An Investigation into the Effect of Vicarious Contact on Attitudes and Intended Friendship Behaviour towards Irish Travellers and Perceived Group Norms about Cross-Group Friendships among Settled Irish Children in the Republic of Ireland.

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to test the effectiveness of vicarious contact (the observation of an interaction between ingroup and outgroup members) on primary school children's attitudes and intended friendship behaviour towards Traveller Irish children along with perceived group norms about the acceptability of intergroup friendship among settled children. Primary school children aged between 8 and 12 in the Republic of Ireland participated in a 3 week intervention where they read 3 stories (over 6 sessions) featuring settled Irish and Traveller Irish children in friendship contexts. Prior to the intervention participants completed measures of intergroup attitudes, intended friendship and perceived norms about intergroup friendship. Approximately 1 week after the last story session they were tested on the same measures. Results showed that those taking part in the intervention, compared to participants in the control group, revealed more positive friendship intentions towards Travellers. Those in the treatment group also expressed that more settled and Traveller children would approve of intergroup friendships. There was no significant effect of intervention on attitudes towards Travellers. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed.

Declaration

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

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STATEMENT 1 This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Post-Qualification Doctorate in Educational Psychology.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The introduction begins with an amplification of the dissertation title. The mission statement of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in the Republic of Ireland is provided and the role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) outlined. This is followed by a brief description of one of the most marginalised social groups in Ireland namely the Traveller community. Research documenting the educational experiences of Irish Travellers is reported along with an analysis of evidence of prejudice and discrimination towards this minority group. The introduction concludes with a rationale for reviewing a) psychological theories of prejudice and b) theoretically informed interventions to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations with Travellers in schools. The relevance of the topic for educational psychology and for the role of the Educational Psychologist in particular is demonstrated.

1.1 Amplification of the title

Contact between different groups has long been considered one of the most effective strategies to improve intergroup relationships (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Wright, 2009). The creation of more favourable relationships is especially relevant for Irish Travellers who (as is demonstrated below) experience high levels of oppression and discrimination in the Republic of Ireland (Harmon, 2015; Holland, 2015; MacGreil, 2010; McGaughey, 2011). According to Gordon Allport's *Contact Hypothesis* (Allport, 1954) a critical source of prejudice is segregation or contact characterised by low levels of interdependence and unequal status sanctioned by authority. Based on this conceptualisation Allport specified the optimal conditions under which contact is most likely to reduce prejudice. Since that time over 50 years of research has enhanced our understanding of the optimal conditions for contact and the psychological processes that mediate the relationship between direct contact and intergroup attitudes (Brown and Hewstone, 2005). However, a rapidly growing research literature has shown that indirect forms of cross-group contact (contact strategies that do not involve actual interaction with a member of the other group) also have the potential to create more positive relations between social groups (Vezzali, Hewstone, Capozza, Giovannini and Wolfer, 2014). For example, knowing about in-group members having out-group friends (extended contact: Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997) can influence attitudes about the out-group. More recently, the concepts of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) have been applied to the field of intergroup contact research and the role of vicarious contact (observing in-group members having successful cross-group contact) as a tool to improve intergroup relations has been examined. Viewing (as opposed to merely knowing about) a positive interaction between an in-group member and an out-group member constitutes vicarious intergroup contact (Mazziotta, Mummendey and Wright, 2011) and experiments using vicarious contact have demonstrated causal effects for prejudice reduction on cognitive, affective and behavioural measures (Cameron, Rutland, Hossain and Petley, 2011; Mazziotta et al., 2011; Vezzali, Stathi, and Giovannini, 2012). Hence, the current study investigates the effects of vicarious contact on attitudes and intended friendship behaviour towards Irish Travellers along with its impact on perceived group norms about cross group friendships among settled Irish children in the Republic of Ireland.

1.2 The Mission of the National Educational Psychological Service

Issues such as: pupil engagement, achievement, attendance, and well-being concern educators (Briesch, Hagermoser Sanetti, and Briesch, 2010; Department of Education and Skills, 2017, Gottfried, 2010; Harbour, Evanovich, Sweigart and Hughes, 2015). According to the mission statement of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in Ireland, their objective is to support the personal, social, and educational development of all children through the application of psychological theory and practice in education (NEPS, no date). Therefore, by such means, Educational Psychologists have an important role in enabling and empowering key stakeholders to optimise the engagement, achievement and well-being of all children. However, such factors have often been reported as problematic among members of the Traveller community (All Ireland Traveller Health Study (AITHS) 2010; Byrne and Smith, 2010; Darmody, Smith and McCoy, 2008; Department of Education and Science, 2005; Education and Social Research Institute (ESRI), 2012; Weir, Archer, Gilleece and O'Flaherty, 2011).

1.3 The Traveller Community

1.3.1 Who are the Travellers?

The Traveller community are a minority group indigenous to the island of Ireland. They have a shared history, language, traditions and culture. However, up until March 2017 the Irish State did not recognise Travellers as a minority ethnic group. Although nomadism was an integral part of Traveller culture, many Travellers are no longer nomadic either by choice or due to the lack of support for and criminalisation of nomadism (Harmon, 2015). According to the *All Ireland Traveller Health Study* (AITHS) there are approximately 36,000 Travellers living in Ireland (AITHS, 2010). This number accounts for less than 1% of the population and in 2011 there were 14,245 Traveller children in Ireland (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2012).

1.3.2 Educational attainment of Travellers

As suggested above, the educational attainment of Travellers is often cited as a serious concern. In 2005 the Department of Education and Science (DES) published their report on the *Survey of Traveller Education Provision*. Thirty primary and six post-primary schools took part in the study. According to the findings, Traveller children perform significantly lower than their settled peers in both reading and mathematics. Using standardised reading test data for 369 pupils it was calculated that more than two thirds of pupils achieved scores that were at or below the 20th percentile with 47.5% scoring below the 10th percentile (DES, 2005). Similarly, standardised test data were provided for 343 pupils in mathematics. Almost two thirds of the pupils achieved scores that were at or below the 20th percentile and only 14% achieved scores above the 40th percentile (DES, 2005). A related concern is that no test results in English reading were available to researchers for almost a quarter of Traveller pupils and for almost 30% in mathematics. Comments such as "incomplete", "absent" and "unable to do" were returned by a number of schools in the study as an explanation of why pupils' results were not provided (DES, 2005).

The report on the first phase of the evaluation of Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) (Weir et al., 2011) tells a similar story. The authors report a significant difference in attainment in reading and mathematics between Traveller children and their settled peers. Furthermore, the

magnitude of the difference between the scores of the two groups is reported to be large in every case.

Further evidence of low attainment is apparent in the relatively high incidence of special educational needs among Traveller pupils. In the general population the incidence of special educational needs is thought to be in the 4-6% range depending on the categories and the definitions used (DES, 2005). However, according to DES (2005) just over 20% (n=104) of Traveller pupils were assessed by an Educational Psychologist or other clinician as having special educational needs. Moreover, the proportion of Traveller pupils assessed as having a general learning disability was six to seven times greater than the expected occurrence for this disability in the whole population (DES, 2005). However one could argue that the use of culturally inappropriate psychological tests might explain the relatively high incidence in the latter category. It is possible that the vocabulary used in the tests was unfamiliar to Traveller children and in some tests responses are graded at different levels by quality or degree of precision or approximation to model responses. Traveller children might not have been aware of the need for precision in responding (DES, 2005).

1.3.3 School attendance and Travellers

The educational attainment statistics suggest that Travellers have difficulty engaging with and benefiting from the education system. Indeed, the data on attendance reveal high levels of absenteeism among Traveller pupils. For Traveller children who are housed the absentee rates represent an average of 32 school days every year or more than six weeks of schooling. For children living in unofficial halting sites the attendance levels mean that on average they are absent from school for 57 days or more than 11 weeks (DES, 2005). Similarly, in their study, Darmody, Smith and McCoy (2008) report that young people from the Traveller community had the highest truancy rates of all the social groups.

1.3.4 Early school leaving and Travellers

The available evidence suggests that the Traveller community become increasingly alienated and disengaged from the education system as they get older. Only 9% of Traveller children complete secondary education in comparison with 86% of the general population (Watson, Kenny & McGinnity, 2017). Sixty three per cent of Traveller children have completed their formal education by the age of 16 and currently less than 1% of Travellers go on to third level education (Watson et al., 2017). Leaving school early has negative implications for individuals' employment prospects, employment quality and broader social outcomes (Byrne and Smith, 2010). With respect to Travellers, several barriers to school completion have been identified. Some themes that emerged during focus groups and interviews included discrimination by teachers, bullying and name calling, peer pressure, feeling isolated, and differences between the social and family lives of Traveller and settled children (Byrne and Smith, 2010).

1.3.5 Well-being of Travellers

The identified barriers to school engagement and completion (such as discrimination, bullying, name calling and feelings of isolation) have potentially pernicious consequences for Travellers' mental health and well-being too. It is concerning that the suicide rate in male Travellers is 6.6 times higher than the general population (AITHS, 2010). There are also increasing rates of substance abuse among

Traveller youth (Van Hout, 2009). Furthermore, alcohol use has been identified by Travellers as a coping mechanism to deal with (among other things) increasing fragmentation of their culture and experiences of discrimination (Van Hout, 2010). Indeed, as detailed in the paragraphs below, themes of prejudice and discrimination are prevalent in several studies chronicling attitudes towards the Traveller community as well as in studies examining Travellers' perspectives and experiences of education and the wider society

1.3.6 Attitudes towards Travellers

A number of studies have explored attitudes towards Travellers among primary and post-primary school pupils. In general Travellers are described in negative terms. O'Keefe and O'Connor (2001) found frequent references to crime, drunkenness, dirt and squalor and begging. In addition, they found that the number of negative qualities associated with Travellers far exceeded the positive ones. Travellers tend to be perceived as different and differences in lifestyle, dress and modes of speech were often used as the basis for name calling (Devine, Kenny, and McNeela, 2004). Similarly, Travellers seem to be considered unacceptable to the majority in part because of their apparent lack of willingness to assimilate (Lodge and Lynch, 2004). Most respondents in the latter study felt that Travellers would not fit in at their school and almost all agreed that having Travellers in the school would make life difficult for teachers and pupils. Travellers tended to be blamed for social ills such as stealing cars, violence, vandalism and cruelty to animals (O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001). Interestingly, while children often condemned racial name calling, name calling of Travellers was never spoken of in critical terms (Devine et al., 2004). Similarly, responses to attitude statements demonstrated much higher levels of negative stereotyping and rejection for Travellers than for other ethnic minorities. Students expressed fear, resentment, and mockery (Lodge and Lynch, 2004) patronising pity and moral superiority (O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001) and connecting with a Traveller was thought to result in social rejection (Lodge and Lynch, 2004). However, on a more positive note, those with previous or ongoing contact with Travellers (as neighbours or primary school friends) expressed more positive views (O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001; Lodge and Lynch, 2004).

More recently, a large quantitative study attempted to overcome the limitations of small qualitative studies investigating attitudes towards ethnic groups. Tormey and Gleeson (2012) examined the attitudes of nearly 5,000 post-primary students towards Travellers and three other minorities. A sample of 120 schools (out of 743) was selected in order to ensure a representative sample of students. 119 schools participated in the study and classes within the school were selected at random. Students completed a scale to measure their reported social distance to each minority group. The authors found that negative attitudes were most prevalent towards members of the Traveller community with 26% of respondents expressing very high levels of social distance from Travellers. This means for example that these post-primary students agreed with the statement 'I would prefer if all Travellers left the country'. Tormey and Gleeson (2012) wonder whether respondents underreported social distance towards other minorities due to social desirability concerns which would make the findings with respect to Travellers even more shocking because a) their actual levels of social distance to members of the Traveller community may be even higher or b) they have no difficulty reporting levels of social distance from Travellers because negative attitudes towards Travellers are regarded as socially acceptable. Indeed research by Devine, Kenny and McNeela (2008) lends support for the latter hypothesis as children in their study did not consider it racist to call Travellers names.

In light of the negativity towards Travellers it is unsurprising that some Traveller children expressed reluctance to let others know their ethnic identity for fear of ostracisation (Devine et al., 2004). Such reluctance is understandable when one considers their reported experiences. Sixty two per cent of Travellers felt they had been discriminated against in school (AITHS, 2010) and in 2012 *The State of the Nations Report* found that when compared to majority group children, Traveller children were more likely to report that they were bullied at school (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2012). Travellers participating in focus groups and interviews for *The Response to Ireland's Third and Fourth Report on the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination* (McGaughey, 2011) talked about their experiences of education and that of their children and grandchildren. They described discrimination by teachers, bullying and name calling, and feeling isolated.

Oppression of Travellers doesn't appear to be limited to educational contexts. Comments from Traveller children, in Devine and colleagues' (2004) study, indicated that they were viewed with disdain by members of the public and refused entry to shops and pubs. Similarly, according to the *All Ireland Traveller Health Study* approximately 50% of all travellers reported discrimination in a range of daily activities (AITHS 2010).

MacGreil has been documenting attitudes towards the Traveller community (and other groups) since the 1970s. Using an adapted version of the *Bogardus Social Distance Scale* (Bogardus, 1925) he measures intergroup attitudes by asking individuals to indicate the degree to which they are prepared to admit members of listed categories. The levels of closeness range from welcoming into the family as a member to debarring or deporting them from Ireland. According to MacGreil (2010) Travellers' relative ranking remains towards the very bottom of the social distance scale. Most people do not want to settle near or socialise with Travellers. For example, 79.6% of those surveyed responded that they would be reluctant to buy a house next door to a Traveller (MacGreil, 2010). This attitude was further highlighted following a tragic event in October 2015 when 10 Travellers lost their lives during a fire at an overcrowded halting site in south Dublin. Due to strong opposition from local residents, the council had to abandon plans to provide emergency accommodation for the survivors in said residents' neighbourhood. Reported concerns related to: the unsuitability of the proposed site; the fear that the accommodation would not be temporary; and perceptions of anti-social behaviour and criminality among the Traveller community (Holland, 2015a). Moreover, there was a lot of sympathy for the residents' objections. According to an Irish Times online poll, when asked if residents were correct to protest, 72% of 4,800 readers said they were (Holland, 2015b, McGreevy, 2015).

1.3.7 Traveller accommodation and implications for physical and mental health

In tandem with the widespread unwillingness to live near Travellers, the fire tragedy highlighted issues surrounding the adequacy of Traveller accommodation. A number of surveys and reports have outlined the unacceptability of dwellings in which many Travellers reside. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) revealed that 866 Travellers who were living in mobile or temporary accommodation had no sewerage facilities in 2011 and 566 had no piped water source (CSO, 2012). The AITHS (2010) listed several factors undermining the health and safety of significant numbers of Traveller families in group housing or sites such as lack of footpaths, public lighting, fire hydrants and safe play areas. Problems such as rats, and being too close to a main road were also reported (AITHS, 2010).

Unsurprisingly, the AITHS (2010) found that living conditions impacted on Travellers' mental health as well as their physical health.

There are a number of factors affecting the accommodation crisis faced by Travellers. In 2002, the Housing (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act (2002) criminalised nomadism which had previously been a civil offence. In conjunction with criminalisation of nomadism there has been a lack of provision of transient halting sites (McGaughey, 2011). This is resulting in suppression of nomadism a key part of Traveller culture. It has also meant that evictions of Traveller families who have nowhere else to go still occur. Although the 1998 Traveller Accommodation Act placed an obligation on local authorities to produce accommodation plans covering a fixed period, the authorities failed to provide adequate accommodation. Moreover, significant amounts of money allocated to Traveller accommodation were unspent (Harvey, 2013, as cited in Harmon, 2015).

Due to the shortage of culturally appropriate housing and transient accommodation, many Traveller families are forced to move into private (and expensive) rented accommodation. In addition to the financial cost, this is problematic for a number of reasons. According to Harmon (2015) discriminatory attitudes on the part of the general population mean that Travellers are often forced to live in areas where the local community is hostile towards them. Harmon argues that in this situation Travellers are not only isolated within the community but also from the support network of their extended family and opportunities for intergenerational learning.

1.3.8 Media representation of Travellers

Given the isolation experienced by Travellers, few settled people have personal contact with the Traveller community. Therefore, as Bhreathnach (1988) highlights, the print media represents the most important source of regular information about Travellers. The media is a prime socialising agent and thus plays a significant part in constructing representations of various groups in society (Breen and Devereux, 2003). Unfortunately, historically, Travellers have been frequently described in negative terms and portrayed in situations of conflict and engaging in anti-social behaviour. According to Bhreathnach's analysis, 15% of the total Traveller representation in articles (published in *The Irish Times* in the 1990s) involved feuding and internecine strife. She also cites examples of decontextualisation and sensationalised violence. Similarly, Breen and Devereux (2003) analysed media coverage of Travellers using newspaper headlines from *The Irish Times* with the term 'Traveller' between January 1996 and March 2003. They found that Travellers were: presented as a source of difficulty in schools; problematic about trespass; and a source of negative comment made by politicians. Disturbingly, the headlines focused on Travellers per se rather than on issues of equality or the lack of facilities for Travellers.

Further evidence of negative media commentary is discussed by Vazquez de la Torre Castillo (2012). Drawing on information on racist incidents collated by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism, Vazquez de la Torre Castillo concludes that remarks made on radio and published in national and local newspapers expound popular stereotypes about Travellers and create a negative image of their community. She cites several assertions made by local politicians that could lead to a deepening of negative stereotypes and a hardening of the public's attitude towards Travellers. Similarly, O'Connell (2013) quotes two local politicians who suggested that Travellers should live in isolation and highlights that neither man was asked to resign or withdraw their comments. O'Connell also refers to a letter written by the then Minister for the Environment in

2012 assuring members of his constituency that a Traveller family would not be moved into their area and a district court judge who described Travellers as "Neanderthal men… living by the law of the jungle". According to O'Connell (2013) neither person apologised for their comments.

Negative public discourse about Travellers was also apparent following the fire tragedy in October 2015. As previously discussed, residents opposed the relocation of Travellers to their neighbourhood. Concerns of anti-social behaviour and criminality among the Traveller community were among the reasons cited for their objections (Holland, 2015). Similarly, according to one 2007 survey, 54% of respondents agreed with the statement that Travellers are more involved in crime than the settled community, (Republic of Ireland, 2007).

Along with more traditional media, the advent of social media has provided another forum for constructing and perpetuating representations of various social groups. The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) collated information on racist incidents prior to its closure at the end of 2008. In the January to June 2008 report it confirmed that racism on the internet remains a significant issue (NCCRI, 2008). According to McGaughey (2011), Facebook (a social networking website on the internet) was used to incite hatred against Travellers. McGaughey describes how one Facebook page (with 8,306 members/supporters) was entitled 'Setting Aside Monday Afternoons to Hunt Knackers' (knacker is a derogatory term for Traveller). Another page was entitled 'Promote the use of knacker babies for bait' (McGaughey, 2011).

1.3.9 Curriculum representation and Travellers

The isolation and discrimination experienced by Travellers is further compounded by the lack of representation of Traveller culture and identity in the existing curriculum at both primary and post-primary level. This invisibility is reported by teachers (Titley, 2009) and members of the Traveller community (McGaughey, 2011). Moreover, participants in the latter study lamented that any visibility of Traveller identity in schools was negative. While there have been curricular efforts to incorporate knowledge about various minority groups in Irish society (including Travellers) with a view to enhancing understanding and appreciation for diversity, Bryan (2007) cites evidence suggesting that such efforts have the opposite effect of legitimising negative reactions towards Travellers. Based on her analysis of information about Travellers in Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) textbooks (designed for use with lower secondary school students attending school in the Republic of Ireland) Bryan draws a number of conclusions. She presents several examples where Traveller oppression is represented as something that is perceived by Travellers as opposed to something that actually exists. In one textbook, discrimination against Travellers is explained as a benevolent yet misguided attitude on the part of settled people thus, Bryan contends, excusing to some extent the marginalisation and oppression to which Travellers are subjected. The same text implies that it is people in the settled community (and not State institutions) that are deemed responsible for the marginalisation and exclusion of Travellers. Bryan commends a number of resources that acknowledge the existence of institutional racism, yet bemoans the tendency to explain it in terms of the failure of a single institution or organisation. Furthermore, she argues that social institutions are positioned as passively rather than actively engaging in practices which have racist outcomes. Finally, Bryan maintains that the way in which Travellers are represented (as lawless, irresponsible and a threat to the dominant community) minimises the extent to which one might feel empathy towards them. She concludes that the nature of the knowledge being provided

about Travellers in particular "is perhaps more likely to reproduce rather than contest racist ideologies" (p.256).

There are a number of long term implications of failing to incorporate Traveller culture across the curriculum. According to Harmon (2015) lack of curriculum representation prevents students from the majority population from understanding and appreciating the contributions made by the Traveller community to wider Irish society. Secondly, Harmon (2015) maintains that it results in Traveller students feeling that their culture is neither valued nor welcomed in the education system, contributing to a lower sense of self-worth and isolation within the school community. Indeed, *The Report of the Task Force on the Travelling community* (Task Force on the Travelling Community, 1995) cites the disregard for nomadic traditions as a significant factor in discouraging young Travellers from actively engaging and continuing with schooling.

The need to validate Traveller culture within the curriculum has been recognised as a priority in State policies relating to Travellers (DES, 2002). Hence, the publication of the Intercultural Education Guidelines (IEGs) for both primary and secondary schools (by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (the body with statutory responsibility for developing school curricula in Ireland) might be considered one response to such a need. The IEGs seek to mediate and adapt the existing curricula to reflect the emergence of a more culturally diverse society in Ireland (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2005).

The teaching resource (NCCA, 2005) does include some commendable guidance for teachers in relation to selecting texts and resources. For instance, teachers are asked to consider whether or not people who have made a contribution to society are drawn from a variety of ethnic groups. Similarly, when using examples, stories or illustrations teachers are asked whether they are drawn from a variety of cultures, and if certain groups only appear when minority issues are under discussion. Another question for consideration is whether the text or resource represents white or middle class culture or lifestyle as being normal. In theory, the guidelines could improve Traveller representation in the curriculum and contribute towards validating Traveller culture. However, there are a number of problems that make such an outcome unlikely. Firstly, although the guidelines were disseminated to every teacher in the country, they are non-statutory and no in-service training was provided for teachers. Furthermore, the available evidence suggests that as a result many schools took little action to engage with the concept of intercultural education or to implement the IEG's recommendations (Kavanagh, 2013).

Even if the IEGs were successful at validating Traveller culture and improving Traveller representation in the curriculum, Bryan (2010) argues that the manner in which intercultural education is conceptualised is more likely to reproduce rather than challenge racism and racial inequality. Indeed, according to the IEGs, intercultural education is conceived as

> "education which respects, celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity in all areas of human life, It sensitises the learner to the idea that humans have naturally developed a range of different ways of life, customs and world views and that this breadth of human life enriches all of us. It is education which promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination and promotes the values upon which equality is built" (NCCA, 2005, p.3).

While such aims appear worthwhile, drawing on the work of Ghassan Hage (1998), Bryan maintains that the very notion of respecting, appreciating, valuing, and celebrating minority culture creates a divisive binary which presents the dominant Irish group as the valuer or celebrator of difference while simultaneously constructing minority groups in terms of how they benefit or enrich the host culture (2010, p.255). In doing so and contrary to the aims of interculturalism the discourse of interculturalism actually has the effect of covertly reinforcing existing asymmetric power relations.

1.3.10 State recognition of Travellers as an ethnic group

An additional and significant problem in relation to Traveller's experience of education and wider society is that up until March 2017 the government did not recognise Travellers as an ethnic group (O'Halloran and O'Regan, 2017). McVeigh (2007) outlines the implications of such 'ethnicity denial'. Firstly, there were no grounds for Travellers experiencing racism if ethnicity was denied and secondly the grounds for recognising and respecting Traveller 'cultural difference' were particularly unclear if Travellers did not meet the criteria for classification as an ethnic group. Indeed, although Travellers are protected from discrimination under some aspects of Irish law such as employment and equality status (Fay 2011) they were not protected by others. An example is the passing of the Housing Act (2002) which criminalised trespass for the first time. This impacts Travellers in a number of ways. For instance, the Government division responsible for the development of anti-racism initiatives did not include Travellers as part of its brief and so Travellers were not included in such initiatives by design. According to Harmon (2015) 'racism against Travellers is not acknowledged by the State' (p. 22). Furthermore the protection available to Travellers through anti-racism, equality and human rights infrastructure has been severely compromised by drastic cuts to these sectors. The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism was closed in 2008 and the National Action Plan against Racism was discontinued.

1.4 Rationale for current research study

Cumulatively, the evidence in relation to Travellers' experience is distressing, particularly when one considers the effects of oppression. National and international research points to several negative outcomes for victims of prejudice and discrimination. They include but are not limited to: school drop-out, addiction, suicide bullying and harassment, loneliness, unhappiness and rejection, and academic underachievement (AITHS, 2010; Kimmel & Mahler 2003; Poteat and Espelage, 2007; Van den Bergh et al., 2010; Van Hout, 2010; Whitted & Dupper, 2005).

In light of the pervasive prejudice and discrimination against Travellers from peers, teachers, media, local communities, the public, curriculum (and curriculum guidelines) textbooks, and government policies and decisions, along with the devastating effects on targets of prejudice, there is a need to take action to reduce prejudice towards Travellers and improve intergroup relations among children in schools.

1.5 Relevance of current study for the work of Educational Psychologists

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) recognises that one of the most important settings for the promotion of a young person's mental health and well-being is the school (Department of Education and Skills (DES), Health Service Executive (HSE), Department of Health (DoH), 2015a and b). Accordingly, NEPS developed guidelines (in collaboration with other key

agencies) to promote mental health and well-being in primary and post-primary schools (DES, HSE, DoH, 2015a and b). The *Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion* identify several actions to promote well-being of a school community such as developing and maintaining a safe, caring culture and climate within the school where a sense of belonging and connectedness is fostered. In addition, they recommend building positive relations between teachers and children to promote participation social interaction and prosocial behaviour. The need to foster a whole-school ethos that accepts and values diversity within the pupil and staff population is also highlighted (DES, HSE, DoH, 2015a and b). Therefore, the current study is relevant to the work of Educational Psychologists. Given that the mission of NEPS is to support the personal, social and educational development of all students through the application of psychological theory and practice in education, it is important for Educational Psychologists to understand the psychology of prejudice and to be familiar with theoretically informed and evidence based programmes to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations among students. Such programmes could promote children's sense of belonging and well-being in school. Furthermore, by prioritising and addressing Traveller children's belonging and esteem needs there could be positive consequences for their engagement, achievement and attendance too. Indeed, Weare (2000) argues that there is overwhelming evidence that students learn more effectively, including their academic subjects, if they are happy in their work, believe in themselves, their teachers and feel that school is supporting them.

1.6 Overview of chapters

While this chapter has sought to provide a contextual background for the study and to outline the research aims, chapter two provides a critical review of the academic literature pertaining to the psychology of prejudice and discrimination and educational approaches to combat bias amongst children and young people. Chapter three delineates the methodological framework including methods employed and provides a rationale for all decisions taken. It explicates data analysis procedures followed by an examination of the ethical considerations which informed the study. The study's findings are presented in chapter four and cautiously discussed in chapter five whilst acknowledging the various research limitations. Chapter six provides an overview of the study, considers its significance, its theoretical and practical implications for educational psychological theory and the practice of educational psychology, and makes suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction to Literature Review

Chapter two describes the literature search strategy, defines key terms, and delineates and justifies the limits of the review. In order to examine how educational psychologists can apply psychology to improve Travellers' experience of schooling, the literature review presents a theoretical examination of the different components and causes of prejudice. Understanding how psychological factors play a role in creating/ maintaining prejudice provides a fundamental key to reducing prejudice. For example, if prejudice derives from individuals stereotyping and making generalisations about groups, it follows that enhancing individuals' capacity to attend to individuating information could reduce such bias. Hence, the theoretical review is followed by a critical analysis of research studies investigating (psychologically informed) school based approaches to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations among children (in Irish and international contexts). The chapter concludes with an explanation of how the review has led to the proposed study.

2.1 Description of search strategy

The search strategy included locating several articles, reports, books and book chapters in electronic databases such as ERIC, PsycInfo and Google scholar. Keywords were combined with and without truncations (*) and included: prejudic*, intergroup attitude, ingroup bias, discriminat*, intervention, reduction, prevention, evaluation. The search was narrowed by combining with child*or adolescen*. Additional titles were retrieved by manually searching the reference lists of existing review articles and meta-analyses on prejudice, the modification of intergroup attitudes, and on intervention programmes to reduce or prevent prejudice in children and adolescents. Similarly, reference lists corresponding to chapters on prejudice in social psychology textbooks and in previously identified primary studies were also analysed for further relevant publications.

2.2 Definition of key terms

Prior to offering a justification for areas reviewed and those not reviewed, it is necessary to define prejudice and then distinguish between prejudice and racism.

2.2.1 Definition of prejudice

Many definitions of prejudice are offered in the literature. Prejudice is variously defined as "any attitude, emotion or behaviour towards members of a group which directly or indirectly implies some negativity or antipathy toward that group" (Brown, 2011, p.7) or "the prior negative judgement of the members of a race or religion or the occupants of any other significant role, held in disregard of facts that contradict it" (Jones, 1997, p.138). According to Aronson, Wilson and Akert (2010) prejudice is an attitude and attitudes are made up cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Similarly, Beelman and Heinemann (2014) conclude in their review that negative attitudes are multi-faceted (with cognitive, emotional and behavioural components) and several different manifestations. Thus, for the purposes of the review prejudice is defined as "a hostile or negative attitude towards people in a distinguishable group based solely on their membership of a particular group" (Aronson et al., 2010, p.422). According to Aronson and colleagues the affective or emotional component of a prejudiced attitude represents both the type of emotion linked with the

attitude such as anger or warmth and the extremity of the attitude ranging from, for example, mild uneasiness to outright hostility. The cognitive component refers to the beliefs or thoughts (cognitions) that make up the attitude and the behavioural component refers to one's actions. For instance, people tend to act on their attitudes. Finally, while prejudice can be positive, the term is generally used to describe a negative bias towards others.

2.2.2 Difference between prejudice and racism

According to Jones (1997) prejudice is an individual level concept in that *people* are prejudiced but their prejudice derives from the broader socio-historical cultural matrix of their experiences and the socialisation processes that shape their attitudes, values and personalities. Those interested in prejudice study individual perceptions whilst acknowledging the contribution of larger social forces to what is observed. Racism on the other hand is defined as a powerful and destructive form of prejudice and refers to the belief that one racial category is innately superior or inferior to another (Macionis and Plummer, 2012). Those who study racism place greater emphasis on macro level forces that shape society such as policies and practices related to education, employment, health, and housing. Racism diverges from prejudice because the foci of analysis are institutional practices and cultural mechanisms (rather than individual perceptions). Finally, Jones (1997) asserts that control and power also make racism different from prejudice. For example, when control over others ability to control what happens to them is systematically organised around racial categories then the values held in racialistic thinking conspire to control for the worse the outcomes or effects of members of other racial groups (Jones, 1997).

2.3 Justification for areas reviewed/not reviewed

Given that the mission of NEPS is to support the social, educational and personal development of all children through the application of psychological theory and practice in education, the theoretical literature selected for review focuses on the psychology of prejudice. Priority is given to literature from the last 40 years that examines psychological processes implicated in the development of prejudice. Older seminal texts and studies are also included. Analysis is situated within a systems framework where the role of wider social forces in the formation of attitudes is acknowledged. Hence, literature investigating the influence of parents, peers, group norms, and social norms and contextual variables (such as group status and intergroup competition) on the development of prejudice is also included for review.

Additionally, the review includes research studies that evaluated the impact of interventions (informed by psychological theories of prejudice) on cognitive, affective or behavioural measures of prejudice. Furthermore, in order to facilitate the process of selecting a developmentally appropriate school-based programme, the review is limited to research studies conducted in educational contexts with children or young people. Research interventions that are not informed by a specific psychological theory of prejudice are excluded. For example, multi-cultural education programmes are not reviewed because they are often based on learning theory rather than theories and research specific to attitude formation and change (Aboud, 2009; Bigler, 1999).

The review does not include a theoretical discussion of the causes of racism (or inequality) or an evaluation of anti-racism initiatives. The literature on racism is vast and beyond the scope of the

dissertation to include even a summary. The interested reader is directed to Kitching and Curtin's (2012) seminal text *Addressing the concept and evidence of institutional racism in Irish education.*

However, the author acknowledges that any psychologically informed educational intervention (designed to reduce prejudice and improve intergroup relations) would need to be part of a broader effort in order to affect real and lasting progress towards a more equal and just society for all. It is not enough to change attitudes and behaviours of individuals, the institutions within which they are conducted and the society in which the participants live also require modification (Stephan and Stephan, 2005).

Indeed Smith and Neill (2005) offer some specific guidance in relation to a school improvement paradigm for greater inclusion and equality. Drawing on their work with educational practitioners in Northern Ireland in relation to peace education, they emphasise the need to engage the voices of those who have been silenced, disqualified or subjugated and to examine taken for granted discourses with regard to issues of power. For example, they suggest asking whose or what knowledge is privileged admitted as real and valuable and whose knowledge is sequestered or hidden from view? By engaging groups of teachers and educators in a collaborative mode of enquiry (where they analysed children's peace poems) they found it to be a powerful tool in challenging what they describe as the most obdurate barrier to the transformation of schooling for peace- "the culture of silence that discourages open discussion of what causes social divisions" (p.6).

As discussed in the introduction, Travellers are subject to institutional racism. This means that they are disproportionately disadvantaged by various government policies and decisions and institutional practices including the design and delivery of curriculum. Until such systemic injustices are rectified (perhaps via an approach such as that recommended by Smith and Neill, 2005) it is unlikely that outcomes in relation to education, health and well-being will improve substantially for Travellers as an ethnic group.

2.4 A note on language used to describe different social groups

Terms used to describe different social groups change over time and according to social context. For example, some social groups might be referred to as *Blacks* and *Hispanics* at one point in time in a particular context and *African Americans* and *Latinos* in another. Rather than impose a consistent label to describe certain groups, the author has adopted the language reported in the original article.

2.5 Prejudice in children

Now that prejudice has been defined as an attitude (comprising cognitive, affective and behavioural components) the next question is when prejudice becomes apparent among children. Research into children's attitudes towards ethnic diversity yields mixed findings in relation to the age at which children develop prejudice. Arguably, research from different cultures and historical periods has contributed to the observed lack of consensus regarding the age at which children typically develop intergroup bias. The use of different measuring instruments is also relevant. However, Aboud & Amato (2001) in their review assert that, regardless of the measure used, White children as young as 3 years of age show a bias in favour of Whites and prejudice towards minorities. A number of studies indicate that the bias increases with age, reaching very high levels between 5 and 6 years (Bigler & Liben, 1993; Clark, Hocevar, & Dembo, 1980; Katz & Kofkin, 1997). Nonetheless, there is evidence of

a developmental trend whereby children around 7 years of age begin to moderate their biases (Aboud, 2003; Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001). By age 7 over half of white children begin to show a significant decrease in prejudice (Bigler & Liben, 1993; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Clark et al., 1980; Doyle & Aboud, 1995).

The development of implicit attitudes, however, shows a different trajectory. Baron and Banaji (2006) assessed White children's implicit attitudes towards Blacks using a modified child friendly version of the Implicit Association Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). They measured the discrepancy between how quickly children associate their own group (Whites) versus the outgroup (Blacks) with good things and how quickly they associate the outgroup versus their own group with bad things. They found that children display implicit ingroup bias from at least age 6. Furthermore, their results indicate that although 10 year olds' explicit race attitudes became substantially less biased (compared to 6 year olds) the same magnitude of implicit race bias was observed. Similarly, Dunham, Baron, and Banaji (2006) found that implicit prejudice is relatively stable across children's development. One interpretation is that children learn the norms prohibiting the expression of negative racial attitudes so they suppress their overt expressions of these attitudes but nonetheless retain the bias and exhibit it on implicit measures.

When one investigates the pattern of intergroup bias among minority children a different picture emerges. According to Aboud & Amato (2001) like White children, those from Black, Hispanic, Native Indian, and Asian groups begin to develop ethnic attitudes around 3 years of age. Yet a review by Aboud (1988, as cited in Aboud and Amato, 2001) suggests a great deal of variability in the ethnic evaluations of Black children between 5 and 7 years. Aboud and Amato (2001) conclude that by the time minority children are between 7 and 10 years old any pro-White bias seems to have disappeared and they either no longer exhibit any clear bias or express pro-ingroup bias. Aboud and Amato attribute the greater variability in minority children's attitudes to the variable information they receive from their environment as compared to majority children who typically receive consistent information to help them form ethnic categories, preferences, and identification.

In an Irish context, the prevalence of prejudiced attitudes towards minority ethnic and minority language groups (including Travellers), asylum seekers, and children with special educational needs is evidenced among children from 7 years and upwards (Devine & Kelly, 2006; Devine, Kenny & McNeela, 2004; Lodge & Lynch, 2004; O'Keefe & O'Connor, 2001; Prunty, Dupont &McDaid, 2012; Rose and Shevlin, 2004; Tormey and Gleeson, 2012). There is also evidence of prejudice towards gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders among adolescents and young people (Maycock, Bryan, Carr, & Kitching, 2009). As suggested above, distinguishable or minority groups tend to be more likely to become victims of prejudice.

2.6 Theoretical literature: Causes of prejudice

A discussion of likely targets of prejudice and the emergence of prejudice in early childhood raises the question of the cause(s) of prejudice. A review of the vast amount of theoretical literature available on the topic indicates that prejudice is a multi-faceted and complex phenomenon that is triggered and maintained by a number of simultaneously operating forces. Factors such as the way we process and reason about social information along with environmental influences like social norms have all been implicated in the development of prejudice. Moreover, the multi-faceted nature of prejudice makes designing effective interventions to reduce prejudice problematic. The following

section includes a critical examination of psychological theories of the etiology of prejudice with particular reference to prejudice in children. Causes are discussed under the following headings: social cognition (influenced by motivational needs) and social learning mechanisms. Analysis is situated within a systems framework (acknowledging the interdependence and reciprocal influence of systems and how changes in one system influence changes in other systems).

2.6.1 Social cognition- the way we think (influenced by motivational needs)

The first explanation for what causes prejudice is that "it is the inevitable by-product of the way we process and organise information" (Aronson et al, 2010 p.424). There are several aspects of social cognition that can lead us to form negative attitudes towards particular groups. In their review, Aronson and colleagues (2010) identify a number of cognitive factors that contribute to the development of prejudice such as the tendency to categorise and group social information.

2.6.2 Social categorisation and stereotyping

Just as we make sense of the physical world by organising plants and animals into taxonomies, there is a tendency to make sense of our social world by categorising people into groups, assigning those with certain characteristics to one group and those with different characteristics to another group. Frequently, groups are organised according to gender, ethnicity and religion. Although there are endless bases on which humans can be categorised, children tend to use perceptually salient features such as race, gender, age and attractiveness as the basis for social stereotyping (Livesley & Bromley, 1973; Bigler & Liben, 2007). For instance, Giles and Heyman (2005) found that pre-schoolers used gender as the basis for social stereotyping. Children in the study were more likely to infer that a physically aggressive story character was male rather than female (Giles and Heyman, 2005).

The psychological salience of social groups is also important. Drawing on constructive theories, Bigler and Liben (2007) propose that children actively seek to determine which of the available bases for classifying people are important. They observe the characteristics along which humans are sorted (for example they notice perceptual similarities among those who live, work and socialise together) and then "infer that the social divisions they observe must have been caused by meaningful inherent differences between groups" (p.1649). Hence, a link is established between social categories and attributes (e.g traits, behaviours, roles). For example, a child might infer that people with dark skin and "foreign" accents work as cleaners and those with light skin and "Irish" accents work as teachers. Thus, negative and limiting stereotypes are born.

Gordon Allport in his seminal text *The Nature of Prejudice* described stereotypes as "exaggerated beliefs associated with a category" (1954, p. 191). Largely in line with his description, contemporary conceptualisations define a stereotype as "a generalisation about a group of people in which identical characteristics are assigned to virtually all members of the group regardless of actual variation among the members" (Aronson et al., 2010, p.423). For example, according to popular stereotypes, Irish people are drunks and eat potatoes. Allport (1954) argued that the world is too complicated for us to develop a highly differentiated attitude about everything so we take cognitive shortcuts. Later researchers support the idea that stereotypes save us the effort of putting limited processing resources into forming individual impressions (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Stangor & Duan, 1991) and as Quadflieg & Macrae (2011) eloquently summarise the position "stereotypes offer

apparent insights into the personalities and deeds of others without the cumbersome necessity of getting to know them" (p.215).

2.6.3 Stereotyping and unfair treatment

While stereotyping can simplify the process of person understanding, if it blinds us to individual differences within a group of people it can often result in unfair treatment or discrimination defined as "unjustified negative or harmful actions towards a member of a group simply because of his or her membership in that group" (Aronson et al., 2010, p.432). For example, if you are a primary school teacher in Ireland and you have the stereotypical belief that members of the Traveller community don't value education, you might be likely to spend less time in the classroom supporting a member of the Traveller community than a majority group member.

Perceived group variability is important because it appears to influence the extent to which a stereotype versus individuating information is used in making judgements about an individual (Krueger & Rothbart, 1988). As Park, Judd and Ryan (1991) explain, in everyday social interactions information about individuals can be ambiguous. Hence, there is a tendency to use information about the group stereotype to interpret the meaning of behaviour. This was demonstrated by Sagar and Schofield (1980) when they showed Black and White children a variety of ambiguously aggressive behaviours performed by Black and White stimulus figures. They found that Black and White participants rated these behaviours as more mean and threatening when the perpetrator was Black than when he was White. In short, undifferentiated thinking about outgroup members facilitates unfair generalisations and the use of stereotypes to inform social judgements.

Indeed individuals of stereotyped groups face differential treatment and discrimination in schools, courtrooms, the workplace, and the wider community (Agerström & Rooth, 2011; Blair, Judd, & Chapleau, 2004; Cemlyn et al., 2009; Maycock, Bryan, Carr, & Kitching, 2009). Furthermore, stereotypic beliefs create a social climate in which targeted individuals feel burdened and hindered by the predictable expectations of others. Negative consequences include underperformance in stereotype relevant domains such as underperformance for women in science and maths and ethnic minorities in academics (Appel, Kronberger, & Aronson, 2011; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Walton & Cohen, 2007) , reduced self-efficacy (Aronson & Inzlicht, 2004), impaired working memory and test preparation (Appel et al., 2011; Schmader & Johns, 2003) and negative health consequences (Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn, & Steele, 2001).

Developmental patterns in stereotyping have been reported in the literature although the reasons for age related changes are disputed. Specifically children's racial stereotyping appears to increase through the preschool years, peak in kindergarten or early primary school, and decline through the middle elementary school years (Doyle, Beaudet & Aboud, 1988). The decline has generated some conflicting explanations. Katz et al. (1975) argue that older children express less bias as they become increasingly sensitive to attitudes that are socially sanctioned. Thus, the decline reflects a social desirability response bias. Conversely, cognitive developmental theorists claim that the apparent decline can be partially explained by the growth of cognitive flexibility and skills (in particular the ability to classify others on multiple dimensions) and there is some support for this hypothesis (Bigler & Liben, 1992). Indeed scholars have attempted to enhance multiple classification skills in order to reduce children's tendency to stereotype (a matter that will be discussed in the research literature section).

2.6.4 Social categorisation and ingroup bias

While grouping and categorising people serves a cognitive function (in terms of saving us the effort of putting limited processing resources into forming individual impressions) such social categorisation is also influenced by motivational needs. According to social identity theory (as proposed by Tajfel, 1978), human beings are motivated by the need to achieve a positive sense of themselves. When a social group membership has been internalised as part of an individual's self-concept, Tajfel argues, then the individual is motivated to view that social group in a positive way. In order to do this the ingroup is compared with the outgroup using suitable dimensions of comparison which produce more favourable representations of the ingroup than of the outgroups. The positive distinctiveness which is then ascribed to the ingroup over the outgroups on these comparative dimensions produces positive self-esteem. Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) predicts that the process of social comparison results in either: ingroup favouritism, or outgroup denigration, or both.

The production of positive feelings for those we have defined as being part of our group (in-group bias) has been documented in children when group membership is based on ethnicity, nationality, or even trivial or random criteria such as a team colour (Abrams, Rutland, & Cameron, 2003; Cameron, Rutland, Brown & Douch, 2006; Nesdale, 2008, Nesdale, Durkin, Maas, Kiesner & Griffiths, 2008). Interestingly, a series of studies by Bigler and colleagues demonstrated that simply categorising children into novel social groups (such as a "blue" group or a "yellow" group) can lead to in-group biased attitudes in primary school and preschool children (Bigler, Jones & Lobliner, 1997; Bigler, Spears Brown & Markell, 2001).

The ingroup preference can manifest in a number of ways. In Sherif and colleagues' seminal study (Sherif et al., 1961, as cited in Sherif et al., 1988), 11 year old boys in a summer camp showed consistent biases favouring their own group (as measured by peer preferences, trait ratings and group evaluations). More recently, Rutland and colleagues provide evidence that children assign more positive traits and/or less negative traits to their own group (Rutland et al., 2007). Research also suggests that children are more likely to choose to play with members of their own group (Hayden-Thompson, Rubin & Hymel, 1987; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1987) and they show more positive affect for their own group compared with other groups, a process that can lead to prejudice (Nesdale, Durkin, Maas, & Griffiths, 2005; Nesdale & Flesser, 2001).

2.6.5 Conditions under which categorisation can lead to ingroup bias and/or outgroup denigration

Categorisation per se is not always sufficient to develop intergroup bias. Many theorists have attempted to specify the conditions under which social categorisation can lead to ingroup bias. According to Tajfel and Turner (1986) the individual must identify with the ingroup. Indeed, several developmental studies have shown that increased ingroup identification (both in terms of self-categorisation and feeling an emotional attachment) is related to stronger intergroup biases amongst children (Bennett, Lyons, Sani and Barrett, 1998; Pfeifer et al., 2007).

Additional conditions, believed to be important for the formation of ingroup biases amongst children, include perceptual salience of group membership and functional use of group labels by authority figures (such as teachers) during routine interactions (Bigler et al., 1997; Bigler et al., 2001; Patterson and Bigler, 2006). Group status also appears relevant. Bigler et al (2001) found that high status children rated their in-group more positively than the outgroup. In contrast low status

children rated the ingroup and outgroup equivalently. The relationship between unequal status and intergroup bias in children has also been demonstrated experimentally. Children pick up on status cues and such cues can influence their intergroup attitudes (Bigler, Averhart, & Liben, 2003; Bigler, et al., 2001). Similarly, in their review, Barrett and Davies (2008) conclude that ingroup favouritism is not always exhibited by minority children who belong to low status racial or ethnic groups. The differential impact can be explained as follows: "the tendency for children to view their ingroup in an extremely positive light may be reduced among those individuals who receive negative information about their own group thus eliminating intergroup biases in their attitudes" (Bigler et al 2001. P.1160).

Researchers have also identified conditions where the formation of ingroup biases is less likely. According to a series of studies by Verkuyten and Thijs, (2001) and colleagues in the Netherlands, Dutch and Turkish children were less likely to show ingroup favouritism if they perceived that teachers would react to ethnic harassment in the classroom. Furthermore, they were also less likely to show ingroup favouritism if discrimination and ethnic differences were taught as part of the school curriculum. These studies highlight that in addition to cognitive and motivational processes, there is a need to consider societal and social processes when attempting to understand the development of children's intergroup attitudes.

One societal factor thought to pave the way to outgroup hostility is when the outgroup is perceived as a threat to ingroup interests or survival. According to Brewer (1999) under these circumstances identification with the ingroup is directly associated with fear and hostility towards the threatening outgroup. In accordance with this prediction, research by Nesdale and colleagues showed that children with high ethnic ingroup identification were more likely (than low identifiers) to express explicit dislike (prejudice) towards the ethnic outgroup when they perceived a high degree of threat (Nesdale, Durkin, Maas and Griffiths, 2005a). The researchers manipulated outgroup threat by making ingroup children believe that outgroup children thought they were better drawers than the ingroup in a picture drawing competition and that they would like to win the competition. Anglo Australian children turned their ingroup bias into explicit ethnic prejudice towards the outgroup (Pacific Islanders) when they thought the status of the ingroup was threatened.

In addition, when the ingroup feels morally superior to the outgroup (who do not subscribe to the same moral rules) this can lead to denigration, contempt and in turn avoidance (Brewer, 1999). While contact is strongly resisted, "social changes that give rise to the prospect of close contact and integration can lead to hatred, expulsion and even "ethnic cleansing" (Brewer, 1999, p.435). It is perhaps this moral superiority that led local residents to object to the prospect of close contact with Travellers following the fire tragedy in Carrickmines. Their concerns in relation to anti-social behaviour and criminality among Travellers indicate a belief that Travellers do not subscribe to the same moral rules. Such moral superiority has also been expressed (towards Travellers) by children as young as 9 years old (O'Keefe & O'Connor, 2001).

2.6.6 Social categorisation and discriminatory behaviour

Possible consequences of social categorisation are not limited to the formation of negative and limiting stereotypes and ingroup favouritism. As suggested above, there is also evidence that the cognitive and motivational process of social categorisation is associated with outgroup denigration and discrimination.

The relationship between social categorisation and unjust treatment of the outgroup was powerfully demonstrated in Jane Elliot's classic experiment. Elliot, an elementary school teacher, grouped children in her class by eye colour, according higher status and privileges to blue-eyed children initially (Peters, 1987). Consequently, the children began to act differently based on that social categorisation. Blue-eyed children (the superior group) stuck together and actively promoted and used their higher status and power in the classroom. They made fun of the brown-eyed children, tattled on them and thought up new restrictions and punishments for them.

Outgroup discrimination has also been evidenced in relation to the allocation of resources. Children as young as 2 and half years of age were more likely to give a toy to a speaker of their native language (ingroup member) than to a speaker of a foreign language (outgroup member) (Kinzler, Dupoux & Spelke, 2012). Similarly, White children, when asked to share their own resources, were more generous towards the White than the Black target (Zinser, Rich & Bailey, 1981; Renno & Shutts (2015). Outgroup discrimination is even apparent with novel groups. For example in Dunham Baron and Carey's (2011) study, 5 year old children tended to give more resources to people who belonged to their own novel t-shirt group. However, resource allocation decisions are not entirely determined by group membership. It seems that such decisions are influenced by children's expectations that they would be more likely to receive help from ingroup members (Dunham et al., 2011; Renno &Shutts, 2015). For example, in Renno and Shutts (2015) study, race based giving was related to White participants expectations that they would be more likely to receive help from White than from Black children.

However, attachment to one's ingroup does not necessarily require hostility towards outgroups. Indeed, research with children suggests that intergroup bias takes the form of believing that one's ingroup is nearly perfect and the outgroup is merely good (Bigler et al. 1997; Bigler et al., 2001). Furthermore, results from laboratory and field studies confirm Allport's (1954) proposal that preferential positivity towards ingroups doesn't necessarily imply negativity or hostility towards outgroups. Several studies demonstrate that variations in ingroup positivity and social identification do not systematically correlate with degree of bias or negativity towards outgroups (see Brewer, 1999 for a review). For example, drawing on the work of Mummendey and colleagues (Mummendey and Schreiber, 1983; Mummendey and Simon, 1989; Mummendey, Simon, Dietze, Grunert, Haeger, Kessler, Lettgen, and Schaferhoff, 1992; Mummendey, and Wenzel, 1999, as cited in Brewer, 1999) Brewer (1999) concludes that individuals are willing to differentially benefit the ingroup compared to the outgroup but are reluctant to harm outgroups more directly. Brewer (1999) surmises that many forms of discrimination and bias may develop not because outgroups are hated but because positive emotions such as admiration, sympathy and trust are reserved for the ingroup and withheld from the outgroup (p.438)

Similarly, Aboud and Amato (2001) maintain that children rarely express their prejudice in racial slurs. While name calling, hassling, fighting, and intimidation are often considered indices of discrimination, Aboud and Amato argue that avoidance and exclusion in peer relations are more closely associated with prejudice. Therefore, it is concerning that cross-race friendships remain infrequent (at least in the United States of America) (Page-Gould, Mendoza, Denton, and Tropp 2008) and such friendships decline with age (DuBois & Hirsch, 1990; Hallinan and Teirerira, 1987). Moreover, racial integration remains fairly minimal in intimate contexts in the adolescent world with

respect to cross-race friendship interactions such as a sleepover party or dating (Edmonds and Killen, 2009; Kennedy, 2012).

So far, it appears that categorising individuals into groups can lead to discrimination, avoidance and exclusion. However, this is neither inevitable nor universal. Killen et al. (2001) investigated children's reasoning processes when making judgements about exclusion based on group membership such as race. They found that in straightforward situations children tend to use moral reasons to say that exclusion is wrong. However, in more complex or ambiguous situations, children resorted to stereotypic judgments or social conventional reasoning to justify exclusion (Killen et al 2001). For example, when deciding whom to include in a club, when there is only room for one more, children often justified inclusion on the basis of preserving group functioning and/or stereotypic expectations (Killen and Stangor 2001). Rutland, Killen and Abrams (2010) conclude that whether and when children begin to show prejudice depends on the close interplay between their emerging morality, their ability to understand group life and their motivation to act in accordance with certain group identities.

While, under certain conditions, social categorisation is thought to lead to stereotyping, ingroup bias, outgroup denigration and discrimination, an additional psychological process is worthy of mention. It seems that people encode information about ingroup and outgroup members differently, emphasising individuating information more for ingroup members (Park & Rothbart, 1982). This leads us to a discussion of the relationship between social information processing and prejudice.

2.7 Social information processing and prejudice

According to Aronson et al, (2010) an attitude tends to organise the way we process relevant information about the targets of that attitude. For example, when an individual holds specific opinions (or schemas) about certain groups these schemas influence the kind of information that is attended to, encoded and recalled. For instance, if an individual has a negative attitude towards Travellers they might notice and remember encountering a Traveller who is aggressive (schema consistent information) but fail to notice and remember a Traveller engaging in more prosocial behaviour (schema inconsistent-information).

Since Martin and Halverson's (1981) landmark paper on children's schema-based processing of social information much research has examined the impact of social category schemas (such as gender and race) upon children's attention and memory (Carter & Levy, 1988; Levy, 2000; Liben & Signorella, 1993). This body of research has shown that children's social category schemas can influence their attention to and memory for information about particular target persons. Thus, information consistent with schemas is given more attention, rehearsed (or recalled) more often and remembered better than information that is inconsistent with schemas. For instance, photographs of children engaged in gender consistent activities were better remembered than gender inconsistent ones (Martin and Halverson, 1981). Similarly, Bigler and Liben (1993) found that children had better memory for stories that were consistent with cultural racial stereotypes (schemas) than for stories that were inconsistent with such stereotypes.

Furthermore, individuals to whom a particular dimension is highly salient (i.e high schematics) distort schema-inconsistent to schema-consistent content in memory. Hence, children's memory for

gender inconsistent depictions was distorted such that children's recollections involved changing the sex of the target (Carter & Levy, 1988; Liben & Signorella, 1993). Similarly, when faced with counter-stereotypic information, participants who engaged in high levels of racial stereotyping tended to forget counter-stereotypic information or even more disturbingly distort it in memory so that it became consistent with their stereotyped beliefs (Bigler & Liben, 1993). Moreover, in a study by Levy (2000) children high in race schematicity had higher rates of memory distortions of racial stereotype-inconsistent drawings into stereotype consistent ones (than children low in race schematicity).

Additional consequences of schema-based processing of social information include: peer preference bias; and a propensity to make unfair judgements. According to Levy (2000) race schematicity was positively and significantly associated with same race peer preference bias. Furthermore, as previously exemplified, when information is deficient or ambiguous, schemas allow the perceiver to supply what is missing by relying on information already contained in the schemas (Sagar & Schofield, 1980).

To summarise, the way we process (attend, encode and remember) social information has an important role in perpetuating prejudiced notions that that we hold about stigmatised groups. This poses problems for reducing prejudice. Since stereotypes, once formed, become relatively impervious to change. As Aronson et al. (2010) conclude, "proof that they are accurate is always out there when our belief guides us to see it" (p.427).

Hitherto, the review has outlined some social cognitive factors that can cause/or lead to prejudice. So far the respective roles of categorising people into groups and the way we process social information have been discussed. However, there is another aspect of social cognition that can contribute to negative bias-namely attributional processes.

2.8 Attributional biases and prejudice

In order to make sense of other people's behaviour we form attributions (explanations as to the causes of their actions). Sometimes actions are attributed to innate characteristics or the personality of the individual. Such attributions are called internal or dispositional attributions. On other occasions we attribute a person's behaviour to some aspect of their situation or circumstances and these attributions are referred to as external or situational attributions. As well as individual's behaviour we also make attributions about whole groups of people. Moreover, along with many aspects of social cognition, attributional processes are subject to bias.

Attributions can lead to prejudice if one wrongly assumes that a person's behaviour is due to some aspect of their personality rather an aspect of the situation. For example, one could perceive that the angry behaviour of a Traveller is due to an aggressive personality rather than an appropriate response to injustice and inequality. Such misattributions can lead to the formation and maintenance of negative stereotypes. When people conform to a stereotype individuals tend to blind themselves to reasons as to why the person might have behaved as they did and this can lead to unfair treatment and discrimination.

Extending this attribution error (the tendency to underestimate situational factors and overestimate personal factors as the causes of an actor's behaviour) Pettigrew (1979) described a pervasive

pattern of prejudiced intergroup attributions called "the ultimate attribution error". This error refers to the tendency to attribute negative outcomes to an individual's disposition when actors are outgroup members, but to situational factors when actors are ingroup members. For example, a Settled Irish person might provide different explanations for the poor performance of a Traveller Irish person (outgroup member) on a test versus the poor performance of a Settled Irish person (ingroup member). The Traveller's poor performance might be attributed to his/her innate lack of ability. Whereas the Settled Irish person's poor performance could be attributed to task difficulty. The ultimate attribution error also refers to the tendency to attribute positive outcomes to situational factors when actors are outgroup members but to an individual's disposition when actors are ingroup members. Using the same example, a Traveller might get lucky on a test or be an exceptional case whereas a majority group member (e.g White Settled) might be perceived as being very competent.

Hewstone (1990) reviewed the available literature to investigate whether there is support for Pettigrew's predictions. He concluded that in numerous intergroup contexts the tendency for attributions to favour ingroup over outgroup members is apparent. More recently McGlothlin and Killen (2005, 2006) investigated whether children used race to attribute intentions when evaluating familiar but ambiguous peer encounters. They found that 6-9 year old European American children attributed more negative intentions to a Black child than to a White child in potential "pushing" and "stealing" ambiguous peer encounters on the playground. They also rated a Black child's friendship potential more negatively than that of a White child. Importantly, this bias was only revealed by European American children in racially non mixed schools. European American children of the same age in the same school district and enrolled in ethnically mixed schools did not attribute more positive intentions to their ingroup than to the outgroup. In fact race was not used to attribute negative intentions.

While the latter studies suggest that social context influences attributional bias, ingroup favouring attributions also seem to be affected by group status. According to Hewstone, Wagner and Machleit (1989) attributional bias can be extinguished or even reversed for members of subordinate or low status groups. They showed that Turkish children (a low status group in West Germany) attributed ingroup success more to good luck than they did outgroup success. Perhaps the Turkish children had internalised low expectations communicated by authority figures. Indeed there is evidence that teachers direct less positive speech and encouragement to minority students (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). Furthermore, the powerful influence of teacher expectations on minority students' achievement has been well documented in the literature (McKown & Weinstein, 2002; Van den Bergh et al., 2010).

Having reviewed the literature (including conceptual and methodological limitations) Hewstone (1990) concludes that the attribution error is not as ubiquitous as previously imagined. He also cautions against the use of the term 'ultimate attribution error', preferring the more modest label of 'intergroup attributional bias'.

Although attributional bias is not inevitable, the implications of bias are profound for marginalised and stigmatised outgroups. As highlighted by Bodenhausen (1988), college students, playing the role of jurors in a mock trial, were more likely to find a defendant guilty of a given crime if his name was Carlos Ramirez rather than Robert Johnson. Thus, any situational information that might have

explained the defendant's actions was ignored when the powerful dispositional attribution was stereotypically triggered, in this case by the Hispanic name. Perhaps a similar attributional bias operates in the Irish criminal justice system. According to the All Ireland Traveller Health Study (2010) it is estimated that Traveller men are up to 11 times more likely than other men to be imprisoned, while Traveller women face a risk of imprisonment as much 22 times higher than that of the general population. The fact that surveys indicate that many people believe that Travellers are more involved in crime than the settled community lends some support for this hypothesis (Republic of Ireland, 2007). Moreover, there were recent concerns that the Irish police force was practicing racial profiling. In October 2014, a Traveller mother discovered that her two children aged four and five were recorded and given criminal tag numbers after she and her husband visited a Garda station to have passport applications stamped (Harmon, 2015). This suggests further evidence that the ethnic identifier 'Traveller' activates stereotypical ideas about criminality.

2.8.1 Attributional biases and blaming the victim of prejudice

As previously highlighted, members of marginalised and stigmatised groups face many difficulties in society. In addition, as well as being discriminated against they can even be blamed for their victimisation with majority group members concluding that they must have done something to deserve such a fate. The tendency to blame the victim (make dispositional attributions) for their victimisation has been observed in studies investigating attitudes towards the poor and the homeless (Furnham & Gunter, 1984) fat people (Crandall, D'Anello et al., 2001) and rape victims (Janoff-Bulman, Timko & Carli, 1985).

Ironically, Furnham and Gunter (1984) found that blaming victims for their plight is more prevalent among individuals who display a strong belief in a just world. Similar findings were reported by Dalbert and Yamauchi (1994) in relation to attitudes towards immigrants in Hawaii and Germany. In both groups the disadvantaged migrant's situation was judged as more just by participants with a greater belief in a just world.

Lerner (1980) introduced the concept of a belief in a just world which is characterised by a view that, quite justly, good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people despite the fact that this is patently not the case. The belief is thought to have an adaptive function and serves to protect people from overwhelming anxiety if they encounter evidence that the world is not really fair after all (Tomaka & Blascovich, 1994). For example, most of us find it frightening to think that we live in a world where people through no fault of their own can be assaulted, discriminated against, deprived of equal pay for equal work or denied basic human rights. Hence, it is in a strange way comforting to believe that victims must have done something to bring those events on themselves.

The likelihood of blaming victims for their fate can also be increased when an individual perceives that their situation is similar to the victims. To the extent that perspective taking makes salient one's own vulnerability to a similar plight it may lead to a defensive response in which one tries to distance oneself psychologically from the individual and the stigmatised group. Distancing may result in reduced empathic feelings and perhaps even derogation for or blaming the victim (Lerner, 1980; Lerner & Miller, 1978; Ryan, 1971, as cited in Batson et al., 1997)

In addition, research suggests that when an individual's circumstances are thought to be within their personal control, this can increase the degree to which stigmatised targets are blamed for their own fate (Weiner, 1993, 1995, 1996). On the other hand when victims experience hate crimes (due to characteristics beyond their control such as race or sexual orientation) they are viewed as more innocent and less blame-worthy than victims of non-hate crimes (Rayburn, Mendoza & Davison, 2003).

These and other studies raise questions pertaining to their relevance in understanding prejudice towards Travellers. There is evidence that, among young people, Travellers are perceived to be responsible for their circumstances and unacceptable to the majority in part because of their apparent lack of willingness to assimilate (Lodge and Lynch, 2004). Similarly, de la Torre Castillo (2012) cites an article published in a national newspaper recommending that Traveller culture should be obliterated and replaced with assimilation into "normal" settled life. Such perceptions might contribute to explanations of high levels of reported prejudice directed towards Travellers. Furthermore, while being a member of the Traveller community is a stable characteristic, it is debatable whether, in the context of a hate crime, Travellers would be considered as innocent and blameless as minorities in Rayburn and colleagues' (2003) study. Firstly, research with children found that while racial name calling was condemned, name calling of Travellers was never spoken of in critical terms (Devine et al., 2004). Secondly, Travellers were not recognised by the Irish government as an ethnic group until March 2017 and therefore it is argued that there were no grounds for Travellers experiencing racism or indeed hate crimes if ethnicity was denied.

2.8.2 Prejudiced attitudes prompt attributional bias

While it has been argued that attributional errors (such as explaining an individual or group's behaviour as due to some aspect of their personality rather than an aspect of the situation) can lead to prejudice, there is a view that the reverse is true. According to Crandall and Eshleman (2003), prejudice can lead to attributional bias. The justification-suppression model of prejudice proposed by Crandall and Eshleman (2003) contends that genuine prejudice (pure negative feelings towards members of a devalued group) is distinct from the expression of prejudice. They argue that the current social norms of fairness and egalitarianism inhibit the expression of prejudice. Therefore to resolve the cognitive dissonance (between an individual's genuine prejudice and the social norm to treat a stigmatised group without prejudice) stigmatised traits are attributed to controllable causes to make the expression of prejudice less noxious. Therefore pre-existing prejudicial attitudes might prompt attributional beliefs that can justify pre-existing noxious prejudices (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003).

Although Crandall and Eshleman (2003) acknowledge that attributional beliefs can affect prejudiced attitudes (as predicted by attribution theory) they maintain that prejudiced attitudes initiate the attributional thinking process. Indeed, recent research by Hegarty and Golden (2008) provides support for the justification-suppression model. They found that prejudiced people alight on controllable causes of stigmatised traits (such as homosexuality, obesity, depression and alcoholism) to resolve discrepancies between pre-existing prejudices and norms to appear non-prejudiced.

Thus far the respective roles of: social categorisation, the way we process social information, and attributional biases in the development of prejudice have been discussed. Additional psychological phenomena relevant to understanding prejudice include: a motivation to maintain the status quo; a

bias against unlucky people; and self-fulfilling prophecies. The evidence for each is presented below along with a commentary on how these phenomena perpetuate negative attitudes and inequality.

2.9 Motivation to maintain the status quo and prejudice

According to System Justification Theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994) people are motivated to favour themselves, their ingroup, and also the status quo. System Justification Theory also predicts that when people are exposed to a systematic inequality such that one group possesses more resources than another that inequality will often be maintained. In support of this hypothesis, Olson, Dweck, Spelke and Banaji (2011) found that young children consistently acted in a manner that perpetuated the status quo. When asked to give targets what they deserve, young children determined deservingness by observing which group had been given more resources and perpetuated that inequality with their own allocations.

A study by Bigler, Arthur, Hughes and Patterson (2008) also provides evidence consistent with System Justification Theory. They asked elementary school aged children to explain why it was that no women, Blacks and Hispanics had been president of the United States (importantly the study was conducted before Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton were candidates). Bigler et al argue that as children try to make sense of the world around them they notice that inequalities are associated with particular social groups and they entertain plausible albeit incorrect views that are consistent with the status quo. For instance, they found that almost a third of participants in their study endorsed the justification that women, Blacks and Hispanics are not presidents because they are not as good leaders as men or Whites. A similar number endorsed the justification that women, Blacks and Hispanics lack the desire to be president. Additionally, they found that a non-trivial minority of children endorsed the explanation that it is illegal for women, Blacks and Hispanics to be president of the United States (Bigler et al., 2008).

2.10 Bias against the unlucky and prejudice

Another psychological phenomenon thought to perpetuate negative attitudes and inequality is bias against the unlucky. A series of studies by Olson, Dunham, Dweck, Spelke and Banaji (2008) demonstrate that children as young as three years of age prefer lucky to unlucky people. More recent research suggests that the tendency to favour more advantaged/lucky groups and individuals is driven by an affective tagging mechanism (Li, Spitzer and Olson, 2014). Affective tagging suggests that people automatically evaluate others based on their associations with positively or negatively valenced events or items. Thus, people who are associated with material advantage or having more desirable resources are evaluated more positively than those associated with fewer resources (Li et al., 2014).

Although bias against the unlucky may seem like an innocent bias, Olson et al (2008) warn that it has important and insidious repercussions. This is because random events are by definition out of the control of those experiencing them and random events such as extreme weather conditions have a disproportionately negative impact on disadvantaged groups (as illustrated by Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans). According to Olson et al (2008) if children believe that lucky people are better than unlucky people this could lead to "systematic bias against disadvantaged people and groups resulting in both inculcation and perpetuation of prejudice in children" (p.775). A preference for the lucky has two important (negative) implications for stigmatised and marginalised or oppressed

groups. Firstly, Olson et al argue, in so far as the lucky are higher in status, prestige or resources, preferring them over others maintains the status quo. Secondly, as long as negative outcomes continue to fall disproportionately on some groups we may be unwittingly providing children with the evidence they use to infer that group's inferiority (Olson et al., 2008).

2.11 Self-fulfilling prophecies and prejudice

Self-fulfilling prophecies are also believed to play a role in maintaining (rather than causing) prejudice and discrimination. When an individual has an expectation about what another person is like this can influence their behaviour towards that person which can in turn cause that person to behave in a way consistent with people's original expectations. For example, if a teacher expects a child from the Traveller community to be disaffected and of low ability (a negative stereotype) this could influence the type of work that the teacher assigns and the level of time and energy she invests in supporting the child. Why waste energy in teaching the child if he/she is unlikely to be interested or motivated? The child from the Traveller community sensing the low expectations and low teacher investment responds with disinterest and thereby confirms the teacher's original expectations.

Since the publication of *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968) the topic of interpersonal expectations and the relationship between expectations and social inequalities has inspired several research studies. Many researchers have investigated the effect of teacher expectations on the achievement/performance of children from minority and/or stigmatised groups. McKown and Weinstein (2002) provide evidence of the deleterious effect of low teacher expectations on members of academically stigmatised groups (specifically African American elementary school students). They found that African American children are more susceptible to teacher expectancy effects (as measured by reading achievement) than students who are members of non-stigmatised groups such as Caucasian students. Compared to Caucasian children the African American children were much more likely to confirm teacher underestimates of reading ability.

Similarly, Van den Bergh et al (2010) report that teachers in their study with negative prejudiced attitudes towards Turkish and Moroccan ethnic minority students (in the Netherlands) appeared more predisposed to evaluate these students as being less intelligent and having less promising prospects for their school careers. Their results also suggest a relationship between teachers' implicit prejudiced attitudes towards minority groups and the ethnic achievement gap. The achievement differences between ethnic minority students and students of Dutch origin were larger in the classrooms of high prejudiced teachers than in classrooms of less prejudiced teachers.

Taken together these findings imply that teacher expectations can differentially affect the members of different groups favouring non-stigmatised groups over stigmatised groups and thereby confirming stereotypes and exacerbating the achievement gap for groups of students from different ethnic backgrounds.

There is also evidence of how expectations might be communicated to students. In their meta-analysis Tenenbaum and Ruck (2007) found that teachers had more negative expectations with respect to Latino and African American students relative to European American students. Moreover they directed less positive speech including questions and encouragement to the former as opposed to the latter.

However, the teacher expectancy effect is not universally accepted. Some researchers condemn teacher expectation research as flawed and express dismay at how it has been misinterpreted (Snow, 1995). Prompted by this controversy, Jussim and Harber (2005) reviewed 35 years of empirical research on teacher expectations with the following conclusions: self-fulfilling prophecy effects do occur but the effects are typically small; self-fulfilling prophecies may selectively occur among students from stigmatised social groups; and teacher expectations may predict student outcomes more because they are accurate than because they are self-fulfilling.

While Jussim and Harber (2005) concluded that teacher expectations may predict student achievement because they are accurate, the issue of teacher efficacy requires consideration. Teachers with high and low levels of personal teaching efficacy differ in their approach to instruction in ways that have important implications for student achievement and engagement. High personal efficacy teachers communicate high expectations for performance to students, emphasize instruction and learning more to students, are aware of student accomplishments, and are less likely to give up on low achievement students and more likely to extend extra effort on their behalf (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1983; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). In contrast, teachers with a low sense of teaching efficacy are more likely to doubt that any teacher or amount of schooling will affect achievement of low-achieving students and are less likely to persist in their efforts to teach students or to exert extra effort (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs are also more likely than teachers with a low sense of self-efficacy to take responsibility for students with special learning needs (Allinder, 1994; Jordan et al., 1993), to manage classroom problems (Chacon, 2005), and to keep students on task (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Therefore it is the attitudes and behaviours (associated with teacher efficacy) that are likely to play a role in whether group stereotypes are disconfirmed or confirmed (and maintained). In support of this hypothesis, research indicates that high levels of teacher efficacy are associated with enhanced student motivation (Ashton and Webb, 1986), increased self-esteem (Borton, 1991), more positive attitudes toward school (Miskel, McDonald, & Bloom, 1983) and increased student achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Ross, 1992).

2.12 Summary of social cognitive factors implicated in the development of prejudice

Thus far the review has examined social cognitive factors implicated in the development and maintenance of prejudice and discrimination. For instance, the tendency to categorise individuals has been linked to the formation of negative stereotypes and limiting ideas about different social groups. Categorisation has been shown to lead to ingroup favouritism and outgroup denigration, avoidance and exclusion. Evidence has been presented that schemas, expectations, and the way that we attend to, encode, and remember social information perpetuate prejudiced notions about stigmatised groups. Research suggests that attributional bias leads to negative attitudes towards minorities and unfair judgement and treatment of lower status outgroups. Additional factors thought to play a role in the maintenance of prejudice include: a belief in a just world; a preference for lucky people; a desire to preserve the status quo and ironically a wish to appear non-prejudiced.

The review has also highlighted some aspects of the social context that can moderate, mitigate or exacerbate the impact of various social cognitive processes on the development of prejudice. For example, attributional bias can be less evident in ethnically diverse schools as compared to ethnically homogenous schools. In addition, perceived social norms regarding fairness and

egalitarianism can inhibit the expression of prejudice or lead one to attribute stigmatised traits to controllable causes. Given that prejudice is determined by more than cognitive and emotional factors, the role of environmental influences must now be considered. Hence, the contribution of key socialising agents (such as parents, peers and the media) to the development of children's bias are explored below.

2.13 Environmental factors: Social learning mechanisms and prejudice

There are numerous environmental sources of information and contextual variables that are likely to contribute to the development of negative intergroup attitudes. Key socialising agents such as primary caregivers, peers, and the media have all been identified as potent providers of a child's information about social groups. Additionally, aspects of the context such as intergroup contact, group status, and intergroup competition are relevant to understanding prejudice.

2.14 Parental influences on prejudice

Social learning theory holds that children and adolescents learn attitudes through observation and imitation of parents (and other important models such as peers) to gain their acceptance (Allport, 1954; Bandura, 1977). Thus, parents communicate, model, and reinforce attitudes which contributes to parent-child attitudinal similarity. Indeed, in political and religious socialisation research, parents have repeatedly been found to be the main determinants of offspring attitudes (Granqvist, 1998, 2002; Jennings, Stoker and Bower, 2009). However, whether parents play a significant role in relation to the direct and indirect shaping of their children's intergroup attitudes is less clear. According to early correlational studies there is no, or only a small, significant relationship between parents' and children's prejudice (Aboud and Doyle, 1996; Carlson and Iovini, 1985; Castelli, Zogmaister and Tomelleri, 2009).

More recently, Degner and Dalege (2013) conducted a meta-analysis encompassing 131 studies to explore whether, and under which conditions, children's intergroup prejudice resembles that of their parents. They also attempted to elucidate how different sample, study and method-specific factors might moderate the relationship between parent and child intergroup attitudes. They found that a significant positive relationship exists between parent and children's intergroup attitudes throughout childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood.

Interestingly, Degner and Dalege's (2013) results suggest that parent-child similarity is generally higher when the study relies on children's reports of parental attitudes compared to parental self-reports. There are a number of possible explanations to account for the discrepancy. It might be that children don't know their parents' beliefs very well (because they are rarely expressed or openly discussed) or because children misperceive and misinterpret their parents' attitudes in light of their own attitudes. However, it is also possible that parents' responses may be affected by social desirability concerns and self-presentation strategies (whereas young children's responses are not). This might lead parents to conceal their true attitudes thus deflating parent-child correlations. The finding that parent-child similarity was significantly higher when parents' attitudes were assessed in private settings as compared to public expressions supports this assumption (Degner and Dalege, 2013).

Similarly, children's perceptions of their parents' intergroup attitudes could be accurate and based on observation of the non-verbal behaviour that adults direct towards members of social groups (e.g a settled person becoming nervous or socially withdrawn in the presence of a member of the Traveller community). Such non-verbal behaviours are likely to be unconscious and as a consequence adults are unlikely to explain their behaviours to children. However, since children actively seek to construct their understanding and make sense of their surroundings, Bigler and Liben (2007) posit that children's attention to correlations (between behaviours and particular social groups) plays a role in shaping the content of their stereotypes and in turn prejudice. In fact, recent research provides powerful evidence that social attitudes may be transmitted to children through the way significant adults behave during social interactions. In a series of studies Castelli, DeDea, and Nesdale (2008) found that very young children (aged between 3 and 6 and a half years) were able to infer the quality of the interaction between a Black and White adult on the basis of observed non-verbal behaviours. Importantly, participants reported personal attitudes towards the Black target that were largely influenced by the observed non-verbal behaviours. For example, when the White adults revealed uneasiness during the interaction with the Black partner, children detected it and they expressed more negative attitudes towards the Black target compared to a condition in which the White model expressed friendly nonverbal behaviours. Furthermore, Castelli et al. found that attitudes formed towards a specific target generalised to other group members.

An additional influential (and relevant) factor reported in the literature relates to the degree to which children identify with their parents. It seems logical that children who admire their parents, and value their approval and affection, are likely to adopt their views and empirical research supports this hypothesis. According to Sinclair, Dunn and Lowery (2005) children's implicit and explicit prejudice corresponded to the views of their parents more so when children had high as opposed to low identification towards them. Similarly, the strength of intergenerational attitudinal transmission has been shown to be moderated by relationship quality, that is, the better the relation the stronger the parental influence (Miklikowska, 2016).

Of course parent-child similarity may not be indicative of parent influence per se. Degner and Dalege (2013) argue that shared factors in the environment (such as cultural norms, neighbourhood diversity, and media influences) could cause similar levels of intergroup prejudice in children and parents (a matter that will be discussed later). However, it is important to keep in mind that exposure to environments that promote attitudes consistent with parents' attitudes might not be accidental. According to Barrett and Davis (2008) parents often selectively, choose specific environments (e.g school, neighbourhood, and access to media exposure) that promote values consistent with their own values which in turn indirectly facilitates parent-child socialisation. Hence, it is unsurprising that a longitudinal study found that children with high racial bias at school entry had much more racially homogenous social environments throughout their early years than did low bias children (Katz & Barret, 1997). Similarly, the same study reported that parents who valued racial diversity had children who were less biased (Katz & Barret, 1997). It seems, therefore, that parents' implicit (rather than explicit) attitudes are important for predicting the development of prejudice in children.

The complexity of untangling parental influence from the myriad of other influences on children's intergroup attitudes is further highlighted in two recent longitudinal analyses. Jugert, Eckstein, Beelman and Noack (2016) found that parental influence on children's intergroup attitudes was

moderated by socio-economic status (SES) whereby families with high SES provide a context that is conducive for positive intergroup relations. Similarly, in another longitudinal study, Mikilowska (2017) found that parental education and income predicted changes in children's anti-immigrant attitudes. Youth with poorer parents increased in prejudice relative to adolescents with wealthier parents, while youth with better educated parents decreased in prejudice relative to adolescents with less educated parents (Mikilowska, 2017). Variations in threat perception experienced by members of low and high SES groups might explain the different trajectories. According to Meeusen and Kern (2016) it is possible that individuals of low SES fear economic effects of labour market competition that in case of an increased immigration might primarily affect blue collar workers. In contrast, better educated individuals have been suggested to believe that immigrants benefit the host economy and to place value on cultural diversity (Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007).

Finally, research shows that correlations between parents' and adolescents' racial prejudice are smaller for youth with a high level of intergroup contact (Dhont & Van Hiel, 2012; Edmonds and Killen, 2009) suggesting moderation effects. Hence, it is timely to examine peer influence on intergroup attitudes.

2.15 Peer influence and prejudice

In addition to parents, the child's friends and peer group can provide powerful information about attributes associated with particular groups. Unlike parents, peer remarks are likely to be more explicit. Bigler and Liben (2007) propose that children teach attributions that they have detected or invented as in the popular children's rhyme (girls go to college to get more knowledge and boys go to Jupiter to get more stupider). They may also explicitly teach prejudice without reference to attributes using statements such as "I hate girls".

Friends can reciprocally influence each other's attitudes towards different groups. Scholars argue that friends are selected on the basis of their similar attitudes initially and they socialise one another in their attitudes as the friendship progresses, consequently leading to an assimilation of attitudes (Deutsch & Mackesy, 1985; Kandel, 1978). Therefore, similarity in attitudes between friends can either come about through initial friendship selection or through mutual socialisation.

However, support for similar attitudes among friends is varied. Aboud and Doyle (1996) found that although children (third graders) perceived their friends to have similar levels of racial prejudice to their own, actual similarities were less evident. Further, Ritchey and Fishbein (2001) using a variety of measures of prejudice, found that the prejudiced attitudes of adolescents' friends did not predict their own prejudiced attitudes. Conversely, other researchers have documented significant within-peer group similarity in relation to attitudes towards stigmatised outgroups (Gypsies, Albanians and Moroccans in Italy and homosexuals in the United States) (Kiesner Mass, Cadinu & Vellese, 2003; Poteat, 2007).

There is a plausible explanation for the aforementioned inconsistent findings. It seems that friends converge more closely in terms of attitudes towards stigmatised as opposed to non-stigmatised outgroups and this is supported by empirical research (Kiesner et al. 2003). Perhaps this explains the lack of correspondence between peers' attitudes towards outgroups in the studies by Aboud and Doyle (1996) and Ritchey and Fishbein (2001). As Kiesner and colleagues point out, the average level

of prejudice was quite low in these studies and there were no clear negative attitudes towards the outgroups thereby suggesting that the target outgroups were non-stigmatised.

It is possible that attitudes towards stigmatised groups are more susceptible to group influence (than attitudes to non-stigmatised groups) because they have clear stereotypes thereby making them more salient and more likely to become subjects of discussion. As Aboud and Doyle (1996) suggest, the degree of overlap between friends' attitudes may depend on how explicitly friends present their views. Indeed there is some support for the role of talk and discussion in influencing prejudiced attitudes for better and for worse. Aboud and Doyle (1996b) documented that high prejudiced children reported lower levels of racial prejudice after talking about racial issues with a less prejudiced friend. Conversely, discussion can be used to promote and reinforce prejudiced attitudes. For instance, homophobic banter has been found to be more likely to occur in peer groups expressing higher levels of homophobia (Poteat, 2007).

2.16 Intergroup contact and intergroup friendship and prejudice

Of course attitudes towards groups can also be influenced by intergroup contact (rather than just peer discussion and reinforcement). Gordon Allport in his seminal text *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954) argued that a critical source of prejudice is segregation or intergroup contact characterised by low levels of interdependence and unequal status sanctioned by authority. Based on this conceptualisation, Allport specified the optimal conditions under which contact is most likely to reduce prejudice. According to the *Contact Hypothesis* (Allport, 1954) prejudice may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. Furthermore, Allport concluded that the effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports such as law, custom or local atmosphere. Indeed, as will be shown in the research literature, many interventions have attempted to create these conditions of contact in order to reduce prejudice.

Research supports Allport's (1954) contentions. Repeatedly, positive intergroup contact has been found to be inversely related to prejudice (Davies et al 2011; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). There is evidence that positive contact and friendships with outgroup members lead to increases in empathy, reduction in anxiety (about contact) and ultimately to reduction of negative intergroup attitudes (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008). Furthermore, research suggests that the effect of contact is stronger in contexts in which Allport's optimal conditions were met (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner and Christ, 2011).

Conversely, when conditions of contact are not optimal (for example when groups are unequal in status and when there are low levels of interdependence between groups) there is evidence of increased prejudice. In a series of studies by Bigler and colleagues, they found that children pick up on status cues and such cues can influence their intergroup attitudes (Bigler, Averhart, & Liben, 2003; Bigler et al., 2001). Furthermore, in a classic experiment, Muzafer Sherif and colleagues (1961) demonstrated the link between competition (negative interdependence) and hostility between two groups of 12 year old boys in a Boy Scout camp. The young participants were randomly assigned to two groups where they engaged in a series of competitive activities in which the two groups were pitted against each other. The systematic introduction of conditions of rivalry led to the formation of unfavourable stereotypes and negative attitudes towards the outgroup along with the repeatedly

expressed desire to have nothing more to do with the other group (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood and Sherif, 1988).

Similarly, Sassenberg, Moskowitz, Jacoby and Hansen (2007) argue that conflicts of interest (i.e., negative interdependence) between groups result in prejudice and social discrimination. According to Sassenberg et al., this is because

> "such conflicts (e.g., competition for resources between groups) lead to intergroup threat and intergroup threat, in turn, initiates the expression of hostility and prejudice toward the competing outgroup" (p.529).

Indeed, there is substantial evidence for these assumptions (e.g., Bettencourt, Brewer, Croake and Miller, 1992; Sherif, 2015; Sherif & Sherif, 1953).

Finally, while research indicates that intergroup friendship leads to improved intergroup attitudes (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008) there is also evidence that intergroup friendship might be a protective factor against the effects of parents' and peers' prejudice (Miklikowska, 2017). However, it seems that the positive effects of intergroup friendship might wear off after a longer time interval (Van Laar, Levin, Sinclair and Sidanius, 2005). This might be particularly likely in middle and late adolescence when race homophily increases (Shrum, Cheek and Hunter, 1988) and intergroup friendships are less stable (Aboud, Mendelson and Purdy, 2003).

To summarise, research suggests that friends tend to have similar attitudes towards marginalised groups. In addition, friends are thought to influence each other and possible mechanisms of influence transmission include: discussion and reinforcement. Intergroup contact and particularly intergroup friendship have demonstrated positive effects on intergroup attitudes. However, given the evidence that the effects might not be long lasting, there is a need to examine the influence of other variables such as group norms and social norms on attitude formation. The role of group norms is discussed next.

2.17 Group norms and prejudice

According to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) children and adolescents have a fundamental need to belong which motivates them to establish friendships and to become members of social groups (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Moreover, scholars argue, the process of identifying with a group involves taking on the group's frame of reference and learning and internalising the group norms (Abrams and Rutland, 2008). According to Nesdale Mass, Durkin and Griffiths (2005) group norms are the expectations that particular groups have concerning the appropriate attitudes, beliefs and behaviours to be displayed by group members. As they grow older children develop a better understanding of how groups work and they increasingly consider what is socially acceptable when expressing particular attitudes and behaviours (Abrams, Rutland, Cameron & Ferrell, 2007; Killen & Rutland, 2011; Nesdale, 2007). In particular, peers are significant others who function as important sources of appropriate behaviour (Killen, Lee-Kim, mcGlothlin, Stangor and Helwig, 2002; Smetana et al., 2009) and research by Killen, Rutland, Abrams, Mulvey and Hitti (2013) suggests that peer group norms about intergroup relations become salient around middle childhood.

The powerful influence of group expectations on individuals has long been recognised by social psychologists. There is a tendency for people to follow behaviour that they believe to be acceptable

for their group or sub-group and there is a body of evidence supporting the role of perception of group norms in the development of attitudes and intergroup behaviour.

Researchers have demonstrated that group norms can influence children's attitudes towards an outgroup. Using a minimal group paradigm, Nesdale, Mass, Durkin and Griffiths (2005) found that children (aged 7-9 years) revealed dislike for members of the outgroup after they were told that their team did not like people in other teams. While the children who were told that their team liked to work with children on other teams showed more favourable intergroup attitudes. Similar results were obtained in later studies where ingroup preference turned to outgroup dislike when the ingroup had a norm of outgroup unfriendliness and exclusion versus friendliness and inclusion (Nesdale & Dalton, 2011; Nesdale & Lawson, 2011).

Studies have also examined the impact of norms on intergroup behaviour. Franca and Monteiro (2013, Study 2) investigated White children's allocation of resources to White and Black target children in different normative contexts. They found that White children allocated more resources to White than Black children when the anti-racism norm was not salient versus when the anti-racism norm was salient (the Black interviewer was present). More recently, Sierksma Thijs and Verkuyten (2014) examined the role of empathy and peer group norms in relation to children's intergroup helping. They found that in a low need situation, when helping was public, children intended to help outgroup peers more than ingroup peers, particularly when they perceived an accepting classroom norm about the outgroup. According to Sierksma et al., children appear to consider peer group norms when others know about their helping behaviour and are inclined to present themselves favourably by helping the outgroup more compared with the ingroup. However, in high need situations they found children's empathic tendencies, rather than perceived peer group norms, predicted their intergroup helping intentions.

In their review, Abrams and Rutland (2008) maintain that individuals understand that they are expected to behave in accordance with group norms so as to avoid social sanction, disapproval and ostracisation. According to research by Abrams, Rutland and Cameron (2003) in-group deviants engaging in anti-normative behaviour may be viewed as undermining the validity of group norms thereby reducing their chances of retaining their position within the group. Indeed, children show less and less liking for in group members who do not conform to ingroup norms (Nesdale & Brown, 2004; Abrams et al., 2003).

Conversely, (using a group simulation paradigm) Nesdale and Lawson (2011) found that as the children increased in age, they showed less liking for ingroup members who communicated a ingroup norm of exclusion (where they were told that in order to be a member of the team they must not like or be friendly to any members of the other teams). Nesdale and Lawson observed that although older children's outgroup attitudes were still consistent with the ingroup norm they were clearly unhappy about the exclusion group norm and consequently they liked the ingroup less. It is possible that the children might have reacted to being assigned to a group with such a group norm.

To summarise, whether or not children's intergroup attitudes and behaviour are influenced by group norms depends on a complex interplay between: their age (and awareness and understanding of group norms and consequences of deviating from same); their empathic tendencies; the level of perceived outgroup need; and whether their attitudes and behaviours are public or private.

Interestingly, Nesdale and Lawson (2011) found that children's attitudes towards the outgroup were significantly more positive when there was a school norm that endorsed inclusion than when there was not. This leads us to a discussion of the influence of wider social norms on prejudice.

2.18 Social norms and prejudice

Of course children's attitudes towards different groups are not solely influenced by the attitudes of their peer group. Nor do they simply come about from contact with members of these different groups. Sherif and Sherif (1953) describe the influence of social norms on intergroup attitude formation

> *attitudes towards members of other groups are not determined so much by experiences while in contact with the groups in question as by contact with the attitudes towards these groups prevailing among the older members of the group in which they develop.* (*p94-95*)

In line with this idea, Rutland, Cameron, Milne and McGeorge (2005) assert that social norms prescribe appropriate attitudes, values and behaviour in a given situation. There are a number of means by which social norms are communicated. For example, norms can be conveyed through the mass media (see Mutz and Goldman, 2010; Brown Graves, 1999) national laws (e.g equal opportunity legislation) and special multi-cultural education programmes (e.g Bigler, 1999) which promote tolerance and appreciation of cultural diversity in elementary schools and wider society.

The omnipresence of mass media (particularly television) in contemporary life means that it is an especially important source of information about different groups. Research in the United States indicates that on average children watch 3-5 hours of television per day (Roberts & Foehr, 2004). Therefore, Vittrup and Holden (2011) argue, television has taken on the role of a socialising agent. Through television, children not only learn about people of other racial and ethnic groups, they also learn about societal customs, values, morals and expectations. According to cultivation theory, television "cultivates" beliefs about the world, beliefs about norms, structures, and social behaviour, through the way the world is depicted (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1986; Brown Graves, 1999). Thus, the world portrayed on television becomes the social reality of the viewer.

For those with limited contact with people of other racial and ethnic groups, television becomes a critical source of knowledge and opinion formation (Fuijoka, 1999; Tan, Fuijoka, & Lucht, 1997) and a source of "contact" that ingroup members can have with outgroup members. In fact research from the United States demonstrates that the majority of people are exposed to outgroup members more through mass media than through face to face contact (e.g Charles 2003; Dixon and Rosenbaum, 2004).

However, when outgroups are presented in stereotypical ways this can have negative implications for attitudes. Previous research supports the connection between television exposure and racial attitudes among adults. For example, frequent exposure to stereotypical portrayals of Blacks is associated with greater endorsement of such stereotypes and more negative attitudes towards Blacks in general (Dixon, 2008; Lee, Bichard, Irey, Walt & Carlson, 2009; Ramasubramanian, 2010). Similarly, surveys have demonstrated significant correlations between self-reported media exposure and stereotypical beliefs about women (Mares & Woodward, 2005; Oppliger, 2007). However, correlational evidence provides a weak basis for causal inference. For example, people may

selectively expose themselves to media content congruent with their prejudices (Ball-Rokeach, Grube and Rokeach, 1981).

Experimental studies make a more convincing case that exposure to mass media has the capacity to alter levels of prejudice in both negative and positive directions. Studies employing fully randomised experimental designs demonstrated a causal link between mass media exposure and prejudice. For instance, viewing stereotypical portrayals of outgroups can lead to attributional bias. Ford (1997) found that participants who viewed a televised comedy skit portraying Blacks stereotypically (poor uneducated and prone to acts of violence and crime) were more likely to perceive a Black student as guilty of a crime than those who viewed a neutral comedy skit (featuring Blacks but not in stereotypical ways). The perceived guilt of the White subject did not vary by condition. Conversely, there is evidence that television can influence attitudes in positive directions too. Media content that included positive and sympathetic portrayals of outgroups (homosexuals) led to more positive and tolerant attitudes towards gay people (Riggle, Ellis & Crawford, 1996; Rossler a& Brosius, 2001; Schiappa, Gregg and Hewes, 2005).

It seems that portrayals of outgroup members can prime prejudice and stereotyping. Participants in Power, Murphy and Coover's (1996) study read autobiographical essays by either a stereotypic Black college student, a counter-stereotypic Black college student, or a control. Those in the stereotypic condition were more likely to endorse the anti-Black stereotypes highlighted in the treatment (lazy, unintelligent, aggressive and socially destructive) than were participants in the counter-stereotypic condition. Moreover, participants in the stereotypic condition were more likely to generalise these conclusions to seemingly unrelated people becoming increasingly likely to suggest that African American Rodney King brought the highly publicised beating by the Los Angeles police on himself (relative to the counter-stereotypic condition) while participants in the counter-stereotypic condition were more likely to say he was innocent (relative to the control and stereotypic conditions).

Research linking media exposure to adults' prejudicial attitudes has implications for children's attitudes too. As previously discussed, adults/parents can influence their children's attitudes by their non-verbal behaviour (Castelli, DeDea, and Nesdale, 2008).

An additional problem relevant to media and intergroup attitudes is that minority groups (at least in the United States) are significantly underrepresented on prime time television (Children Now, 2004, as cited in Vittrup and Holden, 2011). Consequently the limited presence of ethnic minorities on television could lead viewers to believe that these groups are not important.

As well as being underrepresented, compared to Whites, minorities on television are more likely to hold low status jobs, be aggressive or engage in criminal activity (Brown-Givens and Monahan, 2005; Children Now, 2004, as cited in Vittrup and Holden, 2011; Brown Graves, 1999). According to Vittrup and Holden (2011) this promotes the view that minorities lack power and status. Citing the work of Bigler and colleagues, Vittrup and Holden highlight that children do in fact pick up on status cues and such cues can influence their intergroup attitudes (Bigler, Averhart, & Liben, 2003; Bigler et al., 2001). Recent research also suggests that young people's racial attitudes can be influenced by race biases displayed through nonverbal behaviour in television programmes (Weisbuch, Pauker, & Ambady, 2009). Weisbuch et al. (2009) reported that exposure to television characters exhibiting

pro-White (versus pro-Black) nonverbal behaviors was sufficient to increase race-based automatic associations, so that Black people were more easily paired to negative features.

Television can influence children's intergroup attitudes in positive directions too. For example, White children who watched Sesame Street's race curriculum which promoted cross-racial friendships reported more positive attitudes towards Blacks and Latinos (Fisch, Truglio, and Cole, 1999; Lovelace and Scheiner, 1994). Similarly, students who watched educational videos focusing on fairness, awareness, inclusion and respect reported more positive attitudes towards cross-race relationships and were more likely to make cross-race friendship selection compared to controls (Brown Graves, 1999). In Northern Ireland, Connolly, Fitzpatrick, Gallagher and Harris (2006) found that children exposed to a pro-tolerance TV ad campaign and a pre-school curriculum that elaborated on key themes, increased their awareness of the emotional consequences of being excluded and their willingness to play with hypothetical outgroup girls.

Interestingly, although children in Lovelace and Scheiner's (1994) study said that they would like to be friends with a Black child they still thought that their mothers as well as the mothers in the video would be sad or angry about the friendship. This illustrates how prejudice is a multi-faceted and multiply determined problem.

Hence the available evidence suggests that social norms communicated via various forms of media can influence the intergroup attitudes of adults, adolescents, and children in both positive and negative directions.

In addition, research suggests that social norms can influence the expression of prejudice among children. For example, in western societies a contemporary social norm is to avoid expressing discriminatory attitudes or behaviour towards individuals based on their ethnic or racial group membership (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991). Research studies support the idea that children attend to the social norm that blatant or straightforward racial discrimination is inappropriate (Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin & Stangor, 2002; Killen &Stangor, 2001). In addition social norms and children's concern for self-presentation affects their explicit racial (and other) intergroup attitudes (Katz, Sohn & Zalk, 1975; Rutland, Cameron, Milne & McGeorge, 2005).

In light of research on the influence of media on intergroup attitudes and the media portrayal of Travellers discussed in the introduction, it seems plausible to argue that one would develop a negative attitude towards Travellers as a result of media exposure. In terms of newspaper coverage, Travellers have been frequently described in stereotypically negative terms and portrayed in situations of conflict and engaging in anti-social behaviour (Bhreathnach, 1988; Breen & Devereux, 2003; de la Torre Castillo, 2012). Though (to the author's knowledge) no statistics are available, anecdotal evidence suggests that Travellers are underrepresented on television. Nor are they seen interacting with other groups frequently (potentially sending the message that groups are meant to be segregated). Furthermore, in terms of curriculum they are either invisible (McGaughey, 2011) or presented as lawless, irresponsible and a threat to the dominant community (Bryan, 2007). While the link between media exposure and attitudes towards Travellers has not been examined directly, there is abundant evidence of prejudice towards Travellers amongst adults, and young people who have presumably been exposed to multiple media sources (Devine et al., 2004; AITHS, 2010; Lodge & Lynch, 2004; MacGreil, 2010; Tormey & Gleeson, 2012).

Hitherto, the review has examined theoretical literature relating to the psychology of prejudice. Social cognitive, motivational and environmental factors have been considered. Understanding how these factors play a role in creating and/or maintaining prejudice provides a fundamental key to reducing prejudice. For instance, if prejudice derives from individuals stereotyping and making broad generalisations about groups, it follows that enhancing individuals' capacity to attend to individuating information could reduce such bias. Similarly, if intergroup competition leads to negative attitudes and hostility, it is possible that mutual interdependence could promote opposing and positive effects. Hence, it is timely to present an analysis of research investigating theoretically informed interventions to combat prejudice in children.

2.19 Research literature- Review of interventions to reduce prejudice and/or improve intergroup relations

There is a substantial amount of research on both psychological and educational interventions. Many of the prejudice reduction interventions target a particular psychological process implicated in the development of prejudiced attitudes. While many interventions focus on similar psychological processes for change, they use varied strategies to achieve this change.

There are numerous ways in which the interventions can be classified or categorised. For the purposes of this review, approaches have been categorised as follows:

- Interventions that promote children's social-cognitive capacities (including categorisation and perspective taking)
- Intergroup contact interventions that include programmes based on contact between members of different social groups
- Media interventions (including programmes based on indirect contact between groups)

 It should be noted that categories are not mutually exclusive and sometimes a number of approaches are used in combination.

A brief summary/recap of the psychological theory/theories that inform(s) each intervention is presented first. This is followed by an interrogation of the effectiveness of the particular approach with respect to improving intergroup attitudes and/or relations. Consideration is also given to the intervention's suitability for use in the Irish primary school context with the aim of increasing positivity towards members of the Traveller community.

2.20 Interventions targeting social cognitive capacities

Firstly, as has been discussed at length in the theoretical section, the way we process and organise social information can lead to prejudice and discrimination. Therefore many scholars have attempted to improve children's social cognitive skills to reduce the tendency to stereotype and make generalisations about groups. There is a view that children's intergroup attitudes often reflect their stage in socio-cognitive development and research suggests that as children develop distinct socio-cognitive abilities there is a decreasing tendency to hold (explicitly) biased attitudes. For example, children with more advanced classification skills have been found to be less rigid stereotypers than those with less advanced skills (Leahy & Shirk 1984; Trautner et al 1983, as cited in Bigler & Liben, 1992).

2.20.1 Multiple classification skills training interventions

Accordingly, a number studies have examined whether improving children's multiple classification skills leads to a reduction in gender stereotyping (Bigler & Liben, 1992) and biased attitudes towards different stigmatised groups, namely: physically disabled children, those with learning difficulties; and refugees (Cameron, Rutland & Brown, 2007).

Multiple classification skill training interventions typically involved 5 or 6 sessions where children were taught to sort photographs of people along multiple dimensions. Bigler and Liben found a reduction in gender stereotyping among children who received such skill training. However, while children in Cameron and colleagues study showed an improvement in their multiple classification skills, a corresponding improvement in attitudes towards the various outgroups was not found. In fact, the multiple classification skills training was ineffective in changing children's attitudes and intended friendship behaviour towards the disabled outgroups and the refugees.

Cameron et al., identify a fundamental difference between their studies and that of Bigler and Liben. The latter looked at the effects of training on outgroup stereotyping whereas Cameron and colleagues looked at the influence of training on attitudes. Indeed, there is an important distinction between intergroup attitudes and children's stereotypes. Cameron et al. argue that conceivably multiple classification skills training changes the child's stereotype knowledge (for example they think that both groups can now fill either occupation) but does not affect their more affective orientated intergroup attitudes. Therefore, multiple classification training is unlikely to be a fruitful approach in terms of improving attitudes towards Travellers.

2.20.2 Interventions to enhance ability to attend to individual differences

Another social cognitive process that has been targeted by researchers is the ability to attend to individual differences. Such studies are underpinned by the principle that increasing the capacity to attend to individual qualities reduces the tendency to stereotype. For example, White children with lower levels of outgroup homogeneity expressed lower levels of prejudice (Black-Gutman Hickson, 1996; Doyle & Aboud, 1995, as cited in Aboud &Fenwick 1999). Moreover, Katz and colleagues' motivation for enhancing processing of individual differences emerged from their research that found that other-race faces appear more similar to both pre-school (Katz, 1973) and grade school children (Katz et al., 1975) and that this increased similarity is related to the ease with which children maintain stereotypes. Consequently, Katz and Zalk (1978) trained children in the ability to perceive differences among members of the same group. They trained children at different stages of socio-cognitive development (second graders and fifth graders). Children exposed to a fifteen minute training session in which they learned to associate individual names with Black stimulus faces showed greater reductions in prejudice than a control group who associated names with White faces (Katz and Zalk, 1978). In addition, they showed that relative to students in the control condition, fifth graders in the experimental condition pictorially represented the desire for less social distance between themselves and Black children and second graders in the experimental condition were more likely to select a seat closer to the Black adult experimenter. However, such an approach would be problematic with Travellers due to their lack of perceptual salience.

Aboud and Fenwick (1999) also attempted to strengthen attention to individual rather than racial qualities of people. Their study involved fifth graders who participated in an eleven week school

based intervention to strengthen the processing of internal, individual difference information. Activities involved group discussion, dyadic problem solving and individual work where students attended to within-group differences and between group similarities. Students were pre-tested and post-tested 2 months after the programme finished. They found that high prejudiced White students in the intervention class showed a significant decrease in composite prejudice after the programme (using the Multi-response Racial Attitude measure). There were no changes in attitudes of Black students as a result of the programme.

They acknowledge that identifying the actual social cognitive skill that led to prejudice reduction is difficult in an 11 week programme. However, it is encouraging that White children in the intervention group improved their ability to attend to internal attributes when comparing children from the same racial group. Again one wonders whether Travellers' relative lack of perceptual salience would act as a barrier to the effectiveness of such an approach.

2.20.3 Interventions targeting social categorisation

As discussed previously, categorising people into groups can lead to intergroup bias. Indeed research suggests that people tend to favour ingroup members over outgroup members in terms of their evaluations, feelings, and actions (Cameron et al., 2006; Kinzler et al., 2012; Nesdale et al., 2008; Renno & Shutts, 2015; Rutland et al., 2007). Therefore, the cognitive process of social categorisation has been the target of many interventions with the ultimate goal of improving intergroup attitudes and relations. However, scholars have differed in their approach to changing the ways in which people/children categorise.

2.20.3.1 Decategorisation

According to a decategorisation approach (as proposed by Brewer and Miller, 1984) individual identity is emphasised over group identity. It is thought that reducing the salience of group categorisation will lead to a more individuated mode of information processing and enhance the potential for group stereotype disconfirmation (Brewer & Miller, 1984, Brewer & Miller, 1986, as cited in Gonzalez and Brown 2003). Hence, decategorised contact will lead to generalisation of positive outgroup attitudes beyond the contact situation because if one experiences personalised contact with several different members of the outgroup then the outgroup will become individuated and not perceived as belonging to a group.

The decategorisation model has been examined in naturalistic settings with children. Maras and Brown (2000) tested the appropriateness of categorised and decategorised theories of contact as models for improving attitudes within the social context of inclusive education for children. Decategorised schools were characterised as such where integration was taking place but children with disabilities were not clearly identified by the schools to their mainstream peers as being members of a wider group. They found that schools that downplayed the salience of a disability category tended to have children with less biased attitudes than those schools who placed more emphasis on disability (categorised schools). However, these attitudes were not any more favourable than those shown by children in control schools. Maras and Brown (2000) offer a plausible reason for the more negative attitudes observed in categorised schools. The contact which occurred was not optimal in terms of Allport's (1954) criteria namely: meaningful intergroup contact, sanction for contact from authority figures, equal status and cooperative interdependence.

2.20.3.2 Recategorisation

A second perspective is to recategorise ingroup and outgroup members as belonging to a larger superordinate group. According to the common ingroup identity model proposed by Gaertner et al 1989 and reformulated by Gaertner et al 2000, in order to reduce intergroup bias, members of different groups should be induced to conceive of themselves as a single group rather than as completely separate groups. The development of a common ingroup identity should reduce bias primarily by increasing the attractiveness of former outgroup members because of their revised group status (Dovidio, Gaertner, Isen, & Lowrance, 1995).

A survey study with students in a multi-ethnic high school (Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio Bachman & Anastasio, 1996) provides support for the common ingroup identity model. It was found that the more favourable the participants reported the conditions of contact between the groups (e.g cooperation) the more the school felt like one group. Furthermore, the more it felt like one group the lower the bias in the affective reactions in the high school (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2005).

The general principles of the common ingroup identity model have also been tested in an applied setting specifically a multi-ethnic elementary school (Houlette et al., 2004). First and second grade children participated in a programme of activities designed to help them bring people from different groups conceptually into their own circle of caring and sharing. Results indicated that children in the experimental group still had a general preference for playing with children of the same race rather than a different race. However, compared to the control group, children in the experimental group showed greater increase in willingness to select as the child from the 8 drawings who was different from them in terms of race, sex, and weight as the child they would "most want to play with". Therefore, there is some indication that children in the experimental group reported greater willingness to cross group boundaries in making friends.

The common ingroup identity model has been criticised on a number of counts. Firstly Gonzalez and Brown (2003) argue that the causal antecedents of reduced bias observed in 'one group' situations are not always unambiguously identified. The same authors note that the reduction in bias tends to be observed in the contact situation only. Furthermore, Gonzalez and Brown maintain that when measures of generalisation have been included (as in studies by Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Bachman, & Anastasio, 1994 and Dovidio et al., 1997) the results are not always as strong as expected. Another problem reported in the literature is that full recategorisation might be difficult to achieve in real life situations as individuals might resist abandoning important group identities (Huo, Smith, Tyler & Lind, 1996; Van Oudenhoven, Prins & Buunk, 1998). Hence an alternative categorisation strategy (the dual identity model) has been proposed.

2.20.3.3 Dual categorisation

According to the Dual identity model (Gonzalez & Brown 2003) the ingroup-outgroup distinction is maintained and a superordinate identity is simultaneously invoked. The strategy is thought to facilitate generalisation of positive attitudes from individual to group because some subgroup salience is maintained. Furthermore, it is regarded as potentially less costly for minority groups who might fear being assimilated into a larger category.

Researchers have compared the different models of categorisation (using different conditions of contact) to observe their effects on variables such as intergroup attitudes and intended friendship behaviour (Cameron et al., 2006; Gonzalez & Brown 2003). Cameron and colleagues used indirect contact which is based on the theory that simply being aware of intergroup friendships between a member of one's own group and another group can improve intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997). Frequently indirect contact is achieved by children reading stories about ingroup and outgroup members in friendship situations. Whereas, Gonzalez and Brown created a direct contact situation (with adults) where they were engaged in an intergroup cooperative task.

In Cameron and colleagues' study the dual identity model of indirect contact (where subgroup identities of the protagonists as host majority members and refugees were salient while also underlining their common school identity) was found to be most effective in terms of improving children's attitudes towards refugees. Similar findings have been reported with adults who were randomly assigned to experimentally-created social categories. Dual identity (and superordinate identity) were found to be most effective in generalising positive attitudes beyond the contact situation (Gonzalez & Brown, 2003).

However, there was less evidence that any of the categorisation approaches changed the children's outgroup intended behaviour (Cameron et al., 2006). This is in line with previous research that suggests that outgroup attitudes and behaviour are distinctive phenomena (Aboud et al 2003).

2.20.3.4 Intergroup model

Later research challenged the need to emphasise common ingroup membership during intergroup contact. The intergroup model of contact proposed by Hewstone and Brown (1986) holds that the positive effects of contact will be generalised to the outgroup during contact when ingroup and outgroup boundaries remain salient (without a common ingroup being emphasised). Additionally, scholars recommend stressing the typicality of the outgroup member (Brown, Vivian & Hewstone, 1999; Maras &Brown, 1996).

Several studies support the intergroup model of extended contact with children. Cameron and Rutland (2006) found that extended contact was most successful in terms of improving children's attitudes towards disabled children when stories stressed the group membership of the characters i.e disabled and non-disabled (rather than just their individual qualities). Further evidence that outgroup attitudes can be improved following extended contact that emphasises subgroup identities only (without a common ingroup) was provided by Cameron Rutland and Brown (2007 study 1). In their study, children as young as 6-9 years reported more positive intergroup attitudes and intended behaviour towards people with disabilities than control group participants. The positive effect of the intergroup model (in terms of attitudes) was later replicated with a larger sample, wider age range and different stigmatised group (refugees) (Cameron, Rutland & Brown (2007 study 2).

Taken together these studies suggest that the superior effect of dual identity extended contact (reported earlier) may have been due to increased emphasis on subgroup identities and typicality rather than the common ingroup identity. Therefore, it seems that the intergroup model of categorisation might be the most suitable to adopt with respect to Travellers where their group membership and typicality are emphasised.

2.21 Summary of effectiveness of multiple classification and social categorisation approaches

Beelmann and Heinemann (2014) evaluated standardised psychological and/or educational intervention programmes aimed at reducing prejudice or otherwise improving intergroup attitudes and relations among children and adolescents. Their review included programmes aimed at promoting social-cognitive competencies such as multiple classification skills training and restructuring the process of social categorisation. Following their analysis of effect sizes in such programmes they drew a number of conclusions. Firstly, they did not find any significant positive changes and sometimes even negative effects of training classification skills or restructuring the process of social categorisation.

There are a number of possible reasons for the disappointing impact of multiple classification skills training on intergroup attitudes. Beelmann and Heinemann (2014) suggest that such training is ineffective because it tends to be restricted to classification skills for non-social characteristics. Secondly, as reported previously, while multiple classification skill training improves classification skills, it has little impact on the affective component of intergroup attitudes (Cameron et al., 2007). Thirdly, contrary to research that associates advanced classification skills with more flexible thinking about different groups (Bigler and Liben, 1992), a recent meta-analysis of individual prejudice predictors in childhood and adolescence found otherwise. According to Heinemann and Beelmann, 2011, as cited in Beelmann and Heinemann (2014) multiple classification skills did not correlate significantly with prejudice at any stage of development. Finally, while, research reports that prejudice declines in childhood at around age 7 (Aboud, 2003; Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001) (an age when children develop the ability to classify across multiple dimensions) such decline in bias might be less attributable to the development of classification skills and more to do with social desirability concerns. Indeed, although children's explicit bias reduces around age 6 there is no corresponding change in implicit bias from 6 years to adulthood (Baron & Banaji 2006; Dunham, Baron & Banaji 2006).

The non-significant effect sizes reported in Beelmann and Heinemann's (2014) meta-analysis of social categorisation interventions could be due to a number of factors. It is possible that modifying social categorisations could have negative effects when training sensitises members of the target group to social categories that they were not aware of before the start of the programme (i.e they serve as a root for subsequent prejudice). In addition, it seems that how social categorisation takes place is important because some approaches are more effective than others. As discussed earlier, dual categorisation and intergroup models have demonstrated effectiveness in improving intergroup attitudes (Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron & Rutland 2006; Cameron et al., 2007). Lastly, there are other important variables such as the commitment and quality of the programme trainer. According to Beelmann and Heinemann (2014) interventions with a trainer who was actively involved in the programme administration yielded significantly higher effect sizes than interventions without this element.

While, results from social categorisation and multiple classification interventions were somewhat disappointing, promoting another social cognitive capacity showed promise. Beelman and Heinemann (2014) describe how (in their meta-analysis) training in empathy and perspective taking demonstrated high potential for promoting intergroup attitudes via social cognitive abilities.

2.22 Perspective taking interventions

A number of studies have found that empathy facilitates prosocial behaviour (Litvack-Miller, McDougall & Romney 1997; Strayer & Roberts, 2004; Warden & McKinnon, 2003) and that it can be enhanced through training (Feshbach 1989; Crabb, Moracco & Bender, 1983; Goldstein &Michaels, 1985,. Moreover, research by Nesdale and colleagues demonstrated that the development of empathy in children served to increase their liking for members of an ethnic minority group (Nesdale et al., 2005). Perhaps, for these reasons, empathy has been incorporated into several intergroup relations programmes.

Drawing on relevant social psychological literature, Stephan and Finlay (1999) conclude that empathy can take a variety of forms, be induced in several ways, and influence different aspects of intergroup relations.

Scholars distinguish between two types of empathy: cognitive empathy and emotional empathy. Stephan and Finlay (1999) explain how the first refers to taking the perspective of another person whereas the second refers to emotional responses to another person that are either similar to those the other person is experiencing (parallel empathy) or are a reaction to the emotional experience of the person (reactive empathy).

Researchers have used different techniques to create/facilitate empathy in children and adolescents. They include (but are not limited to) multi-cultural education, cooperative learning groups, discrimination simulations, and media-generated experiences.

Most multi-cultural education programmes involve empathy to a greater or lesser extent. Typically such programmes present materials about different groups and/or facilitate activities that are designed to give insight into the values, norms and behaviours of other groups. Results include improved attitudes towards African –Americans (Litcher and Johnson, 1969) and decreased social distance among both African American and White elementary school students (Colca, Lowen, Colca and Lord, 1982). However, Bryan (2007) argues that curricular efforts to enhance understanding of Travellers and appreciation for diversity "is perhaps more likely to reproduce rather than contest racist ideologies" (p.256).

There is also a belief that when children work interdependently with children from other groups (over a series of cooperative learning tasks) they learn to view their world from their perspective. Indeed, Bridgeman (1981) found that the empathy scores of children in ethnically diverse cooperative learning groups increased over the course of an eight week study. Whereas empathy scores of children in the control group did not. Aronson and Bridgeman (1979) argue that improvements in intergroup relations (such as increased cross-ethnic liking and helping behaviour) that occur in so called jigsaw classrooms are due in part to empathy.

Researchers propose several explanations to account for the role of empathy in improving intergroup relations. According to Stephan and Finlay (1999) coming to understand the worldview of members of the other group may be effective at changing stereotypes and attributional patterns. Furthermore, when empathy creates cognitive dissonance, participants are motivated to reduce the discrepancy between their attitudes and behaviour by changing their attitudes towards a previously disliked outgroup (Rokeach, 1971).

However, in the aforementioned interventions (cooperative learning groups and multi-cultural education courses) empathy is just one component of a multi-faceted programme. Therefore it is difficult to determine its precise effects. Even though Bridgeman measured empathy no analyses were conducted to examine its mediational role. Hence, Stephan and Finlay (1999) lament the dearth of studies that measure empathy as either a mediating or outcome variable.

Another approach to inducing empathy entails the use of discrimination simulation exercises. Perhaps best known is Jane Elliot's "Blue Eyes-Brown Eyes" simulation that was used in her predominantly White rural primary school in Iowa (Peters, 1987). In a similar study by Weiner and Wright (1973) third grade children were divided into groups and then each group experienced a day in which they were stereotyped, discriminated against and not praised by the teacher. The children exposed to this experience were less prejudiced than a comparison group in terms of expressed beliefs about Black children and desire to have a picnic with a group of Black children. The effects persisted for at least two weeks. It is thought that the experience of discrimination created parallel empathy where participants felt emotions similar to outgroup members, thus facilitating a more sensitive understanding of how the targets of discrimination in society feel. Batson and Ahmad (2009) speculate that experiencing discrimination might also prompt more situational attributions for the behaviour of outgroup members and more positive feelings towards them including empathic concern. However, introducing a discrimination simulation in a modern Irish primary school would raise many ethical challenges.

Media generated experiences can also facilitate empathy. Batson and Ahmad (2009) argue that such approaches are underpinned by the belief that by imagining the thoughts and feelings of a member of a stigmatised group as he or she attempts to cope, we can be led to value this person's welfare and feel empathic concern. Furthermore, it is hypothesised that these empathic feelings will generalise leading to more positive attitudes towards the outgroup as a whole. Indeed there is evidence that positive media exposure to individual members of an outgroup can lead to more positive attitudes towards the entire outgroup (Brown Graves, 1999). Similarly, Paluck (2009) found that those who listened to a radio soap opera in Rwanda (featuring the struggles of a young cross-group couple) were more accepting of cross-group marriage and more willing to trust and to cooperate with others in their community (which included outgroup members) than those in a comparison group.

Despite the reported benefits of inducing empathy towards outgroups, Stephan and Finlay (1999) maintain that empathy can also lead to undesirable outcomes such as defensive avoidance and more negative attitudes. For instance, the greater one identifies with a victim, the greater the likelihood that they will fear that similar suffering could befall them which may lead to defensive avoidance. Furthermore, when a person is threatened by the prospect of their own vulnerability they could distance themselves from victims of discrimination and this could lead to more negative attitudes. According to Boler (1997), there is also the risk of creating compassion without simultaneously leading participants to recognise that they themselves are implicated in the social forces responsible for the suffering with which they are empathising. One wonders whether inducing empathy towards Travellers would have the unintended consequence of exacerbating a tendency towards patronising pity that has been reported in previous studies (O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001).

In order to maximise the impact of empathy in intergroup relations programme, Stephan and Finlay (1999) recommend that researchers match their procedures to their goals. For example, induce cognitive empathy if the goal is greater intergroup understanding and parallel empathy if social action is required. They also advocate giving participants explicit instructions to empathise. Boler (1997) emphasises the need to provide opportunities for participants to challenge their own assumptions and worldviews and according to Nesdale et al. (2005b) there needs to be group norms of inclusion. Creating group norms of inclusion might be particularly difficult with respect to Travellers as there is evidence that discrimination against Travellers is so widespread that it has been described as the last 'respectable' form of racism (Lloyd and McCluskey, 2008).

2.23 Contact interventions

While previous interventions have targeted psychological processes such as perspective taking and social categorisation, contact interventions focus on creating contact between groups that may in turn influence cognitive and emotional processes. Intergroup contact may be a result of specific interventions designed to create such contact (for example cooperative learning programmes) or may be a consequence of changes in school structure or policies, such as racial desegregation, as well as cultural immersion programmes and bilingual education.

As discussed earlier, according to Allport's (1954) 'intergroup contact hypothesis' prejudice and discrimination are a consequence of unfamiliarity with the out-group. In his seminal text *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954), Allport argued that a critical source of prejudice is segregation or intergroup contact characterised by low levels of interdependence and unequal status sanctioned by authority. Hence, many interventions have attempted to create Allport's conditions of optimal intergroup contact to reduce prejudice namely: meaningful intergroup contact, sanction for contact from authority figures, equal status and cooperative interdependence. Indeed a large body of research suggests that intergroup contact can lead to a reduction in intergroup bias (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000) and research suggests that the effect of contact is stronger in contexts in which Allport's optimal conditions were met (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner & Christ, 2011).

Researchers have attempted to understand how contact diminishes prejudice. In their meta-analysis of more than 500 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) found that enhancing knowledge about the outgroup mediates contact effects. For example, when one is exposed to many outgroup individuals one learns about unique attributes that can distinguish them from other group members thereby helping to disconfirm stereotypes about the outgroup.

Reducing anxiety about intergroup contact has been identified as an even stronger mediator of contact (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008). According to a meta-analysis published in 2000, Pettigrew and Tropp estimated that 20-25% of the effect of contact in reducing prejudice is explained by a reduction in intergroup anxiety. Furthermore, according to Kenworthy, Turner, Hewstone and Voci (2005) cross-group friendship is thought to be one of the best predictors of better intergroup attitudes because of its impact in terms of reducing anxiety and threat.

There is also a view that intergroup contact (especially close cross-group friendship) may enable one to take the perspective of outgroup members and empathise with their concerns which could in turn contribute to improved intergroup attitudes. This contention is supported by Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) where they found that empathy and perspective taking yielded strong mediational effects.

The positive effects of contact have been found in ethnically diverse schools. Students with diverse school populations demonstrate more positive attitudes towards minorities than those in ethnically homogenous schools (Rutland, Cameron, Bennett & Ferrell, 2005). They also show less bias in their interpretations of peer dyadic encounters (McGlothlin, Killen & Edmonds, 2005; McGlothlin & Killen, 2006). Receiving bilingual (as opposed to English only) instruction has been associated with a greater tendency among White English speaking students to select minority (Latino) targets as friends (Wright & Tropp, 2005). Research by Aboud, Mendelson and Purdy (2003) revealed an association between cross-ethnic friendship and low levels of prejudice. Similarly, Feddes, Noack and Rutland (2009) demonstrated that cross-ethnic friendships positively altered children's intergroup attitudes. However, it is important to note that in the latter three studies positive effects were only apparent among majority group children and Rutland et al only assessed majority group children.

The differential effects of contact for majority and minority groups have also been reported by Tropp and colleagues. Their meta-analyses examined contact effects among children, adolescents, and adults (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005; Tropp & Prenovost, 2008) and found that the effects of contact are significantly stronger for majority rather than minority status groups. Several explanations have been offered to account for these differences. Firstly, minority group members tend to be well aware of their group's lower status (Jones et al., 1984) and therefore are frequently aware of being a possible victim of prejudice (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998). Hence, Tropp and Pettigrew (2005) suspect that perceived discrimination or perceived differences in group status might inhibit the effects of contact on prejudice among minority group members but not among majority group members. This view is consistent with studies showing that minority group members' intergroup attitudes are closely tied to their perception of prejudice from the majority group (Livingston, Brewer & Alexander, 2004, as cited in Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005; Monteith & Spicer, 2000) and that exposure to prejudice from the majority group can provoke more negative intergroup attitudes among members of the minority group (Tropp, 2003).

Another problem with assessing the effects of intergroup contact is that it is difficult to establish a causal sequence. Does contact reduce prejudice or does prejudice reduce contact? For instance, it is plausible that prejudiced people are unlikely to seek opportunities for contact with outgroup members and indeed may actively avoid them. Pettigrew and Tropp (2000) attempted to overcome this limitation by reviewing studies that included intergroup situations that severely limited choice. By eliminating the possibility that initial attitudes caused differential contact such research provides a clearer indication of how intergroup contact alters prejudice. Interestingly, the 'no-choice' studies provided by far the largest effect sizes for between intergroup contact and prejudice (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2000).

School based instructional practices that oblige students from diverse ethnic groups to work together are examples of 'no-choice' intergroup situations. Therefore, it is timely to critique such practices in relation to their effectiveness at improving intergroup attitudes and relations.

2.23.1 Cooperative learning interventions

Many instructional practices include the conditions advocated by Allport (1954) to combat prejudice. Specifically, several models of cooperative learning structure learning in such a way so as to enhance interdependence. Cooperative learning involves children/adolescents being placed in academically and ethnically heterogenous groups to work on tasks connected to class learning objectives.

Students must teach and learn from each other. In order for each student to succeed the other students in the group must succeed. A number of variants of cooperative learning models exist (with each model enhancing interdependence differently). For example Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) developed by Slavin (1995) rewards interdependence by assigning grades to each student in a group based on the average performance of everyone in the group. According to the cooperative learning method devised by David Johnson and Roger Johnson (1994), students are praised and rewarded as a group.

The effectiveness of cooperative learning as a means to promote intergroup relations and intergroup attitudes has been investigated in a variety of contexts such as Australia, Canada, Norway, Spain and the United States of America. Some models of cooperative learning appear to be more successful than others (Slavin and Cooper, 1999).

Typically cooperative learning programmes are used with children in grades 4-10 ranging in age from approximately 9 to 16. In the research reviewed, programme duration ranged from 10 instructional days to 7 months and target minority groups included Aborigines, African-Americans, Arabs, Asians, Blacks, Latin-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, Pakistanis, Turks, and Vietnamese.

Different measures have been used to assess the impact of cooperative learning on intergroup attitudes and relations. Frequently the impact on cross-race friendships has been examined.

Participation in STAD has been found to have positive effects on cross-race friendship choices with students in the experimental group making significantly more cross-race friendship choices than those in the control group (Slavin 1979; Slavin & Oickle, 1981, Hansell & Slavin, 1981). Again, as previously discussed, the effect is sometimes greater for majority group members rather than minority group members. Slavin and Oickle (1981) found significant gains in White friendships with African Americans as a consequence of STAD but no difference in African American friendships with Whites.

There is evidence that compared to competitive and individualistic learning experiences, cooperative learning experiences promote more interpersonal attraction (Johnson & Johnson, 1985) and cross-ethnic interaction in both instructional and free time activities (Johnson & Johnson 1981; 1982). Furthermore, this interaction is characterised by greater perceived helping between minority and majority students and stronger beliefs that students encourage and support each other's efforts to learn (Johnson & Johnson 1981). There is also evidence that relationships formed within cooperative learning situations generalised into home activities (as well as unstructured class and school activities) (Warring, Johnson, Maruyama & Johnson, 1985).

Few longitudinal studies have been conducted to examine the long-term impact of cooperative learning programmes. However, Slavin (1979) followed up students who had participated in STAD (for 10 weeks) nine months later. He found that participants in the experimental group still made significantly more cross-race friend choices than those in the control group. Similarly, Hansell and Slavin (1981) found that students who had participated in STAD a year previously continued to have more cross-race friends than students from the control class.

Whether cooperative learning leads to more positive attitudes towards entire racial or ethnic groups is not clear. Santos Rego, Moledo and Del Mar (2005) found gains in the experimental (cooperative

learning) group in relation to intercultural attitudes compared with the control group and pre-test measures but these were not statistically significant. In a study by Bratt (2008), the Jigsaw model of cooperative learning did not show any positive effects on intergroup attitudes in 11 classes in secondary schools in Norway. He posits that the failure to produce positive effects may be due to the fact that none of the specific minority groups were large enough to be represented in most of the Jigsaw groups. This is important because the study used attitudes towards specific ethnic groups as outcome variables. A similar problem was encountered by Walker and Crogan (1998) in Australia. Majority group students who participated in the Jigsaw model of cooperative learning actually indicated an increased desire for social distance from Aborigines. Again Aborigines were not represented in the Jigsaw class and there were few Aborigines in the school so the children did not have opportunities to engage in interdependent activities with Aboriginal children. It is also relevant that stereotypes about Aborigines are particularly pernicious. Another study by Weigel, Wiser and Cook (1975) reported that White students who cooperated in classroom learning projects showed more positive attitudes towards Mexican Americans than those in control groups. However, no significant effect was found for White-Black, Black-White, Black-Hispanic, Hispanic-Black or Hispanic-White attitudes.

The available evidence suggests that cooperative learning does not reliably lead to improved attitudes towards entire groups. There are many factors that are likely to be important in facilitating generalisation. For example, the minority outgroup member with whom one interacts might need to be perceived as typical of their group. Otherwise they could be considered an exception. There would need to be sufficient members of the target minority group to allow all majority group members an opportunity to interact with them. Finally, the conditions of contact specified by Allport are also likely to be important.

One study that created most of Allport's (1954) conditions for optimal intergroup contact was conducted by Green and Wong (2009). They randomly assigned 54 White teenagers to racially homogenous (all white) or heterogenous expedition groups with the Outward Bound camping expedition organisation in North Carolina, USA. In these expeditions campers learn group survival techniques under the conditions for ideal intergroup contact: equal status, a common (survival) goal, authority sanction and intimate contact. One month after the two-three week trip, in an ostensibly unrelated phone survey, white teens from the heterogenous groups reported significantly less aversion to blacks and gays and described themselves as less prejudiced compared to the homogenous group teens.

There are a number of problems in relation to using a cooperative learning intervention to improve attitudes towards and relations with Irish Travellers. Firstly, the low number of Travellers in the population might make it hard for all children in a particular context to engage in a cooperative learning group with a Traveller, thus limiting the potential for impact and positive generalisation. The erratic attendance of Travellers might compound this issue. Like Aborigines, stereotypes about Travellers are also particularly pernicious. There is also the danger that children will view the interaction as interpersonal and not generalise to the wider group of Travellers. Attitudes might only improve towards one or a small subset of exceptional members of the group. Furthermore, it is hard to create Allport's conditions of optimal contact for minority members particularly the criterion for equal status. Travellers are likely to be acutely aware of their devalued status given what was discussed earlier about their experiences of discrimination in school and the wider society. It would

be hard to control the experience to ensure that it is positive and empathy inducing. It might only be effective for the majority group. There is also the issue that Travellers sometimes conceal their ethnic identity.

2.24 Media-generated experiences

The limitations of direct contact interventions lead us to a discussion of the role of media-generated experiences in reducing prejudice and improving intergroup relations. Rather than the elaborate arrangements required to create direct cooperative personal contact, one can learn about another group through media such as books and videos. Media generated experiences have a number of advantages over direct contact. Firstly, compared to face to face contact, investigators have a greater degree of control in terms of whether the experience is positive and empathy inducing. Secondly, such contact can be induced in low cost and low risk situations. Furthermore, Batson and Ahmad (2009) stress that as long as membership in the stigmatised group is a salient feature of the need for which empathy is induced, the attitude change doesn't seem vulnerable to subtyping whereby attitudes only improve towards one or a small subset of exceptional members of the group.

There is, however, another media generated experience that overcomes at least one of the limitations described by Bigler (1999). Approaches that employ indirect or vicarious contact with outgroups are informed by theories of attitude change and are discussed below.

2.25 Indirect contact

The extended intergroup contact hypothesis is derived from the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) and is based on the idea that merely being aware of intergroup friendships between a member of one's own group and another group can also improve intergroup attitudes (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin, Volpe, and Ropp, 1997). Specifically Wright et al., define extended contact as the knowledge or observation that one or more ingroup members have contact with one or more outgroup friends.

2.26 Forms of indirect contact

Scholars distinguish between two forms of indirect contact (Dovidio et al., 2011). Firstly, extended contact consists of knowing that ingroup members have contact with outgroup members. The second form of indirect contact is vicarious contact defined as the direct observation of an interaction between ingroup and outgroup members.

Indirect contact builds on the insights of research on the contact hypothesis. Wright et al (1997) proposed that extended contact is effective because it capitalises on the benefits of crossgroup friendship, it makes group members salient, and it reduces negative emotions such as intergroup anxiety.

Scholars have drawn on a variety of theories to explain why both extended and vicarious contact can improve intergroup relations (Vezzali, Hewstone, Capozza, Giovannini and Wolfer, 2014).

Balance theory (Heider, 1958) maintains that individuals try to reach balanced states. A situation that could cause imbalance is when an ingroup member and friend has a positive relationship with a

disliked outgroup member. One way to resolve the imbalance would be to improve attitudes towards the outgroup.

According to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) people learn social norms and how to behave from the observation of others. Thus, observing a successful cross-group interaction can suggest that ingroup members are positively inclined towards the outgroup and thereby indicate the appropriate behaviour during contact.

Self-perception theory (Bem, 1972) holds that people sometimes infer their own attitudes from the observation of their behaviour. Goldstein and Cialdini (2007) propose that these self-perception processes might also apply when considering someone else's experiences vicariously: particularly when one feels a sense of merged identity with the observed person. By observing a behaviour performed by a close other we may derive information about that person's attitudes and as a consequence (given that we perceive a merged identity with him/her) about our own attitudes. Hence observing an ingroup member who has outgroup friends may lead the observer to believe that the ingrouper, and as a consequence the observer him, or herself, has positive attitudes towards the outgroup.

In their meta-analysis of research on extended and vicarious forms of indirect contact, Vezzali and colleagues (2014) draw a number of conclusions. Firstly, since 1997, research has yielded extensive and consistent evidence supporting the beneficial effects of indirect contact (extended and vicarious) on intergroup relations. Secondly, they observe that extended contact research has been mainly correlational while research on vicarious contact has been mainly experimental. Typically extended contact is measured by asking participants to identify the number of ingroup friends with outgroup friends, whereas, vicarious contact tends to be manipulated via an intervention where participants observe positive cross group interactions. Given that the purpose of the literature review is to identify an appropriate intervention to reduce prejudice towards Travellers and improve intergroup relations in schools, the review is restricted to interrogating experimental interventions that used vicarious contact with children and adolescents.

2.27 Vicarious contact interventions

Research on vicarious contact has revealed its beneficial effects across a large range of contexts, situations and target groups. Positive effects were found for various target groups in Europe (e.g Vezzali et al., 2012), Africa (e.g Bilali and Vollhardt, 2013) and Israel (Cole et al., 2003). Vicarious contact was found to affect attitudes towards disabled children (Cameron and Rutland, 2006) refugees (Cameron, Rutland, Douch and Brown, 2006) and ethnic minorities (Liebkind, Mahonen, Solares, Solheim and Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2014).The effects of vicarious contact were obtained in children as young as five years of age (Cameron et al., 2006). There is evidence that vicarious contact also affects intergroup relationships in highly conflictual situations such as those characterising the relations between Israelis and Palestinians (Cole et al., 2003) and between ethnic/racial groups in Africa (Bilali and Vollhardt, 2013; Paluck, 2009).

Vicarious contact can take many forms including exposure to: TV programmes characterised by a high degree of ethnic diversity and positive cross-group interactions; specially created stories, books, newspapers or radio programmes. Many studies have incorporated vicarious contact principles into

prejudice reduction interventions in naturalistic settings. Typically these interventions entail reading stories depicting friendships between ingroup and outgroup characters.

A number of experiments have demonstrated that vicarious contact has a causal effect on prejudice reduction. Research has identified several dependent variables affected by vicarious contact that are classified below as: cognitive, affective, and behavioural consequences.

2.28 Cognitive consequences of vicarious contact

2.28.1 Stereotypes and outgroup variability

In a study by Vezzali et al., (2012) they tested experimentally whether vicarious contact was effective when using published books rather than specially created stories. Italian high school students were assigned to the three experimental conditions: intercultural reading, non-intercultural reading and no reading. In the intercultural reading condition students were asked to select a book to read from a list that included books where characters from cultures other than that of the participant had positive interactions with people from a culture similar to that of the participant. In the non-intercultural reading condition books were unrelated to intercultural topics. On a measure of outgroup stereotype traits attributed to Italians and immigrants, there were lower levels of negative stereotyping in the intercultural reading condition than in the two control groups.

Cole and colleagues (2003) used a different approach to create the conditions for vicarious contact with preschool children living in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. They tested the effect of exposure to a television programme (based on the American television series Sesame Street) on a range of measures of prejudice. The series presented messages of mutual respect and understanding and included segments depicting positive cross group interaction where characters who inhabited the Israeli street visited their friends on the Palestinian street and vice versa. The results indicated that the Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian-Israeli children displayed an increase in the use of positive attributes when shown a picture card of an adult member of the other culture. Conversely, Palestinian children displayed an increase in the use of negative attributes. The authors explain the difference between the groups in terms of the salience of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the child's daily environment: The Palestinian children were living in a more encompassing and intrusive environment of negative Israeli-Palestinian relations.

2.28.2 Cognitive attitudes towards the outgroup

Research has also indicated that vicarious contact can improve cognitive types of attitudes. For example, participants in the intercultural reading condition in Vezzali and colleagues' (2012) study reported significantly more positive attitudes towards immigrants than those in control groups. Similarly, though using a slightly different approach, Cameron and colleagues demonstrated in a series of studies that vicarious contact (achieved through reading adapted stories depicting ingroup and outgroup members in friendship situations) led to improved attitudes towards disabled children (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007, Study 1) and refugees in Great Britain (Cameron, Rutland, Brown and Douch, 2006; Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007, Study 2). They found that some models of vicarious contact were more effective than others- a matter that will be discussed under moderators of vicarious contact effects.

Liebkind and McAlister (1999) adopted another means of manipulating vicarious contact with promising results. A large sample of students aged 13-15 in Finland read stories about ingroup members engaged in close friendship with members of outgroups over two (fifty minute) sessions. There were approximately three or four stories read in each session. The stories were real experiences whereby the protagonist had changed their attitudes towards foreigners through forming personal friendships with outgroup members. The typicality of both the ingroup exemplar and the outgroup friend was enhanced by adding to the photograph of the ingroup member, a short introduction and by including in the printed stories the ingroup members' own generalisation from the outgroup member to the outgroup as a whole. Students were asked to comment on the stories and additional testimony of similar experiences was encouraged, while disagreement or debate was not encouraged. These group discussions were designed to influence group norms and the perceptions of the social desirability of tolerance. Attitudes were measured before and after the intervention. The results indicated that intergroup tolerance showed stability or favourable changes in the experimental schools while attitudes worsened or stayed the same in the control schools.

Liebkind and McAlister (1999) acknowledge that the peer modelling in the experimental group was a kind of social desirability manipulation. Further, they maintain that social desirability effects can be regarded as direct and desirable consequence of the vicarious contact intervention whose goal is precisely to create such new norms against expressions of prejudice.

2.29 Affective consequences of vicarious contact

2.29.1 Explicit outgroup attitudes

Along with cognitive measures of prejudice, studies show that affective measures are also influenced by vicarious contact. Mazziotta and colleagues (2011) manipulated vicarious contact by showing adolescent and adult participants video clips depicting successful interactions between a German and a Chinese student or two German students. The third condition showed a clip of an out-group member (Chinese student) engaging in the same activities as seen in the other two conditions, but he/she did so alone. A number of outcome measures were used including an affective measure of intergroup attitudes. Participants were asked to describe how they feel about Chinese people in general by using three bipolar adjective pairs separated by a seven-point scale: negative–positive, unpleasant–pleasant, suspicious–trusting. As predicted, the results showed that, compared with participants in both the in-group control and positive out-group member conditions, participants in the vicarious contact condition had significantly more positive intergroup attitudes.

2.29.2 Implicit outgroup attitudes

According to Gawronski and Bodenhausen (2006) implicit attitudes represent the affective reaction to an attitude object. Thus far only a few studies have tested whether vicarious contact influences implicit prejudice. Research by Weisbuch et al., (2009) and Castelli et al., (2012, Study 1) provide experimental evidence for the role of vicarious contact in influencing adults' implicit prejudice. Both studies show that being exposed to positive or negative non-verbal behaviour displayed by an ingroup member towards an outgroup target shapes the observers' implicit attitudes accordingly.

2.30 Behavioural consequences of vicarious contact

Thus far the review has illustrated the impact of vicarious contact on a number of cognitive and affective measures of prejudice. However, its influence on behavioural measures has also been demonstrated.

2.30.1 Behavioural intentions

Many studies employing experimental interventions have investigated the impact of vicarious contact on children and adolescents' behavioural intentions towards outgroups. Typically behavioural intentions are measured by presenting participants with hypothetical situations and asking them how happy they would be to engage in a range of activities with the outgroup member. Activities range from playing together in the park to having the outgroup member stay at their home overnight. According to research by Cameron and colleagues, vicarious contact had a significantly positive effect on intended friendship behaviour towards disabled children (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007). Similarly, Vezzali et al. (2012) found that children's behavioural intentions towards immigrants were more positive in the intercultural than in the non-intercultural reading condition. Furthermore, there is evidence that vicarious contact fosters the desire to meet and spend time with outgroup members (Vezzali et al., 2012; Mazziotta et al., 2011).

However, vicarious contact does not reliably lead to improved behavioural intentions towards outgroups. Cameron and colleagues found that there was no main effect for condition in relation to intended friendship behaviour towards refugees (Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007, study 2; Cameron Rutland Brown and Douch, 2006). In the latter studies ingroup identification moderated the vicarious contact effects. A later study demonstrated that vicarious contact promoted more positive intended friendship behaviour towards Indian-English children but only when children had lower rather than medium or high levels of quality direct contact (Cameron, Rutland, Hossain and Petley, 2011).

2.30.2 Formation of cross group friendships

Whether extended contact (rather than vicarious contact) can foster the development of actual intergroup friendships has also been investigated. In a study by Vezzali and colleagues (2015) Italian school children were asked to take part in a competition for the best essay on personal experiences of cross-group friendships. Their task was to write the essay in small groups, in order to make them disclose their (positive) cross-group experiences, thus increasing awareness that ingroup peers have positive relations with outgroup peers. They were also asked to evaluate the essays written by other ingroup peers: Knowing that other (anonymous) ingroup peers have outgroup friends should favour the generalization process, thus strengthening the effects of the intervention. In the control condition, participants wrote an essay on friendship, without reference to cross-group relations. Results revealed that children who took part in the intervention reported a higher number of outgroup friends 3 months later.

2.31 Mediators of indirect contact effects

Scholars have attempted to uncover the processes mediating indirect contact effects. Several mediators have been proposed including: perceived ingroup and outgroup norms; inclusion of other in self; expectancies about one's competency in contact; and anxiety.

2.31.1 Ingroup and outgroup norms

Cameron, Rutland, Hossain and Petley (2011) found that perceived outgroup norms mediated the effect of vicarious contact on intended friendship behaviour. Hence, vicarious contact resulted in more positive intended friendship behaviour by making the children think that outgroup would be more positive about cross ethnic friendship. However, only amongst older children did the perception of more positive ingroup norms lead to more positive outgroup intended behaviour. It is likely that older (rather than younger) children are more aware of the potential negative consequences of deviating from the group norms i.e exclusion (Abrams and Rutland, 2008). Therefore the more they perceived their ingroup had a positive norm about cross ethnic friendship the more positive their intended behaviour.

2.31.2 Inclusion of other in the self

Wright et al., (1997) suggested the ability to include other in the self (IOS, ie to spontaneously identify oneself with ingroup members and others) is a key mediator of indirect contact. Typically inclusion of other in self is measured by asking children to imagine meeting an unknown outgroup child and then describe the pair of circles that best illustrates their closeness to the target (ranging from no overlap to high degree of overlap). Recent research supports Wright and colleagues' hypothesis. The role of IOS as a mediator between vicarious contact and intergroup attitudes has been demonstrated with children by Cameron and colleagues (2006). Research with adolescents has demonstrated that IOS acts as a mediator between vicarious contact and intergroup attitudes, stereotypes, intergroup behavioural intentions and desire to engage in future contact (Vezzali et al., 2012).

2.31.3 Anxiety and Intergroup expectancies

As discussed earlier, cross-group interactions when anticipated and experienced can invoke feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and even a state of physiological threat in some individuals (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, Lickel, & Kowai-Bell, 2001; Plant & Devine, 2003; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). These feelings can result from concerns about whether one knows how to behave competently while navigating cross-group contact situations (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). According to Bandura (1997) the strength of one's self-efficacy beliefs determine, in large part, how one interprets the demands of situation as well as one's capacity to cope with those demands. Mazziotta et al (2011) investigated the mediational role of self-efficacy expectations and intergroup certainty in relation to German participants' attitudes towards Chinese students and their willingness for future contact. They found that observation of successful cross-group interactions increased the observer's self-efficacy expectancy, which, in turn, reduced feelings of uncertainty, which then led to more positive out-group attitudes and greater openness to direct cross-group interaction.

2.32 Moderators of indirect contact

Several moderators of vicarious contact have also been identified such as direct contact, ingroup identification and group categorisation, membership salience, and group typicality.

2.32.1 Direct contact

A longitudinal study by Feddes et al., (2009) found that direct contact is more effective at changing children's ethnic attitudes than indirect contact. Therefore, children with high levels of direct contact (particularly if conditions of contact meet Allport's, 1954 criteria) are not expected to benefit from indirect contact interventions as much as children with low levels of contact. Indeed research by Cameron and colleagues (2011) supports this hypothesis. They found that vicarious contact effects were demonstrated only amongst children who reported less high quality direct contact e.g outgroup members as acquaintances rather than close friends.

2.32.2 Ingroup identification

There is evidence that vicarious contact is especially effective with children who are highly identified with their ethnic group (Cameron et al., 2007, Study 2). However, in contrast, Cameron et al., (2006) found that vicarious contact was more effective in the dual identity condition for low identifiers. They wonder whether low identifiers in dual identity condition benefited from increased salience of the subgroup identities and the common ingroup identity. Perhaps the common ingroup identity led to increased inclusion of other in self which has been shown to mediate vicarious contact effects Cameron et al., 2006; Vezzali et al., 2012). They acknowledge that further research is required to test this hypothesis.

2.32.3 Group categorisation, membership salience, group typicality

Different models of vicarious contact have been investigated and compared in a series of studies by Cameron and colleagues. Their results indicate that group categorisation, membership salience and typicality of group members enhance generalisation of the effects of vicarious contact from specific outgroup members to the outgroup as a whole (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2007, Study 2; Cameron et al., 2011).

2.33 Key studies selected for critical review

The following section includes key studies that have been selected for critical review. Given that the purpose of the current study is to design, deliver and evaluate an intervention to promote favourable attitudes towards Travellers, the author decided to select one study to interrogate the approach used to assess/examine attitudes towards Travellers. Another study is included to investigate the possibility of targeting teachers and educators (rather than just children) with a view to facilitating more favourable intergroup relations. Lastly, the author dissects an experimental study using a theoretically informed approach to promote more positive attitudes (amongst children) towards a stigmatised group. Particular attention is paid to the model of prejudice reduction used and the means by which its impact is measured. The critique is followed by an explanation of how the review has led to the proposed study.

2.33.1 Approach to examining attitudes towards Travellers

In relation to examining attitudes towards Travellers, Devine et al., (2004) investigated primary school children's understanding and experiences of racism (rather than attitudes towards Travellers specifically). By interviewing 132 children of diverse ethnic identity (in small friendship groups) from three primary schools (one school in an area of social disadvantage and 2 of mixed social class)

researchers were able to gain in depth insight into participants' interpretations of their social worlds. In relation to Travellers, the authors cite evidence that majority ethnic children in the school in an area of social disadvantage made distinctions between legitimate abuse of Travellers (due to their lifestyle) and unfair abuse of other minority ethnic children by virtue of their skin colour. Indeed, according to Devine et al., the children's views signified an absence of identifying Travellers as a minority ethnic group. In terms of actual experience of racial abuse within the broader community, Devine et al. maintain that this was an issue that emerged predominantly in interviews with ethnic minority children. It did not appear to apply to one minority group over and above another (including Travellers). However, whilst acknowledging that other groups were vulnerable to discrimination, Traveller participants felt that they were subject to greater levels of abuse than other minority ethnic groups. They were also aware of their lower standing among their peers. Indeed in a number of instances (in the school in an area of social disadvantage) majority ethnic children suggested that the derogatory term for a Traveller 'knacker' was the worst name you could be called, highlighting the lower status of Travellers in these children's minds.

While the interview data in the Devine et al., (2004) study, suggests that negative attitudes persist towards Travellers, the number of participants that commented on Travellers was relatively small. All the quoted comments appear to emerge from children in the school located in an area of social disadvantage which comprised of 48 majority ethnic participants and 8 minority ethnic children (5 of whom were members of the Traveller community). Evidence of prejudice towards Travellers may have been less apparent in the other two schools where children might have had less contact with Travellers. It is possible that lack of exposure to Travellers means that children are less familiar with negative stereotypes about this group and this may have positive implications for their attitudes towards Travellers.

The background of the researchers is also relevant to the results obtained. One author was formerly a principal of a primary school for Travellers and another has researched extensively in the area of racism and social disadvantage (Devine, 2006; Deegan, Devine and Lodge, 2004; Devine and Kelly, 2006). It is possible that, despite their best efforts, their prior beliefs, experiences, and values influenced: the selection of schools for participation; the conduct of the interviews; and the subsequent analysis of interview data. For instance, it is likely that they believe that Travellers are a devalued group and such a belief might have prompted them to select a school with Travellers enrolled, and to probe children more thoroughly in relation to their attitudes towards Travellers rather than other minorities. It is also possible that their belief guided them to find examples consistent with their prior beliefs and expectations. Indeed Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) argue that because interviews are interpersonal, it is inevitable that the researcher will have some influence on the interviewee and thereby on the data. Thus, in a different context with different researchers perhaps a different picture of Travellers would emerge.

The research by Devine and colleagues has implications for the current study as it might help to minimise researcher bias if a numerical scale is used with all children (regardless of their experience with Travellers) to seek children's perceptions of Travellers.

2.33.2 Targeting teachers and educators to improve intergroup relations

While the literature review to date has examined theoretically informed interventions to reduce prejudice towards various outgroups, all of the research studies have targeted children for change.

Researchers have used varied strategies to alter or influence children's social cognitive capacities and/or their contact (direct and indirect) with different social groups. By contrast, Smith and Neill (2005) focused on teachers and educators in their study in Northern Ireland in relation to peace education.

Peace poems were elicited from children and young people and a sample of these were then discussed interpretatively by groups of experienced teachers and educators supported by practices from the organisational development approach called Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (see Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2003). AI is underpinned by post-modern social constructionist thought where a critical stance is adopted towards taken for granted knowledge and truths are viewed as constructed by people and sustained by social processes (Burr, 2002).

Participants included five teachers from the interpretative community of peace activists who held positions of strategic importance in terms of developing community relations policy across Northern Ireland. In addition approximately 30 professionals who were engaged with school based peace education took part. They were all middle or senior managers who held responsibility for the coordination of the curriculum elements of *Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage.*

According to Smith and Neill (2005) in the AI approach the framework for collective action includes asking a series of questions beginning with one designed to foster an appreciation of the best of what there is within an organisation (or a particular theme or issue) and a vision based on what the institution might look like. The process continues with participants collaborating and dialoguing over what should be and finally what can be. Hence, they were asked "what strikes you about the poems? What can we learn from these? What practices could develop from your learning?"

The results of Smith and Neill's narrative analysis drew attention to the influence on the developing person of the discursive processes and practices associated with living within particular and specific communities and to the contribution made by cultural contexts such as ethnicity, class, and gender to the plots people lived by. For example a Catholic child's poem expressed dislike for Ian Paisley and implied Protestants are responsible for the conflict. Smith and Neill also maintained that the process of AI provided a supportive context for critiquing mainstream institutions and for productive professional dialogue and peace activism. Indeed, participants in their study created practical suggestions for developing a more richly described peace education that were later formulated into a set of 13 principles for improving school based peace education.

Perhaps a similar approach could be used to promote positive relationships between Traveller and settled communities. For example, using a process of Appreciative Inquiry, teachers and educators could review poems written by Traveller children on the theme of inclusion and belonging. Several advantages pertain to this model. Firstly, it would provide the opportunity to facilitate the engagement of the voices of those who have been hitherto "silenced, disqualified or subjugated" (Smith and Neill, 2005, p.9). Secondly, by targeting teachers and educators in the interpretative discussion, the influence of engaging with the process of AI could be far reaching. For instance, in relation to challenging taken for granted discourses with regard to issues of power, teachers could positively influence not just their current cohort of students but future cohorts too. In addition, perhaps a similarly productive professional dialogue might emerge that could lead to the formulation of principles for a more richly described inclusive education.

However, Smith and Neill neither implemented nor evaluated the principles for improving school based peace education. Moreover, while the principles are worthwhile, it is not clear how they could be implemented successfully. For example, it is suggested that students are allowed to engage critically with their own background and that of the other ethnic/cultural group. It is possible that teachers would need more support in relation to how they might manage issues of pupil resistance to having their world views or assumptions challenged. Similarly, it is suggested that teachers have well-organised and planned community contact programmes where at some stage group membership is made salient and a topic of discussion rather than ignored. Again it is likely that more detail would be needed in relation to how one might create such a well organised and well planned community contact programme.

It is also relevant that the participants in Smith and Neill's study held particular positions of responsibility in relation to peace activism, developing community relations, and coordinating a curriculum of school based peace education. Therefore their positions suggest that they are already heavily invested in the task of promoting more favourable intergroup relations. Parallel positions do not exist in the Republic of Ireland in relation to enhancing relationships with the Traveller community or other minority groups. Hence, the "transformative potential" reported by Smith and Neill might be more difficult to create in a different context.

There are additional possible barriers to the effectiveness of using an AI approach with teachers in order to promote more favourable intergroup relations between Travellers and the settled community. Firstly, it is possible that upon reviewing Traveller children poems, there is a risk that teachers might feel compassion for Travellers without simultaneously leading teachers to recognise that they themselves are implicated in the social forces responsible for Travellers being marginalised (Boler, 1997). Furthermore, even if such culpability was pointed out, it is possible that teachers might be more motivated to maintain the status quo rather than initiate change (Jost and Banaji, 1994). There is also a possibility that reading poems featuring themes of exclusion might have the unintended consequence of exacerbating a tendency towards patronising pity that has been reported in previous studies (O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001).

2.33.4 Targeting children to improve intergroup relations

The final study selected for review was conducted by Cameron and colleagues in 2006. It is critiqued here to evaluate its effectiveness with respect to improving attitudes and relations with outgroup members. Consideration is also given to its suitability for use in the Irish primary school context with the aim of increasing positivity towards members of the Traveller community.

As previously discussed, Cameron and colleagues conducted several experiments to test the effects of vicarious contact by reading children adapted stories depicting ingroup and outgroup members in friendship situations (Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007). In one such study, using a post-positivist experimental paradigm, Cameron et al., (2006) manipulated children's experience of contact with a refugee outgroup. 253 White British children of mixed social class, from 10 primary schools in suburban or rural areas outside a large city in the United Kingdom took part in the research. The children, aged between 5 and 11, read three age appropriate stories about refugees and British children in friendship situations. The stories were read in small groups and sessions took place once a week for 6 consecutive weeks.

Three different models of vicarious contact were tested and participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: decategorisation condition where story characters' individual characteristics were emphasised; common ingroup identity condition where their common ingroup identity (school membership) was made salient and their sub category membership was mentioned only once; dual identity condition where both the common ingroup and subgroup identities were emphasised along with their typicality; and the control condition where participants did not experience any form of vicarious contact.

In order to measure the impact of the vicarious contact intervention on intergroup attitudes, Cameron et al., (2006) converted factors typically associated with prejudice into quantitative variables so that a statistical analysis could be conducted. For example, attitudes were measured using a scale where children commented on how many refugees they thought were lazy, kind, and so on. Their behavioural intentions were measured by asking them to indicate on a scale how much they would like to show friendship behaviours with a refugee child (such as playing with them if they met in the park). In this way they were able to determine within a certain realm of probability the conditions that led to improved outgroup attitudes and behavioural intentions towards the refugee outgroup. In order to minimise potential for bias, children were interviewed one week post-intervention by a researcher who was blind to the condition to which they were assigned.

Cameron et al (2006) found that attitudes towards refugees were significantly more positive in the vicarious contact condition compared with the control. The dual identity intervention was the most effective vicarious contact model at improving intergroup attitudes presumably because they were more able to generalise from the protagonists in the story to refugees in general. However, in terms of intended friendship behaviour there was no main effect of condition.

The results are quite encouraging in demonstrating the potential of a theoretically informed intervention to improve outgroup attitudes. The sample was large with representation of children (aged between 5 and 11) from different social classes and contexts. The use of a control group and that fact that children were interviewed by a researcher who was blind to the condition add credence to the findings.

Next, an explanation is presented of how the review of the literature has led to the proposed study.

2.34 How the review has led to the proposed study

A thorough review of psychological and educational literature reveals that in the Irish context Travellers are frequently targets of prejudice and discrimination. There is ample evidence that Traveller students' engagement, attendance, achievement and well-being are cause for concern. Educational psychologists have a critical role in relation to applying psychological theory in order to enable and empower key stakeholders to optimise the educational experience of all children. Therefore, educational psychologists need to be familiar with the psychology of prejudice and evidence based approaches to reduce/prevent prejudice and promote intergroup relations. Psychological theories and research indicate that prejudice is triggered and maintained by a number of simultaneously operating forces. Hence, interventions with children and young people need to be multi-faceted, developmentally appropriate, and informed by theories of attitude and behaviour change. Having reviewed the vast amount of research in the area it seems that vicarious contact

could be a promising approach to employ in a school context in order to reduce prejudice towards Travellers and improve intergroup relations.

Firstly, vicarious contact interventions have demonstrated their effectiveness across age groups including 6-11 year olds in an educational setting suggesting that it is a developmentally suitable intervention for children within that age range (Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2007).

Vicarious contact has demonstrated causal reduction on a range of prejudice measures including cognitive, affective and behavioural measures (Cameron et al., 2011; Mazziotta et al., 2011; Vezzali, et al., 2012). This is important because prejudice is multiply determined.

Unlike direct contact, vicarious contact can be manipulated so that the observed cross-group interaction is positive. In real life direct contact cannot guarantee positive experiences and it can provoke anxiety (Plant and Devine, 2003). It is also difficult to establish the conditions for optimal contact as described by Allport (1954). One could surmise that the condition of equal status would be particularly hard to create when the target group has experienced a long history of marginalisation (MacGreil, 2010). Arguably the perception of equal status might be easier to create in a vicarious contact situation.

Scholars have recommended vicarious contact when there is little opportunity for direct contact. This makes it suitable for use in the Irish context as many settled people have infrequent contact with Travellers. This is due to a number of factors. Firstly, they represent a small proportion of the population (AITHS, 2010), Traveller children are frequently absent from school (DES, 2005) and very isolated within communities (Harmon, 2015).

Another advantage of vicarious contact is that compared to direct contact there is greater flexibility in relation to making group membership salient thereby increasing the likelihood that generalisation of positive effects to the entire group of Travellers will occur (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2007, Study 2; Cameron et al., 2011). Generalisation might be less likely in a direct contact situation because the encountered Traveller might be considered an exception. There is also the issue that some Travellers conceal their ethnic identity for fear of ostracisation (Devine et al, 2004).

Following the recommendations of Bigler (1999) and Aboud (2009) prejudice reduction programmes should be based on theories of attitude change rather than theories of learning. Indeed vicarious contact interventions are informed by what we know about mediators of attitude change.

Although vicarious contact has demonstrated efficacy with a variety of outgroups in a variety of contexts, as Cameron and colleagues (2007) observe, attitudes towards some groups have been initially quite positive. Therefore, they propose examining whether vicarious contact is equally effective in changing more negative outgroup attitudes towards target groups. In light of the evidence presented in the introduction there are several reasons to believe that Travellers in Ireland are a highly stigmatised group (Bryan, 2007; Harmon, 2015; MacGreil, 2010; de la Torre Castillo, 2012). Therefore the current study intends to examine the effects of vicarious contact with a highly stigmatised outgroup (Irish Travellers) in a different context (the Republic of Ireland). Moreover, the impact of vicarious contact on attitudes towards the Traveller Irish community has not previously been examined.

The following hypotheses are proposed:

- To investigate the effects of vicarious contact on settled children's attitudes towards Travellers

Given that attitudes and behaviour are distinctive phenomena (Aboud et al., 2003) the study also intends

- To investigate the effects of vicarious contact on settled children's intended friendship behaviour towards Travellers

Pettigrew (1991) argues that the greatest determinant of prejudice is slavish conformity to social norms. In Ireland the current social norm is that it is acceptable to be openly critical of Travellers and their lifestyle (Vazquez de la Torre Castill, 2012). Given the influence of group norms and social norms on children's attitudes towards outgroups (Rutland et al., 2005; Nesdale et al., 2005) it is important to examine whether vicarious contact can make a positive difference to ingroup and outgroup norms about cross group friendships.

Therefore the study proposes

- To investigate the effects of vicarious contact on settled children's perceived ingroup norms about cross-group friendships
- To investigate the effects of vicarious contact on settled children's perceived outgroup norms about cross-group friendships

2.35 Summary

Chapter two sought to provide a critical review of the academic literature pertaining to the psychology of prejudice and educational approaches to combat bias amongst children and young people. Chapter three is presented next and delineates the methodological framework.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Brief summary of research procedure

In order to investigate the effect of vicarious contact on children's attitudes and intended friendship behaviour towards Traveller Irish children (along with its effect on perceived in-group and out-group norms about cross-group friendship) decisions had to be taken in relation to how to: create vicarious contact; select children for participation; and measure and evaluate changes in children's prejudice towards Traveller Irish children. Following a rigorous review of research and methodological literature, it was decided to use a quasi-experimental approach whereby children in volunteering classrooms were randomly assigned to a control or experimental group. All children participated in pre-test interviews where they answered questions designed to measure their attitudes and friendship intentions towards Travellers along with their perceived norms about intergroup friendships.

Six storytelling sessions were held over three consecutive weeks in each class. Children in the experimental group read stories featuring Traveller Irish and Settled Irish children in friendship contexts (vicarious contact condition) and those assigned to the control group read the same stories but the ethnicity of the story characters was never mentioned.

The chosen stories were based on pre-existing children's fiction books that were designed for use in primary schools. Each story included illustrations with short, manageable chapters to help pupils stay in the reading experience. The books were described as suitable for children from age eight upwards.

In the experimental group, each introduction included the characters' names along with an illustration, a description of their group membership (Traveller Irish or Settled Irish) and a statement that they were best friends. It was also stated that lots of Traveller Irish and Settled Irish children are best friends like _____ and _____. In order to encourage attention to individual qualities, the researcher identified describing words for the two main characters. Frequent opportunities were taken throughout the story sessions to pause and discuss evidence for a particular quality. For example, the children might be asked 'why did I describe Tom as imaginative?' A summary sheet of these adjectives was also prepared for each main character to aid post-story discussion and promote memory of individual qualities and group membership. The typicality of the characters was also stressed throughout the group discussions. For example, the researcher stated that it is likely that many Traveller Irish children are resourceful, persistent and brave too. The typicality of Settled Irish characters was similarly highlighted.

The storytelling sessions for children in the control group differed in the sense that the ethnic membership of the characters was never mentioned. Accordingly, the typicality of the characters was not stressed either. However, like the experimental group, the children in the control group were invited to discuss evidence for a particular character's quality. Hence, they were asked, for example, 'why would I describe Lucy as persistent?' The research assistant also used the same summary sheet of adjectives for each character to aid story discussion and to promote the skill of using evidence from the story to justify assigning varied attributes to individual characters.

All children participated in post-test interviews (using the same measures as in pre-tests) approximately one week following the last storytelling session.

During the pilot study it emerged that some children had never heard of the Traveller Irish community. Therefore an additional measure was developed to seek information regarding whether the children had ever heard of or met a Traveller, how they learned about Travellers and what they had heard said about this group.

A research assistant (a third year psychology student participating in an internship in the author's place of work) helped to administer pre and post tests and led storytelling sessions with the control group. This allowed the researcher to evaluate the intervention with a larger sample and complete the field work in a shorter time. Permission was sought (and granted) from the author's then supervisor (Dr Simon Griffey) to enlist the help of the research assistant prior to beginning the study. The supervisor also provided assurance that no further ethical issues arose from her involvement so long as she had no role in interpreting the data or writing the thesis.

The flow chart in figure 3.1 illustrates the method used, what was done and in what order. The same process was repeated in each participating school following consent.

The remainder of chapter three describes the methodological framework in more detail including: the research paradigm, methods and measures employed, set of hypotheses to be tested and intended data analysis procedures. A rationale is provided for all decisions taken and a thorough examination of the ethical considerations that informed the study is presented.

Figure 3.1 Flow chart of method used to investigate the effect of vicarious contact intervention on children's attitudes, intended behaviour, and perceived norms about intergroup friendship

Pre Tests

(Administered individually 1 week prior to story sessions)

Children read brief information sheet about Travellers

Source of information about Travellers

Dependent measures:

- Intergroup attitudes
- Intended friendship behaviour
- Perceived ingroup and outgroup norms

Random allocation to control or experimental groups

Control Group

Read and discussed 3 stories over 3 consecutive weeks with Research assistant

Two half hour sessions per week in groups of 5/6

Experimental Group

Read and discussed 3 stories (same as experimental group but adapted to create condition of vicarious contact) over 3 consecutive weeks with Researcher

Two half hour sessions per week in groups of 5/6

Post Tests

Administered individually 1 week after story sessions by researcher

- Intergroup attitudes
- Intended friendship behaviour
- Perceived ingroup and outgroup norms

Children were debriefed immediately following post-tests

Post Tests

Administered individually 1 week after story sessions by research assistant

- Intergroup attitudes
- Intended friendship behaviour
- Perceived ingroup and outgroup norms

Children were debriefed immediately following post-tests

3.1 Research paradigm: Post positivist paradigm

A post-positivist research paradigm was chosen for the current research. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994) there are three basic questions that help to define a research paradigm. The ontological question asks what is the nature of reality; the epistemological question asks about the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be known; and the methodological question asks how the knower can go about obtaining the desired knowledge and understanding.

The answers to the paradigm defining questions for post-positivism are set out below along with an explanation of how the current study is underpinned by the principles of the post-positivist paradigm. This is followed by a justification for the chosen research paradigm and a consideration of its strengths and weaknesses.

3.1.1 Ontological question-What is the nature of reality?

With regard to ontology, Mertens (2015) explains how post-positivists concur that a reality does exist but it can be known only imperfectly because of the researcher's human limitations. Therefore, researchers can discover reality within a certain realm of probability. Indeed as Trochim and Donnelly (2008) observe much contemporary social research is based on probabilities and the inferences made in social research have probabilities associated with them that are seldom meant to be considered as covering laws pertaining to all cases. Moreover, Willis (2007) maintains that while the goal of post positivist research is to find the truth about something, post-positivists do not believe you can convincingly find truth with one study but each study is part of a broader effort to get closer and closer to the truth through a series of research studies (p.74). Similarly, Reichardt and Rallis (1994) argue that within a post-positivist paradigm a theory cannot be "proved" but post-positivist researchers can make a stronger case by eliminating alternative explanations.

The current study is underpinned by the ontological assumption that reality can only be discovered within a certain level of probability. Truth (in this instance) refers to whether vicarious contact can positively influence attitudes and intentions towards Travellers. Hence to discover the truth the researcher created a list of variables that might be associated with the phenomenon of prejudice based on previous research in the area. The independent variable (type of story read) and dependent variables (intergroup attitudes, intended friendship behaviour, and group norms for intergroup friendships) were converted into quantitative variables so that a statistical analysis could be conducted to determine the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables within a specified level of probability. Furthermore, the author acknowledges that the findings from the current study will not convincingly reveal the truth but will constitute part of a broader effort to get closer to an understanding of factors and conditions that lead to improved intergroup attitudes.

3.1.2 Epistemological question- What is the relationship between the knower and the would be known?

Post-positivists recognise that the theories, hypotheses, and background knowledge held by the investigator can strongly influence what is observed (Mertens, 2015). According to Trochim and Donnelly (2008) post-positivists believe that all observations are theory laden and that individuals

are inherently biased by their cultural experiences and their world views and so on. Because everyone is biased and all observations are affected, post-positivists believe that objectivity can never be achieved perfectly but it can be approached. Trochim and Donnelly (2008) identify triangulating across multiple fallible perspectives as the best hope for achieving objectivity. The same authors argue that objectivity is a social phenomenon and it is what multiple individuals are trying to achieve when they criticise each other's work. Therefore, according to Trochim and Donnelly (2008), the best way to improve objectivity is to work publicly within the context of a broader contentious community of truth seekers. In addition, Mertens (2015) advises that researchers try to prevent values or biases from influencing the work by following prescribed procedures rigorously.

The epistemological assumption of the post-positivist paradigm informed the current study in the sense that the researcher used multiple (fallible) measures to assess intergroup attitudes, friendship intentions and perceived group norms about intergroup friendship. The researcher also made transparent the procedure that was followed so that fellow truth seekers could criticise the work. Finally, she followed prescribed assessment procedures rigorously in an attempt to minimise bias. For instance, the researcher and research assistant followed exactly the same procedures for asking questions of the respondents and for recording their responses. To standardise responses the goal was to ask exactly the same question in the same way to each of the people being interviewed. The researcher used a fixed response format for the questions on the interview instruments. The researcher checked the research assistant's interview performance to ensure that she was asking questions and coding responses in the same way.

3.1.3 Methodological question- How can the knower obtain the desired knowledge and understanding?

Typically post-positivists use interventionist approaches to obtain the desired knowledge and understanding (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). While positivists borrowed their experimental methods from the natural sciences, post-positivists recognised that many of the assumptions required for rigorous application of the scientific method were not appropriate for educational and psychological research with people (Mertens, 2015). Therefore quasi-experimental methods were developed (Campbell and Stanley, 1966; Cook and Campbell, 1979, as cited in Mertens, 2015).

A post-positivist approach to methodology informed the current study in that the researcher used a modification of experimental methods associated with this paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) a true experiment includes several key features. The approach adopted for the current study comprised many, but not all, of these features. Firstly, the design had a control and an experimental group. Both groups were pretested to ensure parity. The same post-tests were administered to participants in the control and experimental conditions so as to see the effects on the dependent variables. The design included an intervention to the experimental group and the independent variable (type of story read to the children) was manipulated. While the participants in each school were randomly allocated to conditions using a computer programme, the sample of participants was not randomly selected from the parent population (all primary school pupils in the Republic of Ireland). An additional feature of a true experiment is non-contamination between the control and experimental groups. This was not possible as, in theory, the participants in experimental and control groups could talk to each other about the stories they were reading or

what they discussed in relation to attitudes towards Traveller Irish children. Therefore the method adopted is more aptly described as quasi-experimental.

3.1.4 Justification for selection of post-positivist paradigm

There were several reasons that justified the selection of a post-positivist paradigm for the current study. Firstly, it was chosen because it is based on a theory first model (research is conducted to test a theory) (Mertens, 2015). This seemed appropriate because the purpose of the research is to investigate whether vicarious contact theory can be applied in order to improve attitudes and intended friendship behaviour towards the Traveller Irish community along with their perceptions of norms surrounding intergroup friendships. Secondly, the researcher was mindful of the need to contribute to the knowledge base concerning interventions to promote positive intergroup attitudes. This fits with the post positivist paradigm of forming part of a broader effort to get closer and closer to the truth through a series of research studies (Willis, 2007). Finally, the post positivist model of empirical research is aptly expressed in the contemporary concept of evidence based practice (Mertens, 2015). Part of the rationale for the research was to assist practitioners (teachers and educational psychologists) in basing their professional decisions related to book selection, curriculum content and creating an inclusive classroom on the best available empirical evidence. It is hoped that the current study will provide some evidence in relation to the effectiveness of vicarious contact stories on children's attitudes, intended friendship behaviour, and group norms in relation to in intergroup friendships.

3.1.5 Limitations of post-positivist approaches

Despite the aforementioned strengths of a post positivist approach, there are a number of limitations. Firstly, the researcher acknowledges that by summarising complex variables such as attitudes, intended friendship, and group norms for intergroup friendship into numeric scales, important information related to context is missing. The participants do not have an opportunity to: elaborate on their thinking and reasoning in relation to assigning adjectives to particular groups; to explain their decisions in relation to intended friendship behaviour; or to comment on their reasoning in relation to perception of group norms. Similarly, as argued by Cohen et al (2011) to atomise complex phenomena (such as prejudice) into measurable variables and then to focus on only certain of these is "to miss synergy and the spirit of the whole" (p.318). As this limitation became particularly apparent during the pilot study, the researcher decided to include an additional measure to seek information about the participants' sources of information and their knowledge about the Traveller Irish community. The purpose of the additional measure was twofold: to contextualise the results and to assist with interpretation of findings.

Another problem associated with the post-positivistic experimental methods is that while they abide by the need for replicability and predictability, this may not be particularly fruitful since in complex phenomena (such as prejudice) results are never clearly replicable or predictable (Cohen et al., 2011)

In relation to the latter two weaknesses of a post-positivistic approach, the researcher will be mindful to avoid overstating the significance of the findings, and to interpret them in relation to the responses to the open ended questions and the large and growing body of literature that exists in the area of prejudice and the multitude of interventions to reduce prejudice and promote positive intergroup attitudes.

3.2 Measuring instruments

Cohen et al. (2011) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour. Rather than rely exclusively on one method (and risk distorting or biasing the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality under investigation) triangular techniques were employed in the current study to attempt to explain more fully the richness and complexity of prejudice by studying it from than one more viewpoint. The researcher used what Denzin (1970) describes as methodological triangulation.

Four measuring instruments were used in the study. Three instruments were designed to measure one of the following dependent variables: intergroup attitudes, intended friendship behaviour and perceptions of norms surrounding the acceptability of intergroup friendships. The fourth instrument was developed following the pilot study when it emerged that some children had never heard of the Traveller Irish community. A description of the latter instrument is described under the section on piloting where a rationale for its development (and justification for its inclusion) is also provided. The three quantitative measuring instruments are described below and the metric of each is specified. An evaluation of each instrument along with a justification for its selection is also offered.

3.2.1 Intergroup attitude rating scale

In order to measure intergroup attitudes the author took adjectives from the Preschool Racial Attitude Measure II (Pram II) series A (Williams, Best, Boswell, Mattson, & Graves, 1975). The PRAM II, series A, measure has been used reliably in a previous study investigating intergroup attitudes among children (Cameron, Rutland, and Brown, 2007). Cameron et al., subjected ratings for non-disabled, physically disabled, and learning disabled children to separate reliability analyses and all proved reliable (Cronbach's alpha for non-disabled positive and negative traits=.87 and .93 respectively; for physically disabled positive and negative traits=.76 and .86, respectively; for learning disabled positive and negative traits=.77 and .93).

As per previous studies (Cameron et al., 2007) the intergroup attitude rating scale asks children to rate how typical they think positive and negative traits are of the ingroup and the outgroup. In the context of the current study the ingroup referred to settled Irish children and the outgroup referred to Traveller Irish children. 10 positive words and 10 negative words were selected and each trait was accompanied by a short explanation (Cameron et al., 2007). Positive words included: friendly, good, happy, hard-working, helpful, kind, nice, unselfish/sharing, polite and clean. Negative words included: bad, nasty, unhelpful, unkind, sad, selfish, rude, lazy, unfriendly and dirty. However, the researcher decided to substitute 'clean' and 'dirty' with 'tidy' and 'messy' for fear that teachers inspecting research instruments would balk at the idea of children commenting on how many Traveller children they thought were clean and dirty.

The intergroup attitude test (see Appendix A) was administered once for each group (ingroup and outgroup) and counterbalanced across participants. The children chose from pictures representing different numbers of stick figures (as per Abrams, Rutland, and Cameron, 2003, see Appendix B) The pictures were presented on a scale of 0-4 and under each picture of stick people there were the words 'almost all' (4) 'a lot' (3) 'some' (2)' a few' (1) or 'hardly any' (0). The children were asked to point to the picture which shows how many Traveller Irish (Settled Irish) you think are_____ trait.

To ensure understanding of the task, initially each child was asked to practice assigning adjectives by attributing four non-evaluative items to each of the categories (Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996). How many Settled Irish (Traveller Irish) children do you think ''like to run,'' ''like to sing,'' ''like TV,'' and ''like music''.

An ingroup attitude score was computed by subtracting the negative trait score for Settled Irish from the positive trait score for Settled Irish. This score has a minimum value of -30 and a maximum value of +30 with a higher score indicating a more positive attitude towards the ingroup.

An outgroup attitude score was computed by subtracting the negative trait score for Traveller Irish from the positive trait score for Traveller Irish. This score has a minimum value of -30 and a maximum value of +30 with a higher score indicating a more positive attitude towards the outgroup.

3.2.2 Intended friendship behaviour measure

The intended friendship behaviour measure was used to gauge how much children would like to show friendship behaviours with an out-group (Traveller Irish) child on a future occasion and has been used reliably in previous research investigating intergroup attitudes among children (Cameron & Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2007). The non-disabled, physically disabled and learning disabled intended behaviour ratings in Cameron and colleagues' 2007 study were subjected to separate reliability analyses and all proved reliable (Cronbach's alpha for non-disabled=.77; for physically disabled=.83; for learning disabled=.83).

Children were presented with a hypothetical scenario in which they were in the park and they met a Traveller Irish/Settled Irish child they knew from school. The gender of the child in the scenario was matched to the participant and the order was counterbalanced across participants.

The items used to measure intended friendship behaviour were answered on a 5-point Likert-type scale using smiley faces to represent different points on the scale. The questions were "would you like to play with them?", "would you like them?", "would you like to have them over to your house for a meal?" and "would you like to have them stay overnight at your house?" (See Appendix C). The scale ranged from not at all (big frown = 1) through neutral (face not smiling or frowning =3) to very much so (big smile = 5) (see Appendix D). The higher the child's score the more positive their intended friendship behaviour towards the target group.

3.2.3 Measure of perceived ingroup and outgroup norms about intergroup friendship

Children's perceived ingroup and outgroup norms were measured by showing (and reading) them four statements about intergroup friendships (see Appendices E1 and E2). The perceived in- and out-group norms for intergroup friendships measure has been used reliably with children in previous research (Cameron, Rutland, Hossain and Petley, 2011). Reliability analysis showed Chronbach alpha=.70 in Cameron and colleagues (2011) study. The statements were adapted for the current study as follows: "I don't like being friends with Traveller Irish [Settled–Irish] children", "It is a good idea for Settled Irish and Traveller Irish children to be friends", "I like being friends with Traveller Irish [Settled Irish] children", "It is not a good idea for Settled Irish and Traveller Irish children to be friends". Then participants were asked to indicate on a stick figure scale (see Appendix F) how many children from the in-group (Settled Irish) and the out-group (Traveller Irish) would agree with these statements: all of them (5), a lot of them (4), about half (3), a few (2) or none of them (1).

A composite mean was calculated resulting in two measures: perceived ingroup norm for intergroup friendship and perceived outgroup norm for intergroup friendship with scores ranging from 1-5. Higher scores indicated more positive norms for inter-group friendship.

3.3 Hypotheses and intended quantitative data analysis procedures

A review of the research and methodological literature led to the formation of the following set of hypotheses to be tested.

3.3.1 Outgroup attitude hypotheses

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup attitude score and the mean post-test attitude score
- There will be a difference between the control group mean post-test outgroup attitude score and the experimental group mean post-test outgroup attitude score

In order to look at the effect of the intervention on each group individually a t test will be conducted to see whether there is a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup attitude score and the mean post-test attitude score among the experimental group.

A t-test will also be used to compare control and experimental group post-test outgroup attitude scores.

3.3.2 Intended friendship behaviour hypotheses

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the post-test intended friendship behaviour score
- There will be a difference between the control group post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the experimental group post-test intended friendship behaviour score

In order to look at the effect of the intervention a t test will be conducted to see whether there is a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the mean post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score among the experimental group.

Similarly, a t-test will be used to compare control and experimental group post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores.

3.3.3 Ingroup norms hypotheses

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test perceived ingroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived ingroup norm
- There will be a difference between the control group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm and the experimental group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm

In order to look at the effect of the intervention a t test will be used to see whether there is a difference between the mean pre-test perceived ingroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score among the experimental group.

Similarly, a t-test will be used to compare control and experimental group post-test perceived ingroup norm scores.

3.3.4 Outgroup norms hypotheses

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test perceived outgroup norm and the mean post-test perceived outgroup norm
- There will be a difference between the control group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm and the experimental group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm

In order to look at the effect of the intervention a t test will be used to see whether there is a difference between the mean pre-test perceived outgroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived outgroup norm score among the experimental group.

Similarly, a t-test will be used to compare control and experimental group post-test perceived outgroup norm scores.

The level of significance for each test will be 0.05.

3.4 Creating vicarious contact

Once the instruments had been selected to measure the dependent variables, the author set about investigating the independent variable (vicarious contact).

3.4.1 Selection of stories

When selecting stories to adapt for the vicarious contact intervention, the researcher was guided by criteria used by Cameron, Rutland and Brown (2007). The chosen stories were based on pre-existing children's fiction books that were designed for use in primary schools. They included illustrations and were appropriate for the reading abilities of participants. Each of the three books involved children in friendship situations and the main characters included an ingroup and an outgroup member both of whom were presented in a positive and favourable light. In addition, the researcher was mindful: that each story should be short enough to read and discuss in two (half hour) sessions; that there should be a balance of male and female characters; and that the stories should be interesting and engaging.

It was also important that the outgroup characters did not conform to existing stereotypes about members of the Traveller community. According to Stotsky (1994) stereotypes are created either by consistent negative portraits of people in particular social groups or by consistent portraits of people in particular social groups engaging in a restricted range of activities and achievements. Stotsky maintains that one way the formation of undesirable stereotypes can be avoided is by reading works that show members of ethnic groups coping with the kinds of problems or situations that may arise in the lives of many human beings and have little to do with ethnicity. Hence, it was with the above guidelines and recommendations in mind that the researcher chose the texts.

The first story concerns two girls (Settled Irish and Traveller Irish) who are best friends and decide to form a basketball team. As they source willing volunteers and a coach, they enter a local competition in which they compete against children from other districts. The tale follows their trials and tribulations as they learn the new skills and with determination and practice manage to secure a final victory.

The second book tells the story of best friends Lucy (Traveller Irish) and Alan (Settled Irish) who are excitedly awaiting the opening of Lucy's mother's art exhibition. However, disaster strikes when they discover that a thief has stolen one of the paintings. Lucy and Alan use their detective skills to solve the crime and recover the stolen painting in time for the grand opening.

The final work follows the adventures of Tom (Traveller Irish) and Sean (Settled Irish) who have been assigned roles in the school drama production. Whilst tidying up the rehearsal hall, Tom gets stuck in an animal costume so Sean dares him to walk through the school in character. Chaos ensues when staff and pupils believe that a wild animal is on the loose in the school.

3.5 Research procedure

Following decisions about how to answer the research questions, measure the dependent variables, and create a vicarious contact intervention, the author was ready to address the issues of sampling and ethics. A discussion of each is presented below.

3.5.1 Sampling

The sample consisted of 118 pupils attending five primary schools in a city in the Republic of Ireland. In deciding the approach to sampling, four key factors were considered namely: access to the sample; the sampling strategy to be used; the representativeness and parameters of the sample; and the sample size (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2011).

3.5.2 The sampling strategy

Ethical considerations and associated restrictions in relation to gaining access to children had important implications for the sampling strategy and the representativeness of the sample. For instance, given the sensitive nature of the research, it was felt that Traveller children could be distressed by their peers commenting on their attitudes and intended friendship towards members of this traditionally alienated and marginalised group. Hence, a non-probability sample was deemed suitable and primary schools with Traveller children were excluded from the sample. Therefore, in relation to ethnic diversity, the sample is not representative of the whole population of primary school children in Ireland.

Non-probability sampling has been used in previous studies investigating the effect of vicarious contact (Cameron et al., 2006; 2007; 2011). However these studies did not necessarily exclude schools with target outgroup members. Conversely, O'Keefe and O'Connor (2001) conducted their research in schools without Travellers. Children in O'Keefe and O'Connor's study were asked to draw in response to the question 'What I think of Travellers'. They also participated in focus groups where the topic of discussion was whether they would be happy to have a Traveller (and other minorities) as a neighbour. Presumably this would have caused upset if Travellers were privy to such discussions. Hence, in O'Keefe and O'Connor's study, schools with Travellers enrolled were excluded.

According to Gray (2014) convenience sampling is one of the most common sampling strategies (particularly when conducting research as part of an academic programme). It involves gaining access to the most easily accessible participants from organisations where useful contacts are known (for example, friends of colleagues acting as link gatekeepers). A convenience sampling strategy was employed for the current study because the researcher needed to ensure that access to the sample

would be permitted and practicable. Thus, colleagues were consulted to identify primary school principals with whom a positive and trusting relationship exists. These professional contacts were subsequently used to source schools without Traveller children. Convenience sampling is criticised because the convenience of the researcher takes precedence (Bajpai, 2010, as cited in Gray,2014). Moreover, given that this sampling strategy is neither purposeful nor strategic it has the lowest credibility of the sampling designs (Gray, 2014). However, as Trochim and Donnelly (2008) argue, in some circumstances in applied social research it is neither feasible nor practical to use random sampling. The current research entailed delivering and evaluating an intervention with experimental and control groups which is demanding on resources and time. Since, the convenience sample is least costly to the researcher in terms of time, effort, and money (Gray, 2014) it was considered necessary to persist with such a sample given the staffing, funding, and resources available.

3.5.3 The parameters of the sample

The parameters of the sample in terms of age range of participants were informed by previous research in the area of vicarious contact interventions designed to improve intergroup attitudes among children. According to a series of studies by Cameron and colleagues (Cameron, Rutland, Brown & Douch, 2006; Cameron, Rutland, & Brown, 2007) vicarious contact is a developmentally suitable intervention for children between 6-11 years and has demonstrated effectiveness in improving the outgroup attitudes of children in this age range. However, to simplify the process of book selection, the researcher restricted the grades requested to third and fifth class where children's age typically ranges from 8 to 11.

While research participants in grades third to fifth class were requested, it was ultimately the principal who selected class groups according to teacher willingness and availability. In spite of the selectivity of such an approach it was felt wise to respect the needs and wishes of the school community given the significant time commitment that research participation required during a busy period of the school year. While this is an example of convenience sampling, efforts were made to link the sampling approach to one of the non-probability schemes (Gray, 2014). For instance, although the principals nominated classes for participation a computer programme was used to randomly assign the participants to either the control or experimental group. A similar approach was adopted by Cameron et al. (2011) where an effort was made to create random conditions. Rather than assigning whole classes to conditions children in each class were individually and randomly assigned to conditions.

In relation to controlling for distribution, the researcher considered matching participants in control and experimental groups according to their pre-test scores. Coolican (2014) maintains that when it is suspected that changes will be slight, it makes sense to compare each child in the treatment condition with a child in the control group who is similar in (for example) attitude to start with. Matching participants has the advantage of partly controlling for participant variables and achieving homogeneity of variance. However, Coolican acknowledges that it can be difficult to find perfect matches. Indeed, such a problem arose in the current study particularly because there were four separate pre-test scores on which participants could be matched. The researcher was faced with the task of deciding which variables would be most important to balance: participants' outgroup attitudes; their outgroup intended friendship behaviour; their perceived ingroup norms about intergroup friendship; or their perceived outgroup norms about intergroup friendship. Given the

difficulties associated with such a task, the researcher followed Coolican's (2014) advice of what to do under such circumstances and randomly allocated participants to conditions.

However, since children in each participating class were randomly allocated to conditions, it turns out that they are closely matched in relation to some variables. For example, they are closely matched in terms of gender because four single sex schools took part in the study. Similarly, they are matched in terms of schools and social class. Although they have not been matched on learning ability, given the process of random allocation within schools (along with the large sample size) one would expect that the range of learning abilities is relatively evenly distributed between control and experimental groups.

Proximity to the author's place of work was also an important factor in order to facilitate maintaining work commitments during field work. Again the decision to employ convenience sampling impacted on the representativeness of the sample with only five urban primary schools in one city in Ireland included.

Some effort was made to include significant characteristics of the wider population such as mixed and single sex (all boys and all girls) schools; catholic and multi-faith schools; and schools in affluent areas and schools in areas of disadvantage. However, the researcher failed to ensure that the percentage proportion of these characteristics from the wider population appeared in the sample as is recommended in the methodological literature (Cohen et al., 2011)

The decision about sample size was informed by: the number of variables to control in the analysis (pre- and post-tests, control and experimental groups); and the types of statistical tests planned (t tests). There is no widely accepted minimum sample size recommended for t tests. However, large scale international studies such as the Programme for International Assessment (PISA) recommend a minimum of 35 per group for between group comparisons (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2016). Hence 35 participants per group was the number set as the minimum sample size for the current study.

Despite the aforementioned limitations of the non-probability, convenience sampling strategy (particularly with respect to representativeness) it is argued that the approach has merit for a number of reasons. Firstly, ethical considerations and the focus of the research necessitated using a non-probability sample. Secondly, convenience sampling is less arduous and significantly less expensive than random sampling. Although the researcher won't be able to generalise the findings beyond the sample in question, the research may raise issues for comparable groups such as children, teachers and Educational Psychologists in other Irish primary schools with a diverse pupil population with a view to creating an agenda of issues for further research and policy development.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The proposed research raised several ethical issues requiring thoughtful consideration. Issues related to consent, confidentiality and harm are explored below.

3.6.1 Gaining consent

The researcher was mindful of the main details that children, who were invited to take part in the research, would need in order to give informed consent. Following the advice of Alderson and

Morrow (2011) an information leaflet was prepared in plain language explaining what the children might most want to know (see Appendix G). The information leaflet included: the title, topics and purpose of the research; what would happen to people during the research; an explanation of potential risks and harms and hoped for benefits; how the data would be used; the researcher's contact details along with those of the research supervisor (in the event of a complaint); measures to protect identity and maintain confidentiality; and means by which they would learn about the results. Some brief biographical information was also provided about the researcher and the research assistant. Critically, as recommended by Alderson and Morrow, children were helped to give unpressured consent or refusal by telling them about their rights. Specifically, it was explained that children had the right to refuse to participate, to withdraw from the study without giving a reason and without fear of negative consequences. They were assured that they would still receive the same care at their school. A time lag of three days was provided to allow the children unpressured thinking time and an opportunity to discuss the study with a trusted adult (parent/guardian) before making their decision.

The researcher read through the leaflet with the children allowing plenty of pauses for questions and discussion. The children were quizzed on their understanding of key messages and the discussion provided an opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings or ambiguity. They were encouraged to read the leaflets with their parents and guardians and to keep the leaflet as an aid to understand and remember the researcher's spoken information.

Following guidance, provided by the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2002), in relation to the obligations of 'professional' researchers, written parental consent was also sought. This served two purposes: to maximise the chances that parents were aware of and understood what their children would be doing in the research project; and to minimise problems associated with parents presenting concerns post hoc.

3.6.2 Confidentiality

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) researchers have an obligation to make sure that guarantees of confidentiality are carried out in spirit and letter particularly when sensitive, intimate or discrediting information is sought. With this in mind the researcher explained to children the meaning of confidentiality in relation to the research project. Drawing on techniques, listed by Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992), to allow public access to data without confidentiality being betrayed, the researcher promised to delete identifiers and to store information in a safe and lockable place. Concepts such as crude report categories and microaggregation were also explained using examples.

However, owing to issues of child protection and the requirement to make provision for potential disclosure of harm/abuse (Department of Education and Science, 2011) children were warned about the limits of confidentiality. It was explained that the researcher would not tell others what they discussed but the only time she might have to break this promise was if she thought the child or someone else might be at risk of being hurt. If so she would talk to the child first about the best thing to do.

Similarly, it was felt that discussion of positive and negative attitudes and intended friendship behaviour could prompt some children to remember a time when they were teased and/or

excluded. This could lead to feelings of sadness and loneliness. In order to deal with this concern a number of safeguards were put in place. The researcher committed to following the anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2013) in the event that a child disclosed that they or someone they know are/were being teased/ bullied. The researcher committed to following the same process if she witnessed an incident of bullying or if a child disclosed that they were bullying another child. Hence, in each school, the researcher sourced the name of the anti-bullying coordinator along with a copy of each school's code of behaviour.

In addition to general ethical issues already outlined, there were further ethical concerns relating to the specific focus, purpose, and conduct of the research project. Each issue is set out below along with an explanation of plans to address and minimise its impact.

3.6.3 Ethical issues related to the focus and conduct of the research

There was a possibility that discussion of vicarious contact stories in groups could facilitate children making prejudiced comments and/or accusing each other of being racist/ prejudiced. Therefore, at the beginning of each reading group, the children were reminded of the group rules: we are gentle, we are kind and helpful, we listen, we are honest, we work hard, and we look after property. They were notified in advance that children who persistently broke the rules would be asked to return to their class. In addition, it was planned that children would be made aware of the rule infringements that would lead to them being sent back to class.

There is a view that commenting on the degree to which an attribute is associated with particular ethnic groups, could reinforce negative attitudes towards such groups. However, the literature on prejudice doesn't support this idea. The research evidence points to several factors associated with the formation of prejudice such as: group norms (Nesdale et al., 2005) social norms (Pettigrew, 1958, 1985, 1991; Weisbuch et al., 2009) outgroup threat (Nesdale et al., 2005); the way we process social information and categorise (Brewer and Brown, 1998); identifying with specific social groups (Tajfel, 1982); the phenomenon of blaming the victim (Crandall et al., 2001); and how we explain others' behaviour by using dispositional attributions (Pettigrew, 1979). Hence, the available evidence suggests that it is the aforementioned factors that contribute to prejudiced attitudes rather than reporting pre-existing attitudes. In addition, it should be emphasised that children were interviewed individually and allowed to assign the adjectives in the intergroup attitude measure to both groups or neither of them if they wished. There was no forced choice element – children could choose to not assign a negative adjective to anyone, and could assign a positive adjective to both groups if they wished. Furthermore, there were no Traveller Irish children in the selected schools. Finally, studies that have used the intergroup attitude measure (at pre and post-test) do not report that participants in the control group (or indeed treatment groups) increased their prejudiced attitudes towards outgroups (Cameron et al., 2006; 2007).

Additional precautionary measures to minimise opportunities for discussion (and possible reinforcement) of attitudes included: administration of the tasks individually; and asking children not to share responses with peers (this was accompanied by giving them explicit permission to share their responses with trusted adults or to keep them private).

When doing experimental research, there is the problem of excluding the control group from a potentially beneficial intervention. In order to deal with this issue, resources and guidelines were

provided to support the school in developing their own reading materials that represented different ethnic groups in a positive and meaningful way (see Appendix H). Furthermore, it was thought that children from the control group would not be harmed by reading stories with the researcher in a small and supportive group.

3.6.4 Ethical issues related to the purpose of the research

Finally, since children were not told in advance of participation that the purpose of the investigation was to evaluate the impact of vicarious contact stories on their attitudes and feelings towards the Traveller Irish community, this could have left them feeling unfairly deceived. In this instance the deception occurs in not telling the whole truth. Kelman (1967, as cited in Cohen et al., 2011) has suggested ways of dealing with the problem of deception. Firstly, it is important to ask whether deception is necessary and justified. According to Cohen et al (2011) deception may be justified on the grounds that the research serves the public good and that deception prevents any bias from entering the research. In the context of the current study, the research has potential to serve the public good by revealing a possible means of improving attitudes towards a traditionally marginalised and arguably invisible group by representing its members in a positive and favourable light, in a variety of roles, and in friendship contexts with members of the majority group. Moreover, while the general description of the research might leave out some key issues, to tell the participants that the researcher was looking to see whether children who read vicarious contact stories developed more positive attitudes to the Traveller Irish community would have biased the outcome quite substantially.

Kelman also recommends counteracting and minimising some of the negative effects of deception by ensuring that adequate feedback is provided at the end of the research. Hence, the children were debriefed at the end of the study (see appendices I (1) and I (2). As outlined by Cooper and Schindler (2001:116, as cited in Cohen et al., 2011), the debriefing included an explanation of the deception and the reasons for it; a description of the purposes, hypotheses, objectives and methods of the research (with a particular emphasis on the importance of the project for children in marginalised groups). Furthermore, a summary of the key findings of the research was shared with the participants a year later (see Appendix J). During these feedback sessions the children had a chance to ask questions about any aspect of the study.

In sum, throughout each stage of the research process the researcher endeavoured to ensure that the participants would not leave the research situation with greater anxiety or lower levels of self-esteem than they came with. Efforts were made to make the experience enriching and for the participants to leave feeling that they learned something (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 96).

3.7 Piloting

Following ethical approval the author was ready to pilot the study. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) piloting is an important element of research design. Although the chosen measures had been used reliably in other studies, they had not been used by the author nor had they been used with reference to the Traveller Irish outgroup. Hence, as recommended by Cohen et al., the measuring instruments were piloted to assist with decisions about: the timing of interviews; the clarity of questions; the types of questions; and identifying redundant questions. The information gleaned from the pilot study was subsequently used to refine data gathering methods. Another

advantage of including a pilot study is that it can help to identify potential technical matters (Cohen et al., 2011). Hence, prior to testing the efficacy of a vicarious contact intervention with a larger sample, the author piloted the intervention to evaluate whether additional issues related to its delivery might require consideration.

3.7.1 Piloting procedure

During November 2012, professional contacts were used to identify primary schools that might be open and willing to participate in a pilot of the research study. Subsequently, one primary school principal was contacted via an email in which the researcher introduced herself, outlined the aim of the study and briefly stated what involvement would entail. This was followed by a phone call, a few days later, requesting an opportunity to meet in person in order to elaborate on the details of the research programme along with the anticipated benefits associated with same and to answer any questions school personnel might have.

The principal was agreeable to meeting and during this time an information letter was provided for the principal and the volunteering teacher (see appendix K). The principal and the teacher were also given the opportunity to see information letters and consent forms for parents (see appendix L) and information leaflets and consent forms for children (see appendix G). They also had the chance to inspect the reading materials and proposed assessment measures before making a decision whether or not to take part.

Following principal and teacher consent, the researcher met with the children in the class to explain the research, seek their involvement in the pilot study and answer their questions. They were given a children's leaflet to discuss with their parents along with a parent information leaflet. The children had 3 days to return their consent forms and from the group (with written consent) the teacher selected pupils for participation by picking seven names out of a hat. The project was framed as asking 'what helps children to respect and get along well with each other'.

Seven female pupils (in the fourth class of an all girls primary school) participated in the pilot study. Their ages ranged between nine and ten. Prior to pre-tests children submitted their consent forms and signed a duplicate form for their records. Their name was noted alongside a participant number. In order to gauge their ethnicity, they were asked where they would say they were from if asked whilst abroad. Five children reported being from Ireland, one from Georgia and one from Ireland and Portugal.

Before introducing the measures (which were administered individually in a separate room) children were shown a collage of members of the Traveller Irish community and were read a brief information sheet about their population, lifestyle, and traditions (see Appendix M). The information was taken from a Pavee point school resource called 'Who are the Travellers?' An explanation was also provided as to what was meant by a 'settled Irish' child. For the purpose of the study a 'settled Irish' child was defined as any child living in Ireland who did not have the tradition of moving around the country. A distinction was made between those who go on holidays and travel around and those who are members of the Traveller Irish community. It was also emphasised that each member of the child's class would be described as a settled child.

The intergroup attitude rating scale was used to ask children to rate how typical they thought positive and negative traits are of Settled Irish children and Traveller Irish children. They were assured that there are no right or wrong answers. The scale was administered once for each group (ingroup and outgroup) and counterbalanced across participants.

The intended friendship behaviour measure was used to gauge how much children would like to show friendship behaviours with an out-group (Traveller Irish) child and an ingroup (Settled Irish) child on a future occasion. The gender of the child in the scenario was matched to the participant and the order was counterbalanced across participants.

Children's perceived in-group and out-group norms were measured by showing (and reading) them four statements about intergroup friendships. Then they were asked to indicate on a stick figure scale how many children from the in-group (Settled Irish) and the out-group (Traveller Irish) would agree with these statements.

The week following pretests, the children participated in group storytelling sessions. These sessions took place in the school library twice a week for three consecutive weeks. Each story featured a child from the Traveller Irish community in a friendship context with a settled Irish child. The duration of sessions lasted about half an hour. One book was read over two sessions and the children were asked a series of questions to encourage engagement and discussion.

The week following the final story, the children were tested again using the same measuring instruments as in the pre-tests.

3.8 Addressing issues that arose during the pilot study

During the pilot study a number of questions and issues arose.

3.8.1 Children's lack of familiarity with the Traveller Irish community

Firstly, it emerged in casual conversation, that some children had never heard of Traveller Irish children and, among those that had, the most frequent source of information was the popular television show 'My big fat gypsy wedding'. Therefore, in order to contextualise the findings, a series of questions was devised to enquire about children's sources of information and knowledge about this group (see Appendix N). Participants were asked whether they had ever met a Traveller Irish person, heard of Traveller Irish people, how they learned about Traveller Irish people, and what they had heard and/or knew about the group. The literature that informed the development of the interview schedule is discussed below along with a description of intended data analysis procedures and the rationale for employing a mixed methods approach.

3.8.2 Development of interview schedule to measure familiarity with the Traveller Irish community

The author drew on relevant methodological literature to inform the development of the interview questions. Firstly, information regarding whether the children had heard of or met a Traveller Irish person before was required. Such detail was necessary to assist with interpretation of attitude scores because if children had neither heard of nor met a Traveller they would have no personal experience upon which to base their views. Therefore the following questions 'Have you ever heard

of the Traveller community?' Have you ever met a Traveller Irish person?' were included in the interview schedule. Both questions were fixed alternative items and participants could either indicate 'yes' or 'no'. According to Kerlinger (1970) the chief advantages of fixed alternative items is that they achieve greater uniformity of measurement and therefore greater reliability. They are also more easily coded. Furthermore, since the author wished to gain comparable data across people and sites, she adopted a standardised and quantitative approach (to the first two interview questions) as recommended by Cohen et al. (2011). The data from each of these questions will be analysed by counting the number of yes and no responses respectively.

The literature review discussed means by which children learn about different social groups and the differing impact on their intergroup attitude formation. For example, children learn about groups through different sources including (but not limited to): direct intergroup contact, television, books, parents, and peers. Direct contact under optimal conditions is thought to lead to the formation of positive intergroup attitudes (Davies et al 2011; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). Whereas if children learn about groups through, for example, their representation on television (where they might be represented stereotypically, in restricted roles with restricted interests) this can lead to the formation of more negative intergroup attitudes (Dixon, 2008; Lee, Bichard, Irey, Walt and Carlson, 2009; Ramasubramanian, 2010). Therefore, it was deemed important to include some open ended (qualitative) questions regarding their sources of knowledge about Travellers and what they had heard said about Travellers. Such information was necessary to increase the accuracy of data, provide a more complete picture of the phenomenon under study, and enable the researcher to develop the analysis and build on the original data (Denscombe, 2008). Furthermore, as argued by Reams and Twale (2008) mixed methods are necessary to uncover information and perspective, increase corroboration of the data, and render less biased and more accurate conclusions.

Two open ended questions were included in the interview schedule: 'How did you hear about Travellers?' and 'What have you heard said about Travellers?' According to Cohen et al. (2011) open ended questions have the advantage of being flexible, they allow the interviewer to probe, to clear up any misunderstandings and enable the interviewer to test the limits of the respondents' knowledge. Furthermore, Wright and Powell (2006) maintain that when interviewing children, answers to open ended questions are usually more accurate than answers to closed questions as they are respondent driven and respondent focused and they can take account of children with limited linguistic or cognitive abilities.

The interviews were not audio recorded as permission had not been sought for this during the ethical approval process. Instead the researcher(s) took note of what the children said in response to the questions. In order to facilitate the process of rapid note-taking some categories were listed on the interviewer's schedule so that she could circle the relevant source(s) if mentioned by a participant. These categories were derived from frequently mentioned sources in the pilot study and some predicted sources namely: parent, teacher, television, news, books. Additional sources and comments mentioned by participants were noted by the researcher. Similarly, two themes 'weddings' and 'caravans' were listed on the interviewer's schedule in relation to the question of what they had heard said about Travellers. Both themes were frequently mentioned during the pilot study and the interviewer took note of additional comments made in response to the same question.

Thematic analysis will be used to analyse the responses to the open ended questions.

The interview schedule may be considered valid for the purpose of collecting information about children's experiences with the Traveller Irish community and the means by which they learn about this group. However, it is possible that social desirability effects influenced their responses. Children may have been reluctant to report negative comments for fear of being labelled prejudiced. Indeed there is evidence that children become more concerned with self-presentation with age (Rutland, Cameron, Milne and McGeorge, 2005). Some attempt was made to minimise potential reticence by asking what they had heard said about Traveller Irish people rather than seeking their personal beliefs/opinions.

3.8.3 Relevance of the research questions

One concern related to children's lack of familiarity with Travellers was the relevance of the research study given that some children were unaware of and presumably unprejudiced towards members of the Traveller Irish community. However, as discussed in the literature review, the evidence of prejudice towards Travellers seems significant and according to Fazio and Zanna (1981) outgroup attitudes formed before direct contact are more malleable. Moreover, vicarious contact is found to be most effective among those who have experienced few or no meaningful interactions with the outgroup (Cameron, Rutland, Hossain and Petley, 2011). Therefore, the study seems justified in the sense that the stories can be tested (using pre and post-tests and control and experimental groups) to evaluate their influence on the formation of attitudes towards Traveller Irish children. If successful, administering vicarious contact before real contact, could potentially improve actual interactions between settled and Traveller communities.

3.8.4 Model of vicarious contact

From reading and discussing the stories in groups, the researcher realised that she had not chosen a specific model of vicarious contact to evaluate. It was particularly evident that the group membership of the characters (Traveller Irish/Settled Irish) was not sufficiently salient. Category membership was stated only once at the beginning of each story. According to Brown and Hewstone (2005) making group membership salient is important because it leads children to generalise positive feelings towards the outgroup member in the intervention to the whole group.

While a number of models of vicarious contact exist, the researcher used several criteria to select the most appropriate model for the current study. It was important that the model had been used successfully with a large sample in a similar context (in schools that were relatively ethnically homogenous) with children of similar age range and to promote positive attitudes towards stigmatised groups. The intergroup model of vicarious contact devised by Brown and Hewstone (2005) has led to improved attitudes among children (aged 6-11) in relatively homogenous schools towards people with disabilities and refugees (Cameron, Rutland, and Brown, 2007). Therefore it was selected as an appropriate model to evaluate. According to this model, group membership, individual qualities and typicality should be emphasised.

The issue of group membership was addressed by providing some brief biographical information about the two main characters in each story. Each introduction included the characters' names along with an illustration, a description of their group membership (Traveller Irish or Settled Irish) and a

statement that they were best friends. It was also stated that lots of Traveller Irish and Settled Irish children are best friends like _____ and _____.

In order to encourage attention to individual qualities, the researcher identified describing words for the two main characters. Frequent opportunities were taken throughout the story sessions to pause and discuss evidence for a particular quality. For example, the children might be asked 'why did I describe Tom as imaginative?' A summary sheet of these adjectives was also prepared for each main character to aid post-story discussion and promote memory of individual qualities and group membership.

The typicality of the characters was also stressed throughout the group discussions. For example, the researcher stated that it is likely that many Traveller Irish children are resourceful, persistent and brave too. The typicality of Settled Irish characters was similarly highlighted.

3.8.5 Duration of storytelling sessions

The pilot study allowed the researcher to test how long would be required for the individual pre and post-test interviews. Fifteen minutes was a typical duration. Similarly, the amount of time to read and discuss stories was evaluated. On average, half an hour was sufficient to read and discuss half of each story.

3.8.6 Size and conduct of groups

Seven participants in a story group seemed too many and it was felt that group dynamics would be more manageable in a smaller group of perhaps five children. The need to establish ground rules for story sessions became apparent. Hence it was decided to introduce such rules at the outset and as a brief reminder at the beginning of each session.

3.8.7 Administering post-tests to the experimental group

The researcher was also mindful of the potential for social desirability effects operating during post-test interviews. Therefore, it was decided that, where possible, the post-tests for the experimental group would be carried out by the research assistant who would have no role in either pre-tests or storytelling with the experimental group.

3.9 Research procedure

In Spring 2013, professional contacts were used to identify a broader range of primary schools that might be keen to participate in the research study. In relation to providing information to principals and teachers about the study (and seeking their consent) the same procedure was followed as for the pilot programme. However, the research assistant also met with the participating class of pupils when explaining the research programme and answering their questions. Another key difference was that all pupils who (along with their parents) consented to participate in the research study were permitted to do so.

Each school agreed to participate. Following consent and pre-tests, a computer programme was used to randomly assign children in each school to either control or experimental groups. As per the pilot, storytelling sessions took place the week following pre-tests and they were held in a variety of locations (school libraries, resource rooms, and corridors). Attendance was taken at the start of each

session in the event that it would be needed to assist with interpretation of research findings. In order to ensure programme fidelity the researcher delivered all the experimental sessions and the research assistant led sessions with the control groups. To support the control group sessions, the research assistant shadowed the researcher for the first week and prompt notes were posted to her storybooks to assist with questions to stimulate reflection and discussion.

Post-tests took place approximately one week following the conclusion of the storytelling sessions in each school. At this point children were debriefed about the purpose of the study. They were also provided with a letter for their parents (see Appendix O). One year later, in Spring 2014, the researcher visited each school to share a summary of the key findings (see Appendix J) and to answer any questions that arose for the children.

3.10 Summary

Chapter three has outlined the methodological framework, methods, measures and intended data analysis procedures. A rationale has been presented for all decisions taken. Chapter four presents the findings of the study.

#

Chapter Four: Findings

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four presents the findings of the study. Firstly, the sample is described in terms of the number of participants in control and experimental groups and their reported ethnicity. The age and gender distribution of participants is also presented. In order to assist with the interpretation of results, the children's attendance at storytelling sessions is recorded along with the number of children who had heard of and/or met a member of the Traveller Irish community. Sources of information about Travellers are identified and children's comments (about what they have heard said about Travellers) are analysed according to themes. Pre-test scores are compared and reported by condition, gender, school, those who had heard of/not heard of Travellers, and those who had met/not met a Traveller. The hypotheses are restated and an explanation is provided for statistical tests chosen to test each hypothesis. The statistical findings for each hypothesis are presented and interpreted.

4.1 The sample

4.1.1 Number of participants

118 children took part in the study (65 girls and 53 boys). There were 61 children (28 boys and 33 girls) in the control group and 57 children (25 boys and 32 girls) in the experimental group.

Figure 4.1. Number of Male and Female Participants in the Control and Experimental Groups
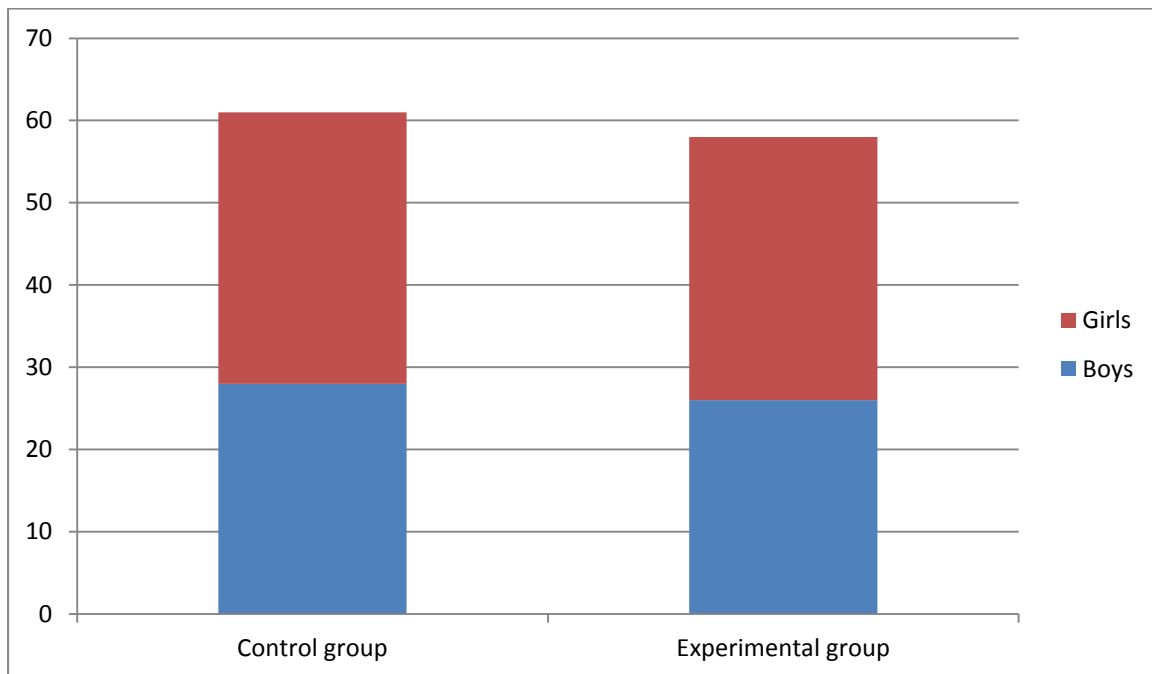
4.1.2 Participants' reported ethnicity

114 children identified as Irish, 2 as Romanian Irish, 1 as Russian Irish and 1 as English-born Irish. All the children attended schools in urban areas. The first language of all children was English. The

Romanian Irish children were all born in Ireland with one parent Irish and the Russian Irish child was adopted by an Irish family before the age of six months.

Figure 4.2. Participants' Reported Ethnicity
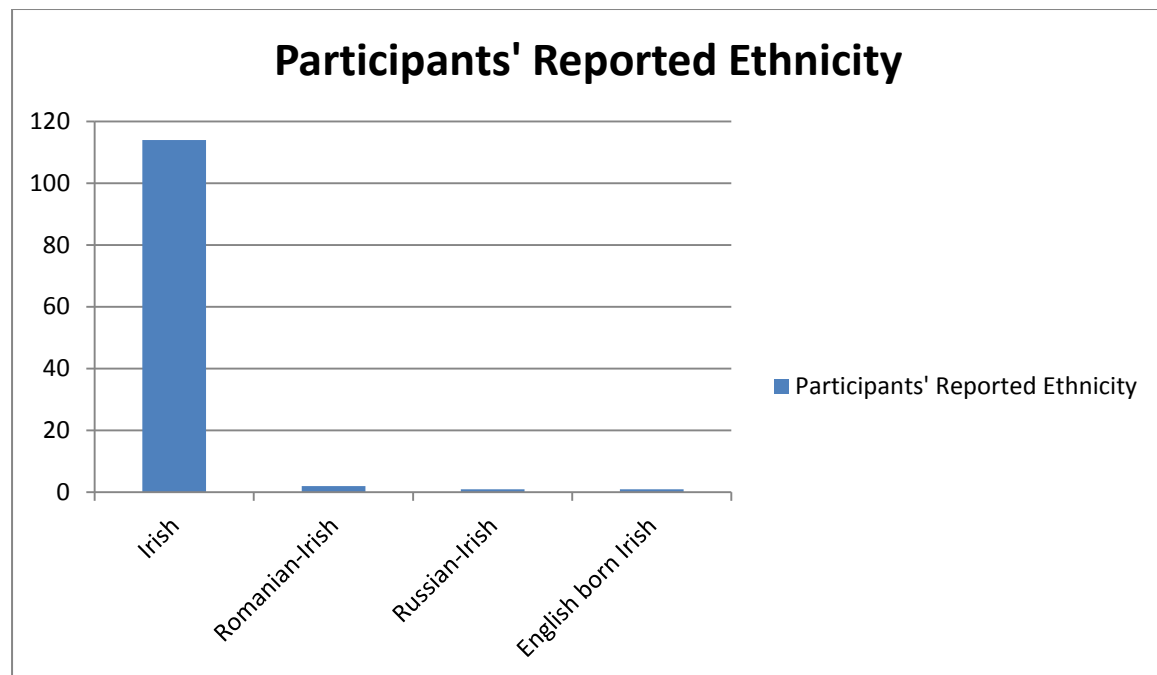
4.1.3 Age distribution of participants

Children's ages ranged from 8 to 12. There were 18 eight year olds, 39 nine year olds, 42 ten year olds, 18 eleven year olds and 1 twelve year old. The average age was 9.5, the median was 10 and the mode was 10.

Figure 4.3. Age Distribution of Participants
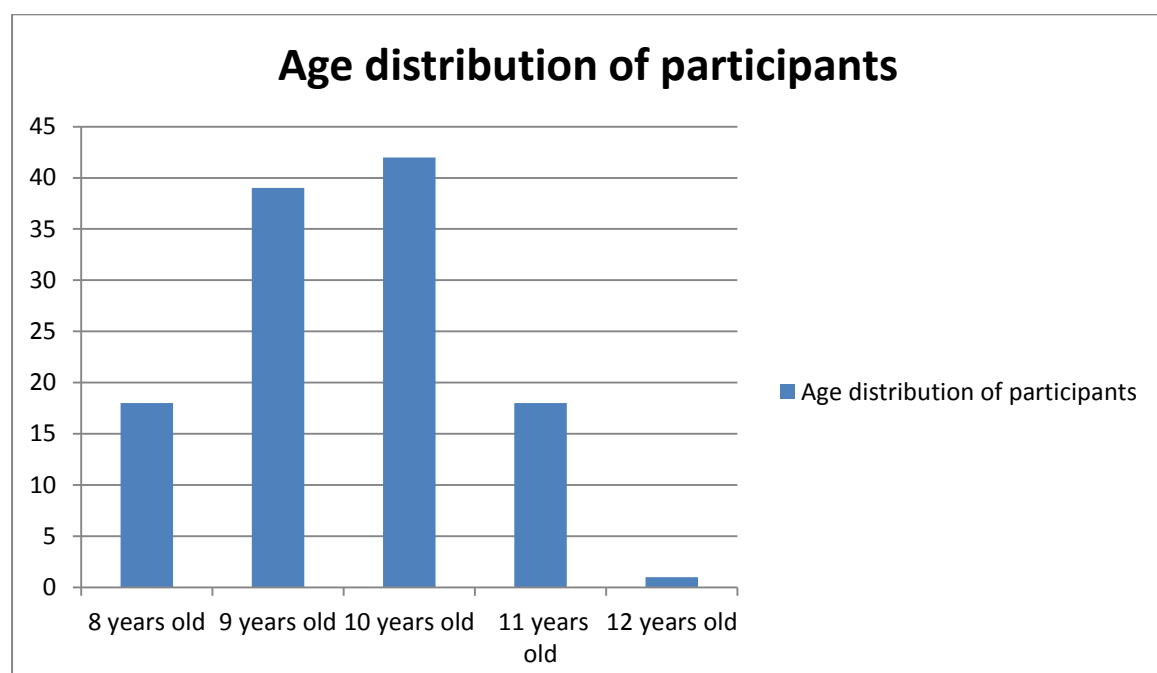
4.1.4 Participants' attendance at storytelling sessions

81 children attended all six sessions. 24 attended five sessions, 12 attended four sessions and 1 attended only three sessions.

39 children in the experimental group attended all six sessions. 13 attended five sessions, 4 attended four sessions and 1 child attended only three sessions.

42 children in the control group attended all 6 sessions, 11 attended five sessions, and 8 attended four sessions.

Figure 4.4. Control and Experimental Group Participants' Attendance at Storytelling Sessions
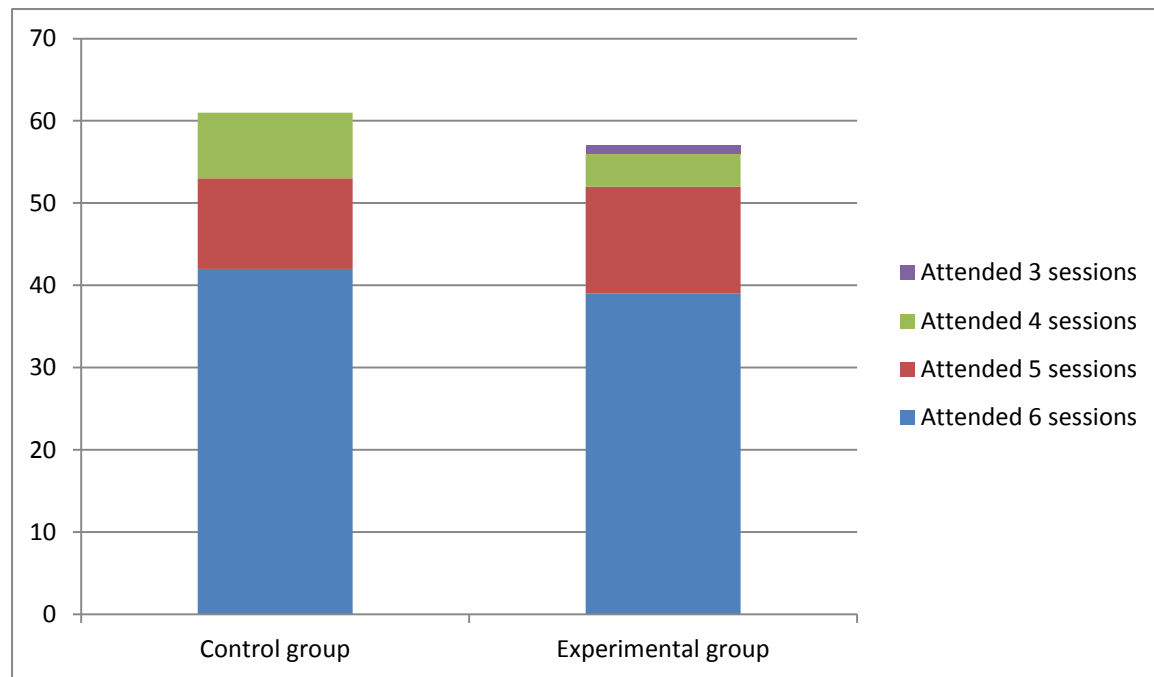
4.2 Have children ever heard of the Traveller Irish community?

The first question put to children was whether they had heard of the Traveller Irish community. Children responded yes or no to this question and the number of yes and no responses were counted.

83 children had heard of Irish Travellers. 35 children had never heard of Irish Travellers. 43 children in the control group had heard of Irish Travellers and 18 had never heard of Irish Travellers. 40 children in the experimental group had heard of Irish Travellers and 17 had never heard of Irish Travellers.

Figure 4.5. Number of Children in the Control and Experimental Groups who Had Heard of Irish Travellers
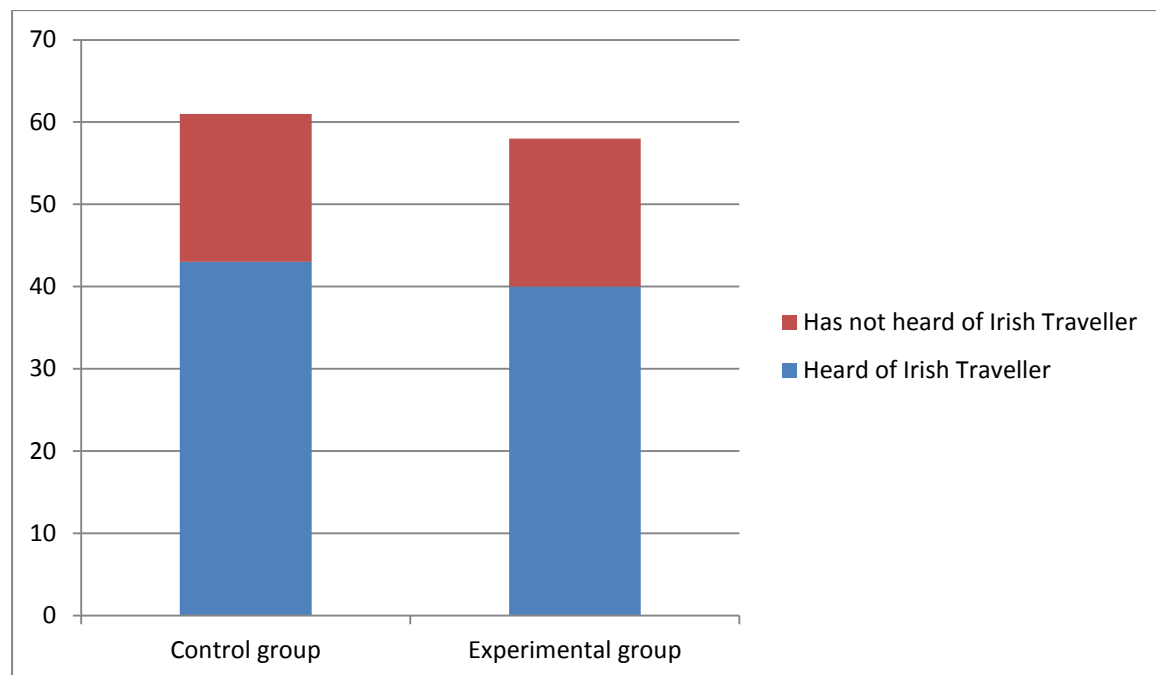
4.3 Have children ever met a member of the Traveller Irish community?

The next question put to children was whether they had ever met a member of the Traveller Irish community. Children responded yes or no to this question and the number of yes and no responses were counted. 18 children in the study had met a Traveller Irish person and 100 had never met a Traveller Irish person.

8 children in the experimental group had met a Traveller Irish person and 49 had never met a Traveller Irish person. 10 children in the control group had met a Traveller Irish person and 51 had never met a Traveller Irish person.

Figure 4.6. Number of Children in the Control and Experimental Groups who Had Met a Member of the Traveller Irish Community
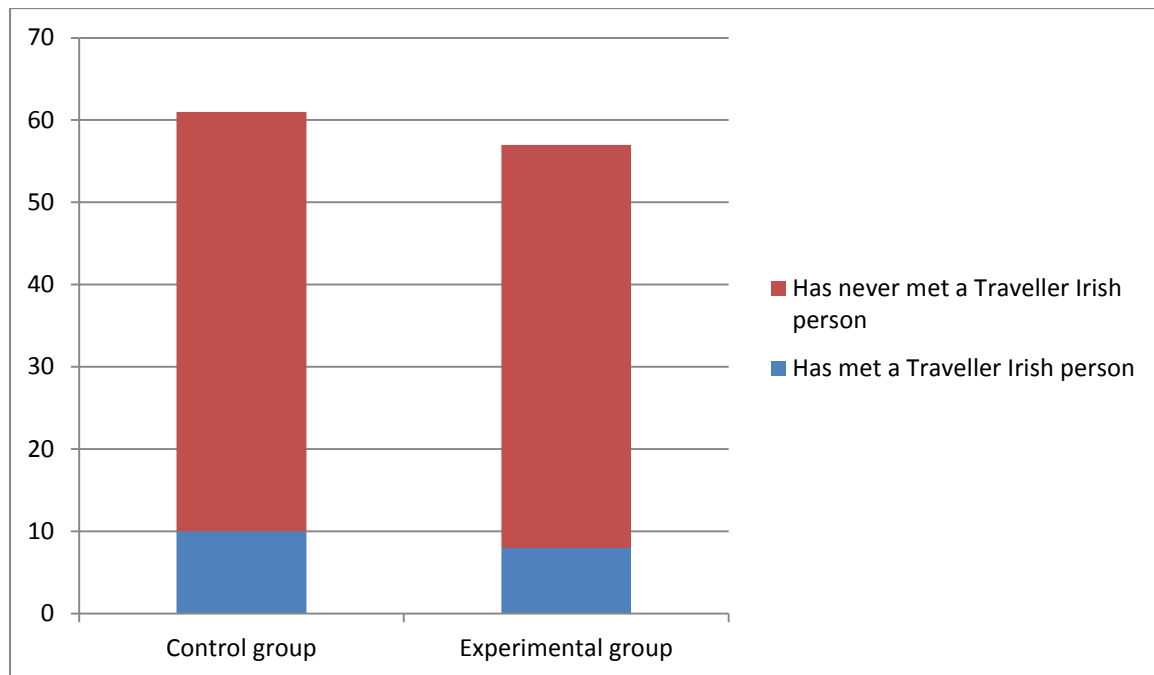
4.4 Sources of information about the Traveller Irish community

Following on from the question about whether children had ever heard of the Traveller Irish community, for those who responded in the affirmative they were asked how they learned about this group.

37 children did not specify a source of information regarding the Traveller Irish community. This is unsurprising in light of the fact that 35 children stated that they had not heard of Irish Travellers before. Among those that did specify where, or how, they had heard of Irish Travellers, some children cited several sources of information about the Traveller Irish community. These comments are presented in Appendix P and were subjected to thematic analysis

4.4.1 Data analysis procedure for qualitative data

Thematic analysis was used to identify and analyse patterns (themes) within the qualitative data emerging from the open ended question 'Where or how did you learn about Travellers?' Following the advice of Braun and Clarke (2006) the researcher followed particular phases to assist with the analysis. Firstly, handwritten notes taken during interviews were typed up into a format that could be easily read. The author familiarised herself with the data by reading and rereading the participants' comments. Subsequently this was followed by a more focused reading of the data where keywords or phrases (such as parent) were underlined. A word or phrase (code) was assigned to a pertinent comment. For example, parent was assigned to the comment 'my mam works with them'. The author ensured that each comment was collated to a code. A search for themes followed and codes were collated into emergent themes. For example 'family member' was assigned to any reference to parent, aunt, uncle, cousin or sibling. Next, themes were reviewed to ensure that there was sufficient data to support them. The following themes were identified: television, family

member, observations in the community, personal experience, books, and other member of the community.

The number of references to each theme was counted and is represented in a graph below. This is followed by a summary of each theme along with some illustrative comments.

Figure 4.7. Number of References to Different Sources of Information about the Traveller Irish Community

Number of references to different sources of information about the Traveller Irish community
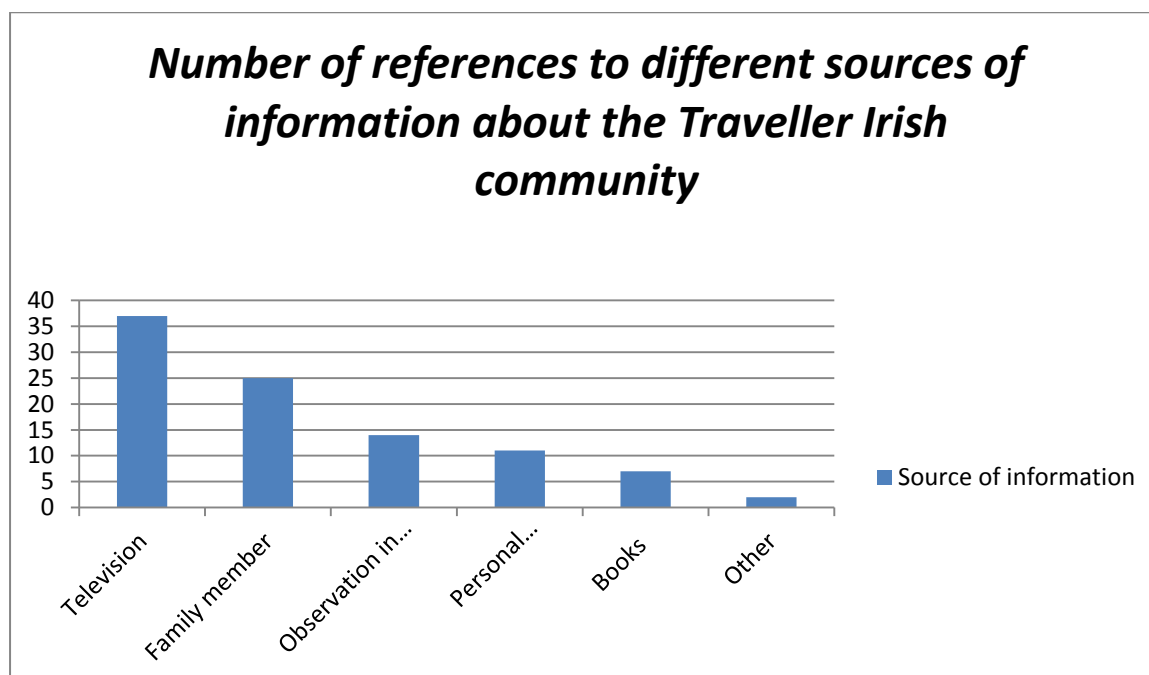
4.4.2 Sources of information about Travellers according to themes

Television

The most frequently cited source of information regarding the Traveller community was the television. There were 37 references to learning about Travellers through this medium. This included reference to: documentaries, song contests, films, advertisements, and sports coverage of boxing in the Olympics. *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding* was mentioned 16 times and *The Voice of Ireland* (which featured a Traveller Irish contestant) 3 times.

Family member

The next most common source of information about the Traveller community was a family member (including parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins). There were 25 references to learning about Traveller Irish people through family members.

My mum used to work with Travellers (participant 8)

My aunt works with Travellers (participant 12)

My dad said they stay on caravan sites (participant 3)

My mam works with them teaching home economics (participant 22)

My cousin goes to school near a camp of Travellers…some are tough (participant 39)

My mam says they only take what they need if you leave something out (participant 71)

My uncle said they don't have normal houses and are messy (participant 81)

Dad knows Travellers from work doing deliveries (participant 85)

My aunt works in a school for Traveller kids…they are not treated and respected as they deserve to be (participant 93)

Observations in neighbourhood/community

Twelve children said that they knew about Travellers because they had seen their caravans or driven past a halting site.

I have seen caravans at the edge of the M50 (a large motorway) (participant 4)

They used to live up the road (participant 19)

They live beside my grandmother's house (participant 79)

We drove past a halting site and saw millions of caravans (participant 10)

Beside the airport there are lots of caravans. They normally live beside a circus (participant 17)

I've seen caravans beside houses and roads (participant 66)

One child mentioned passing by a church where a Traveller Irish wedding was taking place.

Going past a church I saw they couldn't fit through the door…a big wedding (participant 8)

Another said that *they come looking for things in the neighbourhood* (participant 97)

Personal experience

Eleven children referred to personal experiences with Traveller children as a source of information about this group.

They come to our estate (participant 5)

I met a settled Traveller in my dance class (participant 7)

I see them on holidays in Kerry (participant 8)

My Aunt brings Travellers over twice a week. They love our dogs (participant 12)

There was a Traveller in my old school (participant 16)

They lived on my road, I was friends with them. They moved on (participant 19)

I went to their wedding. There was a huge horse and carriage. It was really different (participant 22)

Over in the park one time I played football with Travellers (participant 24)

I lived near a site. They were friendly but I moved (participant 44)

I got a German Shepard dog off them for free. They're really nice people (participant 85)

There is a Traveller in my neighbourhood. Nobody is nice to him. He comes around to play at my house (participant 113)

Books

There were 7 references to learning about Travellers through books. Some children mentioned specific titles

I read about gypsies in Tin Tin (participant 13)

The Blue Horse (participant 23)

Enid Blyton- they were stealing farmers' property (participant 27)

There's a story about Travellers in Starry Links (a primary school curriculum textbook) (participant 29)

Other community members

One child mentioned that they learned about Travellers from a taxi driver who said they didn't pay their fare (participant 49)

Another child reported that *my friend's mum works in a Traveller school* (participant 9)

4.5 What have children heard said about the Traveller Irish community?

Forty children did not volunteer any information in relation to what they had heard said about Traveller Irish people. Three comments were indecipherable due to poor handwriting. Comments made by remaining children are presented in Appendix Q. The comments were subjected to thematic analysis and are discussed below.

<u>4.5.1 Data analysis procedure for qualitative data</u>

Thematic analysis was used to identify and analyse patterns (themes) within the qualitative data emerging from the open ended question 'What have you heard said about Travellers?' The researcher followed the same procedure as for the analysis of how the children learned about Travellers. Again, handwritten notes taken during interviews were typed up into a format that could be easily read. The author familiarised herself with the data by reading and rereading the participants' comments. Subsequently this was followed by a more focused reading of the data where keywords or phrases were underlined. A word or phrase (code) was assigned to a pertinent comment. For example, 'dangerous and fighting' was assigned a code of 'dangerous'. The author ensured that each comment was collated to a code. A search for themes followed and codes were collated into emergent themes. For example, 'dangerous and fighting', 'tough' and 'they hit you' were collated into the theme of 'aggressive'. Next, themes were reviewed to ensure that there was sufficient data to support them. The following themes were identified: housing arrangements, weddings, difference, marginalised group, education, aggressive, other negative attributes,

language, positive attributes and other. The number of references to each theme was counted and is represented in a graph below. This is followed by a summary of each theme along with illustrative comments.

Figure 4.8 Number of References to Themes Emerging from Participants' Comments in relation to What they Have Heard About the Traveller Irish community
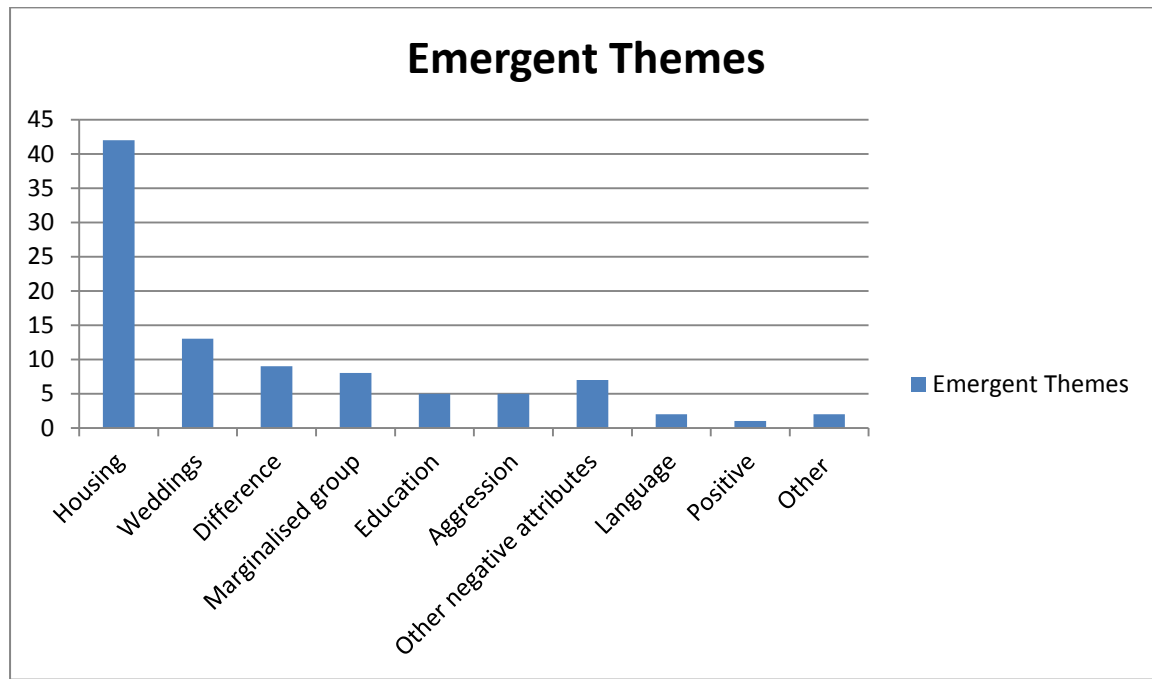
4.5.2 What children heard said about the Traveller Irish community according to themes

In general the children's comments about Travellers were very brief. A participant number is recorded beside each illustrative comment below.

Housing arrangements

When asked what they had heard about Travellers, many children's comments related to housing/living arrangements for Travellers. There were 38 references to caravans with children stating that Travellers lived in and/or moved around in caravans.

One child mentioned that *lots of Travellers are settled…many stay in one place* (participant 8)

Two children referred to the influence of the settled population on the nomadic lifestyle of Travellers.

Most Travellers need to be moved into houses…not sure why...cause they don't like them going around (participant 12)

Settled people stopped them travelling around (participant 18)

One child emphasised how Travellers are different from settled people saying *they don't have normal houses* (participant 81)

Weddings

Thirteen comments related to Traveller weddings. Presumably their knowledge was largely informed by the television show *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding*

They overreact to the size of the dress (participant 14)

They wear big dresses (participant 15)

They take dresses very seriously for communions and weddings (participant 12)

We went to a wedding…there were rows of people sitting in rags and people sitting in front in luminous belly tops (participant 22)

Weddings are not very nice (participant 43)

They can get married to someone they just met (participant 94)

Difference

Other comments focused on how Traveller Irish people are different from the majority.

They are a bit different to people…they stay in their group (participant 8)

They are very strange and giddy (participant14)

Children commented on differences in their accent

- *They have accents* (participant 23)
- *Dull accents* (participant 94)
- *They have a certain accent* (participant 95)
- *They speak common* (participant 90)

Differences in their appearance

- *They look a bit different* (participant 95)
- *I heard about gypsies wearing belly tops* (participant 28)
- *They have gold in their teeth and have gold watches and cool clothes* (participant 36)

Marginalised group

Eight of the children's comments suggested that Traveller Irish people are marginalised and victims of prejudice and discrimination

Big boys were slagging off a Traveller girl (participant 19)

People imitate them and mock them (participant 23)

Lots of people say bad things (participant 26)

They are not treated with the respect they deserve (participant 93)

People didn't let them into the venue (participant 99)

They get forced to move (participant 99)

They're judged like they're all lazy (participant 110)

I know a Traveller from my neighbourhood…nobody is nice to him (participant 113)

Education

There were five references to Travellers' education and how they believed that Traveller Irish children left school early and were home schooled.

They leave school at twelve to mind the kids (participant 37)

They leave school early (participant 38)

They finish school at eleven and get home schooled (participant 85)

Aggressive

Some comments suggested that participants believed that Traveller Irish people are aggressive

They're dangerous people (participant 25)

People hide when they come down the road, they hit you…I've always hid (participant 73)

They are dangerous fighting…not very nice (participant 25)

Some are tough (participant 39)

They chase you around (participant 78)

Negative attributes

Negative attributes were associated with Traveller Irish people suggesting that they are vain, foolish, poor, lazy, dishonest, and badly parented.

Most of them are all about their looks (participant 14)

They like to show off (participant 100)

Their clothing is not very sensible (participant 95)

They are poor (participant 62)

They are *messy* and *lazy* (participant 81)

They steal bins (participant 90)

Taxi driver told a story about Travellers not paying (participant 49)

Little kids drink alcohol at age 12 (participant 94)

Language

There were two references to Travellers having their own language

Sometimes they speak their own language (participant 19)

Positive attribute

There was one positive reference to Travellers

They're really nice people (participant 85)

Other

Two comments related to observations about Travellers related to halting sites and their knuckles

There's a statue of Mary in the halting site (participant 85)

They have boxing knuckles (participant 94)

4.6 Comparison of pre-test scores

Prior to presenting the statistical findings for each hypothesis, a comparison of pre-test scores across different variables is reported. Comparisons were made across: schools; gender; those who had heard/not heard of Travellers; and those who had met/not met Travellers. Given that the numbers in each respective comparison group were unequal, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not met. Therefore it was deemed appropriate to use non-parametric techniques to compare the differences between each pair of groups (Pallant, 2010). The results of the statistical analyses for each comparison are reported below.

4.6.1 Analysis of differences between schools on pre-test measures

Firstly participants' pre-test scores for each measure were compared according to school. A Kruskal Wallis test was used to investigate differences between the five schools in relation to the distribution of pre-test scores on each measure. The results suggest that there was no significant difference between the schools in relation to pre-test scores for outgroup attitudes, intended outgroup friendship behaviour and perceived ingroup norms. However, there was a statistically significant difference between perceived outgroup norms reported by participants in different schools (H(4)=11.52 , p=0.02) with a mean rank of 80.42 for School F, 64.54 for School P, 57.13 for School V, 53.98 for School C, and 47.08 for School N.

As can be seen in the box plot in figure 4.9 children in school F (the school in an area of social disadvantage) perceived that significantly more Traveller children would be likely to approve of intergroup friendship than children in the other four schools.

Figure 4.9 Box plot of pre-test perceived outgroup norm scores for each school

Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test
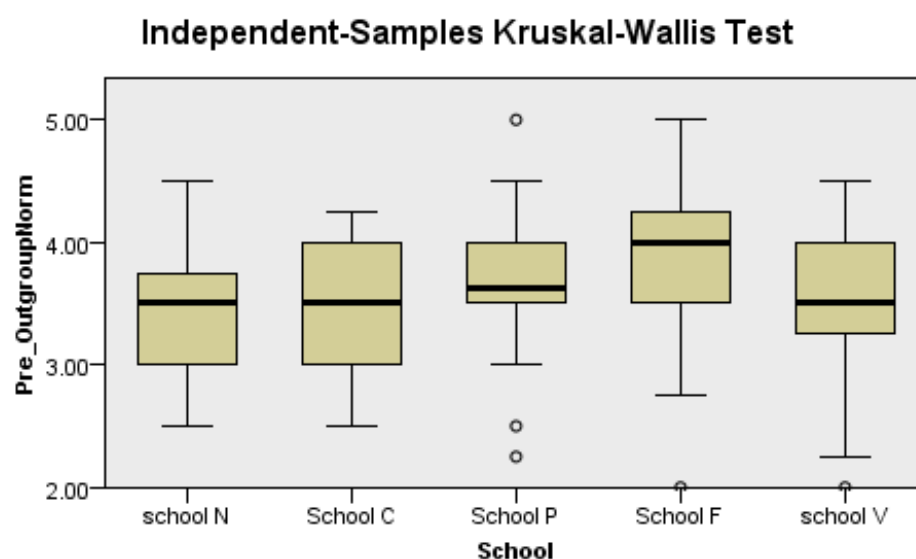
Table 4.1 Results of Kruskal Wallis and descriptive statistics (including mean ranks and sample sizes) for pre-test outgroup measures by school

Measure	School (n)					*H* value	*p* value
	N (25)	P (24)	F (18)	V (30)	C (21)		
Attitude	44.62	66.92	61.17	63.72	61.29	6.45	0.17
Behaviour	59.27	54.31	71.75	54.77	59.17	3.50	0.48
Ingroup norm	55.94	66.62	61.44	61.55	51.00	2.83	0.59
Outgroup norm	47.08	64.54	80.42	57.13	53.98	11.52	0.02

4.6.2 Analysis of gender differences on pre-test measures

A Mann Whitney U test was used to investigate differences between genders in terms of distribution of pre-test scores on all measures. The results are presented in table 4.2 and suggest that there was no significant difference between boys and girls in relation to the distribution of pre-test scores on measures of outgroup attitudes; intended outgroup friendship behaviour; perceived ingroup norms; and perceived outgroup norms.

Table 4.2 Results of Mann Whitney U and descriptive statistics for pre-test outgroup measures by gender

Measure	Girls		Boys			
	Median	n	Median	n	U	p
Attitude	10	65	9	53	1,723.5	0.97
Intended behaviour	3.25	64	3.25	53	1,678.5	0.92
Ingroup norm	3.5	65	3.5	53	1,833.5	0.54
Outgroup norm	3.5	65	3.75	53	1,964	0.92

4.6.3 Analysis of differences between those who had heard of Travellers and those who had not heard of Travellers on pre-test scores

A Mann Whitney U test was used to investigate differences between those who had heard of Travellers and those who had not heard of Travellers in relation to the distribution of pre-test scores. The results are presented in table 4.3 and suggest that there was no significant difference between those who had heard of Travellers and those who had not heard of them in relation to their pre-test scores on measures of: intended outgroup friendship behaviour; perceived ingroup norms; and perceived outgroup norms. However, there was a significant difference between the groups in relation to their outgroup attitudes. Participants who had not heard of Travellers reported significantly more positive outgroup attitudes (Mdn=14) than those who had heard of Travellers (Mdn=9), U=1,929 , p=0.01.

Table 4.3 Results of Mann Whitney U and descriptive statistics for pre-test outgroup measures by those who had heard of or not heard of a Traveller

Measure	Heard of a Traveller		Has not heard of a Traveller			
	Median	n	Median	n	U	p
Attitude	9	83	14	35	1,929	0.01
Intended behaviour	3.25	83	3.5	35	1,572.5	0.41
Ingroup norm	3.5	83	3.5	35	1,481	0.81
Outgroup norm	3.5	83	3.75	35	1,607.5	0.36

4.6.4 Analysis of differences between those who had met a Traveller and those who had not met a Traveller on pre-test scores

A Mann Whitney U test was used to investigate differences between those who had met a Traveller and those who had not met a Traveller in relation to the distribution of their pre-test scores on measures of outgroup attitudes, intended outgroup friendship behaviour, perceived ingroup norms and perceived outgroup norms. The results are presented in table 4.4 and suggest that there was no significant difference between groups of children who had met a Traveller and those who had not met a Traveller in relation to pre-test scores on all of the pre-test measures.

Table 4.4 Results of Mann Whitney U and descriptive statistics for pre-test outgroup measures by those who had met or not met a Traveller

Measure	Met a Traveller		Has not met a Traveller			
	Median	n	Median	n	U	p
Attitude	8.5	18	10	100	1,117.5	0.10
Intended behaviour	2.88	18	3.25	99	1.125.5	0.08
Ingroup norm	3.5	18	3.5	100	951	0.70
Outgroup norm	3.5	18	3.5	100	99.5	0.45

4.6.5 Analysis of differences between the control and experimental group on pre-test measures

An independent samples t test was conducted to see if there was a difference between the control group and the experimental group in relation to mean pre-test scores on each measure. The results are presented in table 4.5 and indicate that there was no significant difference between the groups in relation to mean pre-test scores for: outgroup attitudes; intended outgroup friendship behaviour; perceived ingroup norms; or perceived outgroup norms.

Table 4.5 Results of t-test and descriptive statistics for pre-test outgroup measures by condition

Measure	Experimental		Control		t	p	df
	M (SD)	n	M (SD)	n			
Attitude	10.94 (6.81)	57	10.67 (7.11)	61	0.21	0.83	116
Intended behaviour	3.37 (0.92)	56	3.24(1.04)	61	0.71	0.48	115
Ingroup norm	3.57 (0.58)	57	3.35 (0.68)	61	1.94	0.06	116
Outgroup norm	3.53(0.6)	57	3.55 (0.66)	61	-0.194	0.85	116

Note. Outgroup attitude scores range from -30 to +30. Outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores range from 1-5. Perceived ingroup and outgroup norm scores range from 1-5. For all measures the higher the score the more positive towards the outgroup.

4.7 Introduction to results of quantitative data analyses to test research hypotheses

Prior to presenting the statistical findings for each hypothesis, a justification for use of parametric tests is offered.

It was decided to use parametric tests to investigate differences between groups. According to Pallant (2010) it is appropriate to use parametric tests when a number of assumptions have been met. Firstly, each parametric approach assumes that the dependent variable is measured using a continuous scale. In the current study, intergroup attitudes, intended friendship behaviour, perceived ingroup norms and perceived outgroup norms were all measured using scales.

Secondly, Pallant (2010) outlines that each observation or measurement must not be influenced by another observation or measurement. Accordingly, children were interviewed individually thus minimising the influence of others on their responses to each measure.

For parametric techniques it is assumed that the population from which the samples are taken are normally distributed. Yet Pallant (2010) argues that in a lot of research (particularly in the social sciences) scores on the dependent variable are not normally distributed. Indeed, in the current study, it seems unlikely that intergroup attitudes, intended friendship behaviour and perceived ingroup and outgroup norm scores are normally distributed within the population. Literature presented in the introduction suggests that Travellers are a stigmatised group. Hence attitudes and behaviour towards Travellers are likely to be predominantly negative. However, Pallant (2010) maintains that most parametric techniques are reasonably tolerant of violations of the assumption of normal distribution and that with large enough sample sizes (30+), the violation of this assumption should not cause major problems. Given that the sample size in the current study comprises 118 participants and previous studies using similar measures have used parametric techniques (Cameron et al., 2006; 2007; 2011) the violation of the assumption of normal distribution does not present significant cause for concern.

Parametric techniques also make the assumption that samples are obtained from populations of equal variances (that the variability of scores for each of the groups-control and experimental-is similar). To test this, SPSS was used to perform Levene's test for equality of variances. The p values were above 0.05 across all comparisons therefore the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met.

Finally, parametric techniques assume that scores obtained using a random sample from the population. However, Pallant (2010) acknowledge that this is rarely the case in real life research. Although the sample in the current study is not representative of all primary school children in the Republic of Ireland some effort was used to apply random sampling. Using a computer programme children in volunteering classrooms were randomly assigned to control or experimental groups. This approach has been used in previous studies (Cameron et al., 2006; 2007; 2011) that have also adopted parametric tests to investigate differences between groups.

The hypotheses that were tested are outlined below along with an explanation with regard to the statistical test chosen to test each hypothesis. The statistical findings for each hypothesis are presented and interpreted.

4.8 Outgroup attitude hypotheses and results

4.8.1 Within group outgroup attitude results

In relation to outgroup attitudes the following hypothesis was proposed:

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup attitude score and the mean post-test attitude score.

In order to look at the effect of the intervention on each group individually a t-test was conducted to see whether there was a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup attitude score and the mean post-test attitude score among the experimental group.

Result: There was no significant difference between the mean pre-test outgroup attitude and the mean post-test outgroup attitude for the experimental group (t (56) = -0.84, p>0.05)

4.8.2 Between groups outgroup attitude results

It was also hypothesised that there would be a difference between the control group mean post-test outgroup attitude score and the experimental group mean post-test outgroup attitude score.

A t-test was used to compare control and experimental group post-test outgroup attitude scores

Result: There was no significant difference between the control group mean post-test outgroup attitude score and the experimental group mean post-test outgroup attitude score (t (115)=0.904, p>0.05)

4.8.3 ANCOVA result for outgroup attitudes

The author also asked the question 'for a person who scores X on the outgroup attitude scale prior to the intervention, would they score higher on the post-test if they were in the control group or the experimental group?' A one way between groups ANCOVA was conducted to answer this question. The independent variable was group condition (control and experimental) with post-test outgroup attitude as the dependent variable. Pre-test outgroup attitude scores were used as the covariate in this analysis.

Results: The results indicate that there was a non-significant effect of the intervention on outgroup attitudes when pre-test scores were taken into account F (1,114) 1.39, p=0.24, partial eta squared= 0.012

Hence, the statistical analyses suggest that the intervention did not have a significant impact on children's outgroup attitudes.

4.9 Intended friendship behaviour hypotheses and results

In relation to outgroup intended friendship behaviour the following hypothesis was proposed:

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the mean post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score

4.9.1 Within group outgroup intended friendship behaviour results

A t test was conducted to see whether there was a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the mean post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score among the experimental group.

Result: There was no significant difference between the mean pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the mean post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score among the experimental group (t (55)= -1.69, p>0.05).

4.9.2 Between groups outgroup intended friendship behaviour results

It was also hypothesised that there would be a difference between the control group post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the experimental group post-test intended friendship behaviour score

A t-test was used to compare control and experimental group post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores.

Result: There was a significant difference between the control group post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the experimental group post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score (t (116)= 3.56, p <0.05).

The experimental group showed a higher outgroup intended friendship score (M=3.58, SD= 0.77) compared with the control group (M=3.02, SD= 0.92).

4.9.3 Box plots for pre and post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores

Given the seemingly contradictory results, box plots were created to illustrate the distribution of pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores (see Figure 4.10) and post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores (see figure 4.11).

As can be seen from figures 4.10 and 4.11 below, the median outgroup intended friendship behaviour score increased in the experimental group post-intervention but decreased in the control group according to post-tests. Moreover, there appears to be an increase among the lower pre-test scores in the experimental group but not in the control group. The higher scores did not increase as much due to ceiling effects. Hence, the boxplots appear to demonstrate evidence of treatments effects.

Figure 4. 10 Box Plot for Pre-Test Outgroup Intended Friendship Behaviour Scores
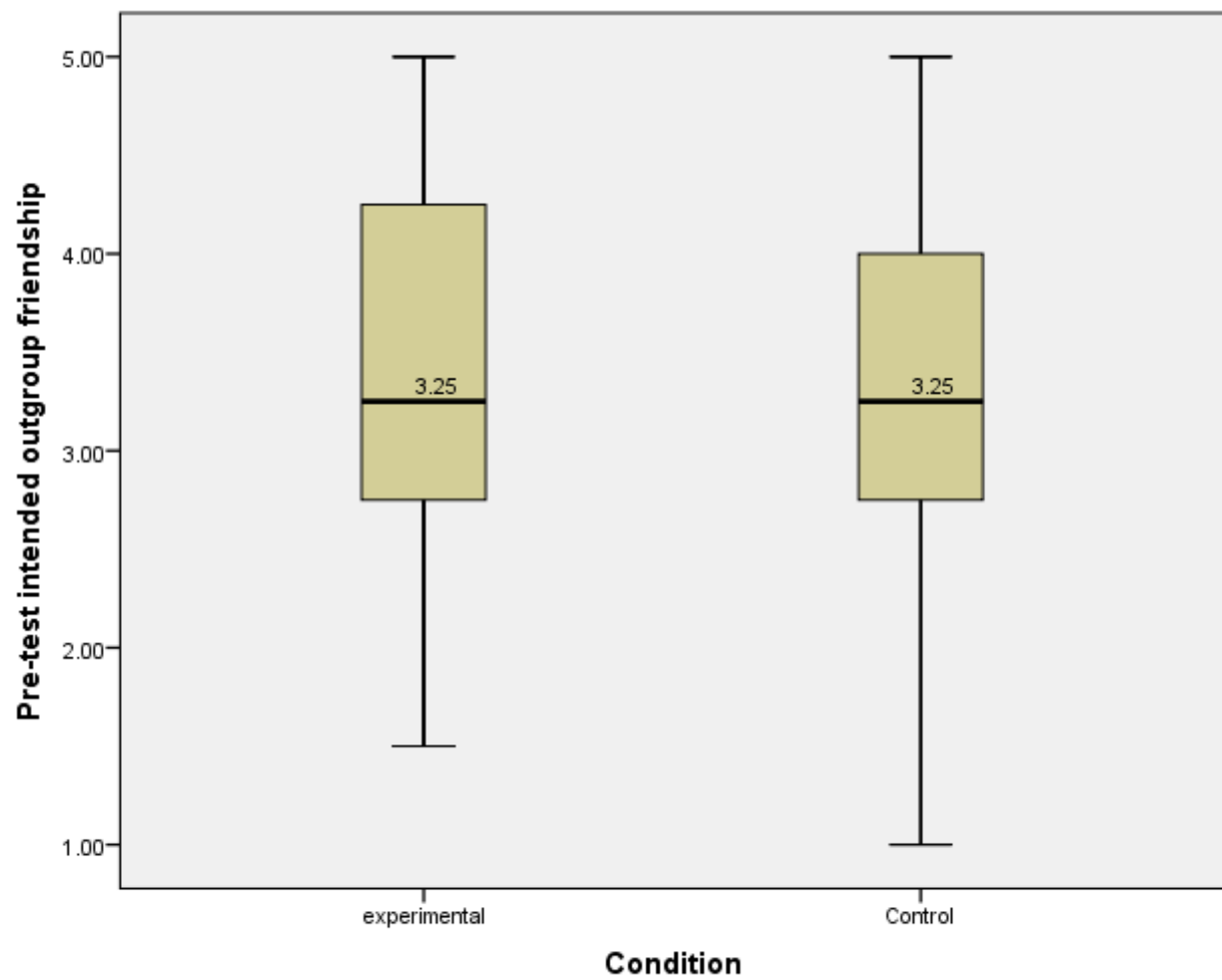
Figure 4.11 Box Plot for Post-Test Outgroup Intended Friendship Behaviour Scores
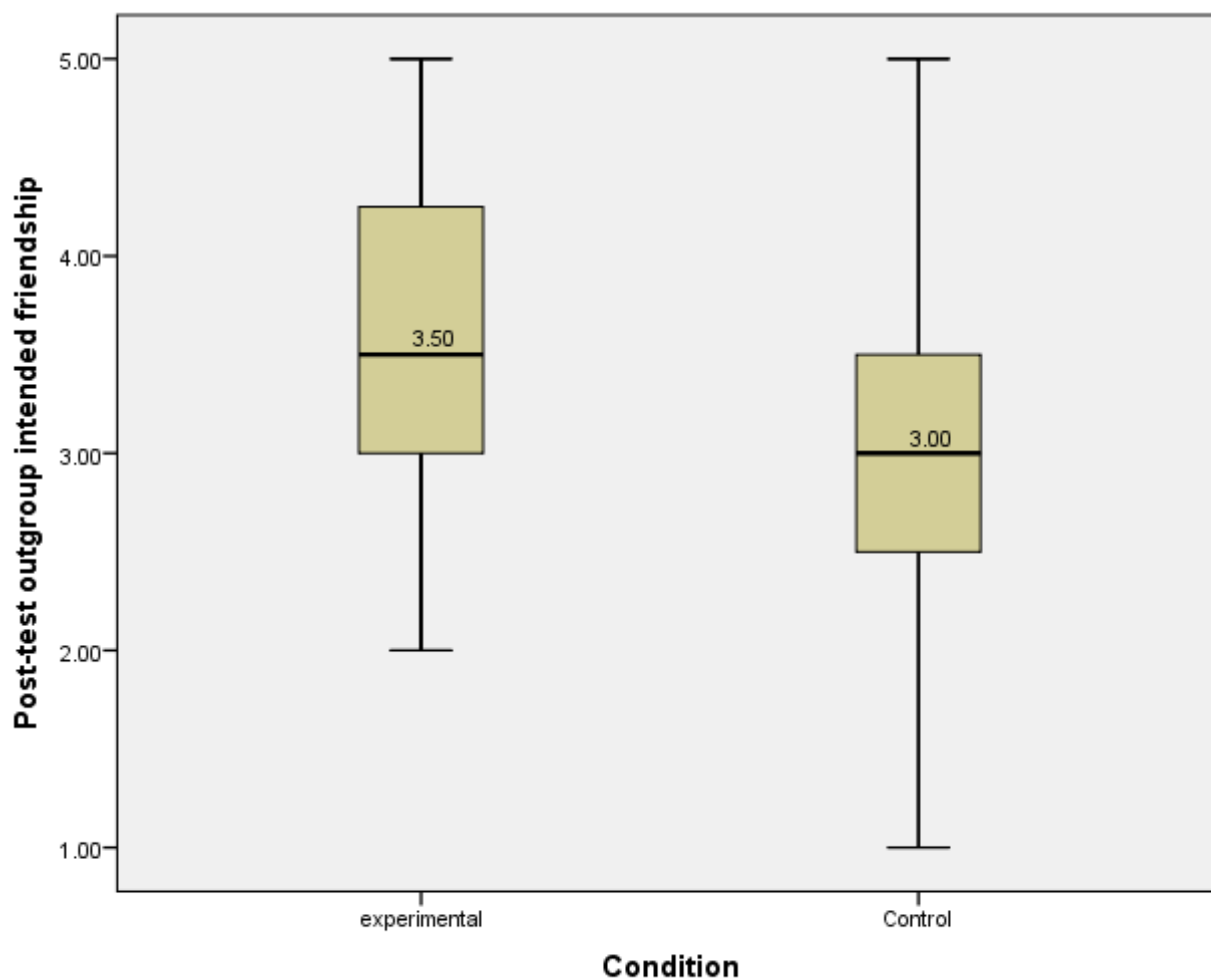
4.9.4 ANCOVA results for outgroup intended friendship behaviour

The author also asked the question 'for a person who scores X on the outgroup intended friendship behaviour scale prior to the intervention, would they score higher on the post-test if they were in the control group or the experimental group?'

A one way between groups ANCOVA was conducted to answer this question. The independent variable was group condition (control and experimental) with post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour as the dependent variable. Pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores were used as the covariate in this analysis.

Result: The results indicate that there was a significant effect of intervention for outgroup intended friendship behaviour when pre-test scores were taken into consideration F (1,114) 15.85, p=0.000, partial eta squared=0.12.

Hence, the statistical analyses suggest that the intervention did have a significantly positive impact on children's outgroup friendship behaviour intentions.

4.10 Ingroup norms hypotheses and results

4.10.1 Within group perceived ingroup norm results

In relation to perceived ingroup norms the following hypothesis was proposed:

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test perceived ingroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score.

A t test was used to see whether there was a difference between the mean pre-test perceived ingroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score among the experimental group.

Result: There was a significant difference between the mean pre-test perceived ingroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score among the experimental group (t (55)=-2.30 $p<0.05$).

Within the experimental group a higher post-test perceived ingroup norm for intergroup friendship score was found (M=3.71, SD=0.54) compared with pre-test perceived ingroup norm (M=3.58, SD=0.59)

4.10.2 Between groups perceived ingroup norms results

It was also hypothesised that there would be a difference between the control group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score and the experimental group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score

A t-test was used to compare control and experimental group post-test perceived ingroup norm scores.

Result: There was a significant difference between the control group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score and the experimental group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score (t (112.5)=2.86, $p<0.05$).

A higher post-test perceived ingroup norm for intergroup friendship was found in the experimental group (M=3.71, SD=0.54) compared with the post-test perceived ingroup norm for intergroup friendship in the control group (M=3.38, SD=0.68).

4.10.3 ANCOVA results for perceived ingroup norms

The author also asked the question 'for a person who scores X on the perceived ingroup norm scale prior to the intervention, would they score higher on the post-test if they were in the control group or the experimental group?' A one way between groups ANCOVA was conducted to answer this question. The independent variable was group condition (control and experimental) with post-test perceived ingroup norm as the dependent variable. Pre-test perceived ingroup norm scores were used as the covariate in this analysis.

Results: The results indicate that there was a significant effect of intervention on perceived ingroup norms when pre-test scores were taken into consideration [F (1, 114) = 4.127, p=0.045, partial eta squared= 0.035]

Hence, the statistical analyses suggest that the intervention had a significantly positive impact on children's perceived ingroup norms about intergroup friendship with Travellers.

4.11 Outgroup norms hypotheses and results

4.11.1 Within group perceived outgroup norms results

In relation to perceived outgroup norms the following hypothesis was proposed:

- Among the experimental group, there will be a difference between the mean pre-test perceived outgroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived outgroup norm score.

A t-test was conducted to see whether there was a difference between the mean pre-test perceived outgroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived outgroup norm score among the experimental group.

Result: There was no significant difference between the mean pre-test perceived outgroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived outgroup norm score among the experimental group (t (56)=-1.73, p>0.05).

4.11.2 Between groups perceived outgroup norms results

It was also hypothesised that there would be a difference between the control group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm and the experimental group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm

A t-test was used to compare control and experimental group post-test perceived outgroup norm scores.

Result: There was a significant difference between the control group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm and the experimental group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm (t (116) =2.16, p<0.05).

A higher post-test perceived outgroup norm for intergroup friendship was found in the experimental group (M=3.67, SD=0.54) compared with the post-test perceived outgroup norm for intergroup friendship in the control group (M=3.45, SD=0.57).

4.11.3 Box plots for pre and post-test perceived outgroup norm scores

Given the seemingly contradictory results, box plots were created to illustrate the distribution of pre-test perceived outgroup norm scores (see Figure 4.12) and post-test perceived outgroup norm scores (see figure 4.13).

As can be seen from figures 4.12 and 4.13 below, the median perceived outgroup norm score increased in the experimental group post-intervention but decreased in the control group according to post-tests. Moreover, there appears to be an increase among the lower pre-test scores in the experimental group but not in the control group. The higher scores did not increase as much due to ceiling effects. Hence, the boxplots appear to demonstrate evidence of treatment effects.

Figure 4.12 Box Plot for Pre-Test Perceived Outgroup Norm Scores
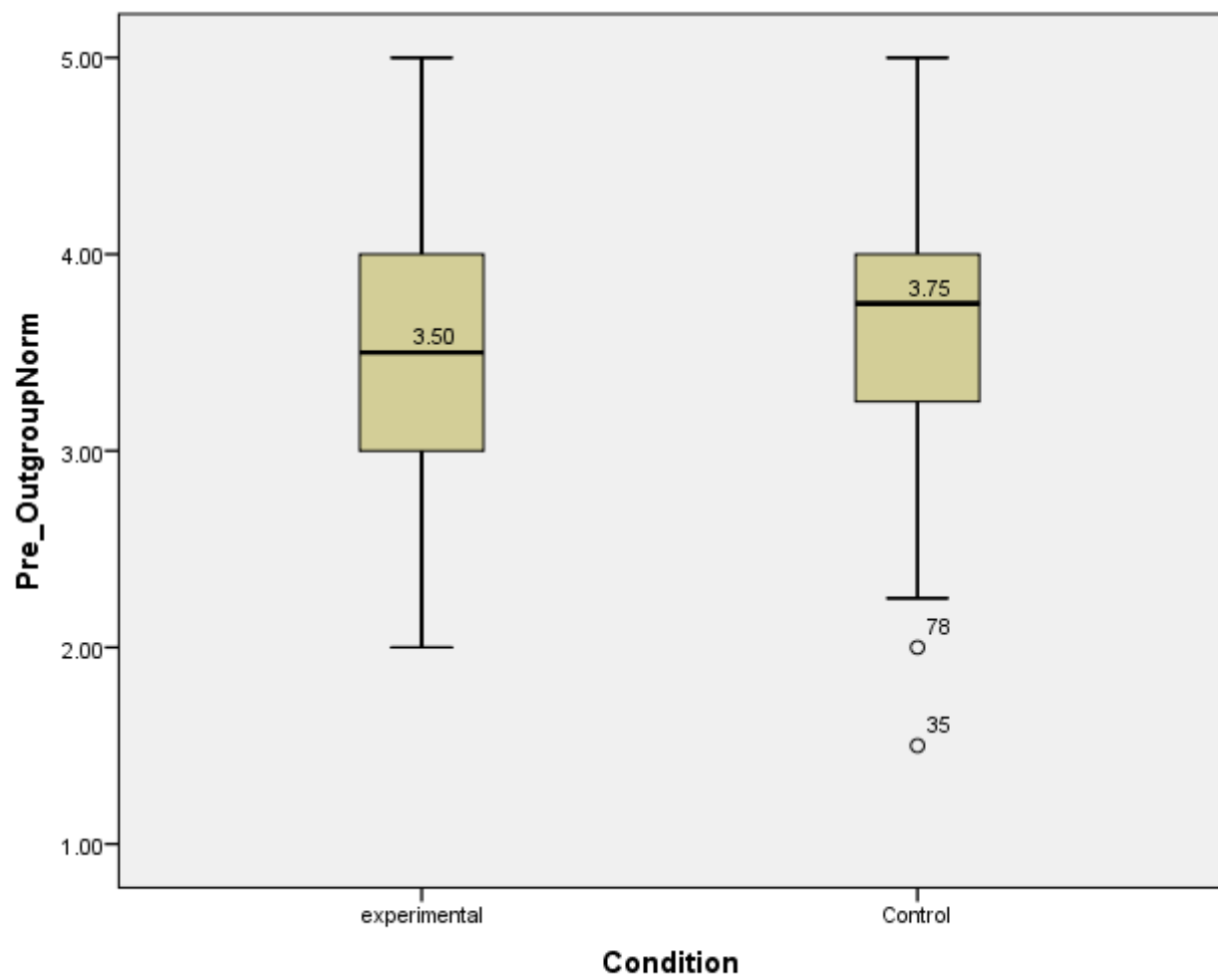
Figure 4.13 Box plot for post-test perceived outgroup norm scores
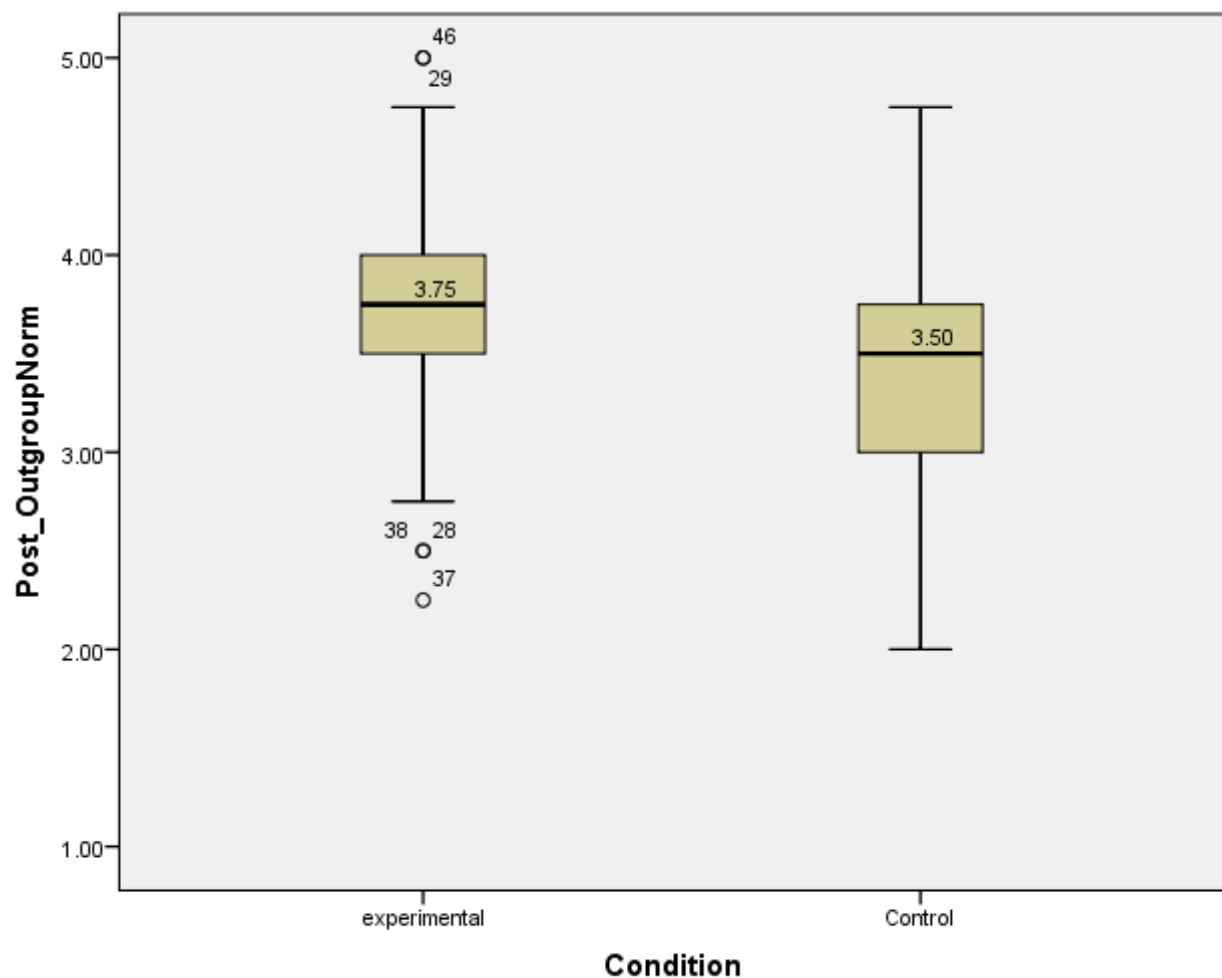
4.11.4 ANCOVA results for perceived outgroup norms

The author also asked the question 'for a person who scores x on the perceived outgroup norm scale prior to the intervention, would they score higher on the post-test if they were in the control group or the experimental group?' A one way between groups ANCOVA was conducted to answer this question. The independent variable was group condition (control and experimental) with post-test perceived outgroup norm as the dependent variable. Pre-test perceived outgroup norm scores were used as the covariate in this analysis.

Results: The results indicate that there was a significant effect of intervention on perceived outgroup norms when pre-test scores were taken into consideration [$F_{(1, 115)}=7.48$, $p=0.007$ partial eta squared= 0.061].

Hence, the statistical analyses suggest that the intervention had a significantly positive impact on children's perceived outgroup norms about intergroup friendship with Travellers.

4.12 Summary of quantitative data analyses

Table 4.6 Results of t-tests and descriptive statistics for post-test outgroup measures by condition

Measure	Experimental		Control		*t*	*p*	df
	M (SD)	n	M (SD)	n			
Attitude	11.51 (6.57)	57	10.38 (6.88)	60	0.90	0.37	115
Intended behaviour	3.58 (0.77)	57	3.02 (0.92)	61	3.56	0.001	116
Ingroup norm	3.71 (0.54)	56	3.38 (0.68)	61	2.82	0.006	115
Outgroup norm	3.67 (0.54)	57	3.45 (0.57)	61	2.16	0.03	116

Note. Outgroup attitude scores range from -30 to +30. Outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores range from 1-5. Perceived ingroup and outgroup norm scores range from 1-5. For all measures the higher the score the more positive towards the outgroup.

Table 4.7 Results of t-tests and descriptive statistics for pre-and post-test outgroup measures within the experimental group

Measure	Pre-test		Post-test		*t*	*p*	df
	M (SD)	n	M (SD)	n			
Attitude	10.95 (6.81)	57	11.51 (6.57)	57	-0.84	0.41	56
Intended behaviour	3.37 (0.92)	56	3.58 (0.78)	56	-1.69	0.10	55
Ingroup norm	3.58 (0.59)	56	3.71 (0.54)	56	-2.30	0.03	55
Outgroup norm	3.53 (0.60)	57	3.67 (0.54)	57	-1.76	0.09	56

Note. Outgroup attitude scores range from -30 to +30. Outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores range from 1-5. Perceived ingroup and outgroup norm scores range from 1-5. For all measures the higher the score the more positive towards the outgroup.

4.13 Further analyses

In order to assist with the interpretation of results, further analyses were conducted. The researcher compared control group scores pre and post-intervention. In addition a series of tests were used to examine whether the treatment also influenced attitudes and intentions towards the ingroup (Settled Irish children). Finally the researcher investigated whether there was a difference across schools (and across gender) in relation to the effectiveness of the vicarious contact intervention.

4. 13.1 Comparison of control group scores pre and post intervention

A paired samples t-test was used to investigate differences between mean pre and post-test scores on measures of outgroup attitude, intended outgroup friendship behaviour, perceived ingroup norms and perceived outgroup norms within the control group. The results are presented in table 4.8 and indicate that there was no significant difference between mean pre and post-test scores on measures of outgroup attitudes, perceived ingroup norms and perceived outgroup norms. However, there was a significant difference between the mean pre and post-test scores of intended outgroup friendship behaviour (t(60)=2.66, p<0.05). This suggests that children in the control group reported significantly less favourable friendship intentions towards Travellers in post-tests as compared to pre-tests.

Table 4.8 Results of t-test and descriptive statistics for Pre and Post-test outgroup measures within the Control Group

Measure	Pre		Post		*t*	*p*	df
	Mean (SD)	n	Mean (SD)	n			
Outgroup attitude	10.8 (7.1)	60	10.38 (6.88)	60	0.63	0.53	59
Intended behaviour	3.24 (1.04)	61	3.02 (0.92)	61	2.66	0.01	60
Perceived ingroup norm	3.35 (0.68)	61	3.38 (0.68)	61	-0.51	0.61	60
Perceived outgroup norm	3.55 (0.66)	61	3.45 (0.56)	61	1.61	0.12	60

Note. Outgroup attitude scores range from -30 to +30. Outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores range from 1-5. Perceived ingroup and outgroup norm scores range from 1-5. For all measures the higher the score the more positive towards the outgroup.

4.13.2 Analysis of ingroup attitudes and intended ingroup friendship behaviour pre and post-intervention

The purpose of the vicarious contact intervention was to promote more favourable attitudes and behavioural intentions towards the outgroup (Travellers). Participation in storytelling sessions was not predicted to impact on children's attitudes and intentions towards the ingroup (Settled children). Hence, a paired sample t-test was used to test whether there was a significant difference between pre and post-test ingroup attitude scores within the experimental group. The results are presented in table 4.9.

As predicted, there was no significant difference between pre-test ingroup attitude scores and post-test ingroup attitude scores within the experimental group (*t*(56)=0.99, *p*>0.05).

A paired sample t –test was also used to test whether there was a significant difference between pre and post-test intended ingroup friendship behaviour scores within the experimental group. The results are presented in table 4.9.

As predicted, there was no significant difference between pre-test intended ingroup friendship behaviour scores and post-test intended ingroup friendship behaviour scores within the experimental group (t(55)=0.17, p>0.05).

Table 4.9 Results of t-test and descriptive statistics for pre and post-test ingroup measures within the experimental group

Measure	Pre		Post		t	p	df
	Mean (SD)	n	Mean (SD)	n			
Ingroup attitude	11.61 (6.37)	57	11.07 (6.46)	57	0.99	0.33	56
Intended behaviour	3.96 (0.81)	56	3.94 (0.78)	56	0.17	0.87	55

Note. Outgroup attitude scores range from -30 to +30. Outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores range from 1-5. Perceived ingroup and outgroup norm scores range from 1-5. For all measures the higher the score the more positive towards the outgroup.

4.14 Effectiveness of intervention across schools

The researcher also wondered whether the intervention was more or less effective across the five schools in relation to each post-test measure (when pre-test scores were taken into consideration).

4.14.1 Outgroup attitudes

In order to answer this question a 2 by 5 between groups ANCOVA was conducted. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and schools (Schools C, F, N P, and V) and the dependent variable was post-test outgroup attitude scores with pre-test outgroup attitude scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and school in relation to post-test outgroup attitude scores (F (4,106)=1.77, p >0.05). Similarly, there was no main effect for school (F (4, 106)=1.37, p>0.05).

4.14.2 Intended outgroup friendship behaviour

Next a 2 by 5 between groups ANCOVA was conducted to examine whether the treatment caused differing effects across schools in terms of post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores.

The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and schools (Schools C, F, N P, and V) and the dependent variable was post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores with pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and school in relation to post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour scores (F (4, 106)= 0.64, p >0.05). There was also no main effect for school (F (4, 106)=1.39, p>0.05).

4.14.3 Perceived ingroup norms

A 2 by 5 between groups ANCOVA was conducted to investigate whether the treatment caused differing effects across schools in terms of post-test perceived ingroup norms scores. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and schools (Schools C, F, N P, and V) and the dependent variable was post-test perceived ingroup norms scores with pre-test perceived ingroup norms scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and school in relation to post-test perceived ingroup norm scores (F (4, 106)=2.38, p >0.05). There was also no main effect for school (F (4, 106)=0.80, p>0.05).

4.14.4 Perceived outgroup norms

A 2 by 5 between groups ANCOVA was conducted to investigate whether the treatment caused differing effects across schools in terms of post-test perceived outgroup norms scores. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and schools (Schools C, F, N P, and V) and the dependent variable was post-test perceived outgroup norms scores with pre-test perceived outgroup norms scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and school in relation to post-test perceived outgroup norm scores (F (4, 107)=1.13, p >0.05). There was also no main effect for school (F (4, 107)=1.86, p>0.05).

4.15 Effectiveness of intervention across gender

The researcher also wondered whether the intervention was more or less effective across boys and girls in relation to each post-test measure (when pre-test scores were taken into consideration).

4.15.1 Outgroup attitudes

In order to answer this question a 2 by 2 between groups ANCOVA was conducted. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and gender (boys and girls) and the dependent variable was post-test outgroup attitude scores with pre-test outgroup attitude scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and gender in relation to post-test outgroup attitude scores (F (1,112)=0.02, p>0.05). There was also no main effect for gender (F(1,112)=0.001, p>0.05).

4.15.2 Intended outgroup friendship behaviour

Next a 2 by 2 between groups ANCOVA was conducted. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and gender (boys and girls) and the dependent variable was post-test intended outgroup friendship behaviour scores with pre-test intended outgroup friendship behaviour scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and gender in relation to post-test intended outgroup friendship behaviour scores ($F(1,112)=0.003$, $p>0.05$). There was also no main effect for gender ($F(1,112)=2.73$, $p>0.05$).

4.15.3 Perceived ingroup norms

A 2 by 2 between groups ANCOVA was conducted. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and gender (boys and girls) and the dependent variable was post-test perceived ingroup norms scores with pre-test perceived ingroup norms scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and gender in relation to post-test perceived ingroup norms scores ($F(1,112)=1.81$, $p>0.05$). There was also no main effect for gender ($F(1,112)=0.88$, $p>0.05$).

4.15.4 Perceived outgroup norms

A 2 by 2 between groups ANCOVA was conducted. The independent variables were group condition (control and experimental) and gender (boys and girls) and the dependent variable was post-test perceived outgroup norms scores with pre-test perceived outgroup norms scores used as the covariate in the analysis.

The results revealed that there was no interaction between condition and gender in relation to post-test perceived outgroup norm scores ($F(1,113)=0.69$, $p>0.05$). There was also no main effect for gender ($F(1,113)=0.40$, $p>0.05$).

4.16 Summary

This chapter has presented the key findings of the study and reported on statistical tests used and the statistical significance of results. Chapter five discusses the findings, relates them to previous studies and considers the research limitations.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.0 Introduction

Chapter five analyses the findings of the study. Firstly, aspects of the methodology are critiqued in order to assist with cautious interpretation of results. Next, the hypotheses are restated, presented, and discussed in the following order: outgroup attitudes; intended friendship; and perceived ingroup and outgroup norms about cross group friendships. Results are interpreted with reference to qualitative data (where relevant) and literature in the area of prejudice and discrimination. The limitations of the study are identified.

5.1 Critique of methodology

It is important to acknowledge that there are a number of factors other than the intervention that could have influenced the results obtained. Such factors include: the approach adopted by the researcher in relation to developing and administering pre and post-test measures; and consistencies and differences between the researcher and the research assistant with regard to storytelling sessions. Each factor is discussed below.

5.1.1 Administering pre and post-test measures

Firstly, the researcher neglected to conduct an open ended interview with a sample of children in a similar age range about their attitudes towards Travellers. Previous research by Cameron and colleagues used this approach to select relevant adjectives from the Preschool Racial Attitude Measure-II (PRAM-II) Series A (Williams, et al., 1975). This oversight affected the validity of the attitude scale in the current study. Hence, it is possible that the measuring instrument was neither sufficiently sensitive nor appropriate for assessing attitudes towards Travellers.

Furthermore, the researcher did not create an effective intergroup comparative context. In previous studies (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2007) using a similar attitude scale, an intergroup comparative context was created by asking participants how many members of the outgroup (or ingroup) they thought were lazy (for example) and then immediately asking how many members of the ingroup (or outgroup) they thought were lazy. By contrast, due to misunderstanding the procedure used by other researchers, the author sought ratings from the participants in relation to all twenty attributes for one group before progressing to discuss the other group. Hence, this mode of administration might have reduced the likelihood of participants describing the ingroup in a more favourable manner.

The researcher administering post-tests was not blind to the condition and it is possible that children in both groups guessed the purpose of the study and these factors could influence the attitudes reported post-intervention. For example, the research was highly transparent and the children might have matched their views to the implicit attitudes of the researchers.

The researcher had a conscious bias that children might be familiar with the popular television show *My big fat gypsy wedding*. Hence this might have led her to prompt children to think of such a programme (when asking about sources of information about Travellers) thereby inflating the salience of the show in children's minds and possibly influencing subsequent views reported.

Unconscious biases held by the researcher and the research assistant are also relevant. For instance, both the researcher and the research assistant are aware that Travellers are a devalued group and that intimate relationships between Travellers and members of the settled community are rare. Such awareness might have influenced their body language during interviews. For example, when asking whether children would like to have a Traveller over to their house for a meal or stay overnight, the body language of the researchers (such as posture, tone of voice and eye contact) might have unintentionally conveyed the implicit view that it is unlikely that they would be in favour of such an arrangement. Children might have reported views in line with researchers' implicit expectations.

5.1.2 Approach to storytelling session

As previously mentioned the researcher took responsibility for the storytelling sessions with the experimental group and the researcher led sessions with the control group. It is likely that the researcher's approach to storytelling sessions differed in important ways from the approach adopted by the research assistant. The researcher is a former primary school teacher, lecturer in special education and currently an educational psychologist. This could have influenced her approach to including the children in discussion, prompting their participation, affirming their responses, distributing questions, expanding their language, anticipating reading comprehension difficulties, and supporting their learning. The research assistant was a 3rd year psychology student with arguably considerably less experience, education and expertise in the above domains.

Furthermore, the researcher developed the research proposal, read extensively and in depth about the theory and practice of vicarious contact along with the different models of vicarious contact. Her level of investment in the storytelling and the measuring of attitudes, behavioural intentions (and so on) was likely to be significantly higher than that of the research assistant who was on an internship. Therefore, the researcher's enthusiasm and expertise in facilitating a story group could have impacted on the children's subsequent post-test measures. The relationship that developed over the course of the research study could have motivated children to match what they perceived to be the researcher's implicit views on Travellers and inclusion. Similarly, it could be argued that their experience of participating in a supportive and inclusive reading group could have prompted them to report more positive views than participants in the control group.

The hypotheses are restated below and the results of each are discussed and interpreted with reference to: the qualitative data; the wider literature; and the aforementioned and other limitations of the study.

5.2 Outgroup Attitudes

5.2.1 Discussion of pre and post-test results for reported outgroup attitudes within experimental group

Given that the aim of the research was to test a theoretically informed school-based intervention to reduce prejudice/improve attitudes towards Irish Travellers, it was hypothesised that among the experimental group there would be a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup attitude score and the mean post-test outgroup attitude score.

However, there was no significant difference between the mean pretest outgroup attitude score and the mean post-test outgroup attitude score for the experimental group (t (56) = -0.84, p>0.05). This

result suggests that reading stories featuring members of the Traveller community in friendship contexts with settled children did not have a significant effect on the attitudes of children in the experimental group towards Traveller Irish people. Rather than assume that the children needed to read a greater number of stories over a longer period of time in order to be effective, more thorough analysis suggests alternative and more plausible interpretations.

According to the mean pre-test outgroup attitude score, the children in the experimental group did not report a negative view of Traveller Irish people before the intervention. In fact their attitude was quite positive. The average outgroup attitude score was 10.9 with a standard deviation of 6.8. Given that the range of possible scores is from -30 to +30 (with a higher score indicating a more positive attitude) 10 represents a positive attitude score. Hence, given the children's initial positive attitudes there was not much potential to improve further. Therefore the attitude scale seems to be subject to ceiling effects. Indeed, similarly positive attitudes were reported towards settled children both before (mean=11.6, standard deviation=6.4) and after the intervention (mean=11, standard deviation=6.4).

Such positive attitudes are contrary to previous research with children where Travellers were viewed in very negative terms (O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001; Devine et al., 2004; Lodge & Lynch, 2002). Furthermore, the positive disposition towards Travellers is surprising and unexpected in light of negative public discourse about Travellers in more recent years. Prejudice towards Travellers is evidenced by negative media coverage (O'Connell, 2013; de la Torre Castillo 2012) curriculum representation (Bryan, 2007) online polls (McGreevy, 2015) social media representation (McGaughey, 2011; NCCRI, 2008) and surveys about perceptions of Traveller involvement in crime (Republic of Ireland, 2007). Measures of social distance also indicate that Travellers' relative ranking remains towards the very bottom of the scale (MacGreil, 2010; Tormey and Gleeson, 2012). Given that children's attitudes were more positive than predicted it raises the question of whether they have (as Sherif and Sherif, 1953 suggest) come into contact with the attitudes towards Travellers that prevail among older members of Irish society.

5.3 Explanation for initially positive outgroup attitudes reported by the experimental group

5.3.1 Participants' lack of familiarity with outgroup/outgroup stereotype

There are a number of possible reasons why the children in the experimental group were more positive (than predicted) about Traveller Irish people. Firstly, the children seemed quite unfamiliar with Travellers as a distinct group. This is partly evidenced by the fact that 17/57 children had never heard of Traveller Irish people, 49/57 had never met a Traveller Irish person and 21/57 could not tell the researcher anything that they had heard people say about Travellers. Of those (in the experimental group) that did comment on Travellers, many participants' knowledge seemed limited to a perception that Travellers live in and/or move around in caravans (there were 19 references to caravans in the experimental group). Therefore, it is plausible that they were drawing on the brief information provided about Travellers (their population, lifestyle and traditions) that was provided at the outset of the study in order to make judgements about the proportion of Travellers possessing positive and negative attributes.

Indeed, there is support for the idea that lack of familiarity with a stigmatised group is associated with more favourable attitudes towards such a group. According to pre-test outgroup attitude

scores (in both groups) participants who had not heard of Travellers reported significantly more positive attitudes than those who had heard of Travellers. Presumably lack of awareness of Travellers meant that children were also unaware of negative stereotypes about Travellers.

However, it is important to note that some children in the experimental group were familiar with stereotypes about Travellers. Four children mentioned weddings and how, for example, Travellers "*overreact to the size of the dress*" and "*take dresses very seriously for communions and weddings*". Three children commented that Travellers "*leave school early*". One participant indicated an awareness that Travellers are marginalised, observing that "*nobody is nice*" to the Traveller in her neighbourhood. Another observed that Travellers "*like to show off*" and one child talked about "*gypsies wearing belly tops*". Yet those that demonstrated familiarity with Traveller stereotypes were in the minority (only 10/57 participants). Hence, it seems that most children in the experimental group did not know much about the Traveller Irish community.

The reported low level of contact with Travellers provides support for Bhreathnach's (1998) observation that few settled people have contact with the Traveller community. Similarly there is some support for the idea that majority ethnic group members have more contact with outgroup members through mass media than through face to face contact (Charles, 2003; Dixon and Rosenbaum, 2004). Eighteen children in the experimental group learned about Travellers through television whereas only 8 children had ever met a Traveller.

5.3.2 Bias against the unlucky

Children's lack of familiarity with Travellers is relevant for understanding their initially positive attitudes towards this ethnic group for another reason. As discussed earlier, children tend to have a negative bias against unlucky/disadvantaged individuals (Olson et al., 2008). This is thought to be due to an affective tagging mechanism whereby people associated with material disadvantage are evaluated more negatively than those with more resources (Li et al., 2014). However, many children were not aware that Travellers experience significant hardship and poverty (AITHS, 2010) therefore their attitudes could not be influenced by the bias against the unlucky.

5.3.3 Use of unfamiliar term to describe Travellers

One could argue that some children might be more familiar with derogatory terms (such as 'knacker') to describe Travellers. Perhaps use of that term might have prompted more children to think of Travellers. However, it is possible that middle class children, in particular, would use that term to describe all people living in an area of social disadvantage and not just Travellers. Given that efforts were made to prompt children to recall information about Travellers by providing information about and images of Travellers and their living arrangements (at the outset of the study) one can have some confidence that this was sufficient to enable children to comment on their attitudes towards this group.

5.3.4 Mode of administration of intergroup attitude scale

Another unexpected finding (along with reported positive attitudes) was that the experimental group did not show ingroup bias. When the attitude scores for the ingroup (settled Irish) and the outgroup (Traveller Irish) were compared, there was no significant difference between the mean ingroup attitude score and the mean outgroup attitude score either before the intervention (t (56) =

0.96, p>0.05) or after the intervention (t (56) = -0.65, p>0.05). However, it is highly likely that the lack of ingroup bias was due to the researcher's failure to create an effective intergroup comparative context (as discussed earlier). Hence, this mode of administration might have reduced the likelihood of participants describing the ingroup in a more favourable manner.

5.3.5 Participants' possible low level of Identification with the ingroup

The lack of ingroup bias might also be attributable to the way in which the ingroup was labelled. A settled Irish child was described as any child living in Ireland who doesn't have the tradition of moving around the country. It is unlikely that the participants would describe themselves as settled in any other context. Nor is it likely that they were highly identified with being settled. There is evidence that vicarious contact is especially effective with children who are highly identified with their ethnic group (Cameron et al., 2007 study 2). So perhaps a low level of ingroup identification could have contributed to the lack of observed effects. Nonetheless, it was emphasised that each member of the child's class would be described as a settled child. Therefore they did have a reference group with whom they might identify and with whom they have had extensive experience in order to make their judgements. However, ingroup identification was not measured therefore further research is required to test the hypothesis that ingroup identification moderates the effects of vicarious contact on attitudes towards Irish Travellers.

5.3.6 Perceptual salience of outgroup membership and ingroup bias

According to developmental theories, perceptual salience of group membership is important for the formation of ingroup biases amongst children (Bigler et al., 1997; Bigler et al., 2001; Patterson and Bigler, 2006). Travellers are not perceptually salient in the way that a Muslim or Black child might be. Although some children referred to Travellers' distinctive wedding attire and their particular housing arrangements (caravans and halting sites) in the absence of these signifiers it is possible that they might not recognise Travellers. Although 49/57 experimental group participants reported that they had never met a Traveller Irish person it is possible that they had unwittingly encountered Travellers before. Furthermore, their lack of awareness of Travellers' group membership might have prevented them from developing ingroup bias.

5.3.7 Social desirability concerns

Another possibility for the reported positive attitudes towards a traditionally marginalised group is that among those familiar with Traveller Irish people, the children feared being labelled prejudiced towards them. Indeed previous research with children demonstrates that children attend to the social norm that blatant discrimination is inappropriate (Killen et al, 2002; Killen and Stangor, 2001). In addition, social norms and children's concern for self-presentation affects children's explicit racial (and other) intergroup attitudes (Katz et al., 1975; Rutland et al, 2005). Hence, it is possible that social desirability concerns were operating. In support of the latter argument only two children in the experimental group made negative comments about Travellers saying "*they like to show off"* and their "*weddings are not very nice*". However, the failure to create an effective intergroup comparative context (whilst administering the attitude scale) might have mitigated social desirability effects. Arguably, the children might not have been aware if they were being more favourable towards one group than the other. Hence, it is possible that they did not feel the need to cover up any existing negative biases. Furthermore, there is evidence that it is still socially acceptable to mock

Travellers (Devine et al., 2004; McGaughey, 2011; NCCRI, 2008; O'Connell, 2013). Therefore social desirability concerns cannot entirely account for the failure to find negative attitudes among the experimental group prior to the intervention.

5.3.8 Insensitive/inappropriate attitude measure

It is important to temper the optimism in relation to the lack of reported prejudice towards Travellers. While the children did not report negative attitudes, it is possible that the measuring instrument was neither sufficiently sensitive nor appropriate for assessing attitudes towards Travellers. According to the qualitative data, the most common source of information about Travellers was television and the show *My big fat gypsy wedding* in particular. It could be argued that the show depicts Travellers engaging in restricted activities, with restricted interests in a narrow range of roles. After watching the show one might draw conclusions that Travellers are vain, materialistic, superficial, ostentatious, and tacky. None of these or similar age appropriate adjectives were included in the attitude scale and therefore one could argue that the measure was invalid. However, the scale was designed to test global attitudes rather than the degree to which children endorsed stereotypes about Travellers.

5.3.9 Differences between current study and previous research

So far a number of explanations have been considered as to why the experimental group indicated more positive attitudes towards Travellers than predicted by prior research. In addition, it is possible that the current study differed in important ways from other studies conducted in the Irish context. The differences relate to: the participants' social class and their prior and ongoing experience with Travellers; group norms; and also the approaches used to investigate attitudes towards Travellers.

5.3.9.1 Participants' social class and experience with Travellers

According to O'Keefe and O'Connor (2001) children in working class areas are more likely to have personal contact with Travellers since accommodation is generally provided in such areas. There were five primary schools that participated in the current study. Four out of the five schools were located in predominantly middle class areas and only one school was located in an area of social disadvantage. By contrast, in Devine and colleagues (2004) study there was a number of Travellers attending the school (designated as disadvantaged) in which research interviews took place. Given that schools with Travellers enrolled were excluded from the current study (due to previously discussed ethical concerns) the participants had arguably less experience with Travellers than research participants in Devine and colleagues (2004) study. Contact with Travellers is relevant for several reasons.

Firstly, children who had contact with Travellers in Devine's study were aware that Travellers comprise a distinct group/category with low social status. As discussed in the literature review, categorising can lead to stereotype formation (Giles and Heyman, 2005), intergroup bias (Bigler, et al., 2001; Dunham et al., 2011; Kinzler et al., 2012; Renno and Shutts, 2015) and discrimination (Peters, 1971). In support of this Devine et al., (2004) reported that majority ethnic children recounted the high degree of taunting that involved Traveller children and name calling derived from differences in their lifestyle as well as modes of speech and dress. Thus, the children in Devine and colleagues' study were familiar with and also endorsed negative stereotypes about Travellers.

Furthermore, they demonstrated awareness of Travellers' devalued status. In many instances the derogatory term for a Traveller 'knacker' was considered the worst name you could call someone highlighting the lower status of Travellers in the children's minds.

In the current study the researcher sought children's experience with Travellers in the sense that they were asked whether they had ever met a Traveller during pre-test interviews. While one might expect that a child who had met a Traveller might report more negative attitudes and friendship intentions than one who had never encountered a Traveller (for reasons outlined above), this was not the case. When pre-test scores were compared across those who had met Travellers and those who had never met Travellers, no significant difference emerged on any of the measures. Those who had met Travellers were neither significantly more positive nor negative in terms of their attitudes, their behavioural intentions or their perceptions of norms surrounding cross group friendship than those who had never met a Traveller. However, the researcher did not ask participants to rate the quality of their experience with Travellers. Indeed children reported quite polar views in relation to their interactions with Travellers ranging from very positive (attending a Traveller wedding) to very negative (being chased by Travellers). Therefore it is possible that with a more sensitive measure and a larger more diverse sample it might have emerged that those with prior experience with Travellers were more negatively predisposed to this minority group.

5.3.9.2 Group norms about Travellers

Group norms are also relevant to explaining why prejudice towards Travellers was more apparent in previous research than in the current study. For example, according to Devine et al. (2004) there appeared to be a group norm among children that it was acceptable to mock Travellers whereby name calling of Travellers was never condemned by the majority ethnic children. Such a group norm was neither tested nor evident in the current study. Group norms are important because previous research demonstrates that they have a powerful influence on children's attitudes towards the outgroup (Nesdale et al., 2005; Nesdale and Dalton, 2011; Nesdale and Lawson, 2011). There is also evidence that children show less and less liking for ingroup members who do not conform to ingroup norms (Nesdale and Brown, 2004; Abrams, Rutland and Cameron, 2003). Hence, it is unsurprising that Lodge and Lynch (2004) reported a perception among young people that contact with Travellers could lead to social rejection.

5.3.9.3 Approaches to investigate attitudes towards Travellers

Previous research has used more qualitative measures to access children's attitudes towards Travellers. O'Keefe and O'Connor (2001) asked children to draw or write in response to the stimulus 'what I think of Travellers'. They maintain that replying to an open ended question is appropriate since it means the children are not privy to any biases the researcher might have. Other children in the study participated in group interviews where they discussed whether they would like a Traveller (and other minorities) to be their new neighbour. Devine and colleagues (2004) used group interviews to examine children's understanding and experience of racism in primary school. Such qualitative approaches have a number of advantages over quantitative methods used in the current study.

Firstly, open ended questions allow participants to generate many attributes to describe the target group that have presumably emerged from their observations. Hence, open ended questions allow

for arguably more valid and elaborate responses. In contrast, the current study asked children to consider how many Travellers they thought were kind, helpful and so on. Their response choices were limited to 10 positive and 10 negative attributes. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, the attributes did not necessarily correspond very closely to what the children had heard said about Travellers.

It is also possible that the use of a scale increased the risk of children adopting a response pattern rather than responding in a meaningful and thoughtful way. It seemed that many children replied 'most' for the positive attributes and 'some' for the negative attributes.

O'Keefe and O'Connor (2001) provided a context for discussion of Travellers (whether children would like a Traveller as a new neighbour) that elicited more information about attitudes than asking for example "how many Travellers do you think are messy?"

Another advantage of Devine et al.'s (2004) study is that they sought the perspective of the outgroup too. Travellers reported being refused entry to shops and pubs and how they were viewed with disdain by the settled community. Many felt that they were subject to greater levels of abuse than most other minority groups and some reported concealing their ethnic identity. Therefore, seeking information from more than one source/group lends greater credence to the finding that Travellers are targets of prejudice and discrimination.

Group dynamics also seemed to play a role in revealing negative intergroup attitudes. In the current study the children were interviewed individually. However, in previous studies children were interviewed in small groups (Devine et al., 2004; O'Keefe and O'Connor, 2001). O'Keefe and O'Connor describe how dominant group members, in some instances, influenced the views reported causing some children to express more negative views towards Travellers to be in line with the views of the dominant child.

5.4 Discussion of apparent failure of intervention to promote more positive intergroup attitudes

Hitherto a number of explanations have been proposed as to why children were initially and unpredictably quite positive towards Travellers. Next, possible reasons for the apparent failure of the intervention to promote significantly more positive attitudes towards Travellers are considered.

5.4.1 Intergroup model of vicarious contact

During the intervention the researcher adopted the intergroup model of extended contact (Hewstone and Brown, 1986). This entailed making story characters' group membership salient, attending to individuating information and stressing characters typicality for their group. Efforts to encourage the children to attend to individuating information involved expanding their vocabulary to describe characters in the story and using evidence from the story to justify assigning specific attributes to particular characters. Some of the words to describe the Traveller Irish children mapped onto positive words included in the attitude scale. For example, attributes such as dedicated, committed, persistent and proactive could contribute to judgements in relation to the proportion of Traveller Irish that could be considered helpful. Similarly, descriptors such as entertaining, funny, and a good sense of humour could contribute to judgements about the proportion of Travellers that could be considered happy. Although unplanned, there was overlap between some of the Traveller character attributes discussed in the experimental group stories and

positive attributes contained in the scale. Therefore participating in the experimental group intervention could potentially have positively influenced attitudes towards Traveller Irish people.

Despite the success of the intergroup model of extended contact in previous studies (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2007) it did not appear to increase positive attitudes towards the outgroup in the current study. This could be partly due to initially positive attitudes and ceiling effects. Additionally, it is relevant that it was hard to remember which character in each story was a member of the Traveller community. This was surprising for a number of reasons. Firstly, each story contained only two main characters and each character's group membership was stated at the outset. In addition, throughout the discussion when attending to individuating information and stressing characters typicality for their group it was stated at frequent intervals that it is likely that many Traveller Irish children are also brave, resourceful and imaginative (for example). However, on reflection there are a number of explanations as to why it was difficult to remember which child was Traveller Irish.

5.4.2 Perceptual salience and memory for group membership

Firstly, Traveller Irish people are not distinctive in terms of appearance. Hence the illustrations that were provided did not help to distinguish between characters. In fact, in one instance, the illustrations might have caused confusion. A child of Romanian ancestry commented that the darker skinned child in the illustration looked more like a Traveller. Presumably she was drawing on her experience with Roma gypsies to make this assertion.

5.4.3 Memory for counter-stereotypic information

The absence of stereotypical information or context might have inhibited memory of characters as they did not readily fit into pre-existing schemas about Travellers. Indeed previous research supports the idea that children have difficulty remembering counter-stereotypical (schema inconsistent) information (Bigler and Liben, 1993; Carter and Levy, 1988; Levy, 2000; Martin and Halverson, 1981). The stories in the current study contained very little reference to schema consistent information such as caravans or things that might identify Travellers as being from a lower socioeconomic group. In one story, the mother of the Traveller was a painter and was preparing to unveil a portrait of the Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) in a highly anticipated art exhibition. This doesn't fit with existing ideas about Travellers. Indeed one participant asked if she was a famous painter why wasn't she rich? Also the story about children playing on a school basketball team is a context that is not usually associated with Travellers. The last story involved two students bunking off class and playing in the theatre store room, dressing up in animal costumes. Again this isn't necessarily a stereotypical activity. In only one of the three stories was there reference to feeling different due to different living arrangements and home language. Thus, it is possible that the depiction of Travellers in schema inconsistent ways meant that participants in the experimental group couldn't easily remember them when making judgements about Traveller Irish people.

Furthermore, the fact that the stories did not portray Travellers in situations of poverty or hardship meant that the intervention did not cause bias against the unlucky. Hence, children's attitudes towards Travellers remained quite positive.

5.4.4 Invalid/insensitive intergroup attitude measure

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When asked what the children had heard said about Travellers most of the comments from the experimental group participants referred to living arrangements for Travellers (they live in caravans). The next most common theme was reference to weddings and their distinctive wedding attire. Of the remaining comments, some of them implied that they knew Travellers were from a different socioeconomic group. Three children talked about their level of education. These comments indicate stereotype knowledge. An additional remark implied that one child had a sense that Travellers were somewhat excluded and marginalised *"nobody is nice to him"*. The attitude scale could be considered inappropriate in the sense that it couldn't detect whether reading texts with Travellers with varied personalities, in a variety of roles, and, engaging in varied activities, would influence their perceptions of this group. Similarly, it was unclear (following the intervention) whether children revised their ideas about Travellers and the proportion that were well educated with varied interests and aptitudes. Again, the researcher's failure to conduct open ended interviews with children about their attitudes towards Travellers and use the findings as a guide in relation to adjective selection (for the attitude scales) emerged as a significant limitation of the research.

5.5 Discussion of differences between the experimental and control groups' mean post-test outgroup attitude scores

It was also hypothesised that there would be a difference between the control group mean post-test outgroup attitude score and the experimental group mean post-test outgroup attitude score. However, when the attitudes of those in the experimental group were compared to the attitudes of children in the control group after the intervention, no significant difference was found in relation to their attitudes towards Traveller Irish people. Similarly the results of the ANCOVA revealed a non-significant effect of the intervention. The finding conflicts with previous research in the area where vicarious contact led to increased positive attitudes towards outgroups (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2006; Cameron et al., 2007).

5.5.1 Possible reasons for absence of significant difference between groups' mean post-test outgroup attitude scores

Again it seems that the intervention did not lead to improved attitudes towards Traveller Irish people. Many of the arguments presented above are relevant to explaining the failure to find a difference between the control and experimental groups in terms of their attitudes to Traveller Irish people. As previously discussed, the observation that it was difficult to recall the Traveller characters in the intervention stories meant that participants in the experimental group couldn't easily bring them to mind when making judgements about Traveller Irish people. Therefore, the vicarious contact stories did not positively impact their attitudes.

It is also relevant that both the control and treatment groups reported initially positive attitudes towards Travellers. Hence, perhaps there was not much room for improvement in either group. As previously discussed, the lack of predicted prejudice might have been due to participants' lack of familiarity with Travellers: 35/118 children had never heard of Traveller Irish people, 100/118 had never met a Traveller Irish person and 40/118 could not tell the researcher anything that they had heard people say about Travellers. Furthermore, according to pre-tests, those who had not heard of Travellers reported significantly more positive outgroup attitudes than those who had heard of Travellers. Hence, it is possible that participants' lack of stereotype knowledge (and negative experience with Traveller Irish people) contributed to the apparent absence of negative feelings

towards this traditionally marginalised group. Thus, perhaps children were relying on the brief information that was provided at the outset of the study (rather than the vicarious contact stories) in order to inform their judgements about Travellers.

As previously highlighted it is possible that the outgroup attitude scale was not sufficiently sensitive to detect a change in attitude towards the outgroup because the scale did not include attributes that were commonly used to describe Travellers. Moreover, the scale did not include attributes that participants in the experimental group used to describe Travellers.

However, it is important to highlight that some children were familiar with stereotypes about Travellers. Interestingly children in the control group volunteered more information (other than awareness of housing arrangements) than those in the experimental group in relation to what they knew or had heard said about Travellers. Some of the comments demonstrated stereotype knowledge. Furthermore, their reported perceptions could have contributed to their judgement of the proportion of Traveller children possessing different attributes on the intergroup attitude scale. For instance, the following comments could have informed judgements about the number of Traveller children they thought were bad/nasty/unkind: "*they're dangerous people*", "*they hit you*", "*they are dangerous fighting*", "*some are tough*", "*they chase you around*", "*little kids drink alcohol at age 12*", "*taxi driver told story about them not paying*". Similarly other observations could have influenced their judgements of the proportion of Traveller people they thought were sad: "*big boys were slagging off a Traveller girl*", "*people imitate and mock them*", "*lots of people say bad things*", "*they are not treated with the respect they deserve*", "*people didn't let them into the venue*", "*they get forced to move*", "*nobody is nice to him*", "*they are poor*". There were also two references to Travellers being lazy and one comment related to Travellers being unfriendly: "*they stay in their group*".

Yet the proportion of comments was small and the control group demonstrated similarly positive attitudes to the experimental group in pre and post-tests. Therefore it is possible that the scale was indeed inappropriate for measuring attitudes towards Travellers. As previously discussed, the use of a scale might also have increased the risk of children adopting a response pattern and their responses might have been somewhat influenced by social desirability concerns. Participants' social class is also relevant as it is suspected that most of the participants' socio-economic status would be classified as middle to high. According to Jugert, Eckstein, Beelman and Noack (2016) families with high socio-economic status provide a context that is conducive for positive intergroup relations.

There are two additional factors that could have influenced the findings obtained. Firstly, the researcher administering post-tests was not blind to the condition and secondly it is possible that children in the control group guessed the purpose of the study and these factors could influence the attitudes reported post-intervention. Children might have reported positive attitudes for fear of being labelled prejudiced. There are a few reasons to believe that the children might have guessed the purpose of the study. It was presented as an investigation into what helps children to respect and get along with each other. Since the children in the control and experimental groups were in the same class it is likely that they discussed the content and conduct of their respective storytelling sessions. They might have learned that their peers read stories featuring Travellers and discussed attributes used to describe the main characters. It might have appeared odd and newsworthy to share that the researcher often stated that it is likely that many Travellers are also persistent,

proactive and brave (for example). Indeed the control group children's attitudes remained positive as measured by post-tests.

5.6 Discussion of pre and post-test results for reported outgroup intended friendship behaviour within experimental group

Along with attitudes, a measure of intended friendship behaviour was obtained. It was deemed important to evaluate the effect of vicarious contact on both outgroup attitudes and intended behaviour since as Cameron and Rutland (2006) assert "the aim of all prejudice reduction interventions should be to encourage interaction between the groups and so limiting social exclusion" (p.474). Moreover, research suggests that outgroup intended behaviour may be substantially more difficult to change than outgroup attitudes in prejudice reduction interventions (e.g Katz and Zalk, 1978).

The intended friendship behaviour measure was used to gauge how much the children would like to show friendship behaviours with an outgroup and an ingroup child on a future occasion. The scale ranged from 1-5 with higher scores indicating more positive intended friendship behaviour towards the target group. It was hypothesised that among the experimental group there would be a difference between the mean pre-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score and the mean post-test outgroup intended friendship behaviour score. No significant difference between the mean scores was found. However, analysis of the boxplots of pre and post-test scores along with the results of the ANCOVA suggest that the intervention did lead participants in the experimental group to develop more favourable intended friendship behaviours towards Traveller Irish children. This was particularly apparent among those who scored low on this measure in pre-tests.

Despite some evidence of intervention effects the results should be interpreted with caution. Firstly, it would be foolish to be overly optimistic about the effects of the intervention on intended friendship behaviour towards Travellers. Positive behavioural intentions do not necessarily translate into actual friendships. Furthermore, when the mean scores for ingroup intended friendship behaviour and outgroup intended friendship behaviour were compared it emerged that children showed ingroup bias. Children in the experimental group demonstrated significantly more positive friendship intentions towards settled children than Traveller children both before (t (55)=4.86, p <0.05) and after the intervention (t (56)=3.84, p<0.05). The reported ingroup bias concurs with research that shows that cross-group friendships are infrequent (Kao & Joyner, 2004; Page Gould et al., 2008) rarely extend beyond the school context (Aboud & Amato, 2001; Fletcher, Rollins, & Nickerson, 2004) and integration remains quite minimal in intimate contexts with respect to cross-group friendship interactions such as a sleepover party (Edmonds and Killen, 2009; Kennedy, 2003). Moreover, there is evidence that, with age, race/ethnic homophily increases (Shrum et al., 1988) and intergroup friendships become less stable (Aboud et al., 2003).

5.7 Discussion of differences between the experimental and control groups' mean post-test intended friendship behaviour scores

It was also hypothesised that there would be a difference between the control group mean post-test intended friendship behaviour score and the experimental group mean post-test intended friendship behaviour score. Indeed, there was a significant difference between the groups. The experimental group showed a higher outgroup intended friendship behaviour score compared with the control

group. This finding is in line with previous research in the area (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007; Cameron et al., 2011; Vezzali Stathi et al., 2012).

Analysis of raw data shows that the experimental group participants were less resistant, than their control group counterparts, to the idea of more intimate friendship than simply playing with an outgroup member in the park. For example, only 9/57 of the experimental group were reluctant to have a Traveller child over for a meal (as measured by a score of 2 or less on this scale). In contrast, 34/61 control group participants were reluctant to have Traveller child to a meal in their house. In relation to the prospect of having a Traveller stay in their home overnight 28/57 experimental group participants expressed reluctance compared to 38/61 control group participants offering a similar view.

Upon closer analysis the significant difference between the groups seems partly attributable to the control group showing a decrease in willingness to show friendship behaviours to an outgroup child along with a slight increase among the experimental group's reported willingness. Compared to pre-tests, the control group showed a significant decrease in intended friendship behaviour towards outgroup children (t (60)=2.66, p<0.05). A corresponding decline in intended friendship towards the ingroup (settled children) was not found. While remaining quite neutral towards Traveller Irish children (the mean post-test score was 3.02) there are some possible reasons why participants in the control group might have become less willing to show more intimate friendship behaviours towards Traveller Irish children.

When the children were introduced to Traveller children at the outset of the study, perhaps they became more attuned to gain information about this ethnic group. The most common sources of information were family members and television.

Participation in the study could have prompted the children to seek their parents' perceptions of Travellers and their response might have contributed to a negative bias towards Travellers. Indeed prejudice towards Travellers is prevalent among Irish adults (Republic of Ireland, 2007; McGreevy, 2015; MacGreil, 2010) and according to a meta-analysis by Degner and Dalege (2013) a significant positive relationship exists between parent and children's intergroup attitudes. However (it is suspected) most of the participants were from a middle to high socio-economic group and Jugert et al (2016) found that high socio-economic status provides a context that is conducive to positive intergroup relations. In addition, parents were informed that their children would read stories featuring Travellers and that the goal of the intervention was to foster respect for diversity in children, promote community cohesion, and good relations between ethnic groups. All parents consented for their children to participate thus implying at least the absence of explicitly negative outgroup attitudes among parents. It is also unlikely that, in the intervening period between pre and post-tests, the children inferred their parents' implicit attitudes by observing an interaction between their parent and an outgroup member (Traveller) as per Castelli et al.'s (2008) study. Hence, perhaps the children gained information from another source such as the media.

Prejudice towards Travellers is prevalent among the media (Breen and Devereuz, 2003; de la Torre Castillo, 2012; O'Connell, 2013). Thus, perhaps children's interest was piqued to watch a television show featuring Travellers. One of the most popular programmes *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding* shows girls in over the top outfits and engaging in "exotic" rituals such as "grabbing". As Pusca (2013) describes, most of the Traveller girls featured in the show are expected to leave school at an early

age and help care for their younger siblings; cleanliness at home is extremely important with girls cleaning the caravans for several hours a day; and once married, the girls appear to be completely under their husbands' control, with few if any allowed to keep jobs outside of the household. Maybe watching such shows confirmed for these children, who had hitherto been unfamiliar with Travellers, that they are different and definitely categorised as the outgroup. This interpretation is speculative however, and highlights that it would have been worthwhile to ask participants whether they sought further information about Travellers following pretests. Probing about sources of information and what they learned would also assist interpretation of statistical results.

It is also possible, as Beelmann and Heinemann (2014) argue, that when children become sensitised to social categories that they were not aware of before the start of a programme this can serve as a root for subsequent prejudice. Indeed pre-test data provide partial support for this hypothesis. For instance, 18/61 children in the control group had never heard of the Traveller Irish community and according to pre-test outgroup attitude scores, children (in both groups) who <u>had not</u> heard of Travellers reported significantly more positive attitudes than those who had heard of Travellers. Thus, perhaps learning about the social category 'Traveller' did serve as a root for subsequent prejudice.

Assuming children sought further information about Travellers that negatively coloured their perceptions, this raises the question as to why a corresponding significant decline in outgroup attitudes was not found among the control group. Firstly, as stated earlier the attitude scale was probably not a valid and sensitive measure for examining attitudes towards Travellers. This was largely due to the researcher's failure to conduct open ended interviews with children about their attitudes towards Travellers prior to selecting appropriate adjectives from the PRAM-II (Williams et al., 1975). Many of the attributes contained in the scale used in the current study don't relate to what is commonly said about Travellers.

Another possible reason why attitudes remained stable but intended friendship declined is because as argued by Aboud and Amato (2001) children don't necessarily express prejudice using racial slurs. Instead avoidance and exclusion are more closely associated with prejudice.

It is also relevant that although children attend to the social norm that blatant discrimination is inappropriate (Killen et al, 2002; Killen and Stangor, 2001) it is unlikely that the children in the current study would consider reluctance to invite a Traveller child to their home as an example of blatant discrimination. In some instances children justified their reluctance to invite a Traveller child to their home by making comments such as 'I only met her' or included conditions for accepting a Traveller into the home such as 'if she is kind' or 'if our mums met'. Hence, the intended friendship behaviour measure is arguably a more subtle and sensitive measure than the attitude scale in terms of tapping into perceptions of Travellers and settled children's willingness to include them.

It could be argued that the experimental group were also prompted to find more out about Travellers and yet a corresponding decline in intended friendship behaviour was not found. Perhaps the vicarious contact stories counteracted negative biases that could be inculcated via media and parents. Again, the interpretation is speculative and highlights the need to ask participants whether they sought further information and if so what they learned from their sources.

Overall it is encouraging that there was a significant difference between the control group and the experimental group with the latter indicating more favourable intended friendship behaviour. The results suggest that reading stories featuring Travellers in friendship contexts with settled children led children to indicate more favourable friendship intentions. Previous research suggests a number of reasons why this might be the case.

5.8 Suggested reasons for significant difference between groups' mean post-test intended friendship behaviour scores

5.8.1 Stories communicate positive norms about cross-group friendship

While it may have been difficult for children to remember counter-stereotypic information contained in stories it was easy to remember that the central ingroup and outgroup characters were friends. All stories in the current study featured Travellers and settled children in friendship contexts. Children read about Travellers and settled friends playing on a sports team together, having sleepovers together, collaborating to solve a crime, and co-operating in a practical joke. According to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) people learn social norms and how to behave from the observation of others. Hence observing successful cross-group interactions (through stories) could suggest that ingroup members are positively inclined towards the outgroup. Therefore it is possible that after reading the stories the children perceived that their ingroup have a positive norm about cross-group friendship with Travellers. Indeed, research by Cameron et al., (2011) found that more positive ingroup norms led to more positive outgroup intended behaviour with older children.

In addition, it could be the case that the children who experienced vicarious contact developed a perception that the outgroup would also be positive about friendship. Again Cameron et al. (2011) provide support for this hypothesis. They found that vicarious contact resulted in more positive intended friendship behaviour by making the children think that the outgroup would be more positive.

5.8.2 Vicarious contact and efficacy expectations about behaving competently during interaction

Along with social norms, Bandura (1986) maintains that we learn how to behave from the observation of others. Hence observing successful cross-group interactions through stories could indicate the appropriate behaviour during outgroup contact. Maybe vicarious experience of contact enhanced children's self-efficacy expectancies in relation to behaving competently while navigating cross-group contact situations. Though self-efficacy expectations were not measured in the current study, previous research investigated and demonstrated the mediational role of self-efficacy expectations in relation to willingness for future contact with outgroups (Mazziotta et al., 2011).

5.8.3 Vicarious contact and anxiety about prospect of contact

As discussed in the literature review, cross group interactions, when anticipated, can invoke feelings of uncertainty and anxiety (Blascovich et al., 2001; Plant and Devine, 2003). According to Stephan and Stephan (1985) these feelings can result from concerns about whether one knows how to behave competently in intergroup contact situations. Perhaps reading stories enabled children in the experimental group to observe successful cross group interactions and this had positive implications for anxiety about intergroup contact. Though the latter variable was not tested in the current study

Mazziotta et al., (2011) found that observation of successful cross-group interactions reduced feelings of uncertainty among adolescents which led to greater openness to direct cross-group interaction.

5.8.4 Vicarious contact and inclusion of other in self

Wright et al., (1975) suggested the ability to include other in self as a key mediator of the effects of indirect contact. It is possible that the process of observing successful cross-group interaction facilitated participants' ability to include other in self. Again this variable was not tested. However, research by Vezzali Stathi et al. (2012) demonstrated that inclusion of other in self acted as a mediator between vicarious contact and adolescents' intergroup behavioural intentions and desire to engage in future contact.

5.9 Discussion of pre and post-test results for perceived ingroup and outgroup norms about cross-group friendship within experimental group

The third dependent variable to be examined was norms about cross-group friendship. It was considered important to examine perceived norms because previous research shows that contact between children from different ethnic groups is related to children's understanding of social norms about having cross-ethnic friendship (Feddes et al., 2009; Turner, Hewstone, Voci, & Vonofakou, 2008). Furthermore, children are also known to become more sensitive (with age) toward which types of behaviour are sanctioned by their peers (Abrams, Rutland, & Cameron, 2003). Indeed, several studies suggest that children's intergroup attitudes are regulated by perceived peer norms (Killen and Rutland, 2011; Nesdale, Griffith, Durkin, & Maass, 2005; Nesdale, Maass, Durkin, & Griffith, 2005; Rutland, Cameron, Milne, & McGeorge, 2005). Similarly, norms influence intergroup behaviour (Franca and Monteiro, 2013). Therefore it was important to investigate whether vicarious contact could make a positive difference to ingroup and outgroup norms about cross group friendships. The results for ingroup norms are presented and discussed first.

5.10 Discussion of pre and post-test results for perceived ingroup norms about cross-group friendship within experimental group

It was hypothesised that there would be a significant difference between the mean pre-test perceived ingroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score among the experimental group. Indeed the hypothesis was supported (t (55)=-2.30 p<0.05). Following vicarious contact the participants in the experimental group developed significantly more positive norms for intergroup friendship. They perceived that greater numbers of ingroup members (settled children) would approve of intergroup friendship with a Traveller Irish child.

5.11 Discussion of differences between the experimental and control groups' mean post-test perceived ingroup norms about cross-group friendship

It was further hypothesised that there would be a significant difference between the control group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score and the experimental group mean post-test perceived ingroup norm score. Again the hypothesis was supported (t (112.5)=2.86, p<0.05). The experimental group developed significantly more positive ingroup norms for intergroup friendship than the control group.

5.12 Suggested reasons for positive impact of intervention on perceived ingroup norms about cross group friendship

Firstly, it is likely that the stories communicated a positive norm about cross-group friendship (as intended). Each story portrayed a settled child and a Traveller child in a friendship context. Moreover, their friendship was neither questioned nor criticised. This is important because as Turner and colleagues (2008) note, it can demonstrate that group members will not be punished for developing close relationships with or showing positive attitudes towards the outgroup. Moreover, it is reasonable to expect that children would fear a negative reaction as research suggests that children show less liking for ingroup members who deviate from ingroup norms (Abrams, Rutland and Cameron, 2003; Nesdale and Brown, 2004). In addition, in the Irish context there is evidence of a perception among young people that contact with Travellers could lead to social rejection (Lodge and Lynch, 2004).

It is possible that the intergroup model of contact (as proposed by Hewstone and Brown, 1986) also contributed to the observed effects. According to this model, when group membership is salient and outgroup member typicality is emphasised during (extended or vicarious) cross-group interactions, positive changes in attitudes towards encountered outgroup members will generalise to the entire outgroup. By a similar rationale, one would expect positive changes in perceived ingroup norms to generalise to the entire ingroup following vicarious contact that emphasised group memberships. The intergroup model of vicarious contact has demonstrated efficacy in improving attitudes and intended behaviour towards various outgroups (disabled children and refugees) (Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2007 Study 2). In addition, the current study suggests that the intergroup model of vicarious contact improves perceived ingroup norms about cross-group friendships with Travellers.

As previously discussed, the intergroup model of vicarious contact failed to significantly improve attitudes towards Travellers. This may have been due in part to the fact that it was difficult (for the participants and the researcher) to remember which storybook character was a Traveller. Therefore, despite group membership being salient participants couldn't remember which counter-stereotypic attributes were typical of Travellers. However, presumably, stating group membership of characters made it easy to remember that the children were from different groups and that they were friends.

The significant impact of vicarious contact on perceived ingroup norms is important for several reasons. Firstly, studies show that perceiving more supportive norms for cross ethnic relations predict more positive intergroup attitudes (Feddes, Noack and Rutland 2009) greater interest in cross-group friendships among minority and majority ethnic children (Tropp, O'Brien and Migacheva, 2014) and greater preferences for cross ethnic friendship (Jugert, Noack and Rutland, 2011). Furthermore, research shows that when youth encounter ingroup norms that support cross ethnic relations they themselves report greater openness to cross ethnic relations and interest in contact with other groups (e.g Gomez et al., 2011). Similarly, Cameron et al., (2011) found that the more children perceived their ingroup had a positive norm about cross-ethnic friendships the more positive their intended behaviour towards the outgroup. There is also evidence that creating supportive norms for cross ethnic relations via extended contact facilitates the development of actual intergroup friendships (Vezzali et al., 2015). Conversely, when inclusive norms are absent cross-group friendships are hindered (Aboud and Sankar, 2007) people are often inclined to believe

that they cannot trust members of other groups (Kramer and Wei, 1999) or to assume that members of other groups lack interest in cross-ethnic relations (e.g Shelton and Richeson, 2005).

However, the findings in relation to perceived ingroup norms need to be interpreted with caution. It is possible that children in the experimental group were susceptible and/or conforming to the social norm that it is desirable to be tolerant and inclusive of outgroups. Indeed this message was communicated at least implicitly through stories. Furthermore, children might have been motivated to portray the ingroup in a positive light indicating that they are friendly and inclusive and most of their peers would consider it a good idea to be friendly with outgroup members. Previous research suggests that majority group members inflate the degree to which they are friendly with minorities so as to appear unprejudiced (Bonilla Silva, Goar and Embrick, 2006). Hence, social desirability concerns might explain, in part, why children in the experimental group perceived that more settled children would approve of intergroup friendship following the intervention.

5.13 Discussion of pre and post-test results for perceived outgroup norms about cross-group friendship within experimental group

Along with perceived ingroup norms, perceived outgroup norms were also measured. Given individuals' desire to belong and be accepted in an intergroup context, it is important that children sense that cross-group friendships are sanctioned by their own group. In addition, it is critical that they perceive the outgroup to be positively disposed towards friendship. The absence of a positive perceived outgroup norm about cross-group friendship could provoke anxiety about intergroup contact. Hence, children were asked how many Traveller children would think that they like/don't like being friends with settled children and how many would think that it was a good idea/not a good idea for settled and Traveller children to be friends. It was hypothesised that there would be a significant difference between the mean pre-test perceived outgroup norm score and the mean post-test perceived outgroup norm score among the experimental group. No significant difference between the scores was found. However, analysis of the boxplots of pre and post-test scores along with the results of the ANCOVA suggest that the intervention did lead participants in the experimental group to develop significantly more positive perceived outgroup norms for intergroup friendship. This was particularly apparent among those who scored low on this measure in pre-tests.

Despite evidence that the intervention had an effect on perceived outgroup norms about intergroup friendship, this might not lead to improved intergroup relations. For instance, Traveller's prior experience of prejudice and discrimination might make them cautious and reticent about friendship with members of the settled community. Research with other minority ethnic groups suggests that experience of ethnic victimization can negatively impact social relations (Quintana 2011; see Tropp, 2006). For example, Verkuyten (2006) provides evidence that being subject to name-calling and social exclusion increases victim's negative attitude toward the other ethnic group, making cross-ethnic peer relations more unlikely. Furthermore, as discussed previously, members of minority status groups are often acutely aware of their group's devalued status (Jones et al., 1984) and that they are likely to be judged in terms of their devalued group membership (Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002; Pinel, 1999). Hence, minority group members might be particularly motivated to avoid intergroup contact to keep from exposing themselves to prejudice and discrimination from the majority group (Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002; W. G. Stephan & C. W. Stephan, 1985).

However, analysis of pre-test scores across schools revealed that children in the school in an area of social disadvantage (school F) reported significantly more positive perceived outgroup norms than children in the other four schools. This means that they perceived that higher numbers of Travellers would approve of intergroup friendship than did children in the other schools. This finding is interesting because Travellers are more likely to live in an area of social disadvantage and in fact had been enrolled in school F previously. Therefore the children might have had contact with Travellers in their school or neighbourhood. Yet on further investigation, only three out of 18 children in school F reported having ever met a Traveller and only 8 out of 18 had ever heard of Travellers. Furthermore, 11 out of 18 children in school F did not volunteer anything that they had heard said about Travellers. Of the 7 that did, their comments were predominantly negative and related to Travellers being perceived as aggressive, messy, lazy and different. Two comments were positive describing them as *really nice people* and suggesting that they recycled waste materials.

It is unclear what might have motivated children in school F to believe (during pre-test interviews) that most Travellers would like to be friends with settled children. Perhaps they were less adept at adopting the perspective of the Travellers than children in other schools. It might not have occurred to them that Travellers might be reticent about seeking out intergroup contact based on previous negative experiences. This interpretation is speculative and suggests that they should have been asked why they thought most Travellers would think it was a good idea to be friends with settled children.

In any case the observed difference between schools was no longer apparent in post-tests within the experimental group. There was no main effect for school in relation to participants' post-test perceived outgroup norms scores. Perhaps participating in the research prompted children to watch a TV show such as *My big fat gypsy wedding* and they might have noticed that members of the Traveller and settled community rarely interact and this might have influenced their post-test views in relation to Travellers willingness to develop intergroup friendships.

As with previous dependent variables, the difference between control and experimental group scores was analysed.

5.14 Discussion of differences between the experimental and control groups' mean post-test perceived outgroup norms about cross-group friendship

The final hypothesis predicted that there would be a difference between the control group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm and the experimental group mean post-test perceived outgroup norm. The hypothesis was supported ($t_{(116)} = 2.16$, $p < 0.05$). The experimental group developed significantly more positive out group norms for intergroup friendship than the control group.

An analysis of scores also revealed that the control group showed a slight decrease (though not significant) in their perceived outgroup norm scores. One wonders whether factors that possibly influenced the decrease in intended friendship (among the control group) also influenced a decrease in perceived outgroup norms. Perhaps control group participants were motivated to find out more about Travellers following pre-tests. As previously discussed, family and television were the most common sources of information about Travellers. However, Travellers are frequently criticised for their lack of compliance with Ireland's majority cultural values and lifestyle expectations (MacLaughlin, 1999; Crowley, 2005) and their unwillingness to assimilate (Lodge and Lynch, 2004). If

children became aware of these ideas they might have influenced their perception of whether Travellers would be interested in friendship with settled children. Similarly, the children might have watched a TV show where Travellers did not engage in or express interest in cross-group friendship and this had implications for their perceived outgroup norms about cross-group friendship. Again such interpretations are speculative and highlight that it would have been worthwhile to ask participants whether they sought further information about Travellers following pre-tests. Probing about sources of information and what they learned would also assist interpretation of statistical results.

Interestingly, during pre-tests, six control group participants expressed awareness that Travellers are a marginalised group. Their comment suggests that Travellers would indeed be reticent about friendships with settled people. For example, "*big boys were slagging off a Traveller girl*", "*people imitate and mock them*", "*lots of people say bad things*", "*they are not treated with the respect they deserve*", "*people didn't let them into the venue*", and "*they are judged like they are all lazy*". Perhaps children in the control group became more attuned to noticing the treatment and representation of Travellers. Their observations could have negatively influenced their perception of whether Travellers would be in favour of intergroup friendships.

It could also be argued that the experimental group were prompted to find more out about Travellers and yet a corresponding decline in perceived outgroup norms was not found. Perhaps the vicarious contact stories counteracted negative ideas that could be inculcated via media and parents. Again, the interpretation is speculative and highlights the need to ask participants whether they sought further information about Travellers and if so what they learned from their sources.

Of course it is also possible (and indeed was predicted) that observing positive cross group interactions (through stories featuring settled and Traveller children in friendship contexts) led treatment group participants to perceive that the outgroup has a positive norm towards intergroup contact. In each story, group membership was salient which may have facilitated generalisation of a positive norm about intergroup contact to the entire outgroup (as predicted by Hewstone and Brown, 1986 intergroup contact model). A positive outgroup norm is important because interest in intergroup contact is often predicted by the extent to which one believes outgroup members are willing to engage with members of one's own group (Shelton & Richeson, 2005; Tropp & Bianchi, 2006). Therefore, positive changes in perceived norms governing interaction between ingroup and outgroup should be an important antecedent of more positive outgroup attitudes and desire for future contact. Previous research suggests that when ingroup members perceive that outgroup members value diversity they report greater willingness for contact and interaction (Ananthi al Ramiah, Schmid, Hewstone and Floe, 2014; Tropp and Bianchi, 2006).

Although outgroup norms have not been examined as dependent variables, previous research has demonstrated that the positive effects of vicarious and extended contact are mediated by (among other things) perceived outgroup norms. For example, Cameron et al (2011) found that vicarious contact led to more positive intended friendship behaviour by making the children think that the outgroup would be more positive about cross ethnic friendships. Similarly, studies by Turner et al., (2008) and Gomez et al (2011) found that more positive outgroup norms partially mediated the effects of extended contact on more positive outgroup attitudes. A study by Vezzali Stathi et al (2014) provided experimental evidence of outgroup (and ingroup) norms as mediating mechanisms

of extended contact. In their study extended contact led to improved outgroup attitudes and fostered intentions to have outgroup friends and spend time with them and these effects were mediated by increased perceptions that both the ingroup and the outgroup have positive norms towards contact. Moreover, three months after the intervention, cross group friendships were more numerous in the experimental than in the control condition, an effect mediated by ingroup and outgroup norms and intentions to have contact with the outgroup (Vezzali Stathi et al 2014).

To summarise, many studies suggest that positive norms towards intergroup contact are important for intergroup relations. Research demonstrates that positive norms are associated with and in some cases lead to: more positive attitudes, intentions for contact and even actual intergroup friendships. However, there is some evidence that outgroup norms are more important for minority than majority group members (Ananthi al Ramiah et al., 2014; Tropp and Bianchi, 2006). Scholars speculate that fear of rejection might be more salient for groups who have a lot of experience with discrimination. Therefore perceiving that the outgroup is positively disposed towards contact could reduce such fear of rejection and thereby increase openness to contact among minority group members. Whereas majority group members may be more likely to avoid contact with outgroup due to lack of interest than due to fear of rejection (Ananthi al Ramiah et al., 2014). This highlights the multi-faceted nature of prejudice and how many factors including norms, anxiety and apathy need to be considered when planning approaches to improve intergroup attitudes and relations.

5.15 Summary

The current study yielded some mixed and unexpected findings. Vicarious contact (via a storytelling intervention) did not lead to improved attitudes towards Travellers. This was due in part to methodological flaws- particularly related to the development and administration of the attitude scale. Vicarious contact showed greater impact on intended friendship with the treatment group expressing significantly more favourable friendship intentions towards Travellers than the control group. The most promising result was for perceived ingroup norms about cross group friendship. The experimental group showed significantly more positive ingroup norms compared to the control group and pre-test reports. Vicarious contact also appeared to influence perceived outgroup norms with the experimental group expressing more favourable outgroup norms than the control group following intervention.

Chapter 5 discussed the findings of the study. Chapter six is presented next. It provides the conclusion and considers whether the theory of vicarious contact has been supported. Additional questions meriting further research are identified along with the practical implications for educational psychology.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.0 Introduction

Chapter six considers whether (in light of the results obtained) the theory of vicarious contact has been supported. Additional questions meriting further research are identified and the implications for educational psychology are outlined.

Decades of research has demonstrated that intergroup contact can, under certain conditions, reduce prejudice (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). However, strategies based on direct contact can sometimes be difficult to implement. Hence, more recently, scholars have explored the potential benefits of indirect contact on intergroup relations. The extended contact hypothesis proposed by Wright and colleagues (1997) maintains that the knowledge or observation that one or more ingroup members have contact with one or more outgroup friends promotes prejudice reduction. Since that time Dovidio, Eller and Hewstone (2011) distinguish between two types of indirect contact: extended contact (knowing that ingroup members have contact with outgroup members); and vicarious contact (observing an interaction between ingroup and outgroup members). The current study investigated the effects of vicarious contact which was operationalised by participants reading three stories depicting Traveller and settled children in friendship contexts.

Vicarious contact has demonstrated causal reduction on cognitive, affective and behavioural measures of prejudice across age groups, with a variety of outgroups in a variety of contexts (Cameron et al., 2007; Cameron et al., 2011; Mazziotta et al., 2011; Vezzali et al., 2012). There are different models of vicarious contact. Some emphasise ingroup and outgroup members' superordinate identity, their individual qualities and/or their subgroup membership. The current study adopted the intergroup model of vicarious contact proposed by Hewstone and Brown (1986). According to this model, during vicarious contact, group membership of in and out group members should be made salient so as to facilitate generalisation of positive orientations from the protagonists in the story to the outgroup as a whole. In addition, the typicality of outgroup members should be emphasised (Brown, Vivian and Hewstone, 1999).

6.1 Summary of key findings

The current study predicted that the intergroup model of vicarious contact would improve attitudes and intended friendship behaviour towards Irish Travellers. It was also hypothesised that vicarious contact would lead to perceptions that fellow ingroup members (settled children) would approve of cross group friendship. Similarly, it was hypothesised that participants would think that more outgroup members would also approve of cross group friendships following vicarious contact.

Contrary to previous research in the area (e.g Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron et al., 2007) vicarious contact did not lead to improved attitudes towards the outgroup (Travellers). This was largely due to the researcher's failure to develop a valid scale to measure attitudes towards Travellers. Furthermore, there was no evidence of ingroup bias which was possibly due to the researcher's mode of administering the attitude scale. The researcher neglected to create an effective intergroup comparative context. Additional plausible reasons for the lack of impact on reported attitudes towards Travellers include participants' unfamiliarity with Travellers and their initially positive attitudes. Children's possible lack of identification with the settled ingroup is also

relevant because vicarious contact has been found to be especially effective with children who are highly identified with their ethnic group (Cameron et al., 2007 study 2).

Although, theory predicts that reading stories including non-stereotypical and positive portrayals of Travellers in friendship situations with settled children will improve attitudes towards this marginalised group, this hypothesis was not supported. Paradoxically, it is possible that the *absence* of stereotypical information and context inhibited participants' memory of characters as they did not readily fit into pre-existing schemas about Travellers. Therefore positive exemplars couldn't alter children's intergroup attitudes because they couldn't remember them. Indeed previous research suggests that children have difficulty remembering counter-stereotypical information (Bigler and Liben, 1993; Carter and Levy, 1988; Levy, 2000; Martin and Halverson, 1981).

Lastly, social desirability concerns about appearing prejudiced might have influenced reported attitudes.

In terms of intended friendship behaviour there was evidence of intervention effects. Compared to the control group, the experimental group showed a higher outgroup intended friendship behaviour score. This finding is in line with previous research (e.g Cameron and Rutland, 2006; Cameron, Rutland and Brown, 2007; Vezzali et al., 2012) and provides support for the theory that vicarious contact positively impacts intended friendship behaviour towards outgroups. However, the significant difference between groups is partly attributable to the treatment group showing a slight increase in willingness to show friendship behaviour to Traveller children along with the control group showing a significant decrease in openness to inclusion. On the other hand it is possible that vicarious contact (through story reading) buffered children in the experimental group from the effects of viewing or hearing about negative and stereotypical portrayals of Travellers in the intervening period between pre and post-tests.

As predicted, perceived ingroup norms about crossgroup friendship were positively influenced by the intergroup model of vicarious contact. The experimental group indicated that a greater number of settled children would approve of friendships with Travellers following the vicarious contact intervention. There was also a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in terms of perceived ingroup norms with the experimental group indicating a greater degree of perceived approval. Hence, the current study provides support for the theory that vicarious contact positively impacts perceived ingroup norms about cross group friendship.

The final hypothesis predicted that children in the treatment group would believe that more Traveller children would approve of friendship with their settled peers following vicarious contact. Indeed there was evidence of treatment effects. When the post-test scores for the experimental and control group were compared, there was a significant difference between the groups. Compared to the control group, children in the treatment group believed that greater numbers of Traveller children would approve of friendship with settled children. This provides support for the theory that the intergroup model of vicarious contact has a positive impact on perceived outgroup norms about cross-group friendships.

6.2 Strengths and limitations of the research

Although the research has many limitations, it does make some important contributions to the educational/social psychological literature. Firstly, it demonstrates the potential of a theoretically informed intervention in a naturalistic setting to reduce prejudice/promote inclusion as measured by intended outgroup friendship behaviour and perceived norms about cross-group friendships. Thus, the research responds to Paluck and Green's (2009) recommendation to conduct field experiments on social psychology's theories of prejudice and to assess whether an intervention's effects emerge "among the cacophony of real-world influences" (p.357). Hence, the current study used the field, as Paluck and Green suggested, as a laboratory for generating richer more multi-dimensioned theory.

The current research extends the findings of Cameron and colleagues (2007) in relation to the positive impact of the intergroup model of vicarious contact on intended friendship behaviour towards the outgroup (at least in the short term).The study also provides evidence of the favourable effects of the same model of vicarious contact on perceived in and outgroup norms as dependent variables.

The present study provides further support that vicarious contact can be used effectively with children between the ages of eight and twelve in an educational setting. It corroborates studies suggesting that children in this age range have the social cognitive abilities necessary for successful vicarious contact (e.g Cameron et al., 2006 Cameron et al., 2007). Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that vicarious contact can be effective with children in an ethnically homogenous context who have little or no contact with target outgroup members. Thus, supporting Cameron and colleagues' (2011) discovery that vicarious contact interventions are effective in promoting more positive intended friendship behaviour towards the outgroup when children have low levels of direct contact. Importantly, the current research examined the impact of vicarious contact on a new outgroup (Travellers) who were thought to be highly stigmatised thereby responding to Cameron and colleagues' (2007) suggestion to examine whether vicarious contact is effective at changing more negative outgroup attitudes.

Finally, the data related to the number of children who had heard of Travellers, their sources of information about same, and the number who had met a Traveller highlight the invisibility and isolation of Travellers in Irish society. These findings provide support for the observations of key stakeholders who point to the lack of representation of Traveller culture in the curriculum (Harmon, 2015; McGaughey, 2011; Titley, 2009) and the isolation of Travellers within communities (Harmon, 2015). The findings also demonstrate that the objective to validate Traveller culture within the curriculum as espoused in State policies (e.g DES, 2002) has not been realised.

The research showed that children's attitudes and intended friendship behaviour toward their ingroup were not significantly affected by the vicarious contact intervention. Thus, as intended the intervention had quite specific effects on orientations towards the outgroup (at least in relation to intended friendship).

The study has many limitations in terms of the credibility and representativeness of findings.

There were a number of limitations associated with the measuring instruments. It seems that the attitude scale lacked face validity. In addition, the children did not have the opportunity to explain

the reasoning that informed their judgements about: Travellers; their friendship intentions; and their perceptions of norms related to cross group friendships. Furthermore, children were not asked whether they sought further information about Travellers in the period between pre and post-tests. Therefore, the reasons offered for observed differences between groups (and within groups) are largely speculative.

It is possible that the effects of the intervention were due (in part) to demand characteristics. The researcher administering post-tests was not blind to the condition and it is possible that children in both groups guessed the purpose of the study and these factors could influence the attitudes reported post-intervention. The intervention was highly transparent in that it explicitly promoted intergroup contact. Hence, if the children had been asked to estimate the experimenter's outgroup attitudes they might have perceived the experimenter to have positive views. Thus, there may have been subtle pressure to match the experimenter's views.

Moreover, as Bigler and Hughes (2010) propose, statistically significant effects are often practically unimportant. For instance, children in the experimental group demonstrated significantly more positive friendship intentions towards settled children than Traveller children both before and after the intervention. In addition, the intervention did not require the actual forging of friendships with Travellers. It is also unclear whether the observed effects will be lasting.

The results of the study are not representative of all children in the Republic of Ireland. The sample of children was very homogenous with respect to ethnicity and social class. These factors may have implications for participants' familiarity with the Traveller community and the results obtained.

The study is also limited in terms of its transformative potential. Only the children's attitudes were targeted for change. Hence, the researcher did not attempt to influence a myriad of other relevant factors such as: the teachers; the curriculum; the school ethos; the influence of the wider community including parents and media or macro level factors such as legislation and social norms. The intervention was underpinned by the mistaken belief that prejudice is an intra-individual characteristic.

Lastly, a significant limitation of the study is that the language of the intervention lacked criticality. According to Mayo (2003) the transformative potential of an educational initiative would have to focus attention on the following questions: "Does it contain a language of critique?" "Does it expose forms of institutional oppression?" Does it provide a language of possibility?" (p.44). Such questions were neither raised nor discussed during storytelling sessions in the current study.

6.3 Implications for future research

The limitations of the study suggest some avenues for future research.

It would be worthwhile to use a validated scale to examine attitudes towards Travellers so as to facilitate assessment of the impact of vicarious contact on this outcome variable. Furthermore, those testing participants should be unfamiliar to children and blind to conditions so as to minimise demand characteristics. It would also be worthwhile to ask children whether they sought further information about Travellers (in the intervening period between pre and post-tests) and what they learned. This would facilitate a more nuanced interpretation of the post-test results.

While the original intention was to examine the impact of vicarious contact on attitudes towards a more stigmatised outgroup, it emerged that attitudes were not as negative as originally anticipated. Hence, future research should include participants who have experience (including negative experience with Travellers) so as to more fully assess the effect of vicarious contact with different populations and in different contexts (including rural, urban, affluent and socially disadvantaged contexts). Randomly selecting schools throughout the country for participation would facilitate more representative findings. In addition, vicarious contact should be introduced into a more ethnically diverse context, such as a school with Travellers enrolled, so as to measure its real world effects.

Rather than simply asking the children whether they had ever heard of or met Travellers, they could be asked to indicate their level of contact and experience with Travellers as well as the perceived quality of such contact. Researchers could match participants in control and treatment groups according to the quality of their contact with Travellers. Statistical analyses could be conducted to see whether vicarious contact is more or less effective with participants with prior negative experience of Travellers.

Future research should include additional measures to assist with interpretation of results. For example, children's level of identification with their ingroup should be assessed. In this way it would be possible to test whether ingroup identification moderates the effect of vicarious contact on attitudes towards Travellers.

Children could be asked about their level of anxiety regarding the prospect of intergroup contact. This would allow researchers to investigate whether vicarious contact influences anxiety about future contact with Travellers. A mediational analysis could be conducted to see, for example, whether vicarious contact promotes more favourable friendship intentions because it reduces anxiety about cross-group relations.

Similarly, by measuring self-efficacy expectations in relation to contact, one could examine whether vicarious contact enhances self-efficacy expectancies in relation to behaving competently while navigating cross-group contact situations. The relationship between self-efficacy about contact and willingness for future contact could also be explored.

Of course it is possible that participants could be apathetic about contact and therefore a measure of their interest in cross-group relations could be sought to further illuminate when and why vicarious contact works to promote more favourable intergroup relations.

Future research could target teaching staff. By including measures of their explicit and implicit attitudes and their reported social distance towards Travellers, one could examine whether teacher attitudes moderate the impact of vicarious contact interventions.

One would have more confidence in the results in relation to intended friendship behaviour and perceived norms about cross-group friendship if they endured over time. Therefore future studies should retest participants several months after the intervention has ended.

The intervention effects found in the present study may have been the result of mere exposure to members of the Traveller outgroup. In order to rule out this explanation, future research should include an additional mere exposure condition that consists of in and outgroup members who are not friends.

A major limitation of the current study is that the voice of the minority outgroup is missing. In order to truly examine the impact of a prejudice reduction initiative, it would be imperative to seek the perspective of the victims of prejudice and discrimination. Possible measures of success might include Travellers' perceptions of belonging and inclusion. The number of cross group friendships could also be an indicator of success. However, researchers would need to be mindful that considerable time might be required to induce positive effects. For example, minority group members might be particularly motivated to avoid intergroup contact to keep from exposing themselves to prejudice and discrimination from the majority group (Mendoza-Denton et al, 2002).

As has been suggested in previous studies (Cameron et al., 2011; Turner, Hewstone et al., 2007; Vezzali et al., 2014) vicarious contact could be used as a preparatory strategy prior to direct contact. Perhaps actual contact could reinforce positive outgroup attitudes and behaviours and ultimately lead to more stable cross-group relationships. Thus, it would be worthwhile to examine the effects of a two stage intervention where participants experienced vicarious contact before direct contact with a group of Travellers. Measures could be employed to examine group norms, inclusion of other in self, anxiety, and interest in cross-group interaction along with efficacy expectations about competency during same. This could be followed by an assessment of the quality and frequency of integroup interaction. In so doing there would be greater understanding of when and why vicarious contact works.

6.4 Implications for educational psychology

A review of the vast amount of literature on prejudice along with the results of the current study has many implications for educational psychology.

For example, the results suggest that vicarious contact might be worthwhile to introduce in an educational context to facilitate positive group norms about interactions between settled and Traveller children.

However, the same vicarious contact intervention was applied uniformly in each school regardless of differences in terms of racial climate, and children's level of prior experience and degree of contact with Travellers in the local community. Rather than responding to concerns about prejudice, discrimination or exclusion, the intervention was imposed on participants following consent. According to the Constructionist Model of Informed and Reasoned Action (COMOIRA) a framework for practice in Educational Psychology (Gameson and Rydderch, 2008) the process of EP involvement should be related to initial concerns. Similarly, McKown (2005) maintains that interventions should be tailored and sensitive to the needs and realities of each setting.

Therefore, in order to respond to concerns about prejudice and discrimination, McKown (2005) advocates conducting a careful assessment of the ecology of a school/social setting prior to selecting an empirically supported intervention. Educational psychologists are well placed to conduct such an analysis. According to McKown, several factors require consideration such as

> where in the ecology problems arise (isolated students, group conflict, classroom conflict, school yard conflict) what the problem looks like (overt racism, interracial teasing, racial isolation, perceived racial climate, lack of positive contact, low minority participation) how old the children are… and when in the time course of the problem the intervention is

implemented (before problem onset, soon after problem onset, or when the problem is "full blown") (p.187).

EPs could share assessment strategies and/or information emerging from assessment with those concerned so as to assist with the identification and clarification of change issues. Through a process of joint problem solving relevant parties could construct shared ways of thinking and talking that might set the scene for appropriate change(s). According to COMOIRA, positive outcomes and long-term changes are more likely to occur when relevant people feel engaged, empowered and enabled to make sense of and to manage their own change issues (Gameson and Rydderch, 2008, p.104). EPs with their unique expertise and knowledge could share psychological theories and research that might inform decisions about what to do next. For example, in an ethnically diverse school with a competitive climate where there is evidence of outgroup avoidance and/or conflict between groups, prejudice reduction approaches based on social cognitive, contact, and extended contact theories and research could be productively applied in combination. In addition, the EP could have a role in jointly constructing and establishing the criteria for success, considering who will do what to monitor and evaluate the desired changes

Of course (in order for such an approach to be successful) the careful assessment of the ecology would need to include an assessment of teachers' and other relevant ancillary staff members' attitudes and beliefs regarding the inclusion of minorities. It would also be important to analyse staff members' willingness to support a prejudice reduction programme along with their efficacy beliefs in relation to same.

EPs could have a role in promoting staff members' awareness of prejudice and support the delivery of training, making it relevant for teachers, which is important in relation to attitudinal change. Ongoing support could also be provided through group consultations or drop in surgeries. In addition, EPs are well positioned to aid the development of policies and initiatives to help teachers foster greater inclusion of all children. Similarly, EPs could have a role in supporting senior staff to develop effective mechanisms for consulting with and empowering teaching staff when issues arise.

The approach used by Smith and Neill (2005) might be worthwhile in relation to promoting teachers' awareness of minority children's experience of inclusion or equality. For instance, minority children (including Travellers) could be invited to write poems related to their understanding of inclusion and/or equality. Educators could then be invited to review the poems using a process of appreciative inquiry with a view to developing practical propositions for change. Indeed, Smith and Neill (2005) found such an approach to be extremely powerful in terms of encouraging open discussion within schools on the causes and consequences of social divisions.

Members of relevant community groups (such as Traveller organisations) could also be invited to take part in the process of appreciative inquiry. In this way EPs could play an important role in bridging the gap between schools and communities that surround schools. EPs are ideally suited to such a task, given their familiarity with the complexities of the change processes within educational contexts and theories of attitude development along with their comprehensive knowledge of child and adolescent well-being informed by theory, research and experience.

Finally, the current study indicates the importance of using quantitative measurements as a keystone of professional practice. As argued by Apter (2016) without such systematic observation

skills set and associated data analysis experience, the authority of the applied psychology of the EP in the classroom (working either organisationally or systemically with teachers and school leaders or when observing individual students as case work) is diminished. Furthermore, Apter contends that if EPs restrict themselves to small scale qualitative studies the research of the profession will continue to be sidelined by educational leaders and policy makes who are more influenced and persuaded by the large scale research of educational academics such as Hattie (2009).

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, educational and psychological prevention and treatment programmes are only one way to address the challenging goal of reducing prejudice and discrimination and promoting cooperation between social groups. Macro level factors such as legislation, curriculum and mass media need to be examined too and society needs to rectify the injustices that cause disadvantage. For example, curricula are thought to play an important role in perpetuating social inequality in enabling dominant cultural groups to sustain their competitive advantage in education and society more general (McEneaney and Meyer, 2000). Indeed scholars argue that curriculum is assimilationist and if you wish you wish to teach about ethnicity and race relations, for instance, a more comprehensive and deeper understanding is possible if you construct your curriculum from the point of view of the subordinated ethnic groups than if you work from the point of view of the dominant one. (Connell 1993)

Irrespective of the type of initiative, they should all share the common mission of not only reducing prejudice and discrimination but also enabling children, adolescents and finally adults to develop a greater sense of equity tolerance and justice (Killen et al., 2011) and "to build up positive intergroup relations so that they may benefit rather than suffer from social diversity" (Beelmann and Heinemann, 2014, p.21).

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Appendix A: Intergroup attitude test/Travellers/Settled

	None (1)	Some (2)	Most (3)	All (4)
Likes to run				
Likes to sing				
Likes tv				
Likes music				
Friendly- often smile and include children in their games				
Good-they do things for other people				
Happy-they often smile and laugh				
Helpful they help others when they need it				
Hardworking they work hard at home and at school				
Kind often caring and consider others' feelings				
Nice they are good to others				
Unselfish/sharing share their toys with other children				

Polite- often say please and thank you				
Tidy- keep their clothes and belongings very neat				
Bad-often naughty and rude				
Nasty-often mean and cruel				
Unhelpful- don't help others when they need it				
Unkind they say and do mean things				
Sad- often unhappy				
Selfish- don't share their toys or help others				
Rude- bad manners and don't say please or thank you				
Lazy- don't work hard				
Unfriendly don't include others in their games				
Messy not neat and tidy				

_____   none

some

most

all

Appendix C: Intended friendship behaviour measure

Imagine you are in the park and you meet a Traveller Irish child there that you know from school

Number:					
Meeting a **Traveller Irish child** in the park					
	Not at all (1)	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Very much so (5)**
Would you like to play with them					
Would you like them					
Would you like to have them over to your house for a meal					
Would you like to have them stay overnight at your house					

…

Imagine you are in the park and you meet a Settled child there that you know from school…

Number:					
Meeting **a Settled child** in the park					
	Not at all (1)	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Very much so (5)**
Would you like to play with them					
Would you like them					
Would you like to have them over to your house for a meal					
Would you like to have them stay overnight at your house					

Appendix D: Response key for intended friendship behaviour measure

1   2   3   4   5

Not at all   Very much so

1. "I don't like being friends with Traveller Irish children"

2. "It is a good idea for Settled children and Traveller Irish children to be friends"

3. "I like being friends with Traveller Irish children"

4. "It is not a good idea for Settled children and Traveller Irish children to be friends"

1.   "I don't like being friends with Settled children"

2.   "It is a good idea for Traveller Irish and Settled children to be friends"

3.   "I like being friends with Settled children"

4.   "It is not a good idea for Traveller Irish and Settled children to be friends"

All of them

A lot of them

About half

A few

_____ None of them

Appendix G: Information leaflet and consent form for children

Information leaflet

What helps children to respect and get along well with each other?

This leaflet is for children in _____ class and their parents/guardians

Please will you help me with my research?

This leaflet gives some details about the project.
I have set out the questions you might want to ask with my answers so you can talk about them together before you decide if you would like to take part.

Please contact me, Maeve, if you want more details and/or if you would like to join the project.

Maeve Dupont Tel: 01 884 2089

Email: maeve.dupont@spd.dcu.ie

Why is the research being done?
As you know it is important that children are happy at school and feel that they belong.
I plan to listen to girls and boys and write reports about their views.
The aim is to see what helps children to respect and get along well with each other.

What questions will the project ask?
What are girls' and boys' views of children from similar and different cultures?
How would girls and boys feel about spending time with or playing with children from different cultures?
What do girls and boys think about children from different groups being friends with each other?

Who will be in the project?
Children in _____ class at _____ School

Do I have to take part?
You decide if you want to take part or not
Even if you say yes you can drop out at any time
And I can remove the information you tell me up to a year after the study is over
You can tell me if you want to stop or have a break
If you don't want to answer some questions just say 'pass'
You do not have to tell me anything unless you want to. And you do not have to give a reason if you say 'no' or 'stop'.

Whether you help me or not you will still have the same care at your school

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree you will work in small groups of 4 or 5 children where we will read and discuss stories about children from different groups having adventures together. I or my research assistant Aisling will lead the story groups. You don't have to be good at reading to be part of the group.

If you agree, I or Aisling will meet you at your school. One of us will talk with you twice for about 15 minutes each time. There are no right or wrong answers. It is your own views that matter.

Could there be any problems for me if I take part?

I hope that you will enjoy talking to me or Aisling. A few people don't like talking about their views and if they want to stop, we stop. I can put them in touch with someone to help them, if they wish. If you have any complaints about the project please tell me or Dr Simon Griffey.
Simon Griffey Tel: 0044 2920 875393   Email: Griffeysj@cardiff.ac.uk

Will doing the research help me?

I hope you will like helping me but the main aim is to write reports that will help teachers and children in the future. Maybe you too will find the reports useful.

Who will know if I am in the research or what I have talked about?

Teachers and other children in your school will know if you are in the project but I will not tell them or anyone else what you tell me.
The only time I might have to break this promise is if I or Aisling think you or someone else might be at risk of being hurt. If so I will talk to you first about the best thing to do.
I will keep notes about you in a safe and lockable place. When I write reports about your views I will not use your name so no one will know you said that.

Will I know about the research results?

I will send a short report to you in your school and longer reports too if you want to see them.

The project is approved by Dr Griffey and Cardiff University research ethics committee, project number (EC.12.05.293150RR). St Patrick's College research ethics committee has also approved the project.

The researcher Maeve teaches primary school teachers about how children learn and develop. She also does research and writes reports about children's views on schools. The research assistant Aisling is a third year psychology student.

If you do take part, please keep this leaflet with the copy of your consent form

Consent form

What helps children to respect and get along well with each other?

The aim of the study is to see what helps children to respect and get along well with each other.

If I agree to take part in this study I will talk with Maeve or Aisling twice for about 15 minutes about friendships and children from similar and different cultures. I will also take part in a group where we listen to, read, and discuss stories about children on adventures.

I understand that if I agree to take part in this study, I can drop out at any time without giving a reason. I can have my information removed from the study up to a year after the final interview. Whether I help Maeve or not I will still have the same care at my school.

Maeve will keep notes about me in a safe and lockable place and delete named details about me after the project. Maeve will not tell anyone else what I tell her or Aisling. The only time she might have to break this promise is if she or Aisling thinks a child might be at risk of being hurt. When she writes reports about my views she will change my name so no one will know what I said.

(Circle Yes or No for each question).

Have you read or had read to you the information leaflet?   Yes/No

Do you understand the information provided?   Yes/No

Have you had a chance to ask questions and discuss this study?   Yes/No

Are you happy with the answers to all your questions?   Yes/No

Signature:

I have read and understood the information in this form. Maeve has answered my questions and concerns, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I agree to take part in this research project.

Participant's Signature:

Name in Block Capitals:

Witness: **Date:**

Appendix H: Resources and guidelines to support inclusive representation of minority groups

Dear_____

Further to your school's participation in my research project, I am attaching a summary of the books that were read during the storytelling sessions along with the reading and comprehension skills that were targeted. It should prove useful for your cuntas miosuil record.

I am also attaching a weblink to a resource pack for youth workers/teachers that might be helpful for SPHE lessons to explore issues of diversity, promote equality and to challenge prejudice and discrimination.

http://www.youthdeved.ie/sites/youthdeved.ie/files/All_Different_All_Equal_Ireland_2006.pdf

Since I haven't had an opportunity to analyse the research data yet, I am reluctant to offer the adapted stories as a resource to reduce prejudice and promote positive attitudes towards members of the Travelling community. However, if you wish to apply the 'vicarious contact' theory, research in the UK suggests that providing children with stories in which children from minority groups are represented in a positive and non-stereotypical light can lead to improved attitudes towards such groups. Apparently, depicting children from the majority group in friendship situations with members of the minority group helps to create a norm that it is acceptable to be friends with children who are different from the majority.

If you want to apply the theory to promote positive attitudes towards a particular group (such as a minority ethnic, minority language, or minority religious group) you can source or adapt a story in which the marginalised group member is in a friendship situation with a majority group member. It would be important to draw attention to the individual qualities of the character and to ensure that they are depicted in a non-stereotypical and positive way.

I am extremely grateful to you for being so accommodating of the research and I will be in touch next year with a summary of the key findings for you and the research participants.

With every good wish

Maeve Dupont

Appendix I (1): Debrief for children who participated in the study

Debrief for children

Debrief given orally to individual children immediately after they have completed the second interview:

Thank you for taking part in this project. I hope you enjoyed it. Now remember no one is going to know the answers you gave because look, I did not put your name on the answer sheet.

When I write reports I will not use real names of children and I will change the name of your school. I am interested in putting all the information together for the answer rather than talking about individual children.

You were chosen for the reading group by picking your name out of a hat.

I just wanted to ask you questions about what you think and feel about lots of other children, who you would like to play with and what you think other children are like. I wanted to see whether your thoughts about other children and your feelings about playing with other children have changed because of the stories you read. We were reading stories about playing with Traveller Irish children. I wanted to see if reading about playing with Traveller Irish children changed children's thoughts and feelings about Traveller Irish children and made them happier about the idea of playing with Traveller Irish children.

I couldn't tell you at the start that is what I wanted to find out because you might think there are right answers to the questions I asked and there are no right answers. It is your views that matter.

There are some children who don't feel respected and who don't feel that they belong in school like Traveller Irish children, children who speak a different language, children who have different colour skin and children with disabilities. People say that if we read stories about these children it helps them to feel respected and like they belong. That is why I think my project is important because I want to find ways to help all children feel respected and that they belong in school. Now remember, nobody will find out what your answers are and your name doesn't go anywhere on your answer sheet. And it's not like tests you've done before, there are no right and wrong answers, I was just interested in what you think.

You have done really well. Well done and thank you for taking part. Do you have any questions?

Here is a letter home for your parents/carers.

Appendix I (2): Debrief for children in the experimental group

Debrief given orally to individual children immediately after they have completed the second interview:

Thank you for taking part in this project. I hope you enjoyed it. Now remember no one is going to know the answers you gave because look, I did not put your name on the answer sheet.

When I write reports I will not use real names of children and I will change the name of your school. I am interested in putting all the information together for the answer rather than talking about individual children.

You were chosen for the reading group by picking your name out of a hat.

I just wanted to ask you questions about what you think and feel about lots of other children, who you would like to play with and what you think other children are like. I wanted to see whether your thoughts about other children and your feelings about playing with other children have changed because of the stories you read. We were reading stories about playing with Traveller Irish children. I wanted to see if reading about playing with Traveller Irish children changed children's thoughts and feelings about Traveller Irish children and made them happier about the idea of playing with Traveller Irish children.

I couldn't tell you at the start that is what I wanted to find out because you might think there are right answers to the questions I asked and there are no right answers. It is your views that matter.

There are some children who don't feel respected and who don't feel that they belong in school like Traveller Irish children, children who speak a different language, children who have different colour skin and children with disabilities. People say that if we read stories about these children it helps them to feel respected and like they belong. That is why I think my project is important because I want to find ways to help all children feel respected and that they belong in school. Now remember, nobody will find out what your answers are and your name doesn't go anywhere on your answer sheet. And it's not like tests you've done before, there are no right and wrong answers, I was just interested in what you think.

You have done really well. Well done and thank you for taking part. Do you have any questions?

Here is a letter home for your parents/carers.

Appendix J: Summary of key findings shared with participants

What helps children to respect and get along well with each other?

Dear pupil,

Last year you took part in my research project called 'What helps children to respect and get along well with each other?'

You worked in small groups with me (Maeve) or my assistant Aisling where we read and discussed stories about children having adventures together. Some children read stories about settled children playing together but other children read stories about settled children playing with Traveller Irish children.

We also asked you questions about your views of settled children and children from the Traveller Irish community. We asked how you would feel about spending time with or playing with children from these groups and whether you think it is normal for children from different groups to be friends with each other.

I wanted to see if reading about playing with Traveller Irish children changed children's thoughts and feelings about Traveller Irish children and made them happier about the idea of playing with Traveller Irish children.

As promised, I am sending you a report of the views of the children who took part in the study.

Results:

119 children from 5 different schools took part in the study.

Only 18 of these children had ever met a Traveller Irish person and 36 children had never even heard of Irish Travellers.

All children showed a positive attitude towards settled children. Similarly, almost all children in the study had a positive attitude towards children from the Traveller Irish community. They described most Traveller Irish children as being friendly, helpful, hard working and so on.

Children's attitudes towards Traveller Irish children did not change after reading stories about settled children and Traveller Irish children having adventures together. They reported a positive attitude to Traveller Irish children before and after reading

stories. There was no difference between the story groups in terms of children's attitudes to Traveller Irish children.

Most children were happy about the idea of playing with an imaginary settled child that they met in the park. Similarly, most children were happy with the idea of playing with an imaginary Traveller Irish child that they met in the park.

Children who read stories about settled children and Traveller Irish children having adventures together were a bit happier about the idea of playing with a Traveller Irish child than children who just read stories about settled children playing together.

After reading stories about settled children and Traveller Irish children having adventures together, children felt that more settled children would consider it normal for settled children and Traveller Irish children to be friends.

Similarly, they thought that more Traveller Irish children would agree that it is normal to be friends with settled children.

Thank you for taking part in my study. I will use the information to think of ways to help all children feel that they are respected and that they belong in school.

If you, or your parents, want a longer report about the project, you can contact me, Maeve Dupont, at

Tel: 01 884 2089

or

Email: maeve.dupont@spd.dcu.ie

If you have a complaint about the project you can contact one of the following:

The Administrator,   Psychology Ethics Committee Secretary
Office of the Dean of Research and Humanities   Cardiff University
Room C214   Tower Building Park Place
St Patrick's College,   Cardiff
Drumcondra,   CF103AT
Dublin 9.   Tel: 0044 2920 87400
Tel +353-(0)1-884 2149   Email:psychethics@cf.ac.uk

Appendix K: Information letter for Principal/Teacher

Dear Principal,

My name is Maeve Dupont and I am an Educational Psychologist undertaking research for a doctoral thesis in Educational Psychology at Cardiff University. While I am a student on this programme, I am based in Dublin and working as a lecturer in Psychology in St Patrick's College Drumcondra.

I am writing to ask you to consider my request to conduct a study with a group of children in third and/or fourth class in your school. The proposed project has been approved by Cardiff University research ethics committee and also by St Patrick's College research ethics committee.

I would like to test an exciting, new storytelling activity. The goal of the intervention is to help schools foster respect for diversity in children, promote community cohesion and good relations between ethnic groups. I would like to find out whether or not vicarious experience of friendship between different ethnic groups (via a reading intervention) has an influence on attitudes and feelings towards marginalised groups. In order to do this, I would like to ask a group of children in your school to take part in the storytelling sessions and to participate in two short interviews with me.

Children would be randomly assigned to one of two reading groups. Group A would read stories featuring children from different ethnic groups (Traveller Irish children and Settled children) having adventures together. Group B would read stories about Settled children having adventures together. The purpose of random assignment is to see if the type of story causes a difference between the groups in terms of their attitudes and feelings towards marginalised groups. You and relevant teaching staff would have an opportunity to inspect the reading materials before making a decision whether or not to take part. Storytelling sessions would take place with me (the researcher or my research assistant Aisling) in groups of 5/6 children of similar age. There would be six sessions of 30 minutes duration on days, and at times, decided by you and the class teachers. Children of all reading abilities would be welcome to take part. There are some anticipated benefits associated with the programmes. It is thought that children enjoy and benefit from opportunities to practice their reading, listening, and comprehension skills in a small and supportive group. In addition, research suggests that reading about friendships between children from different cultures leads to improved attitudes towards minority groups. This could address curriculum objectives in SPHE in relation to fostering: respect for diversity, and a sense of identity and belonging. Finally some of the reading materials could meet the aims of the school's anti-racist policy by exposing children to literature that represents different ethnic groups in a positive and meaningful way.

Consent would be sought from children, their parents, and teachers. Children who agree to participate would be asked to be interviewed twice (before and after the end of the programme). It is expected that these interviews would last for about 15 minutes. Both interviews would consist of a series of the same simple questions using pictures. Children would be asked questions designed to tap into their thoughts and feelings about children from Traveller and Settled backgrounds and attitudes towards diversity. I would use photographs to do this, and the questions would be modified to suit the children's age.

Children would be free to withdraw their data from the study up to a year after the final interview. After taking part in the project children would be given a letter to take home outlining in more detail the purpose of the study.

I would be most grateful if you would allow children in your school to take part. I expect that children would enjoy taking part in the interview and the activities as I will try and make it fun for them. All children's answers would be confidential, and their answers would become part of a larger data set. No one apart from the researcher, research assistant and research supervisor would have any access to the information the children provide. Children's names and any other identifying information would be stored separately from their data in a securely locked filing cabinet. Answer sheets would be stored in a securely locked room for as long as is required by the Data Protection Act, and then they would be destroyed by a confidential shredding service.

Once the data is analysed a report of the findings may be submitted for publication and used for teaching purposes. General findings would also be presented to your school. Only broad trends would be reported and it would not be possible to identify any individuals or particular schools.

I understand that schools are busy places and to compensate for possible disruption caused by participating in the project, I would be happy to offer a professional development session to your staff on understanding prejudice and promoting good relations between different ethnic groups.

Thank you for your time. I will contact you shortly to discuss the possibility of your school's involvement in my study and to discuss any queries that you might have.

In the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below if you have any questions or would like more information.

Yours sincerely,

Maeve Dupont
Postgraduate student, Cardiff University

My contact details   **Supervisor contact details**

Maeve Dupont   Dr Simon Griffey
Education Department   Research Director DEdPsy Professional
St Patrick's College   Programme
Drumcondra   School of Psychology
Dublin 9   Cardiff University
Tel: 01 884 2089   Tower Building Park Place
Email: maeve.dupont@spd.dcu.ie   Cardiff
                                                CF103AT
                                                Tel: 0044 2920 875393
                                                Email: Griffeysj@cardiff.ac.uk

In case of complaint please contact one of the following:

The Administrator,   Psychology   Ethics   Committee
Secretary
Office of the Dean of Research and Humanities   Cardiff University
Room C214   Tower Building Park Place
St Patrick's College,   Cardiff
Drumcondra,   CF103AT
Dublin 9.   Tel: 0044 2920 87400
Tel +353-(0)1-884 2149   Email:psychethics@cf.ac.uk

Appendix L: Information leaflet and consent form for parents

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Maeve Dupont and I am an Educational Psychologist undertaking research for a doctoral thesis in Educational Psychology at Cardiff University. While I am a student on this programme, I am based in Dublin and working as a lecturer in Psychology in St Patrick's College Drumcondra.

This term some children at _____ school will be using an exciting, new storytelling activity. The goal of the storytelling intervention is to help schools foster respect for diversity in children, promote community cohesion and good relations between ethnic groups. I would like to find out whether or not vicarious experience of friendship between different ethnic groups (via a reading intervention) has an influence on attitudes and feelings towards marginalised groups. In order to do this, I would like to ask your child to take part in my pilot study. This will entail participating in storytelling sessions and in two short interviews with me.

Following consent, children will read stories featuring children from different ethnic groups (Traveller Irish and Settled Irish) having adventures together. Storytelling sessions will take place with the researcher in groups of 4/5 children of similar age. There will be six sessions of 20 minutes duration on days, and at times, decided by the class teacher. Children of all reading abilities are welcome to take part. There are some anticipated benefits associated with the programmes. It is thought that children enjoy and benefit from opportunities to practice their reading, listening, and comprehension skills in a small and supportive group. In addition, research suggests that reading about friendships between children from different cultures leads to improved attitudes towards minority groups.

Children who agree to participate will be asked to be interviewed twice (before and after the end of the programme). It is expected that each interview would last for about 15 minutes. Both interviews will consist of a series of the same simple questions using pictures. Children will be asked questions designed to tap into their thoughts and feelings about children from different ethnic backgrounds and attitudes towards diversity. I will use photographs to do this, and the questions are modified to suit the children's age.

_____ has given me permission to contact you about this study and the project has been approved by Cardiff University research ethics committee and also by St Patrick's College research ethics committee. I would be most grateful if you would allow your child to take part. I expect that children will enjoy taking part in the interview and the activities as I will try and make it fun for them. All children's answers are confidential, and your child's answers will become part of a larger data set. No one apart from the researcher and research supervisor will have any access to the information your child provides. Your child's name and any other identifying information will be stored separately from their data in a securely locked filing cabinet. Answer sheets will be stored in a securely locked room for as long as is required by the Data Protection Act, and then they will be destroyed by a confidential shredding service.

Once the data is analysed a report of the findings may be submitted for publication and used for teaching purposes. General findings will also be presented to your child's school. Only broad trends will be reported and it will not be possible to identify any individuals or particular schools. A summary of the results will be available from the researcher on request.

You are free to withdraw your child's data from the study up to a year after the interview. This is no problem – to do this, please contact me on 01 884 2089. After taking part in the project your child will be given a letter to take home to you outlining in more detail the purpose of the study. If you have any serious concerns about the ethical conduct of this study, please inform the secretary of the Psychology Ethics Committee in Cardiff University or the administrator in the office of the Dean of Research and Humanities in St Patrick's College providing a detailed account of your concern.

_____ has most kindly allowed me access to the school however I do require individual consent from parents to allow children to participate. If you are happy for your child to take part, you need to sign the consent form below and return it by _____. If you do not wish your child to take part you do not have to do anything. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor. Contact details are provided below.

Thank you for your co-operation.

My contact details

Maeve Dupont
Education Department
St Patrick's College
Drumcondra
Dublin 9
Tel: 01 884 2089
Email: maeve.dupont@spd.dcu.ie

Supervisor contact details

Dr Simon Griffey
Research Director DEdPsy Professional Programme
School of Psychology
Cardiff University
Tower Building Park Place
Cardiff
CF103AT
Tel: 0044 2920 875393
Email: Griffeysj@cardiff.ac.uk

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Psychology Ethics Committee
Cardiff University
Tower Building Park Place
Cardiff
CF103AT
Tel: 0044 2920 87400
Email:psychethics@cf.ac.uk

……
……….

I give permission for my child to participate in Maeve Dupont's intervention project (reading programme and questions before and after).

Name of pupil………………………………………………………………………...

Signature of parent / guardian……………………………………………………..

Appendix M: Information sheet about Travellers

Explanation of Traveller Irish (taken from Pavee point school resource 'Who are the Travellers?')

Irish Travellers are Irish people whose families have been living in Ireland for hundreds and hundreds of years. While there are about 4 million people living in Ireland today about 36,000 of those people are Travellers.

In the past most Travellers used to move around the country in their caravans. Now for a lot of reasons they usually stay in one place but a lot of Travellers would like to move around the country more.

Most travellers are very religious and they try to visit holy places like Knock and Lourdes at some point during their life.

Family is very important to Travellers. They are very close to their aunts and uncles and cousins compared to settled Irish children. Because family is so important, events such as christenings, weddings and funerals tend to be big affairs.

They have a language called cant or gammon that some Travellers use to speak with each other.

Appendix N: Interview questions for sources of information and knowledge about Travellers

Source of information about Travellers

Participant Number_____

Have you ever met an Irish Traveller?   *Yes*   *No*

                                              Neighbourhood

                                              Sporting/Hobby event

                                              Mass

                                              Other _____

Have you ever heard of Irish Travellers?   *Yes*   *No*

Source of information   Parent

                                              Teacher

                                              Television/films

                                              News

                                              Books

What do you know about Travellers?

                                              Move around in caravans

                                              Weddings

Appendix O: Debrief letter for parents of children who took part in the study

May 2013

Dear Parents / Guardians,

Thank you for allowing your child to take part in my evaluation of the multicultural storytelling sessions introduced in your child's school. The activity involved reading and discussing stories featuring children from different ethnic backgrounds. The goal of the intervention is to help schools foster respect for diversity in children, promote community cohesion and good relations between ethnic groups.

I wanted to find out whether or not vicarious experience of friendship between different ethnic groups (via a reading intervention) has an influence on attitudes and feelings towards marginalised groups (specifically the Traveller Irish Community). In order to do this, I interviewed children before and after they participated in reading stories so as to gauge their attitudes towards diversity and friendship. Some children read stories about settled children and Traveller Irish children having adventures together. Other children read about settled children having adventures together. By comparing children's attitudes before and after stories, and by comparing attitudes between the reading groups, I will be able to see whether the type of story exerted some influence on children's thoughts and feelings about Traveller Irish children. Similar interventions have been used successfully in schools in England in relation to attitudes towards refugees and children with disabilities. It is expected that the intervention will be successful in Ireland also.

It is hoped that the findings of this project will help schools develop better multicultural lessons in the future.

Thank you again for allowing your child to take part. Remember, all children's answers are confidential.

If you have any queries about this research or would like to ask any further questions, please contact the researcher using the contact details below.

If you would like to withdraw your child's data up to a year from the date of this letter please contact me on 01 884 2089. You do not have to give a reason for your withdrawal.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your valuable contribution to this research. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Maeve Dupont

Postgraduate student Cardiff University

My contact details

Maeve Dupont
Education Department
St Patrick's College
Drumcondra
Dublin 9
Tel: 01 884 2089
Email: maeve.dupont@spd.dcu.ie

Supervisor contact details

Dr Simon Griffey
Research Director DEdPsy Professional
Programme
School of Psychology
Cardiff University
Tower Building Park Place
Cardiff
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Tel: 0044 2920 875393
Email: Griffeysj@cardiff.ac.uk

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Psychology Ethics Committee Secretary
Cardiff University
Tower Building Park Place
Cardiff
CF103AT
Tel: 0044 2920 87400
Email:psychethics@cf.ac.uk

Appendix P: Reported sources of information about the Traveller Irish community

	Comments
1	Not specified
2	Not specified
3	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) My dad (said they stay on caravan sites)
4	Observation- has seen caravans at the edge of the M50
5	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) Personal experience- Neighbourhood- they come to our estate
6	My dad
7	Parent Saw a movie- can't remember name (prompted Pavee Lackeen and agreed that might be the name) Personal experience- Also met a settled Traveller in my dance class
8	Mother- my mum used to work with Travellers I see them on holidays in Kerry Observation –going past a church I saw they couldn't fit through the door-a big wedding)
9	My friend's mum works in a Traveller school
10	Observation- we drove past a halting site and saw millions of caravans
11	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
12	My aunt- she works with Travellers Personal experience- Aunt brings Travellers over twice a week. They love our dogs
13	Books- I read about gypsies in TinTin
14	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
15	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
16	Personal experience- There was a Traveller in my old school. Interviewer: "were you friends? Child: "Not really"
17	Parent- beside the airport there are lots of caravans. They normally live beside a circus
18	Not specified
19	Personal experience in neighbourhood-They lived on my road. I was friends with them. They moved on
20	A girl in my class and her mam used to be an Irish Traveller (appears to misunderstand term)
21	Observation- I have seen caravan sites
22	Mother- my mam works with them teaching home economics Personal experience- I went to their wedding. There was a huge horse and carriage. It was really different
23	Parent- they didn't say bad things Book- the blue horse
24	Television- documentaries Personal experience- Over in the park one time I played football with Travellers
25	General- I've heard people talking about them saying they are dangerous and fighting- not very nice

26	Observation- has seen caravans
27	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) Books (Enid Blyton- stealing farmers property)
28	Cousin- heard that gypsies wear belly tops
29	Sister- read story about travellers in Starry Links
30	Television (Ad for show)
31	Observation- I have seen caravans on roads
32	Television
33	Television (Advertisement)
34	Not specified
35	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
36	Television Observation- in Ballymun they have gold teeth and watches and cool clothes.
37	Parent Television Observation- some don't go to school, when twelve mind the kids. Live in Limerick.
38	Television Observation- they leave school early.
39	Book (The Golden Compass) Cousin- goes to school near a camp of travellers, some are tough.
40	Not specified
41	Not specified
42	Television
43	Television Observation- weddings are not very nice
44	Personal experience in Neighbourhood- I lived near a site, they were friendly but I moved
45	Not specified
46	Parent
47	Not specified
48	Parent
49	Personal experience- taxi driver told them a story about travellers not paying
50	Not specified
51	Aunt- on holiday (appears to misunderstand term)
52	Not specified
53	Not specified

54	Not specified
55	Not specified
56	Not specified
57	Not specified
58	Not specified
59	Television
60	Not specified
61	Parent Observation- John Joe Nevins in the Olympics
62	Parent Television Observation- poor
63	Parent Personal experience- I heard about them in Limerick and have seen caravans
64	Not specified
65	Not specified
66	Observation- I've seen caravans beside houses and roads
67	Television (Voice of Ireland)
68	Books (appears to misunderstand term)
69	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
70	Not specified
71	Mam- They only take what they need if you leave something out. They go off in caravans for summer.
72	Not specified
73	Observation- people hide when they walk down the road, they hit you, I've always hid. (never met a traveller)
74	Not specified
75	Not specified
76	Not specified
77	Not specified
78	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
79	Neighbourhood- beside grandmothers house

80	(Confuses with explorer)
81	Uncle- Said that they don't have normal houses and are messy.
82	Neighbourhood- they used to live up the road
83	Not specified
84	Not specified
85	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) Dad- knows travellers from work doing deliveries Personal experience- I got a German Shepherd dog off them for free, they're really nice people. Seen halting site near the M50 Observation- they finish school at 11, some get home schooled.
86	Not specified
87	Not specified
88	Not specified
89	Participant data removed due to absence of written parental consent
90	Neighbourhood- they steal and speak common
91	Not specified
92	Observation- I have seen caravans at Dollymount but haven't seen people
93	Aunt- school for traveller kids. They are not treated and respected as they deserve to be.
94	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) Cousins Observations- they can get married to someone they just met, little kids drink alcohol aged 12. Boxing
95	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding, Voice of Ireland) Observations- They're not as rich, look a bit different, certain accents, their clothing is not very sensible.
96	Not specified
97	Neighbourhood-looking for things...can't read
98	Not specified
99	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) Observations- people didn't let them into a venue. They wear belly tops, sometimes wear belly tops and are forced to move.
100	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding) Observation- they likt to show off.
101	Television (the hunchback, she covers her face and takes things)
102	Parent

103	Not specified
104	Not specified
105	Television (My big fat gypsy wedding)
106	Television Observation- some might of come from different countries
107	Book
108	Television (Ads on BBC)
109	Cousin- there are travellers my cousin lives in Balbriggan
110	Television (Fashion design show where travellers had to design clothes) Observation-They're judged like "they're all lazy" and they didn't even talk to them
111	Personal experience- I have seen them when I go on holidays to a campsite.
112	Television (documentary, My big fat gypsy wedding)
113	Neighbourhood- Nobody is nice to him, he comes around to play at my house.
114	Not specified
115	Television (Voice of Ireland)
116	Film
117	Not specified
118	Parent
119	Television

Appendix Q: What children know or have heard said about Travellers

They move around in caravans

1

2 Don't know

3 They live in caravan sites. Dad says that's where they are staying

4 They move around in caravans. I've seen caravans at the edge of the M50

5 Gypsy weddings. They come to our estate

6 Don't know- doesn't elaborate

7 They move around in caravans

8 Lots of Travellers are settled. Many stay in the one place

They are a bit different to people.

They stay in their group

Going past the church I saw a big wedding. They couldn't fit through the door

I see them on holidays in Kerry

9 My friend's mum works with Travellers in a school. She has funny stories

A boy's phone went off in school

10 I drove past a caravan site. There are millions of caravans

11 Doesn't elaborate

12 Auntie works with Travellers. She brings different Travellers over twice a week. They love our dogs. They liked our house cause it is so big. Most Travellers need to be moved into houses. Not sure why cause they don't like them going around.

They take dresses very seriously for communions and weddings

13 They move around in caravans

14 I saw a halting site.

Most of them are all about their looks.

They are very strange and giddy.

They overreact to the size of the dress

15   ==They wear big dresses==

16   They travel around in caravans

17   ==They travel around in caravans==

==Beside the airport there are lots of caravans==

==They normally live beside a circus==

18   They move around in caravans

Settled people stopped them travelling around

They have another language

19   They lived on my road

I was friends with them. They moved on

They move around in caravans

Sometimes they speak their own language

Big boys were slagging off a Traveller girl

20   ==A girl in my class, her mum used to be an Irish Traveller==

21   ==I have seen caravan sites==

22   ==Mam works with them. She teaches home economics in a special school.==

==We went to a wedding. There was a huge horse and carriage. It was really different==

==There were rows of people sitting in rages and people sitting in front in luminous belly tops==

23   Heard about them from my parents- not bad things

People imitate them and mock them

They have accents and they're dangerous people

24   In the park one time, I played football with Travellers

They are home schooled

I went to school near them

They moved on

25 I've heard people talk about them

They are dangerous fighting, not very nice

26 They move around in caravans

Heard of gypsies

Lots of people say bad things

27 Gypsies leave school at 11-learned from tv(my big fat gypsy wedding)

Enid Blyton-gypsies stealing farmers property

28 Travel around the world

Heard about gypsies wearing belly tops

29 Sisters class read a story about travellers (Starry Links)

30 Saw an ad for a tv show

31 Saw caravans on roads

32 Weddings

33 T.V ads

34 Don't know

35 Move around in caravans

My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding

36 In Ballymun they have gold in their teeth and have gold watches and cool clothes.

37 Live in Limerick

Leave school at twelve to mind the kids

38 Move around in caravans

Leave school early

39 Cousins school near camp of travellers

Some are tough

40	Don't know
41	Don't know
42	Move around in caravans
	My big fat gypsy wedding
43	Weddings are not very nice (My big fat gypsy wedding)
44	Lived near site- they were friendly but she moved
45	Move around in caravans
46	Move around in caravans
47	Doesn't elaborate
48	Doesn't elaborate
49	Move around in caravans
	Taxi driver told them a story about travellers not paying
50	Doesn't elaborate
51	Don't know
52	Can't read
53	Don't know
54	Don't know
55	Don't know
56	Don't know
57	Don't know
58	Don't know
59	Move around in caravans
60	Don't know
61	Move around in caravans
	Olympics John Joe Nevin
62	They're poor
63	Move around in caravans

Heard about in Limerick and has seen caravans

64   Don't know

65   Don't know

66   Seen caravans beside houses and roads

67   Voice of Ireland contestant

68   Don't know

69   Move around in caravans

70   Don't know

71   Only take what they need

      If you leave something out they take it

      Goes off in caravan for the summer

72   Don't know

73   People hide when they come down the road, they hit you, I've always hid(never met a traveller)

74   Don't know

75   Don't know

76   Don't know

77   Don't know

78   They chase you around

79   Can't read

80   Don't know

81   lazy

      Uncle says that they don't have normal houses

      Messy

82   Used to live up the road

83   Don't know

84   Don't know

85   Clarehall near Darndale

His dad's job-deliveries

They finish school at 11, get home schooled

Got german shepherd dog off them for free- "They're really nice people"

M50 halting site- Statue of Mary there

My Big fat gypsy wedding

86   Don't know

87   Don't know

88   Don't know

89   Participant data not included due to absence of parental consent

90   Steal bins

Speak common

91   Don't know

92   Move around in caravans

Saw caravans in Dollymount but hasn't seen people

93   Move around in caravans

Not treated with respect they deserve

94   Move around in caravans

Weddings

Can get married to someone they just met

Boxing knuckles

Dull accents

Little kids drink alcohol age 12

95   Move around in caravans

Look a bit different

Certain accent

Their clothing is not very sensible

96	Caravans
97	Can't read

98	More around in caravans
99	My Big fat gypsy wedding-wear belly tops

Sometimes called gypsies

People didn't let them into venue

Get forced to move

Move around in caravans

100	Like to show off (my big fat gypsy wedding)
101	Gypsies
102	Move around in caravans

Seen caravans and people

103	Don't know
104	Don't know
105	Move around in caravans
106	Move around in caravans

Some might have come from different countries

107	Think read about travellers in school
108	Ads on BBC
109	Where cousin lives in Balbriggan there's a few travellers
110	TV show- fashion show where she thought travellers were being judged but not in the

right way. Travellers had to design clothes to gain skills

They're judged like "they're all lazy" and they didn't even talk to them

111   Move around in caravans

        See them when they're on holidays went to a campsite

112   Move around in caravans

113   Knows a traveller from her neighbourhood- nobody is nice to him, he comes around to her house to play

114   Don't know

115   Just knows that they're around

        One of the contestants in the Voice of Ireland

116   Gypsies

117   Don't know

118   Definitely didn't like them-changed mind when saw the pic of travellers and said "they're nice"

        Don't really know about them

119   Doesn't elaborate

Highlighted comments are from experimental group participants