

General Certificate of Secondary Education

J696

Sociology

**B673 Applying Sociological Research
Techniques**

Specimen Pre-release Material

INSTRUCTIONS TO TEACHERS

- These Investigations may be given to candidates at any time after 1 January 2009.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- You should make yourself familiar with the Investigation before you take the question paper.
- You must not take notes into the examination.
- A clean copy of these Investigations will be provided with the question paper.
- It is not compulsory to carry out practical research but please bear in mind that it could aid the accessibility of some research methods.
- The topic area under investigation is Youth

This document consists of **10** printed pages and **2** blank pages.

INVESTIGATION 1

Source: Female Youth Worker, aged 25, in the Nottingham area, 2007

'The police are more likely to stop teenagers if they dress in a particular way.'

Introduction

This research is based on the stereotypical view held by the police of young offenders. It relates specifically to dress. I want to find out if teenage boys are stopped by the police because they are wearing 'hoodies' which cover their face. Hooded jumpers are worn as a fashion statement and have been for some time. However, they are now associated with young criminals and have connotations of bad behaviour. This stereotypical view of young offenders has led to members of the public in Nottingham, being afraid of teenagers wearing hooded jumpers. As a youth worker this interests me as I want the community to work together and I want what I consider a stereotypical view, to be put aside.

The aims for my investigation are as follows;

- To find out if the police ever stop teenagers because of what they are wearing. I also want to see what the police thought of hoodies.
- To see if my sample, between the ages of 14 and 17, have been stopped by the police and if so, were they actually committing a crime. Alternatively was it because they were wearing a hooded jumper.

Methodology

To investigate if teenagers are unfairly targeted by the police due to their appearance and clothing, I intend to use two primary methods:

I will use questionnaires, to target my teenage sample. I will ask them if they are unfairly targeted or if they feel they are unfairly targeted. I will use questionnaires because they are cost effective and I can get quick results.

I have decided upon a pre-coded questionnaire as my sample is far more likely to fill in the questionnaire if they are able to simply choose an answer.

I will use the method of an unstructured interview which will allow me to ask a member of the police force several questions on this topic.

I will only ask one member of the police because I work with this member and I believe they will give me a valid and honest account. It is not possible for me to get several members of the police force to interview.

For my secondary data, I am going to find a newspaper article on how teenagers wearing 'hoodies' are portrayed by the media. I will use a newspaper article because they are readily available and the media is very influential. I will bear in mind that the media exaggerate things to make the stories more interesting.

Questionnaire

I am completing my research on the stereotypical view of what a young offender wears. I am trying to find out if teenagers get stopped by the police for wearing hooded jumpers as they are commonly associated with criminals. I would be very grateful if you could complete this questionnaire for me.

1 How old are you?

14		15		16		17	
----	--	----	--	----	--	----	--

2 Do you wear hooded jumpers?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

3 If yes, why?

They are in fashion		You feel like wearing it	
Your friends do		You want to look tough	
They are stylish		Other	

If other please specify

4 Have you ever been stopped by the police?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If yes, please specify why

5 If you have been stopped by the police, were you wearing a hooded jumper when you were stopped?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

6 If you have been stopped, were you committing a crime?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

7 How would you describe young people who wear hoodies?

8 How do you think the media describes young people who wear hoodies?

9 Do you think young people wearing hoodies are unfairly targeted by the police?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Thank you for completing my questionnaire.

Questionnaire Results

I handed out the questionnaire to 20 of the teenagers who attend my youth club. They are all pretty relaxed with me – I think they trust me- and come from mixed backgrounds. I found out the following from my questionnaires:

- The respondents were mixed in terms of age (although all are teenagers).
- The majority wear hoodies or casual sports clothing regularly and for a variety of reasons, mainly fashion.
- Only two of the respondents wanted to look tough.
- Only four of the respondents were stopped by the police.
- Three out of the four respondents who were stopped had not committed an offence and did feel they were stopped because of what they were wearing.
- They admit that hoodies are associated with criminals and feel this is supported in the media, but they cannot understand why, as this is not their view

Interview Results

When I interviewed the PC in an unstructured interview format, I found out that the area he patrols is very ethnically mixed and the majority of people wear traditional Asian dress. The crimes committed there are usually theft, burglary and just general fighting between individuals and groups.

Although the PC has only made a few general arrests, he told me that he does not falsely arrest people and takes innocent people in to be questioned rather than accusing people immediately. My opinion is that the PC is a reasonable policeman.

When I asked: 'Have you ever falsely accused a teenager of something because of what they are wearing?' The PC replied 'No, I haven't and would never do this'. This result has failed to prove my hypothesis as it basically contradicts it.

Secondary Data Results

I found many articles in newspapers, but few that had factual information.

All of the articles basically indicate that hooded jumpers are associated with crime; youths are obscuring their faces with their hoods to conceal their identity from CCTV cameras.

The article that was most useful was "Magistrates take the hood off young offenders" (see appendix).

Conclusion

Overall, I have found that the two primary methods I used did not support one another. My interview with the member of the police led me to believe that the police do not stereotype teenagers who wear hoodies as criminals. The questionnaires seemed to support this to some extent as only 20% of the respondents had been stopped but the respondents do feel unfairly targeted by the police and some feel they have been arrested purely because of their clothing.

My secondary result seemed to support the view that what teenagers wear will create an image that could be stereotypical. It insinuated that hooded jumpers should be banned and that teenagers who wear them do so to obscure their faces from CCTV and are intimidating and suspicious.

- To find out if the police ever stop teenagers because of what they are wearing.

From the interview I had with a member of the police, I found out that the PC had never falsely arrested a teenager because of what they were wearing.

- To see if my sample, between the ages of 14 and 17, have been stopped by the police and if so, were they actually committing a crime. Alternatively was it because they were wearing a hooded jumper?

I found out that a minority of the people filling in the questionnaires said they had been stopped by the police and at the time they were doing nothing wrong. However they were wearing hooded jumpers when they were stopped and hanging around in groups.

Overall, my hypothesis 'The police are more likely to stop teenagers if they dress in a particular way' was backed up by the secondary data I gathered. It was also supported by my questionnaires. On the other hand, my hypothesis was disproved by evidence of the interview with a member of the police because the PC said he would never stop anyone purely because of their clothing.

Evaluation

In general, I believe my research went reasonably well.

The questionnaires I handed out were useful because I was able to find out why teenager boys wear hooded jumpers and whether they feel that clothing can lead to discrimination by the police.

The results I got from the interview were not that representative as I only asked one police officer.

The secondary data I found was very useful as it related to my hypothesis and proved that hooded jumpers are associated with crime so people wearing them are more likely to be stopped by the police.

I only focused on teenage boys in my research, I did not focus on ethnicity, so if I re did the investigation I would extend it to different groups in society.

APPENDIX A

Magistrates take the hood off young offenders

John Elliott

Hooded tops made popular by rap stars such as Eminem are being banned by local authorities, police forces and courts because of their associations with crime.

The bans, handed out to individuals as part of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs), are designed to prevent young people concealing their identity from CCTV cameras. They also aim to reduce the intimidation felt by residents at seeing gangs of hooded youths lurking around their neighbourhoods.

Councils including Manchester, Leeds, Middlesbrough, Plymouth and Stockton-on-Tees have had ASBOs granted against troublemakers banning them from obscuring their faces with clothing.

The bans come as the fashion for wearing hooded tops takes hold among teenagers, partly inspired by musicians such as Eminem, Dr Dre and Dizzee Rascal.

A spokesman for Leeds city council said that of 232 ASBOs granted by courts after applications by the authority, nine involved restrictions on hooded tops, but that it was "very difficult to get magistrates to support this kind of ASBO".

He added: "They are introduced when it can be shown that headwear is part of a uniform identifying gang members. Also, they are forbidden if disguising a person's facial features forms part of intimidating behaviour and avoiding CCTV cameras. West Yorkshire Police had some youngsters who were getting on buses and robbing people on the top deck while obscuring their faces.

Inspector Terry Crompton, of Greater Manchester Police, said gangs wearing hooded tops – known as "hoodies" – were a problem in certain parts of the city. He said: "Over 50% of robberies are committed by people covering their face with hoods or something similar.

"It's an intimidating look. A few years back baseball caps were used to disguise someone's appearance. Now it appears to be hooded tops."

Last month, police on Merseyside launched a poster campaign asking for hooded tops and baseball caps to be removed when entering supermarkets, off-licences, banks and petrol stations. John Murphy, deputy chief constable, said: "It puts customers and staff on edge. Law-abiding people will not mind removing a hood or hat.

Marilyn Davies, community safety manager at Stockton-on-Tees borough council, said one criminal released from prison, Christopher Wood, 21, had an ASBO imposed that banned him from wearing hooded tops and being in car parks.

She said: "He was released from prison on September 6, the council had an ASBO imposed on him that afternoon. He was known to be drug dependent. He re-offended 10 days later and is back in prison. His offence was being in a car-park wearing a hooded top and walking towards a car."

One young hood-wearer in Stockwell, south London, said: "I like to wear my hood up because it is fun and no one can see your face. I think it scares people when you walk by with it up, sometimes I do that on purpose."

Youth workers in Manchester said the latest fashion to denote gang membership was to wear a single glove on the right hand. This is intended to suggest the wearer is concerned with not leaving powder marks from a firearm in the skin of his shooting hand. Already one ASBO issued in Manchester has banned an individual from wearing a glove on his right hand.

Additional reporting: Holly Watt

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INVESTIGATION 2

Source: Male GCSE sociology candidate, aged 16, in Manchester, 2004

'I am trying to investigate if the media has an effect on how teenagers act.'

Aim of enquiry

- To find out why teenagers are labelled as criminals
- To find out if the computer games they play effect the way they act
- To find out if the music they listen to has an impact on the way they act

Background

I have a strong belief that music and games effect teenager's, and encourage antisocial behaviour. In the music industry there is a lot of reference to crime: Most rap stars come from rough backgrounds and talk about crime and escaping poverty.

These days you are considered to be 'cool' if you commit some crimes. Everyone wants to be cool so they think they can gain this level of "street cred" by committing crime and then boasting about it to their peer group. I think that teenagers accept this criminal label, I know as soon as I was aware of labelling and the association of coolness with wearing a hoodie, I dressed in one.

I think that the community target teenagers because they want to have fun and also because they do not like the way they dress and act.

Methodology of the enquiry

I am going to do a questionnaire about the thoughts of teenagers today. I'm going to have questions which ask whether they think the music they listen to affects them. I will get my questions and will give them to my teenage mates, then I will ask them to give them to their teenage mates and see what they say. I'm also going to do covert observation on some criminal friends I know already, I will watch them from a way away and see what they do.

SOCIOLOGY QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEENAGE BEHAVIOUR

As part of my research I am trying to investigate if the media has an effect on how teenagers act.

1. How old are you?

13-14

15-16

17

18+

2. What type of music do you listen to?

R'n'b

Hip-hop

Pop

Dance

Drum and bass

Reggae

Metal

4. Do you like school?

Yes

No

6. Choose

Robbie
Williams

or

50 Cent

7. Choose

Clarks

or

Airmax

8. Choose

New era caps

or

Beanie

9. Choose

Fighting action
games

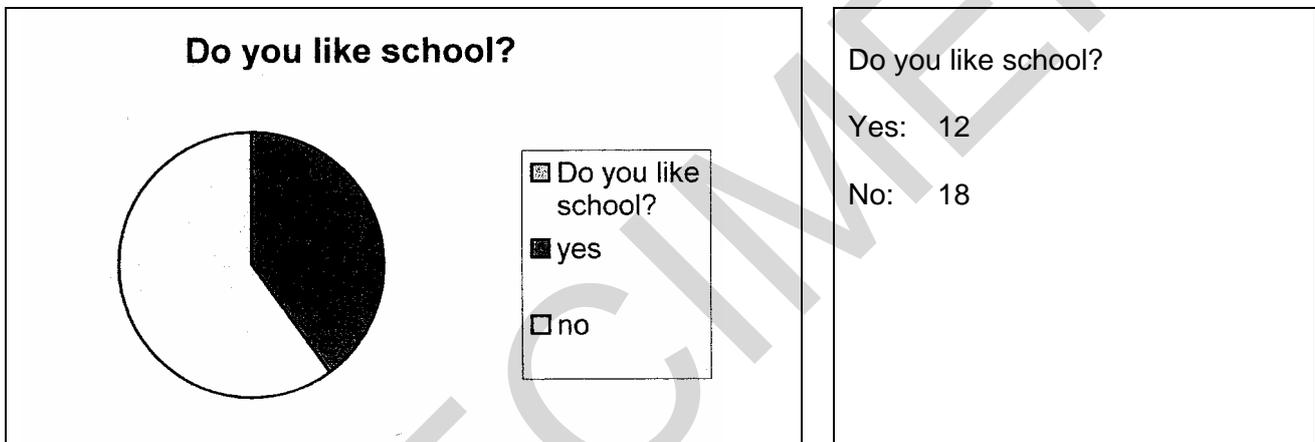
or

Football
games

Evaluation of results

- I have mostly asked people from the 16-19 age group. The reason I did this is because I thought that teenagers around that age group are into music and are honest.
- Roughly two thirds of the people that filled in my questionnaire favoured hip-hop music. This is the genre that is most associated with gang culture and violence. Lots also liked reggae which is associated with drugs.
- They did not really like school
- More than half of the teenagers that I have surveyed, would rather listen to music that is all about gun crime and stuff. Do you think that someone that has been shot 9 times and boasts about it is a good role model for kids?
- They all liked both the fighting games and football, most just ticked both.

See an example of my pie chart below which I created from my result.



Conclusion

I have found that most people would rather wear a new era cap than a beanie. This type of head wear comes from hip-hop culture which encourages antisocial behaviour. Therefore, my results show me that most teenagers would rather be hip-hop stars and take drugs. This makes my hypothesis right. I did not get round to doing the other methods but think they would agree.

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Appendix A: Magistrates take the hood off young offenders by John Elliott © The Sunday Times, 14 November 2004

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