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**A Case Study of the experiences of ethnic diversity in leadership
in an Outdoor Education Centre**

Dissertation

Module E822

**Masters Multi-disciplinary Dissertation: Education,
Childhood and Youth**

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August 2023

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Abstract (100)

This small-scale exploratory case study in an Outdoor Centre investigates the experiences of people of colour in leadership in outdoor education. Eliciting voices with a qualitative methodology using one-to-one interviews and focus group discussion the study develops two research questions. These discover issues related to people of colour in leadership and how best opportunities to leadership are developed. Using inductive thematic analysis patterns emerged as thematic maps with six important themes; lack of diversity, self-limiting behaviours, access to environment, good role models, access to workplace and awareness. The conclusion creates understandings that shared responsibility is needed for future actions.

Chapter 1: Introduction (922)

Within the field of Outdoor Education it is strongly agreed through documentation and evidence that there is a lack of diversity as regards people of colour at leadership level, (Anderson et al, 2021; Anderson 2021; Dyer, 2019; Duffy 2021; Gauthier et al, 2021; Goodrid, 2018; O'Brian, 2020, 2021; Rose and Paisley, 2012). This evidence leads as one of three main factors that drive the need for this exploratory investigation.

1.2: Rationale

In the United Kingdom people of colour make up 6% of sports leadership positions (Shibli, 2021), that is in coaching and management. However, people of colour make up less than 2% of leadership positions in Outdoor Educational Sport (The Outward Bound Trust 2018; O'Brian 2020). 'Would any other field in the UK accept a workforce that is as ethnically non-inclusive as ours', (Dyer, 2019, p.31).

Secondly, it is apparent from searching that there is a lack of literature about people of colour in leadership in Outdoor Education within research studies. Further to this, 'limited research explores the lived experiences and perspective of people of colour' (Goodrid, 2018, p.5). Through their review of literature in the field Cunninham and Fink (2006, p.458), suggest that 'diversity research could benefit from an incorporation of different investigative paradigms'. This points to a void in knowledge and lack of investigative approach associated with the field in question.

Finally, as the researcher and author I have a vested professional interest in seeking knowledge as an insider researcher who is Head of the contextual setting studied. In addition, it should be noted that I also have a practical personal interest in the topic through the years of experience working in the field.

1.3: Aims of study

The aim of this study is to elicit the voices and experiences of people of colour in related to the field of leadership in Outdoor Education

1.4: Contextual practice

A case study is used of an Outdoor Centre by way of contextual setting referred to as the 'Centre' in the study. The Centre uses outdoor activities as an educational vehicle for development with young people through youth programmes. The Centre creates employment pathways and uses experiential learning as an approach around its own internal curriculum. This includes among other concepts the teaching of a leadership pathway.

1.5: Research Approach

As this study aims to elicit the voices and experiences of others to try and understand human experience then I will use an interpretivist-constructivist paradigm. This view of the world within this study will help 'generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning', (Creswell, 2018, p.9). It is a qualitative study with data collection carried out through one-to-one interviews and a focus group discussion. In a search for meaning from data, emerging themes were developed from interview coding. During the research the method 'inductive thematic analysis', (Braun and Clark, 2006), was used to establish a focus on findings and understanding. This ensured there were no 'preconceptions or deductions from a pre-given framework, (Cohen et al, 2018, p.645), or model. Although, it must be noted that elements from the findings do hint towards possible future applications of frameworks. As an adaptation to 'inductive thematic analysis' to try to keep the data authentic, the participants, during the focus group discussions, created the final thematic maps. They also established a rank order of the six final themes divided equally to answer each research question. In addition, I used direct quotes of participants to illuminate the research findings. It is argued this research approach enabled the triangulation of data throughout to enhance the credibility of the study and confirmability of the data.

1.6: The scope of the study

The study participants identified as people of colour in leadership positions in Outdoor Education referenced as both coaching and management roles within the workforce.

It is important to point out as researcher my positionality as a white male and my concerted and conscious attempt to achieve a 'culturally reflexive approach to the presentation and analysis of research findings', (Bradbury et al, 2021, p.xix) and throughout the research process.

It is clear there is a need to add to the knowledge in this field as the voices and demand for this need grows. This includes the study setting where new knowledge based on social interactions through experiences and voices can be generated. This in turn it is suggested will develop understanding to propose possible positive actions. In this way the study is very specific therein its potential for transferability is limited as discussed with other study limitations in chapter 4. Finally, to engage effectively with the aim of the study considering the rationale, research approach and points concluded from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, two research questions are proposed below.

Research Questions

What are the issues related to people of colour in leadership in an Outdoor Education Centre?

In addition, to focus on what is needed to help address the disparity of representation with people of colour in leadership in outdoor education, and, to help explore the pathway to leadership it is proposed that the second research question will be.

How can we ensure opportunities in leadership are developed for people of colour in Outdoor Education?

It should be noted that over time these research questions developed from a structure where there were assumptions attached within the questions, that could be associated with a hypothesis, to more open questions which could be used to collect the experiences of the participants working in the field studied, without pre-conceived ideas or anticipated findings or conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review (2,526)

2.1: Introduction

To seek clarity of purpose in the literature reviewed, ensure a full critical analysis of existing corpus and to assist in developing research questions related to the study aim I focus throughout on 'three foundational elements', 'empirical findings, theoretical foundations and methodological approaches', (Kelly, 2011, p.4). Under these foundational elements themes have then emerged from the corpus that helps address the study aim and craft relevant research questions creating a pathway to a research design in Chapter 3. It was found that certain emerging important literature themes transcend several foundational elements. It should be noted that empirical and statistical findings in the literature are also part of the rationale in the introduction chapter. In addition, throughout the rest of this study literature is referred to, at times in detail, in the individual chapters related to the concepts discussed therein, whereas due to this may have less attention in this Chapter.

As referred to previously there is a lack of topic specific literature as regards Outdoor Educational Leadership concentrating on people of colour. What literature that does exist is mostly indirectly related as either; outdoor education related to other 'protected characteristics' e.g. gender, philosophical discussion on the diversity of people taking part in sporting or outdoor activities, or diversity and leadership literature related to other sports disciplines. Not all the literature engages with research or at least primary research. Much of this existing research and subsequent literature 'and what solutions have been found comes mostly from USA', (Loynes, 2021). This means that this review also analyses literature outside of what Kelly (2011) calls the 'core' or in this case topic specific literature to help inform the study.

2.2: Eliciting the voices and experiences of others

This is a relevant and re-occurring theme across a number of articles that transcends both empirical and methodological foundational elements. There are a small number of studies recently in the United Kingdom that are beginning conversations about people of colour in leadership in Outdoor Education using primary data as empirical studies, although theoretical frameworks are also referred to.

Most notably is the full report of a series of webinars written up into the 'INclusivity in the OUTdoors Report (Anderson et al, 2021). There are three documents accessed in all related to what is called Phase 1 of a project around increasing diversity in Outdoor Education. To gain accurate data, the 'methodology' of the project ensured, 'the collating of data included the stories and experiences shared by presenters, polls, contributions to 'word clouds', online chats, and feedback surveys', (Duffy, 2021, p.3). Further to this Lumby's (2009) study on 'Leaders Orientations to Diversity', focused on the importance of 'the perceptions of leaders', in order to obtain 'attitudes towards diversity', (Lumby, 2009, p.429).

Developing the idea of using voices and experiences further, it is proposed that the six participants in this study would also be leaders who are people of colour, as opposed to 92% identifying as white in a leading role in the 'INclusivity in the OUTdoors' Project. This would attempt to effectively elicit concentrated cultural experiences of leadership through authentic voices. In addition, 'the lack of diversity among attendees' can 'effect the analysis and findings', (Duffy, 2021, p.2), which is a limitation that this study needs to avoid enhancing trustworthiness of data when answering the research questions. This is further argued as the question of participant ethnicity resonates through articles who engage with the importance of having participants of colour with direct experience to establish authentic voices, Goodrid (2018), Gauthier et al (2021), and O'Brien (2020, 2021).

The strengths of this argument for study findings and analysis are illuminated by, 'prioritizing the value of the 'experiential knowledge' of the interviewees and (re)position them centrally as the knowers within this interactive discourse', (Bradbury et al, 2018, p.318). To effectively achieve this much of the literature reviewed commonly used qualitative interviews and focus groups as a method to gain data. This would appear to be a vital consideration when developing study design for this research.

Alternatively, literature in the corpus that engaged in quantitative surveys to gain topic data were statistical reports, some from large scale surveys, some of which are referred to in the introduction chapter as evidence of disparity in diversity. The weaknesses of such methods would enforce a limitation on the possibility of rich data collection and subsequently, in this case, would not support the aim of this study.

With this purpose in mind this provides a strong argument for acknowledging that this study should engage with people of colour through qualitative methods to obtain in-depth and rich data that can be analysed for meanings.

2.3: Models and Frameworks for measuring and action

Within the theoretical foundations element (Kelly, 2011), a number of models and frameworks are presented in the literature that are used to measure or assess progress or guide action with diversity as an initial theme. The second theme emerging encompasses multi-level models and discourses applied to studies for analysis. 'A framework for change' is presented, taken from Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, Warren (2014) as a tool of 'self-assessment of inclusion at five levels', (Anderson et al, 2021, page 4). Lumby (2009), uses a self-assessment model, to help establish an organisations approach to diversity whilst Floyd and Fuller (2016) use a conceptual framework to apply to leadership development. These models and frameworks are a good way of initially measuring the scope of a study to progress with actions and solutions with diversity. They are easily applicable in generalised contexts and can be used in comparative studies. However, they lack in their ability and application to focus on specific contexts and in engaging participants in conversations on experiences, an important aim and focus in this study.

2.4: Multi-Level Models and Discourses for Application

The second theme in the theoretical foundations element (Kelly, 2011) to emerge are multi-level models and discourses applied to studies with particular focus on the use and application in study analysis. First and foremost, models and frameworks which separate diversity study into three areas based on study scope and size. Diversity being a large and ever complicated area of study, the advantage here is the ability of these models to achieve pinpoint focus from an individual, to an organisation and then a society level. These models emphasise the differences between the three levels, which is crucial for effective application. They make 'explicit the societal (macro-level), organisational and group influences (meso-level), and individual factors (micro-level), (Cuningham, 2021, p.6).

If this study is to engage with collecting rich in-depth data, then applying generalised models may well limit the studies ability to answer the research questions as it will be setting out pre-conceived frameworks of operation. Although this study will not apply these models it may engage through its contextual setting with it could be argued both Micro and the Meso levels. Secondly and contesting the intentions of this study would be the application of 'Intersectionality' (involvement of multiple factors effecting diversity and inclusion). This is a discourse, that considers all factors at the same time holistically. Lusted et al (2021), Anderson et al (2021) and Duffy (2021) all emphasise the need when studying diversity to consider all multiple factors, for example poverty and gender discrimination. However, due to the possible excessive size and comprehensive nature of this type of study it is proposed that this research would be more effective by not engaging with intersectionality. Instead, it will focus on ethnicity, as discourses like this are beyond the scope of this small-scale study and will diverge from the aims and research questions. However, it cannot be stated that issues related to gender and poverty will not be voiced by participants.

The literature further engages with the discourses of Critical Race Theory and Social Justice Theory. In using these discourses the study commits to a particular approach to the topic of diversity, covering research design, findings and analysis. The focus being on the 'practices of institutional racism' (Bradbury et al, 2018, p.313) and exposing 'structural racism and whiteness in everyday practices', (Gauthier et al, 2021, p.420). Also, with its basis in the examination of 'privilege and oppression' (Rose and Paisley, 2012, p.139) within a white system, Social Justice Theory, as a lens, seeks to establish links throughout the studies focusing on this discourse.

The models, frameworks and discourses explored here although, it is argued are not applicable directly to this study could well be used in similar future research. In addition, also, as a means of establishing a measurement of scale or particular analysis focus.

The aims, methodology and the time constraints make the use of these models, frameworks and discourses impractical and sometimes unapplicable in this small-scale study. It should be recognised though that there are possibilities for combining this study design with applicable models and discourses presented here.

2.5: Data collection and Analysis

The study needs to adopt a structure that is conducive with achieving the research aim and can assist in answering the research questions as well as organising the data to be collected for analysis. If a model or framework is not applied, then the methodological approaches element of Kelly (2011) needs to be examined to achieve a structure.

Although not presented as a model or framework the fourth emerging theme under methodological approaches looks at the data collection and analysis process. A good proportion of the literature reviewed has a thematic approach to this process. Focusing on 'themes identified by interviewees', Bradbury et al (2018), through qualitative interviews, explored further in the research design chapter.

These themes seek to effectively collect, present as findings, and analyse the voices and experiences of the participants. This does not always ensure that there is an effective systematic process though. Being able to more effectively organise, present and analyse these voices and experiences of leadership as themes a clearer structure is needed. Braun and Clark (2006) offer an approach called 'thematic analysis', described as a 'method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) with data', (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.79). They see it as a 'foundational method for qualitative analysis', (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.78). Two strengths are identified regarding its application to this study. Firstly, this method allows the researcher to pick up prevalence from qualitative data. Secondly, the proposed identification of data for this study is best described as 'inductive thematic analysis'. This is one of two ways in which data is identified, according to Braun and Clark (2006,p.83), and is driven by 'coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researchers analytic preconceptions'. This may well be compatible with the research methodology explored so far for this study. Both these strengths will reinforce the aim of the study.

The main weakness with thematic analysis is in the application to the research by the researcher. Even with a clear process care needs to be taken regarding the use of thematic analysis. Firstly, it is possible to misinterpret the answers to the individual questions from data methods, such as interviews, and use them as themes. This means, 'no analytic work has been carried out to identify themes across the entire data set', (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.94).

Secondly, there can be a 'mismatch between the data and the analytic claims that are made about it', (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.95). Care needs to be applied during any analysis to ensure that clear explanations with justifications match up with data that is presented. To mitigate against this, it may well be possible to include the participants at some point with the analysis of data collected. In this case we need to ask the question would this approach be compatible with this study? The answer to this starts in the conclusion in this chapter below and is further explored in the research design chapter 3.

2.6: Findings and Analysis structure

A large body of the corpus reviewed, as a fifth emerging theme, uses direct quotes as a structure in the presentation of findings and to support analysis of data. All this literature also engages with primary research as this study will. (Floyd and Fuller, 2016; Holligan et al, 2011; Goodrid, 2018; Gauthier et al, 2021) all use direct quotes to report on the findings in their studies. The strengths of this approach in analysis are emphasised in; (Bradbury et al, 2018; O'Brien, 2020 and 2021), where participants quotes are used to add confirmability to claims reported in the analysis. In addition, the quotes help illuminate and bring alive the data having 'given voice to the extensive narratives' (Bradbury et al, 2018, p.329) therein. Finally, in the case of this study, it would assist me in working towards maintaining reflexivity, in this context, cultural reflexivity during analysis. As a caution though and possible weakness the use of quotes to make claims can be dependent on the perception of interpretation on the side of the researcher. Any claims need to be made with a certain guarded and open-minded inference attached.

2.7: Using Research Question's in Findings and Analysis

A final theme that emerged from the literature was the use of study research questions as headings in the presentation of findings to assist in the analysis. There were not many articles that adhered to this study structure, but it is an important approach as it has the capacity to synthesise the findings with the analysis to answer the research questions with the data collected. Both Holligan et al (2011) and Floyd and Fuller (2016) use this approach within their presentation and discussion of their findings to help continually focus their study towards answering their research questions to complete their conclusion.

2.8: Conclusion

This study does not seek to use frameworks or models to examine the disparity that has been alluded to so far in leadership with people of colour in Outdoor Education. It does not seek to argue to prove or disprove a hypothesis.

This investigation will instead use a contextual case study to carefully record the experiences of those most close to the issues related to people of colour in leadership in outdoor education. To do this and answer the research questions I will use the learning from the literature review and do the following.

Engage and collect primary data to elicit the voices and experiences of participants as people of colour in the field of outdoor educational leadership.

Adopt a qualitative methodology and methods to gain authentic voices and experiences from those affected most to obtain rich in-depth data.

Adopt the use of direct quotes and words of participants to illuminate the study.

Use the phases in the Braun and Clark (2006) thematic analysis method to assist with the data research analysis, and as an adaptation and an attempt to increase credibility, look to involving the participants in this process.

Include the two research questions in the structure of findings and discussion to focus on answering them.

It is intended that this will address the aim of the study, answer the research questions as well as creating new contextual knowledge within the field of leadership studied. This will inform the research design which is explained in chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Design (2,910)

3.1: Introduction

This chapter presents ethical considerations and charts the development of the overall research design including methodological approach and methods, data collection process and data collection tools.

3.2: Considering Ethics

In considering ethics I set out to create integrity by using the British Educational Research Association guidelines (2018) of five principles on ethical research contextually considered below.

In addition, I critically analysed the practical applications of ethics and dilemmas within the context of the research using the Open University (2020) adapted framework of Stutchbury and Fox (2009). (Appendix 1). Throughout the dissertation I have referred to and discussed ethical considerations as they emerged making clear the process of decision making and judgement.

3.2.1: Participants

After initial verbal contact with participants a written follow up was made confirming interest and commitment. Formalised consent for participation in the research with requirements and a statement on the right to withdraw was distributed. This also included the assurances of anonymity and individual data storage and protection. (Appendix 2 and 3). I had personal meetings with each participant to explain the process and obtain consent.

For GDPR written information is stored in a personal locked office drawer in work and typed information stored on a password protected work account and when needed password protected memory stick.

One of the participants was under 18 so consent was granted from their parents. The organisation has human resource and safety policies that were adhered to throughout the research.

3.2.2: Sponsors, Clients and Stakeholders

Before any participants were contacted, I met the gatekeeper of the organisation, Chair of Board of Trustees. This involved informing them about the research, the process and recruitment of participants. This was summarised by email and formalised with the Letter to Gatekeeper (Appendix 4).

3.2.3: The Community of Educational Researchers

The Open University is the representative of the community of educational researchers. The researcher in this case followed all required protocols, communications and completed agreements of this organisation.

3.2.4: For Publication and Dissemination

It is my intention this research is done in a manner allowing it to be openly scrutinised with the processes used being easily traceable and understandable, with the committed work and writing being the author's own.

3.2.5: For Researchers Wellbeing and Development

I carefully avoided putting myself in situations regarding making promises associated with work related in my position as Head of the Centre. This avoids putting myself in uncompromising positions. It was made clear this research is being completed outside of work time and influence, although I explained the research may be presented to the organisation following participants consultation.

3.3: Study Terminology

Race is a 'protected characteristic' as referred to in the Equality Act (2010). The study itself is about diversity with leadership and so terminology and reference to ethnic minority groups was thought through. In March 2021 it was recommended by Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparity Report (2021) that the term Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E) stop being used as it emphasised specific ethnic groups. It goes on to suggest an alternative to this when referring to all ethnic groups is 'ethnic minorities'. The participants within this research and the literature reviewed refer to people by individual ethnicity, and as a group, 'people of a mixed ethnic background', 'ethnic minorities' and 'people of colour'.

To encompass this difference and the terminology within sourced literature, both from the UK and abroad, particularly from United States, and the acceptance by the participants the term, 'People of Colour' was chosen as a reference throughout. It is therefore chosen with caution to facilitate the empowerment of a group of people in this case who are under-represented in the field of study.

3.4: Methodology

3.4.1: Paradigm

The literature reviewed encompassed different paradigmatic approaches under the banner of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, which included associated concepts, ideas, opinions, models and frameworks.

I wanted to create meaningful opinion from the participants and set out to record, analyse and discuss their experiences to represent the issues about leadership. This is the aim to help answer the two research questions.

It cannot be assumed there are equality, diversity, and inclusion issues from the start in this context specific study. The paradigm open most to this approach is the 'interpretivist-constructivist' paradigm, as I intend 'to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied', (Creswell, 2018, p.8). This approach can then be used to discuss meanings from the findings against existing literature and with respect to the research questions and contextual practice, adding to existing knowledge, using participants voices.

3.4.2: Ontology

My paradigmatic choice, and perspectives on the world drive my ontological view that 'social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors', (Bryman 2001). The research is based upon the ontological position of 'constructivism', with reality created among individuals where, 'each individual produces his own reality', (Corbetta, 2003, p.14). Although this does not create a single absolute reality it may result in convergence among the participants due to the specific nature of their cultural association, the contextual setting, and the adopted research design.

3.4.3: Epistemology

Presently, this is speculation as epistemologically, 'what and how we will know', regarding answers to our research questions will only emerge as data is collected and analysed. The way of gaining knowledge in this research, epistemologically, is through interpretivism. By extracting the stories from participants voices, by methods described below, meaning will be gained by understanding these subjective experiences better through discussion. The reader will then be better placed to view the evidence presented and evoke their own understandings and conclusions. Our deliberations so far have driven the development of the methodology, that is, how can we go about acquiring the knowledge, to answer the research questions, to that of a qualitative research approach. Most of the literature reviewed sought out perceptions and voices of people of colour in relation to the situation of their leadership experiences. It is the case with this study and in its attempt to do this puts it firmly as qualitative research to gain the rich needed data for analysis.

3.4.4: Case Study

In fitting with qualitative methodology, I compared using a narrative and biographical or case study approach to the research. They both extract data from the experience of participants, as this research design focuses on, with responses being subjectively descriptive. However, the former was less researcher led with less focused conversations. I would need a set of standard open questions albeit that different responses could be elicited to ensure focusing on the research questions was kept for data collection. It could not be a free-flowing narrative. It followed in development of design that a case study would be used as an approach as it, 'is more relevant the more your questions require an extensive in-depth description of some social phenomenon', (Yin, 2014, p.4). This allowed a detailed analysis in a single context with the establishment of clear boundaries. I concur with Yin (2014), who refers to this case study design as, 'single case', which is needed to gain in-depth and rich data. Case studies concentrate and elicit detailed data. 'In this study, a specific cultural group and its nuances' (Wardle, 2023, p.3), assist to, 'investigate and report the real-life, complex, dynamic, and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors', (Cohen et al, 2018, p.376). The less historical narrative and the more contemporary set of events the more likely a case study is chosen.

This case study best fits one of three categories from Yin, (2014), that of 'exploratory'. 'Explanatory' and 'Descriptive' categories were rejected with the later tracing a sequential narrative of events and the former more used for testing a hypothesis. 'Exploratory case studies can be used to examine ideas from people's experiences and how these can be addressed if need be. They can also be used to generate a hypothesis or define further research, all open possibilities for this research with meaning being created by social interactions from individual experiences.

3.4.5: The Characteristics of the Participants

All six participants identified as people of colour and within the case study are a purposive sample. Their ethnicities are made up of, Caribbean, mixed heritage Caribbean and White, African, and mixed heritage Asian and White. They are either employees or ex-employees who have had significant employment experience and a lasting meaningful connection with the Centre. All had worked in leadership as a coach of outdoor educational activities within the context. Presently their leadership roles are, three are coaches and three are middle management or co-ordinating roles. Three were female and three were male. There was a variety of years of leadership experience in the field of outdoor education from one year to eight years. All six had declared a willingness to take part in the research and understood its focus and aim. All six participants selected were ideal regarding their positionality in relation to answering the research questions, the context and as a possible cross-section as people of colour in leadership in the field.

3.4.6: My Positionality as a researcher

My positionality has both opportunities and challenges. As Head of the Centre my role is defined as an insider researcher. As challenges, firstly, I am white English, so my cultural and life experiences may be very different from the participants. As a researcher I need to continually remind myself throughout the study to be culturally reflexive, making sure I understand the responses when recording, analysing, and attempting to interpret data. The second challenge is related to my position as Head of Centre. As a limitation 'this could create a power differentiation' (Wardle, 2022), particularly in one-to-one interviews, that are not either, 'dominance free', or 'between equal partners', (Kvale, 2006, p.484).

This could mean participants give answers they thought were required by the researcher rather than their own. The implications and mitigations of these challenges will be further explored throughout the study. Conversely, it means that I already have established trusted relationships with the participants. These relationships have fostered social protocols and expectations. This can ensure an open and honest exchange of information when collecting data.

3.5: Methods

3.5.1: One-to-One Interviews

To gather rich and in-depth qualitative data to answer the research questions within the case study face to face deliberations were needed. Initially, one-to-one interviews were to be conducted followed by a questionnaire, which would be derived from interview data. This was due to research time allocation and to avoid pressure on participant's time. However, a questionnaire would not generate enough qualitative data and diverged from the adopted methodology. As a solution, and on advice from my tutor following one-to-one interviews a focus group with participants was convened to discuss interview data. This was also requested by participants and so with extra work the time issue was solved.

The interviews had standardised open questions to generate data. (Choak, 2012; OU, no date), classify these as semi-structured interviews, with Cohen et al, (2018) referring to these as standardised open-ended interviews. Interviews were chosen for three reasons. Firstly, the 'interview is a social interpersonal encounter, not merely a data collecting exercise', (Cohen et al 2018, p.506). Open questions allowed me to follow up, not only clarifying, but enabling the participant to expand on answers. This increased the likelihood through rigorous process of confirmable data. Secondly, it allowed participants to freely give opinion, views, and ideas through their experiences, whilst maintaining a focus on the research questions, 'allowing respondents to answer on their own terms, (Choak, 2012, p.92). Thirdly, interviews produced a large amount of data that was used to create themes for focus group discussion. In addition, the interviews were conducted first to mitigate against the effect of dominance by others.

Addressing the challenge of power imbalance between myself and the participants being employees three actions were instigated. Firstly, the participants were offered a choice of their own for venue. Secondly if interviews were at work they were in a plain and neutral space, not used by management. Thirdly, reassurance was given throughout the process that being involved was voluntary and not dependant or beholden to work. Reflecting on the researcher's ethnicity as white, two actions were put in place. The interview questions used language that set the course for honest opinion sharing. Secondly, I took a stance of a learner during conversation, following up with further questions to clarify any perceived sensitive statements.

3.5.2: Focus Group

As a second data collection method, there was a focus group with research participants. The aim was to present the data themes from interviews. The focus group was chosen for four reasons. Firstly, it enhanced and created value added quality to the rich data collected already, having the 'attraction of synergy, with several people stimulating discussion', (Cohen et al, 2018, p.532), at the same time as focusing on the research questions. Secondly, it acted as a point of triangulation for the data collected in interviews based on collaborative data discussions. Thirdly, it offered a chance for participant involvement in the data analysis process as they discussed the themes, they felt were most important prioritising them. For cultural reflexivity, this attempted to reduce the effects of the white ethnicity of the researcher. Lastly, it acted as a data reduction exercise selecting the most important themes related to answering the research questions.

One of the limitations that arose from the focus group was one of the six participants could not make the schedule and subsequently was not able to join in with discussions.

3.6: Data Collection Process and Analysis

The data collection process was embedded as two stages in a four-stage research design. The design approach was put together with 'progressive focusing' Parlett and Hamilton (1976) in mind. The four-stage design allowed for the 'sifting, sorting, reviewing, and reflecting on the data', (Cohen et al, 2018, p.648) that makes up progressive focusing, whilst assisting and keeping the focus on answering the research questions.

It was important that through 'data reduction', 'distilling from complexity of the findings' (Cohen, 2018, p.643) 'the key points of the phenomenon', were not lost.

Stage 1 – Data Collection

One-to-one interviews of about ninety minutes were undertaken with all six participants. These were transcribed during the interview allowing for reading back of answers to ensure clarity of data. There were eleven questions relevant to answering the two research questions with some of these questions starting as research questions originally.

Stage 2 – Data Analysis

The six-phase method of Inductive Thematic Analysis Braun and Clarke (2006), inductive meaning themes developed from data and not pre-conceived, was used for stage 2, 3 and 4. Phase 1 (familiarisation with the data) and Phase 2 (generating initial codes) and Phase 3 (searching for themes) and Phase 4 (reviewing the themes) at stage 2. 179 different data extracts (statements, opinions, or ideas) were recorded from the interviews. These were grouped under 42 coding names, e.g. 'Training and Qualifications'. These codes were put under the most relevant of each of the research questions as answers. Similar codes were collapsed into a total of 17 themes some becoming sub-themes. Frequency and amount of data extracts within each of the codes was used to signify and select the most relevant to develop into the themes. Two thematic diagrams were developed with research question one having eight themes and research question two having nine themes. (Figure 1 and Figure 2) in chapter 4.

Stage 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

This encompassed the last part of Phase 4 (reviewing themes) and Phase 5 (defining and naming themes) of Braun and Clarke (2006). The focus group were presented with the two research questions and related themes as thematic maps. Taking each thematic map separately, the participants discussed the importance of the themes and sub themes presented. They selected the three most important themes from each thematic map. This created two finalised thematic maps, (Figure 3 and Figure 4) in chapter 4 to assist in answering the research questions. This was filmed and took forty minutes and then transcribed.

Stage 4 – Data Analysis

Stage 4 is also the final phase of Braun and Clarke (2006), writing up an analysis of the findings and discussion in Chapter 4. Extracts of data were used to illuminate the findings throughout. This structure is based on a report of a similar study by Holligan et al (2011) and research by Floyd and Fuller (2016) which contextually helped focus on answering the research questions.

3.7: Data Collection Tools

The data collection tools were selected to obtain the most available data whilst ensuring that the focus was throughout on answering the research questions.

3.7.1: One-to-One Interview Question Sheet

This is a 'pre-ordinate tool', decided in advance, Cohen et al, (2018) with the questions written for collecting information on the two research questions. (Appendix 5).

3.7.2: Interview Data Coding Analysis Table

This was the tool for collecting data extracts for coding from the transcribed interviews by statements, opinions, and ideas (Phase 2). The table developed from a need to select extracts without boundaries. In this way this is classified as a 'responsive tool', 'responsive to the emerging data', (Cohen et al, 2018, p.644). (Appendix 6). Later the extracts were reorganised under codes in this table for analysis.

3.7.3: Focus Group Response Table

This was developed as a 'responsive tool' used to extract transcribed quotes of statements, opinions, and ideas from film footage of the focus group. (Appendix 7). The above two tools were used to create thematic maps at different phases of analysis.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis (4,552)

4.1: Introduction

This chapter is broken into sections. The findings are presented thematically under the two research questions, using thematic maps and direct quotes. A data discussion, using the final themes emerging from the focus group. These are applied to reviewed literature and theories, the research questions and contextual practice using the ‘interpretation of results’ model (Drew et al 2008). Limitations of the study, an evaluation of methods and research actions taken and study trustworthiness using the ‘four constructs’ (Guba 1981).

4.2: Findings

To answer the research questions the findings were elicited from the voices of participants, drawing on their lived experiences, opinions, and perceptions. These narratives and subsequent data coding were then reflected through emerging and established themes.

4.2.1: Initial Findings from Interviews

RQ1: What are the issues related to people of colour in leadership in an Outdoor Education Centre.

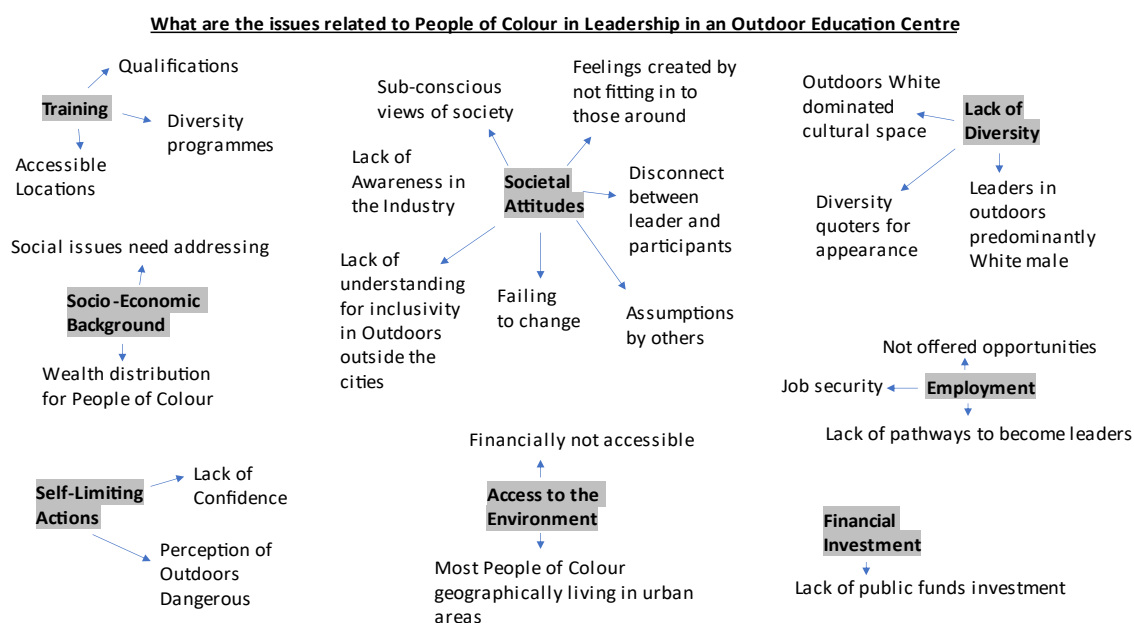


Figure 1: Initial thematic map created from Interviews.

During interviews it became apparent participants were very aware of the lack of diversity in leadership roles within outdoor education:

‘In every Centre outside of this one leadership has not been racially diverse – quite white dominated, I am not directly opposed but it should not be a focal point in your mind’,

This was also a cause for concern:

‘People need to bring different things to the outdoor world, different perceptions and approaches are needed to avoid the outdoor world being an echo chamber for a small group of people in power’.

This theme also reflected on the frustrations of some participants:

‘diversity quoters are superficial – for marketing purposes only, designed to recruit, exercised for appearance and not the progression of people involved, people of colour’.

Participants searched for reasons behind lack of diversity agreeing on issues that emerged into themes of ‘Societal attitudes’ and ‘self-limiting behaviours’.

‘People underestimate your ability or are surprised about what you can do, assumptions are made on what I look like on my lack of ability’.

They also explored conscious and sub-conscious attitudes in society regarding responsibility. ‘Sub-conscious views of society’ accepted it was ‘not a role done by people of colour’. Echoed by another participant that there was ‘a lot of sub-conscious bias to trust you to become a leader because of your culture, this was everyone in the industry’. Across themes, financial barriers to access professional development emerged as an issue. Attributed to poorer socio-economic backgrounds of many people of colour and what one participant described as, ‘economic costs of being a professional in the outdoors’. Lesser issues were related to needing good facilities and society pressures to pursue academic careers, as well as a lack of organisations within Outdoor Education.

Some exceptions were related to ‘intersectionality’, which is beyond the reach of this study. This touched on the greater need for women of colour to be in leadership with one participant commenting that, ‘sometimes it is as much a boys club as much as an un-diverse club’.

RQ2. How can we ensure opportunities in leadership are developed for people of colour in Outdoor Education.

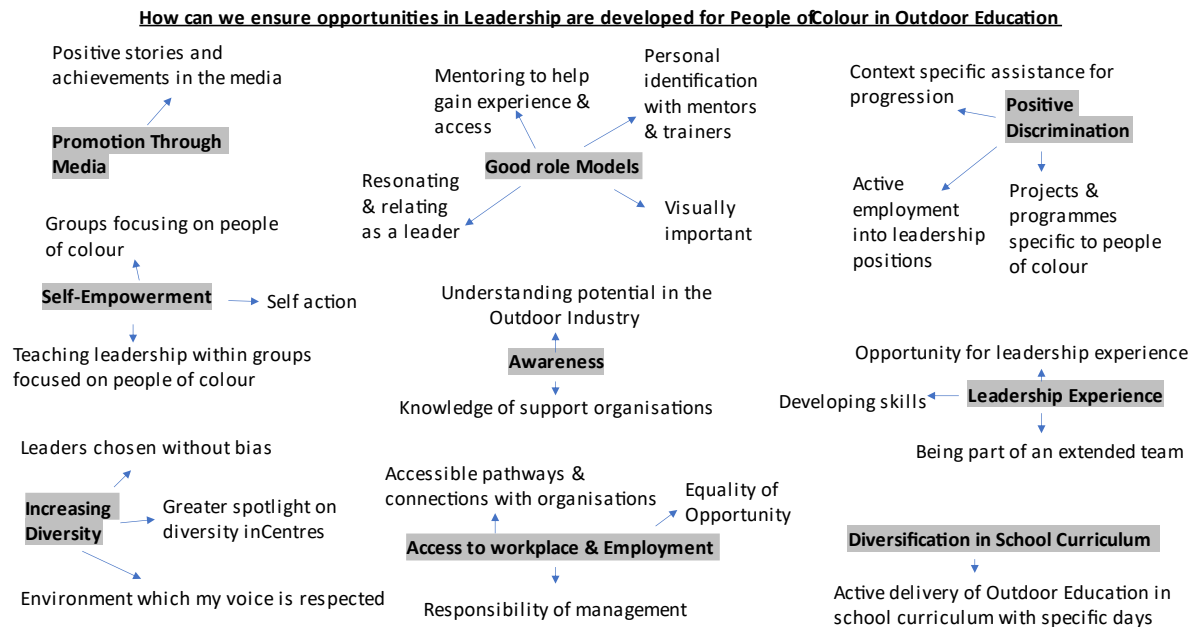


Figure 2: Initial thematic map created from Interviews.

All participants talked about the importance of role models. The idea of relating to someone leading you came across strongly:

‘people in outdoor education cannot relate to their leaders, mostly 100% white leaders – it is difficult for a young person to see role models’.

Participants felt responsibility for this:

‘having the role models, which is why I stay in the industry, to show other black instructors they have a role in these sports, I feel I need to stay to make it happen’.

It was also felt connections between leaders and those that they lead were important, which was not specific to race:

‘Leaders need to resonate with people they lead creating a rapport between them – this transcends race – people follow people you feel seen by’.

Some participants had taken part in a leadership programme and it was felt these were positive for pathways into leadership. 'Projects for people of colour gives a stepping-stone into leadership allowing me to reinforce my skills back at my context'.

One participant felt programmes were 'useful for bringing people of colour together to look at the future, this disproves that the outdoors was not for people of colour'.

There were comments that fitted themes related to employment pathways with differences on how this might be achieved or whose responsibility it was. One participant stated Centre's need to 'employ someone as a person of colour in a leadership position' with another commenting that 'access to a place of work with connections to an organisation was needed – people of colour do not have these contacts', emphasising the need for management and networks to give access to employment. One participant commented that, 'responsibility lies with higher level management to ensure resources are invested'. Self-empowerment was a solution with one comment that 'getting together groups of leaders who are people of colour dedicated to outdoor education leadership' was needed.

The likelihood of ensuring opportunities in leadership being developed emerged with participants feeling that change would occur. Hope was a concept that emerged, 'things will be talked about to make changes so it will not be an issue as much as it is currently'. However, all participants acknowledged this process would be slow wherever it came from.

4.2.2: Focus Groups Findings

The participants were asked to discuss both thematic maps emerging from the interviews. To answer the research questions, they were tasked in creating a rank order as regards the interview themes. Following the discussions some sub-themes were added and amended.

The findings as themes are separated under each research question presented in selected rank order importance as final thematic maps. (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

RQ1. What are the issues related to people of colour in leadership in an Outdoor Education Centre

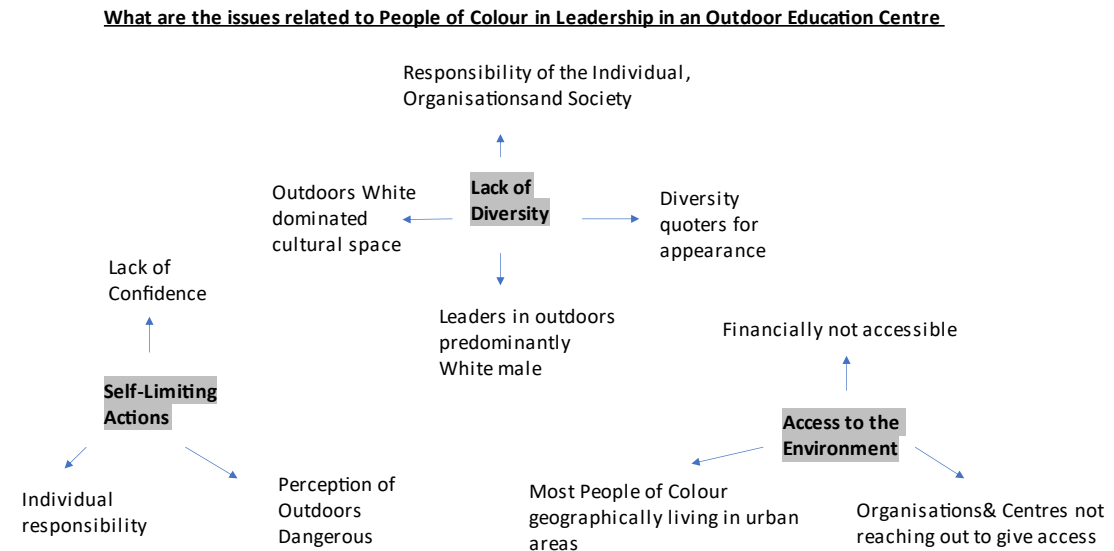


Figure 3: Focus Group final thematic map

There were differences in opinion throughout the discussions, associated with ranking of the chosen three themes under each research question before final agreement.

Theme 1: Lack of Diversity

This theme was the root issue that everything else depending on, ‘Lack of diversity is first as everything else stems from this’. Past experiences were recollected. ‘Even when you are on programmes that are for diversity, it still feels like it is up to you because the facilitators are still all white’. These feelings were echoed from the interviews. A sense of frustration emerged for Centre’s to do more to assist, ‘Some Centres are in urban areas next to diverse populations, and they are not reaching them’.

Participants discussed other reasons for the lack of diversity, with 'societal attitudes' focused on most after institutional responsibility. 'I feel societal attitudes are what dictate access to the environment and other areas'. There were different reasons given for the lack of diversity but the group agreed this was the biggest issue for people of colour in leadership.

Theme 2: Self-limiting behaviours

One participant narrated a story where they were the only person of colour out of 120 competitors. 'It is not easy, but I need to focus on people who are nice to me to stop self-limiting actions. The group agreed there were several issues that contributed towards self-limiting behaviours. One participant commented that, 'knowing people who look like you are doing these things, leading, then your perceptions change as seeing the outdoors as adventurous and not dangerous'. Having the confidence to step into a white world was identified as a challenge and barrier with discussions on imposing limitations on yourself associated with role models, 'outdoor sports to be fair do not have role models. After reflection, one participant changed their mind about the rank order as regards self-limiting behaviours. 'I have changed my mind a bit because how you are with yourself is so important'. It was also the belief of some participants self-limiting behaviour grew out of lack of diversity. It was in a sense a self-fulfilling prophecy as one was closely related to the other.

Theme 3: Access to the environment

Most importantly it was felt financial accessibility was due to professional costs and the demographics of people of colour living mostly in urban areas, where travelling to the outdoors was difficult. One participant commented that 'I do think that most people cannot afford to do outdoor activities'. One participant commented on physical access that, 'In the city it is hard to get access to water and the outdoor environment'. Some felt upbringing restricted access to the environment. One participant commented that 'if parents are not into outdoor sports then this can be a problem'. Further to this it was felt organisations played a part in restricting access. 'If Centre's are not reaching out this can be a problem of access'. The discussions under this theme echoed the interview data collected.

RQ2. How can we ensure opportunities in leadership are developed for people of colour in Outdoor Education.

How can we ensure opportunities in Leadership are developed for People of Colour in Outdoor Education

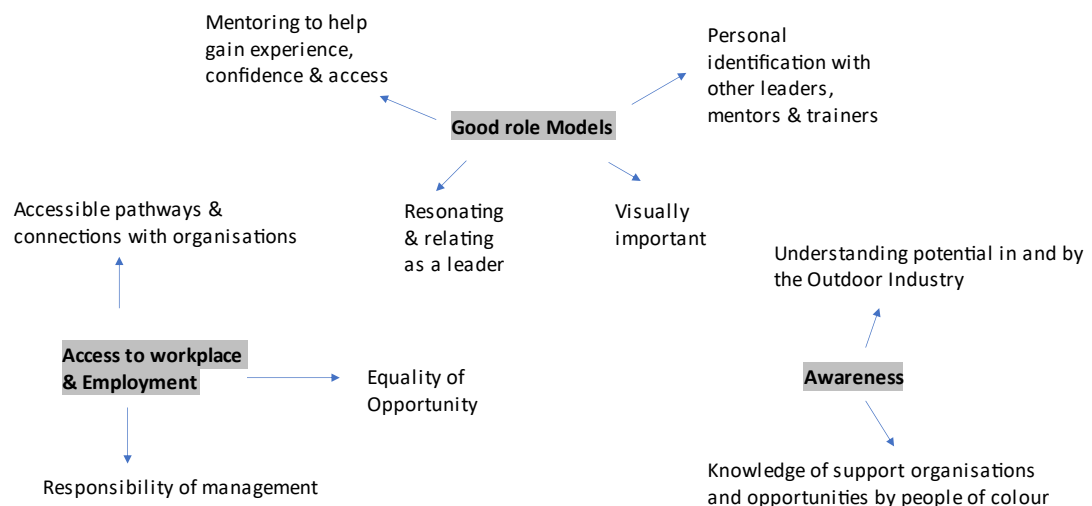


Figure 4: Focus Group final thematic map

Theme 4: Good Role Models

Reflecting interview data, there were strong feelings about the importance of leadership role models to ensure opportunities. It was seen as, 'really important to have role models that affect your identify, that is what builds your confidence'. One participant explained about an older leader who had inspired them saying, '*mines* related to something that happened to me. When I saw this person, I thought they were the coolest cat in town'. This triggered a younger participant to say, 'that's like you with me'. It was an inter-generational moment as regards the power of role models with surprise on the face of the older leader about the effect they had. It was thought that having role models and mentors was a solution to lack of diversity. 'Having role models will boost your self-confidence, if we put lack of diversity first as an issue then role models should come first'.

Others felt that access would be easier if role models were present at work. 'To have a good role model is your way in, otherwise you will not be interested'. This opened a discussion into access to employment.

Theme 5: Access to workplace and employment

One participant thought workplace access as opposed to role models was more important:

‘I think access to workplace and employment is important as if there are opportunities then good role models are not so important, role models are less important if the opportunities are available’.

From this there were discussions around the ideal situation where employment access and role models in combination would develop opportunities. One participant commented, ‘most people do not have platforms to assist them to become leaders’. It was also felt that management should bear responsibility for creating pathways and opportunities, reflecting interview data. However, even though some participants had been on leadership programmes specifically for people of colour the theme of ‘positive discrimination’ was not seen as one of the three most important themes.

Theme 6: Awareness

‘Awareness’ discussions revolved around two meanings which was felt needed to be combined to develop opportunities. Firstly, ‘the awareness of our potential from the industry’. This puts the responsibility on the outdoor industry with a need by organisations to seek out potential in people of colour. In frustration another participant said, ‘a lot of people do not understand why we do not just come, that is the local ethnic population’. This referred to organisations making spaces easier to enter. There were comments related to the context, and the higher percentage of staff from ethnic backgrounds. ‘We are lucky to have this Centre otherwise I do not know where I would have gone’. The second meaning is related to ‘the awareness of opportunities that exist for us’ as one participant put it. It was felt people of colour should themselves seek out opportunities that existed. This was related to self-value and self-worth during the discussion; ‘we need to show positive affirmation of ourselves to be ourselves’. It was concluded that awareness as a theme was important to rank as third as other themes depending on this.

4.3: Discussion

Searching for meanings in the final themes the discussion asks three questions; what do the findings mean for the literature reviewed and related theories? What do the findings indicate with respect to the research questions? What might the findings mean for contextual practice. This approach is adopted from (Drew et al (2008).

4.3.1: What do the findings mean for literature reviewed and related theories?

The qualitative studies of Goodrid (2018), Gauthier et al (2021) and O'Brien (2020, 2021) all mirror this study's findings on lack of diversity. Arguing comparability, I suggest this study also confirms the quantitative statistical literature regarding the lack of diversity in leadership.

Little literature exists about self-limiting behaviours, but it emerged contextually as an important factor, both in creating barriers, but with positive approaches to ones-self building leadership pathways. This suggests the field could benefit from investigation into self-awareness and how it effects people of colour in leadership. The data does suggest individuals' ability to understand the sphere of influence related to leadership. This self-awareness could be interpreted as individual agency to make change, but at the same time may only be contextually specific.

Data agreed the industry was not geographically accessible founded in the fact most people of colour lived in urban areas. The factor of ethnic populations living in poorer areas initiated the theory of 'intersectionality'. It was not the aim to engage this theory, however, data responses emphasise the need to acknowledge its influence. (Lusted et al (2021), Anderson et al (2021) and Duffy (2021) all explored 'intersectionality' and indicated the importance of holistic approaches.

Participant identification with role models could indicate their trust in mentoring. This is contrary to the literature, with few pieces exploring role models. O'Brien (2020 and 2021), reviewed a leadership programme and Dyer (2019) considered role models as one of three considerations. This stated importance of personal identification is supported by the data.

Access to employment was a theme emerging from almost all literature, as it was with this study. Cunningham (2021) referenced this as an issue of 'access discrimination, although little referral to this concept came directly out of the data. Most significantly were equal opportunities through access and connections with management taking responsibility. This infers the need for symbiotic partnerships with actions. It suggests creating networks which will reach beyond the context. Although, the study did not engage with multi-level models the data did suggest for opportunities to develop, there needed to be change at three levels: individual, organisation and society.

The fact that some participants had attended leadership programmes may have increased their knowledge and situational awareness. Emerging frustrations around the lack of awareness of ability related to people of colour could suggest sub-conscious decisions or intentional efforts to allow or restrict access to professional leadership. Bradbury et al (2018) and other studies found this to be the case. The data does not directly support this view, but participants alluded to having knowledge of this. In conclusion, although, some factors mirrored existing studies there were contextual specific themes that were generated that differed from the literature.

4.3.2: What do the findings indicate with respect to the research questions?

The data created a rich, extensive, and in-depth corpus. The issues are varied, complex and interrelated, so intersectionality and multi-level models should be acknowledged. This made the data reduction through thematic analysis both difficult and could be argued controversial. Data was possibly passed over in favour of selected themes deemed important. However, the research was done in corroboration with participants, who were actively involved in the analysis agreeing on three themes for each research question.

RQ1. What are the issues related to people of colour in leadership in an Outdoor Education Centre.

The data suggested a link between the lack of diversity and self-limiting actions of individuals, which is compounded and possibly encouraged because of the lack of access granted by organisations, in a tripartite relationship. Additionally, the data interpreted these spaces as culturally white dominated.

It is argued this creates a self-fulfilling cycle of continuity and there is expectation that responsibility needs to be taken as actions to change this in the long term. In the focus group and interviews the theme of societal attitudes was put forward as an important issue. Although not chosen, this macro theme of the multi-level model, Cunningham (2021), could be the third issue responsible for lack of diversity. Finally, it is observed all issues across the data set are indeed barriers that either; exist or are purposefully put up to create a lack of diversity as regards leadership. It is proposed that these issues create emotive frustrations and individual self-doubt in belonging whilst fostering a growing need to search for solutions.

RQ2. How can we ensure opportunities in leadership are developed for people of colour in Outdoor Education.

Most of the themes initially outlined after the interviews are related to the individual and the organisation. This appears to indicate that ensuring opportunities is determined at grass roots level, or outside the 'Macro' sphere. This is confirmed by group selection of themes under this research question. This indicates the reason that societal attitudes were not chosen as perceptions deem it outside participants influence. Alternatively, it could suggest opportunities are best constructed from the bottom in full knowledge of the individual, which in turn influences change at the top level, society. Again, data emphasises expectations for individuals and organisations to work together in symbiotic partnership to achieve equality of opportunities in leadership. It is then proposed addressing one theme is not enough to successfully develop leadership opportunities. This interconnectedness is inferred by the importance of relationships through role models, mentoring and networks and is reliant on where the responsibility lies for action. Finally, the aspirations behind the themes emphasised a realism in participants to achieve the development of opportunities. In that, it would need proper planning and a positive approach as well as time to ensure pathways to leadership equality would grow and evolve.

4.3.3: What might the findings mean for the contextual practice?

Lack of Diversity

It is significant to know the contextual setting has a higher-than-average percentage of people of colour in its workforce in leadership. One could argue this is a positive drive already.

However, there is no policy to underwrite this situation, which, could be argued is the result of the surrounding community being ethnically diverse. A review to examine if the Centre is reaching the community could be followed by discussions around policy development.

Self-limiting behaviours

Reading data findings will help understanding regarding the experiences of people of colour relative to moral struggles that are apparent in leadership. This can lay foundations for discussions to include the wider community and workforce. This could lead to supportive actions to address perceived self-limiting behaviours and create empathy and understanding.

Access to the environment

The Centre offers funding to assist with professional training. The data suggests there would be value in auditing these actions to assess effectiveness. There is also a legacy of assisting potential leaders to access experience for development. The review could include the collected data to determine actions, the outcomes, and their effectiveness.

Good Role Models

With the importance the data attaches to this theme a drive towards positive actions needs to be considered. This could be identifying and encouraging mentoring to support leadership development. Discussions would need to develop an approach acceptable to all. It is assumed good self-chosen mentors would create good role models.

Access to workplace and employment

The data suggests there needs to be, 'contextually considered and targeted positive action measures to ensure equality of opportunities', (Lusted, et al, 2021, p.245). Is the present situation effective, with higher management identifying as ethnically white. Discussion could lead on proposals for training programmes and opportunities to establish relevant networks identified as important in the data.

Awareness

The data interpreted awareness as a combination of two meanings. The first is associated with the Centre taking responsibility for seeking out potential in people of colour. This could mean assessing the potential available and developing actions to ensure individual's potential is engaged. Secondly, there is a need to investigate the effectiveness of communication associated with the awareness of opportunities that exist.

4.4: Study Limitations

All research has limitations. You could argue those featured below are not the complete list, but they are important ones in the researcher's opinion.

Firstly, the study is designed to elicit voices of participants who are from a specific sample group, which is contextually limited. This sample is small, six participants, meaning the findings cannot easily be generalised to wider settings. Additionally, the context has a higher-than-average percentage of people of colour in leadership. This raises questions about study transferability to similar organisations.

Secondly, you could argue using thematic analysis with data reduction creates a different social reality from which the data came to present the findings, with a small-scale study not having the capacity to analyse all the data generated.

There are two limitations concerning the researcher that need considering. Firstly, power relationships leading to imbalance with the researcher being Head of Centre and participants' staff. Due to this, it could be suggested, particularly with the interviews, participants revealed what they thought needed to be heard by the researcher. Secondly, the ethnicity of the researcher is white, with all participants being people of colour. It could be argued the researcher is investigating a present situational system that has benefited them. So, the researcher may act in, 'ways that are automatically congruent with culturally narrow discourses', (Bradbury et al, 2018, p.319)., with 'whiteness' as a default way of thinking.

Lastly, models, theories and frameworks presented in the literature have not been applied except for thematic analysis. It could be argued that the research could benefit from having an alternative lens applied to the data.

4.5: Evaluation of Methods and Research Actions

The main issue with using an interpretative-constructivist paradigm, where experiences are used to develop knowledge, is having methods and actions that are effective in creating meaning.

I argue three influential actions were taken with methods to assist in this. Using one-to-one interviews ensured independent data was collected from individuals. Having the focus group after meant there were data results to be discussed allowing participants to challenge, edit and add to data. It is argued this reduced the influence of the researcher keeping data authentic. However, it should be recognised that coding, although done diligently, was done by the researcher and therefore open to bias. Nonetheless, in combination both methods produced a wealth of in-depth data which involved triangulation. Second, the use of 'inductive thematic analysis created a methodical structure to adhere to. I believe this method is compatible with the chosen paradigm to achieve data reduction, 'distilling from the complexity of the findings', whilst 'without violating it', (Cohen et al, 2018, p.643). It also allowed analysis of data throughout the research process. You could argue the six-phase method of creating three sets of thematic maps was unnecessary. This study used two sets of thematic maps. However, an adaptation meant that none of the process was lost as with the third action the participants took part in data analysis during the focus group to develop the second set of maps. The ranking of the final themes by participants allowed the findings to focus on answering the research questions.

4.6: Trustworthiness

In addition to evaluating methods and actions this study reflects on trustworthiness using the 'four constructs' (Guba 1981).

Credibility

The method of 'thematic analysis' (Braun and Clark, 2006) was applied using the data collection methods of interviews and a focus group. These methods created triangulation of data, particularly with the focus group involvement in thematic analysis to develop finished thematic maps. In addition, I used detailed description throughout to disseminate information about the investigation to the reader.

Transferability

It is argued the descriptive information of the physical context gives the reader a holistic picture of the study. This is sufficient to allow the reader to decide whether the findings can initiate application to their own context.

Dependability

It is proposed that throughout the study there is a clear step by step process involving stages of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. There is also an audit trail of phases applied through adapted 'thematic analysis' to allow future researchers to repeat the practices followed.

Confirmability

There are three ways the study aims to establish confirmability. The researcher has openly examined and explained any issues of possible bias. The mitigation of ethnic differences with the researcher being culturally reflexive. And beliefs and decisions taken with the methodology of the study being explained.

Chapter 5: Conclusions (1,057)

Reflecting on the aim of this study, gaining knowledge from social reality and its interactions, means the interpretation of findings need to be carefully weighed up by the reader to make their own assessment. Below, I have set out learning outcomes for the research questions, the context and its implications and future research possibilities.

5.1: Research Questions

All efforts were made to ensure the data was authentic for presentation, so even though there was a reduction in data corpus the richness of stories were not lost for analysis.

The first research question was open to allow for participant's experiences to be shared with the researcher. This process through thematic analysis enabled the ranking of three themes in order of priority by participants. The lack of diversity is linked to an exploration of responsibility, that is who is responsible? In this there is a combination of individual and organisation. This in turn is affected by self-limiting behaviours and the white dominated cultural spaces that outdoor education exists in. In addition, the study suggests society bears some responsibility with attitudes that can reinforce certain barriers to leadership. Lastly, the data collected diverges slightly from the literature. Whereas it agrees access and white dominated spaces are significant in creating a lack of diversity, it also concentrates on the behaviours of the individual to limit and take control of their progress.

In reflection, the second research question focused on looking for opportunities to create pathways to leadership. Three themes were chosen through analysis and ranked in priority. This indicated there needs to be a symbiotic relationship between the individual and role models, and the organisation, through access to the workplace with networks. There was a conviction the individual needed an important input into creating solutions. This again was a divergent result of the findings in comparison to the literature findings reviewed. It should, however, be noted that societal solutions were not a factor in answering the second research question. This is something that may need more exploration.

The study emphasises the reality of the power of knowing within people of colour in leadership in the outdoor education industry. Firstly, what are the issues involved and secondly, what are the ways to deal with these issues to help with opportunities. What is also apparent from the whole process is the general strength of agreement concerning the outcomes of the data and its analysis by the participants.

5.2: Learning and Implications for Contextual Practice

The participants being from the contextual setting makes the findings and its subsequent analysis very specific. Whereas this means the study is not necessarily generalisable to a wider population within the industry it does mean there are learning outcomes related strongly to the contextual practice. Firstly, there is a willingness from participants to be involved in conversations about issues and what the needs are to address these. This may create expectations as outcomes related to the study. Secondly, in the light of the findings and analysis, even though participants made it clear the setting was unusual due to its high percentage of leaders from different backgrounds, the feelings were this was a start of something and not the end. This has reinforced expectation regarding outcomes from the study and what this will mean for the Centre. Thirdly, the study has emphasised the importance of involving those affected within the context in research. Seeking new knowledge and solutions, is vital for future professional development and understanding of the workforce and its practices. Lastly, being listened to gives a sense of ownership and involvement in the journey and direction of an organisation.

The implications of the study are based around the expectations from participants and the organisation. Firstly, a post discussion of the findings is needed to look at what this study and new knowledge means for development within the Centre. Secondly, there is a reliance on management to audit and examine the present situation and compare this with outcomes of the data. Following this it is proposed that relevant and meaningful actions could be identified and applied in combination between the individuals and the organisation. Lusted et al (2021, p.235), refers to these as 'targeted positive action interventions' and Bradbury et al (2018, p.331) as, 'a holistic package of positive action measures'. These interventions or measures it is proposed would look to guidance from the emerging themes of the study.

Lastly, this may result in the documenting and creation of policy to cement long term sustainable commitment.

5.3: Future research

There is a wealth of rich and in-depth data that emerged from this study, generating possibilities to develop this research further.

A discourse, model or framework could be applied as a lens to examine the data with a particular approach to the findings or analysis. To create a sustainable policy document a framework could be adopted or adapted from Anderson et al (2021), 'Actions For Change'. Alternatively, two that emerged from the data but were not applied are the multi-level model (Cunningham, 2021) and discourse of 'intersectionality', which appeared frequently in the literature reviewed. This later lens and the possibility of using for example Critical Race Theory would demand an extended time related analysis. As emphasised in some literature reviewed the study could be used to look at creating a new pedagogy with experiential learning in outdoor education that would produce a foundation towards new leadership pathways for people of colour. These are aspirational and would most of the time demand a re-examination of present data or extension of the study. Lastly, would be the possibilities of extending the study size to take in other organisations and looking into establishing a transferable model that could be used for comparison in other settings.

Even though different directions could be taken to extend, improve or expand this study with the aims in mind the researcher should always keep in focus their approach. This is done by asking some specific questions and then reflecting on these as this study has. 'Whose voice is (and is not) being heard, how that voice is being heard, and ultimately why it is being heard', (Rose and Paisely, 2012, p.148). This will then give answers that are authentically examinable that will create findings that will achieve an analysis that is able to keep as true as possible to the participants voices and experiences.

Postscript: Narrative Critical Reflection (501)

I have chosen two aspects more personal to myself as it has been a long and difficult journey which has had a positive personal effect on me as well as a significant learning curve with academia and research.

Before the start of E822 I had decided I wanted to do research that would result in positive an outcome for my contextual practice. I realised that my positionality as Head of contextual setting would have advantages and disadvantages. My advantage comes from both personal perceptions and feedback from staff that my leadership style encourages people to speak openly. However, to instigate an investigation I realised that bias from power imbalance may influence the research data collected, creating a 'hierarchical relationship with an asymmetrical power distribution' (Kvale 2006). This issue emerged in feedback from my tutor as a possible concern (Appendix 8 - Reflection evidence grid.). This was complicated by choosing a research topic that was under-researched and a personal passion, specifically, people of colour in leadership in Outdoor Education. Coming from a white ethnic background I was aware my life experiences would be different from the research participants. The concern was this may affect the data collected as participants may either hold back information during interviews and discussions or relay information of what they thought I wanted to hear. My review of literature assisted in my understanding of this and the possible mitigations that could be instigated. I created 'cultural reflexivity', Bradbury et al, (2021), by frequently reviewing data collected and involving the participants in the data analysis process. In addition, I fostered an atmosphere of trust allowing participants to choose environments for interviews. I took cues from answers to know when I should ask for further explanations and adopted an active listening approach in interviews and a back seat in focus group discussions. As an outcome I felt I was able to enter a different world of social meanings that I had little knowledge of before.

The second aspect, in combination with the first, is related to a PDP goal I set myself of, having an aim to develop culturally relevant processes to fit my context as the Head. (Appendix 8).

The aim was to seek new knowledge to improve and guide possible future actions. There was a need for these to be relevant to the staff and therefore organisation. For this to happen the research needed to be constructed to allow the participants to give their own experiences in their own words. This was one of the factors that drove the paradigm and subsequent design on which the research was based. As an outcome I feel that the findings helped lay the foundations for developing knowledge further for future positive actions.

In conclusion the study helped me grow respect for the participants views and build my confidence as a researcher in my data and approach. With future research I feel I am now able to carry out a similar study or develop this one further.

Total Word Count – 12,496

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Ethical Grid

Rationale	No	Question to consider	Your thoughts
External/ecological			
Cultural sensitivity	1	What are the values, norms and roles in the environment in which I am working and are they likely to be challenged by this research?	<p>Due to the fact this study is investigating the experiences of leaders on ethnic diversity then culturally sensitive issues may be discussed. I have tried to seek explanation during the research to clarify opinions given and been sensitive to the participants needs where expressed.</p> <p>I will make conscious attempts throughout the research to be reflexive with the view of my positionality as a white male.</p> <p>The justification of terminology use is explained in the main dissertation. Refer to 3.3.</p>
Awareness of all parts of the institution	2	What is the relationship between the group/individual I am working with and the institution as a whole? How does it affect the participant(s)?	<p>I am aware of my positionality as regards being Head of the contextual setting for the study. I have tried to mitigate the possible power imbalance as regards the qualitative data collection. This has included; allowing the participant to choose the interview venue as well as adopting a passive listening role as interviewer and not taking the role of chair during the focus group discussions.</p>
Responsive communication – awareness of the wishes of others	3	How might my work be viewed/interpreted by others in the institution? How will the language I use be interpreted?	<p>The staff and organisation are aware of my research and what it entails. This was explained formally in a staff meeting as well as through individual conversations. Any findings will be shared with and explained to the workforce to aid in agreeing</p>

			any decisions from the research. This will be after consent is given by participants.
Responsibilities to sponsors	4	What are my responsibilities to the people paying for or supporting this research (local authority, my school, external bodies)?	Not Applicable
Codes of practice	5	Have I worked within the British Educational Research Association guidelines? Are there other relevant codes which might also be applicable? Am I aware of my rights and responsibilities through to publication?	The five principle of B.E.R.A guidelines are addressed in the section on ethics, see 3.1. I have used the Open University Course, 'Becoming an Ethical Researcher' to guide decisions related to my research.
Efficiency/use of resources	6	Have I made efficient use of the resources available to me, including people's time?	My positionality as Head of the organisation as lead to this being an advantage as regards access to staff time and resources.
Quality of evidence on which conclusions are based	7	Have I got enough evidence to back up my conclusions and recommendations?	Qualitative data was collected from one-to-one interviews and a focus group. It provided substantial amounts of rich in-depth data.
The law	8	What legal requirements relating to working with children do I need to comply with? Am I aware of my data protection responsibilities? Am I aware of the need for disclosure of criminal activity? Do I need written permissions?	The organisation has policies and procedures related to GDPR and data storage which were adhered to. Permissions were received in writing from the gatekeeper. No children were worked with during the research
Risk	9	Are there any risks to anyone as a result of this research?	None are expected. If the research is to be published then permissions would need to be given by all participants. If this happens they would, need to be aware that their anonymity may be compromised as I am known within the field of study, outdoor education, and therefore the contextual setting may be revealed.

Consequential/utilitarian			
Benefits for individuals	10	What are the benefits of my doing this research to the participants? Would an alternative methodology bring greater individual benefits?	<p>There are possible actions attached to the conclusions as regards a way forward in relation to improvements at the contextual setting for individuals.</p> <p>There is enough data to use for alternative methodology such as application of a model or framework. Further research could be done to develop a framework from the outcomes.</p>
Benefits for particular groups/organisations	11	What are the benefits of my doing this research to the school/department? Could these be increased in any way? How will I ensure that they know about my findings? Is my work relevant to the school development plan? Can I justify my choice of methods to my sponsors?	<p>This research could behave as a catalyst for the organisation to be able to engage in conversations that some people may find difficult to talk about.</p> <p>It is hoped that the participants are all in agreement for the finding to be shared and discussed with the workforce.</p>
Most benefits for society	12	Is this a worthwhile area to research? Am I contributing to the 'greater good'? Is it high quality and open to scrutiny?	<p>This study has shown there is a gap in the literature and research in this field of leadership.</p> <p>There is also a growing number of voices concerned that the diversity in this field in leadership is under-represented.</p> <p>New knowledge generated will assist with paving a way forward.</p> <p>It is hoped that it will be viewed as high quality research.</p>
Avoidance of harm	13	Are there any sensitive issues likely to be discussed or aspects of the study likely to cause discomfort or stress?	<p>It is possible that discussions coming out of the research will for uncomfortable to talk about. This will depend on your view of the world and society and your ethnicity.</p> <p>The research is not carried out to cause discomfort intentionally but to be used as a tool for engagement.</p>

Benefits for the researcher	14	Am I going to be able to get enough data to write a good thesis or paper? Am I aware of my publication rights? What might I learn from this project? Will it help in my long-term life goals?	It is envisaged that there will be enough data that can be collected. It is hoped that I will be encouraged with new learning to take on more research following this study.
Deontological			
Avoidance of wrong – honesty and candour	15	Have I been open and honest in advance with everyone who might be affected by this research? Are they aware that they can withdraw, in full or in part, if they wish?	Through personal meetings with the participants the processes and consents they are aware of their options and rights.
Fairness	16	Have I treated all participants fairly? Am I using incentives fairly? Will I acknowledge everyone involved fairly? Can I treat all participants equally?	My approach to the data collection is one of imitation as regards my role as interviewer. I will make a concerted effort to give each participant chances to offer their opinions and create an atmosphere that is fair and equal.
Reciprocity	17	Have I explained all the implications and expectations to the participants? Have I negotiated mutually beneficial arrangements? Have I made myself available when those involved might wish me to be? Are the participants clear about roles, including my own, as they relate to expectations?	The implications and expectations are written in the information letter (see Appendix 2) given to the participants prior to the interviews. Participants were offered a choice of their own venue for the interviews. I have had a number of informal conversations around the topic of the research with participants.
Tell the truth	18	If there is any need for covert research, how will I deal with this? What will I do if I find out something that the participants/school/department do not like? How will I report unpopular findings	If any unpopular findings come out of the research then I will be able to act on these as Head of the organisation and/or seek permission to bring this up with the gatekeeper.
Keep promises	19	Have I clarified access to the raw data and how I will share findings including at publication? How will I ensure confidentiality?	Information will be stored securely. Refer to 3.2.1. If the research is to be shared or published I will seek the permission of the

			participants. No names will be used during the research.
Do the most positive good	20	Is there any other way I could carry out this research that would bring more benefits to those involved?	If the sample were bigger than six and was across more similar organisations this may create a wider reach as regards outcomes & actions.
Relational/individual			
Genuine collaboration/trust established	21	Who are the key people involved? How can I build a constructive relationship with them?	The participants are staff and there are already established relationship with them. Developing these further may mean actions coming out of the research that would be beneficial to them.
Avoid imposition/respect autonomy	22	Am I making unreasonable or sensitive demands on any individuals? Do they appreciate that participation is voluntary?	It has been made clear both verbally and in writing that the participation is voluntary. The participants were very willing to take part and gave active support to having a focus group discussion to explore their thoughts and ideas.
Confirmation of findings	23	What steps will I take in my methodology to ensure the validity and reliability of my findings? Can I involve participants in validation? Will I report in an accessible way to those involved?	The participants will be involved in the analysis of interview findings in a follow up focus group discussion after to create themes of importance. Direct quotes from participants will accompany the findings in the research to allow reader interpretation and assessment of the discussions.
Respect persons equally	24	How will I demonstrate my respect for all participants? Have I treated pupils in the same way as teachers?	I will keep an open mind during interviews and the focus group transcribing carefully what is said

Appendix 2 – Participant Information Sheet

E822 Information letter: Interviews – Masters Research



What is the aim of this interview?

The aim of the interview is to gain an individual's perspective on an aspect of education, childhood and youth studies as part of a small-scale investigation for a Masters qualification. This particular interview is designed to help answer;

What are the issues related to people of colour in leadership in an Outdoor Education Centre
How can these issues be addressed to ensure opportunities in leadership are developed for people of colour

Who is conducting the research and who is it for?

This interview is part of my studies on the Open University Masters module E822 'Multi-disciplinary dissertation: Education, Childhood and Youth'. On this module I have an opportunity to design a small-scale investigation which will generate findings relevant to and of value to practice settings. The interview has been agreed with my tutor to be an important part of this design to allow me to include the perspectives of selected participants in addressing the above research questions. I will be analysing the data collected and reporting my findings in the dissertation I submit to the University as my final assessment for my Masters qualification.

Why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been chosen as your experiences and opinions would be highly valuable in helping to address questions which are considered will have value for the setting and others like it.

If I take part in this research, what will be involved?

The interview is intended to last no longer than 40 minutes at a place which I will negotiate with you and others being mutually convenient. If there is anyone else affected by the interview, such as a member of staff, they will also have been consulted. Permission has been granted from Chair of Board of Trustees. I would like to ask your consent to make a written record of our discussion during the interview. Only I will have access to this transcript. I do not need to share this with those at the University or in this practice setting. I will anonymise the interview before sharing any part of this with my tutor or if it forms part of the final dissertation. Your contribution will be recognised by a pseudonym and you will be asked if you would like to suggest what name should be used. Any other real names referred to during the interview will be removed and renamed. There will also be an anonymous online questionnaire following the interviews to be completed.

What will we be talking about?

The focus of the interview will be to find out your perspective on experiences of ethnic diversity in leadership in an outdoor education centre. I can share the questions with you in advance, if you would like.

Will what I say be kept confidential?

Your participation will be treated in **strict confidence** in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018). No personal information will be passed from me to anyone else. Your consent forms will be stored safely in our professional setting. My notes of the interview will be kept confidential and typed up as soon as possible. However, if you disclose anything during your interview which I consider means that you might be unsafe or have been involved in a criminal act, because this is a safeguarding concern, I will need to pass this immediately to the Chair of Trustees. The anonymised records of the interview will be stored securely on password protected devices and or files. I will be submitting an analysis of the data collected from the interviews as part of my

dissertation in August 2023. I also plan to present my findings to relevant audiences. I can confirm that you as an individual will not be identifiable in any of these reports and presentations.

What happens now?

After reading this information sheet, please review and complete the consent form, also attached, by 17th April 2023. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw your consent at any point by letting me know, until the time I am using your data in my University assessments. As soon as you let me know you wish to withdraw, your consent forms and any data collected will be destroyed.

What if I have other questions?

If you have any other questions about the study I would be very happy to answer them. Please contact me at

Thank you in advance

Mike Wardle

Appendix 3 – Participant Consent Form



E822 INTERVIEWS CONSENT AND ASSENT FORM

(to be completed by all participants and, if the participant is a child/young person under age 18, with and by their parent/carer/guardian)

If this request relates to a child/young person under the age of 18 and a child or young person would benefit from this, please would a parent, carer or guardian read these questions to them and, if necessary, complete the replies for them.

Please indicate YES or NO for each of the questions below and return the completed form by 17th April 2023 to Mike Wardle at

- Have you read (or had read to you) the information about this interview? YES NO
- Has someone explained this interview to you? YES NO
- Do you understand what this interview is about? YES NO
- Have you asked all the questions you want? YES NO
- Have you had your questions answered in a way you understand? YES NO
- Do you understand it is OK to stop taking part at any time? YES NO
- Will you have an adult present with you? YES NO
- Are you happy for the interview to be audio recorded? YES NO
- Are you happy with how your data will be stored? YES NO
- Do you understand that your and any other real names as well as any identifiable information will be removed from what will be shared after the interview? YES NO
- Are you happy to take part? YES NO

If any answers are 'no' you can ask more questions. But if you **don't** want to take part, please let me know and **don't** sign your name.

If you **do** want to take part, please write your name and today's date

Your name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

If the person to be interviewed is a child or young person under 18 and you are happy for the child or young person you are responsible for (as their parent, carer or guardian) to participate, please could you also sign and date below.

Print name _____

Sign _____

Date _____

Return form to: Mike Wardle at

Thank you for your help.

Appendix 4 – Letter to Gatekeeper

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education, Language and Sport



Study related to Masters module 'E822 Multidisciplinary dissertation: Education, Childhood and Youth'

Letter to Setting Gatekeepers: E822 Dissertation

Dear

I am currently studying on the Masters module 'E822: The Multidisciplinary Masters Dissertation: Education, Childhood and Youth' at the Open University in the Faculty of Wellbeing, Education, Language and Sport. My studies are being supervised by my Open University personal tutor, supported by the module team WELS-ECYS-Masters@open.ac.uk and follow research protocols reviewed and supported by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee. As part of my studies, I would like to request whether I could develop a Small-Scale Investigation (or SSI form of the dissertation), which would involve data collection in your setting (using interviews, observation, collection of documents and/or questionnaires). This will involve present staff as well as recent past staff. I will be able to provide and discuss further details about which methods I would like to use as my studies develop during the module.

Information collected from all participants will be kept confidential, de-identified to remove identifying features of individuals and the setting, and stored securely on password protected devices. Original notes and digital files will then be destroyed. I confirm that no information leading to the identification of your setting or the individual participants will be included in my submissions to the University or in any related publications. If there is a disclosure of a safeguarding nature during data collection, then, as will have been explained to the participants in advance of data collection, this will be immediately passed to the setting Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Your setting's and participants' involvements are voluntary. To help you in making a decision, the University have provided Guidance for Setting Gatekeepers, which I attach. You can withdraw permission for the study to take place as outlined in this Guidance. Your colleagues, staff and recent past staff in the setting who are invited to provide data as participants can also withdraw their consent and request destruction of data collected up to two weeks after each form of data collection has taken place. I will respect these wishes. In this situation, for any interview or observation assuming there is time, I would like your support in contacting participants to collect sufficient data for my research. I do have the option of carrying out an Extended literature review and research Proposal (or EP form of the dissertation) which would not require any data collection during my studies and I am happy to discuss this with you.

If I am carrying out the SSI form of the dissertation, I am required by my University to complete a jointly signed Dissertation Ethical Agreement Form **by my first tutor marked assessment submission date in November**. If you are happy for me to develop a dissertation on the basis outlined above, I would like to discuss this with you to further. This would allow me to explain more about my studies and these requests, including the timeline and processes and protocols for ethical research in this setting. Please suggest a suitable date and time. Yours sincerely, Mike Wardle

Appendix 5 – One-to-one Interview Questions

NAME _____ Date of Interview _____

One to One Interview Questions

1. What is your definition of diversity in leadership in outdoor education
2. What are the important issues for you around diversity in leadership in outdoor education
3. What negative experiences have you had in leadership in outdoor education
4. What positive experiences have you had in leadership in outdoor education
5. How can the positive experiences you have had in leadership in outdoor education be developed
6. How can the negative experiences you have had in leadership in outdoor education be solved
7. What potential barriers are there for you in leadership in outdoor education
8. What specific needs do you have as regards leadership in outdoor education
9. What do you feel is the extent of ethnic diversity in leadership in outdoor education
10. What actions need to be taken to ensure ethnic diversity in leadership in outdoor education
11. What do you see is the future of ethnic diversity in leadership in outdoor education

**Appendix 6 - Interview Data Coding Analysis Table
(Phase 2 in Thematic Analysis)**

Data Extract	Participant Initials	Coding Name	Code Letter

**Appendix 7 - Focus Group Response Table
(Phase 4 and 5 of Thematic Analysis)**

1. WHAT ARE THE ISSUES RELATED TO PEOPLE OF COLOUR IN LEADERSHIP IN AN OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE
2. HOW CAN WE ENSURE OPPORTUNITIES IN LEADERSHIP ARE DEVELOPED FOR PEOPLE OF COLOUR IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Appendix 8 - Reflection Evidence Grid

Category	Feedback received and areas of development	How did this shape my dissertation
Knowledge and understanding	Badged Course on Ethics -Understanding ethics – Ethics in research was mostly new to me at the beginning of the dissertation module.	The practice of ethics in my research with participants cemented my understanding of its importance. This assisted with what I should and should not reveal in my dissertation
	TMA 01 feedback from my tutor on the research study title - 'There is an assumption here that needs to be tested'. The original title created a hypothesis which was not conducive with the aim of the research which was to explore the experiences of the participants. This helped advance my learning and understanding as regards academic knowledge of methodology.	The title was changed to create a title with an open description that was compatible with the paradigm of the research.
Critical analysis and evaluation	TMA 02 feedback from my tutor - This concerns my positionality as a researcher. 'You need to develop your discussion on bias and power relations'. This is in reference to my position as Head of the organisation with staff as participants and my ethnic background as a white researcher investigating leadership with people of colour.	Both within the 'considering ethics' section, (Appendix 1) and research design chapter under a sub heading 'my positionality' and study limitations I have analysed my influence as a limitation to the research carried out.
Links to professional practice	PDP Goal – Personal Choose culturally relevant processes to fit my	The PDP Goal related to my context helped shape the research design

	<p>context. This is partly achieved as the process has started through the research completed for my dissertation. It will now be an ongoing process in my professional practice.</p>	<p>approach to the dissertation, that is listening to the voices and experiences of the staff to create meaning.</p>
<p>Structure, communication, and presentation</p>	<p>Dissertation feedback form from my tutor after submitted section of the dissertation - ‘..there is a need for direct reference to the RQ’s. The RQ’s need to inform every aspect of the dissertation’.</p>	<p>Following this feedback I introduced points across the dissertation that showed how the RQ’s linked to the development of the research design and process. This was also reflected in the structure of the findings and the discussions in the analysis which had sections relating back to the RQ’s.</p>

Appendix 9 - E822 Ethical Appraisal Form



Masters: Education, Childhood and Youth

NB: it should be noted that The Open University is unable to offer liability insurance to cover any negative consequences students might encounter when undertaking 'in-person' data collection. It is therefore very important that you follow appropriate research protocols which should include seeking Gatekeeper permissions to undertake any data collection within your setting and adhering to ethical principles for the safety

Because ethical appraisal should precede data collection, a completed version of this form should be included with TMA02 for those developing a Small-Scale Investigation (SSI) and as part of the EMA submission for those completing an Extended Literature Review and Research Proposal (EP) form of the Dissertation.

of yourself and your participants.

Fill in section 1 of this document with your personal details and brief information about your research.

For section 2, please assess your research using the following questions and click yes or no as appropriate. If there is any possibility of significant risk please tick yes. Even if your list contains all "no" you should still return your completed checklist so your tutor/supervisor can assess the proposed research.

Section 1: Project details		
a.	Student name	Michael Wardle
b.	PI	
c.	Project title	The experiences of ethnic diversity in leadership in an outdoor education centre. A case study.
d.	Supervisor/tutor	Robert Melville
e.	Qualification	Masters in Education
		Masters in Childhood and Youth

f.	MA pathway (where applicable)	
g.	Intended start date for fieldwork	17 th April 2023
h.	Intended end date for fieldwork	25 th May 2023
i.	Country fieldwork will be conducted in <i>If you are resident in the UK and will be conducting your research abroad please check www.fco.gov.uk for advice on travel.</i>	United Kingdom

Section 2: Ethics Assessment		Yes	No
1	Does your proposed research need initial clearance from a 'gatekeeper' (e.g. Local Authority, head teacher, college head, nursery/playgroup manager)?	Yes	
2	Have you checked whether the organisation requires you to undertake a 'police check' or appropriate level of 'disclosure' before carrying out your research? ¹	Yes	
3	Have you indicated how informed consent will be obtained from your participants (including children less than 16 years old, school pupils and immediate family members)? Your consent letters/forms must inform participants that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. ²	Yes	
4	Will your proposed research design mean that it will be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge/consent at the time (e.g. covert observation of people in nonpublic places)? If so have you specified appropriate debriefing procedures? ³		No

¹ You must agree to comply with any ethical codes of practice or legal requirements that maybe in place within the organisation or country (e.g. educational institution, social care setting or other workplace) in which your research will take place. If required an appropriate level of disclosure ('police check') can be obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland, AccessNI (Northern Ireland), Criminal Records Office (Republic of Ireland), etc.

² This should normally involve the use of an information sheet about the research and what participation will involve, and a signed consent form. You must allow sufficient time for potential participants to consider their decision between the giving of the information sheet and the gaining of consent. No research should be conducted without the opt-in informed consent of participants or their caregivers. In the case of children (individuals under 16 years of age) no research should be conducted without a specified means of gaining their informed consent (or, in the case of young children, their assent) and the consent of their parents, caregivers, or guardians. This is particularly important if your project involves participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent (e.g. children under 16 years, people with learning disabilities, or emotional problems, people with difficulty in understanding or communication, people with identified health problems). There is additional guidance on informed consent on the Masters: Education and Childhood and Youth website under Project Resources.

³ Where an essential element of the research design would be compromised by full disclosure to participants, the withholding of information should be specified in the project proposal and explicit procedures stated to obviate any potential harm arising from such withholding. Deception or covert collection of data should only take place where it has been agreed with a named responsible person in the organisation and it is essential to achieve the research results required, where the research objective has strong scientific merit and where there is an appropriate risk management and harm alleviation strategy.

5	Does your proposed design involve repetitive observation of participants, (i.e. more than twice over a period of more than 2-3 weeks)? Is this necessary? If it is, have you made appropriate provision for participants to renew consent or withdraw from the study half-way through? ⁴		No
6	Are you proposing to collect video and/or audio data? If so have you indicated how you will protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality and how you will store the data?		No
7	Does your proposal indicate how you will give your participants the opportunity to access the outcomes of your research (including audio/visual materials) after they have provided data?	Yes	
8	Have you built in time for a pilot study to make sure that any task materials you propose to use are age appropriate and that they are unlikely to cause offence to any of your participants?		No
9	Is your research likely to involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. adult/child relationships, peer relationships, discussions about personal teaching styles, ability levels of individual children and/or adults)? What safeguards have you put in place to protect participants' confidentiality? De-identification of participants	Yes	
10	Does your proposed research raise any issues of personal safety for yourself or other persons involved in the project? Do you need to carry out a 'risk analysis' and/or discuss this with teachers, parents and other adults involved in the research?		No
11	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?		No
12	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS or the use of NHS data?		No

If you answered 'yes' to questions **12**, you will also have to submit an application to an appropriate National Research Ethics Service ethics committee (<http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/>).

⁴ Where participants are involved in longer-term data collection, the use of procedures for the renewal of consent at appropriate times should be considered.