

Institution: University of Northampton		
Unit of Assessment: 21: Sociology		
Title of case study: Transforming best practice in services for socially excluded young people		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2011-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Meanu Bajwa-Patel	Senior Researcher	2014 - 2020
Dr Claire Paterson-Young	Senior Researcher	2019 – 2020
	Associate Professor	2020 - Present
Professor Richard Hazenberg	Professor	2011 - Present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 - Present		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		

1. Summary of the impact

Research conducted by the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) into youth social exclusion, has directly supported the Ministry of Defence (MoD), Army Cadet Force, Sea Cadets, RAF Air Cadets, Department for Education (DfE) and the Oakhill Secure Training Centre, to utilise evidence in their guidance and policies. The research has led to the maintenance of the GBP160,000,000 of Cadet Force funding in the Ministry of Defence budget, as well as the expansion of the Cadet Expansion Programme funding. Furthermore, it has resulted in revisions to Oakhill Secure Training Centre's Violence Reduction Strategy (VRS) and the development of Specialist Training Programmes for staff in the Centre. Overall, the research has improved support for young people, with benefits for young people participating in activities, support staff and the organisations that facilitate youth support programmes.

2. Underpinning research

Since 2014, ISII research has supported socially excluded groups in practice and policy, specifically around social impact measurement and service improvement. **Dr Bajwa-Patel** led research into the development of support services for children to improve school engagement. **Bajwa-Patel** conducted a four-year research project examining the social impact of the Cadet Forces (a uniformed youth organisation) across the United Kingdom (UK) (August 2016 – July 2020). In consultation with the MoD and the DfE, the researchers examined the social impact of being a cadet on young people and adults. The research was based on the analysis of interviews with over 250 cadets, parents, school staff and volunteers, data collected from over 3,050 surveys of cadets, volunteers and school staff, and data from schools on attendance, behaviour, special educational needs and disability (SEND), Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), and risk of exclusion. The research demonstrated the impact that the Cadet Forces have on educational inclusion, resilience and wellbeing, by offering an environment within which socially excluded young people can personally and socially develop [3.1; 3.2]. The research found that being a cadet can have a positive impact on attendance and behaviour, and has a benefit for young people with SEND and teachers who become adult volunteers (CFAVs). Furthermore, cadets with SEND and their parents reported improvements to self-confidence, inclusion and resilience [3.2].

Impact case study (REF3)

Building on this research, ISII was commissioned to deliver a project exploring the impact of custody on young people. Led by **Dr Paterson-Young**, this project focused on the social impact of custodial environments (specifically Secure Training Centres) on young people. The research identified an alternative vision for youth justice, one that is centred on the young people's holistic needs, in a manner that deals with the underlying causes of their criminal behaviour (abuse, trauma, education, and personal agency etc.) [3.3, 3.4]. It illustrated that social impact (the intended and unintended, positive and negative impact of services/interventions) provides an opportunity to reframe the debates and narratives within youth justice towards a young person-centred approach to welfare and rehabilitation, rather than punitive approaches to what society sees as 'problem' children [3.3]. Through this holistic framework, institutions and stakeholders within youth justice are made accountable for the outcomes achieved by young people, essentially reducing offending and improving positive outcomes for young people. The research into the social impact of custody on young people led to the publication of a commissioned book by Palgrave-Macmillan titled 'The Social Impact of Custody on Young People' [3.4].

Additional research outlined the traumatic impact of restraint on young people in custody (especially those with a history of domestic violence) and offers frameworks to enhance outcomes for young people by providing specialist support based on the Rehabilitative Environment Model [3.3, 3.4]. Restraint in custody is often an emotional experience for young people that can result in trauma, hindering progression in the custodial environment and consequently transition to adulthood [3.3, 3.4]. This research advocates a new framework for developing effective services based upon a Rehabilitative Environment Model and Social Impact Measurement framework [3.3 3.4], which supports children with health and wellbeing, relationships, education, independence and resettlement [3.3, 3.4].

3. References to the research

[3.1] **Bajwa-Patel, M.**, Denny, S., **Hazenberg, R.**, Giroletti, T., & Brylka, A. (2018). *What is the social impact of the expenditure on the Cadet Forces. Second interim report 2018*. University of Northampton Institute of Social Innovation and Impact. <https://www.northampton.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/social-impact-cadets-expenditure-report-2018-19.pdf>

[3.2] **Bajwa-Patel, M.**, Denny, S., & **Hazenberg, R.** (2020). *What is the social impact and return on investment resulting from the expenditure on the Cadet Forces? Year 3 Interim Report*.

[3.3] **Paterson-Young, C.**, **Hazenberg, R.**, **Bajwa-Patel, M.**, & Denny, S. (2017). Developing a social impact measurement framework to enhance outcomes for young people in custody – what to measure? *Papers from the British Criminology Conference*, 17. <https://www.britsoccrim.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Developing-a-social-impact-measurement-framework-.pdf>

[3.4] **Paterson-Young, C.**, **Hazenberg, R.**, & **Bajwa-Patel, M.** (2019). *The Social Impact of Custody on Young People in the Criminal Justice System*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18422-3>

The Cadets research/associated outputs were funded through grants from the Centre for Child and Family Advocacy (GBP60,000) and CVQO UK Education Charity (GBP40,000) whilst the Secure Training Centre research and associated outputs were funded through G4S (GBP54,000).

4. Details of the impact

The research with socially excluded young people has enabled organisations, including the Cadet Forces and G4S, to shape their services/interventions and best practice. Specifically, the research has been instrumental in improving best practice in education and youth justice, through the shaping of support services for young people; support and development for staff; and development for researchers.

Developing effective and sustainable services for young people

Research conducted by the ISII enabled organisations to develop and enhance support services for young people at a time when other programmes, such as youth groups, have been cut. Specifically:

- *Demonstrating to schools and governing bodies the benefit of the Cadet Forces*

Our findings on the efficacy of the Cadet Programme have helped head teachers justify their spending on Cadets within the school [5.1]. For example, Headteachers were able to use the reports as evidence that the costs of the programme could be balanced against the cost of exclusion and the stress caused by behavioural issues within the classroom [3.2, p32].

The research demonstrates that the Cadet forces “contribute to increasing social mobility and decreasing social disadvantage” [5.2] and that they play a key role “in developing young people’s life skills, improving mental and physical wellbeing, and promoting and enabling social mobility [5.3]. A letter from the General Officer Commanding Regional Command of the British Army testified that **Bajwa-Patel’s** contribution highlighted the benefits of the ‘Cadet Movement generally and the Cadet Expansion Programme more specifically’, which contributed to the continued commitment of schools for creating and sustaining Combined Cadet Force programmes [5.4].

Bajwa-Patel was invited to present the research findings to a multi-academy trust of newly established Combined Cadet Forces. This further disseminated the research on the Cadet Programme, which the cadet’s team at the MoD used to evidence the social impact of the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP) was significantly higher than the annual cost. As a result the research directly supported the opening of 31 new Cadet Units [5.3; 5.2]. The Minister for the Armed Forces stated in a speech to the House of Commons on 21 October 2019, “The University of Northampton’s research into the social impact of the cadet forces, including those in state schools, suggests that membership can increase social mobility and help children reach their potential because of the activities they undertake. This is precisely why this has been such a successful process” [5.5]. This speech was delivered as part of the government’s policy decision to expand the CEP in schools. The research was also presented to the Cross-Party Group: Armed Forces and Cadets in the Welsh National Assembly [5.6].

Research findings were used to help the MOD Youth and Cadet’s team to engage with Ofsted with regards to changes to the education inspection framework [5.3]. This research, published by the [DfE](#) (2018), demonstrates that cadet units are now perceived as positively contributing to a school’s OFSTED inspection rating.

- *Developing safeguarding/child-informed processes in Secure Training Centres*

Research conducted in Secure Training Centres (STC) led to the development of a VRS [5.7] that had a positive impact on young people in the justice system through improvements in support offered to young people after restraint. The research demonstrated the benefits of children receiving support from Healthcare and Psychology professionals following restraint. Since the implementation of the VRS, the number of young people receiving support after restraint has increased from 58% (October 2017) to 73% (June 2018) (demonstrated in Ofsted reports in 2017 and 2018).

Findings from the research were submitted to the Justice Committee and recommended improving provision for education and independence in Secure Training Centres. [5.8] This research also highlighted best practice for ensuring that children have safe and secure accommodation when they are released from custody [5.8].

Support and Development for Staff

Research conducted by the ISII enabled organisations to develop and enhance service provisions through support and development for staff. Specifically:

- *Developing staff training in managing violence in Secure Training Centres*

The research provided a clearer understanding of the impact of domestic violence on young people at the STC to the Head of Safeguarding and the Senior Management Team. This resulted in a review of the violence management approach at the Centre and the development of the new VRS. The Head of Safeguarding stated that **Paterson-Young's** 'research is clearly already having a positive impact on the centre and proving beneficial to [the centre] and the cultural shift the centre's management team is leading' [5.7].

- *Developing Specialist Intervention Training*

A key research recommendation was the development of support for young people, based on the Rehabilitative Environment Model [3.3, 3.4]. The Head of Safeguarding used this recommendation to 'identify key areas of focus' and develop new training for Specialist Intervention Teams at Oakhill Secure Training Centre based on the holistic trauma-informed approach outlined in the research [5.7]. The training was delivered in the Oakhill STC between 2017 and 2018, and enabled staff to tackle the issues experienced by young people in custody effectively, which in turn ensured young people in custody had effective support to help with resettlement and transition to adulthood. Since 2017, there have been approximately 22,617 young people in Secure Training Centres that would have benefited from this changing approach either directly or indirectly (see longitudinal data from the [Youth Justice Board, 2020](#)).

Development of new Methodological Approaches

Reports from the research were used by the Government's Canadian Cadet Organizations to inform and support their programme evaluation. More specifically, they used the report to develop their research methodology (specifically, the rigorous multi-faceted methodology and use of statistical techniques), timelines, planned deliverables and research presentations at conferences [5.9].

Research, based on methodological approaches for the Cadets research, was commissioned by the Motivational Preparation College for Training (MPCT). This research allowed the MPCT to strengthen support for young people and staff as evidenced by R Huw Lewis MBE - Chief Executive Officer – MPCT who confirmed "that the research conducted by the ISII has been instrumental in providing evidence on the social impact of the programme for the MPCT and the young people we support." [5.10]. The research findings were used to improve the support offered to young people and demonstrated the benefits of employing them to the MoD that added an estimated value of GBP 1,900,000 [5.10].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[5.1] Department of Education Impact Statement

[5.2] [Statement](#) from Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon.

[5.3] Ministry of Defence Impact Statement

[5.4] Army Impact Statement

[5.5] [House of Commons HANSARD, October 21st 2019, Volume 666](#)

[5.6] [The Value of Cadet Forces in Wales - Presentation to the Cross Party Group: Armed Forces and Cadets](#)

[5.7] Oakhill Secure Training Centre Impact Statement

[5.8] [Justice Committee Evidence](#)

[5.9] Canadian Cadets and Junior Rangers Headquarters [Impact Statement](#)

[5.10] [MPCT\(Motivational Preparation College for Training\) Impact Statement](#)