Territoriality and Sectarianism in Glasgow: A Qualitative Study

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1   Executive Summary

This small research study was funded by the British Academy, with a budget of £3406. The study aimed to explore how young people (aged 16-18) in Glasgow view their city, what the various issues are that impact on their lives and the extent to and ways in which sectarianism influences them. It was the first study of its kind to include the real voices of young Glasgow people on these issues. Qualitative case studies of a cross-section of seven voluntary organisations in some of the most socially deprived areas of Glasgow were conducted. Youth venues were selected on the basis that they offered social and educational opportunities and employment-related skills. Initial open-ended interviews with community leaders in each of the venues were combined with informal interaction with young people, in order to build rapport and establish trust. Subsequent visits to each youth venue enabled the researchers to implement semi-structured interviews and focus groups with 40 young persons (aged 16-18 years). Thereafter the researchers also conducted interviews with senior operational Strathclyde police officers within each of the targeted communities. Participants were recruited voluntarily in each youth venue. It was recognised that recruitment from youth groups raises particular ethical issues and there was therefore a need for informed consent from all participating groups. To this end, an information leaflet was designed, which provided participants with full and relevant details of the nature, object and duration of the study in a form that was easily understood. Anonymity was maintained and the volunteers informed of this. Interviews and focus groups were transcribed and emerging codes were analysed.

The main findings can be summarised as follows:

- Territorial gang issues were at the forefront of the young participants' minds. Youngsters sought out gang culture as a means of excitement, as a remedy for boredom and also as a means of protection. While membership of gangs created some opportunities for social networking, they also resulted in a sense of confinement and a sense of social distance from other communities.

- Networking with other gangs took place via the internet, and this was usually in the search for conflict or for recruiting new gang members. Youngsters often felt trapped

in the confinement of their housing schemes and some also had a feeling of exclusion that stemmed from having a history of conflict with authority.

- Although the activity associated with gangs was not seen as sectarian in terms of promoting open religious bigotry, 'flashpoints' resulted in this type of bigotry occasionally being used as a 'resource' for the expression of aggression, particularly where alcohol was involved and in the immediate aftermath of an 'Old Firm' game.

- Most youngsters were extremely influenced by football culture and the 'Old Firm' rivalry, which often fostered memories of the historical conflict linked to Northern Ireland.

- Football-related sectarianism was seen to be related to family influence, the continuing 'traditions' associated with the 'Old Firm' and a tendency towards male tribalism and machismo. There was a general feeling among the youth participants that sectarian values were more prominent among the current generation of adults (particularly men) in Glasgow than among 16-18 year-olds.

- It was evident that many of the young people had been influenced by older family members (usually fathers or older brothers) to support certain teams, wear certain colours and sing certain songs as a means of encouraging a heterosexual male identity. Thus, there was evidence to suggest that young people were under pressure to conform to certain cultural expectations, which were defined by narrow views of masculinity and sexuality.

- The young people did not appear to have any interest in religion, and yet were still conscious of issues related to religious division, which usually arose from football-related discussions with family or friends.

- Participation in Orange Walks and the singing of sectarian songs appeared popular among some youngsters and there was some evidence to suggest that football bigotry was so much a part of life in Glasgow that it often went unnoticed. The young people often viewed sectarian humour as harmless 'banter', and did not consider the impact

of online sectarianism or the real meaning of the sectarian language they used. This illustrates that the use of sectarian language and humour may have become so deeply assimilated into these young people's social identity that it has become normalised.

- Although participants talked about the lack of overt religious territoriality in Glasgow there were, in fact, *hidden* territories which dictated where young people could or could not go while wearing particular football colours, for fear of violence. Although the idea of 'restricted social space' was not as sharply defined as it tends to be in Northern Ireland, the associated feelings of fear undoubtedly restricted young people's potential for networking, limited their sense of trust and their chances of finding employment later in life.

- The small number of asylum seekers in our sample appeared to notice sectarian-related crime and bigotry more than those who were native to the city. This suggests that sectarian language, crime and bigotry may have become so normalised in people's minds that it takes a newcomer to really notice that it is there at all.

- The data also suggested that racist attitudes were prominent among some of the young people, in light of the growing population of asylum seekers and refugees and the recent terrorist attack at Glasgow airport.

One recommendation from this research is that anti-sectarian policies and initiatives need to be put back on the political agenda in Scotland. In addition, participants revealed that they had had very little anti-sectarian input in school and this suggests that teachers need to be more proactive at putting sectarianism on the classroom agenda, particularly since the new *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) in Scotland has the teaching of controversial issues, the exploration of social values and the fostering of active participation at its core (Curriculum Review Group, 2004).

2   The research study

Social Capital theory has at its heart the need for networking and creating social connections as means of facilitating action (Bourdieu, 1983, 1986; Coleman, 1990; Baron *et al.*, 2000; Field, 2003; AERS, 2004). Implicit within all forms of social capital is a sense of personal and collective agency, which requires the 'active and willing engagement' of people as 'creators of their social world' (Leonard and Onyx, 2004: 23). It is recognised that such capital can have negative, as well as positive, consequences and can be directed towards malevolent, antisocial purposes. A sectarian community can emerge where high volumes of 'bonding' social capital are combined with low volumes of social tolerance (Putnam, 2000). In this study, which was funded by the British Academy and conducted during the winter of 2007-2008, we aimed to explore how young people (aged 16-18) in Glasgow view their city, what the various issues are that impact on their lives and the extent to and ways in which sectarianism influences them. Ultimately, we aimed to explore the extent to which participants accumulate and maximise forms of social capital and engaged in social action related to a sectarian habitus. One of the focal areas was to explore the possible connections between territorial gang culture and sectarianism in Glasgow.

Qualitative case studies of a cross-section of seven voluntary organisations in some of the most socially deprived areas of Glasgow were conducted. Recent statistics suggest that the homicide rate in Glasgow is very high compared with all other parts of Scotland (Scottish Government, 2007), and so most of the young participants lived their lives against a backdrop of violence and aggression. Youth venues were selected on the basis that they offered social and educational opportunities and employment-related skills, and each of the venues were supported by government initiatives aimed at supporting urban regeneration and tackling anti-social behaviour. In each venue, we adopted a methodological approach based on a hybrid between situational ethnomethodology, with the aim of understanding 'the ways in which people negotiate the social contexts in which they find themselves' (Cohen *et al.,* 2000: 25), and phenomenology, with the aim of developing a rich, descriptive account of the essential meaning and structure of the young people's lived experiences (Husserl, 1960; Moustakas, 1994). Initial open-ended interviews with community leaders in each of the seven venues were combined with informal interaction with young people, in order to build rapport and establish trust. We felt that this initial rapport-building stage was essential, given that many of the participating youths had a history of disaffection and conflict with authority.

Subsequent visits to each youth venue enabled us to implement semi-structured interviews with 40 young persons (aged 16-18 years), the majority of whom were young males.

It was recognised that recruitment from youth groups raises particular ethical issues and there was therefore a need for informed consent from all participating groups. To this end, an information leaflet was designed, which provided participants with full and relevant details of the nature, object and duration of the study in a form that was easily understood. Anonymity was maintained and the volunteers informed of this. In order to help interviewees feel more at ease we decided to interview them either in pairs or small groups. We were conscious of the potentially sensitive nature of the research and recognised the potential hazards that may emerge from this, such as young people not answering honestly and giving what they perceive as 'socially acceptable' views (NFO Social Research, 2003). To this end, we introduced the study to the young people as one that was focused on 'life in Glasgow for a young person' as well as being about sectarianism.

Two sets of interviews were conducted with each group of young people on each site, and a gap of 4 weeks divided the two sets of visits. Thereafter we also conducted interviews with senior operational Strathclyde police officers within each of the targeted communities. Interviews were transcribed and emerging codes were analysed using NVivo software. In the sections which follow, the key themes emerging from this analysis will be presented and key quotations that were seen as being representative of participants' views highlighted. In the final section, we will draw upon social capital indicators generated by recent research (Leonard and Onyx, 2004; Catts and Ozga, 2005), using these as a lens through which to explore the key themes and participant responses.

3   Emerging themes

3.1   Territorial gang culture in Glasgow

When asked to describe what life is like for a young person in Glasgow, almost all of the youth participants referred to the impact of territorial gangs. Some young people admitted that they were actively involved in gangs and described the 'buzz' that they gained from gang fighting. These participants had drifted into gangs as a source of excitement and as a remedy for boredom, and alcohol was a major stimulus for engaging in street fights. Gang membership was seen as a means of protecting your housing scheme, and many youngsters talked about a sense of confinement that arose from being unable to walk into opposing housing schemes:

> 'When you're in your own bit, you're alright. But if you step 'oot o' that an' go into somebody else's scheme then maybe you'll get attacked' (male, age 16).

Thus, invisible boundaries came into play and youngsters become trapped in housing schemes with poor living accommodation and few economic opportunities to widen their horizons (echoing previous findings by Patrick, 1973). In some cases, where young people had experienced educational failure at school followed by unemployment, the only thing they felt they had left was to go out on a Friday night and defend their housing scheme. Indeed, for some who had withdrawn from the parental influence at home, the gang appeared to provide members with what could almost be described as a surrogate family.

Some participants talked about using MSN to contact gang members from other housing schemes and challenge them to fight. One boy also revealed that 'when a fight is going to happen, everybody takes out their mobile phones to record it'. Often, these films later appeared on sites such as *Youtube.* Some youngsters talked about designing 'Bebo skins' (customised website colour schemes and layouts) associated with particular gangs, which were then used to attract new gang members. The gang was clearly seen as a vehicle for the expression of masculine aggression and power; one youth leader explained that 'if you compare it to life in the jungle, it's all about who's going to be the big gorilla ... who's going to be the top man'. As the young people's lives became more confined because of territorialism, so their sense of trust diminished; many youngsters admitted that they would

only trust the people from their own schemes, and in some cases narrowed this down to particular streets. Young people explained that the gangs they were aware of or had been associated with in the past had both Rangers and Celtic fans within them, since they were formed on the basis of geographical territory and not on a religious or football basis. One youth leader summed up the views of many when he described the territorial nature of the gangs, which occasionally drew upon sectarianism as a 'resource' for masculine aggression:

> 'It's territorial. Certainly you have certain areas which are predominantly one or the other … a lot of places around here predominantly affiliate with Rangers, Protestantism, all that kind of thing … places … identified with previous immigrants - you know Irish immigrants, they grew up with that. The Calton as well is another example, you've got all these gangs with these names but within them, they don't really separate, maybe on Old Firm day they have a bit of banter with each other, there is a bit of trouble based on football … but on a day to day basis it's definitely territorial issues' (male youth leader).

The way in which sectarian bigotry was occasionally drawn upon during a gang fight as a means of expressing masculine aggression was articulated clearly by one youth:

> 'Sometimes, if it's a Rangers fan or whatever, they might try and bring religion into it and call you "fenian bastard" or somethin' and they'll try an' get in your face about that ... if there's a couple of Rangers fans get in your face, they'll say "ya fenian scumbag" or 'ya pape bastard", an' you take the bait n' go for it.' (male, age 18)

3.2   Family, religion and masculinity

It seems that family was the biggest influence in terms of instilling sectarian values in young people (confirming earlier findings from Northern Ireland by Kelly, 2002; Sinclair *et al.,* 2004). It was common for youngsters to talk about the way in which their fathers or older brothers had encouraged them to support the same football team as they did and had taught them the words to sectarian songs. The young people generally felt that religion was an issue that was of very little importance to them, thus adding weight to earlier findings about the increasing secularisation in Glasgow (NFO Social Research, 2003). The one exception to this view was a 16-year-old female participant who had been brought up in Belfast and then moved to Glasgow when she was aged nine, and who expressed deeply engrained hatred towards Protestants that had clearly stemmed from her upbringing. Further, while most youth leaders agreed that young people did not tend to place much importance on religion, two

female participants felt that some youngsters seemed able to discuss the history of the religious divide in Scotland in some depth.

Some young people felt that sectarian bigotry was most prevalent in older men, many of whom were searching for excitement and identity and a replacement for the 'buzz' they had experienced from being part of the gang culture in their youth:

> 'When they've been young boys they've been gang fightin'. And now they canny be in that gang 'cos they're that old so they want somethin' else to dae so they come here 'cos they know they'll be fightin' with guys their own age. And they've got a reason to fight' (male, age 16)

There was, indeed, a common feeling among the youth leaders interviewed that sectarianism was strongly associated with a form of male tribalism, providing men with a sense of identity, camaraderie and a means of expressing masculine aggression (Murray, 2000). Two female youth leaders felt that football-related discussions provided a context for learning about 'religious divides', an issue that girls seem less informed about. They also felt that support for Rangers and Celtic is often passed on from father to son since some fathers are keen to ensure that their sons develop a 'hard man' image and avoid the possibility of becoming homosexual.

3.3 Segregation, Orange Walks and racism

The existence of faith schools in the west of Scotland was seen by some as being a contributing factor, although opinions on this issue were divided (echoing earlier findings by NFO Social Research, 2003). One youth leader described his experiences of being at a Catholic school and the territorial issues that emerged because of it:

> 'I think for me it was an issue when I was younger. I remember when I was at primary school I went to a Catholic primary school and there was a non-denominational but we called it a 'Proddy' school and I remember ... we used to be like kind of scared of meeting them, bumping into them at lunchtime because they were Protestants but nothing that I remember ever happened ...' (male youth leader)

Some youths admitted that they had been encouraged to become members of the Orange Lodge from a young age. Both youth leaders and the youngsters themselves described the sight of drink-fuelled brawls, songs accompanied by drums and flutes and cries of 'fuck the

Pope!' that are often a part of the Orange Walks in Glasgow. Several youths also described specific violent incidents that they had witnessed while participating in the Orange Walks. However, although many youths admitted that sectarianism continued to be kept alive through family values, football and organisations such as the Orange Lodge, others felt that the media portrayed the problem as being worse than it really is (reflecting earlier research by NFO Social Research, 2003; Sinclair *et al.,* 2004). Some youth leaders felt that racism had become more of an issue than sectarianism, in light of the influx of asylum seekers, refugees and Eastern Europeans to Scotland in recent years. Indeed, responses from several groups of youngsters suggested that racist attitudes had escalated and support for the BNP party had grown in light of recent terrorist issues:

> 'It was Catholics/Protestants, but see Muslims … see nowadays I would just love to do one of them somethin' awful … what are they called, Iraqis and Afghanistans an' people …' (male, age 16).

> 'Half of them shouldny be here' (male, age 16).

> 'Nae wonder we don't like them though when they come in and try and bomb Glasgow airport an' all that' (male, age 16).

> 'Aye, I'd vote … so I can get just white people in the scheme. Vote BNP' (male, age 16).

3.4   Football culture and the Old Firm

Football culture was seen as being extremely influential throughout Glasgow and the 'Old Firm' rivalry was strongly linked to the conflicts in Northern Ireland (confirming earlier evidence from Murray, 2000, 2003; NFO Social Research, 2003; McMenemy *et al.,* 2005; Moorehouse, 2006). While many youths and youth leaders talked about the new initiatives that the clubs had introduced to combat the issues, they also indicated that there may be some reluctance on the part of the two clubs to completely depart from their 'traditions':

> '… the traditions are tied down with the early days, Celtic were a Catholic side and Rangers were the protestant side and it's trying to break down those barriers without losing your identity … it's trying to hang on to traditions at the same time as trying to stamp out that … a social problem' (male youth leader).

The young people talked about the hidden territories that exist in Glasgow in terms of

football, adding weight to earlier findings that suggest that a sizeable minority of Glaswegians may avoid particular areas of the city due to their religion or their football affiliation (NFO, 2003). Some youngsters talked about the fact that if they wore a Rangers or Celtic top in certain areas of the city they might get attacked. Others felt that they would not feel safe wearing a Rangers or Celtic top at all, regardless of where they were in Glasgow. Some youths had experienced name-calling where opposing fans harassed them, even although they were not wearing any football colours:

> 'The last time we went down we hadn't Rangers tops on and we were just walking about there and they were shouting 'aye, you couple of Huns' and a' that because we were walking about, it was a Celtic versus Motherwell game, and I think Celtic just lost one nil so we were walking about and we were getting all sorts, just shouting out windows' (male, age 17).

Three groups of young people talked about the flags associated with both sides of the Old Firm and were aware of Rangers pubs in Glasgow which were adorned with Union Jacks and Celtic pubs which displayed the tri-colour. The issue of territory was prominent in discussions with young people; in some cases, youngsters had witnessed fights breaking out when fans from rival pubs met in the street and had heard verbal abuse when rival supporters' buses drove past certain pubs. In other cases, youngsters had heard of people being attacked because they had gone in to a pub wearing the wrong colours.

Some young people talked about footballers as being role models, but several also recognised that their behaviour can contribute towards sectarianism in society. Most felt that football was a source of intense rivalry but not a source of violence and aggression, although many admitted to being what they described as a '90 minute bigot'. Most felt that a person's football affiliation would not provide a barrier to the forming of friendships (in contrast to findings in Northern Ireland, in Sinclair *et al.,* 2004). They talked about the fact that, even although there may be hatred between rival fans on match days, most of them tended to go back to school or work the next day and forget about the issues. However, there was a realisation that some fans took things too far:

> 'Well, put it this way – if Rangers were to beat Celtic, some of the Celtic fans would .. I'm not gonna lie, a lot of them would be ragin' but there's a lot of fruitcakes out there would try and fight aboot it because they would say, "you don't deserve to win"' (male, age 16).

3.5   Sectarian 'banter' and online forums

The theme of 'banter' was an extremely common one which recurred frequently throughout the interviews with young people. Two boys, who were both Celtic supporters, talked about the fact that they acquired the 'bragging rights' following Celtic's recent victories in successive Old Firm games in the spring of 2008, which allowed them to have a joke with their Rangers supporting mates and to tease them about their team's performance. Another boy explained that he felt that the best part of a *Rangers v. Celtic* game was the 'banter' afterwards with fans of the opposing team, while several talked about this type of humour being a common feature within territorial gangs in Glasgow, most of whom had mixed religious membership.

Two boys described the mood-enhancing effect associated with the singing of sectarian songs which are directed at opposing fans, and also the fact that they could then 'have a laugh with them about it afterwards'. This builds on earlier findings by NFO Social Research (2003) from an adult survey, which suggested that sectarianism in Glasgow was most commonly observed through jokes between friends and by using sectarian terms to describe people. However, it was recognised that alcohol could tip the balance and allow this type of friendly rivalry to get out of hand. All youth leaders stated that they had not seen any sectarian-related incidents among the young people with whom they worked although they did talk about 'banter' such as youngsters calling each other 'huns' and 'tims', which seemed to be acceptable practice among youngsters. However several youth workers talked about the limited understanding that youngsters seemed to have about these names and felt that this type of language had become normalised:

> 'Certainly what I've found in these projects it comes into it in an ignorant way, they don't know what they're saying half the time. You hear these terms, you hear these words and quite often they don't even know what they mean. They think they do. They don't know what a Fenian is, they don't know what it is to be Orange ... It's just words, they regurgitate it and repeat it and then not only that, it's emphasised when they go to school or maybe in their own wee group it's like they hear them and repeat them amongst each other so they start to outdo each other as well. It's kind of fertile ground for that behaviour if it's not challenged' (male youth leader)

One youth who was an ardent Celtic supporter did admit that she tended to receive e-mails from friends which were anti-Protestant in nature, while others talked creating 'Bebo skins'

associated with both sides of the Old Firm and the plethora of internet sites such as *Follow Follow* and *Celtic Mad*. Earlier research has suggested that the threads posted on discussion boards on these websites can be extremely sectarian in nature, and may even be regarded as 'hate speech' which in itself can lead to 'hate crime' (McMenemy *et al.,* 2005).

3.6 Sectarian incidents and educational initiatives

Several 16-year-old youths had heard about the occasional sectarian-related stabbing taking place in their housing schemes, while others had witnessed vandalism or graffiti in their local area following Old Firm games. Many talked about hearing or participating in sectarian songs on match days and were quick to name songs such as *The Sash, The Rifles of the IRA, The Hills of Free Derry* and *Dying Rebel.* However, none of the participants were able to articulate the true meaning of the songs' lyrics.

Participants were able to name hotspot areas where sectarian flashpoints were most likely to occur. These included the Glasgow underground, where sectarian singing was still common, and football supporters' buses where drunken parties and singing was common, which could occasionally lead to violence. Two youth leaders described the bigotry that they experienced from Glasgow taxi drivers, who tended to ask you which team you support and on some occasions refused to let you in the taxi if you have the wrong colour of scarf on.

In terms of crime, police from several parts of the city talked about the low numbers of sectarian-related incidents which are actually reported. One officer from the southwest of Glasgow described the prevalence of incidents related to away supporters, particularly from Northern Ireland. One group of youths who had recently visited Northern Ireland as part of a peer-tutoring project had been shocked at the impact of the territoriality that accompanies sectarian values there. Perhaps the most graphic accounts of sectarian-related incidents in Glasgow were those that came from a group of asylum seekers who were in our sample. These young men, who had come over to Glasgow eight years ago from Kosovo, Labanon and Dubai, were regular witnesses to sectarian crime in their housing schemes:

> 'Rangers and Celtic played and Celtic won ... and like if you go round the block of the stadium you see people lying down on the ground bottled and there's just like a lot of ambulance cars around, the police' (male asylum seeker, age 17).

'On the street, every day shouting you know it wakes you up because they are coming back from the football match quite late and you're sleeping and you know, you hear somebody shouting in pain or something quite unpleasant' (male asylum seekers, age 16).

In spite of these descriptions, the overwhelming feeling among all of the participants was that, if they witnessed a sectarian-related crime or serious incident, they would tend to walk away rather than intervene or challenge the behaviour (echoing similar reactions from young people in Northern Ireland: Sinclair *et al.,* 2004). There was limited evidence to suggest that young people had had any input on sectarianism issues aside from the initiatives run by the 'Old Firm', such as the '*Old Firm Alliance'*. Indeed, none of the youth participants were able to name any input they had had from teachers at school (echoing earlier findings by Sinclair *et al.,* 2004).

4   Discussion of findings

There can be no doubt that much of the sectarian tension in Scotland has been associated with the rivalry between the two sides of the 'Old Firm' and the historical conflicts linked with Northern Ireland. While in recent years both Rangers and Celtic FC have taken unprecedented steps towards eradicating sectarianism from their grounds, many of their traditional associations with unionists and loyalists remain (Murray, 2003; Reilly, 2000; Walker, 2001; Moorehouse, 2006). In a wider sense, Scotland is considered by some to suffer from a deeply enduring sectarian divide (Bradley, 2000; Finn, 2000; MacMillan, 2000; Reilly, 2000) which manifests itself in anti-Catholic prejudice and bigotry, while others argue that it is limited to football rivalry (Bruce *et al.,* 2004).

In this paper, we have presented evidence from a small-scale qualitative study into young people's views on life in Glasgow and the way in which sectarianism impacts upon them. The data we have uncovered now enables us to make some tentative conclusions about the extent to which these young people accumulate social capital and engage in social action related to a sectarian habitus (Bourdieu, 1983). We have identified that social capital theory has at its heart the need for networking and creating social connections as a means of facilitating collective agency (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1990; Baron *et al.*, 2000; Field, 2003; AERS, 2004; Leonard and Onyx, 2004). It is clear from the data that territorial issues were at the forefront of the young participants' minds. Youngsters sought out gang culture as a means of excitement and also as a means of protection. While membership of gangs created some opportunities for social networking within Glasgow's housing schemes, they also resulted in a sense of confinement and a sense of social distance from other communities (Leonard and Onyx, 2004). Networking with other gangs took place via the internet, but this was usually in the search for conflict or for creating denser layers of 'bonding' social capital and ingroup identity (Putnam, 2000; Leonard and Onyx, 2004). Youngsters often felt trapped in the confinement of their housing schemes and had a feeling of exclusion that stemmed from a history of conflict with authority (such as teachers and the police). Participants explained that the conflict between rival housing schemes meant that Rangers and Celtic supporters often came together to form friendships and associations in Glasgow. However, although the activity associated with gangs was not seen as sectarian in terms of promoting open religious bigotry, 'flashpoints' resulted in this type of bigotry occasionally being used as a 'resource'

for the expression of masculine aggression, particularly where alcohol was involved and in the immediate aftermath of an 'Old Firm' game.

The youth participants were extremely influenced by football culture and the 'Old Firm' rivalry, which often fostered memories of the historical conflict linked to Northern Ireland. Football-related sectarianism was seen to be related to family influence, the continuing 'traditions' associated with the 'Old Firm' and a tendency towards male tribalism and machismo. There was a general feeling among the youth participants that sectarian values were more prominent among the current generation of adults (particularly men) in Glasgow. They felt that adults tended to seek the excitement of football tribalism more than they would, but it was evident that these adults also encouraged their children (and boys in particular) to support certain teams, wear certain colours and sing certain songs as a means of encouraging a heterosexual male identity. Thus, there was evidence to suggest that young people were subject to a form of bonding social capital which put pressure on them to conform to certain cultural expectations, which were defined by narrow views of masculinity and sexuality.

The young people did not appear to have any interest in religion, and yet were still conscious of issues related to religious division through family and football influences (Catts and Ozga, 2005). Participation in Orange Walks and the singing of sectarian songs appeared popular among some youngsters and there was some evidence to suggest that football bigotry was so much a part of life in Glasgow that it often went unnoticed. The young people often viewed sectarian humour as harmless 'banter', and did not consider the impact of online sectarianism or the real meaning of the sectarian language they used. This illustrates that the use of sectarian language and humour may have become so deeply assimilated into these young people's social identity (Schuller *et al.,* 2000) that it had become normalised (Money, 2008). Thus, elements of a sectarian habitus have been adopted by these young people through internalizing a particular set of cultural social structures without always being aware of it (Schuller *et al.,* 2000).

Although participants talked about the lack of overt religious territoriality in Glasgow there were, in fact, *hidden* territories which dictated where young people could or could not go while wearing particular football colours. This form of territoriality was reminiscent of the restricted social space described by youngsters in Northern Ireland (Kelly, 2002; Sinclair *et al.,* 2004). Although it was not as sharply defined in Glasgow as it tends to be in Northern

Ireland, the associated feelings of fear undoubtedly restricted young people's potential for networking, limited their sense of trust and encouraged passive, as opposed to agentic, identities (Leonard and Onyx, 2004). Leonard and Onyx (2004) argues that factionalism can limit the deployment of social capital, where small, inward-looking networks emerge within the same community. It seems that religious and football-related factions did occasionally emerge within the territorial gangs (which, of themselves represented a form of factionalism), and that this led to occasional episodes of sectarian-related aggression, violence and destruction. The use of online platforms was a breeding ground for encouraging these factions and their associated hate repertoires. Added to this, the evidence also suggested that racist attitudes were prominent among the sample population, further threatening the accumulation of 'bridging' social capital (Putnam, 2000).

Participants from Glasgow's white indigenous population described some isolated occurrences of sectarian abuse and bigotry that they had witnessed in their own housing schemes and beyond. However, the small number of asylum seekers in our sample noticed sectarian-related crime and bigotry more than those who were native to the city. This suggests that sectarian language, crime and bigotry may have become so normalised in people's minds that it takes a newcomer to really notice that it is there at all.

5   Conclusions and recommendations

It has been argued that, in order to develop a high social capital society, one must first develop a more tolerant society and that this involves 'a shift from bonding to bridging networks' (Leonard and Onyx, 2004: 58). The evidence from this study suggests that young people's lives in Glasgow's poorest housing schemes are constrained by territoriality and internalised sectarian values, and that this limits their potential for 'bridging' social capital (Putnam, 2000). It therefore confirms earlier reports about the impact of gang culture (Chiesa, 2008; Forrest, 2008; Leask, 2008) and about the remaining impact of sectarian bigotry in Glasgow (Scottish Executive, 2006).

One recommendation from this research is that anti-sectarian policies and initiatives need to be put back on the political agenda in Scotland. In addition, participants revealed that they had had very little anti-sectarian input in school and this suggests that teachers need to be more proactive at putting sectarianism on the classroom agenda, particularly since the new *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) in Scotland has the teaching of controversial issues, the exploration of social values and the fostering of active participation at its core (Curriculum Review Group, 2004).

However, this study was a small-scale one and therefore no generalisations can therefore be made in relation to urban youth culture and the impact of sectarianism in the west of Scotland. Further research, based on larger samples of young people in Scotland, is needed in order to explore these areas in more depth. It is hoped that this paper might act as a stimulus for such research.

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