Beyond Borders: Exploring the Life Significance of Outdoor Adventure Education Study Abroad Programmes in Wales

Masters Dissertation

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CONTENTS

Abstract:		Pg. 1
Acknowledgements:		Pg. 2
Glossary of Terms:		Pg. 3
List of Figures:		Pg. 4
Chapter 1:	Introduction	Pg. 5
Chapter 2:	Review of Literature	Pg. 11
Chapter 3:	Methodology	Pg. 28
Chapter 4:	Findings and Discussion	Pg. 37
Chapter 5:	Conclusion	Pg. 57
Bibliography:		Pg. 61
Appendix 1-13:		Pg. 76 - 136

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1. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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3. This dissertation is the result of my own independent work / investigation, except where otherwise stated.

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ABSTRACT

Research into the life significance of OAE programmes in relatively limited. Numerous calls have been made to explore beyond the confines of course outcomes, asking instead for inquiry into the processes in place within programmes that promote life enhancing learning. This study set out to explore the life significance attributed to participation in a OAE study abroad programme that immerse participants in the culture of Wales, by utilising a variety of adventurous activities, whilst incorporate educational inputs and outputs surrounding experiential learning. Utilising a two phase qualitative methodology of open ended surveys and semi structured interviews. The rich narrative data gathered was transparently analysed using reflexive thematic analysis, to generate themes of meaning that were interwoven into the data. The findings derived from these themes indicate that participation in a university study abroad programme, has contributed to participants developing self awareness and has positively changed the personal outlooks and attitudes of respondents. The exploration into the programmatic attributes of the study abroad programme suggested that participating in challenging adventurous activities, in socially dynamic groups coupled with evolving reflective practices, enhanced the significance of the experience. Enabling participants of the programme to go beyond the borders of their preconceived ideas of their personal limits and carry these realisations into the next phases of their lives. It is hoped that the findings of this study will simultaneously contribute to the praxis of OAE practitioners and to the emerging research field exploring the significant life experiences of OAE programmes.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERMINOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS: THE MAP LEGEND

In order to ensure clarity for the reader, for the purpose of this study the following meanings have been given to the following terms and abbreviations.

UWSTD - University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

HWS – Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

HWS-SWP - The Hobart William Smith Summer Wales Programme, the programme in question delivered in collaboration between HWS and UWTSD.

Participant - A former participant of the HWS-SWP.

Alumni - HWS students and staff may refer to participants as Alumni or Alums.

Respondent - A participant who has provided responses to the survey and/or interviews. (Pseudonym - prefixed with 'R' followed by a number - example R20)

Facilitator/s - Member/s of UWTSD or HWS staff who organise the programmes, lead adventurous activities and facilitate the learning.
(Pseudonym - prefixed with 'S' followed by a number - example S10).

Buddy - UWTSD student ambassadors who accompany HWS students during their programme.
(Pseudonym - prefixed with 'B' followed by a number - example B4).

OAE - Outdoor Adventure Education - the definition for this study is included in introduction chapter (1.2).

SLE - Significant Life Experience

A STATEMENT REGARDING GENDER APPROPRIATION

Whilst studying this master's programme, the researcher's personal experiences and time spent with fellow students has been enlightening. Particularly regarding the appropriation of gender pro nouns. To that effect a conscious decision has been made to not make any assumptions as to the gender of any academic author cited within this dissertation. Therefore nonbinary pro nouns of they/them have been used, every effort in writing has been made to ensure this does not influence the clarity of the text. Whereas respondents to surveys and interviews have been able to select their gender appropriation, so the researcher has referred to them accordingly in the text.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Walsh and Golins (1974) Outward bound Process Model	Pg. 19
Figure 2	Youth Adventure Programming Model	Pg. 20
Figure 3	Mechanism of change model	Pg. 21
Figure 4	Excerpt from HWS global education website	Pg. 30
Figure 5	Data gathering information	Pg. 31
Figure 6	Interview participation timeline	Pg. 32
Figure 7	Sample thematic map	Pg. 35
Figure 8	Ethics risk assessment	Pg. 36
Figure 9	R14, Pt 2017, Q15 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 39
Figure 10	R5, Pt 2017, 00:08:21 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 39
Figure 11	R5, Pt 2017, 00:00:59 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 39
Figure 12	R7, Pt 2013, Q11 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 40
Figure13	R10, Pt 2019, Q12 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 40
Figure 14	R17, Pt 2011, Q13 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 41
Figure 15	R11, Pt 2013, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 41
Figure 16	R6, Pt 2013, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 41
Figure 17	R15, Pt 2018, Q12 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 42
Figure 18	R15, Pt 2018, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 42
Figure 19	R16, Pt 2019, Q15 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 42
Figure 20	R1, Pt 2017, Q12 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 43
Figure 21	R10, Pt 2019, Q12 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 43
Figure 22	S1, 2023, 00:08:59 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 43
Figure 23	R14, Pt 2018, Q12 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 43
Figure 24	R11, Pt 2013, Q13 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 45
Figure 25	R10, Pt 2019, Q13 and R13, Pt 2019, Q13 - Survey excerpts	Pg. 45
Figure 26	R2, Pt 2014, 00:02:55 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 45
Figure 27	R18, Pt 2012, Q12 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 46
Figure 28	R15, Pt 2018, Q13 - Survey excerpt and 00:19:56 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 46
Figure 29	R5, Pt 2017, 00:12:33 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 47
Figure 30	S1, 2023, 00:12:13 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 47
Figure 31	R9, Pt 2017, Q11 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 47
Figure 32	R4, Pt 2011, 00:08:52 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 49
Figure 33	R5, Pt 2017, 00:12:33 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 49
Figure 34	R2, Pt 2014, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 50
Figure 35	R3, Pt 2022, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 50
Figure 36	R6, Pt 2013, Q13 and R9, Pt 2017, Q13 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 50
Figure 37	R4, Pt 2011, 00:14:33 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 51
Figure 38	R15, Pt 2018, Q16 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 52
Figure 39	R1, Pt 2017, Q 16 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 52
Figure 40	R4, Pt 2011, 00:16:14 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 53
Figure 41	S1, 2013, 00:15:24 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 53
Figure 42	R4, Pt 2011, 00:17:12 - Interview excerpt and R10, Pt 2019, Q17 - Survey	Pg. 53
Figure 43	R19, Pt 2017, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 54
Figure 44	R4, Pt 2011, Q14 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 55
Figure 45	R5, Pt 2017, 00:03:39 - Interview excerpt	Pg. 55
Figure 46	R7, Pt 2013, Q9 - Survey excerpt	Pg. 55

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

In the field of outdoor adventure education (OAE) programming research, the pursuit of academic knowledge often reflects the intent of its practitioners, fuelled by a desire to explore the unknown, challenge established norms and uncover new insights that contribute to the advancement of theory and consequently practice. At the heart of this endeavour lies the recognition of gaps in current understanding and the quest to address them through rigorous investigation. This introductory chapter marks the starting point of a journey of exploration into the complex terrain of the life significance of OAE programming. This chapter will outline the rationale for the study, before developing an understanding of the HWS-SWP, after which the research aims, objectives and subsequent questions will be clearly expressed, briefly the methodological standpoint of the study will be outlined before finally the layout and purpose of the remaining chapters will be introduced.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY: CHARTING THE PATH OF INQUIRY

For decades scholars have defined and debated the terminology surrounding the concept of programmed outdoor adventurous education for the purpose of personal growth and development (Miles and Priest, 1999; Priest and Gass, 2005). The discourse is abounded with terminology endeavouring to isolate and define the multifaceted outdoor education sector. Terminology such as, Adventure Therapy (AT) (Neil, 2003; Norris, 2011; Norton *et al*., 2014; Newman *et al*., 2023) Outdoor Environmental Education (OEE) (Robottom, 2014; Prince, 2017; Cincera, 2021; Johnson and Cincera, 2023), Outdoor Education (OE) (Higgins, 2002; Bucknell and Mannion, 2006; Potter and Dyment, 2016; Jirasek, 2021), Outdoor learning (OL) (Gray and Mitten, 2018; Marchant *et al*., 2019; Priest and Asfeldt, 2022), Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE) (Hattie *et al*., 1997; Brown, 2010; Potter, Socha and O'Connell, 2012; Meerts-Brandsma, Sibthorp and Rochelle, 2020, Down *et al*., 2024), Experiential Outdoor Education (EOE) (Hovelynck, 2001; Ord and Leather, 2011). Given the defined path laid by this study, the purposeful choice has been made to use the term Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE) as an all-encompassing term that encapsulates the many terms pervasive with in the literature. The researcher acknowledges that socio-cultural, philosophical and practical variations in these terms exist, however, it is beyond the scope of this study to delve into the nuanced differences between them. For the purpose of this study OAE has been conceptualised by synthesising the consensus of authors in the field (Hattie, 1997; Priest and Gass, 2005; Prouty, 2007; Ewart and Sibthorp, 2014; Cooley, Burns and Cumming, 2015; Brown and Beames, 2017; Katulis and Rasa Pilkauskaitė Valickienė, 2022; Reed and Smith, 2023). The product of this synthesis sees OAE taking the following form:

Structured attainable adventurous activities, which may contain an element of risk, facilitated to achieve educational outcomes, predominantly conducted in natural unpredictable environments, where interpersonal interactions occur in relatively small groups.

Throughout the evolution of OAE from its Hahnian origins (Veevers and Allison, 2011) to its contemporary practices (Beames, Humberstone and Allin, 2017) it has faced many critiques. Brookes (2003a, 2003b) challenges the neo-Hahnian ideals imbedded in OAE practices. Notably Loynes (1998), heavily criticises the commodification of predetermined adventure education practices. Whereas critically Brown and Beames (2017), acknowledge the contemporary socio-cultural challenges facing OAE, calling for an evolution that departs from the dominant pedagogy of personal development through adversity. Warning against the further marginalisation of OAE in educational debate, Brown and Beames (2017), propose instead that OAE must adapt to equip participants with the skills to thrive in an unpredictable society where critical issues such as fiscal constraints, advancements in technology, an imminent climate crisis and ever-changing policy are prevalent.

In light of these sizeable challenges facing contemporary OAE is imperative that a lingering question surrounding OAE is answered through purposeful research (Ewart, 1989; Priest, 1999, Daniel, 2003; Takano, 2010). What are the lasting life lessons attributed to OAE participation, why do they occur and how are they transferred to participants life contexts. Spearheaded by Daniel (2003) momentum in the field of research exploring the longer term influences of OAE is gathering pace, (Gassner, Kahlid and Russell, 2008; Takano, 2010; Ramirez, 2020; Allison *et al*., 2021; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021; Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, 2022) with the application of a modified Significant Life Experience (SLE) Theory lens being focused upon this critical topic. The literature review chapter will delve deeper into this modification and the associated life enhancing influences attributed to transformational significant life experiences.

1.3 THE STUDY GROUP

The inspiring Welsh proverb, “Adfyd a ddwg wybodaeth, a gwybodaeth ddoethineb” translated into English means “Adversity brings knowledge and knowledge wisdom” is a very fitting way to introduce the study group and the programme in question. The keen focus applied by this study is upon an outdoor adventure education (OAE) study abroad programme provided in collaboration between HWS and UWTSD, that has provided experiences that have immersed participants in the landscape and culture of Wales for over a decade.

1.3.1 THE HOBART WILLIAM SMITH SUMMER WALES PROGRAMME (HWS-SWP)

The dual-purpose intent of this section is to introduce the HWS-SWP whilst also outlining why the decision was made to select this OAE programme as a focus for this study. Principally this decision was due to a number of fundamental elements of this programme that simultaneously aligned and differentiated it from OAE programmes that have previously been studied.

1.3.2 PROGRAMME CONSISTENCY

Of fundamental importance the lead facilitators organising, designing and delivering the programme, have remained relatively consistent. S1, the principal member of HWS staff who has organised the programme from its original conception, comments upon the programmes consistency during interview.

> *"So to answer your question, yes, it's been it's been fairly consistent with a couple tweaks here and there. So you know the big ones, you know North Wales has always been there, Coasteering like a kind of a couple water days they've always been in the programme. Pen Y Fan has always been in the programme right, so different areas, I would say different areas of Wales have always been, you know, Brecon Beacons have been there, West Wales has been there, Preseli's have been there".* (S1, 2023, 00:03:40).

1.3.3 UNDERREPRESENTED STYLE OF PROGRAMME IN THE LITERATURE

S1's description of the programme highlights another distinctive aspect. The HWS-SWP is an OAE study abroad programme that immerses participants in a broad spectrum of Welsh culture, locations and landscapes, harnessing multi-discipline adventurous activities as the vehicle to do so. The mode of programme delivery is centred around challenge by choice (Rohnke *et al*., 2003) and Experiential learning (Dewey, 1938; Kolb 1984). As a university study abroad programme it integrates educational elements aimed primarily at fostering a practical comprehension of experiential learning, complemented by academic input from staff and facilitator and assessment outputs generated by students. With the exception of Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021) who cast an SLE lens upon OAE programmes, the SLE literature (Gassner, Kahlid and Russell, 2008; Takano, 2010; Ramirez, 2020; Allison *et al*., 2021; Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, 2022) has predominantly focused on Outward Bound type wilderness programmes that involve a singular mode of adventurous journey in one type of environment.

1.3.4 AVAILABILITY OF PARTICIPANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Uniquely the alumni of the programme are emailed every year by the HWS lead facilitator, sharing the experiences of the current cohort. This mailing list of Alumni was kindly made available to the researcher.

1.3.5 A CONSISTENT SPREAD OF PARTICIPATION

Since 2011 there have been approximately twelve participants per year, apart from 2015 where the programme did not run due to organisational constraints and 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

1.3.6 CONSISTENCY IN PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC

The participants of the programme across the years have been undergraduates between the ages 18 – 22 years. They are typically members of university sports teams with varying degrees of pre programme engagement with adventurous activities.

1.3.7 HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES

The Hobart and William Smith Colleges is an American liberal arts college based in New York State. Their mission statement succinctly expresses the intent of the institution's educational focus. "Hobart and William Colleges prepare students to lead lives of consequence" (Hobart and William Smith College, 2024). A snapshot of the current student population (Hobart and William Smith College, 2024) shows that in 2022 - 23 HWS colleges had 1660 undergraduate students enrolled, according to the Carnegie Classification (American Council on Education, 2024), a university of this size would be considered small. Approximately 70% of students at HWS opt to study abroad during some portion of their studies. HWS is a private institution and is important to note that the HWS-SWP is a three week long optional programme of study that students apply for and fund independently.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM: THE DESTINATION

The overarching aim of this study is to explore the life significances that have been attributed to participation in the HWS-SWP between the years 2011 and 2022. To achieve this aim a set of specific objectives have been formulated.

1. Identify the components of the HWS-SWP and how they may have differed across the years from one programme to the next.
2. Identify what life significance has been attributed to the participation in HWS-SWP, and how these manifest in various aspects of respondents lives.
3. Identify and evaluate the programmatic attributes of the HWS-SWP that may have contributed to life significant learning occurring.

These objectives serve as guiding beacons directing the inquiry and shaping the trajectory the research endeavour towards its final destination.

1.4.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the growing interest in the longer-term influences of adventure programmes being explored with a modified SLE lens. Combined with the need to further understand the components of an adventure programme that may lead to it being significant in a persons life, this study aims to address the following principle research questions.

Question 1 - What life significant influences do alumni attribute to their participation in the HWS-SWP outdoor adventure education study abroad programme?

Question 2 - What were the programmatic attributes of the HWS-SWP outdoor adventure education programme that contributed to the programme becoming a significant life experience?

1.5 METHODOLOGY: TRAVERSING THE METHODOLOGICAL TERRAIN.

In order to answer the questions posed by this study, it required the researcher to engage with the complexity of lived experiences blended with perception and interpret the subsequent meaning; therefore, the methodological approach is deliberately aligned with the qualitative research paradigm. The distinctly qualitative research instruments of retrospective open-ended surveys and interviews were employed to engage with alumni of the HWS-SWP in order to gather rich data in the form of respondent narratives. An understanding of the key methodological landmarks of the ontological and epistemological stances taken are vital when looking to navigate the vast and varied methodological terrain of OAE research. The conceptual framework of this study is non-positivist, with a constructivist epistemological stance taken by the researcher, underpinned by an acknowledgement that respondents will have attributed meaning to their programme experiences based upon their life experiences before, during and after their participation in the programme. In unison this constructivist vision of the researcher acts as the compass informing the thoughtful decisions made at each stage of the research process, from data collection through to data analysis and interpretation. The ensuing reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2023) of the data has led to themes being generated in relation to the research questions guiding this study.

1.5.1 ONTOLOGICAL STANCE: TRIANGULATING THE RESEARCHERS POSITION

The ontological position of the researcher can have profound influences upon the research process (Humberstone and Prince, 2020) shaping the understanding of the relationship between the researcher and the researched. At the core of this study is the researcher's commitment to reflexivity, by recognising his own subjectivity and the ways in which personal experiences, beliefs and potential biases may shape the research process. The researcher's transparent intentions acknowledge that he is situated with a unique perspective. This can be seen by triangulating the life experiences of the researcher. In experiencing an active outdoor up bringing with supportive outdoor orientated role models, the researcher naturally flowed towards a lengthy career in the outdoor sector. Spending the

last 25 years designing and delivering adventurous programmes as a profession. In addition to this he holds a privileged vantage point of the programme in question, having been involved in assisting with the delivery of the programme since 2019. Undoubtably these life experiences have shaped his perspective and in turn his motivation to explore this topic. Chiefly his motivation is founded upon a desire to venture beyond the confines of his own anecdotal observations of the immediate impact of adventure experiences and seek a deeper understanding of the longer-term influences and meaning derived by participants. Consequently, when embarking on this academic journey the researcher has strived to remain mindful of the influences of his own lived experiences upon his perspective, throughout all the phases of the research process.

1.6 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS: MAPPING THE TERRAIN

As this intellectual journey begins it is essential to assist the reader by plotting a bearing through the chapters that lie ahead. The extensive discourse surrounding OAE programming, and an emerging research trend of significant life experience theory will be explored throughout the literature review chapter. Where the consideration of OAE programming's historical roots acts as the catalyst for the exploration of the evolution of scholarly thought and inquiry that has led to contemporary developments. Furthermore, seminal works and authors are identified, highlighting the enduring questions that continue to shape the scholarly discourse. By diligently reading the contours of the academic terrain a plateau will be identified where possibilities for exploration await. It is within this gap that this study finds its purpose and potential to expand the existing literature base. As the researcher navigates the methodological terrain, a transparent description of the research process is provided in the Methodology chapter, highlighting the underpinning decisions made at each stage of the research process. In the findings and discussion chapter, the findings are presented alongside enriching respondent quotes, in conjunction with a thoughtful discussion positioning the findings within the context of the existing academic terrain. In the final chapter conclusions will be presented that have been drawn from the findings of this study. Along with highlighting the limitations of this study, together with proposed sectoral implications for future praxis and research.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0: CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

The retrospective accounts of the lived experiences of OAE programme participants, and their perceptions of how these experiences have instigated a lasting influence upon their lives, sit at the heart of this study. Arguably the programme in question has been influenced by the extensive history of adventure programming and its principal protagonists. Therefore, this chapter explores the tangible heritage embedded within the dominant norms of OAE programme design, along with the identification of key themes and patterns in the existing literature that showcase the potential influence OAE programmes can have upon personal growth and development. After which this review will seek to understand the processes involved in promoting such positive outcomes and suggest a theoretical framework to explore the longer term influences of OAE programming.

2.1: OAE PROGRAMMING HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT IN THE UK AND USA

There are a myriad of formats OAE programming has taken in the UK, along with a veritable smorgasbord of studies exploring programme outcomes along with the processes involved in producing these outcomes. An illustrative list of UK based OAE programmes has been compiled to include, Outward Bound (Mateer *et al*., 2023), British Schools Exploring Society (Ramirez, 2020), Raleigh International (Beames, 2004), the Guides and Scouts movements (Talbot, 2015), Corporate development programmes (Loynes, 1999), Urban youth at risk programmes (Gillespie and Allen-Craig 2009; Cohen *et al*., 2022), Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) (Cole et al., 2020), Local Education Authority residentials (LEA) (Nicol, 2001; Taylor *et al*., 2015), commodified adventure experiences (Loynes, 1998) and outdoor learning such as forest schools (Knight, 2016). Whilst overseas in the USA, barring some cultural differences, many of these organisations operate somewhat in parallel. Hattie et al in 1997, identified a rapid growth in adventure programming with over 200 Outward Bound schools in the USA in just over 30 years since its conception. In addition the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) (Sibthorp *et al*., 2011) has ensured wilderness expedition programmes have remained prolific, universities such as HWS advocate for Pre Orientation Adventure Programmes (POAP) (Kercheval *et al.*, 2022), and Project Adventure (Prouty, 2007; Helker and Rurup, 2022) remain enthused about the power of challenging adventure programmes providing positive outcomes for participants.

The influence of Outward Bound and its founding father Kurt Hahn (Veevers and Allison, 2011) upon the practices and philosophies of contemporary OAE programming in the UK is somewhat unquestionable. Hahn's legacy lies in a dedication to educational reform that extends beyond

academic achievement, applying increased value upon character development, immersive outdoor experiences and the subsequent cultivation of person qualities such as leadership, resilience and service to others (Veevers and Allison, 2011). It has been suggested that this vision has continued to shape OAE practices and programmes around the world (Rohrs, 1966; Hopkins and Putnam 1993; Loynes 1999; Barnes and Sharp, 2004; Freeman 2011; Veevers and Allison, 2011; Vernon, 2020). The 1941 installation of Hahn's first outward bound school at Aberdovey in Wales provides a somewhat fortuitous link to the HWS-SWP as it to is imbedded in Wales. However, connections aside, it is vital to note that aspects of Hahn's educational philosophies have been heavily criticised. Principally by Brooks (2003a; 2003b; 2020), where in a systematic appraisal of psychological terminology and social psychology it is argued that the idea that OAE experiences hold the capacity to build the personality trait of character is a "flawed concept" (Brookes, 2003b, p.119). Although, Dyment and Potter (2015) suggest that the character training concept has become less pervasive within OE practice. Whereas Freeman (2011), discusses that during the earlier stages of Outward Bound and in the wider OAE sector the concept of character training was repeatedly challenged, consequently becoming less popularised in favour of terms such as personal growth and self-discovery. However, Freeman (2011) also notes a recent resurgence of references to character education, within social and political discourse. Freeman along with Brookes (2020) urge for the OE sector to remain cautious of "a paradigm shift that never was" (Brookes, 2020, p. 153), calling for OE to pursue scientific rigor over un-challenged loyalty to a movement. In addition, Vernon (2020), challenges the idealised view the OE sector holds for Hahn. "Treatments of Hahn are often hagiographic, providing over-idealized accounts of an almost saint-like visionary" (Vernon, 2020, p. 102). Whilst acknowledging aspects of Hahns positive influences upon OE pedagogy, Vernon also unearths perturbing undertones of homophobic pedagogy imbedded within Hahn's philosophy. "Hahn specifically feared a latent homosexuality existed in all young boys, and adventure was a therapeutic intervention meant to repress, or even erase, this latent homosexuality" (Vernon, 2020, p. 111). Calling upon contemporary practitioners to audit current practices and ensure Hahn's "repressive pedagogy" (Vernon, 2020, p. 112) no longer resides within OE.

The problematised historical evolution of OAE continues to permeate contemporary OAE, with notable academics highlighting further challenges facing the OAE sector. One such notable critic being Loynes (1998), in the inflammatory identification of the "McDonaldisation" (p. 35) of adventure education, likening commodified modern experiential adventure to that of the continually replicated McDonalds burger. Further to this Loynes (2002) discusses "The Generative Paradigm" challenging the algorithmic approach of OAE and the programming of predetermined outcomes. Curiosity led Beames and Brown (2014) to explore the concept of Disneyfication of OAE, where social pressures of branding, franchise and the "indoorisation" (van Bottenburg and Salome, 2010, p.

143) of adventure experiences has drawn OAE away from its experiential roots and leaned it towards the production of reliable predetermined outcomes.

Whilst maintaining focus upon the context of this current study, in light of it being an University OAE study abroad programme, it is prudent to highlight that OAE has faced considerable challenges when looking to gain recognition as a standalone discipline within education, particularly as it struggles to justify its seemingly unquantifiable developmental outcomes (Nicol, 2002a, 2002b, 2003; Bucknell and Mannion, 2006; Brown, 2006; Potter, Socha and O'Connell, 2012; Dyment and Potter, 2015, 2016; Williams and Wainwright, 2016, 2020). Hattie *et al*., (1997), shed light upon this issue as they criticise OAE theories, research and its ensuing praxis as evolving in a somewhat ad hoc manner. However numerous authors indicate that the application of OAE with higher education institutions such as HWS and UWTSD is still prevalent (Potter, Socha and O'Connell, 2012; Cooley, Burns and Cumming, 2015; Leather and Nicholls, 2016; Towers and Loynes, 2018; Thomas, Dyment and Prince, 2021; Tetzlaff *et al*., 2023).

Throughout OAE literature authors (Mckenzie, 2000; Yohalem and Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2010; Allan, Mckenna and Hind, 2012; Norton *et al*., 2014; Ardoin, Biedenweg and O'Connor, 2015; Newman, *et al*., 2023; Priest, 2023) refer to a statement made by Ewart (1983) "We have discovered an educational black box; we know something works, but we don't know how or why" (Ewart, 1983, p. 27). Indicating that in the field there is a feeling that a particular OAE intervention may have worked, whilst practitioners and researchers alike still search for clarity as to how and why it has worked. In efforts to understand the contents of the black box, Norton et al., (2014) urge for research to extend beyond the examination of singular models and focus upon differing demographics. Whilst Mckenzie (2000) in their meta-analysis of OAE research, stated research needs to look beyond just the beneficial outcomes of OAE and explore the processes of how they are achieved. In addition, authors (Stott *et al*., 2013; Beames, Mackie and Scrutton, 2020) call for research that explores the lasting influence of OAE programmes beyond the trend for short term (five years) focus of research.

2:2 THE DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES OF ADVENTURE PROGRAMMING

In light of these at times damming critiques of OAE philosophies, research and praxis that are the challenges facing OAE, it can be seen that OAE academics and practitioners alike have remained alert and reactive to the need to adapt and evolve (Hattie *et al*., 1997; McKenzie, 2000; Gilkes, Wintle and Reed, 2023), whilst retaining positive elements of Hahn's legacy (Mees and Collins, 2022) in order to safeguard the OAE sector in its pursuit of empowering positive developmental outcomes.

2.2.1 PERSONAL AND SOCIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Hopkins and Putnam (1993) champion the term "Personal Growth Through Adventure" (P. 15). Expressing the opinion that growth through adventurous experiences can be seen as the process of a participant challenging their existing view of themselves in the context of the affordances of an environment and the other people within it, further supported by contemporary authors, (Draper, Lund and Flisher, 2011; Asfeldt and Hvenegaard 2014; Smith and Thomas, 2023). Opportunities to perform actions within a given environment were first termed affordances by Gibson in 1979 (Ewert and Sibthorp, 2014; Peacock *et al*., 2017; Immonen, 2022). At a conceptual level, the affordance of an environment alters the description from its components to a depiction of its functional properties. "The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill" (Gibson, 1979. p. 127). When viewed from an ecological dynamics perspective, the adventurous affordances of an environment come forth once individuals and/or organisations with the relevant knowledge, motivations, skills and abilities view it as so (Peacock *et al*., 2017; Immonen, 2022), encapsulating the premise of OAE programming harnessing adventurous activities in natural spaces leading to development opportunities.

Affirming this, Ewart and Sibthorp (2014) pinpoint the dualistic affordances offered by OAE programming of enabling participants to interact in challenging environments with other people evoking both interpersonal and intrapersonal development. A facilitator during a programme or a parent welcoming their loved one home after an OAE experience, may initially be able to observe the more overt changes to a participants interpersonal skills (Cincera, *et al*., 2021). However the more nuanced intrapersonal developments of self-awareness otherwise seen as self-concept (Neill, 2003), personal values, self-confidence (Leather, 2013) spirituality and emotional awareness are somewhat hidden within mental adaptations to a person's psyche (Hattie *et al*., 1997; Ewert and Sibthorp, 2014; Goldenberg and Soule, 2015; Gutman and Schoon, 2015; Williams and Wainwright, 2016; Povilaitis *et al*., 2019; Katulis and Rasa Pilkauskaite Valickiene, 2022; Mateer *et al*., 2023). In addition, there is further support (Harper, 2009; Passarelli, Hall and Anderson, 2010; Allan *et al*., 2020; King, 2020; Down, *et al*., 2024) for the positive therapeutic outcomes gained from OAE programmes in the form of psychosocial wellbeing development.

2.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES

Thomas, Dyment and Prince (2021) highlight the early work of Arthur Lucas (1979), referring to the persistent rhetoric within Environmental Education (EE), that the model for EE is centred around the concept that EE is in, for, from or about the environment. It is beyond the scope of this literature review to delve deeply into this far reaching debate, however the words of Ian Robottom ring true for many environmental educators "the essence of environmental education lies in its education for the

environment dimension" (Robottom, 2014, p. 6) as this ties the educational praxis closer to that of an ecocentric mentality. The educational praxis of EE often aligns its educational outcomes with creating educational experiences focused upon learners developing pro-environmental behaviours (Cinera, Johnson and Kroufek, 2020; Inwood, 2020; Van de Wetering *et al*., 2022). Often utilising methods intent on fostering deeper connections with the natural world and consequently eliciting powerful environmental consciousness-raising effects (Iribarren, 2016). Notably within a curriculum context and pupils cognitive learning, Williams and Wainwright (2016) found insufficient evidence to support OAE praxis significantly influencing environmental behaviours. Nicol (2014a, 2014b) clarifies that gaining knowledge about environmental issues may not lead to changes sustainable behaviours, suggesting limitations of EE pedagogical approaches (Thomas, Dyment and Prince, 2021). However, when considering other relevant literature that explores the influence of OAE and OEE pedagogies it is possible to see that thoughtfully designed (Johnson and Cincera, 2023) and facilitated (Nicol, 2014a) adventurous interactions with nature (Meltzer *et al*., 2018; Baird, Garrett and Plummer, 2020; Schwass et al., 2021) can foster post experience changes in environmental behaviour (D'Amato and Krasny, 2011; Szczytko, Carrier and Steveson, 2018).

2:3 THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS IN ADVENTURE PROGRAMMING

When shining a torch into the black box of OAE in the context of this study, it is relevant to summarise and appraise the underpinning theoretical frameworks within OAE programming. It is beyond the scope of this literature review to highlight all frameworks associated with OAE, whilst it is prudent to note the inclusion of the following theories does not imply a unified sectoral agreement, more so upon review the researcher has elected to highlight those most applicable to this study.

2.3.1 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The association between OAE programming and experiential learning is extensive, when the Deweyan foundations of the theory are considered, it is possible to determine why this is so. The seminal work of Dewey (1938) placed experience at the core of learning. Poignantly stating that "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative" (Dewey, 1938, p. 25). Positioning his stance that not all education process are effective, proposing instead an "experiential continuum" (p. 33). Prioritising the concreteness of these experiences Dewey impressed the need for reflections upon these meaningful and relevant moments to inform future practice (Dewey, 1933; Leberman and Martin, 2004). In synthesising the core principles of Dewey, Bandura and Piaget, OAE pedagogies have applied the "experience cornerstone" (Miles and Priest, 1990, p. 173) principle of experiential learning to its practice for decades (Miles and Priest, 1990; Priest and Gass, 2005; Berry and Hodgson, 2011; Ord and Leather, 2011 Quay and Seaman, 2013; Ewert and Sibthorp, 2014; Seaman, 2019; Parry and

Allison, 2020;), in the form of a plethora of models. Such as Joplin's (1981) spiralling five stage model of experiential learning, the numerical scale of experientiality created by Gibbons and Hopkins (1980), along with cyclical models conceived by the likes of Pfeiffer and Jones (1980), Kolb (1984) and Priest and Gass (2005). Notably Kolb's Experiential learning cycle being the most pervasive (Ord and Leather, 2011; Parry and Allison, 2020). Which crucially along with Deweyan principles of learning have consistently been taught in formal classes and through adventurous experiences as an integral component of the HWS - SWP.

Ironically however, there have been recent observers (Ord, 2009; Ord and Leather, 2011; Towers and Loynes. 2018; Seaman, 2019) calling for experiential practitioners and researchers to refocus their attention upon the Deweyan principles from which so many approaches are derived. Ord and Leather (2011) challenge Kolb's (1984) model and the widely utilised over-simplified "Plan – Do – Review" cyclical representation of Dewey's work. Identifying discrete cyclical stages as being problematic when considering human thought processes. Intriguingly, debate resides around cyclical review processes (Seaman and Rheingold, 2013; Dickson (2008) utilised by practitioners. Ord and Leather (2011) suggest a move away from considering the adventurous activity as the sole concrete experience, instead placing value upon the nuanced elements of the whole experience, whilst also dispelling the need for a facilitated review after the fact. Acknowledging instead the complex nature of an individuals experience and valuing how they have perceived it, as participants construct personalised meaning whilst they interpret their life significant learning.

2.3.2 SENSE OF PLACE

"Topophilia is the affective bond between people and place or setting" (Tuan, 1977, p.4). The holistic concept of place base education is situated with the prominent cultural geographer Tuan (Halpenny, 2010,) who's seminal work explored the humanistic connection with the places in which they frequent. Focusing upon nurturing deeper connections with local communities and cultures (Nicol and Sangster, 2019) place education intersects with EE as a pedagogy to foster social and psychological dimensions of learning (Goodman, 2024), along with promoting environmental stewardship (Goodman, 2022). Since the conception of the HWS-SWP place based education has featured as distinctive component of the programme, with purposefully structured place based educational experiences facilitated by experts in the field, combined with place connection incorporated into the adventurous journeys taken around Wales. The adoption of place education within OAE has been seen by some (Wattchow and Brown, 2011; Leather and Nicholls, 2014; Towers and Loynes, 2018) to be a welcome divergence from the aforementioned dominant Hahnian philosophies still prevalent in OAE practices. Although as identified by Harrison (2010), UK based research into place education is

lacking, alluding to the slower UK adoption of the concept in comparison to our American and Australian counterparts.

2.3.3 THE CHALLENGE PARADIGM

The marriage of learning though experience with participating in challenging adventurous activities is a pervasive narrative throughout OAE literature texts (Miles and Priest, 1990; Loynes 2003, Priest and Gass, 2005; Collinson, Panicucci, Prouty, 2007; Berry and Hodgson, 2011; Beames, Mackie and Atencio, 2014) and remains prevalent in research journal commentaries (Haas and Furman, 2008; Davidson, Ewert, Chang, 2017; Orson, McGovern and Larson, 2020; Helker and Rurup, 2022; Reed and Smith, 2023). The works and philosophies of the notable adventurer and educator Colin Morlock (1984, 2001, 2011), have left an indelible mark on the OAE sector, remaining relevant within the context of this study as aspects of his work are made known to HWS – SWP participants. In earlier personal definitions of what constitutes an adventure Mortlock (1984), claims levels of uncertainty (Beames and Brown, 2016) and a demand upon an individuals emotional, mental and physical capacity should be component of the experience. Differing adventurous activities are specifically selected to provoke feelings of uncertainty (Reed and Smith, 2023). In addition, authors (Goldenberg, 2001; Mckenzie, 2003; Deane and Harre, 2014) champion attainable adventurous experiences with identifiable consequences. Whilst Beames and Pike (2013) present the discussion that adventures are relative to the individual, and that the perception of challenge is key (Tsaur, Lin, Cheng, 2015). The acceptance that with challenge comes risk, is inbuilt in OAE programming (Reed and Smith, 2023). Martin and Priest (1986) and later Priest (1990, 1999) introduce the "Adventure Experience Paradigm" presenting a graphical model intentionally blending Mortlock's stages of adventure, with the concepts of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), play (Ellis, 1975) and arousal (Murray, 1938). Placing competence and risk along the opposing axis, the model makes assumptions that when reaching peak adventure an individuals competence and the situational risks are aligned. Although it has been highlighted (Mckenzie, 2000; King, 2020) that other factors play valuable roles in successful OAE programmes; the physical environment, the activities themselves, group members, facilitators, the individual, and processing. The zone further along the spectrum of Misadventure and arguably hopefully not 'Disaster and Devastation' (Williams and Wainwright, 2016), has been referred to as the comfort stretching zone (Leberman and Martin, 2002; Collinson, Panicucci, Prouty, 2007; Brown 2008, Reed and Smith, 2023). Reed and Smith (2023) highlight "the historical centrality of fear in OAE" (p. 109), they reason that risk and fear balancing OAE practices are utilised to elicit a state of cognitive dissonance, enabling participants to receive developmental benefits. "The OAE facilitators in the study used fear as a core component in their practice, both as a tool and as learning" (Reed and Smith, 2023) an intriguing finding, which when combined with participant narratives, it was seen that the manner in which fear was negotiated, interpreted and managed, was both highly individualised

and brought forth differing outcomes. On occasion (Haras, Bunting and Witt, 2006) to help offset the potential imbalance towards risk and the potentially negative influence of fear, OAE practitioners have taken to employ an inclusive philosophy termed "Challenge By Choice" (Collinson, Panicucci, Prouty, 2007) that has been attributed to Rohnke *et al.,* (2003), a principle that has been used during the HSW – SWP. Enabling participants to take ownership of the decisions surrounding how much they engage with the adventurous activities. Whilst facilitators need to be adept at presenting attainable challenges and assisting participants with expanding their comfort zones (Brown, 2008). Jirasek, (2021) asserts that as OAE typically takes place in natural places using achievable activities, it could afford contemporary rites of passage experiences. A concept corroborated by existing literature (Andrews, 1999, Bell, 2003; Beames, 2004; Norris, 2011). Whilst Beames (2004) and Norris (2011) also indicate that it is challenging to incorporate the third phase of reincorporation (van Gennep, 1960) into typical OAE programmes.

2.3.4 GROUP PROCESSES

OAE programming is unique in typically involving relatively small groups (Makenzie, 2000; Deane and Harré, 2014), large enough to accommodate diversity whilst simultaneously affording social challenges of intrapersonal conflict. Yet small enough to discourage division and encourage conflict resolution. Broadly the process of group formation were brought to light by Tuckman (1965) and Tuckman and Jensen (1977), whilst the nuanced evolution of reciprocity, hierarchy and role formation are given equal importance (Mckenzie 2000; Richmond, 2015; Carreau, *et al*., 2016; Ouellet and Laberge, 2022, 2023), affording interpersonal developments. Upon reviewing the relevant literature it can be seen (Hovelyneck, 2000; Brown, 2002 ; Sibthorp *et al*., 2011; Cooley, Burns and Cumming, 2015; Povilaitis *et al*., 2019; Newman, 2023) that the appropriate facilitation of group processes enhances learning opportunities and guides the transfer of intrapersonal and interpersonal developments beyond the experience into the context of a participants life. Intriguingly North *et al.,* (2022) indicate that some important group processes occur during the un-facilitated moments such as vehicle travel, adding to the intensity of the group process of the OAE experience.

2.3.5 OAE PROGRAMME PROCESS MODELS

> "As OAE programmes continue to focus on creating high quality programmes that lead to important developmental outcomes for young people it is essential to examine the interplay between indicators of programme quality and outcomes" (Froehly et al., 2023, p.67).

To elicit the aforementioned developmental outcomes, via the application of the identified theoretical constructs OAE requires a vessel in which to sail, OAE programmes are that vessel. When focusing upon the second question posed by this current study, an understanding of the processes that occur during programmes is required, therefore it is prudent to explore existing OAE programme processing models. It has become evident following an extensive review of OAE literature, that the frequently

cited Outward Bound Process Model (OBPM) (Walsh and Golins, 1976), has been credited with the creation of one of the earliest OAE process models (Mckenzie, 2003; Sibthorp, 2003; Priest and Gass, 2005; Berry and Hodgson, 2011; Deane and Harré, 2013; Ewart and Sibthorp, 2014; Rushford, 2020; Gargano and Turcotte, 2021; Priest, 2023). In its distilled form the OBPM is a change process model, relying upon the contrast OAE programmes provide against the participants everyday life (Makenzie 2003; Deane and Harré, 2013; Rushford *et al*., 2020). It can be seen in the diagrammatic representation of the model bellow (Figure 1), that by placing a participant in an unusual environment, with a group of people, then presenting them with challenging problem solving tasks, creates a state of adaptive dissonance that then leads to mastery of competence resulting in developmental outcomes.

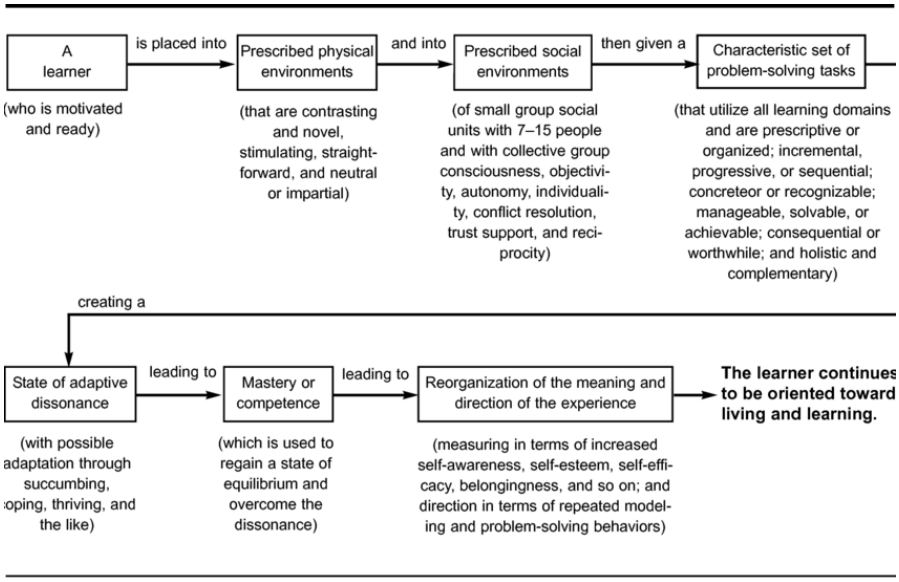

Figure 1: Walsh and Golins' (1976) Outward Bound Process Model (Priest and Gass, 1997)

McKenzie (2003) evaluates more current OAE practices taking a more contemporary stance on the human processes of learning during such experiences. Proposing adaptations to Walsh and Golins' model, with addition of course components. Crucially valuing the contributions instructors make to the process and the powerful influence of reflective practices. Pointedly, Deane and Harré, (2013) synthesise existing literature and other models to also repurpose Walsh and Golins' model. Taking a different perspective focused upon the formation of their Youth Adventure Programming Model (YAP Model). Seen bellow in Figure 2 is the product of this synthesis.

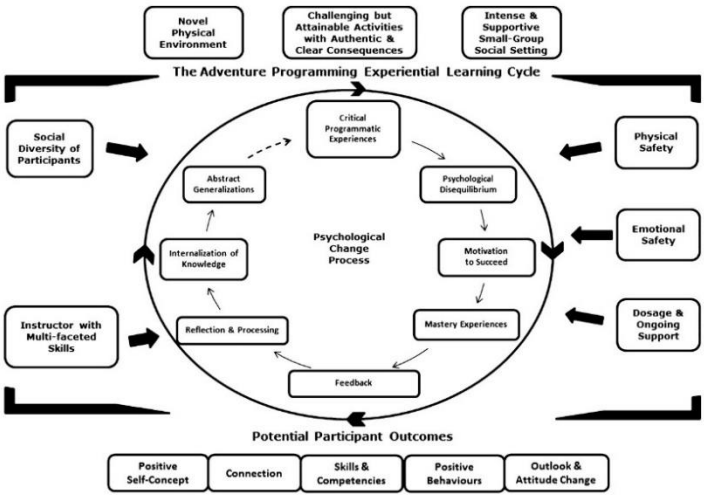

Figure 2: Youth Adventure Programming Model (Deane and Harré,

As illustrated above there are three "critical programmatic experiences" (Deane and Harré, 2014) headlining the model. The first being the novelty of an experience, in particular the novelty of the physical environment that creates an internal imbalance within participants causing them to engage with the process, leading to personalised realisations. Secondly and critically, it's noted (Walsh and Golins, 1976; Miles and Priest 1999; Makenzie, 2000; Deane and Harré, 2014) that the novel wilderness environments in which adventure programmes typically frequent are unpredictable at best and often house inherent real and perceived risks, presenting authentic, unavoidable consequences. Lastly linked with the isolation and intensity of such experiences the dynamic social interactions within the group setting are identified as vital contributing factors. In contrast however, Mackenzie and Goodnow (2021) argue against the dominant norm of adventure taking the form of out of the ordinary grand overseas expeditions, suggesting instead that the localism of the emerging microadventures concept (Humphreys, 2014) is a more sustainable adventure alternative. However, the application of the aforementioned adventure processing models to the concept of microadventures is yet to be explored by the literature.

In other works authors (Jostad et al., 2012; Lewis et al., 2020; Rushford et al., 2020) explore programme length as a contributing component of OAE processes, finding that the preferred 'classic' 28 day Outward Bound stye course remains popular, however with shorted courses (1- 5 day) facilitators were able to focus more intense learning upon a smaller number of selected outcomes. Whereas Asfeldt and Takano (2020), identify a gap in the literature, and explore the partnership between OAE and study abroad programmes, discovering interesting positive findings and suggesting further research. Whilst striving to further understand the 'black box' of OAE, Priest (2023), presents a seven-step mechanism of change model seen below in figure 3 drawing inspiration from Walsh and Golins' original process and somewhat completing the process. With activity elements entering the

"box" of the programme where the seven steps occur, these in turn influence positive developmental outcomes that are then woven back into a participants life as learning is transferred.

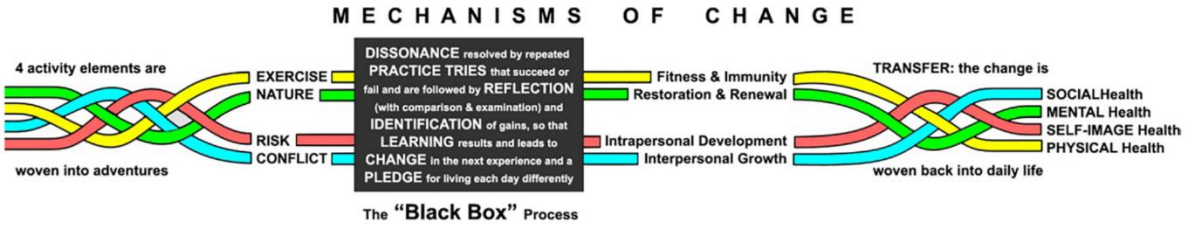

Figure 3: Mechanism of Change Model (Priest, 2023)

2.3.6 MECHANISMS OF TRANSFER

Notably decades earlier Priest posed important questions. "What transfers, how much of it, for how long, and because of what programme elements or barriers" (Priest, 1999, p. 315). A pivotal question that is challenging to answer (Brown, 2010) due to unfounded assumptions (Wolfe and Sambahl, 2005) and a lack of empirical evidence to support it (Leberman and Martin, 2004; Gass and Priest, 2006; Furman and Sibthorp, 2012). Brown, (2010) identifies this challenge "One of the main challenges of adventure based experiential course design is to ensure the transfer of learning post-course" (Leberman and Martin, 2004, p. 173). Sibthorp et al (2011) propose that research has focused upon identifying the outcomes of OAE programming, neglecting to explore the possible processes in place to promote learning beyond the immediate adventure experience and into context of participants life. However, with evidence suggesting transfer does occur (Rhodes and Martin, 2014; Bobilya *et al*., 2015; Meerts-Brandsma, Sibthorp and Rochelle, 2019) the words of Takano should be considered. "The mechanisms for experiences to be 'educational' in the long-term requires further research" (Takano, 2010, p. 91). Takano highlights a gap in the literature, which this study intends to explore. What occurs during an OAE programming for an experience to be deemed educationally significant enough to influence a person's life in the longer term. The subsequent sections of this literature review will demonstrate the effectiveness of the Significant Life Experience (SLE) theory lens to shine light in to the 'black box' of OAE programming.

2:4 SIGNIFICANT LIFE EXPERIENCE THEORY: A FIT FOR PURPOSE THEORETICAL LENS

In an earlier section of this literature review, changes to pro-environmental behaviour were identified as potential developmental outcomes of OAE programmes. This section will now draw upon the SLE theoretical framework to outline the heritage of the theory and explore its connection with OAE outlining the rationale for SLE being a fit for purpose research methodology for exploring the longer-term influences of OAE programmes.

2.4.1 THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ORIGINS OF SIGNIFICANT LIFE EXPERIENCE THEORY

The theoretical framework of Significant life Experience Theory as a research tool within EE has been associated with Thomas Tanner (1980) (Palmer, 1993; Chawla, 1998; Corcoran, 1999; Payne, 1999; Daniel, 2003, 2007, 2022; Takano, 2010; Iribarren, 2016; Stevenson *et al*., 2014; Danquig and Chen, 2015; Wigglesworth, 2021). Tanner's landmark study presented significant life experiences as "A new research area in environmental education" (Tanner, 1980, p. 20). Tanner's predominantly qualitative thematic analysis of retrospective autobiographical data research has remained the dominant methodology within SLE research until present times. In essence the asking of research participants to recall life events that they deem to have influenced their subsequent decisions around environmental protection.

The ensuing four decades of research (Tanner, 1980; Palmer 1993; Chawla, 1998; Corcoran, 1999; Payne 1999; Hsu, 2009; Stevenson *et al*., 2014; Danqing and Chen 2015; Iribarren 2016; Howell and Allen 2017, 2019; Krepelkova, Krajhanzl and Krofek, 2020; Pastor, 2023) seemingly corroborate with Tanner's findings. Identifying similar experiences attributed to the formation of participants pro-environmental attitudes, with outdoor experiences often being the strongest SLE influence (Howell and Allen, 2019). Stevenson *et al*., (2014) took a more contemporary look at SLE. After consulting the existing literature, they consequently confirmed that there were three principle SLE variables pervasive in the literature. These being, childhood time spent outdoors in nature, positive pro-environmental adult role models and inspiration from reading books. In addition, they also identified a need to expand upon the predominantly qualitative research methods used by previous researchers. Therefore, by utilising an existing environmental literacy survey tool, they looked to empirically explore how these three SLE variables might impact the average citizen as opposed to the environmental activist, and when these effects might become apparent by selecting 12 - 14year-old subjects. Curiously, in this instance they found weak support for the notion that time spent outdoors in groups and with family were positive predictors of pro-environmental behaviour. A position indicated by Howell and Allen's (2019) contrasting findings when compared directly against Palmer and Suggate's (1996) study, indicating that nature-based childhood activities were no longer a principle SLE influence. Whilst at the same time Stevenson's inconclusive findings may indicate that the influence of SLE variables might take more time to mature. As suggested by Ramirez (2020), in their justification for clarifying their stance on "how long-term is long term" (Ramirez, 2020, p. 37), they decided that for a long term influence to be long enough, eight years would need pass from participants late teen experiences before they would qualify as long-term influences. As they identified the need for a participant to transition through adolescence into adulthood for the full effect of life significant learning to come to fruition.

It is important to note that relatively early in its conception, significant life experience research came under some criticism. In a somewhat controversial special edition of Environmental Education Research (5:4,1999) a number of authors (Gough, S. 1999; Dillon, Kelsey and Aristzabal, 1999; Gough, A. 1999; Payne, 1999; Gough, N. 1999) supplied critical commentaries of SLE research. Stephen Gough (1999) presents a summary of the "five critical commentaries" (Chawla, 2001, p. 454). In which they seek to challenge what they see to be inaccurate assumptions in Tanner's approach. Raising concerns regarding methodology (Gough, S. 1999; Gough, N. 1999), the reliability of reconstructed memory (Gough, S. 1999), the absence of demographic differentiation (Gough, A. 1999), the apparent lack of theoretical framework (Dillon, et al. 1999) and challenging the need to focus upon environmental activists (Dillon, et al. 1999). The principle rebuttal to these challenges came from Chawla (2001), where in one hand they acknowledge the critiques, whilst in the other systematically draw attention to how in some cases the criticisms are indeed flawed themselves, containing narrow viewpoints and unsubstantiated assumptions that at times are heavily weighted with anthropocentric sentimentality - the very mindset environmental educators are looking to move away from. However, amongst these critical commentaries Payne (1999), whilst in support of SLE research, called for caution, identifying a gap in the literature and questioning how the SLE findings up until that point had been applied to EE praxis. Moving on to forthrightly claim that "experience is fundamentally central to SLE research" (Payne, 1999, p. 369). Highlighting that the "complexity of human experience" (Payne, 1999, p. 369) had been somewhat overlooked in other EE research methods. Aligning SLE research with the educational pragmatism of John Dewey (1938), Chawla (1998a) highlights that the complexity of human experiences presents challenges to SLE based EE pedological approaches, as not all citizens will be influenced by a singular "all potent experience that produces environmentally informed and active citizens" (Chwala, 1998a, p. 381). Therefore, potentially highlighting the true potency of SLE as an EE pedagogical tool, it enables individuals to live their own lives, interpret their experiences of the world in their own way, whilst placing responsibility in the hands of the environmental educator to curate experiences that incorporate the fundamental SLE variables to help promote lifelong learning. Coupled with the aforementioned potential of OAE to elicit positive educational outcomes, it could be seen that with informed pedagogical approaches, programmed adventurous experiences could evoke life significant influences.

2.4.2 SHORT DURATION OAE PROGRAMMES AS SIGNIFICANT LIFE EXPERIENCES

Daniel's (2003) study provides a valuable bridge from SLE research purely focusing upon environmental learning outcomes, to research focused upon a broader range, longer-term life influences. More so however, a significant marker post was placed in the SLE field by repurposing a modified SLE methodology to focus upon specific OAE events within individuals lives to ascertain if

they constituted an SLE. In this instance spiritually orientated wilderness expedition courses. Presenting two fundamentally important questions. Can one specific short course adventurous experience be significant enough to alter the course of a person's life? If so, what made it so significant? In Daniel's (2003) unpublished doctoral study, data was gathered from 227 university student respondents across the 25 programme years. Presenting early research focused upon the long-term significance of OAE programmes. With 90% of the respondents stating that they felt the experience had been significant in their lives. Dominant themes of personal growth, spiritual journeys and elevated personal circumstances were shown to be evident, along with statements illustrating that the expedition experience became a reference point for personal growth moving forwards in their lives. A third of respondents reported that the significance of the experience continued to develop over time. Critically, as part of this study, six reasons why an experience might be deemed an SLE were identified.

1. It changed the person in some manner, such as their perspective behaviour or belief.
2. It was a unique experience outside of the ordinary for the participant, something extraordinary.
3. It was useful in the persons future, in essence a life lesson.
4. It held some specific meaning to the participant.
5. I was deemed by a participant to be something other than chance, controlled by a higher power such as god.
6. The timing in the person's life and magnitude of the experience was important.

(Daniel, 2003)

It could be argued that a singular clarification of what constitutes an SLE is not dependable enough relying heavily on Daniel's subjective interpretation of experiences. However more recent studies (Gassner, Kahlid and Russell, 2008; Takano, 2010; Ramirez, 2020; Allison *et al*., 2021; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021; Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, 2022) have found corroborating SLE variables, affirming what constitutes an SLE. Corroborated more recently by Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth (2022), where the aforementioned variables were reconfirmed as being what makes an experience significant. In addition, they make an important distinction, regarding the term significance, clarifying that it does not relate to its quantitative counterpart within statistical analysis of statistical significance. Whereas in fact it carries the meaning, that for a person an experience has been meaningful, impactful, formative and as some may say life changing. Continuing their line of inquiry Daniel (2005), narrowed the SLE focus even further exploring the solo component of the same course. Programmed solo experiences where participants spend designated periods of time alone in remote locations has become a common pedagogy within OAE (Campbell, 2010; Kalisch, Bobilya and Daniel, 2011; Williams, 2012). Daniel's (2005) found that the solo experience set in a beautiful natural setting, was a unique experience in the participants' lives, which offered emotional, physical and spiritual challenges corresponding with the key elements Daniel (2003) had identified as being

key components of a SLE. In addition, the participants found that the space (physical and mental) the solitude of the solo provided for reflection, offered perspective. Aligning the SLE theoretical framework as a mode of inquiry to explore more than pro-environmental outcomes, affirming the concept that formative life experiences could be the catalyst for life influencing learning. The repurposing of SLE methodology has instigated a relatively small but compelling collection of studies (Gassner, Kahlid and Russell, 2008; Takano, 2010; Ramirez, 2020; Allison et al. 2021; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021; Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, 2022) that have utilised SLE theory to explore the potential lifelong learning provided by OAE programmes. A summary of the findings from these seven noteworthy studies can be found in appendix 1.

Gassner, Kahlid and Russell (2008), whilst studying the lasting influence of an Outward Bound 21-day course in Singapore, applied a transformative learning theory lens to understanding the meaning participants had made of their experiences. 98% of respondents to the survey instrument reported finding the experience somewhat valuable, with participants reporting more of an influence upon their personal life compared to their professional life. Differences in life significance were observed between different social-economic groups and professions, whereas little variance was show between genders.

Takano (2010) conducted a study exploring 20 years retrospectively the lived experiences of 67 Japanese youth participants of Operation Raleigh expeditions. Interestingly along with the long-term influence, Takano purposefully explored the components of the expeditions were felt to have led to the long-term influence, along with the participant motivations to join the expeditions. 96% of participants indicated finding the expedition experience to still hold significance for their present selves. Along with findings highlighting learning from challenging experiences, their age at point of participation, the influence of the natural environment and interacting with a diverse group of people as being contributing components of the experience. Intriguingly, the motivations for participation expressed, aligned with the longer-term outcomes and the expedition's influence promoting components. Takano concludes with a potentially meaningful statement "As reflection and sharing after the experiences seems to help the learning grow, it is worthwhile for practitioners to encourage networking and sharing among participants after programmes" (Takano, 2010, p. 91). Advising practitioners that they may be missing opportunities to make the experiences they have provided even more significant, if they neglect to facilitate a learning community that maintains contact after the experience.

In employing self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2017) as a theoretical framework to focus their research Ramirez (2020) looked to critically respond to criticisms that SLE research lacks theoretical frameworks (Gough, S. 1999). In their analysis they apply the concept that SDT identifies that certain environments (in this case the expeditions) can nourish the three fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness leading to enhancing a person's life

functioning. 70.1% of participants indicated seven or more on a nine-point Likert scale, when asked if the experience was significant in their lives. By focusing the SDT framework upon their analysis Ramirez was able to give meaning to why the experiences brought forth such positive effects on lives. By associating the life influences reported with the affordances offered by the expeditions they were able to demonstrate how the expeditions promoted development of the three fundamental psychological needs. In a further interesting corroboration (Ramirez et al., 2020) synthesise the findings of three expedition-based studies (Marshall et al. 2020; Ramirez, 2020; Allison, 2021), in doing so they outline the transformative potential for personal development through a variety of adventure activities.

As with the aforementioned studies, Allison et al. (2021) affirms the long-term influence of personal and social development. In this case past participants were invited to reflect up to 40 years previous. Upon the influence of school wilderness expeditions, where the pursuits of mountaineering and canoeing had taken them to continental Europe when they were 11- 16 years of age. Finding the challenges of being outdoors, the complex social and logistical aspects of problem solving, and the formation of their own identities all contributed to lifelong influences. Confidence and independence being a strong theme, along with improved awareness of planning and preparation and an overall gratefulness leading to a desire to contribute to public service. Commenting that the study contributed to the existing literature that expedition experiences were of lasting value, and that they should indeed more often be included in school curriculum to enhance the learning opportunities provided.
Unique in the literature Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021), studied OE courses not classified as wilderness expeditions, rather they were undergraduate outdoor adventure education summer courses. By adopting a mixed methods approach, they 20 years retrospectively explored the life significance experiences of Canadian university students. Intriguingly, their study drew direct inspiration from Daniel's (2005) study, in a direct comparison of the SLE variables, finding five of the six elements that constitute an SLE to have been perceived to be of influence by participants. The sixth variable not attributed was that of a spiritually orientated experience. Which when considering the OAE programme studied by Wigglesworth and Heintzman was not specifically a spiritually orientated programme it is unsurprising that this was not a prominent variable. A number of respondents reported perceiving their programme experiences as has having a meaningful and lasting impact on their lives, with self-discovery and the development of interpersonal skills being the dominant themes. Lastly, in a timely study Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, (2022) collaborated to reopen Daniel's line original of inquiry. Retrospectively exploring the life significance of youth Outward-Bound wilderness expedition experiences a staggering 50 years after the original experience. Reporting conclusive support (90% of participants) to the notion that OAE experiences could play a positive role in participants lives.

This small but informative collection of studies show the beginnings of a life significant OAE pedagogy. The curation of unique experiences, with diverse small groups of people, who at pivotal points in their lives, undertake adventurous challenges in natural environments, remaining in contact with each other as the life influencing learning continues to grow with them throughout their lives. In light of the findings from the decades of academic research discussed in this chapter it is evident that the lingering question of how to better understand the transformational potential of OAE programming remains a rich and complex area of inquiry that warrants further investigation. The methods used to focus the proposed modified SLE lens upon answering this question, will now be detailed in the following methodology chapter.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the carefully considered methodological approaches taken to conduct this study and this will be laid out into a series of sections; Firstly outlining the OAE programme that is the focus of this study. Secondly the rationale and research paradigm will be identified. Thirdly, the methods of data collection will be described and justified in relation to previous studies. Fourthly, the data analysis process will be discussed, along with lastly an outline of the ethical considerations pertaining to this study will be identified.

3.1 THE OAE PROGRAMME BEING STUDIED

The OAE programme that is the focus of this study is the Hobart William Smith University (HWS) Summer Wales programme (HWS-SWP). Since 2011 the programme has taken the form of a three-week immersive OAE programme organised and staffed by University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). Across the years the programmes have typically involved international travel to Wales, where students participate in a variety of adventurous disciplines, receive educational input in order to produce academic outputs, whilst getting the opportunity to engage with aspects Welsh culture and history. HWS global education department provides a succinct outline of the programme to prospective participants (Figure 4).

Figure 4 (HWS, 2024)

Outdoor Education: Theoretical Issues in Outdoor Pursuits is a 3-week course that will be a combination of academic theory and hands-on outdoor activities (including hiking, caving, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, mine exploration, rock climbing, and Coasteering) that provide a means for examining topics such as sustainability, conservation, changing landscapes, personal and social development, and the duality of risk versus adventure. Students will earn one course credit upon successful completion of the course.

The key aspects of this programme that were pertinent to its selection as a focus for this study have been identified in greater detail within chapter 1.

3.2 RATIONALE AND RESEARCH PARADIGM

At the heart of this study are the lived experiences of the Alumni who experienced the HWS - SWP. The researcher acknowledges himself as the principle research instrument in this study, taking an active role in steering the collection of data and interpreting its meaning, whilst generating themes during analysis. Throughout this study the researcher has taken a constructivist ontological (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018; Humberstone and Prince, 2020) stance, assuming that respondents personalised experiences were socially constructed before, during and after their time on the programme. Therefore, the researcher has positioned programme experiences within the personal and

social contexts of respondents lives, in order to better understand the multitude of perceived life influences respondents attributed to programmed participation.

The Epistemological stance taken by the researcher, whilst in the pursuit of generating new knowledge in the research field of SLE, was of a non-positivist stance (Humberstone and Prince, 2020), in essence not attempting to seek cause and effect relationships. Whilst in anticipation of a multitude of differing participant interpretations of the same experiences, a constructivist lens was applied to the methodology. The researcher consciously structured the research environment with the principle aim of encouraging respondents to illicit meaningful insights into how their programme experiences influenced their life stories. Pursuing a similar narrative inquiry to that of Takano (2010), where the analysis of the retrospective lived experiences of respondents did not intend to identify moments of cause and effect, more so striving to deeply understand how the experiences had been interpreted by the participants.

Practitioners facilitating adventurous experiential learning, strive to place learners at the centre of the experience, with the intention of facilitating meaningful personalised experiences. Allison (2000) suggested an epistemological paradigm shift (Coates *et al*., 2016) calling for research in the field of experiential learning to move away from a somewhat contradictory positivist outcome-focus (Telford, 2020), that could be seen to be incompatible with the intentions of learner centred experiential practitioners. "Somehow the experiences of the individual that are so central to our work are lost when it comes to research" (Allison, P. 2000, p. 25). Therefore, this study purposefully sits firmly within the qualitative research paradigm. In applying a qualitative methodological approach, it is aligned with the same constructivist visons (Chawla, 2006) of the very experiential programmes and practitioners it looks to explore.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODS

Retrospective methodologies are prolific in the field of significant life experience research (Tanner, 1980; Chawla, 1998; Daniel, 2005; Takano, 2010; Ramirez, 2019; Allison, 2021; Prince, 2021; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021; Daniel, 2022). The similar methodologies applied in such studies have established data gathering patterns, combining either retrospective autobiographical accounts with survey responses and/or semi structured interviews. Chawla (1998) discusses the paradox of employing juxtaposed methodologies in SLE research. They identify the benefit of surveys being capable of canvasing surface levels of data from a wider base of subjects, whilst semi-structured interviews are able to probe deeper into the nuances of lived experiences. Previous SLE studies (Tanner, 1980; Chawla, 1998) have analysed autobiographical accounts prior to interview, whilst others (Hsu, 2009; Howell and Allen, 2019; Wigglesworth, 2021) have taken a mixed methods approach utilising quantitative questionnaires alongside qualitative interviews. Embracing the retrospective methodologies of previous studies whilst heeding the aforementioned warnings of

Allison (2000), the researcher chose to nurture a naturalistic inquiry firmly rooted in the qualitative paradigm.

Although all the methods applied in this study are firmly qualitative it is important to note that they were implemented sequentially, employing two distinct phases of data collection, online open-ended survey questionnaires followed by online semi-structured interviews. The next sections will outline the purposeful decisions made by the researcher, whilst identifying the benefits and limitations of these methods in relation to this study and pragmatically explaining how they were administered.

3.3.1 RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION

In line with the requirements of UWTSD code of ethics and the agreements made with HWS Institutional Review Board (IRB) respondents identities were kept anonymous. In doing so a coding structure was used, as follows Figure 7.

Figure 7

R = Respondent (Numbers 1 – 19) sequenced in the order in which they responded to the survey.

S = Staff (1 – 6) – The leaders and facilitators, sequenced in the order in which they have had involvement with the programme delivery and organisation.

Pt = Year of participation on the HWS – SWP.

Q = the question they were responding to in the survey. Or in the case of an interview extract a time stamp will be used.

- For example (R5, Pt 2012, Q7) Respondent number five who participated in 2012 answering question 7.
- Or (R18, Pt 2018, 00:23.40) Respondent eighteen, who participated in 2018 made a comment at Twenty-three minutes and forty seconds in their interview.
- Or with regard to staff (S1, 2023, 00:15.35) Staff member one in 2023 made a comment fifteen minutes and thirty-five seconds into their interview.

3.3.2 PHASE 1 - OPEN ENDED SURVEYS

An email mailing list of Alumni of the HWS – SWP was kindly supplied by S1. An introductory email was sent by S1 the mailing list. In July 2023, an electronic research information web page (see appendix 7) was sent as a link contained within an email that invited alumni to contribute to the study. Contained within the information page, a link to the informed consent form was available (see appendix 8). The informed consent responses were collated and appropriately stored. A personalised email was sent to potential respondents containing the online survey instrument (see appendix 9).

Table 1 shows the response rate to the survey invitations and subsequent completed surveys.

Mailing list	Informed consent completed	Completed survey
108 alumni 1 email bounced back. 1 student current student 106 potential respondents	25 responded	N = 19 completed the survey Survey response rate of 17.92%

Table 1

The sample can be seen as a convenience sample, as data was only available from those who chose to respond, a sample that does not represent any group other than itself and negates attempts at generalisation to a population (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018; Carlson, *et al*., 2019).

The structure of the survey instrument drew inspiration from Takano (2010), containing three sections, detailed below.

1. A series of questions aimed to gather the respondents personal information.
2. A section posing questions exploring the participants motivations for taking the programme. Including asking if they had previous experiences of adventure programmes.
3. A section of open-ended questions prompting respondents to elicit fuller responses to questions regarding any life significant influences attributed to programme participation.

In efforts to maintain consistency with existing studies the survey questions drew inspiration from Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021), who with similar intentions followed Daniel's (2007) work. The researcher also included a question regarding participants motivations similar to that of Takano (2010). The online survey was open to responses during August 2023.

3.3.3 PHASE 2 - SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews are a frequently utilised methodology within qualitative paradigms (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018; Jenner and Myers, 2019; Telford, 2020; Oliffe et al. 2021). A method well suited to unearthing the nuances of human experiences. Prominent SLE studies exploring OAE experiences have incorporated interviews into their methodologies (Rameriez, 2019; Allison et al., 2021; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021). The purpose of these interviews was to delve deeper into the significant life influences the programmes may have had, adding rich stories and insights from the discussions. A secondary purpose was to shed light upon the programmatic attributes that may have played a key role in participants programme experiences being a catalyst for lifelong learning.

The survey responses were collated, analysed and used to formulate scaffolding questions for the subsequent semi-structured interviews (appendix 10). In addition they created a timeline autobiographical account. Mirroring timeline research, a methodology often applied when interviewing vulnerable populations (Hanne, 2012; Pell *et al*., 2020). This timeline structured the conversations during the semi-structured interviews. A limitation of this approach was at times respondents made reference to events later in their timeline causing the conversation to jump past earlier parts of the timeline that may have held interesting insights. A further potential limitation during this phase was the potential for researcher bias in the selection of interview candidates. The researcher used selective sampling methods, making informed decisions as to whom they would interview, for transparency the decisions made are outlined below.

1. To avoid influencing the researcher and interviewee relationships, the researcher omitted all respondents with whom he had been involved in the delivery of their programme (this included participants from the years 2019 – 2023) or those he had met in person.
2. Those indicating they were not willing to meet for interview were also omitted.
3. A representative sample was looked for that spanned both year of participation and gender.

Leaving eight suitable candidates for interview, reverting to convenience sampling as six of whom responded the interview invitation. Interviews were successfully arranged with five of these candidates. The continuum in figure 5 demonstrates the representative sample of the interviewed participants.

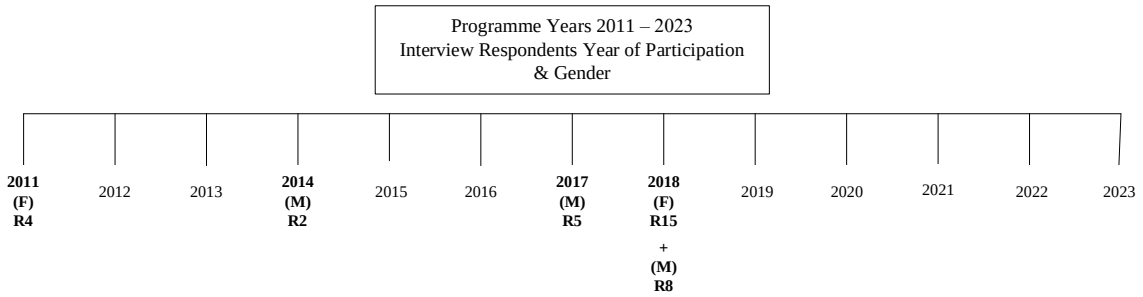

Figure 5

It could be seen that small sample size is a limitation of this study. It can be misconstrued that the ideal quantity of data is reached at a point of saturation (Varpio, 2017), where no further codes are being generated. In agreement, Malterud, Siersma and Guassora (2016), advocate for the concept of "information power" (Malterud, Siersma and Guassora, 2016) as opposed to saturation. Where they establish dimensions within the data sample that essentially empower the data rather than relying upon a larger sample size and saturation. Placing the emphasis upon the quality of the longitudinal narrative data, having a clearly defined theoretical framework, the specificity of the sample group and narrowed research aims. Further corroborated by Carlson *et al*., (2019) who analysed the patterns with

experiential OAE research showing interesting findings regarding sample size. In reviewing five of the predominant experiential OAE journals spanning over four decades of research, a total of 815 studies were examined, 359 using predominantly qualitative methods of surveys and interviews. Of the 359 studies examined 109 had sample sizes of less than 10 and a further 97 less than 25. Indicating that the survey and interview sample sizes of this study somewhat follow a trend in the research field and are fit for its intended research purpose.

During mid-September to mid-October 2023 the interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams. The benefits of research interviews utilising video conferencing software have been described as cost effective, typically in private settings and convenient. Whilst it has been recommended (Archibald *et al*., 2019; Oliffe *et al*., 2021) that deliberate decisions are made as to how to effectively conduct online interviews. Oliffe *et al*., (2021) warned of potential concessions when utilising video conferencing software. Such as poorly synced audio and visuals, inaccurate automatic transcription, poor picture quality and connectivity issues. To help mitigate the potential loss of flow during interviews the researcher chose to not directly record the visual and audio with the Microsoft Teams software. A separate handheld recording device was used to record audio only. In essence acting as a more traditional telephone interview (Oliffe *et al.,* 2021) however still maintaining the benefits of a face to face interview where the nonverbal ques of facial expression and body language aided a more natural conversational flow to the discussions (Jenner and Myers, 2019). Respondents were informed of this before the calls began in the hope that they would feel more comfortable and relaxed knowing images of themselves and their homes/workplaces were not going to be recorded. Some of the limitations of online interviews noted by Oliffe *et al*., (2021) were observed by the researcher. At times poor connectivity affected the image quality, causing some difficulty in reading the social ques of the discussions, potentially resulting in missed opportunities for respondents to expand upon their thoughts. A further limitation was the selection of interview respondents being undoubtedly a convenience sample as it was clearly limited by who was willing and/or available to meet for interview, a factor that is hard to mitigate, but worth noting.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The interviews were transcribed using Microsoft Word transcription software to provide accurate time stamps, combined with cross checking of transcriptions with t recordings to ensure accuracy of transcription. An example of the transcriptions is available in appendix 2 and 3. The data files containing the audio recordings are available upon request. The audio files and transcriptions were securely stored in accordance with GDPR regulations.

3.4.1 REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

The thematic analysis was conducted solely by the principle researcher, this was conducted manually using the six-phase process identified by Braun and Clarke (2006). More so however, the data analysis phase of this study diligently adhered to the contemporary approaches advocated by Braun and Clarke (2019, 2021, 2023), of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA). In the transparent realm of RTA (Byrne, 2022) it is vital for the researcher to acknowledge their position in the research process, Braun and Clarke (2023). In doing so the researcher openly identifies himself as being central to the research process, as both research instrument and active researcher, reading and interpreting data, identifying patterns of meaning whilst creating codes and consequently generating themes. It is prudent to note that in recent years the researcher has been a co-facilitator of the HWS – SWP, acknowledging that this has afforded the researcher a unique perspective of the data. A vantage point that has influenced the researcher's interpretation of the patterns of semantic and latent meaning expressed by respondents. These explicit statements and nuanced hidden expressions once drawn together into codes have been considered with equal importance as the initial "Central organising concepts" (Braun and Clarke, 2019, p.593) were conceived and named as themes. This privileged perspective empowered the researcher to view the data with a constructivist lens, incorporating his understanding of the context in which the data resides. Whilst simultaneously allowing the data to inductively drive the analysis, in a somewhat laborious organic creative process that ebbed and flowed from the data, via the open codes to the generated themes and at times back to the original data recordings and responses.

3.4.2 THE TRIANGULATION OF THEMES

The triangulation of themes is often presented as a means to apply rigour, substantiate themes or ensure they appear to be unbiased (Varpio *et al.*, 2016; Nowell *et al*., 2017). However, Braun and Clarke (2023) argue that positivist quality assurance practices such triangulation are a problematic proposition for constructivist methodologies. Advocating instead for adopting a knowing practice when selecting analytical tools, suggesting researchers should endeavour to reason through common assumptions embedded within popular practices. Therefore, notably the use of triangulation in the context of this study was not to affirm the credibility of the themes. More so to acknowledge that three independent data sources were analysed in isolation of one another. Prior to the researcher amalgamating the initial themes from each source around one unifying principle theme. Figure 6 bellow is a representation of this collaborative process, where it can be seen that the codes and subsequent initial themes from the respondents survey and interview data were amalgamated with the facilitators interview data to form the central organising concept themes.

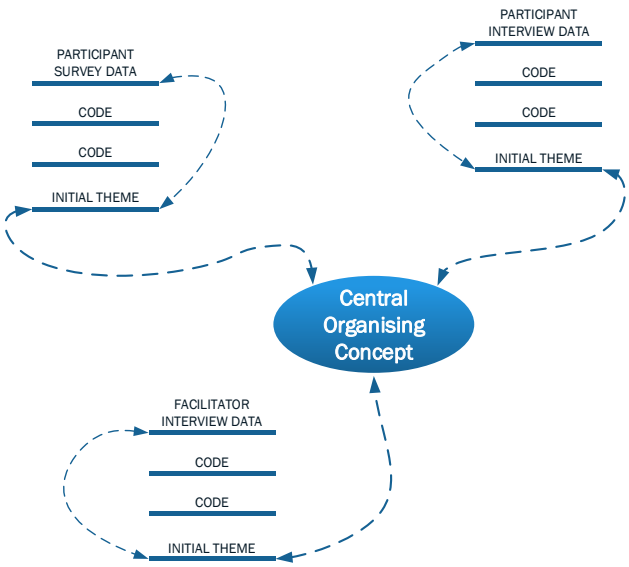

Figure 6

To reflect the transparent process of this RTA, detailed thematic maps for each of the final generated themes are available within appendix 5.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.5.1 UWTSD ETHICAL APPROVAL

In line with the UWTSD "Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice" (UWTSD, 2020, p.5) a PG2/E1 Application for Ethical Approval form was submitted in conjunction with the research proposal. The detailed matters concerning the ethical considerations related to this study are contained within the aforementioned application. However, a full risk assessment of the research was conducted to identify any potential harm that may result from conducting this research study. Figure 8 is a summary of its findings and identified control measures.

Hazard	**Risk**	**Control Measure**
The retrospective nature of the research methodology	Increased Emotional Risk – Potentially a respondent may disclose disturbing or distressing personal circumstances or issues	Respondents were informed that they were able to halt the interviews at any point. Researcher is also able to do so if uncomfortable with the information disclosed.
Transfer and storage of personal data respondent confidentiality.	Financial, emotional reputational risk – Respondents personal data being made available to inappropriate persons	All personal contact information was held in line with GDPR regulations. Respondents identity was anonymised via a coding system
Air Travel	Environmental risk – Unnecessary travel to hold face to face interviews	Electronic surveys were distributed via email. Interviews were held online via Microsoft Teams.

Figure 8

In the course of conducting this research, none of the identified ethical concerns raised in advance occurred, nor did any other concerns arise.

3.5.2 HWS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

In addition to the ethical approval granted by UWTSD, it was also necessary for the researcher to seek approval from HWS Institutional review board (IRB), due to HWS Alumni being the focus of the study. The IRB reviewed a number of documents listed bellow.

- The research proposal
- UWTSD ethical approval
- The research information document for Alumni (PDF booklet) - Link available in appendix 7.
- The informed consent form for survey and interview phases - Microsoft Form – available in appendix 8
- The open-ended survey questionnaire - available in appendix 9
- A sample of the semi structured interview questions - available in appendix 10

A copy of the correspondence from the HWS IRB director indicating the study can proceed is available in appendix 6. The decision was made that study would not invite current HWS students to become respondents, to aid the IRB approval process and maintain some distance from the respondents and researcher, as between 2019 – 2023 the researcher has been directly involved as co-facilitator of the programme alongside S3.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

This chapter will conceptualise the findings of this study within the broader landscape of OAE. The findings of this study are interwoven together, akin to the complexity of human thought. However, they can be separated into two separate narratives. The first being the attributed significance of the HWS-SWP in respondents lives, followed by the second being an identification of the programmatic attributes that have contributed to these life significant experiences.

Respondents considered the HWS-SWP to be a fundamentally significant experience in their lives. In doing so they have attributed the lasting influence of the programme to significant changes in how they view their lives. With reported changes in their outlook and attitudes. Furthermore, participation in the HWS-SWP has been attributed with changes in self awareness, that have manifested in the form of lasting self confidence and realisations of personal capability that have continued to positively benefit respondents personal and professional lives.

The findings surrounding the programmatic attributes that respondents perceive to have contributed to the HWS-SWP being an SLE are threefold yet interlinked. Respondents found participating in attainable challenging adventurous activities afforded opportunities for personal growth, encouraging group cohesion and a support network working in unison with personal reflective practices during and after the programme.

4.1 HWS-SWP LIFE SIGNIFICANCE FINDINGS

As a starting point for the exploration of the findings generated from the data it is vital to identify whether the HWS-SWP was perceived to be fundamentally important enough to be considered significant to respondents. The researcher acknowledges the contribution to the field of Daniel (2003), who's work identifying the key characteristics of a life significant experience has remained relevant, (Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021). In a review of the data sets the researcher has identified an alignment with five of the six characteristics outlined by Daniel (2003). With less of a connection found with the notion that respondents felt their experiences were controlled by a higher power. However, some spiritual connection was indicated. Further details surrounding these findings from this review can be found in appendix 11. In summary, the findings from this review substantiate the overarching finding of this study:

Respondents perceived their participation in the HWS-SWP to be a fundamentally significant experience in their lives.

The following sections will elaborate upon the specific life influences attributed to the HWS-SWP and the programmatic attributes that contributed to the respondents life significant experiences.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF LIFE SIGNIFICANCE INFLUENCE FINDINGS

In order to orientate the reader during this section of the discussion it is helpful to restate the principle question posed by this study.

What life significant influences do alumni attribute to their participation in the HWS-SWP outdoor adventure education study abroad programme?

Although on first glance this question may seem relatively simplistic, however when one considers the complexity of interpreting the nuances of human lived experience, the task of answering it becomes more involved. To do so it was imperative to explore the thematic threads that weave through respondents narratives. Therefore, central to the discussions surrounding the life significance attributed to programme participation are the generated themes that reflect the transformative nature of those experiences. When outlining the sixth phase of reflexive thematic analysis Braun and Clarke (2019, 2023) advocate for the inclusion of vivid and compelling excerpts from the data to breathe life into the themes as they are reported and discussed as findings. The intention of these sections is to do just that.

4.2.1 Participation in the HWS-SWP fostered a lasting influence on how respondents view their lives.

In synthesising the insights gained from respondents, it was found that participation in the HWS-SWP fostered a lasting influence upon how respondents view their lives. Influencing their personal and professional attitudes, reinforcing environmental beliefs and changing their view of educational methods.

A finding that embraces the diversity of thought, whilst encompassing the multitude of ways in which participants have perceived their experiences and interpreted them through reflection to formulate future life philosophies. The centralising concept of this finding bonds together the various facets of respondents lives that have been influenced by the HWS-SWP, such as recreation choices that enhance their personal wellbeing, experiences that acted as reinforcement of environmental attitudes, influences upon personal and professional life choices and unique in the literature influences upon how they viewed educational practices.

The amalgamation of intertwined concepts surrounding respondents outlook manifested in an openness in their mindset that encouraged them to make bold life choices. Evidenced by R14's description (Figure 9) of a life choice that she attributes to a new mindset of considered risk taking and confidence that she continues to carry from her time on the programme.

Figure 9

"The Wales program made me feel more confident taking risks. This past summer, after graduating from my ** **** ****** program, I accepted a job on the other side of the country – away from my family and friends. I never would have felt confident accepting a job so far from home, but I think doing the study abroad program made me feel more comfortable taking such a risk"*** **(R14, Pt 2018, Q15)**

Aligning with the established literature where prominent authors, Takano (2010), Allison *et al*., (2021) and Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth (2022), have identified a similar influence upon the outlook and attitudes of programme participants. A contrasting outlook is expressed by R5 (Figure 10), rather than inspiring a move of location for a career choice, the HWS-SWP influenced him to pursue a lifestyle change, that for some time drew him in different direction away from a typical career following mentality, choosing instead to further pursue adventure activities.

Figure 10

"Oh, I don't have to jump into a career right away because I just had so much fun and learn so much about myself and like, grew so much just in the three weeks of being super adventurous and stuff. So I decided to do that for another 10 months to a year. You know, It's full time. I still do it, as hobby all the time" **(R5, Pt 2017, 00:08:21).**

Echoing established findings in the literature (Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021), R5 articulated (Figure 11) how his newfound open mindset empowered him to make changes in the way he chooses to spend his recreation time.

Figure 11

"I was like, wow. There's a whole other world of things. That I want to do all different kinds of skills and activities I want to learn and try. And you know, going forward to today like every time someone suggests something new to me like. Hey, you want to go do this like…. I'm like, yeah, sure. Which I think if I had never gone on the Wales trip, I probably would not have been as interested" **(R5, Pt 2017, 00:00:59).**

A notion further supported by Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021), McKenzie (2003) and Ramirez (2020). Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021), express this as "leisure style change" (p. 390), where in corroboration with this study they identify the opportunities to learn new adventure skills, leads to an improved level of adventure sport capability and confidence, which is then continued afterwards. In addition, they locate another intriguing finding, that one discrete change in how leisure time was spent, translated to "transferred knowledge and skills from the course to their family and students" (Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021, p.391). Comparably with the current study elements of this

transfer to others was evident within the data but not to the extent that it warranted inclusion as a finding in its own right.

Within the network of interwoven thoughts, it was also evident that respondents gained an understanding of the importance of connecting with their environment for their own personal well-being, as can be seen in the comments of R7 (Figure 12).

Figure 12

"I felt like I wanted to live a healthier lifestyle. I ended up losing a ton of weight after I got back…. but the trip really highlighted my love for the outdoors and healthy qualities that life that lifestyle can bring" (R7, Pt 2013, Q11)

Reiterating and expanding upon the significance of this point and building upon the discussions in the works of Harper (2009), Allan *et al*., (2020), and Down *et al*., (2024) the comments of R10 enrich the discussion (Figure 13) by asserting that she felt being active in a natural environment was beneficial for her mental and physical wellbeing (King *et al*., 2020) and the importance of carrying this outlook into the next phases of her life.

Figure 13

"I don't think I understood the importance of getting outside and connecting with your environment until the Wales trip. I truly feel like when you are active and connect with your environment, it makes your brain stronger and increases your achievement in a traditional classroom setting. After the Wales trip, I made outdoor study breaks a priority - long walks, hikes, and trail running" **(R10, Pt 2019, Q12).**

Allan *et al*., (2020), highlight the opportunities provided by adventure sports conducted in natural places to positively impact the health and wellbeing of participants, paying reference to the enhancement of physical wellbeing. A notion further corroborated by Down *et al*., (2024), whilst they also add a layer to the discourse by focusing upon the psychosocial wellbeing benefits of engaging in such activities in nature with a social support network of other participants and facilitators. In further support of these findings R17 after 12 years summarises with heartfelt sentimentality (Figure 14), her continued connection with maintaining an active outdoor lifestyle.

Figure 14

"I always enjoyed the outdoors but now I feel like I have a place there. It is a second home" **(R17, Pt 2011, Q13).**

Further unpicking the statement of R10 (Figure 13) unravels a compelling thread of meaning interwoven throughout the data that remains connected to this finding. Comparatively with the seminal work of Tanner (1980) in the field of SLE research, and other more contemporary scholars (Daniel, 2003; Ramirez, 2020; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2021), the affordances provided by the

programme to engage with the natural spaces of Wales, acted for some as a confirmation and reinforcement of their environmental attitudes. A thread of meaning supported by R11, where she acknowledges (Figure 15) a preexisting connection with nature through engaging with adventurous activities yet confirms that the manner in which the programme developed a sense of place, immersing her culturally, ethically and emotionally in the places they visited. This enriched connection reinforced her connection with and affinity for nature. Developing a sense of place with the culture, history and people of Wales has consistently been a keen focus of the HWS-SWP since it began.

Figure 15

"I would be remiss if I did not mention the importance of the more "educational" moments that took shape throughout the program and their impact on my relationship with the natural world. While I had always enjoyed spending time amongst the trees; going backpacking, climbing, skiing, and swimming, I feel the program asked us to think deeply about these experiences; to consider the history of the places we were in, the ethics of being there, and our direct relationship to land, water, and air. I think this program really fostered an important relationship to the spaces we inhabit, be it indoors or outdoors"
(R11, Pt 2013, Q9).

The immersive nature of placed based education (Wattchow, 2011) facilitates a learning process that is able to promote learning across the emotional, physical and cognitive domains (Wattchow, 2011, Goodman, 2022, 2024). Alluding to why it has consistently been a core component of HWS-SWP, as outlined by S4 in interview (S4, 2024, 00:05:45). Aligning with the sentiments of Ord and Leather (2011), that individuals lived experiences should be central to OAE programmes. As portrayed by R6 (Figure 16) some of the engagement with nature was directly facilitated through purposeful exercises. In this instance R6 took part in a facilitated exercise that she found to be very insightful and still places value upon.

Figure 16

"The guides had us remove our shoes and do some blindfolded/eyes closed walking in the forest, feeling everything with our bare feet. The goal was to connect to the earth and feel our place within it; since then I've come across the emerging science that contact with "raw earth" is important for mental health, and have been grateful for the experience. Most people who live in city environments never have an opportunity to put their feet on grass or dirt - what a loss! I really valued this exercise for the extent to which it pushed us to be courageous with our senses as well as grounded in our reality" **(R6, Pt 2013, Q9).**

The HWS-SWP purposefully incorporates sense of place as pedagogies to engage the participants with the unique socio-cultural aspects of Wales, the perceptions expressed by R6 alludes to the connections made in Wales forming a personal philosophy which has transferred to her home life context. The following extract R15 explains (Figure 17) how along with other life experiences the study abroad programme in Wales was a catalyst for her future career as an environmental educator.

Figure 17

"** led me to Wales, which led me to *****, and together the three of them (combined with a later experience studying abroad in *********) led me to my career choice - environmental education"*** **(R15, Pt 2018, Q12).**

When in interview R15 discussed (Figure 18) her choice of career and how time on the programme influenced this choice, then as can be seen in the following excerpt she expands upon how she was inspired by the learning environment nurtured during the programme and how she still looks to create this in her workplace.

Figure 18

"As we all pushed each other to grow and try new things in SUCH a supportive environment created by S3, S4, S1, the Buddies, and the rest of my fellow students. I learned so much about how to create this type of environment, and I try to bring the same mentality of openness to my work and life" **(R15, Pt 2018, Q9).**

An attributed influence mirrored by R16 where (Figure 19) an adventurous mindset supported by confidence in her abilities post programme have influenced her professional outlook and the subsequent life choices made. Affirming the conclusions of prominent SLE authors Ramirez (2020) and Gassner (2008).

Figure 19

"This programme did influence me to pursue a career pathway that allows me to engage with biology while in the nature itself and it continues to influence me to seek research that takes me rock climbing or high up in mountain ranges to my target species"
(R16, Pt 2019, Q15).

In responding to a question posed by the survey regarding the influence on academic performance, some intriguing divergence in findings were unearthed by the researcher. A complex interplay of ideas were expressed by respondents, with semantic meaning indicating that programme experiences did not influence the remainder of their academic career. Whilst contrastingly the researcher interpreted and synthesised the latent meaning implied, and the more overt sematic sentiments (Braun and Clarke, 2019) expressed by respondents to unearth a distinct pattern of meaning in the data. The HWS-SWP influenced the educational focus and outlook of respondents. The latent meaning within R1's response demonstrates an increased awareness and subsequent application of the educational concept of experiential learning.

Figure 20

"I think it may have allowed me to trust in how I study, that experience in the field and adventure can be a vehicle for learning. That is how I study, through the use of my body and embodied experiences" (R1, Pt 2017, Q12).

Whereas the more overtly semantic reflections expressed R10 make clear reference (Figure 21) to the awareness of the effectiveness of experiential learning, as she makes a direct comparison with more traditional classroom learning methods.

Figure 21

"Wales taught me that there is a lot to be said about experiential learning. Traditional classroom lectures promote short-term memorization and brain dumping. Where experiential learning promotes long-term memorization and thoughtful analysis. I could not tell you more than two substantive things about my sophomore-year courses. But I can recall very specific details and learning moments from the Wales program" **(R10, Pt 2019, Q12)**

This is firmly aligned with the intentions of the HWS-SWP and the HWS institutional educational focus (Hobart and William Smith College, 2024). As can be seen in appendix 12 the students receive a programme of study prior to their participation in the programme, this is led by S1. Interestingly he expresses doubts (Figure 22) as to the depth of understanding regarding participants have of this topic.

Figure 22

"I just don't know how much they take in. I think you know it's hard to know, right? So I mean, they write these papers and they answer questions and I give them prompts….. You know, they're always talking about Kolb and Dewey. This a Dewey moment and all that kind of stuff. So it's in their lexicon. They know it, you know? Right. I mean, they're using the words and they're using the theories, but how well they totally understand it. I'm not sure" **(S1, 2023, 00:08:59).**

However, clearly the following statement made by R14 indicates (Figure 23) that the HWS-SWP's structure and delivery style is appropriately aligned with the intended educational outcome, and that learning does occur. Leading to the raising of awareness of the concept of experiential learning and subsequently acting as a catalyst for change in respondents educational outlook.

Figure 23

"I think one thing that may have changed regarding my academics could have been my mindset though, the Wales program showed me that you don't always have to be in a classroom in order to learn something. Experiential learning is just as important – if not more impactful – than sitting in a classroom and studying a textbook" **(R14, Pt2018, Q12).**

The aforementioned identification of the variability of interpretation of experiences, indicates that the manner in which the programmed is delivered has fostered individualised reflection processes, which align with the Deweyan principles of experiential learning (Dewey, 1938). Where the experience as a whole (Ord, 2009; Ord and Leather, 2011; Towers and Loynes. 2018; Seaman, 2019) contributes to life significant learning. The prior awareness raising and subsequent reinforcement through experience of the concept of experiential learning as a key component of OAE programmes is relatively unexplored in the existing literature. This intriguing exploratory finding of this study perhaps warrants further inquiry.

4.2.2 The transformative influence of the HWS-SWP upon respondents personal growth

As the narratives of respondents continued to be unpacked it became evident that a distinctive pattern of meaning recurred with striking regularity, the profound transformative influence of the HWS-SWP upon respondents personal growth

The amalgamated findings generated a definitive pattern of meaning, illustrating that the HWS-SWP influenced the intrapersonal development of respondents self-awareness. Self-awareness is a multifaceted concept (Allison, 2000; Williams and Wainwright, 2016; Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2017; Ramirez, *et al*., 2020; Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, 2022; Ramirez and Allison, 2022) that encompasses the complex nature of how an individual might perceive themself. Through out OAE literature the concept of personal growth through adventure (Hopkins and Putnam, 1993) has been shown to achieve positive developments in self- awareness (Hattie, 1997; Draper, Lund and Flisher, 2011; Asfeldt and Hvenegaard 2014; Smith and Thomas, 2023). Along with being interconnected with a plethora of self awareness concepts such as self-esteem (leather, 2013), self concept (Neill, 2003), self-discovery (Wigglesworth and Heintzman, 2017) and self determination theory (Ramirez, 2020). Ramirez et al., (2020) summarise the findings of three studies, each exploring different forms of OAE programme, sail training with Class Afloat (Marshall, 2019), mountaineering and canoeing school expeditions (Allison, 2021) and science and adventure on British Exploring Society youth expeditions (Ramirez, 2020), all of which found evidence supporting personal development through adventure. In the realm of expedition research which can be seen to run in parallel with adventure programming research Allison (2000) reported findings related to the multitude of facets of self awareness, and supported the claims that OAE expeditions has a positive influence upon affective learning and that this learning could be transferred to participants post course lives through a process they refer to as “the post expedition adjustment” (Allison, 2000, p. 26), evidencing the importance of reflecting over time post experience. Interestingly Ramirez and Allison (2022) revisit this line of inquiry, with an exploration of the influences of youth expeditions they identify a theme termed “Knowing thyself” (Ramirez and Allson, 2022, p. 9). Finding corroborating evidence for lasting influence of such programmes on participants personal growth and altered perspectives of themselves. For the purpose of this study and in the context of OAE, the term self-awareness is associated to an individual's ability to recognise and understand their thoughts, feelings, motivations and values in relation to their experiences on an OAE programme. The researcher recognises self-awareness as a fundamental component of personal development and that it is cultivated through reflective practice associated with experiential learning and the engagement in challenging outdoor experiences.

The findings of these aforementioned studies corroborate and affirm the finding of this current study. As evidenced by the excerpts of R11 (Figure 24), R10 and R13 (Figure 25) where they shed light upon the diversity of personal realisations attributed by respondents. Although brief this excerpt from R11 (Figure 24) neatly summarises how she felt the programme taught her vital lessons about herself.

Figure 24

"I believe I learned a lot about myself and how resilient and motivated I can be" **(R11, Pt 2013, Q13).**

In synthesising the thoughts of R10 and R13 it is apparent (Figure 25) that respondents attribute HWS-SWP participation with growth in their confidence in both the physical and mental domains.

Figure 25

"From Wales, I am very confident in my body's ability" **(R10, Pt 2019, Q13).**

"This program definitely gave me more confidence in what I can accomplish by challenging myself in new ways both mentally and physically" **(R13, Pt 2019, Q13).**

When considering the development of physical and mental domains, the work of Ramirez (2020) should be consulted. They explored with an SLE lens, the relationship between expedition participation and changes in self perception and found a direct relationship between the dimensions of Self Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2017) and participation. With reference to the development of intrinsic motivation enhanced by the relationship between mastery of skills and a perception of confidence. Corroborating with existing research R2 reiterated (Figure 26) in interview ten years post programme the idea that he clearly attributes his personal perspective and belief in his own capabilities to his programme participation.

Figure 26

"Those experiences were, were super informative for me because it gave me new perspective on what I was capable of, which I really appreciate and I definitely wouldn't have had had I not gone on the trip" **(R2, Pt 2014, 00:02:55).**

Whereas in contrast R18 offers her perspective (Figure 27) of a different aspect of self-awareness indicating that she found that the HWS-SWP enhanced her self-esteem, to the point where her newfound confidence helped her to overcome the challenge of adapting to university life. Developing to the extent where she felt confident to engage in activities outside of her academic interests and even embrace leadership roles.

Figure 27

"My first couple semesters were a tough transition from high school for me, and this programme boosted my self-esteem. It also influenced my extracurricular activities and led me to serving as a leader on the * **** and for the ****** ****** ****"***
(R18, Pt 2012, Q12).

"I continue to apply many of the principles that I learned prior to and utilised first-hand during my time in Wales" **(R18, Pt 2012, Q13)**

The consistency between R18's perspective and the literature are evident in the share emphasis upon the development of self-esteem (Hattie *et al*., 1997; Leather, 2013; Paquette *et al*., 2014). Further to this in a later question she indicates that over ten years later she still feels that the insights she gained about herself during the programme still influences her now. It is noteworthy to explore the nuances within the responses of R15 (Figure 28) as she articulates how her experiences in Wales helped her understand her limits but also gain a better understanding her own behaviours in her words "learning my own tells", revealing a deepening understanding of her own strengths and weaknesses, an aspect of personal development identified by Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth (2022).

Figure 28

"Yes, after my experiences in Wales, I know that my true limits are a lot further than I might think they are. During the program, I developed a deeper understanding of myself that has informed how I make decisions. For example, I learned what I have a tendency to do/how I act when I am nervous about doing something - sort of like learning my own "tells" - and how to work through them" **(R15, Pt 2018, Q13).**

"We did 4 off-site field trips… two of them we were doing very long hikes and we were doing data collection and It was very hot and very physically uncomfortable to do those long hikes, so I definitely was drawing on some of my Wales perseverance on those long ones".
(R15, Pt 2018, 00:19:56)

Whilst reflecting further upon the influence of the HWS-SWP upon her life, R15 relays (Figure 28) an example of how a personal realisation regarding her resilience gained in Wales helped her succeed in a different life context. Demonstrating the importance of perseverance in the face of adversity, leading to increased confidence and adaptability, which then influenced future experiences. Her statement referencing a personal concept of "Wales perseverance" further connects with existing OAE literature. Gillespie and Allen-Craig (2009) identified a significant development of resilience (ES = 0.607), when studying youth at risk, indicating that a development of resilience could protect against further negative life outcomes. Where R15 might draw upon her newfound resilience in a different context from that of Gillespie and Allen-Craig's research, it is nonetheless still important to her.

The following pragmatic example given by R5 underscores (Figure 29) how he has been able to transfer and utilise the confidence developed in Wales to his workplace. Alluding to the importance for him to find personal satisfaction in certain tasks that previously were a source of anxiety.

Figure 29

"So, for example, public speaking or presenting to a group at work. You know, it still makes me feel nervous, but I never doubt that I can do it. And once it's over, it's gonna be completely fine. And it, in fact feel gratifying" **(R5,Pt 2017, 00:12:33).**

Building upon the discussion regarding the transfer of personal realisations about themselves back to respondents lives, it is insightful to consider the thoughts expressed by S1 (Figure 30). When discussing why he remains so enthusiastic about the programme, he compares the 3 weeks of the programme to the 4 years of undergraduate study, clearly after more than a decade of facilitating the HWS-SWP he still marvels at the transformational potency of the experiences provided.

Figure 30

"So the best part of my job is watching those kind of transformations occur, right?..... You know when you see, when you see that kind of transformation over four years? It's really incredible, but to see it in three weeks, it just it blows my mind. It absolutely blows my mind and it's happening. I mean it's absolutely happening. You can see it every time they come back. It's just amazing, so that's what gets me excited about it" **(S1, 2023, 00:12:13).**

By integrating these insights from S1 into this discussion, a more comprehensive understanding can be gained of the theme of lasting influences upon respondents self-awareness, it can be seen that the underlying intention of this study abroad programme is to provide affordances for personal development along with academic knowledge.

Figure 31

"There was a huge impact on my life. I gained trust in my ability to tackle difficult things that I once thought were impossible. I felt a new sense of confidence in myself and learned how through shared experiences you can form deeper relationships than ever imagined" **(R9, Pt 2017, Q11).**

Whilst the perspective of R9 acts as reinforcement of this theme (Figure 31), it also acts as a bridge to the next section of this discussion. That is an exploration of the complex web of intersecting meaning in the data, that once generated into themes has led to an understanding of what components of the HWS-SWP respondents have attributed to their experience being life significant.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF PROGRAMMATIC ATTRIBUTES FINDINGS

The manner in which the transformative influence an OAE programme can leveraged, often hinges on the careful consideration given to how a OAE programme is designed and delivered and the important role this plays in facilitating meaningful learning and personal growth. Therefore, integral to understanding the reasoning why OAE programmes become life significant is the exploration of the programmatic attributes (McKenzie, 2003; Asfeld and Hvenegaard, 2014; Povilaitis *et al*., 2019) that have influenced participants perception of their life significant learning. To that end the following question was posed by this study to purposefully explore the programmatic attributes of the HWS-SWP.

Question 2 - What were the programmatic attributes of the HWS-SWP outdoor adventure education programme that contributed to the programme becoming a significant life experience?

Whilst numerous findings were generated from the data analysis in the pursuit of answering this question, the researcher acknowledges that the limited scope of this discussion to allow an in-depth exploration all findings. Whilst all identified findings are significant patterns of meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2023), the researcher has elected to discuss those most pertinent to the research objectives and the central overarching narrative.

4.3.1 Respondents attribute participation in attainable challenging activities with consequences as being fundamentally important to their experiences

Consistently respondents vividly recall specific moments of challenge, of which they attribute to being fundamentally important programme experiences that have led to life significant learning. These challenging adventurous activities are simultaneously both attainable yet have consequences associated with them.

Following a thematic exploration focused upon understanding the influence of the programme components that may have influenced respondents transformative experiences the finding of the influence of attainable challenging activities with clear consequences was generated. The thread of meaning within the data connected to this finding could be better described as a mooring rope. R4's comments (Figure 32) are very representative of the narrative within the data, whilst also raising interesting discussion point. The influence of the wide range of adventurous activities participated in during the HWS-SWP. These activities all present different opportunities for challenge (Berry and Hodgson, 2011; McGovern and Larson, 2022; Helker and Rurup, 2022) and consequently leads to individuals experiencing significant learning moments at different points throughout the programme.

Figure 32

"I think the interesting part about the programme, because there was such a breadth of activities that we were doing is I think that there was always something somebody might not be comfortable with You know. Yes, like coasteering for example, I very terrified because I didn't know it existed. But yeah. So that's like a good example of, like, OK, there's like something that's definitely outside of my comfort zone. And like that, you know, certainly I tell people about coasteering all the time. I did this crazy thing once ive never seen it done any other place else" **(R4, Pt 2011, 00:08:52).**

This is a unique attribute of the HWS-SWP that is under-represented in the SLE literature, which predominantly focuses upon expedition experiences, such as Outward Bound (Daniel, 2003; Gassner, Kahlid and Russell, 2008; Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth, 2022), Raleigh International (Takano, 2010), Schools expeditions (Allison *et al*., 2021), and The British Exploring Society (Ramirez, 20200. Such expedition experiences typically utilise singular modes of adventurous travel. The exception to this being Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021), who's study is most comparable to this study, as it explores a university summer OAE course that included a variety of activities, adopting a summer camp type structure.

The following dialogue with R5 during interview (Figure 33) brought to light specific references as to the types of activities that provided moments of introspection. Indicating that challenging activities such as rock climbing afforded him the chance to realise that beyond fear was the opportunity to gain confidence in his own ability. In essence R5's statement reflects the sentiments of Brown's (2008), where the concept that the metaphor of stretching comfort zones is utilised as a transfer mechanism for the learning derived from OAE programmes to be integrated into the lives of participants.

Figure 33

"But yeah, like so for example like I was scared like maybe didn't even know it, but I've intimidated climb of rock climbing or heights all of a sudden through the Wales programme proved myself I can do it. Seeing other people do it, that maybe are even less comfortable than I am. And just apply that overall to life so, you know, it gave me the confidence that, like I can do anything, even if I feel nervous about it, uncomfortable with it" **(R5,Pt 2017, 00:12:33).**

In continuing the exploration of this finding it is informative to consider the perspective of R2 (Figure 34), who physically and figuratively grasped the adventurous affordances of the HWS-SWP with both hands, then used the experience as a springboard to simultaneously delve into his passion for adventure and learn more about himself.

Figure 34

***"Climbing the Cneifion arete…. Being on the edge, roped in, where consequences were real fed my imagination, my self confidence and my adrenaline addiction…. I felt my edge here. Though being roped in, there were a couple of distinct moments about 2/3 of the way up the crack where I almost lost my grip and fell into the ropes/harness. Being on the edge and being able to hold on, keep my calm and persevere is an experience that has stuck w/ me"*(R2, Pt 2014, Q9).**

Comparably the comments of R2 reflect (Figure 34) the findings of Goldenberg, et al., (2010), where they found that participants placed value upon the process of challenging experiences being the catalyst for the formation of new perspectives that were then transferable to their lives post-programme**.** R2's statement further connects with the literature once the work of Deane and Harre (2013) is considered. Drawing upon the seminal works of Walsh and Golins (1976) and McKenzie (2003) as they reconfigure the Outward-Bound Process model into a more contemporary "Youth Adventure Programming Model" (Deane and Harre, 2013, p. 293). Within which they locate a critical programmatic attribute termed "Challenging yet attainable activities with authentic and clear consequences" (Deane and Harre, 2013, p. 298). A programme characteristic that, directly aligns with the finding of this study. As highlighted in R2's narrative (Figure 34) and is further evidenced in this excerpt from R3 (Figure 35).

Figure 35

***"My most significant experiences came at times when we would arrive to a particularly challenging activity and I would think to myself, there is no way this is achievable (and I'm sure I wasn't the only one thinking it). But time and again we pushed through and accomplished our goals. These experiences showed us just how far we could push ourselves physically and mentally. In our day to day lives we rarely test our limits and are happy to live in comfort. The Wales trip showed us that there is so much more we are all capable of and this has stayed with me ever since"* (R3, Pt 2022, Q9).**

As the finding of the influence of challenging experiences was explored further, a recurrent pattern of meaning came to the forefront. Evidently respondents attribute the process of being confronted with adverse situations that comprised elements of fear afforded them the opportunity to become adept at overcoming fear that in turn fostered personal development.

Figure 36

***"I definitely feel more capable of overcoming fear than I did before the program, which has been huge. Graduate school requires a lot of courage"* (R6, Pt 2013, Q13).**

***"I now feel like I can tackle things that I was once afraid of. I have less fear and more confidence in myself to handle anything life throws at me"* (R9, Pt 2017, Q13).**

The statements of both R6 and R9 reveal (Figure 36) that they perceived programme participation to assist them with overcoming fearful situations in life by carrying confidence gained with them through the remainder of their university career and into their adult lives. Reed and Smith (2023) found that it is commonplace for OAE facilitators to knowingly use fearful situations as a medium to promote personal development. However, they express concern that the manner in which risk and

uncertainty are leveraged within OAE practices, which has the potential to elitist negative fear responses. Seemingly in the case of the HWS-SWP, respondents experiences have been facilitated in such a way as to take fearful experiences and invert them into positive confidence building moments. Interestingly, Daniel (2003) indicated that the significance of an experience might have been reduced if participants had experienced wilderness programmes before. In contrast Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021) found that even those with previous outdoor experience still found their OE programme experience to be significant. Indicating that there is value in acknowledging the prior adventure experiences of respondents when considering how their perspectives have been constructed. Following a thorough review of the data it is evident that there was no clear separation between those who had previous experience and those who did not. Over half of the respondents regardless of previous experience went on to be Pre-Orientation Adventure Programme (POAP) leaders and co-ordinators at HWS after their time in Wales.

4.3.2 Respondents developed and engaged in continued reflective practices that positively influenced the life significance of the HWS-SWP

Respondents attributed their life significant learning to the process of reflecting upon their experiences, continued reflection has enabled the learning to evolve with respondents as they transitioned to adulthood.

The second programmatic attribute finding the researcher detangled from the data was that respondents attributed their life significant learning to the process of reflecting upon their experiences, importantly continued reflection has enabled the learning to evolve with respondents as they transitioned to adulthood. The discourse regarding the role reflection plays in OAE practices is relatively extensive (Mortlock, 2001; Leberman and Martin, 2004; Dickson, 2008; Asfeld and Hvenegaard, 2014; Bobilya *et al*., 2015; Stott *et al*., 2015; Asfeldt, Hvenegaard and Purc-Stephenson, 2018; Takano, 2022). Respondents perspectives of the importance of reflection align with a number of the aspects represented in the literature. When discussing the reflective processes in place during the HWS-SWP R4 gives an insight into the moments outside of programmed activities. Moments that encouraged them to reflect, discuss and share their experiences with other group members.

Figure 37

"I think our group really, whether it was structured or not, I don't remember but I do think that we were, you know at the end of every day when we're make dinner together or something like that. Like there's time to sort of like debrief and, you know, think about what we'd experienced and you know, like always, how was this experience for you know, what was your takeaway from that?" **(R4, Pt 2011, 00:14:33)**

Connecting with the experiential learning process advocated by Kolb (1984), Seaman and Rheingold (2013) investigated the facilitation of "Circle Talk" (p. 156) reflective practices, advocating for this practice a as means to make meaning of experiences contextually situated by the reflection process. Whereas in earlier works Dickson (2008), presents opposing opinions, problematising a number of aspects of the process such as the social dominance of group members and facilitators, the gendered imbalance in such situations and that quite simply put, for some people it does not work. Advocating instead for considerations to be given to individuals needs, the situation and intended learning. In corroboration with Gassner and Russell (2008), the previous comments of R4 (Figure 37) indicate that the organic reflection occurring during the HWS-SWP appears to be both inclusive and effective. Whilst making reference to aspects of life significant findings identified earlier, R15 also expresses the importance of reflection upon her experiences as she moved through different phase of her life. In this instance reflecting upon professional life influences.

Figure 38

"When I first left Wales, I thought the most important thing I would take away was the self-confidence and self-awareness I developed. At the time, I wasn't thinking about how my experiences could translate into a possible career. Now, after graduation and working, I realize how much my experiences in Wales inform how I approach my work, too" **(R15, Pt 2018, Q16).**

Bobilya *et al*., (2015), identified that perceived learning from a course had become an important reference point in participants lives whilst also noting that evolving insights emerged over time. A concept further supported by Takano (2022), in a study exploring a placed based OAE programme. Finding that the amount of time that elapsed post course did not detract from the learning more so enhancing it, and that the age of participants at the point of participation did not affect the degree of learning. Consistent with the findings of Takano (2022) and Bobilya *et al*., (2015), R1 also alludes to this interesting aspect, adding to the discussion noting that at a later stage she feels more equipped to understand what influence the programme has had upon her life.

Figure 39

"It is through time that I have been able to more fully receive the effect the program has had on me and my life" (R1, Pt 2017, Q16).

Leberman and Martin (2004) advocate for the inclusion of post course reflection exercises to enable participants the physical and cognitive space to reflect and interpret the meaning of experiences, which reportedly aided the transfer of learning. Takano (2010) also identifies that sharing and reflection post experience "seems to help the learning grow" (p. 91). Takano's findings corroborate

with earlier research (Hattie et al, 1997; Daniel, 2005), where the process of returning home, and connecting programme experiences with future life experiences is a powerful learning component. In this current study R4 recalls returning to campus after her experience in Wales and being inspired to continue taking part in adventurous activities and sharing them with others. Whilst also making reference to a particularly unique programmatic attribute of the HWS-SWP. Newsletters are sent via email every year to Alumni when a new programme begins, providing insights into that cohorts' experiences.

Figure 40

"S1 like is a great facilitator and has been always keeping us in touch, like even to this day, emails all of us who have participated in the programme with updates every day when he's there. So yeah, I think like he was also very instrumental in sort of our like continuing to keep some of like what we had experienced alive while we were on campus that following year" **(R4, Pt 2011, 00:16:14).**

By revisiting the perspective of S1 as he elaborated on why he emails programme updates to alumni and more importantly in this instance the parents of current participants, it is possible to gain confirmation that S1 is confident in the transformative influences of the HWS-SWP.

Figure 41

"So if I can share a little bit with the parents. Then I know that they will not only appreciate it, but they'll know that their students are getting the most out of this programme. And that when they come home to expect that they're going to be slightly different people" **(S1, 2023, 00:15:24).**

Expanding on this R4 describes (Figure 41) how even 12 years after her experience these annual emails trigger reflection and occasionally instigates further communication with fellow classmates, leading to further reflection.

Figure 42

"Yeah, so for sure, It's funny because every now and again I will like send a text message to somebody from the group we have, you know, every summer when he's like emailing us to be like, oh, did you see this one? this was my favourite day or like?" (R4, Pt 2011, 00:17:12).

"I love them! I look forward to reading them every year. They bring up a lot of memories from my trip and make me feel like I am part of a very special community - one where we were all fortunate enough to experience a once in a life time experience in Wales. And we all know how special it is" **(R10, Pt 2019,Q17).**

R10 enthuses about the emails, describing (Figure 41) how she enjoys reading them and looks forward to them jogging memories each year, also mentioning how they are instrumental in connecting her with a community of HWS-SWP alumni. R10's connection with a community of

programme participants connects this unique programmatic attribute of the HWS-SWP with Takano's (2010) recommendation for practitioners to consider the benefits of creating networks for participants to remain connected beyond the confines of their initial programme experiences.

4.3.3 The influence of interactions with other group members during the HWS-SWP is strongly attributed to life significant learning

A critical influence of the HWS-SWP was the interactions respondents had with other participants, whilst forming new life philosophies and their perspectives of themselves

The notion of creating a community of alumni serendipitously connects with the third and final finding to be discussed. The semantic meaning prevalent in the data generated a tidal wave of codes surrounding the critical influence of the interactions respondents had with other participants in forming their perspectives, leading to the generation of the finding that the dynamic nature of interpersonal relationships and group interactions had an influence upon respondents. This expressive excerpt from R19 describes (Figure 42) a moment of peak adventure (Mortlock, 1984), R19 clearly felt that experiencing challenging activities not only developed themselves personally but also brought the group closer together.

Figure 43

"The experience that stands out would be repelling (face first) down an ocean cliff along the rocky coast of Wales. With harness, helmet, and rope in hand, each participant was given the frightening task of taking that first step over the ledge. What was most interesting was how our group leaned on each other in that moment. Some of us, able to take the plunge and get to the bottom, waited patiently to offer support, while those of us on top provided encouraging words and reassurance to each person walking up to the ledge. There was true fear and gut-wrenching emotion in people who just minutes before were seemingly calm and confident. In this time of doubt, our group provided the needed encouragement for all of us to get down safely. In that moment, we, without question or hesitation, were there for our fellow participant and were as committed to their success as we were our own" **(R19, Pt 2017, Q9).**

Adventurous experiences acting as the catalyst of group cohesion is not a new concept in OAE literature (Glass and Benshoff, 2002; Duerden and Witt, 2010; Draper *et al*., 2011; Sibthorp *et al*., 2011; Deane and Harre, 2014). The development of group cohesion in its own right can be seen as a positive outcome of OAE programmes (Berry and Hodgson, 2011; Deane and Harre, 2014; Owen, Priest and Kotze, 2022), but has also been attributed to the personal development of participants (Hopkins and Putnam, 1997; Duerden and Witt, 2010; D'Amato and Krasny, 2011; Deane and Harre, 2014). Noticeably in R19's excerpt (Figure 42), the adventurous elements of the HWS-SWP are at times purposefully challenging and unexpected, alluding to deliberate influences upon the group processes by facilitators. In support of this notion, Rothwell et al., (2008) challenges the sequential

stages of group process (Tuckman, 1965), acknowledging the individuality of experience whilst advocating for the deliberate consideration of how the sequencing of specific challenges can influence the emotional dynamics of groups consequentially promoting personal development and group cohesion. R4 eloquently states how she perceived the interpersonal demands placed upon the group dynamic by the adventure experiences complimented her intrapersonal development.

Figure 44

"I think what's really fascinating about these types of outdoor experiences is the duality of having it be such an individual and collaborative experience at the same time. I think the size of our group (maybe it was 8 of us students total, plus guides) really allowed for a good group dynamic" **(R4, Pt 2011, Q14).**

A perspective endorsed by Sutherland and Stroot (2010) and further affirmed by Richmond et al., (2015), where they highlight the importance of the "Dynamic interplay of relationships" (p. 180). They see this interplay revolving around the evolution of hierarchies in peer status, a sentiment R5 shared during interview, expressing how he found this to be a helpful group process.

Figure 45

"There was people who are way less experienced, way more nervous about certain things than there was people who were, you know, very comfortable doing everything we're doing already. And so it was kind of cool to see, you know, almost where you fit in that hierarchy of things" **(R5, Pt 2017, 00:03:39).**

It can be seen from the programme schedules (appendix 13) HWS-SWP participants travel for three weeks around Wales, requiring considerable time spent in a minibus. North et al., (2022), locate this as the "third place" (p. 192) where the confined physical space can encourage unmoderated social interactions leading to learning in unexpected ways. As can the experience of living together in unique situations as expressed by R7, where he identifies moments outside of the programme as being significant.

Figure 46

"Being in Snowdonia National Park in that off-grid hostel was the best part of the entire trip. living that closely with people you hardly know can be a bit unusual, but I found it very pleasant. Even when the flood waters washed out the trail, we made the best of it. Mornings outside of that cabin are the sharpest memories I have from 10 years ago" **(R7, Pt 2013, Q9).**

The third place the HWS-SWP inhabits is the space between the programmed activities, referred to by R8 as the "*In-betweens*" (R8, Pt 2018, 00:20:35) as she discusses the moments where the facilitators

were not present, she refers to positive cohesive group dynamics and times of conflict, yet she acknowledges that the group cohesion and personal development continued to evolve. S4 in interview discussed the times in the programme, when they as facilitators were not present, yet they knew that personal development was still happening (S4, 2024, 00:18:14). The concept of isolation in the wilderness with small group can be seen to create intense social situations, a key programmatic attribute identified by Deane and Harre, (2014). Referencing the idea that at times conflict and its subsequent resolution is a fundamental component of small group dynamics. The intensity of this aspect was amplified for the students due to it being a study abroad programme. As impressed by R4 *"I think the cultural exchange aspect of the trip was extremely significant"* (R4, Pt 2011, Q9). The literature surrounding a model of combining study abroad programmes and OAE is relatively sparse (Nakagawa and Payne, 2011; Harper, 2018; Asfeld and Takano 2020). Notably the findings of Asfeld and Takano (2020) champion the model, noting the particular benefit of home nations students hosting participants (UWTSD Buddies) and for international students to benefit form the immersive nature of travel combined with adventure experiences. Along with the finding that programmes adopting such a model hold the potential to enhance participants global awareness and citizenship, which is critical in response the face of current global challenges.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

The overarching aim of this research project was to explore the life significance that has been attributed to participation in the HWS-SWP between the years 2011 and 2022. A qualitative retrospective methodology has been utilised to investigate this aim. The findings of this study are a reflection of the lived experiences of the respondents who have participated in the HWS-SWP, yet they can provide valuable insights into the possible longer-term influences of participation in other OAE programme formats.

5.1 Summary of Findings

In successfully reaching the conclusion of this study by achieving the research aim the two research questions posed have been answered, the findings of which are outlined in the subsequent summarising statements:

The overarching finding of the study is that respondents consider their participation in the HWS-SWP to be a fundamentally significant experience in their lives. This was affirmed by comparing the perspectives of respondents with Daniel's (2003) characteristics that outline what constitutes an experience to be deemed an SLE.

Question 1 - What life significant influences do alumni attribute to their participation in the HWS-SWP outdoor adventure education study abroad programme?

In specifically seeking to answer the first research question two key findings have been unearthed. Firstly, it was found that participation in the HWS-SWP fostered a lasting influence upon how respondents view their lives. Moreover, influencing their personal and professional attitudes, reinforcing environmental beliefs and changing how they view educational methods. Secondly, it became distinctly evident that the profound transformative influence of the HWS-SWP had a positive influence upon respondents personal growth. Manifesting in the form of improved confidence, self worth and the positive changes in how respondents viewed themselves. In summary respondents attributed their experiences during the HWS-SWP to significant interpersonal and intrapersonal developments.

Question 2 - What were the programmatic attributes of the HWS-SWP outdoor adventure education programme that contributed to the programme becoming a significant life experience?

In the preceding chapters it has been identified that OAE research still seeks clarification as to why educationally focused adventurous interventions are effective. This investigation has strived to cast further light upon this line in inquiry, by exploring the programmatic attributes of the HWS-SWP. With this goal in mind, three key findings came to light. The first being that respondents found specific moments of physical and mental challenge to be fundamentally important programme experiences that led to life significant learning. These challenging adventurous activities were seen to be simultaneously attainable whilst having appropriate consequences associated with them. The second programmatic attribute respondents identified as being fundamentally important, was the development of reflective processes during the HWS-SWP. In addition, continued reflection has enabled respondents learning to transfer to home life contexts and to evolve with respondents as they transitioned to adulthood. Lastly the interpersonal relationships developed during the HWS-SWP were seen to be a critical influence of the HWS-SWP. The interactions respondents had with other participants were developmentally instrumental, as their perspectives of themselves evolved and as they formed new life philosophies.

5.2 Scope and limitations of the study

Contemporary SLE studies exploring the life influence of OAE experiences have been able to explore impressively lengthy periods of retrospection. Therefore, the length of retrospection of this study could be considered short by comparison. The limited retrospection imposed by the selection of the HWS-SWP as a research group, is balanced against the opportunity to explore a programme with unique components that have previously been relatively unexplored. In a similar vein the sample size of the study was limited in comparison with other studies in the field. However, the depth of narrative data offered by respondents enabled a thorough exploration of the topic, through the use of RTA. Whilst the researcher acknowledges that the limited sample size and length of retrospection, combined with the unique components of the HWS-SWP does limit the findings of this study to be generalised to the wider OAE sector, it is still possible to determine how this study has provided a contribution to the field.

5.3 Implications for Practice and Contributions to the Field

The culmination of this research offers important implications for the OAE sector, particularly OAE programming. This section will outline these implications in the form of recommendations. In considering these pragmatic recommendations it is also possible to identify the contributions made to the field by this research project. This study affirms the importance of the affordances offered by outdoor environments when combined with facilitated adventurous activities as an effective educational platform. Furthermore, this study provides evidence to support the continued need for OAE programmes such as the HWS-SWP to feature within higher education establishments. Within

the OAE sector as with the HWS-SWP, the facilitator is central to the experiences of participants, as such this study highlights key messages for practitioners. Firstly, the importance of developing reflection practices. Dualistically developing the reflection practices of participants during the programme, whilst also endeavouring to develop a post programme community can aid the transfer of learning to different life contexts. In addition, enabling post programme reflections to continue to evolve, as participants progress through distinct phases of life. The creation and management of such communities should be achievable, with the application of modern communication technologies. Secondly the findings of this research function as a noteworthy reminder for OEA facilitators to place value upon the moments during programmes where they are either not present or otherwise engaged. These in-betweens or third places can be a site for continued reflection and un-moderated group interactions that can further enhance the transformational influence of the experience. Lastly a significant programmatic attribute of the HWS-SWP, is that it does not use a singular mode of travel or adventurous activity. This research suggests that practitioners and programme designers alike, should consider the inclusion of a diverse range of activities and environments into programmes. In presenting a variety of adventurous experiences, it can enable each participant to have different touchpoints of challenge within the same programme, further enhancing the affordances for interpersonal and intrapersonal development. As much as this study has contributed to advancements in the understanding of how programmes can be structured to bring about lasting life significant learning, it has also provided new insight into an emerging gap in the literature. The potential pedagogy of marrying study abroad programmes with OAE. This study has found that the novelty of participating in an adventurous study abroad programme can intensify the transformative influence of the programme.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

To further pursue the line of inquiry surrounding the transformative potential of OAE study abroad programmes, future research could involve a comparative study between participants who experience an OAE study abroad programme and those who remain in their locality to experience study at home OAE programme. Potentially providing intriguing insights into the influence of participating in OAE programmes in unusual contexts and settings. An additional layer of intrigue could be added by purposefully including or excluding educational input surrounding experiential learning. The use of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) as a data analysis tool has not been widely adopted within OAE research. This study has demonstrated that RTA can be a suitable tool when conducting OAE research that is concentrated upon the lived experiences of its respondents. Future researchers conducting qualitative SLE research might wish to consider utilising RTA in their data analysis. OAE has faced many challenges in its long history, one challenge being the search for the validation of its presence in educational settings. In pursuits to establish OAE as an educational entity in it own right, researchers

have sought empirical support and a deeper understanding of the educational and personal development outcomes afforded by OAE participation. Furthermore, there are increased calls for a deeper understanding of the processes involved with achieved these outcomes. This study has added further weight to the notion that an SLE theoretical framework is a fit for purpose means to shed light into the black box of OAE. Particularly when conducting longer term research, focused upon tracking changes in respondents perceptions of OAE experiences over time. In addition, it has been demonstrated that SLE research is capable of investigating the programmatic attributes of OAE programmes, assisting in developing a deeper understanding of the contributing factors leading to life enhancing learning.

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APPENDIX 1

OAE Programmes explored with an SLE lens – Findings

Author/s	Years of retrospection	Programme	Level of life Significance found	Life influences expressed	Components attributed to SLE
Daniel (2003,2005)	25 years	Spiritually orientated wilderness expedition	90% believed experience made a difference to their lives.	Reported a greater awareness of ○ God or higher being ○ Natural world ○ Self (attitudes, action, behaviours, belief & personal attributes)	○ Uniqueness of experience ○ Timing in life ○ Instructors involvement ○ Wilderness environments ○ Challenge ○ Connection of experience with life context
Gassner (2008)	9 years	Outward Bound wilderness expedition	Over 98% somewhat valuable positive influence on life.	○ 83% Personal development ○ 75% professional development	○ Final sea kayaking expedition most meaningful component ○ Group interactions and debriefs ○ Reflection time within programme ○ Challenge from outdoor activities
Takano (2010)	20 years	Raleigh international wilderness expedition	90% reported significance to life. 96% reporting influence on current self.	○ Values & attitudes towards work ○ Confidence taking on challenges ○ Global perspective ○ Network of friends	○ Diverse group of people ○ Age at point of participation ○ Natural Environment ○ Learning from challenges ○ Sharing experiences with those back home
Ramirez (2020)	6 – 63 years Average 27 years	British Exploring Society	70.1% rated significance 7 or higher on a 9-point Likert scale with 32.6% at 9	○ Interpersonal relationships ○ Influenced leisure choices	○ Identified components of self-determination theory, autonomy, relatedness and

		wilderness expedition		○ Ability to overcome challenges ○ Learned about themselves ○ Professional influences ○ Transfer to others ○ Environmental awareness	competence through the expedition affordances of ○ Contact with nature ○ Challenges faced ○ Connection with others
Allison *et al*., (2021)	40 years	Schools wilderness expedition	Study affirms the personal and social development from expeditions The Study indicated long term influence on life.	○ Confidence and independence ○ Planning and preparation ○ Teamwork / group bonding ○ Sense of gratefulness and desire to partake in public service ○ Effort and perseverance	○ Challenges presented by the outdoors ○ Identity formation ○ The social and logistical issues of group dynamics ○ Problem solving
Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021)	20 years	Summer university outdoor education programme	10/15 perceived the courses to be a lasting influence.	○ Interpersonal skills ○ Environmental behaviour change ○ Leisure style change ○ Self-discovery ○ Transfer to others ○ An increase in outdoor skills and knowledge	○ Five of the six SLE components identified by Daniels (2005) ○ Challenges from environment ○ Group dynamics ○ Alignment of the programme with the course objectives
Daniel, Bobilya and Faircloth (2022)	50 years	Outward Bound wilderness expedition	90% positive influence on lives.	○ Lessons and skills transferable to life ○ Increased confidence and courage ○ Increase self and social awareness ○ teamwork skills	○ Responding to challenge. ○ Uniqueness of experience. ○ Formed a reference point for life with context and perspective.

APPENDIX 2
Example of Respondent Interview Transcription

Interview Transcript R8

00:00:02 Researcher
OK, so the plan for this little chat really is, I've got a series of questions based on your survey responses and everything that's come in from everybody else. In a way I've, I've kind of build up a bit of a timeline from when you were back on the programme, Immediately afterwards and how the programme may have come back to influence you moving through your life, looking forwards, up until now, up until the 26 year old you back in 2018 how time flies, eh?
00:00:40 Researcher
So if that's OK, that's going to be the plan for today. Great. Just to get us started, though, a nice straightforward question. Overall, looking back on that experience, how was it for you? What was that programme like?
00:00:43 R8
Yeah, that sounds good.
00:00:56 R8
Yeah. I really love that programme. It was one of. So I've been on a couple of the abroad programmes with HWS and I did a semester in Ireland which was really it was unique just being there for a long time. But I thought this one was really catered to what I really was interested in, so more of that like outdoor recreation style of things.
00:01:21 R8
Yeah, it was fantastic. It was great people. I think, I Can't remember how long it was. It was it 2 weeks, 3 weeks. But that was the first like, like exposure, I'd got to outdoor education kind of and it was so fantastic, just like rock climbing. All of the like things I've never done before, which was so, so cool.
00:01:43 Researcher
And what was it? What was so fantastic about it? What really grabbed you? What was it about those activities or those experiences?
00:01:52 R8
Yeah, I think so, one that really stands out to me is when we went it to like Snowdon and that whole like the northern part of Wales. When, when we got to do like backpacking trips, just spending a night on a mountain, just things that I've never seen or done before, like I've done backpacking trips like front country camping. But, but I've never really imagined myself as being part of that scene until I went on this trip and was realising well I can do all of this stuff which was really, really cool to do. And I really, I think you have the activities that we did. There's still things that I talked about today and yeah, yeah brought me to kind of where I am.
00:02:34 Researcher
And so when you?
00:02:37 Researcher
Start experiencing. You talk about camping on a mountain. I I think you mentioned it in your survey, staying on Cadair Idris. What was it about the experience grabbed you so much at the time?
00:02:51 R8
Yeah, so I remember doing. Like the whole part of that experience, it was like we did the grocery shopping was the first thing which is hilarious, like looking back at it now, which I think I got oatmeal because I was like, I don't, don't know what to cook on, like on a mountain. So I got oatmeal for dinner, which was, like, not a great choice in hindsight, cause it was like stomach upset all night. But I do remember being at that lake that we first got to, and I was talking to one of my friends on the trip and she was like I dare you to go in and I said if you flip this quarter on heads, I'll go. If it goes on tails I'll not, I won't go in. And so the quarter went on heads and then just jumped into the water, which was great.

00:03:37 R8
On the way up and that was like a physically challenging experience too. Just being with a heavy backpack going up to the mountain and then just being up there and camping out in the bivvies, which was also really unique to me instead of, instead of you know, being in a tent. So we had this fantastic sunset. We were all just standing watching the sunset. The Stars came out at night. I was pretty exhausted. Right when right when it got dark. So some people stayed up later. But I fell like right right asleep in my bivi and woke up to the stars, which was really cool to do. And then I, I woke up to all these sheep surrounding us in the morning with like, with this creepy fog everywhere and it was just so, it was very memorable. Just all sorts of new experiences I didn't. I've never done before.
00:04:26 Researcher
And you touched on it, you're gonna realise that you can do this, you know. And what was it about like that experience and other experiences in that programme that caused you to think at that realisation about yourself? Is there anything specific about the programme? How it was run or?
00:04:43
That's a good question. Umm. *PAUSE FOR THOUGHT*
00:04:46 Researcher
What moments slotted together to make that that realisation come out?
00:04:52 R8
Yeah, I think, I think it was a lot of the types of activities that we were doing. So again, like I was used to being outdoors and spending time outdoors. But I, but I think the extent of more of the like riskier activities, so like rock climbing or like climbing up a rock and jumping into the ocean, kind of those like, more grand experiences were more of like, like wow, I'm actually one of these people that can do especially things like like rock climbing, which I, I talk about this all the time there's a huge barrier to entry for rock climbing and all sorts of like gear you need to know and like skills, you need to have like fear of height. And then just they, they put us out and said you can do it like you're doing this today and we just did it and I really flourished. I felt like I flourished doing that and, and it was also like they kind of eliminated that that barrier for me. So I was able to feel comfortable and try it out. I do remember the other one where we did, we did it it was like a fireman's repel, except they're like facing forward down the rock. And I was the last to go. I was so, so nervous, and I was with one of the student guides too, I was just up there and I was just, like, talking her ear off. And she was just like you just you have to go do this. You have to do it and then I did it. I was like, this is awesome. I was just so stoked at the bottom.
00:06:18 Researcher
Brilliant. You mention them, I'm assuming you're talking about, the leaders who would have been S3 and S4 that were with you.
00:06:26 R8
Yeah. And then there is the two like they were students, but they were kind of I think they were doing it for credit. There was B1 and B2 I think.
00:06:34 Researcher
OK. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I remember those guys. Brilliant. So you mentioned S4 talking to you on Tryfan when you're going up the mountain whilst scrambling how, how influential was their leadership during your experience? Can you explain that a little?
00:06:44 R8
Oh yes. Definitely. So they were a really funny duo because just their whole personalities. I've met so many different guides with God personalities in my career, and those two stick out to me because because they're kind of like humble. They're a little bit quiet, but also in a way that that they knew what they were talking about and they were able to be kind of funny about it. So anytime there'd be a challenge, we'd be, like, freaking out and being like, ohh, what are we gonna do today? Where are you taking us? And they would just be like, like you'll find out. And I really loved how, like, laid back that was and kind of just, like, go experience it for yourself. And then you'll, like, we're gonna take care of all the safety stuff, but you're just gonna see as we do it. And so S4. we were saying, which way do we go? And he just says up, it was really it was profound. Having that sort of freedom. To make our own decisions, to be the ones kind of making our own risk management decisions, which I think especially in the US maybe isn't as common to do. Like even when I'm guiding people, I'm always being like we have to be super extra safe here and you need to watch where you put your foot and it

should go right here. And, and it was really awesome being in a group of people that he just trusted to figure it out, and I really, really love that about it. It definitely has had a significant impact on what I try to do when I'm guiding today too.

00:08:21 Researcher

Yeah. So you now work in outdoor education?

00:08:25 R8

Yes yeah, yeah so, so I do all a lot of guided trips, backpacking trips, workshops, things like that.

00:08:33 Researcher

You mentioned it in your responses, but, that that was, kinda instigated from being on the programme?

00:08:43 R8

Definitely, yeah, yeah. Well I didn't even know that outdoor education was a thing until I went on this programme and like, it was my third year of college, I only had one year to go and I was like, like man like, this is something I would have loved to do for school and they have programmes around New York where I'm from, that are like expeditionary studies or they're outdoor education studies, and I'm like I should have done something like that because this is so awesome. And then my first job out of college was in outdoor education too, so I worked for ***** ***** and I worked with, What grade was it like? Elementary School kids, young kids, aged like 10 through 13 or so, teaching them outdoor adventure. So that was my first kind of foot in the door, but it was absolutely inspired by the Wales trip.

00:09:37 Researcher

Ohh that's fantastic to hear and I love that this is what you're doing now and you've studied further and that's amazing. That's really cool. Because you talk about when you came back from, you know, sort of moving through that timeline. You know, we've talked a bit about what you're doing now, but thinking back to just as you come back off the programme, you say in your form, in your responses that you felt confident and strong, I'm really intrigued how that came about and why.

00:10:09 R8

Yeah, definitely. I think, I think strong physically just because of doing those activities and when, when I was first like like kind of starting out in outdoor education, especially looking back and having some sort of concrete experience like that was really beneficial to me. So that helps, like with interviews over the next year, I was able to like, look back on that and be like, no, I'm capable of doing all these technical skills. And then I just felt like a really high sense of confidence coming back into our fall semester. It just felt a lot more social. It felt like more, more like ready to explore new things, which was really exciting. Yeah. Yeah. So right around. Yeah. I think it was around the fall when I started kind of feeling that way, a little bit more.

00:10:57 Researcher

Right. Yeah, yeah And how about the relationships within the, group dynamic, how was that experience for you on the programme and then kind of moving on afterwards did it last?

00:11:12 R8

Yeah. Yeah So we had a kind of a unique group there is. It was almost like half of the people were kind of already into the outdoors and half people were more just athletes and this is their first kind of outdoor experience. So so there was like a whole bunch of different people on this trip but we all got along so well for the whole duration of the trip. There was, like, you know, little quarrels here and there between other people but I was never really, I never felt like I was involved in those. But some of the friendships I made with even those like student leaders like B1 and I, became really good friends. We went to Ireland afterwards again and yeah, we did a little travelling together and so her and I got really close and then when we got back like as a group. I think we tried to stay all friends and we tried to make things work. But I think after a little bit, that most people kind of lost touch with each other especially just kind of as a group. There were a couple of I think people that just were closer already that were able to maintain those friendships. I think some of the people that I did go on the trip with are also kind of doing what I'm doing like in the outdoor field at least, environmental fields, living kind of close to me. So if they were ever to come by here I would be stoked. But it's more of just the distance of leaving college, I think.

00:12:36 Researcher
Yeah. It's like kinda life moves on, doesn't it? But the connections are still there, yeah.
00:12:41 Researcher
And you talked about kind of, you know, dealing with some trials and tribulations and difficulties in the groups and those sort of frictions. As your moving through into now your career has that experience helped you or professionally or any other aspects of the programme have helped you professionally?
00:13:02 R8
Yeah, that's a really great question. *PAUSE FOR THOUGHT*. I do remember there's this one experience that like kind of stands out to me and it was someone on the trip that just didn't really want to help with any of any of the chores. They didn't want to, like, help tie knots. They didn't want to clean dishes. And when everyone was doing stuff, they were just kinda, kinda like hanging back and standing there and then B1 got kind of mad at them and, like, called them out. They're like, what are you doing? You're not being helpful at all and then I think he made a comment. He was like, no, This is why I pay people like you to do this. And she got, like, very, very upset by that. And then she like Yeah, there's whole. A whole thing with that.
00:13:44 R8
I remember her confiding in me about how much that upset her and how, like degrading that felt, and now I think, like looking back on that. I encounter people like that all the time in outdoor education where they're just, you're their guide. So they expect you to carry out all their water. They don't want to do the dishes. They don't want to do anything which isn't quite the point of it. And I think that. Looking back at that, it was just like, Oh yeah, he sucks like that. That's awful for him to say. But now, looking back at that, if I were the professional or an outdoor educator at that point, it would have more of a conversation with them. And so I'm able to, like, reflect back on those experiences now from the perspective of like S3 and S4, B1, B2 and just see like, what they were kind of dealing with all these kind of new recreators and just having like that. Yeah, that new perspective gives me a lot of insight into, you know, how I would have done that or if situations like that arise now. I'm able to like kinda reflect back on that too.
00:14:48 Researcher
It's interesting because the programme is not just those adventure activities. The days when the leaders are there, it's all the whole thing, isn't it? The whole, and how is it being abroad? I mean, some people have asked, you know, should you travel to go and do this or is it the fact it being international really important? What do you think?
00:15:09 R8
I think it, I think it is. I think that if you're just in a new place, if you're abroad, especially you're already getting those, you know, new experiences that have a significant impact on your life. Even if we were just staying at the campus the whole week then that's probably something I still would have remembered differently, like walking into town. Just like meeting these new people and being kind of not isolated, but away from everything else in your life because then it like forces you to be right here, there's the time difference. And so then you're really just kind of focusing on what is in front of you rather than if you're here, then a lot of times you can just like, go home at the end of the day kind of plug back in almost instead of just being completely immersed in the experience.
00:15:58 Researcher
Yeah, it's, it's, that's what a lot have said that it’s really immersive. Like you're there, this is you, your little group and it's just super powerful, Yeah, and also something interesting I’ve picked up on you saying in your responses, which other people have said, is about the time in your life being really key so that being that age and from your culture and this sort of transitioning point from adolescence to adulthood.
00:16:25 Researcher
Did you feel that was key, I mean you mentioned it, but I'd be interested to hear what more you've got to say.
00:16:32 R8
Yeah, I think, So that also I was like end of end of college is when it was so it's right before you're about to you know go out and try to find a real job and go into the world and all sorts of things.

Everything's about to change. So I think that was like a really great yeah. It was a great time for that to happen.

00:16:51 R8

I think I mentioned in my responses too of like like when I came back it was a lot of that like just emotional experience where you're, like, remembering the friendships, you're remembering, like the experiences and like feeling more. And then I think that as you get older, it comes a lot more of like a logical process. And now I can look back at that with more insight, more perspective and be like ohh that's why that happened. Like that's why that made me feel really great or that made me feel really bad. Whereas back then, in the time it was just like you're in the thick of it and you're just feeling it, which was. See. It's awesome to do when you're young and stuff, but then when you look back, you're like, OK, that was really important to do.

00:17:35 Researcher

Yeah. And what? What now in your professional life, well professional and personal life I guess. What causes you to think back to those moments on the programme? What are the triggers. For want of a better word? You know, and is it helpful to look back?

00:17:53 R8

Yeah, I think. Umm *LONG PAUSE FOR THOUGHT*

00:17:56 R8

That's a good question. I think for me, most of the time it is in a professional sense and sometimes I get like memories, just like pop up, pop up in my brain. I don't know what triggers those, maybe just like I followed like their Instagram account that I think the university of Wales, and there's a photo of someone like jumping into the water. And I remember that, like, very last day of the course. And I was just. I looked at that and I, like, could remember all of it so clearly and like messaged our Snapchat group and like, do you guys remember this? This was so crazy, but yeah. So like things, just like things like that and that are pretty concrete. I think sometimes like when I'm talking to participants, they'll be asking about my outdoor experiences, and that's kind of when it comes up the most, but yeah, that's a tough one.

00:18:52 Researcher

So, there's, S1, emails. Do you get those? Do they kind of do they jog the memory.

00:18:57 R8

Ohh yes. Yeah, I think that's all. It's always fun to think about them being there right now or like it's happening. It's like, wow, they're going through all of those, like, feelings and emotions that I went through like 5-6 years ago. Yeah. Which is kind of exciting.

00:19:14 Researcher

Yeah, yeah, brilliant. Good stuff, you've already mentioned it, I guess, saying that you look back on it with a different perspective now, especially particularly for you as you're working in the outdoors, that your view of the programme has evolved and changed over time. Would you say that's pretty accurate.

00:19:36 R8

Yeah. Yeah, I definitely think so. And that's just from, you know, the feeling versus thinking like when you're in it, you're feeling it. And then when you're looking back, you're just thinking about how that's impacted, how who you are today.

00:19:50 Researcher

Yeah sure, so I think I'm almost through all of my questions. So it's just the last one being that often when you're asked to sit down and talk about something, you know you might be thinking there was a question I was going ask, or something you had in your mind that we've not really discussed, or something you had in your mind, that you'd thought I'd like to tell me about.

00:20:15 R8

Ohh let me think for a second. *PAUSE FOR THOUGHT*

00:20:17 Researcher

Yeah, no worries.

00:20:27 R8

Yeah, that's like a that's a tough one.

00:20:35 R8
No, I think that like like a piece that was significant in the programme too. So you've got these, like, really big adventures which are like, so, so cool to do. But then a lot of the programme too, that's really like, impactful where those you know those like, those in-betweens, where we're like getting pizza at the pizza shop or we're getting ice cream. And I remember the day before we hiked Snowdon, which was like the sunrise hike up Snowdon. We got the pizza, we got the beer and then two people ordered like these huge ice cream things. Right after dinner, we all wanted to go, but they decided to get ice cream, and then they got these, like, crazy sugar rushes and they like going back to that cabin. They were just, like acting out. And we were just all trying to go to bed at 5 o'clock and that whole cabin experience was kind of like that. Where we ran out of water for I think the rest of the night, like the water, stopped working and then someone had to go try and hike up the river to try and fix it, and then the sheep started going crazy. It was just like, All of these like little these, Little in-betweens that were so significant to and I think bonding that maybe like, the leaders don't see or like maybe like S1 doesn't see. It's just like all those like in-between moments are just as significant, even though you're not like, you know, on the face of a rock cliff or something like that. Yeah.
00:22:01 Researcher
Sure. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. That's a really good. And the whole like time in the minibus driving places, all those conversations.
00:22:08 R8
Ohh yeah. The grocery store like.
00:22:11 Researcher
Yeah. And it's because you just become this awesome little tight group, forced together by all the experiences, and then all that stuff comes with it, doesn't it? Yeah, that's really interesting. Ohh, that's marvellous. Thank you. Unless you've got anything else, we're going to stop that there. So then there's less to transcribe later.
00:22:32 R8
Yeah, sure, yeah.

APPENDIX 3
Example of staff Interview Transcription

S4.mp3 Transcript

00:00:01 Researcher
There we go. So that's running should be able to pick up what you say. So. Yeah. So just, just to confirm that I'm recording now and that you've assigned a informed consent form and you're happy for that and and that we're gonna chat about this life significant stuff.

00:00:18 Researcher
So like I was just saying before I started recording the the feedback around facilitation and and to the programme in general is they, they absolutely love it, you know, and they seemingly have got lots out of it, which has stuck with them for a really long time and like you were just saying, it is really nice to know that that's the case, isn't it?

00:00:40 S4
Yeah.

00:00:47 Researcher
So I'll kind of launch into kind of one of an easy question just to get us started, Just for you, what if you were to describe, so you were between 2014 and 2018, was it? Or is it longer than that?

00:01:01 S4
No, Yeah. No, that was that was probably it, I I was wondering the other day, like how long, like how many of them I did. It was hard to piece them together cause I was overlapping with the Michigan programme as well.

00:01:13 Researcher
Of course, yeah.

00:01:16 S4
Yeah, so 2014 year I started so and I, yeah, I left the Uni 2018, so it must have been the last one I did then. Unless we didn't do one, might not have been one in 2018. Or 2017 some like that.

00:01:26 Researcher
Yeah, I think there might have not been in one in 2015.

00:01:31 S4
Oh fifteen was it then.

00:01:32 Researcher
Or Hobart, but they could well have been the Michigan ones, though, because there was a year where they postponed it because it was too successful or something.

00:01:41 S4
Yeah, they're too many applicants or something.

00:01:42 Researcher
That's right. Yeah, it was making all the other programmes look bad, I think, yeah.

00:01:47 S4
Yeah, 2015 sounds right then.

00:01:49 Researcher
Yeah. So yeah, thinking back to sort of running the programme, how would you describe it if you were saying I used to do this programme for these Americans, how would you describe to somebody?

00:02:02 S4
Ohh man. *PAUSE FOR THOUGHT* It was a cultural sort of a Welsh cultural. Umm. Programme heavily influenced by outdoor activities I suppose, so we'd take a group of university students to every corner or as many corners of Wales as we could to show them the highlights of, of the country because I mean, I think the great thing is, is everyone who runs it or is part of it thinks that, Wales is such a good country to show off. It's got lots of lots of history, sort of everything from industrial stuff to, you know, a lot more, a lot more recent stuff with sustainability wise. So I was just trying to tie, tie all those kind of things in really, but putting as much outdoor stuff included as well, just to keep everybody's appetites sort of going, I suppose, keep their energy levels high.

00:03:15 Researcher
Sorry, carry on.

00:03:15 S4
No, yeah. I was just thinking, just like they sort of they provided I think some some of the more sort of like wow factor moments as well.
00:03:28 Researcher
The activities did.
00:03:30 S4
Yeah, maybe gave more of the memories, but it also allowed us to sort of drive home some of the sort of more factual like, parts of the the syllabus, I suppose.
00:03:44 Researcher
Right. Yeah, yeah. We'll come back to that factual bit in a moment, if that's alright and like kind of what you were trying to put across during the programme. But you sort of alluded to it, I suppose, in that you're saying sort of sharing how wonderful Wales is, but what did it mean to you as a, as a facilitator, as a leader, to get the chance to, to run that programme?
00:04:08 S4
At the time, it felt pretty, pretty sort of massive for me, I just just graduated and been offered three weeks of of work, paid work to to do exactly that, you know, put my put my degree to use, put my qualifications to use, and and show off a country that, yeah, I am pretty passionate about, and and get to places that and explore places with people that were really enthusiastic and you wanted to be there wasn't sort of groups of people that were sort of thrown at you. It was. It was those volun-told to be there. They paid their money there, and and they were lapping up every minute. So it was it, they made it really easy and and and enjoyable because, yeah like it's classic sort of American enthusiasm on on every step of the way.
00:05:15 Researcher
Yeah, yeah, yeah. I've, I've, I've witnessed that myself, they're just so keen, aren't they? And they're so keen in all aspects of the experience, don't they, whether it's photographing a sheep or climbing a mountain. They're just super keen aren't they.
00:05:25 S4
Yeah, yeah, yeah. *SHARED AMUSEMENT WITH RESEARCHER*
00:05:27 S4
Yeah, absolutely, yeah.
00:05:29 Researcher
That's great. And and so So what, what, what was the factual stuff? What was the in your mind, what was the academic or the educational focus of of that programme when you were during the years you were running it?
00:05:45 S4
So I know there is a tie. Well, I was trying to think the name S1. You know, heading over in that first week with with trying to tea up a little bit of stuff, I know that he had been sort of covering stuff back in back in the States surrounding, It just seemed to be surrounding Welsh culture and I don't know whether it was sort of just, they used Wales because it's, quite rich in a diverse way of, you know, like I said, the sort of industrial stuff, I know that he's sort of tied in Snowdonia into sort of the first Everest expeditions and bits like that. So it's almost like how you can explore, the sense of place of of one country or one area in a lot of depth and tie it in. So I don't, I don't think it's necessarily about Wales, but about how, how even like small countries, small places can have so much history and and the ways of exploring that it doesn't have to be, or history doesn't have to be about head and head in books and just reading about what happened. You can, there's ways of going out and experiencing that you know. Taking them to big pit in the South Wales and seeing the open slate mines in in North Wales and and talking about the sort of Bronze Age history and the Preselis.
00:07:17 Researcher
Sure.
00:07:27 S4
You know it, it just sort of every corner, and the fact that you had people like S8 and S9 assist in those days, you you knew that the sort of the content of what we were trying to drive home to them was all about that, yeah. A sense of history and heritage that these places hold on to. The importance to them in the in that sort of community and and the attachment that local places had to their history, however long ago it was.

00:08:05 Researcher
Yeah. Yeah. And you were saying earlier that the you used adventurous activities as kind of, I don't know, I don't want to put words in your mouth but kind of like as the medium, the way of driving home that message, how how valuable do you think those adventurous experiences were to the students?
00:08:27 S4
Well, you mentioned earlier about the one trip being the one trip being cancelled because of popularity and I don't think that would have been the case without any of the activities taking place. Yeah when you when you consider your the the sort of client market they were going after sort of young early 20s, early teens, late teens, whatever university students. Young, fit people, they want to go off travel and have adventures, so taking them, pushing their sort of boundaries, introducing them to not just new environments, new skills and new activities and or activities that they used to put in new environments. And just think you know, it's, there's plenty of evidence out there showing how beneficial sort of jumping outside the comfort zone and all that is. Yeah, in so many different ways. So having having those to to pair with the, that that content, I I yeah, I don't think it would have been half as a successful programme as it has been and still is, without any of that really.
00:09:47 Researcher
I think you agreeing from what I've you know from what I've read and then listened to in the kind of responses, you know totally, that's a huge, huge part of the programme for them. And then yeah.
00:09:58 S4
Yeah, the excitement factor doing that that as well, you know? Yeah. If you said, I mean, there's probably certain countries. If you said, you know, do you wanna go on a three-week sort of cultural tour to somewhere like China or and maybe even France, you know somewhere that's a bit like less familiar than, because we're an English speaking country really, we've got the Welsh language but I'm and that again, that was a sort of a that is an appeal to them in a way, isn't it? You know, the crazy jumble of letters on every sign post and that.
00:10:28 Researcher
Yeah. Yeah, yeah.
00:10:44 S4
But when it's a completely different culture, you you might sell trips that are just culture based and going to see museums and a bit slower pace than when I think the fact that we are, you know there there's a lot of similarities between us. There's so you have to add that other element in. It would be as good to sell otherwise.
00:11:05 Researcher
Yeah, sure, sure. So then you know when you were sort of structuring the programme together to get the right balance of culture and and how to use the adventure, was that something pre planned or did, was there an element of doing it on the hoof when you met the people or how did that all kind of work out in the end?
00:11:31 S4
The, a lot the of planning certainly for the first one or two was done prior to me being involved, I'd say, and I think they're going on a bit of a blueprint as maybe the year, year before, so I'm pretty sure I wasn't there. Yeah, there's there's at least two. Yeah, I want to say 2 before I started.
00:11:52 Researcher
Yeah, there might even have been three, I think.
00:11:55 S4
Yeah. Yeah. So they they already had a decent blueprint of what worked. The the way we spent and then you know we had a block in North Wales or South Wales block and it was just sort of what we did and where we went and it was determined more by the weather and conditions out and about really.
00:12:18 Researcher
Right, yeah.
00:12:23 S4

You know, we had we had days planned to do stuff that we we flipped on the on the head to include, you know, there was one year that we we did go to big pit because it was a particularly bad day out so we added that in really I don't think it was necessarily part of an original plan, but now thinking about that, that could have been Michigan, actually.
00:12:47 Researcher
Could well be, could well be!
00:12:49 S4
Just trying to think of the people that were there.
00:12:52 Researcher
They all merge together, don't they?
00:12:57 Researcher
Yeah, especially cause you at times you would overlap programmes, wouldn't you'd be working on one and then duck out and go and start another one, yeah.
00:13:02 S4
Yes. I'd do. Yeah, it was two weeks of Hobart then three weeks of Michigan, yeah.
00:13:09 Researcher
It's an. It's an intense period of time that is.
00:13:12 S4
Yeah.
00:13:15 Researcher
So sort of staying around the adventure and culture kind of balance of stuff, but and your interaction within that and your place within that I suppose. So you were obviously responsible for facilitating and being with the students every day, making decisions about what they did and all and so on. But then those interactions with them as humans, as people from person to person, and the decisions you made. How, Kind of, how did you decide each time to to react in different situations? What what what things go through your mind when you're facilitating stuff like that? Those sort of long three-week programmes?
S3 PAUSES TO THINK HOW TO ANSWER…
00:13:59 Researcher
Tricky question, isn't it?
00:13:59 S4
I think, yeah, I think that its, you know, the first week it it, it comes. It's a it's a brilliant thing to be able to work with the group for three weeks. I know it's it's pretty, pretty rare, and even the work, the work that I do now in Brecon, having a group for a week and developing that is great, and you can, you know, the longer you get to spend with groups, the longer you know, the better, better relationship you get to form you, everything becomes a bit more open, you sort of, you climb the ladder in terms of how open and honest you can be and you get to learn ticks and traits and stuff like that. *PAUSES FOR THOUGHT*
00:14:48 S4
So that I would say the first week was would, probably probably be a lot more scripted, and then you know, but, but by the end of the first week, and especially when you are spending that first week, trying to put people again at, you know there's a few days where we're I think in the first week there's often a a day down on the Gower with a bit of climbing, so you're instantly putting people in that sort of stretch stress zone and you start to see the real them. Then when your starting to break those barriers down quite quick, the end of that first week, you've got a good idea of who are you dealing with and who needs, who needs what box ticked sort of thing, you know who we can push a bit more.
00:15:38 Researcher
Yeah, yeah.
00:15:40 S4
Who's, who's going to break if we push them too much. Who can, Who's competent as well like. You know who we can let the reins free up a bit more on stuff.
00:15:52 Researcher
Yeah.

00:15:54 S4
Which which then was ideal for going into that like second week in North Wales and *PAUSE FOR THOUGHT…* then being a lot more like that the second week, it always was like we're going up to North Wales then, then we're coming back then and what we do in-between, we'll be really fluid. I mean I think the people to to really highlight here though, the the buddies.
00:16:25 Researcher
Right, yeah.
00:16:26 S4
I think, depending on what who you had as buddy and how much trust and faith and whatever you had in those individuals massively influenced on how you managed that group and what you push forward, what you allowed to, you know what you were able to sort of remotely supervise. Because I think the the summer programmes were probably almost more significant for the buddies than anybody? Umm, because they were very often handed a lot of responsibility.
00:17:15 S4
That they, yeah, they maybe didn't expect. Yeah, I do remember, sort of sending sending groups up or part way up Snowdon just, you know, you can finish off, or you go down that different route and we'll go around the other way and pick you up that sort of thing.
00:17:35 Researcher
Yeah, yeah, yeah.
00:17:36 S4
And that that gave the group then complete freedom of any sort of authority, in a way, I suppose you know however much of a sort of good bond we had there's there's always gonna be a a different type of relationship, so allowing them that sort of freedom on the mountain or to walk part the coast path back to the campsite for a couple of miles and un-supervised or unchaperoned.
BRIEFLY PAUSED FOR THOUGHT
00:18:14 S4
Would have would have potentially given, some people cause cause again, I assume, and I mean them being in university and going over, coming over to Wales would would be a massive step up for a lot of them. You know, being in that kind of environment without that sort of supervision would be such a new and potentially or potentially freeing and but potentially have quite an anxious time as well. You know for them to to deal with that. So there's potentially some quite significant moments that we didn't actually witness ourselves but the but buddies would have been part of.
00:18:56 Researcher
Yeah, yeah, but those moments were kind of, I guess, remote facilitated by you by being able to build those relationships and with the buddies help, then let them free for those times. Yeah. Yeah. Which is a testament to the the way that the programme put together, I guess, isn't it? Yeah.
00:19:12 S4
I think so yes.
00:19:16 Researcher
It's it's really interesting listening to what you're saying, it's really kind of lining up a lot with with what students have been saying, which is really cool and obviously well or not obviously, but a big part of what I'm finding is there's huge amounts of personal development for the American students and and how all sorts of interpersonal relationships, all sorts of amazing personal developments. But when you were you know, seeing the students arrive and then leaving at the end of the programme, what sort of development in people, what sort of changes did you see and what do you think their biggest takeaways were when they left? What do you think was their biggest? Yeah. What were they taken away with it from it?
00:20:07 S4
I mean from start to finish you always see it changing. It's confidence would would be something, but us, us probably biassed to the whole sort of fact that, you know we've got to know them, so they are just more themselves, by the end of end of the three weeks.
00:20:23 Researcher
Yeah, sure.

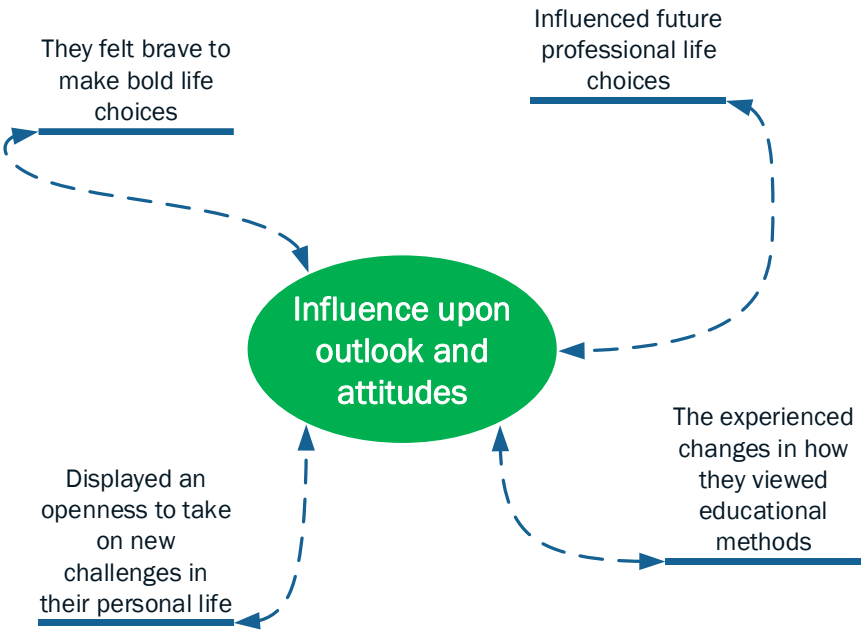
LONG PAUSE FOR THOUGHT S4 CLEARLY TRYING TO RECALL CHANGES IN PARTICIPANTS.
00:20:37 Researcher
It's tricky. One to remember, isn't it? But also kick yourself in their shoes, I guess, isn't it?
00:20:43 S4
Yeah, I I definitely feel like it for certain individuals, or a decent percentage of the groups it it really sort of opened their minds up to, it's it's kind of almost everything that the programme was designed to do, like the fact that history and and cultural places can be interesting.
00:21:17 Researcher
Yeah, sure.
00:21:18 S4
Now. Cause I think I I certainly was at at that sort of age I think, sort of a bit quite uninterested, really, in going to find that, you know, I wanted to go off and do things I wasn't really interested in necessarily, where I was doing them and what was significant about that place.
PAUSE FOR THOUGHT
00:21:48 S4
They're they're definitely like personal development in terms of like self-confidence, confidence in in their own ability to to back themselves and push themselves and and be comfortable with a little bit of the unknown side of things and it it definitely changed, like the first, the first group I worked on, I think there was like 24 of them.
00:22:12 Researcher
Right.
00:22:14 S4
So the fact that it's such a big group is quite easy for some individuals to hide away.
00:22:19 Researcher
Sure.
00:22:21 S4
But again, over the three weeks we were able to spot these in these particular people and offer them either extra assistance or sort of other opportunities to prove themselves sort of thing.
00:22:39 Researcher
Yeah, yeah, sure
00:22:41 S4
That except you could see that they were, they may be capable, but it would just a step half a step behind, and then there's so many other big personalities around, in a in quite a typical American way that they were they were just like, not pushing themselves to the front of the queue like everybody else was, and then maybe less messing up. So was I can't remember the individual's name in particular, I remember when one of the students who we had we had spotted in and I think is during the coasteer, that we saw her properly flipped the switch and it just brought her alive. You know it it maybe it managed to see, we'd seen her seen her potential, we knew she had this want, this drive to to push herself and and she felt that it this was the place to do it and she, she probably came alive at the end of that last week then.
00:23:46 Researcher
That's great, isn't?
00:23:47 S4
Yeah, there were, there were a handful of really powerful moments. Certainly the the one sun rise on Snowdon that we did, that we had just perfect conditions for they properly let loose on that like. proper American.
00:24:09 Researcher
That's that's brilliant. I'm kind of through my kind of rough structure of what I wanted to chat about but when, we were when I, you know, was messaging you in organising this chat was there anything you thought in your head. I really tell Jon about this part of being involved in the programme and and if you've not brought it up, is there anything like that that you've you've had thoughts about or even while we've been chatting.
LONG PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

00:24:42 S4
I wanna say yes, but I don't think. I don't think, there's there's, there's more stuff that came into my to my head than I was expecting to to it's it's nice to be properly rejog it, I was trying to talk it through with S6 earlier. We were kinda trying to piece certain years together. I yeah, I could definitely say more on like, just my involvement on it and the fact that it was, it did feel like quite a big thing for me at the time, and felt quite significant to be part of like a proper big programme, I felt quite privileged to be fresh out of uni and like a part of something that felt like I was using my degree straight away really.
00:25:29 Researcher
Yeah, yeah.
00:25:32 Researcher
So did you feel like the what you'd learned through university and all the the theories underpinning everything and understanding about facilitation, all those sorts of things that it kind of like all of a sudden, like, oh, I've gotta put this all to use, you know?
00:25:45 S4
It was. It was sort of like being able to see it sort of pennies dropping. So each year it wasn't all straight away, for those, definitely sort of some of that leadership theory and and things like that, just really tying in. I think S3 did a, did a good job of sort of mentoring me through that in a way as well. Umm. He he probably didn't know it, but that was, yeah. It it all felt quite significant and definitely sort of drove me to want to do more work along those lines as well. To to put put the degree to use through work.
00:26:39 Researcher
Hmm.
00:26:40 S4
Because as you know, it's quite easy to pick up work in the industry, that's just sort of a bit more, what’s the word, factory style, so yeah.
00:26:58 Researcher
Yeah, great to be great to be involved in something a bit more meaningful.
00:27:01 S4
Yeah.
00:27:03 S4
Yeah, yeah, yeah. As much as as much fun as the other work can be as well is, it's yeah, it's just good to add a little depth to the day.
00:27:14 Researcher
Yeah, yeah, sure.
00:27:17 Researcher
Oh, that's amazing. Yeah. Unless you got anything else. We'll. I'll stop recording there. But don't disappear just yet. If that's OK with you. Yeah, yeah. Awesome.

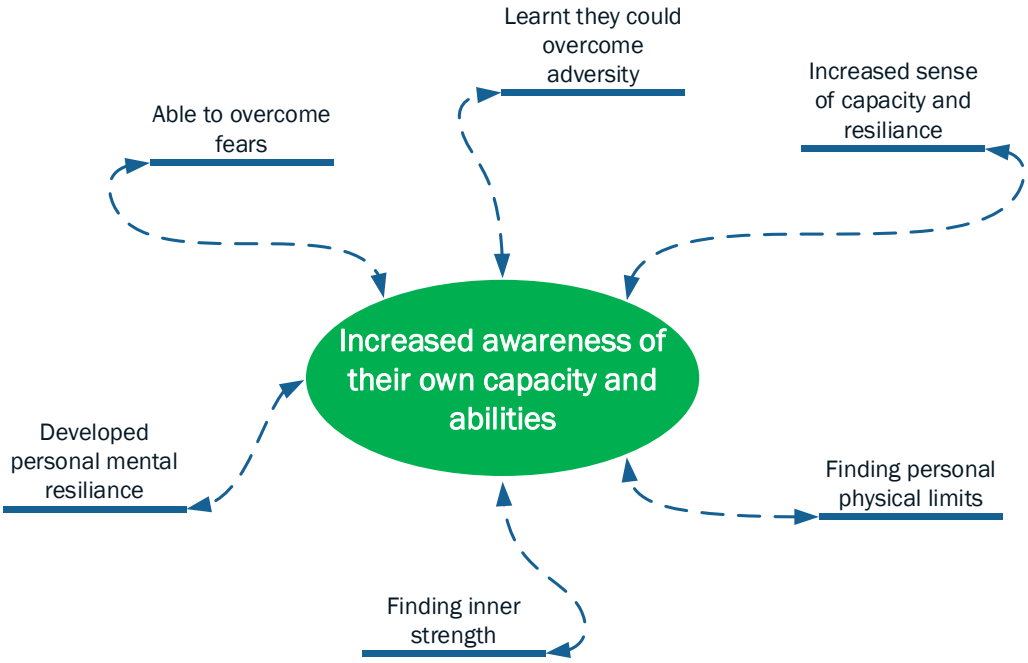
APPENDIX 4

Initial themes - Thematic Maps

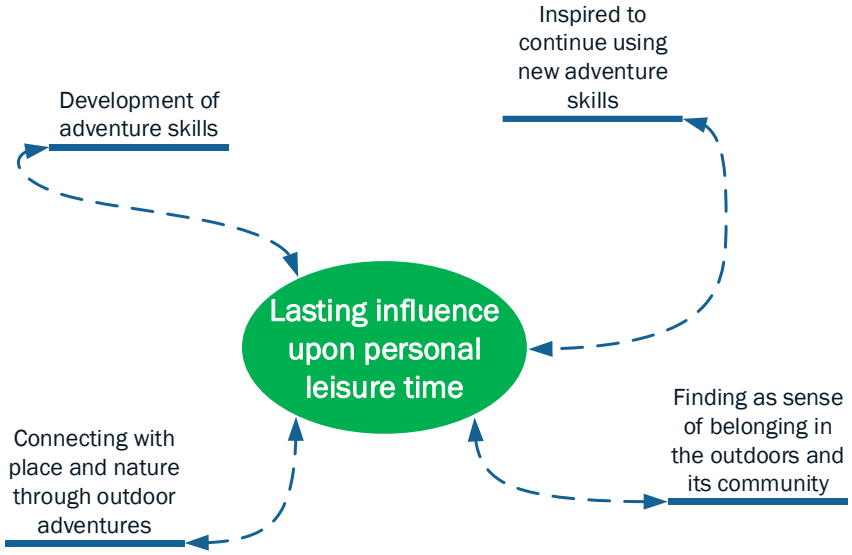
SLE outcomes - Survey Data
Initial theme 1 – Lasting influence upon outlook and attitudes



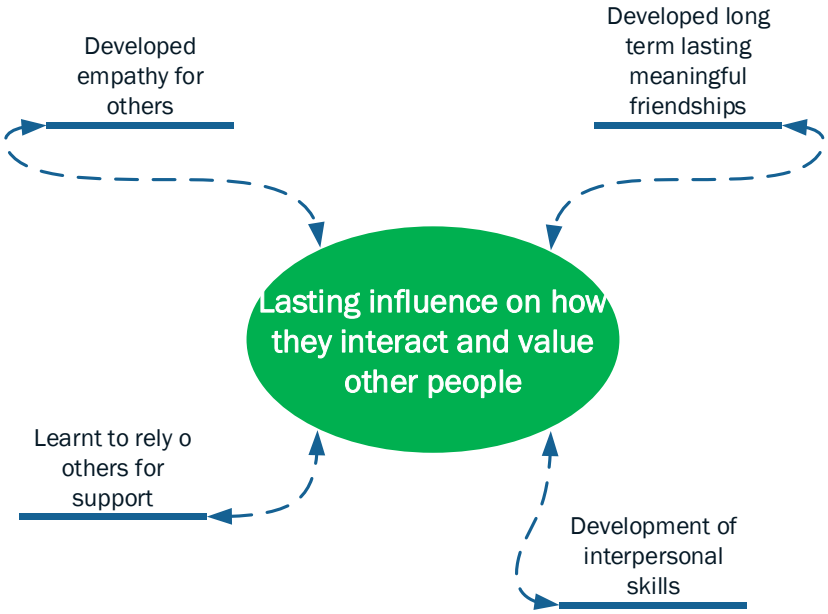
SLE outcomes - Survey Data
Initial theme 2 – Increased awareness of personal capacity and ability



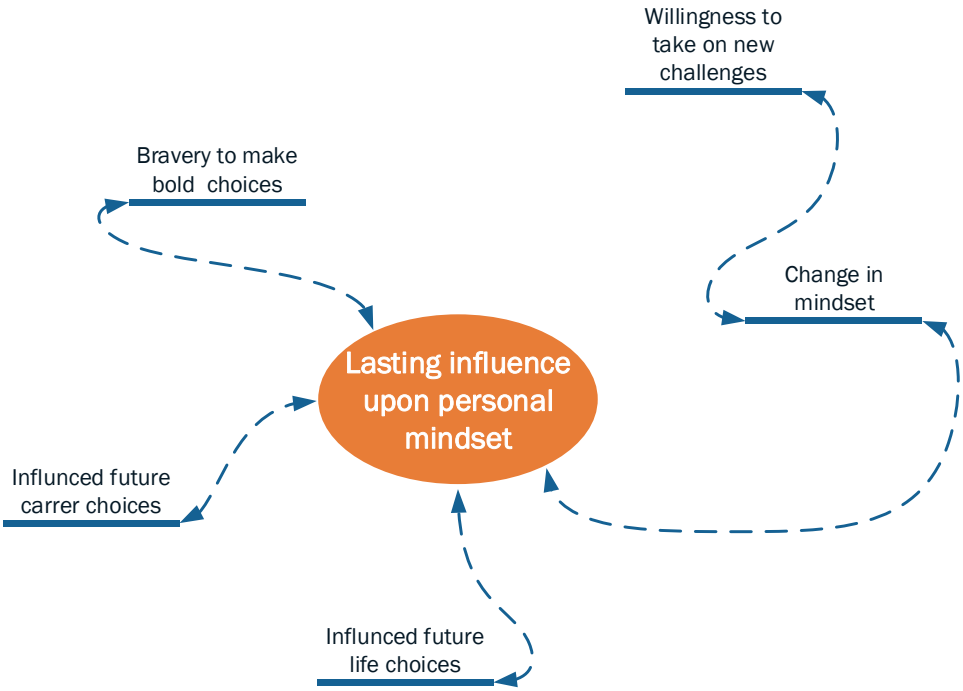
SLE Outcomes - Survey Data
Initial theme 3 –Lasting influence upon personal leisure time



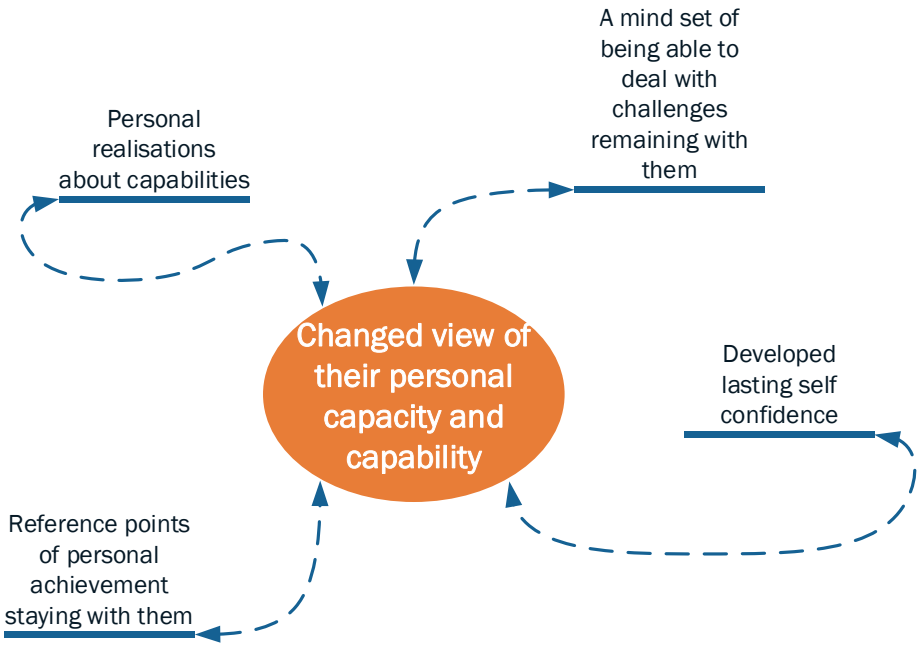
SLE Outcomes - Survey Data
Initial theme 4 –Lasting influence upon how respondents interact and value other people



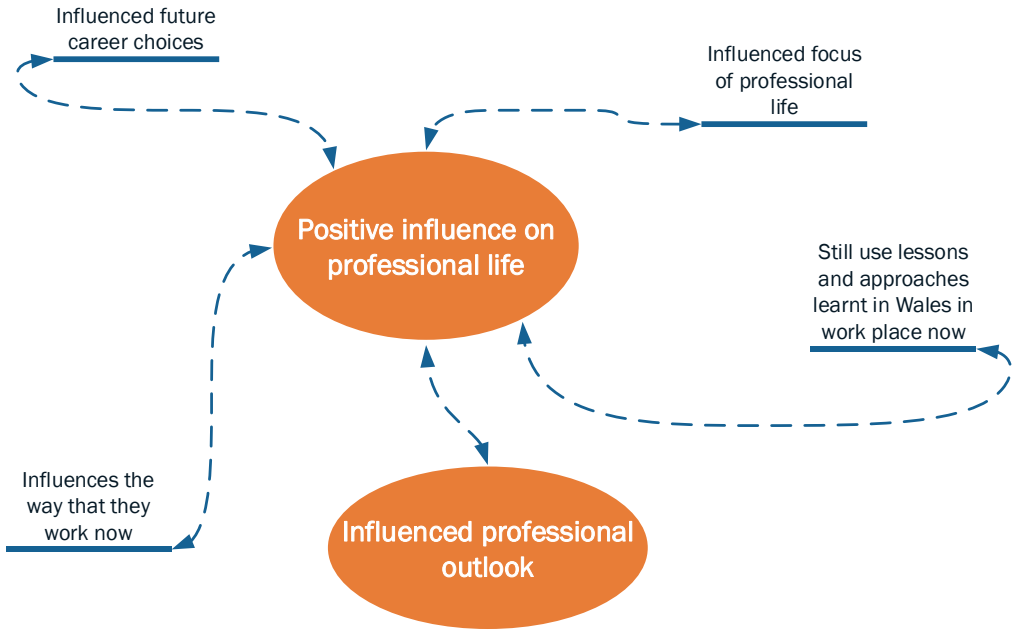
SLE Outcomes – Interview Data
Initial theme 1 –Lasting influence upon personal mindset



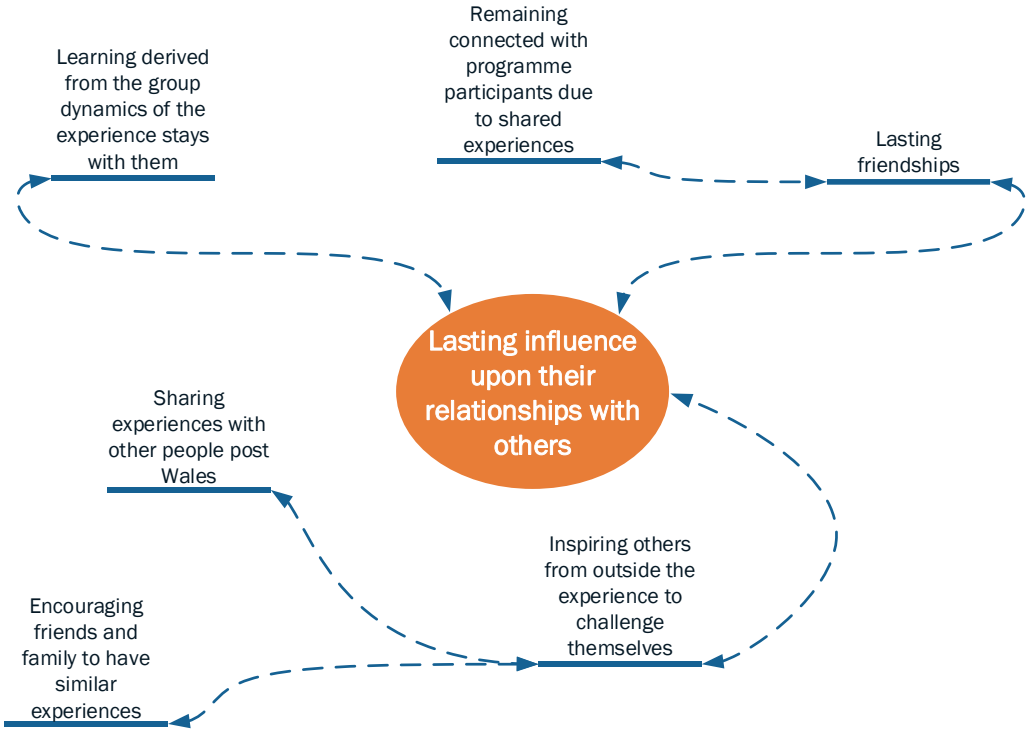
SLE Outcomes – Interview Data
Initial theme 2 –Changes in how they view their personal capacity and capability.



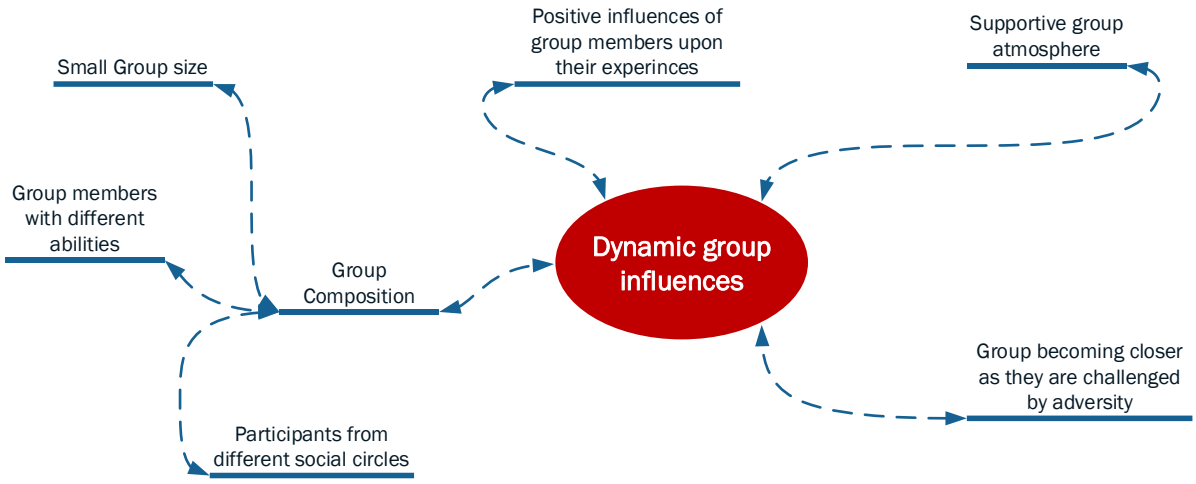
SLE Outcomes – Interview Data
Initial theme 3 –Positive influence upon personal life and professional outlook.



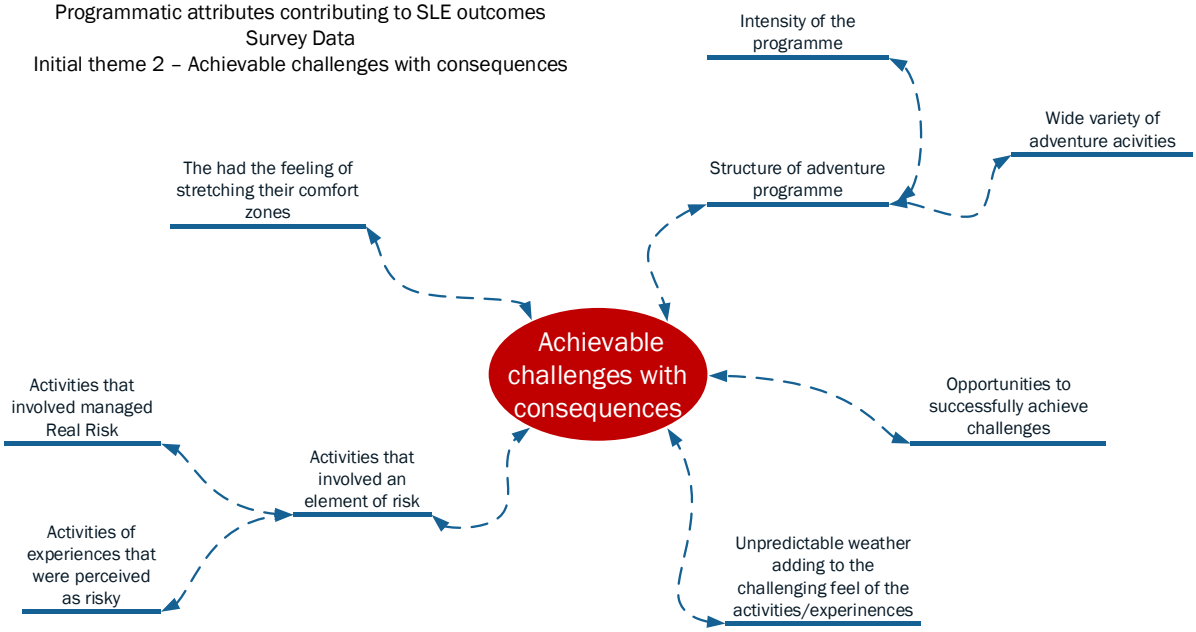
SLE Outcomes – Interview Data
Initial theme 4 –Lasting influence upon their relationships with others.



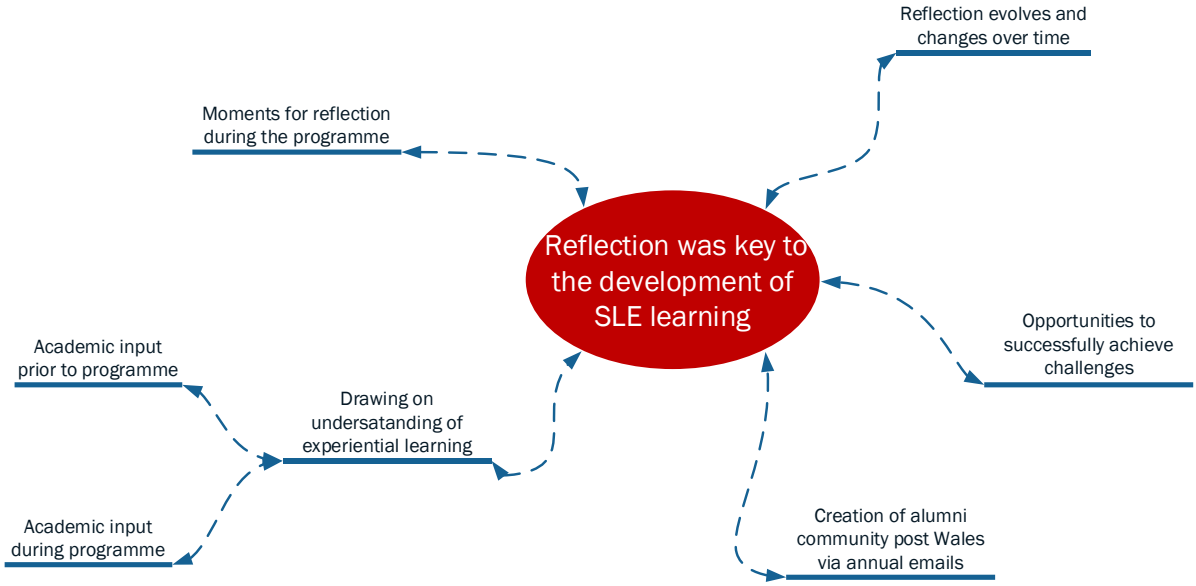
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Survey Data
Initial theme 1 - Dynamic group influences



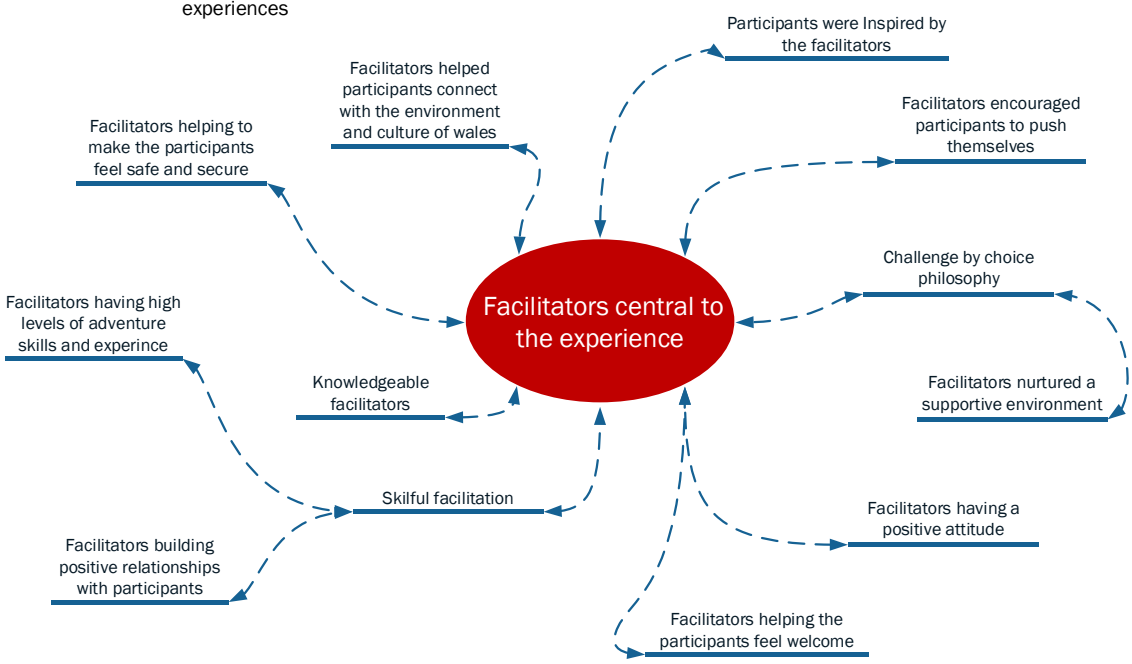
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Survey Data
Initial theme 2 – Achievable challenges with consequences



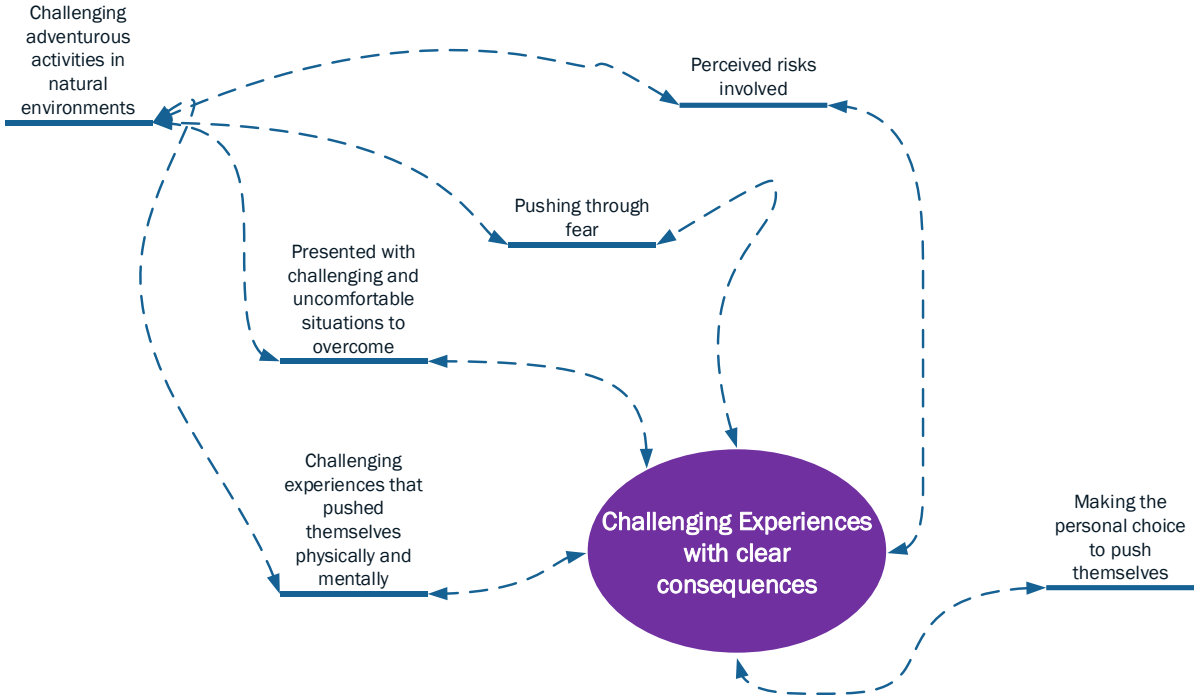
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Survey Data
Initial theme 3 – Reflection leading to development of SLE learning



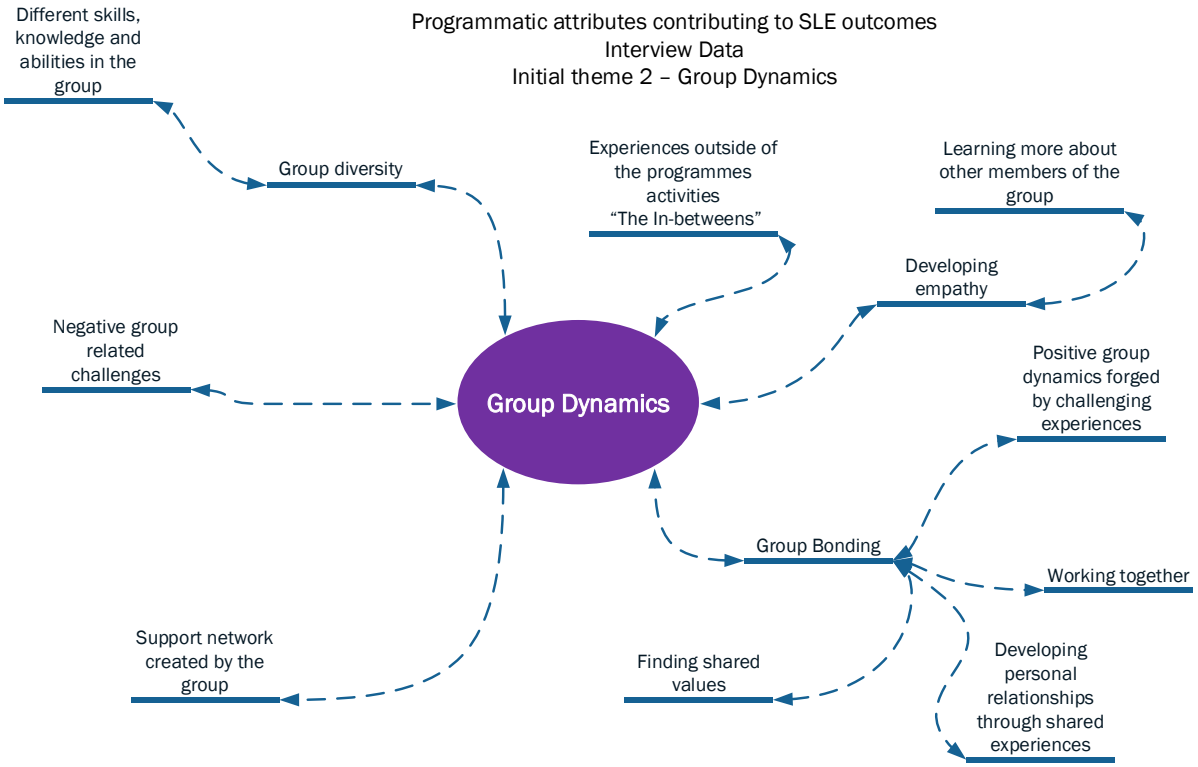
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Survey Data
Initial theme 4 –Facilitators centrality in the participants experiences



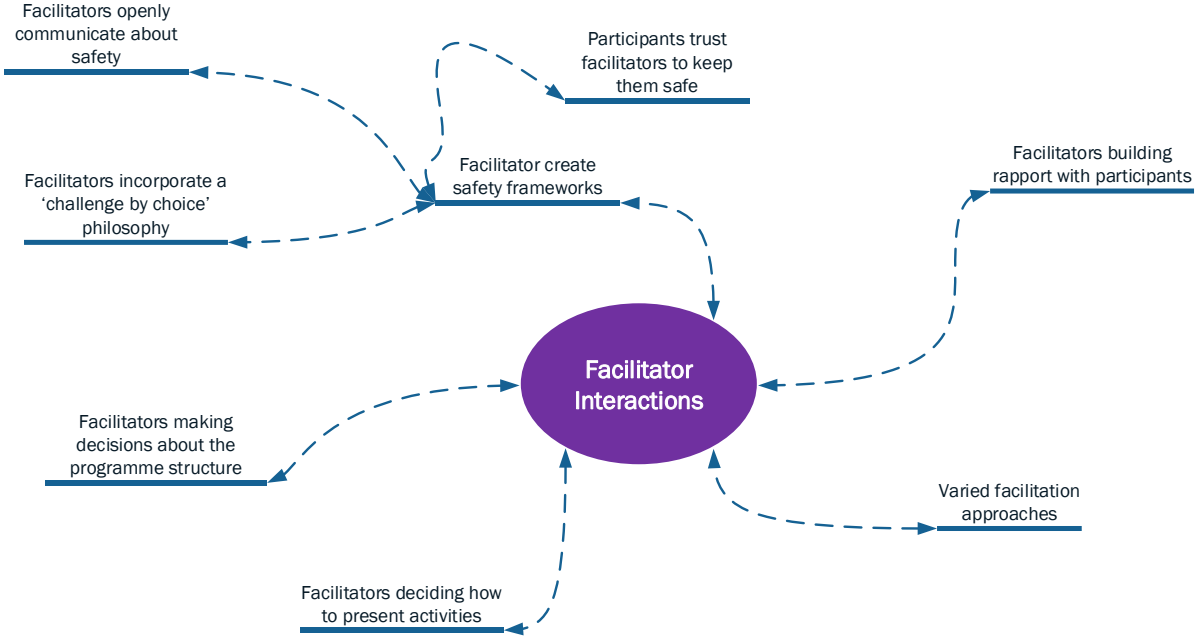
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Interview Data
Initial theme 1 – Challenging experiences with clear consequences



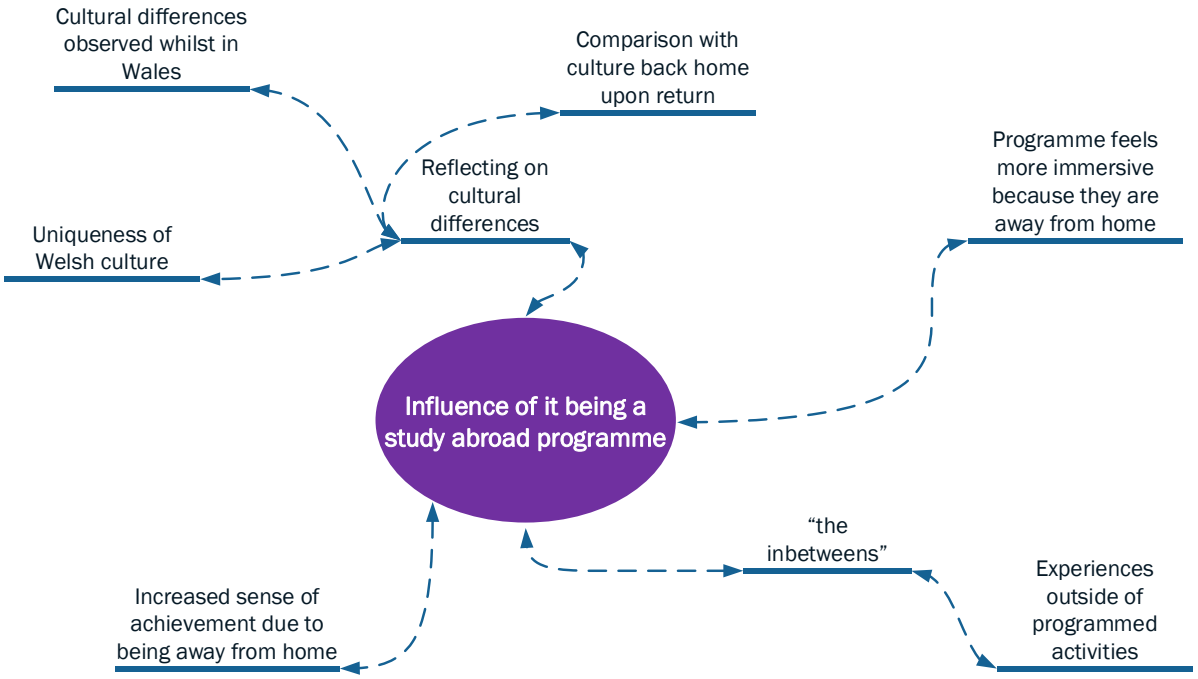
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Interview Data
Initial theme 2 – Group Dynamics

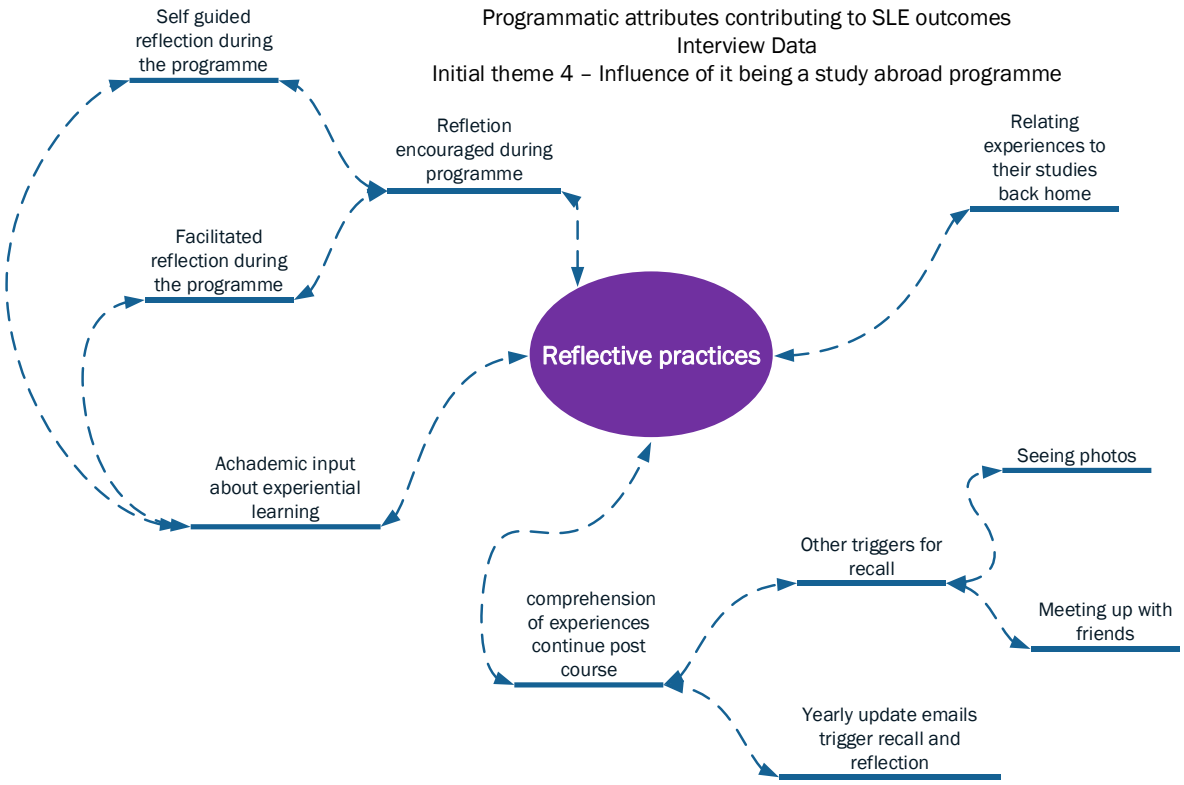


Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Interview Data
Initial theme 3 – Facilitator Interactions



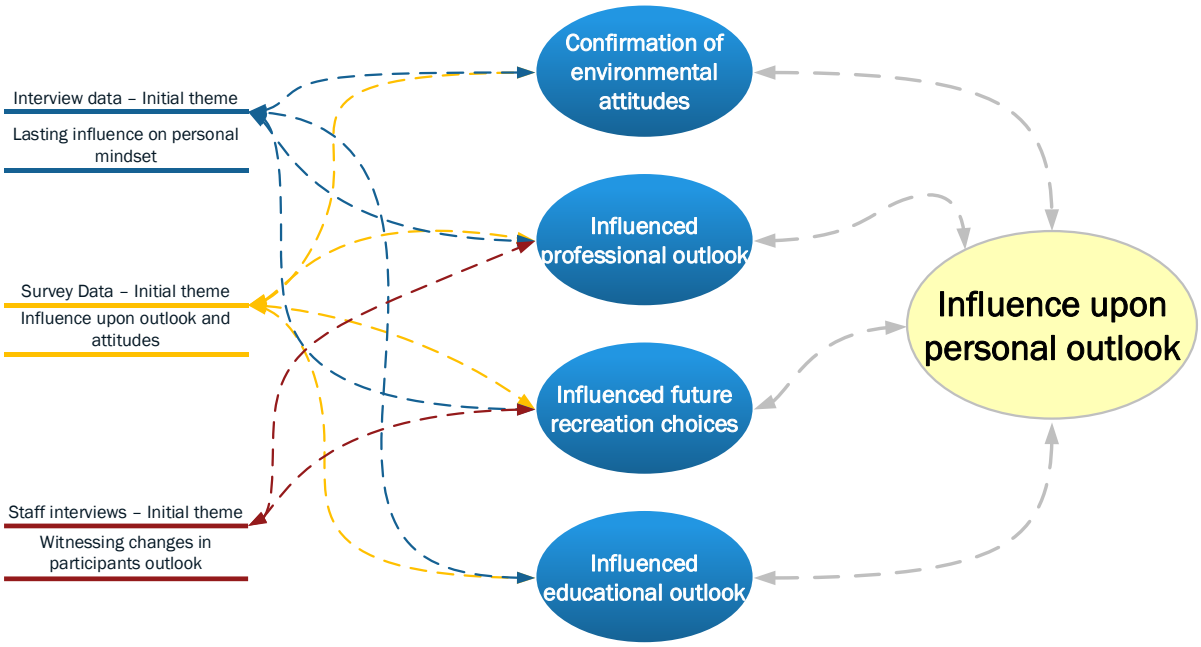
Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Interview Data
Initial theme 4 – Influence of it being a study abroad programme



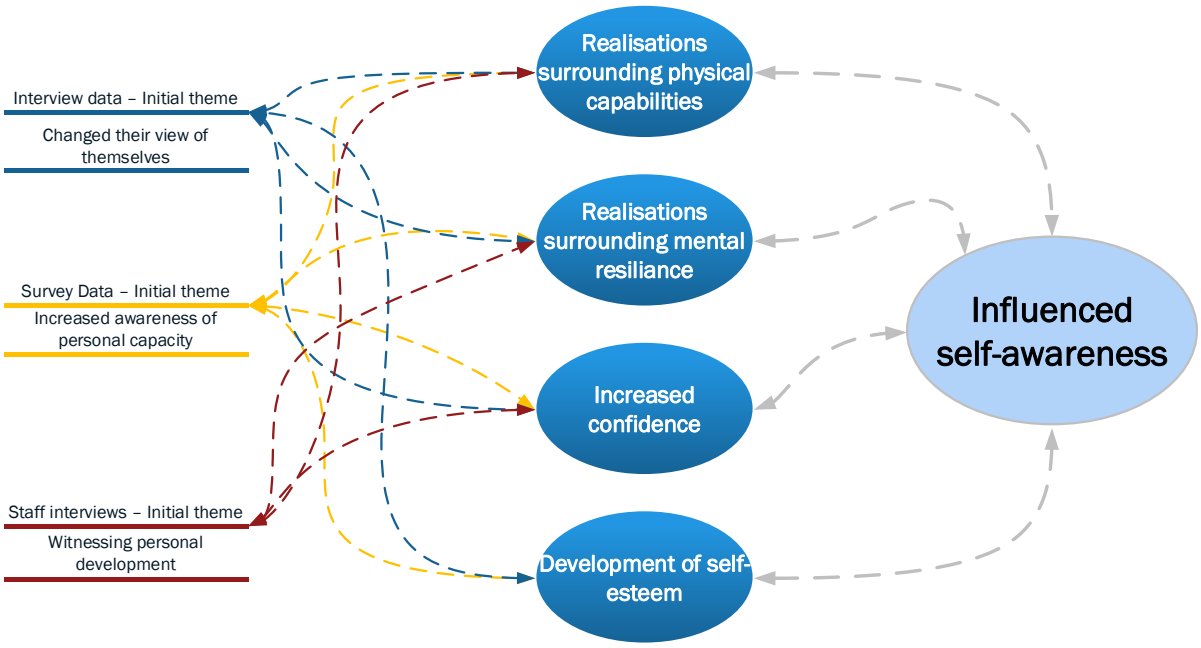

Programmatic attributes contributing to SLE outcomes
Interview Data
Initial theme 4 – Influence of it being a study abroad programme
Self guided reflection during the programme
Refletion encouraged during programme
Relating experiences to their studies back home
Facilitated reflection during the programme
Reflective practices
Achademic input about experiential learning
Seeing photos
Other triggers for recall
Meeting up with friends
comprehension of experiences continue post course
Yearly update emails trigger recall and reflection

APPENDIX 5
Thematic Maps – Amalgamated Final Themes

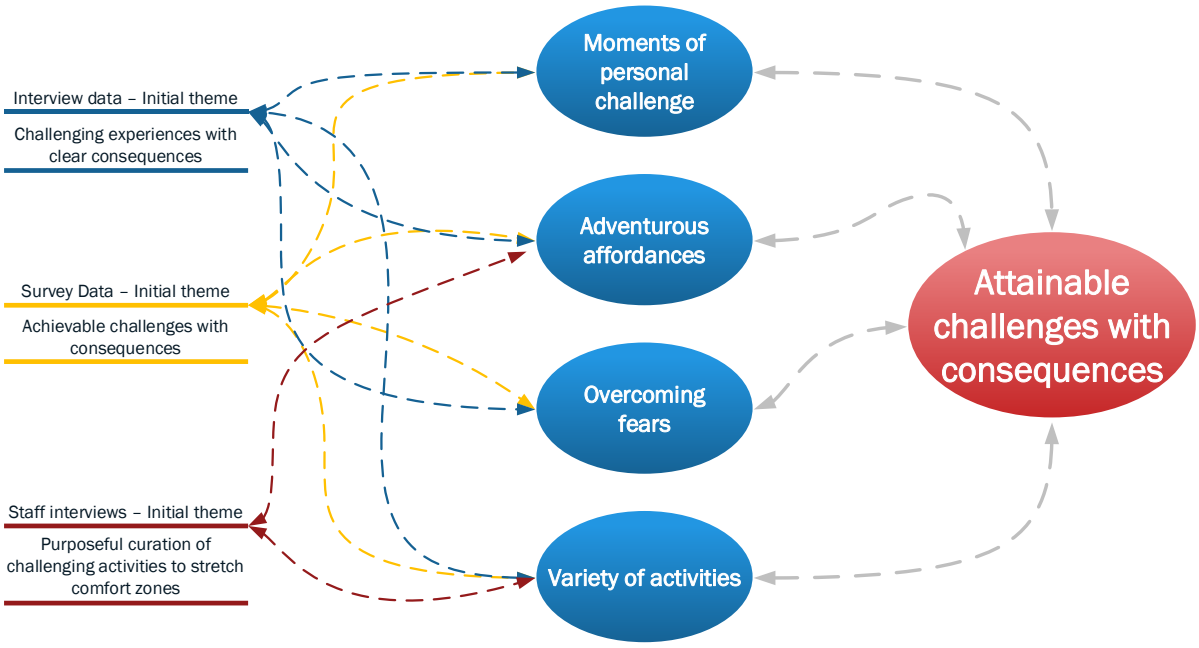
Finalised SLE Theme 1 – Influenced Personal Outlook



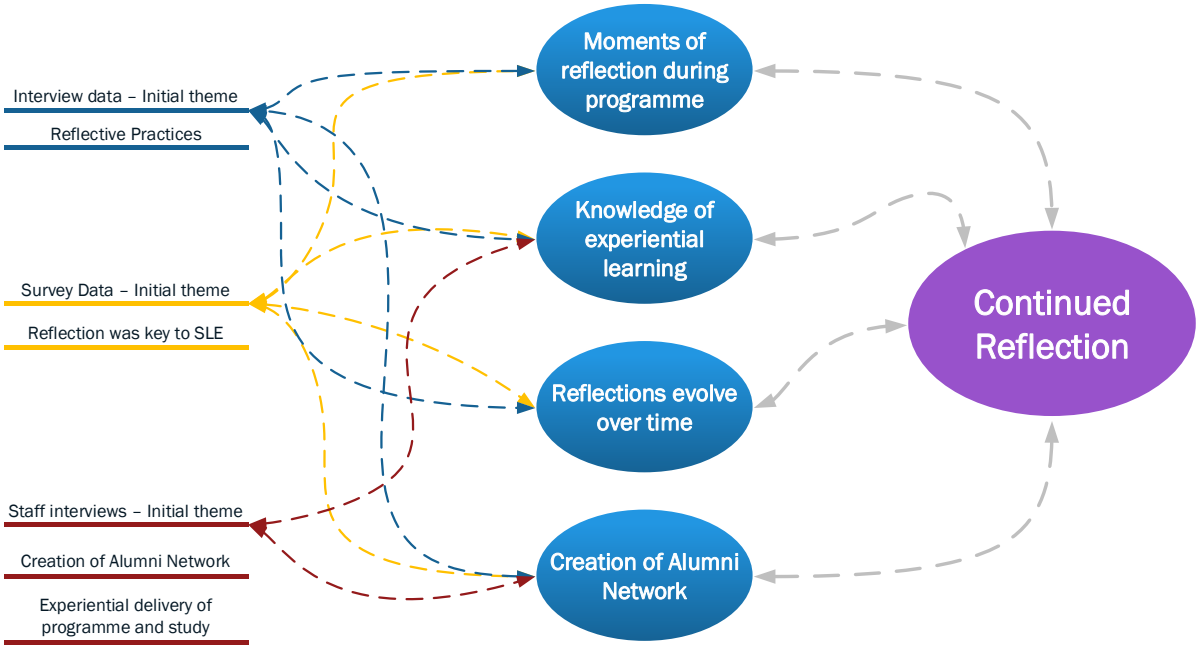
Finalised SLE Theme 2 – Influenced Self-Awareness



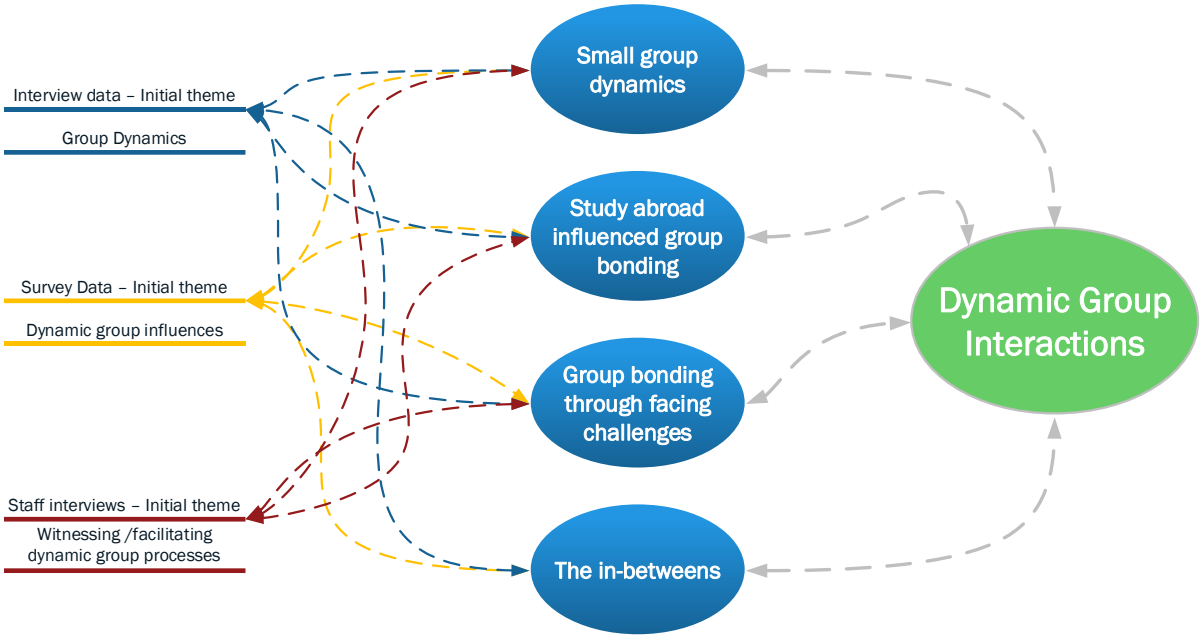
Finalised Programmatic Attributes Theme 1 – Attainable Challenges with Consequences



Finalised Programmatic Attributes Theme 2 – Continued Reflection Influencing Life Significance



Finalised Programmatic Attributes Theme 3 –
Continued Reflection Influencing Life Significance



APPENDIX 6

Institutional Review Board – Approval email chain

From:[redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, July 26, 2023 3:21 PM
To:[redacted]
Cc:[redacted]
Subject: FW: IRB question

Hi [redacted]
You are approved to move forward with this project [redacted] did have one note that I will append below in its entirety for you all to consider.

Best,
[redacted]

- In the sample survey questions, question #10 asks "Did you have any negative experiences during the programme? Please elaborate if you feel like you can.

I do not have any familiarity with this program, so I don't know what kinds of negative experiences one could potentially have. If there is any possibility that someone could have experienced something like sexual assault, I recommend that the researcher have a plan for how to deal with this. Generally, there are two common approaches. The first is to try to design the instrument so that preemptively it is less likely to elicit something like this (e.g. including more specific instructions on what they want to know so that it is not so open ended and is hence less likely to elicit something serious). The second is to get in front of the concern more specifically from the get go (e.g. such as including a note that if someone reports something like a sexual assault the researcher will be required to report it to appropriate campus administrators).

[redacted], Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

From:[redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 10, 2023 11:06 AM
To:[redacted]
Cc:[redacted]
Subject: FW: IRB question

Hi,[redacted]
I think this should do the trick. If you need anything else, let me know and I'll be in touch with Jon. Thanks for helping with this!
[redacted]

[redacted]
Associate Dean
Hobart College

From[redacted] <
Sent: Monday, July 10, 2023 6:03 AM
To:[redacted] <
Subject: RE: IRB question

Hi[redacted]

In addition to my last email a few moments ago, I have also attached my Proposal and approved ethics from UWTSD.

I thought it would be simpler for it all to be in one email.

Many thanks
Jon

Jon Haylock

From[redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, July 5, 2023 6:11 PM
To: Jonathan Haylock <j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk>
Subject: FW: IRB question

Jon
I just looked over [redacted] s requirements and your research links etc…. I think you'll be fine if you just submit a copy of your survey, a draft of your interview questions, flesh out the informed consent as he suggested, and possibly draft another informed consent form for the interview portion of the research. Below is the link to our IRB process.
https://www.hws.edu/offices/oafa/institutional-review-board.aspx

[redacted]

[redacted]
Associate Dean
Hobart College

From [redacted]
Sent: Monday, June 26, 2023 10:04 PM
To: [redacted] <
Subject: Re: IRB question

Hi [redacted]

This looks like an interesting project. I have looked over the materials. Everything that was provided looks good to me. I think we just need a little more information:

1. We like to see lists of questions that will be asked in any surveys and interviews that will be conducted. I am not seeing this information in the items that were provided, so it would be great if the questions could be sent along as well (or, if you can direct me to them if I missed them in what was sent).
2. When securing informed consent, we like to have the researcher provide prospective participants with the following information as well:
    a. an estimate of how long their participation will take (e.g. how long the survey will take to complete)
    b. a brief statement of any anticipated risks and benefits of participating. If none are anticipated, a note indicating that this is the case is customary.
    c. along with contact information for the researcher and the researcher's home institution review board, contact information for someone at HWS in case prospective participants have concerns or questions should also be included (the note about contacting the IRB Chairperson that we include in our sample consent forms on our webpage would be fine).
3. When reviewing these materials it is my sense that they correspond with the survey component of the project. Toward this end, I am assuming there would be a separate consent process for anyone who is invited to do one of the follow up interviews. If this is the case, we would need to see the plans for the interview component of the project before any interviews are conducted. If this is intended to cover both the surveys and the interviews, then more information for the interviews should be included in the consent form.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]**, Ph.D.**
Associate Professor of Sociology
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, June 23, 2023 10:34 AM
To: [redacted] [redacted]
Subject: FW: IRB question

Hi, [redacted]
Please find the attached documents and the links in the email thread below regarding the research project proposed by my colleague in Wales, Jon Haylock. Let me know if you have questions or need any more information.
Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]
Associate Dean
Hobart College

From: Jonathan Haylock <j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 9:27 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: IRB question

Hi [redacted]

Fantastic progress, many thanks.

Bellow are two links. The first to a PDF that outlines the project, I intend to send this out to the alumni of the programme.

Research information https://express.adobe.com/page/xUVapxvPjcILy/

The second link bellow it the informed consent form, the link for this is imbedded into the PDF that will be sent to the alumni.

Informed consent form https://forms.office.com/e/8cZcbKgWta

I have attached my research proposal and my UWTSD approved ethics form.

Obviously is goes without saying if you need more information let me know or if anything needs to be adapted or amended.

Thanks again,
Jon

Jon Haylock

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 5:45 PM
To: Jonathan Haylock <j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk>
Subject: FW: IRB question

Jon
I asked our IRB folks to ensure we were safe to proceed. It looks like they just want to see your proposal, your UWTSD IRB application, and a copy of your informed consent form that you'll use. Send along whatever you have on hand and I'll get it to my folks asap.. Hope you're well.
[redacted]
[redacted]
Associate Dean
Hobart College

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 10:29 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: FW: IRB question

Hi [redacted]
I asked [redacted] who is the current IRB director and you can see his response below. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Best,
[redacted]

[redacted] *(he, him, his)*
Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development
Associate Professor of Geoscience
Director – NEPARS REU Program
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

From: [redacted]
Date: Tuesday, June 20, 2023 at 6:22 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Re: IRB question

Hi [redacted]

I think the first step here would be for us to see the approved proposal from UWTSD. At this point, when another IRB has approved a project that's typically good enough for us, though sometimes we might have a minor request (such as perhaps altering a consent form for an HWS audience, for example). In the case of a non-US based IRB, I think it is a little murkier. This project does not sound like it is particularly 'edgy,' so I see this all being pretty seamless. Once we see the proposal, we can then compare it with a standard proposal here to ensure that there is nothing else that we would like the researcher to do.

I hope you've been having a nice summer,
[redacted]

[redacted]
Associate Professor of Sociology
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, June 16, 2023 12:02 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: FW: IRB question

HI [redacted]
I'm not sure if you have officially handed off the IRB duties yet, but could I please get your interpretation on this?

Best,
[redacted]

[redacted] *(he, him, his)*
Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Development
Associate Professor of Geoscience
Director – NEPARS REU Program

From: [redacted]
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 at 2:55 PM
To: [redacted]<
Subject: IRB question

Hi, [redacted]
I've been talking with my colleague at the University of Wales at Trinity St. David about his Master's thesis project. He's been working on a proposal for a year now and has just had it approved through his advisor and UWTSD. He is also one of the instructors for our very successful short-term summer study abroad program. He is looking at the long-term efficacy of short-term outdoor adventure programs and wants to use the HWS-UWTSD program as a model to study and collect data. He is proposing to survey and interview some of the program alumni. All the participants would be HWS graduates who participated in the program over the past 10 years. He has interviewed me already and may want to interview other staff, but that's unlikely.

I have been in contact with alumni over the past few years regarding the program and would be able to help Jon facilitate communication with them. Before I went any further with Jon's project, I wanted to check with our IRB process to better understand any obligations he may have with the HWS IRB. He has submitted his proposal to the UWTSD IRB and it was approved.

I looked at the HWS website and documents, but could not get a clear answer as to whether Jon would need to submit anything to IRB. 1) the subjects would be HWS alumni, not students) I am not officially participating in the research with Jon.

What is your take on this? Would you like to see his proposal and IRB application for UWTSD?
[redacted]

[redacted]
Associate Dean
Hobart College

APPENDIX 7

Research Information Document for the survey phase of the study – Sent via email as a PDF Document.

https://express.adobe.com/page/xUVapxvPjcILy/

Research Information Document for the interview phase of the study – Sent via email as a PDF Document.

https://new.express.adobe.com/webpage/BNpOWoYbkVwFf

APPENDIX 8
Informed Consent form – Survey Respondent - Distributed within the study information document via email - https://forms.office.com/e/8cZcbKgWta

HWS Summer Wales Programme Research Consent Form - Survey

As an Alumni of the HWS Summer Wales Programme, you have been invited to participate in a research study that intends to explore the potential life significance that your participation in the HWS Summer Wales Programme may have afforded you.

The principle researcher leading this project is Jon Haylock, an Outdoor Education Masters student at UWTSD and member of staff on the BA Outdoor Adventure Education programme at UWTSD.

A PDF titled "HWS Summer Wales Programme Research Project By Jon Haylock" has been circulated, this contains more information regarding the project, please take the time to read this before completing this form.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact Jon via email at j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a participant in this study please complete the form bellow. Once completed I will be in touch with a research survey for you to complete.

Thank you so much in advance for your agreement to participate in this study, it is enormously appreciated.
Jon

* Required

1. Your Name *

2. Please enter your email address. *

3. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided in the Adobe PDF titled "HWS Summer Wales Programme Research Project by Jon Haylock".

   I confirm have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. *

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

4. I confirm that I was a participant of the HWS Summer Wales Programme between 2011 and

2022. * Yes

- ◯ No
- ◯

5. I confirm that I am no longer an enrolled student at HWS. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

6. I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

7. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without giving an explanation. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

8. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the researcher. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

9. I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations. * Yes

- ◯ No
- ◯

10. I agree to be a participant in this project. (Please enter your name as a digital signature) *

11. Please enter todays date *

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Microsoft Forms

Informed Consent Form – Respondent Interview.
Distributed via email as a Microsoft form - https://forms.office.com/e/Smv4wvcgQ7

HWS Summer Wales Programme Research Consent Form - Interview

As an Alumni of the HWS Summer Wales Programme, you have been invited to participate in a research study that intends to explore the potential life significance that your participation in the HWS Summer Wales Programme may have afforded you.

The principle researcher leading this project is Jon Haylock, an Outdoor Education Masters student at UWTSD and member of staff on the BA Outdoor Adventure Education programme at UWTSD.

An additional PDF titled "HWS Summer Wales Programme Interview Information" has been circulated, this contains information regarding this phase of the project, please take the time to read this before completing this form.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact Jon via email at j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk.

If you are interested in continuing to be a participant in this project please complete the form bellow. Once completed I will be in touch to arrange an time and date that suits you best to meet online for an interview.

Thank you so for your continued participation in this project, I look forward to meeting you online to continue to learn more about your experiences. Jon

* Required

1. Your Name *

2. Please enter your email address. *

3. In which state and time zone do you currently live? *

4. I confirm that I have read the additional information provide regarding the interview phase of this project titled, "HWS Summer Wales Programme Interview Information".

   I confirm have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. *

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

5. I understand that my participation in the interview phase of this project is completely voluntary. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

6. I understand that I am free to ask to stop the interview at any time, without giving an explanation. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

7. I give my permission for the interview to be recorded using audio recording equipment. * Yes

- ◯ No
- ◯

8. I understand that upon transcription of the interview my name be anonymised and will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

9. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the researcher. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

10. I agree to be a participant in the interview phase of this project.
(Please enter your name as a digital signature) *
11. Please enter todays date *

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

Microsoft Forms

Informed Consent Form – Staff Interview.
Distributed via email as a Microsoft Form - https://forms.office.com/e/fsEeMq1C9G

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

HWS Summer Wales Programme

Research Consent Form - Staff Interview

As a member of staff who has facilitated the HWS Summer Wales Programme in the past, you have been invited to participate in a research study.

The study intends to explore the potential life significance that participation in the HWS Summer Wales Programme may have afforded Alumni.

The principle researcher leading this project is Jon Haylock, an Outdoor Education Masters student at UWTSD and member of staff on the BA Outdoor Adventure Education programme at UWTSD.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact Jon via email at j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk.

If you are interested in being a participant in this project please complete the form bellow. Once completed I will be in touch to arrange an time and date that suits you best to meet online for an interview.

Thank you so for taking in this project, I look forward to meeting up with you. Jon

* Required

1. Your name. *

2. Please enter your email address *

3. I understand that my participation in this project is completely voluntary.

*

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

4. I understand that I am able withdraw my participation from this research process at any time, with no explanations. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

5. I understand that I am free to ask to stop the interview at any time, without giving an explanation. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

6. I give my permission for the interview to be recorded using audio recording equipment. * Yes

- ◯ No
- ◯

7. I understand that upon transcription of the interview my name be anonymised and will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

8. I consent that any information provided during interview may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the researcher. *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

9. I confirm have had the opportunity to ask questions about this project and have had these answered satisfactorily.

   I agree to be a participant in this project.
   (Please enter your name as a digital signature) *

10. Please enter todays date *

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

Microsoft Forms

APPENDIX 9
Survey Instrument – Distributed via email as a Microsoft Form -
https://forms.office.com/e/8wckD9GKHr

HWS Summer Wales Programme Research Survey

Researcher: Jon Haylock - j.haylock@uwtsd.ac.uk

Thank you so much for agreeing to take part in this study.
Please complete the following questions. This survey may take 30 minutes to complete. When prompted please elaborate as much as you like.

* Required

1

What is your name? *

2

What is your email address? *

3

What is your gender identity? *

- ◯ Woman
- ◯ Man
- ◯ Non-binary
- ◯ Prefer not to say

4

What is your current age? *

Before you participated in the HWS Summer Wales Programme.

5

What was your motivation for participating in the HWS Summer Wales Programme? Please elaborate as much as you like. *

6

Prior to participating in the study abroad programme had you participated in any other outdoor adventure education programmes such as POAP? If so please give details. *

During your HWS Summer Wales Programme

7

What year did you participate in the HWS Summer Wales Programme? *

8

How old were you when you took part in the HWS Summer Wales Programme? *

9

What do you consider to be your most significant experiences during the programme? What made them significant?
Please elaborate as much as you feel you can. *

10

What influence do you feel the facilitators/leaders of your programme had on your experience? *

After your HWS Summer Wales Programme experience.

11

Upon completion of the programme was there an immediate influence on your life?
Please elaborate as much as you like. *

12

Do you feel your participation in the programme had an influence on your academic performance/development?
Please explain as much as you feel you can. *

13

Have your experiences during the programme had a long term influence on how you view yourself?
Please elaborate where you can. *

14

Have your experiences during the programme had a long term influence on your relationships with others?
Please elaborate where you can. *

15

Do you feel your experiences on the programme have continued to influence you professionally? Please elaborate where you can. *

16

Has how you view your experiences on the programme remained the same or changed over time? Please elaborate where you can. *

17

Each year, when the current group are starting their programme, Dean Mapstone emails out journal newsletters informing alumni of how the current group are getting on. Do you receive these? If so what do they mean to you? Please elaborate as much as you like. *

18

If a current HWS student contacted you to ask what you thought of the programme and if they should participate, what would you say? *

19

Would you be willing to meet online for an interview to discuss your experiences further? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe

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Microsoft Forms

APPENDIX 10

Semi Structured Interview Framework – Respondents

Question 1
To start us off.. overall how would you describe your experience of the Wales programme?

Question 2
In your survey responses you describe some significant experiences during the programme..
Refer to notes taken from responses to survey.

Question 3
In your survey responses you mention how your programme experiences still influences you in certain ways…. *Refer to notes taken from responses*.
Prompt - Why or how did your programme experience influence this aspect of your life?

Question 4
Your survey responses have helped construct a time line of events in your life, if it is ok it would be great to work our way along this timeline and discuss how the Wales programme might have influenced your life in those moments.

Question 5
Is there anything else you would like to talk about regarding the Wales programme that you think might have influenced you?

Semi Structured Interview Framework – Staff

Question 1
can you please give a description of the Hobart William Smith programme?

Question 2
What did/does it mean to you to run these/those programmes?

Question 3
When you were/are facilitating the programme what things did/do you take into account?

Prompt 1 – How did you end up structuring the programmes the way you did?
Prompt 2 - did the structure of the programme change as you delivered it? If so what influenced those changes

Question 4
Do you think you've ever witnessed changes in participants from when they arrive to when they leave?

Question 5
What do you think are/were participants biggest takeaways from their programme experiences?

APPENDIX 11

Daniel (2003) Life Significant Experience Defining Characteristics: A Brief Comparative Review

It changed the person in some manner, such as their perspective, behaviour or belief.

"I feel they have changed over time, I now view my experiences in Wales as a highlight in the journey of my development, one of those heightened periods of significance. I can always look back at memories from Wales and feel grounded in my aspirations, I feel like I know where I am going. I remember the days that inspired me to live a life more daring and better acquainted with nature" (R16, Pt 2019, Q16).	When R16 responded to a question regarding how her programme experiences have changed over time, she expresses how her intensive programme experiences where pivotal in her personal development journey and interestingly for her that they remain as focal point of her current perspective and the life lesson derived from them.
"I kind of envisioned myself going into like a standard office job or, you know, kind of like a typical career…. But then after going on the Wales trip, my whole perspective changed. Like I knew eventually I would have to, you know, work, get into a normal job that, you know, whatever. But I yeah, but I decided to take like a gap year, and I did this this community service programme for a year where it was mostly you know, outdoor activities…. and I would I never would have gotten into that if it weren't for the Wales trip" (R5, Pt 2017, 00:08:21) .	Further elaborating on how programme experiences provided a fresh perspective, during interview R5 described how his time on the programme inspired him to pursue an unexpected path in life for some time after the programme.

It was a unique experience outside of the ordinary for the participant, something extraordinary.

"It's interesting to be asked this question because I think these experiences I had are integral to my being, but sometimes I forget where I learned them except for in these rare moments when I'm specifically asked. Also, it's now 10 years since I first went to Wales. I have grown a lot as a human and person in the world since then. In answering these questions, I think at 29, the more time passes, I consider the program to be even more important. It's a pretty rare experience and I'm not sure my 19-year-old self truly understood the impact it had on me like I do now" (R11, Pt 2013, Q16).	In responding to a question about how the personal meaning attributed to her experience has changed over time, R11 describes how important the programme has been to her in the 10 years after, explaining how she now appreciates she was able to experience something quite out of the ordinary and that interestingly by reflecting upon her experiences in order to answer the survey questions has helped her realise her how much the programme has influenced her life moving forwards.
"Wales is a once in a lifetime opportunity to see the world and yourself more clearly, this program gives you the chance to actually engage with the environment and people of your abroad program. I would do it three times over again if I could, and if anyone has the opportunity to go to Wales and see its beautiful rolling hills and coastline.. they definitely should!" (R16, Pt 2019, Q18)	R11's revelations about her programme experiences are somewhat mirrored by the thoughts expressed by R16 as she explained how she would summarise the HWS-SWP for future students. Evidently she found the programme to be out of the ordinary and something she would like to participate in again.
"When I first finished the program I understood that I was learning about the country, culture, and history through outdoor education. However, I didn't fully appreciate the extent I connected with the environment and country. I didn't fully appreciate how unique my experience was - how not many people get the opportunity to do what I did. Looking back, I am unbelievably grateful for the experience and everything it taught me about Wales and myself. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life and I wish I could do it again" (R10, Pt 2019, Q16).	Echoing this sentiment R10 enthuses about how she felt the programme was a unique opportunity to simultaneously explore a new country and herself.
"It was incredible for me. I always look back at it and I tell people all the time and like, even to even today like. You know what? What an amazing experience. It was. It was my first. I'd say my first personal real experience, well going	Further elaborating on this topic R5 discussed in interview how having the opportunity to stretch his comfort zones whist abroad in a foreign country, expressing how this felt particularly unique, this combined with the type of

overseas, but also you know, kind of just doing something completely out of my comfort zone. So I always look, I, you know, I was. I always did, you know, outdoor activities and stuff with my family growing up, but nothing quite like we experienced during our time" (R5, Pt 2017, 00:00:59).	activities led to some quite out of the ordinary experiences.

It was useful in the persons future, in essence a life lesson

"These experiences showed us just how far we could push ourselves physically and mentally. In our day to day lives we rarely test our limits and are happy to live in comfort. The Wales trip showed us that there is so much more we are all capable of and this has stayed with me ever since" (R3, Pt 2022, Q9).	R3 clearly relished the opportunity to engage with adventurous activities in challenging environments for him this led to future life lessons about how much he could simultaneously push himself both physically and mentally and move into a space where personal growth was possible.
*"I think these moments were so significant to me because they taught me that I could do scary things. I have held onto this truth throughout the last ten years and it has led me to experience amazing things and make decisions that have altered my life for the better"*R11, Pt 2013, Q9).	A point of view expanded upon by R11 as she discloses how the learning taken from challenging herself to embrace the more intimidating moments of her programme experiences has led to a life lesson that has seemingly influenced her life in a positive way.
"I feel that since our trip to Wales, I look at things less at face value or through my own assumptions and instead commit to being open and accepting of what inevitably unfolds" (R19, Pt 2017, Q13).	While R11 highlighted the importance to her of learning through challenge, R19 underscores the significance of the programme developing a life philosophy that has lead him to being more open minded and accepting.

It held some specific meaning to the participant

"Looking back on these experiences (e.g., hiking down a steep hillside or cliff-jumping into frigid waters), the moments when I was able to venture outside of my comfort zone showed me that I am much stronger than I give myself credit for, and that sometimes the only limits that I feel are the ones that I place on myself" (R14, Pt 2018, Q9).	Often the specific meaning taken from programme experiences was with regard individuals realisations of their capabilities, typically through experiencing challenging adventurous activities. One such example of this is provided by R14 as she recalls moving outside of her comfort zones and realising she is capable of so much more.
"Yeah, I think so, one that really stands out to me is when we want it to like Snowdon and that whole like the northern part of Wales. When we got to do like backpacking trips, just spending a night on a mountain, just things that I've never seen or done before, like I've done backpacking trips like front country camping. But I've never really imagined myself as being part of that scene until I went on this trip and was realising well I can do all of this stuff which was really, really cool to do." R8, Pt 2018, 00:01:52)	Building upon this notion, R8 expresses how she came to an interesting realisation that not only is she capable of achieving seemingly challenging things, but that she actually belongs within a community of people who choose to participate in adventurous activities.
"As the years pass, I find myself focusing less on what we did, and more on how we felt. I cannot quite explain that feeling, but a positive and open mindset, strong sense of belonging, and inherent value as an individual would best describe my thoughts as I look back" (R19, Pt 2017, Q16).	Whilst corroborating with the idea that programme experiences contributed to respondents gaining specific meaning, R19 offers a divergent perspective of deriving meaning in terms changes in his outlook and mindset after his time in Wales.

It was deemed by a participant to be caused by something other than chance, controlled by a higher power such as god.

Upon careful consideration of all the data there appears to be a lack of direct or indirect references to respondents experiences being controlled or influenced by a higher power such as a God, or indeed any confirmation or reinforcement of such beliefs. However a small selection of respondents do indicate that their experiences in Wales took the form of a what could be perceived as a spiritual communion with the land, nature and culture of Wales.

"I feel the program asked us to think deeply about these experiences; to consider the history of the places we were in, the ethics of being there, and our direct relationship to land, water, and air. I think this program really fostered an important relationship to the spaces we inhabit, be it indoors or outdoors" (R11, Pt 2013, Q9).	R11 reveals how she felt the programme enhanced her connection with the landscape of Wales by challenging her existing perceptions of place and space and asking her to consider her relationship with nature.
"When entering HWS I participated in the Pre-Orientation Adventure Program, where I first learned about the Summer Wales trip. It immediately sparked an urge to join the journey to Wales, embrace the country's culture, and expand my self physically and spiritually in a beautiful environment." (R16, Pt 2019, Q5).	Reiterating the potential spiritual significance of programme participation R16 explains that off the back of previous adventure programme experiences she felt the HWS-SWP would be an ideal way to develop her knowledge of herself. Indicating that one aspect of her motivation to join the programme was the hope that the engaging with the natural environment of Wales that held the potential for spiritual development.

The difference between the findings in this study and those of Daniel (2003) could be attributed to the difference in the population studied. Comparably Daniel studied a wilderness programme that purposefully has a Christian faith focus, whereas the HWS-SWP has a more academic and personal development intent. Aligning with the finding of Wigglesworth and Heintzman (2021), as they clearly state the lack of spirituality evident in their findings was due to the programme being studied was not designed to be spiritual.

The timing in the person's life and magnitude of the experience was important.

"This programme was the perfect platform to kickstart adulthood and its many adventures" (R18, Pt 2012, Q18).	This succinct statement from R18 indicates that she felt the programme happened at a pivotal point in her life. At that point of transition from adolescence to adulthood. Moreso she alludes to the programme being an ideal chance to build a metaphorical basis of personal development in preparation for that transition, along with being ready to approach the next phase of her life with an adventurous mindset.
"I felt young when I took the program and caught up in the emotional side of life more so than I am now. The program happened at a pivotal time in young adulthood. About to graduate, find a job, move on" (R8, Pt 2018, Q13).	Expanding upon this concept R8 also identifies the timing of the experience to be important, outlining her preconceived stages of moving into the next chapter of her life.
"Yeah, I think, So that also I was like end of end of college is when it was so it's right before you're about to you know go out and try to find a real job and go into the world and all sorts of things. Everything's about to change. So I think that was like a really great yeah. It was a great time for that to happen" (R8, Pt 2018, 00:16:32).	Confirming her own sentiment whilst in interview R8, expands upon the expectations associated with the imminent upheaval of her life as she leaves college. Affirming that it was the perfect time for her to benefit from the opportunities afforded by the programme.
"So again I think at that age, it's a very good time to, like, see another country and have these types of experiences either doing challenging things, again like, the challenge being, like in the outdoor environment, but like at a larger sort of more meta scale, like thinking that you know like these challenging you know opportunities like give you sort of some foundational, I don't know, like mechanisms in order to like take on other challenges as you approach adulthood. (R4, Pt 2011, 00:18:31)	Reiterating the significance of the timing of the experience in their lives R4 asserted that it was an ideal time to visit new places, be presented with challenges in the outdoors in order to develop coping mechanisms in anticipation of the potentially troublesome transition to adulthood. Somewhat aligning with the wider literature surrounding the concept of rite of passage models in OAE.

There is comparable consistency between the aforementioned respondents perspectives and the literature surrounding OAE programmes affording opportunities to partake in modern rites of passage rituals (Andrews, 1999, Bell, 2003; Beames, 2004; Norris, 2011; Jirasek, 2021). This is evident in the responses from respondents, where they collectively share a perspective that their programme experiences helped prepare them to transition to adulthood. Aligning with existing literature (Beames, 2004; Norris, 2011 and Jirasek, 2021) the HWS-SWP does hold some similarities to the somewhat outdated (Beames, 2004; Norris 2011) three stage structure of the rite of passage model suggested by van Gennep (1960). However as corroborated by Beames (2004), in this study the similarity remains at a relatively surface level with the phases of separation, transition whereas the rather intricate aspects of the third stage, incorporation, seem not to be present.

APPENDIX 12
HWS Programme of Study – Pre Summer Wales Programme participation.

Cymru: Exploring History, Culture, and Self through Outdoor Education

For many, Wales is often an afterthought, a quiet member of the United Kingdom, an unassuming country dwarfed by its superpower neighbour, England. While historically, Wales (Cymru) has been invaded and conquered by many peoples from the Romans to the Normans, the Celtic Welsh have been able to preserve their culture through music, literature, art, and language. The story of Wales is in part a story of resilience - an active resistance through the patient preservation of Welsh culture.

This course will introduce students to the history and culture of Wales in preparation for participation in the Summer Outdoor Education Program in Wales. Students will also spend significant time working through experiential and adventure education theory and putting these theories to practice in a variety of outdoor activities. Students can expect to spend some of the course in the field engaging in experiential learning activities and reflective writing processes.

RCOL 112-01 Cymru
Tuesday 7:15-8:30am
[redacted]

Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment Due
1/31	Course Building	Introductions
2/7	Intro to Wales/Geography/History	*Welsh Landscapes*
2/14	Experiential Education Theory	Dewey – *Experience and Education* (excerpt) Kolb- *Experiential Learning Theory* Mortlock – *Stages of Adventure* Rhonke – *Challenge by Choice*
2/21	No Class - Do Something Outdoors	Post Outdoor Activity on Group Chat
2/28	Outdoor Adventure Part I	Krakauer – *Into Thin Air* (chapter 1-8)
3/7	Outdoor Adventure Part II	Krakauer – *Into Thin Air* (chapter 9-finish)
	TBA Film Viewing	
3/14	Journals, Smiles, and Lenses	CGE Staff - Paperwork/ Getting the Most out of Abroad
	Paper 1 – Experiential Education Theory due	
	SPRING BREAK	
3/28	Welsh Literature	Thomas- *Short Stories (Choose one to present)*
4/4	Early History of Wales	Weisser – *Wales an Illustrated History* (xi-105)
4/11	Modern History of Wales	Weisser-*Wales an Illustrated History* (106-219)
4/18	Gear Review	Review gear list; bring gear

4/25	Welsh/British Culture	McTague - *How Britain Falls Apart*
5/2	Adventure Inspiration	Kirk – *Adventure Revolution*
TBD	Lunch on the Farm	

*Please note that we will be taking an outdoor day trip during the spring semester. We will choose a date and location for our trips before spring break. We will also have an evening film screening in early March during the Outdoor Adventure Section.

Expectations and Grading:

Students are expected to attend all sessions unless an excused absence is given by the course instructor in advance of the missed class session. Students are expected to have read the material for class and come prepared to discuss their own thoughts on the texts and/or specific questions posted on Canvas in advance of class. Students are expected to actively engage in all in-class activities and the required outdoor trips/ film viewing. Students complete a three-part paper: Paper 1 will focus on experiential and adventure learning theory and is due in class on 3/14. We will discuss specific expectations for each assignment two weeks prior to the due date. Various texts will be posted as pdf documents on our Canvas site, including: *Introduction to Welsh Landscapes*; excerpts from John Dewey's *Experience and Education*; David Kolb's *Experiential Learning Theory*; web excerpts from Kolb's *Experiential Learning Model*, and excerpts from Dylan Thomas' *Selected Poems, Short Stories, and other assorted readings.*

Krakauer, Jon (1997) *Into Thin Air.*Villard Books; New York. ISBN 0679457526

Weisser, Henry (2002) *Wales: An Illustrated History;* Hippocrene Books; New York. ISBN 0781809363

Paper Assignment: Experiential Education Theory

#1 Dewey claims that "progressive education", specifically, the use of student experience in learning, is more "democratic and humane" than traditional education (Pg. 24-26). What does he mean by this? Do you support Dewey's claim? Why? Explain using examples from your own personal experience when you've engaged in learning from experience. (2-3 pages)
#2 Highlight at least one active experience (preferably an outdoor experience) which you've had and use it to explain 1) Kolb's 4-stage cycle of learning; 2) Mortlock and Preist's stages of adventure in relation to your level of risk and adventure; and 3) Rhonke's concepts of "challenge by choice" and "falling forward with confidence." (2-3 pages)
#3 Consider the events of the May 1996 Everest Expedition as described by Krakauer and portrayed in the film Everest. What human factors contributed to the "misadventure" on Everest? Give specific examples. How could individuals have changed the outcome? What can you personally do to prevent a misadventure in Wales? (1-2 pages)

[redacted]. The assignment was pushed back a week in order to give you a bit more time.

APPENDIX 13

Examples of HWS-SWP Schedules

Hobart William Smith Summer Programme 2012

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1:						
Introduction to programme Waterfall walk	Grimes exercise- exploring experiential learning	Sense of place: a guided trek around some of the ancient and mystical sites of West Wales	Heart rate monitor training and basic physiology Porth Yr Ogof Spelunking/ Caving (evening)	Pen-Y-Fan Trekking with heart rate monitors		
Week2:						
Yr Helfa: a week off-grid in the mountains of North Wales- climbing, scrambling, and hiking.						
Week 3:						
Study day/ Journal Writing	Canoeing/ Kayaking on the Afon Teifi	St David's camping Coasteering/surfing/climbing		Brechfa Mountain Biking		

Hobart & William Smith Summer Programme 2017
(Monday 29th May – Saturday 17th June)

Monday 29th	Tuesday 30th	Wednesday 31st	Thursday 1st	Friday 2nd	Saturday 3rd	Sunday 4th
Collection from Heathrow **Arrive at UWTSD & sort accommodation.** **Llansteffan Castle** Buddies	**Introduction to programme & academic input** **Carreg Cannen Castle** , & & Buddies	**Preseli Hills** Sense of Place Hike , & Buddies	**Pontneddfechan** Gorge Walking & Buddies	**Gower Peninsula** Paviland Cave Adventure , & Buddies	**Free Day:** Personal study / Journal Writing	**Free Day:** Personal study / Journal Writing

Monday 5th	Tuesday 6th	Wednesday 7th	Thursday 8th	Friday 9th	Saturday 10th	Sunday 11th
Snowdonia National Park: A week off-grid in the mountains of North Wales: local attractions, sense of place, climbing, scrambling, and hiking. Meet 9:00am Monday 5th and return by 12:00pm Sunday 11th , Buddies & Local Guides						
Monday 12th	**Tuesday 13th**	**Wednesday 14th**	**Thursday 15th**	**Friday 16th**	**Saturday 17th**	**Sunday 18th**
Free Day: Personal study / Journal Writing	**Pen y Fan** Hiking Southern Britain's Highest Peak & Buddies	**Pembrokeshire Coast National Park** Coasteering, Climbing Island boat tour, Camping, & BBQ Meet 9:00am Wednesday 14th and return by 5:00pm Friday 16th &Buddies			Return to Heathrow	

Hobart & William Smith Summer Programme 2019
(Monday 27th May – Saturday 15th June)

Monday 27th	Tuesday 28th	Wednesday 29th	Thursday 30th	Friday 31st	Saturday 1st	Sunday 2nd
Arrive at Carmarthen (Sort UWTSD accommodation) **Llansteffan Castle** Llansteffan Castle	**Introduction to programme & academic input** Carreg Cannen Castle Carreg Cennen Castle	**Gower Peninsula** Paviland Cave Adventure Paviland Red Lady Cave	**Big Pit to Pen Y Fan** -90m to 886m Big Pit Pen Y Fan	**Preseli Hills** Sense of Place Hike Foel Drygarn	**Free Day:** Personal study / Journal Writing	**Cadair Idris** Over Night Bivvi *Will you come back a Poet or Insane?* Cadair Idris

Monday 3rd	Tuesday 4th	Wednesday 5th	Thursday 6th	Friday 7th	Saturday 8th	Sunday 9th
Glan Llyn Llyn Tegid Adventure Challenge Llyn Tegid	**Holy Head Mountain** Rock Climbing Holyhead Mountain	**Tryfan** Scrambling Tryfan	**Cwmorthin Mine** Mine Exploration Cwmorthin Mine	**Mount Snowdon** Hike the highest peak in Wales & for Sunrise Snowdon	**Free Day:** Personal study / Journal Writing	**Free Day:** Personal study / Journal Writing
Monday 10th	**Tuesday 11th**	**Wednesday 12th**	**Thursday 13th**	**Friday 14th**	**Saturday 15th**	
Afon Teifi Canoe Afon Teifi Wildlife Centre	**Cynefin Bike Park & Brechfa** Mountain Bike Skills and Trails Brechfa	**Pembrokeshire National Park** Ramsey Island Boat Tour Ramsey Island	**Pembrokeshire National Park** Coasteering & Rock Climbing Aberiddy	**Pembrokeshire National Park** The Final Adventure	Return to Heathrow	

( ) On- Site Accommodation ( ) Off- Site Accommodation