and feelings about it.

2. EXPERIENCES OF DELIVERING SOTP

I'd now like to move on to talk about the SOTP groups that you've delivered or directly supervised.
Start with most recent groups. Give time to first group as well to follow on from final question in previous section.

What have been your experiences of delivering SOTP?
Good experiences? Any issues or difficulties?
What did you feel that you brought to the group?
What did the group bring to you? What did you take from the group?
In what ways, if any, were your (ethnicity/disability/sexual orientation) an issue?

What are the things you remember most about delivering groups?
Explore why they feel these aspects have stayed with them – explore experiences of delivering the group.
What have been the most memorable incidents for you?

How did you feel about the group members?
How did this change over the course?
What were some of your good and bad experiences?
How important was the make up of the group?
Importance of experiences/group membership. Positive/negative/indifferent?
Explore group dynamics - for example, establish whether group members were felt to be either overly dominant/passive.

How did you feel about the other facilitators?
Has this changed, either across courses or during a single one?
What were some of your good and bad experiences of co-facilitation?
Importance of experiences/group membership. Positive/negative/indifferent?

What are your experiences of dealing with responsivity/diversity issues on SOTP?
Can you describe any specific issues you have experienced or observed?
How prepared were you for dealing with the situation?
What role did training / audit requirements / supervision / co-facilitation play in your decision making?
How did the situation affect the way in which you interacted with group members or other staff going forward?

How does running SOTP compare to your experiences of working in prison generally?
For example, running other programmes, conducting desk based work, wing duties (for officer facilitators) etc.
Recap some of the key points from the interview so far and explore to what extent these apply in different contexts.

From your point of view would you say that (ethnicity and culture/disability/sexual orientation) is an issue in prison generally?
Can you describe any specific issues you have experienced or observed?
If you had a problem how would you deal with it?

How useful are the examples and situations used on SOTP?
How relevant are the situations discussed in the group (by facilitators and group members) and in written materials?
How easy you find it to use these examples when delivering a session?
If you had the chance, what would you do to change them?

3. IDENTITY

In this last section I'd like to ask you about yourself.

How would you describe your ethnic identity?

How do you think this impacted on your experiences of working in prison, or delivering SOTP?

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

How do you think this impacted on your experiences of working in prison, or delivering SOTP?

How you describe your disability (if applicable)?

How do you think this impacted on your experiences of working in prison, or delivering SOTP?

If any issues raised then ask following question. Otherwise skip.
Do you come across these issues before working on SOTP, or working in prisons?
If same issues have been experienced in general life then probe further to explore differences.
Particularly probe and explore issues relating to identity or diversity.

We've discussed how you got on with the other facilitators and group members on SOTP. How do you you think they would have described you at the time?
How do you feel about that description of yourself?
If others perceptions are felt to be inaccurate or unfair then explore why this is.

How would you describe yourself now?
How/why is that different from the way you saw yourself in the past?
How has the way that you think about your (ethnicity/disability/sexual orientation) changed?
How do you see yourself changing in the future?

How would others describe you now?

Is there anything else that you'd like to talk about relating to the topics we've discussed?