

**‘WE HAVE THE FJELLS, BUT YOU HAVE  
CHARACTER ...’**

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**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (PSD) WITHIN THE  
DISCOURSES OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN AND  
FRILUFTSLIV IN NORWAY**



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## ABSTRACT

Great Britain and Norway have a long tradition of being role models for outdoor education in Europe. In Victorian times Great Britain witnessed a growth in public schools often referred to as 'character factories' whose aim was to foster personality and team-spirit via outdoor experiences. Conversely in Norway outdoor education (Friluftsliv) was rooted in a nature consonant theme that was further influenced by the 1970s deep ecology movement.

These two countries offer contrasting insights into how their specific culture affects attitudes toward wilderness and its exploration plus the relation of 'self' and its relationship to 'others' associated with personal and social growth (PSD).

This comparative study traces the transitional nature of PSD-related issues in outdoor education (OE) and Friluftsliv particularly those embedded in each nation's historical antecedents. The study also explores each country's current external influences, such as ideological forces, market-forces and political parameters. Finally, the study attempts to reconcile the past with the present. Scrutiny of the relationship between traditional and contemporary factors and its concomitant impact upon the sector is pivotal to the research interest. Thus the investigation considers future influences on personal and social development through the use of the outdoors, and juxtaposes findings from the two countries.

By drawing on comparative education methodologies, the study draws together two approaches. The first is a philosophical inquiry into the antecedents of outdoor education and Friluftsliv from a PSD perspective, while the second comprises a set of qualitative semi-structured interviews involving two sets of informants - one from Great Britain and the other from Norway. The sample was selected by 'reputational' case selection which resulted in a cohort consisting of four key informants at university level from each country.

The cross-national study shows that the antecedents of each nation's outdoor movement is multi-faceted and culturally embedded as a specific phenomenon borne of their unique political, social and historical background. In Great Britain an explicit PSD tradition has evolved while in Norway it is implicit. The findings show that the 'city-bound' philosophy of the British approach to outdoor education, contrasts strongly with Norway's 'classical' Friluftsliv tradition, which reflects its nature-consonant theme. The concept of PSD seems to depend on ethnocentric constructions of self, disparate ontological paradigms regarding pedagogy and diverse mythological rationales in the antecedents of each nation's narrative.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AE	Adventure Education
BSES	British Schools Expedition Society
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DCELLS	Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DofE	Duke of Edinburgh's Award
DNT	Den Norske Turistforeningen
EOC	English Outdoor Council
EU	European Union
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
EE	Environmental Education
EOC	English Outdoor Council
FOR-UT	Interdisciplinary Committee for Research and Higher Education in Friluftsliv
HCES	House of Common Education and Skills
HE	Higher Education
LEA	Local Education authority
LOtC	Learning Outside the Classroom
LTS	Learning Teaching Scotland
IOL	Institute for Outdoor Learning
OE	Outdoor Education
OA	Outdoor Activities
OYT	Ocean Youth Trust
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PSD	Personal and Social Development
PSE	Personal and Social Education
PSHE	Personal and Social Health Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
SOED	Scottish Office Education Department
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of The University of Edinburgh. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree. Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of The University of Edinburgh.

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## CHAPTER ONE - Introduction

The demolition of the Berlin Wall in 1990 created a unified Germany. In December of the same year, players from East Germany and West Germany were officially permitted to play on the same team for the first time since the Second World War. A new German squad, led by newly-appointed coach Berti Vogts, reached the European Cup Final in 1992 but Denmark emerged as shock winners.

It was on this very day (26th of June 1992) that I (in my role as an outdoor instructor) happened to lead a group of German youngsters on a canoeing trip on the river 'Treene' in the 'Schleswig' region adjacent to the Danish-German border. This course was run by the German 'Outward Bound Sea School - Königsburg'.

In one of the previous evening's reviews I had attempted to help the group explore the notion of 'there is more in you' and had stimulated the discussion *via* a metaphorical learning style based on allegories wherein I had quoted Helen Keller (1880-1968) a deaf and blind American author and social activist:

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved (Herrmann, 1998, p. 5).

However, on this warm and sunny day the concept of trial and suffering contrasted starkly with the tranquility of the meandering river and the rhythmic paddling that had such a meditative effect on our minds. Later, as the sun set over low-lying pastures we met a Danish group who, after a long day of paddling, were looking for a place to camp for the night at a farm.

Despite being similarly equipped and accompanied by 'trained staff', the two groups' reasons for undertaking the river trip were profoundly different: the Outward Bound group was pursuing an overt 'personal and social development' (PSD) agenda, while the Danish group ('Idrætshøjskolen i Sønderborg' who was on a 'folk high school'<sup>1</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Voluntary non-vocational form of 'boarding' school popular throughout Scandinavia which offers courses up to 9 months' duration and which may or may not be residential (Sweden has also some 2-year programmes). In English translation of the term 'folk high school' may be misleading: 'residential adult college', 'residential enrichment academy', 'experiential academy', 'folk academy'

trip) was practicing '*Friluftsliv*' - the Scandinavian manner of encountering the outdoors.

On that evening, both Danes and Germans were eagerly watching the Euro 1992 final on a television-set placed by the farmer on a tree-stump, close to the river. One can imagine the rejoicing of the Danes as they watched their home-team win, while the German group, of whom I was in charge, was left somewhat frustrated. The Low-German farmer who had kindly produced the television set displayed an interest in the dynamics of the two paddle groups and muttered in his '*Schleswig*' Low-German: "De sün anners drop!" [transl. "They are ticking differently!"], implying that despite the fact that each group was experiencing contrasting emotions, he felt the demeanour of the Danes differed from that of the Germans. Although I was unaware of it at the time this comment was a landmark in my 'career'. It triggered a passion in me for observing 'tribal oddities' in national cultures in the realm of the outdoors.

At this stage I want to explore the motives (however enigmatic they may be) that eventually led me to scrutinise the 'outdoor cultures' of Great Britain and Norway - as through this thesis. Undoubtedly this had something to do with this region of '*Schleswig*' where I grew up.

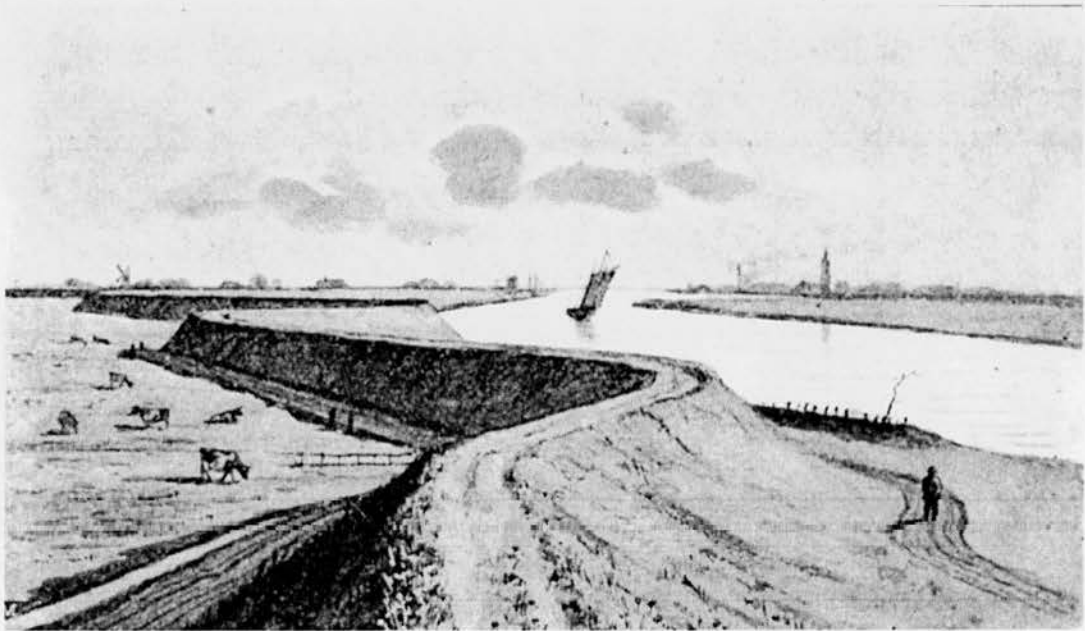
Perhaps '*Ægir*', king of the sea according to Norse mythology had a hand in this - or rather his 'jaw' [*Ægir's kæbe*] - it being the chosen term used by the ancient Nordic world to describe the tidal waves that created the maelstrom which devoured ships on the sea and flooded the shores and its adjacent rivers. From the adjacent North Sea of the Schleswig coast, *Ægir's* 'jaw' flooded the banks of the '*Eider*' - a river at which banks I was raised near the west coast of northern Germany. The name of the river - the '*Eider*' is derived from Old Norse '*Ægirs dør*', meaning the door to *Ægir*.

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or even 'folk school' might be more apt modern descriptions. Typically students range in age from 18 and 25 years and the courses normally span one academic year (nine months). These institutions are non-examination schools; nevertheless completion of a one year course earns credits towards application to universities and colleges. 'Folk high schools' focus upon learning for life and provide opportunities for students to grow individually, socially, and academically in small learning communities where they may live on campus in close contact with staff and their fellow students.

The Romans regarded the *'Eider'* as *'Romani terminus imperii'* (the [northern] limit of the Roman Empire) and it is believed that until the Early Middle Ages the river provided a natural border between the related Germanic tribes the Jutes and the Angles, who with the neighbouring Saxons crossed the North Sea and settled in England. Later, during the High Middle Ages the *'Eider'* was again a border - this time between the Danes and Saxons. For centuries the river divided Denmark and the Holy Roman Empire, and remained a demarcation line between the North Germanic and the West Germanic languages

Crossing the river's width (a mere 100 metres) countless times as a child I began to perceive variations in local dialects between the *'Schleswiger Platt'* (partly Danish influenced Low-German) and the *'Holsteiner Platt'* (Dithmarsian Low-German), which had evolved due to the unique history of each particular district. Furthermore, the Danish minority schools within the *Schleswig* region and the Frisian minority



**Figure 1.1.** View from, the 'German' southbank (Dithmarschen/Holstein) towards the formerly 'Danish'/Schleswig northbank (Tönning) of the river *Eider* adjacent to the Schleswig-Frisian coast of the Northsea (Fürst, 1896).

were souvenirs of a bygone era, a period of Scandinavian pre-eminence. The High German language *'Hochdeutsch'* was also a daily encounter in my early childhood, as were the foreign languages I heard when listening to the sailors passing by. Perhaps my exposure to this multi-faceted culture within the *'Schleswig'* region is

the reason I grew into a '*Grenzgänger*', [frontier commuter/border crosser] and derived satisfaction from studying the cultural and linguistic 'peculiarities' of my neighbours.

In many ways the '*Schleswig*' region is a reminder that cultural differences (which in this case are derived from ancient Nordic culture and Western European culture) are steeped in history and evolve over very long periods of time.

Against a background of claims for national distinction - which are of importance to this thesis - it is noteworthy that for the Norwegian case, commentators have emphasised the importance of ancient mythological rationales underpinning '*Friluftsliv*'. The latter clearly marked by a Nordic culture in stark contrast to Western-European heritage with roots in antiquity, feudalism and subjugation through the Catholic Church (Tordsson, 1995, p. 6).

A detailed exploration of history is important when undertaking comparative educational research - as in the case of this thesis. The phenomena under scrutiny in cross-cultural research often need "contextual sensitivity" to trace how and why educational theories and practices have developed (Kandel, 1933; Osborn, 2004, p. 266). This applies particularly to outdoor traditions which are tied to multi-factorial, historical, social and cultural contexts (Gurholt, 2008, p. 142). Furthermore, close examination of a nation's mythological narratives is key to gaining a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences of peoples' mindsets, and of the divergent relationships to nature and concomitant outdoor traditions (Csapo, 2005).

The preference for specific mythologies has often served a purpose in the antecedents of outdoor traditions. For example, in the case of Great Britain and its Empire adventurous activities played a great role both militaristically and economically in its well-being. Great Britain's colonial interests hailed, for example, 19<sup>th</sup> century Australian bushmanship for its virtues of "self-sacrifice, chivalry, courage, good temper and cheeriness" (Slattery, 2004, pp. 15-16). In contrast, an alternative mythology that would have embodied more humble aboriginal traditions was not considered *en vogue* in times of discovery.



Ironically, the meeting of the two canoe groups - described previously - showed differences in national preferences for mythological rationales that were not immediately apparent at first glance. Also each canoe groups' traditions were inextricably interwoven with the remote history of the *Schleswig* region - something I was to learn and begin to understand over the course of this thesis. The origins of these two traditions were connected to German military aggression that to varying degrees, and somewhat indirectly, was beneficial to the outdoor traditions of both Great Britain and Norway.

Denmark's ceding of territory to Prussia following the Second War of *Schleswig* (1864) was a hard blow for Danes. Not only was this disastrous war a catalyst that prompted Danes to re-evaluate their national identity, it also triggered change in Norway's national identity *via* the 'folk high school' movement that had spread from Denmark to Norway. Christopher Brunn who, as a young Norwegian volunteer among 150 others, had helped the Danes during the '*Schleswig*' War (Sletten, 1964), became the voice of a 'Nordic Germanic awakening' of 'Norwegian-ness' that would permeate the Norwegian 'folk high school' movement (Berggreen, 1993) and contribute to the rise of Norwegian nationalism.

With the prospect of dissolution from Sweden and subsequent national independence in view, the Norwegian polar explorer, sportsman and humanist Dr. Fridtjof Nansen gradually achieved cult following. His rise to fame and national acclaim coincided with the nationalistic fervour. Echoing the cultural lore of Norwegian history, it is no surprise that in the 1970s the rationale for *Friluftsliv* became re-conceptualised by its instigators as a "legitimately born child of national romanticism" [ektefødt barn av nasjonalromantikken] (Faarlund, 1973, p. 15, see also Jensen, 2000, p. 98; Leirhaug, 2007, p. 57).

Also significant in the history of the *Schleswig* region were the sinister undertakings of Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz during the Second World War, who spent his final days operating from naval headquarters in Flensburg adjacent to the Baltic Sea. The German Navy under his command targeted the Allies' Atlantic convoys causing havoc on the seas and the death of twenty-three thousand seamen during the Battle of the Atlantic (Woodman, 2004).



Partly in response to the latter events, the British Outward Bound Sea School was established at Aberdovey in 1941 through the initiative of another German - the emigrant Dr. Kurt Hahn, in partnership with the ship-owner Laurence Holt. They provided training courses to help would-be merchant-seamen attain the physical and moral strength required for survival at sea after ships were sunk by enemy submarines. They tried to instil in “younger men and youths that had not acquired a sense of wind and weather, a reliance on their own resources, and a selfless bond with their fellows” (James, 1993, p. 3). This ethos was the basis for character building and remediation to counter ‘moral panics’ in British society which gradually became a mainstay of outdoor education (OE) throughout Great Britain (Cook, 2001; Loynes, 2007).

Although I knew the region *Schleswig* was rich in cultural history, at the time of the meeting of the two groups I knew little of its somewhat ‘convoluted’ association with British and Nordic/Norwegian outdoor traditions which would play such a large part in my studies towards the present thesis. However, before it even occurred to me to pursue such a study my desire to see what lay beyond the region’s horizon led me to a rather nomadic existence, when having left my beloved river *Eider* and the place of my formative northern German childhood I indulged my *wanderlust* and assuming a state of ‘psychological driftwood’ traversed international borders and explored other nations. I travelled initially to England then Norway, Denmark and later Scotland, spending a considerable amount of time in each country. This sharpened my anthropological eye, igniting my desire to explore not just the terrain but also the similarities and differences between the nations.

My choice of career - working in the field of outdoor education - further consolidated my pre-occupation with aspects of PSD of youth groups in the outdoors. My travels and experiences fuelled my passion for a topic that was to become the core of this thesis: understanding personal and social development (PSD) through experiences gained in the outdoors.

The breadth of my interest was not restricted to national boundaries; indeed it broadened as a result of my working in three countries - Germany, Norway and Great Britain. These inter-cultural experiences triggered a desire to undertake

comparative studies - a desire which was augmented by tutorial discussions and an article reflecting on 'national life cycles' in outdoor education (Priest, 1999). Priest's comments concerning the global pressures and pitfalls associated with national adaptations to OE proved contentious on issues of cultural diversity (Festeu & Humberstone, 2005). It was precisely this contention that spurred me to explore European outdoor approaches in some depth.

Talking authoritatively on PSD is a difficult undertaking, since defining the person-centered concept of learning in the outdoors with its somewhat nebulous concepts and contested shades (Brookes, 2003) is like 'trying to nail jelly to a wall'. In a similar vein regarding the British discourse, Nicol holds that it is "very difficult to generalise about which way outdoor education was moving at any particular time - in terms of aims, values and philosophies" (Nicol, 2002a, p. 30).

An attempt to explain the intricacies of this phenomenon in a single-nation study is challenging enough. However, to go a step further and attempt to conduct cross-national research may be seen as 'madness' - firstly because the time constraints of a PhD submission-date are exacting, and secondly (but more importantly) because there are a multitude of practical problems associated with establishing 'valid' cross-societal demonstrations in relatively dissimilar societies.

Comparativists are more interested in making comparisons than defining the objects of their comparison. In this sense ontological, definitional and semantic battles related to the ultimately comparable 'unit of analysis' are usually not clear-cut (Ragin, 1987, p. 6). When looking at cross-national cultural differences and personality orientations, the optimist is driven by the hope of discovering universal principles of the human condition, whereas the hard-lined pessimist seeks confirmation of insurmountable ethnic differences.

Initially, I felt sufficiently well-equipped linguistically and in both energy and time to trace the 'European landscape' of outdoor-related PSD themes<sup>2</sup> by engaging a

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<sup>2</sup> For simplicity throughout the thesis I will use the term 'outdoor-related PSD' to refer to the use of outdoor environments for primarily 'anthropocentric' purposes, unless stated otherwise. The specific reference to an 'anthropocentric' focus is to highlight the overt intent of most outdoor-related PSD programmes to help participants develop personally and socially. This may range from increasing self-awareness/self-efficacy etc. to therapeutic work with young offenders etc. . This terminology is

large number of possible national cases. In the early stages of the project I considered including Germany together with Great Britain and Norway as examples for representative European practices. The rationale for the selection of Germany being that German was not only my mother tongue but I could also relate to a decade of experience as an outdoor instructor at the maritime school of Outward Bound/Königsburg, (Germany) and work within Hahnian '*Erlebnispädagogik*' inspired schools.

I felt that the British case selection was also appropriate because I had early experiences as an exchange-student at a secondary school in southern England, an ERASMUS-exchange as a PE-Teacher to a Scottish university (St. Andrews College, Glasgow) and involvement as an Outward Bound Instructor at Loch Eil, Scotland.

Norway shares a common cultural heritage with the Nordic countries so it was a natural choice. The Dano-German and Norse strands of Norwegian cultural history had caught my attention. Low German, the dialect I grew up with, used to be the *lingua franca* of the 'Hansa' era and led to widespread inclusion of Middle Low German loanwords into the Norwegian language. Also, my close affiliation with the Danish minority in Northern Germany and completion of a Danish teacher-training course in southern Denmark helped me to gain insight into the Scandinavian mind-frame. As for the Norwegian choice, my experience of working as an outdoor assistant teacher [Friluftsliv-stipendiat] at a Norwegian 'folk high school' [Folkehøgskole] and studies at the University College Telemark (Norway) in 'Nordic' outdoor education [Nordisk Friluftsliv] increased my confidence.

Thus having a familiarity with national contexts and outdoor practices in all three nations, I felt sufficiently confident to embark on a tripartite research project that constituted a selection of prominent European 'outdoor' nations. However, I started to appreciate the magnitude of the task involved when considering demands for

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intended to distinguish the use of 'PSD' here from a more ecocentric focus which several authors (e.g. Higgins, 1996; Loynes, 2002; Nicol, 2001) have argued is inextricable different from anthropocentric PSD. This is discussed at length in Chapter Three & Four.

manageability of data, socio-complexity and prevailing time constraints. Gradually, I realised that a more humble approach to the scope of the envisaged project was necessary.

As comparative research would normally be conducted by large research teams (Troman & Jeffrey, 2005), the limitations imposed by my sole endeavours to deliver a broader European perspective within a PhD project became apparent. However, there are advantages in being a solitary comparative researcher such as a more modest expectation regarding sustaining cross-national validity (*via* both electronic and face-to-face meetings), or in establishing and prioritising linguistic meanings (Osborn, 2004).

I realised during the conduct of the thesis that Great Britain and Norway remained a natural choice for the exploration of PSD. Each nation has revered iconic individuals who not only complemented their national image but epitomised the “character value of exploration” of each nation (Higgins, 2002, p. 154; see also Drivenes & Jølle, 2006, p. 9).

Norway’s reputed outdoor traditions, the explorations undertaken by Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen drawing on an intimate closeness to nature, and the curiosity of an international community regarding the latter spurred my interest. In the context of a pan-European discourse, access to literature on Norwegian *Friluftsliv* is difficult for those who do not speak Norwegian. Its relatively inaccessible geography engendered a traditional way of life which for centuries was one of multiple isolation; national, cultural and individual (Eriksen, 2005, p. 2). This somewhat ‘detached’ position also made it an interesting case worthy of further exploration.

As a second contender for a strong outdoor nation, Great Britain also constituted a natural choice; being a major player in terms of personal development and ‘character building/remediation’ through the outdoors, and because of its historical prominence in Arctic and Antarctic exploration which is comparable to and parallel with that of Norway (Drivenes & Jølle, 2006). The emphasis on personal and social development

can be seen in the Scout movement, Brathay Trust, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, the Outward Bound movement, The British Schools Exploring Society (BSES) and the United World Colleges (Nicol, 2002a; Loynes, 2007).

Eventually, mindful of the anthropological rule 'not to go native', the rationale for omitting the German case quickly became clear. Therefore with due regard to all the aforementioned considerations and trusting in my proficiency in Nordic languages and English, I elected to narrow the comparative study to two selected countries 'only': namely Great Britain and Norway. In other words by restricting the focus of the project I was striving to produce a project of greater depth.

It is my hope that these reflections have acquainted the reader with the events and experiences that led to my undertaking this thesis, to deciding the nature of research it would encompass and to the selection of the countries involved. The following chapter attempts to set the scene and address some of the cultural sensitivities particular to the phenomenon under scrutiny, and includes reflections on methodological challenges in comparative educational research.

## **CHAPTER TWO - Comparative Methodological Issues**

### **2.1. Introduction - The 'contextual landscape' of the study**

It is important to identify the difficulties encountered in exploring the concept of outdoor-related PSD in the two discrete national discourses. Accordingly prior to the literature review chapters (Chapters Three & Four), the thesis continues to explore the context, tension and methodological issues that comparative educational research entails.

This inquiry, which deals with OE/Friluftsliv and its relationship to PSD, is set in the context of a paradigmatic shift: an accelerating globalisation that has been causing worldwide social and political change (Furedi, 2009). When it comes to cultural influences on national pedagogy, global influences seem to result in two primary responses; they can trigger cultural uniformity and convergence, or (conversely) resistance (see further discussion below).

Due to the dominance of the English language, literature from sources as diverse as the Americas, the Antipodes, Great Britain and other English-speaking countries, the values and traditions of English-speaking people have exerted some influence upon the outdoor education discourses of non-English speaking countries (Festev & Humberstone, 2004; Loynes, 2007). Notwithstanding this, countries whose national language is not English continue to practice and develop indigenous traditions. This is particularly true in Norway, and is generally associated with the 'classical Friluftsliv' movement which is imbued with the notion of culture and nationhood.

It seems that cultural domination and global inequality foment defensive reactions within communities (Green, 2002), particularly those which equate global culture with a growing tendency towards American hegemonic dominance, frequently resulting in a swing towards a diametrically opposed stance (Green, 2002, p. 12). Commentators identify both 'positive' outcomes of globalisation, such as the conjoining of local and global issues which generates the creation of something



uniquely new, but also the 'negative' outcomes, such as the financially-driven desire of corporations and nations to impose a cultural economic hegemony around the world (Gabardi, 2000, p. 33-34; Ritzer, 2003). It is of course an open question whether globalisation causes cultural hybridisation or triggers an increase in national protectionism in regard to outdoor education philosophies (Festev & Humberstone, 2004).

Norway's long-held traditions embedded within the deep-ecological paradigm seem to be more resistant to global influences than its British counterpart (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001). The Norwegian imperviousness is reinforced by re-affirmation of traditional identities and beliefs (Tordsson, 1998). Nevertheless, pan-European values and American cultural influences make - as Loynes (2002) suggests - increasing incursions into formerly distinct national discourses of outdoor education (p. 113).

It is this backdrop that contributed to fuel the exploration and comparison of two national outdoor education discourses - that of Great Britain and Norway. The thesis explores their individual perspectives and the degree to which each has responded to a changing world. The following section identifies some of the challenges associated with conducting comparative research that involves two dissimilar societies, two disparate historically-evolved philosophies and two different languages.

## **2.2. Comparative perspectives**

By and large any technique that can offer explanation on variation can be deemed a comparative method (Bailey, 1987, p. 10). Comparativists are interested in identifying the similarities and differences among units. This knowledge provides the key to understanding, explaining and interpreting outcomes, processes and their significance for current institutional arrangements. Hantrais (1996) specifies the desired objectives of cross-national research which occur:

[...] when individuals or teams set out to examine particular issues or

phenomena in two or more countries with the express intention of comparing their manifestations in different socio-cultural settings (institutions, customs, traditions, value-systems, life styles, language, thought patterns), using the same research instruments either to carry out secondary analysis of national data or to conduct new empirical work. The aim may be to seek explanations for similarities and differences or to gain a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality in different national contexts (p. 5).

The above implies that social phenomena can be better understood when they are compared through secondary analysis and empirical work in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasted cases or situations. Indeed the specific bonus of applying a comparative design embedded in a multiple case-study is its ability to improve theory building. Patton (2004) emphasises this as follows:

The key to comparative design is its ability to allow the distinguishing characteristics of two or more cases to act as a springboard for theoretical reflections about contrasting findings (p. 55).

This dilemma of divergent stances predominates the domain of both OE in Great Britain and Friluftsliv in Norway. Should the domains of OE/Friluftsliv incorporate diverse paradigms in the hope that it will be strengthened and improved? Or, should individual countries protect and retain their cultural integrity along with the national traditions, stories and ‘mythologies’ on which they are based?

This study attempts to explore these questions by examining the journeys that two different national discourses have taken. As further explored, the study contrasts historical (Chapter Six) and contemporary issues (Chapters Eight & Nine); influential key individuals, namely lecturers from higher education courses based in both countries who are well-regarded in their field. Arguably, this group is influential in the ‘here and now’ because they reflect the current discourse within their field and also for the future, because they devise programmes for students who will be the teachers of tomorrow. Thus, the inquiry focuses on the relationship of contemporary



factors with traditional values, each of which impacts OE in Great Britain and Norway.

Having outlined the contextual landscape of this thesis, the following section will discuss methodological issues pertinent to comparative education research.

### **2.3. The methodological challenge of researching comparative education**

Comparative education research methodologies have been the preferred means of conducting complex cultural and social research. Whilst in earlier years the focus was on large-scale quantitative projects to establish differences in the educational efficiency of different nations, the ‘new’ comparative research approach is developing fresh methodologies that take account of tradition, context, and both national and local educational policies (Troman & Jeffrey, 2005; Troman & Jeffrey, 2008). This study follows the ‘new’ paradigm in that it seeks to chart the paths of PSD through the use of the outdoors hewn through a socio-cultural context of changing assumptions, values and practices within the two countries over time.

In this context, it is useful to note some of the purposes of comparative education identified by scholars at earlier points in history. Authoritative thoughts can be gleaned from the ‘grandfather’ of comparative education, Sir Michael Sadler. Writing in 1900 (reprinted Sadler, 1964, p. 310) he suggested that:

The practical value of studying, in a right spirit and with scholarly accuracy, the working of foreign systems of education is that it will result in our being better fitted to understand our own.

Sadler suggested that comparison might encourage appreciation of domestic education systems as well as heightening awareness of shortcomings (p. 312). The danger, however, lies in the attempt to apply a common framework. This is expressed in Kai-Ming’s (2000) cautious note for plurality in which he suggests that comparative education should try to understand the ‘diverse’ frameworks in which

different systems work within embedded culture-specific roots (p. 84). Likewise Judge (2000) advocates contrasting rather than comparing in order to avoid “forced comparisons” and to demonstrate the “particularity of national arrangements” (p. 155). Broadly similar national arrangements such as educational concepts and language systems emerge in educational debates, but such frameworks may prove an uncomfortable ‘fit’ when applied to several countries.

Proponents of the advantageous aspects of comparative research often refer to the transparency of an “educational laboratory” (Osborn, 2004, p. 268), wherein ethnocentric assumptions may be identified and challenged by the existence of alternative practices. Likewise Noah (1985) suggests comparative education comprises four research objectives and these form the basis for the present study:

1. to describe educational systems, processes or outcomes
2. to assist in the development of educational institutions and practices
3. to highlight the relationships between education and society
4. to establish generalised statements about education that are valid in more than one country

#### **2.4. The diversity of foci used in comparative education research studies**

While the present study is intended to help policy makers and practitioners from both Great Britain and Norway to value and critique their own approaches to outdoor-related PSD, it is also hoped that it will contribute to conceptual and theoretical understanding of the concept of PSD helping to develop future programme design. In aiming for such, the thesis’ framework has many antecedents. What is certain is that the field of comparative education research is characterised by studies that compare many diverse foci. However, the field is principally conceived in terms of ‘locational’ comparisons, i.e. of phenomena in different places.

Temporal comparisons focusing on historical precedent may also be important, but historical and futuristic studies focusing on single locations are less frequent in

comparative education journals. However, even within the category of locational comparisons, a vast array of studies have been conducted (Bray & Koo, 2005, p. 239) which show diversity in the themes and in the countries, regions, levels of education and types of education chosen for analysis. Within this panoply, however, two emphases predominate. The first stresses comparisons in which the main units of analysis are nations or countries, the second focuses on systems of education - many of which have been described as national systems.

One approach to the present study would have been to compare non-formal PSD-related OE solely within one nation. Indeed, Noah (1989) remarks that cross-societal comparisons have traditionally been avoided with researchers preferring to focus on comparisons within a single country over time (p. 10). However, a number of major works which collectively have helped to define the field of comparative education have explicitly focused cross-nationally on systems of education (Bielas, 1973; Cramer & Browne, 1956; Ignas & Corsini, 1981; Postlethwaite, 1988). Whilst within a doctoral study an analysis of one country would have yielded perfectly adequate in-depth data and analysis, the present study was designed in accord with this cross-national tradition.

Judge (2000) cautions against the bare “exposition of exotic educational behaviour” in each chosen country; indeed he advocates the implementation of rigorous rules for comparison (p. 155). He identifies three principles (which have informed the present study) and they underline the consistent rigour that serious comparative education research should comprise. These are:

- limitation
- informed detachment
- contrast

Firstly, they should subordinate the general to the specific. During the process of research design a pragmatic decision was made to be very specific regarding the ‘unit’ of analysis. Indeed human relations and environmental relations are

intertwined concepts that can each be perceived as part of the same coin in learning 'in', 'for' and 'about' the outdoors (Donaldson & Donaldson, 1958). However, by applying Judge's principle of 'limitation' to the work at hand I chose to narrow the focus of the thesis from the plethora of 'holistic' strands pertinent to PSD to a single strand - namely that of 'human-centredness', hereafter named 'outdoor-related PSD' (see also Chapter One). The literature review in Chapters Three and Four (Great Britain and Norway) discusses contested rationales of OE and Friluftsliv in the context of PSD.

Judge's description of 'informed detachment' suggests many native researchers may have been "taking for granted too many of the locally implicit assumptions and ingrained habits" (Judge, 2000, p. 155). I endeavored to follow this guidance, and the practical consequences of this are explained further in Chapter Five, Section 5.4. .

Thirdly, mindful that comparative research tends to blur the particularity of national arrangements through 'forced' comparisons (and to smooth these imbalances) I followed Judge's guidance and strove to juxtapose and contrast rather than compare. This was in an effort to avoid the application of a common framework which might 'blunt' the idiosyncrasies of Great Britain and Norway (see also discussion on employment of pre-questionnaire, Chapter Seven, Section 7.1.6.). Indeed it is arguable that any framework would not reflect the true peculiarities of either nation (Judge, 2000, p. 155). Notwithstanding this, however, the thesis strives to establish generalised statements about education that are informative to more than one country.

One of the major objectives of comparative education research is to make the "familiar strange and the strange familiar" (Osborn, 2004, p. 272; see also Alexander, 2000; Pepin, 1999). Arguably, to 'make the strange familiar' one has to study the body of literature that underpins the concept of PSD in relation to the outdoors in both countries. Therefore, a review of current literature relevant to the study is detailed in the following Chapters Three and Four.

## CHAPTER THREE - Great Britain Literature Review

### 3.1. Introduction

The provision of OE covers a broad field throughout Great Britain. In 2003 the British pilot research project (CAPHEOS) identified well over 100 degree courses at more than 30 Higher Education institutions throughout Great Britain (Humberstone & Brown, 2006). The growth in HE provision parallels expansion in the body of knowledge emerging from research on OE undertaken throughout Great Britain which has contributed to an enhanced validity of the sector (Humberstone & Brown, 2006, p. 12).

OE is historically linked to adventure and environment as central components (Baker, 2006; DES, 1975; Nansen 1897; Stefansson, 1922). Rickinson *et al.* (2004) in their review of OE literature refer to the diversity of the field of OE both in Great Britain and worldwide as “wide-ranging in both content and context”. This diversity is echoed by Donaldson & Donaldson (1958) whose multifaceted perspectives of education include “in, about and for the outdoors” (p. 17).

Whilst definitional terminology peppers the sector, recently the term ‘outdoor learning’ has overtaken the phrase ‘outdoor education’ as an umbrella term. This change is evident at professional levels and is illustrated by The Institute for Outdoor Learning and the British academic *‘Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning’* (Baker, 2006, p. 14). Nevertheless, the term ‘outdoor education’ is more commonly used as a general phrase in recent research literature and hence will be used throughout the thesis as an umbrella term for learning outdoors.

The difficulty in establishing an agreed rationale for outdoor education caused Baker (2006) in his discourse analysis related to outdoor terminology in Great Britain to conclude that “framing a discourse or understanding a structure” is quite difficult and suggests it is a construct, rather than a subject or discipline (p. 13). Similar definitional struggles were identified by Gair (1997) and Turčova *et al.* (2005), indeed the latter’s research on applied British terminology showed that the terms are

used interchangeably throughout the sector. Meanwhile Gair (1997) reported that terms such as ‘outdoor education’, ‘outdoor activities’ and ‘outdoor adventure activities’ were used interchangeably in policy documents throughout Great Britain.

Among the various domains that OE spans, outdoor adventure activities are associated with promoting personal and/or interpersonal growth (PSD) among participants. Notwithstanding this outdoor-related PSD has evolved in many directions. The concept of outdoor-related PSD as a human-centred approach is identified by Nicol (2002a; 2000b) and Loynes (2008b), both of whom remark on the prominence of PSD in OE programmes designed to reduce offending associated with youth-at-risk groups. However, Thorburn and Allison (2010) perceive PSD to be associated more with ‘functional groups’, and beneficial to students when “exploring their own values, preferences and histories and ... making decisions about how they want to live their lives” (p. 100).

PSD’s predominance in the field of British practice is evident in publications such as brochures pertaining to outdoor courses at HE institutions which highlight the person-centred approach as one of the main pillars of OE (Humberstone & Brown, 2006). The prominence of this strand in OE has been discussed by several authors (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Barrett & Greenaway, 1995; Nicol, 2002). Indeed in his review of OE literature Nicol (2002) claims its consolidated role stems from a “prescribed conservatism” of meanings and values that favour a person-centred approach to the detriment of human-nature relationships (p. 85).

Similarly Allison and Von Wald (2009) suggest that the versatile field of outdoor education is “often associated” with PSD. Its main content - as discoursed by the field - appears to focus on “developing confidence, cooperation, trust and teamwork” and perspectives specific to self-esteem which are “regularly identified as central” to outdoor-related PSD (Allison & Von Wald, 2009, p. 3). Likewise, authors whose focus is on PSD, such as Beedie (1996, p. 13) and Loynes (2008, p. 95), perceive a resonance both with imperial origins and educational approaches utilising the outdoors through social reformers in Victorian times. Arguably the fore-mentioned



antecedents continue to influence current versions of OE programmes to varying degrees.

### **3.2. The rationale for the review**

This literature review explores the discourse on outdoor-related PSD in Great Britain. The review broadly follows the lead of the thesis research question and focuses upon the conceptual discrepancies surrounding the phenomena of outdoor-related PSD along with the contemporary influences shaping PSD in Great Britain.

#### **3.2.1. The type of review**

The scope of the review examines literature that deals explicitly with OE and PSD. The aim of this review is to deliver a thematic critique of authors' perspectives and ideological stances, which illustrate the diversities and pluralities of the phenomenon of PSD in relation to OE. The manner in which the literature has been synthesised could be seen as a 'mosaic', revealing both research-based findings and diverse viewpoints which contribute to a sound presentation of the current discourse. Following Hammersley (2002) this approach to reviewing literature adds to the "complementarity" of the evidence on PSD in the field of OE.

#### **3.2.2. The parameters of the review**

The selection of literature addresses the discourse on adventurous outdoor activities related specifically to personal growth in affective and intra/interpersonal learning within a school-aged population, both in formal education and youth work (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Loynes, 2008). The literature review is limited to the keywords 'PSD in the context of the outdoors' in order to narrow the scope of the review.

In order to carry out a literature search I used the key search terms, 'outdoor education' together with 'personal and social development' (PSD) and personal and social health education (PSHE). Additionally, other English words and phrases closely associated with these two terms were used to aid the search, e.g. 'personal

and social education' (PSE), 'adventure education', 'personal growth'. These keywords were entered into international databases.<sup>3</sup> Alternative literature search routes were also taken, such as scanning reference lists, using search engines, library databases and tracing unpublished work within Great Britain.

The '*Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*' and the professional magazine '*Horizons*' were selected since they are the most widely read within the field. Predominately the review aimed at British authors publishing within Great Britain; however British authors who had published outside Great Britain were also included. Furthermore, the fact that the British discourse is subject to cross-fertilisation from the English speaking OE world is one of the reasons that the literature review led to the inclusion of influential overseas authors, where judged to be necessary.

From this extensive search of literature only 12 peer-reviewed articles related to OE and PSD were found in national or international academic journals. Considering the diversity of the field and for reasons of transparency it was deemed important to include Master-theses, anthologies, conference proceedings, policy documents, guidelines and other grey literature. In total, this review attempts to synthesise 32 documents.

### **3.3. Personal and social development (PSD) through the use of the outdoors and its changing nomenclature**

The concept of outdoor-related PSD has undergone many name-changes. Broadly speaking the umbrella term 'outdoor education' (OE) has also been used to describe the personal and social dimensions of outdoor experiences. However the definitional inconsistency has (arguably) resulted in arbitrary terms describing outdoor-related PSD, e.g.:

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<sup>3</sup> ASSIA, ERIC, SCIENCE DIRECT, SPORTS DISCUS, PSYCHINFO and WEB of KNOWLEDGE.



personal and social development (PSD) by the use of the outdoors	personality enhancement
personal, social and health education (PSHE)	'Outward Bound' activities
adventure based counselling	outdoor adventure programming
outdoor experiential learning	character-training (antiquated form)
outdoor development training	informal education outdoors
person-centred approach through the outdoors	outdoor youth work
personal traits development	

**Table 3.1.** Various terms used to describe outdoor-related PSD.

In Scotland as early as 1971 the Scottish Education Department (SED) preferred 'outdoor education' over the use of terms such as 'outdoor pursuits' or 'outdoor activities.' The term 'outdoor education' was used to draw together "divergent outdoor practices" in the hope that it would increase the sector's esteem especially among school teachers (Nicol, 2001). The divergent strands comprised:

- outdoor pursuits
- curriculum field studies
- social education

The Dartington Conference of 1975 marked a concerted attempt to define the aims and content of OE to create a heightened awareness of and to foster respect for "self, others and the natural environment" (Cooper, 2004, p. 155). During the 1980s and 1990s the term 'adventure education' became synonymous with the domain of PSD following landmark British publications by Mortlock (1987), Hopkins and Putnam (1993) and Barrett and Greenaway (1995). Building on the legacy of the Dartington Conference, Mortlock's (1984) seminal book *The Adventure Alternative* further contributed to the development of a philosophy beyond the ethos of 'outdoor pursuits' that associated 'adventure' with self-concept, education and environmental concerns. Mortlock's (1984) person-centred concept of adventure education highlighted "human possibilities which are realised when engaged with true

adventure” (Neill, 2004). Initially, however, its strong advocacy for exposing participants to “adventure, fear, physical hardship and discomfort” were considered inappropriate and met with resistance from safety-conscious wardens within British OE centres (Mortlock, 1984, p. 13).

The political climate of the 1970s was marked by safety concerns in the wake of the Cairngorm disaster (1971) and further fatalities in North Wales, which led to a shift towards further recognition of outdoor activities in the context of environmental and field studies (Mortlock, 1984). Notwithstanding debates during the 1980s on safety, the initial resistance towards a person-centred approach through ‘adventure’, gradually waned and it achieved attention as a “subject in its own right” (Baker, 2006, p. 18). Mortlock influenced the underpinning philosophy on the instrumental use of the outdoors, in his later work Mortlock (2001), however, veered towards exploration of the relationship between man/woman and nature.

The person-centred approach appears to dominate the last decades of OE history. As Nicol (2002b) concludes in his review of British OE literature, the term ‘adventure education’, which echoes Mortlock’s work, gradually achieved favour over ‘outdoor education’ during the 1980s and 1990s in defining educational outdoor practices focused on personal and social growth (p. 95). In particular, Hopkins and Putnam’s (1993) book *Personal growth through adventure* which explores psychological and sociological ideas and principles in course-design upholds this tradition. They opted for the term ‘adventure education’ where adventure implies “challenge coupled to uncertainty of outcome” (p. 7).

Their departure continues to fuel the preconception of British PSD schemes associated with a ‘cult-of-the-ego’ which is indicative of the individual participant’s ‘enhanced’ self-concept (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993, p. 11). Reminiscent of Dewey’s (1933) emphasis on ‘reflective experiences’, Greenaway, claims adventure education is a subject in its own right which can be circulated to a wider audience if PSD working-methods and schemes are refined. He postulates that this notion of articulation and intellectual reconstruction is ‘axiomatic’ and is even more important

than the experiential phase (Greenaway, 1990; Greenaway 1993; Greenaway, 1996). Likewise Stonehouse *et al.* (2009) emphasise the salience of a “cyclic matter of reflection and experience”, already traced in the antecedents of outdoor learning, drawing on Aristotelian forms of thinking and Dewey’s detailed pattern of enquiry (Stonehouse *et al.*, 2009, p. 35, see also Dewey, 1981; Svenning, 2009; Wurdinger, 2005).

A recent review of research on OE published in English between 1993 and 2003, Rickinson *et al.* (2004), showed only slight semantic changes during that period, and associated outdoor-related PSD with the term ‘outdoor adventure education’. In this context it should be mentioned that Rickinson *et al.*’s rationale for inclusion of diverse publications appears to be somewhat unclear and at best applied inconsistently. Similarly, Higgins & Nicol (2002) opt for the term outdoor adventure education with its “claims often expressed in terms of personal and social education” (p. 29). However, Allison and Von Wald (2009) identify a change in terminology from PSD to PSHE (personal social health education) as a subject area in schools which has entered the discourse most recently. By 2008, however, Loynes (2008b) had discarded application of the term adventure education and referred instead to “informal education outdoors” in an attempt to define an educational arena (including youth work) beyond mainstream education (p. 75).<sup>4</sup>

Clearly, terminology remains diverse: the overlapping nature of outdoor education content tends to blur stringent adherence to ‘disciplines’. Turčová (2004) refers to a “terminological jungle” and looks for clarity from British OE lecturers at HE institutions. She found the most commonly used terms were ‘outdoor education’, followed by ‘experiential education’ and ‘adventure education’ (Turčová, 2004).

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<sup>4</sup> One of Great Britain’s leading provider in outdoor-related PSD, ‘Brathay Trust’, commissioned Stuart (2010) with the most recent British review of ‘youth transition’ literature in 2010. Stuart’s *Brathay Trust - Literature review 1: Issues in youth transitions* emphasises a major tenet of the concept of PSD to be associated with the notion of ‘psychological well-being’ and ‘resilience’ referring amongst others to Margo and Sodha (2007) describing it as “the ability to develop psychologically, socially, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually” but also “the ability to initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying relationships, use and enjoy solitude, become aware of others and empathise with them, play and learn, develop a sense of right and wrong and to face and resolve problems and setbacks satisfactorily and learn from them” (Stuart, 2010, p. 10).

In summary the semantic dissonance seems to undermine conceptual structure which contributes to misunderstandings throughout the outdoor education movement nationally and internationally. It echoes Nicol's (2002a) suggestions that there is no homogeneity in the field and that OE has undergone various changes in description during its existence. However, it is noteworthy that despite diversity in terminology, ongoing contestations and international cross-fertilisation, the British discourse has produced its own explicit and 'demarcated' sector embedded in a human-centred PSD.

### **3.4. The credibility of the sector**

Notwithstanding this view, three recent meta-studies bear witness to the fact that British funding bodies have been interested in raising credibility of the sector (Barrett & Greenaway, 1995; Hunt, 1989; Rickinson *et al.*, 2004). Both Beames (2006) and Loynes (2008) suspect ulterior motives underpin the rationale of these studies, such as the desire of youth services and course directors for predictability, rather than exploration of participants' understanding and phenomenological perspectives (Beames, 2006).

An ongoing demand for academic rigour is evident in OE literature. The first substantial British review titled '*The Hunt report*' (Hunt, 1989) portrayed the sector as accrediting outdoor adventure experiences with somewhat uncritical 'taken-for-granted' positive outcomes. The second conducted by Barrett and Greenaway (1995) called for increased rigour and highlighted major shortcomings in British research. They conclude that research relating to outdoor adventure in relation to PSD within Great Britain tends to be "isolated, inconclusive, over-ambitious, uncritical, not of high standard and difficult to locate" (p. 53). They argued that a new paradigm incorporating humanistic and qualitative approaches was important for future effective research.

The third literature review of OE to date, Rickinson *et al.* (2004), commissioned by the British Field Studies Council (FSC), widened its scope and reviewed research on OE published in English worldwide. The review includes 150 OE research studies between 1993-2003 and focuses on primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors, primarily with due emphasis on environmental programmes; not surprisingly given the funding body. Its findings identified recent growth in research supporting the notion that OE has positive impacts on the personal and social development of school students.

In relation to outdoor-related PSD, which the study referred to as ‘outdoor adventure education’, it was suggested that the sector was underpinned by “well-developed” research literature (p. 31). However, the study found that most of the research was conducted outside Great Britain, i.e. North America and Australasia (Rickinson *et al.*, 2004; see also Barrett & Greenaway, 1995, p. 1). The work included a joint American and Australian meta-analysis by Hattie *et al.* (1997), whose work is frequently cited in OE and which seeks to reinforce the value of utilising the outdoors. Whilst research data draws predominately on Australian Outward Bound courses, Hattie *et al.* (1997) postulate that “too little is known about why adventure programs work most effectively” (p. 1).

Recently three impact studies have complemented research on PSD-related learning in Great Britain. Christie (2004) attempted an evaluation of effectiveness of the outdoor experiential learning in a ‘*raising achievement*’ initiative by the Education Department of North Lanarkshire Council (Scotland). Her findings based on both qualitative interviews and ‘life effectiveness’ scores suggest positive overall effects consistent with the Scottish ‘*5-14 National Guidelines*’<sup>5</sup> (LTS, 2000). Also OfSTED (2008) published a thematic report on learning outside the classroom. Among its key findings the report referred specifically to PSD-related learning:

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<sup>5</sup> The Scottish ‘*5-14 National guidelines*’ were replaced in 2005 by the ‘*Curriculum for Excellence*’ (CfE). Beth Christie (personal communication, February 2011) suggests that there are ‘crossovers’ between the dispositions concept taken from 5-14 curriculum and the ‘four capacities’ framework that is central to the new Curriculum for Excellence.

When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupil's personal, social and emotional development (OfSTED, 2008).

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) study on young people sought to trace the award's impact on young people and its ability to support Local Government objectives (DofE, 2009). Its findings concluded that DofE programmes have the "potential to support personal development in many ways and that participation ... is widely recognised as benefiting young people in ... attitudes toward new experiences, personal development, community engagement, physical and mental well being and employment skills and prospects" (p. 6).

### **3.5. Critique of the dominant school of thought underlying PSD**

Due to PSD's elusive nature it has lent itself to deductive reasoning wherein reasoned judgement and philosophical enquiry have overshadowed empirical research and there are conspicuously few empirically-based journal papers. This has led to the criticism that developmental outcomes are more a feature of suggestion (by the facilitator; outdoor industry) than reality (Brookes, 2003).

The veracity, the depth and the duration of the wide range of learning outcomes is subject to controversial discussions (see e.g. Hattie *et al.* 1997; Fox & Avramidis, 2003; Thom, 2002). The validity of claims referring to behavioural change attracts particular criticism.

Responding to British conferences on experiential work with young participants and the emergence of meta-analysis in the arena of OE, Allison and Pomeroy (2000) identify an "evaluation age" that characterises the quest for knowledge in the field of experiential education (p. 91). Their criticism laments the assumption of predictability prevalent in the 'youth development-market' which appears to constrain the multi-dimensional nature of experiential approaches. Its reasoning favours outcome-focused, objectivist epistemology following a "singular, limited



question: Does it work?" (p. 97). Their quest for an alternative knowledge-base requires discrete categories that explore 'processes at work' utilising various approaches whilst working with groups. They contend that this can occur through a paradigm shift to a constructivist epistemology that emphasises 'alternative' participants' perspectives on experiential education programmes.

Others such as Neill (2004), Brookes (2003), Nicol (2002), Loynes (2007), Allison and Pomeroy (2000) identify what they perceive to be an over-optimistic belief in the validity of the research endeavours. Allison and Pomeroy (2000) question the validity and the underpinning ontology of effect-studies exemplified by Hattie *et al.* (1997) that (in their view) set out to "prove the outcomes" of outdoor education by deducing set success criteria on participants' experiences thereby ignoring other dimensions of learning (p. 96). Beyond the British discourse, Neill (2004) cautions against wholehearted acceptance of Hattie *et al.*'s (1997) optimistic view of the impact of the concept of outdoor-related PSD. Neill's (2002) comparison of five meta-analyses (Bunting & Donley 2002; Cason & Gillis, 1994; Hans, 2000; Marsh, 1999; Neil & Richards, 1997) conducted 1994-2002 - that measured psychosocial constructs such as self-concept, locus of control and teamwork - found that only "small up to moderate impact" can be expected from PSD schemes. Like Hattie *et al.* (1997), Neill found that effectiveness of programmes correlated with the duration and quality of managed processes offered by the provider organisation.

Following this line of thought, and rather more specific to Great Britain substantial criticism is voiced by Nicol (2002) who considers that the British discourse hardly bears witness to a relationship between philosophy, methodology and practice, thus there is a lack of demonstrable validity - a sentiment that whilst not empirically based - is similarly expressed by Higgins and Nicol (2002) who queried the British sector's claims regarding pre-determined outcomes. Likewise, Allison and Pomeroy (2000) rightly ask the question: "By what criteria does one decide that a programme works?" (p. 96). Loynes' (2002) critical reflections on underpinning philosophy of OE hint at the lack of a moral paradigm in recent practice, otherwise indicative of the overtly ethical agenda of the early Hahn. Accordingly, he draws on Bowles

suggesting that Kurt Hahn is “waiting for an informed re-appraisal” (Loynes, 2002, p. 119).

Arguably, the over-emphasis on identifiable outcomes has led to a reduction in alternative philosophies in Great Britain. Allison and Pomeroy (2000) address this vacuum and suggest alternative research paradigms to the outdoors in British practice. They allude to the epistemological concerns of the rationalist model and its focus of outcome as opposed to process in a Husserl’ *Verstehen* sense. They argue for an epistemological shift towards a phenomenological paradigm where one should not ask: “Does it work?” but: “What are the participants’ perspectives on the experiential education programme?” (p. 96).

The concept of outdoor-related PSD has received criticism within the OE field as early as the 1970s (Drasdo 1973/1998; Roberts, White & Parker 1974). The most recent substantial critique is voiced by Brookes (2003a; 2003b). Overall, these criticisms raise questions related to PSD’s validity, philosophical foundations and lack of evidence. From a socio-psychological standpoint Brookes’ questions claim that personality traits addressed in ‘one off’ adventure schemes are interchangeable and thereby ‘dispositional’. His critique contends that character-traits (by definition) should be consistent despite changing circumstances. His arguments approximate those of Ross and Nisbett (1991) whose review on social psychology emphasizes that human nature is unpredictable and concludes that context-free character traits cannot be foreseen or pre-determined.

Moreover, Brookes’ (2003) main criticism addresses the axiomatic notion of transformational learning opportunities (as postulated by Bandura, 1977 and Walsh & Golins, 1976) from the outdoor setting to a normal life situation. This also alludes to the waning of an immediate ‘post-training euphoria’ (Marsh *et al.*, 1986). In other words suggested attributes to outdoor-related PSD schemes appear to lack a consistent dimension. Thus, it may promote participants’ actions in outdoor programmes but doesn’t automatically ensure consistency in other areas such as personal relations. Davidson (2001) endorses this view: he perceives outdoor



adventure experiences to be about encouraging a process rather than achieving particular outcomes.

Stonehouse *et al.* (2009) share the situationist critique and hold that short-term courses in the outdoors are insufficient to “permanently inculcate virtue” (p. 36). However they contend Brookes’ view and argue that Aristotelian ethics ascribe outdoor experiences’ value in raising awareness for participants’ “own moral journey” (p. 37). Furthermore they emphasise that fostering the capacity of sound judgement traditionally associated with the concept of *phronesis* (see also Svenning, 2009) is at the core of experiential models of OE and is thus “developed through experience, over a lifetime” (Stonehouse *et al.*, 2009, p. 36).

The belief in human progress connected with the overwhelming centrality of the ego is another tenet of PSD that faces criticism. Accordingly, the emphasis on the ‘P’ of PSD throughout the OE discourse entails that the body of OE literature is “considerably dominated” by material about ‘individual’ learning (Wood, 2002, p. 27). Neill (2004) criticises the individualistic ‘cult of self’ and sees a need to encompass the ecological, eco-psychological, social and cultural perspectives of OE. This theme is confirmed by several British authors (Beames, 2006; Loynes, 1998; Loynes, 2002; Mathur, 2002; Wood, 2002).

In summary, there is a strong belief in the field that adventurous experiences can impact young peoples’ learning related to personal growth. The central criticism of this belief, however, is that ‘trained’ behavioural dispositions are not able to alter deeper attitudinal dimensions which fundamentally inform each individual’s values. On the other hand, advocates of PSD argue that outcomes such as self-concept, locus of control and leadership are validated by meta-analysis based on ‘effect-sizes’. There remains little research evidence that assists in the understanding of processes that lead to effective programmes, and some authors criticise the over-emphasis on individual attributes rather than more collective attributes.

Despite this debate, the domain of PSD still holds sway as the strongest practice in OE throughout Great Britain.

### **3.6. Conflicting paradigms that seek to inform PSD**

The overall thrust of PSD schemes in Great Britain and worldwide is anthropocentric. This almost axiomatic assumption has been challenged by a number of critical authors who perceive the holism of PSD to be interwoven with ecological dimensions like ‘two sides of the same coin’ (Higgins, 2002; Loynes, 1998; Mortlock, 1984; Ringer, 1999). The central criticism is addressing an increasing tendency towards “algorithmic, assembly line, product-oriented” outdoor experiential learning programmes (Loynes, 2002, pp. 119-120). Its notion of delivery of ‘off-the-shelf’ adventure programmes and subsequent seemingly wide influence on practitioners and lecturers worldwide has impeded alternative paradigms, whose contents could be described as more ‘systemic’.

Moreover, due to the algorithmic managed system of linear, repetitive and predetermined number of learning sequences, it is thought to be negligent of what Loynes (2002) considers the potential that arises from an “organic and emergent nature of experiential learning” (p. 113). Furthermore, the accepted ‘linear’ tradition is regarded by various authors as potentially hampering valuable facets of development of people in the context of community and environment (Higgins, 2002; Brookes, 2002; Loynes, 2002; Mathur, 2002). This includes outdoor educators’ interpretation of land and place. In a similar vein, Brookes (2002) criticises PSD programmes’ lack of connection with land as they utilise locations as “empty sites on which to establish social or psychological projects” (p. 2).

The paucity of alternative literature (e.g. Thoreau, Neill, Loynes) within the mainstream discourse is an indication in itself of hegemony. Such struggle may derive from the fact that inclusion of alternative paradigms may be counter to the foundational rationale of PSD schemes associated with the tradition of adventure education, particularly as evidence suggests the philosophical underpinnings lean

towards the notion of human-centredness. This is exemplified by the hegemony of humanistic psychological perspectives that constitute the antecedents of the person-centred approach: e.g. Plato's focus on morality, Hahn's belief in innate decency and moral sense, Carl Rogers' conflict resolution theories, Maslow's concept of personal growth and self-actualisation or - following Hunt's (1996) suggestions - Outward Bound drawing its inspiration from James's '*Moral equivalent of war*' (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Hunt, 1996; James, 1949; Wurdinger, 1997).

While others (previously discussed) have questioned traditional approaches to PSD and would broaden previous boundaries, the sector's main thrust still appears to be based on a rationale for OE which perceives outdoor-related PSD as a primarily personal, social and moral endeavour.

### **3.7. Recent developments in Great Britain**

The following pages discuss recent developments and their implications for OE at the levels listed below:

- curricula
- educational policy context
- provision at higher education level
- providers' perspectives

#### **3.7.1. Curricula**

Traditionally, PSD's role within the National Curriculum is justified by the need to help young people understand how they ought to develop personally and socially, tackling many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up (National Advisory Group on Personal, Social and Health Education, 1999). PSD's rationale for its implementation into the National Curriculum is manifold (Haydon, 2005). The changing demands of PSD in modern society are a sensitive topic which stimulates much discussion on curricula within schools.

In this context, the notion of challenge and resilience are highlighted as remedies in OE literature for the malaise of society. For instance OE literature draws on Furedi's (1997) book '*Culture of fear*' and Gill's (2007) UK-based research on childhood which challenges views regarding young people in a 'no risk' culture (Allison & Telford, 2005; Baillie, 2008). Gill postulates the need for personal growth in children in that "... society needs to embrace a philosophy of resilience: an affirmation of the value of children's ability to recover and learn from adverse outcomes, whether these are accidents, injuries, failures, conflict, abuse, neglect or even tragedy" (Gill, 2007, p. 82). Various causes for societal pressures are identified by authors. For instance Loynes (2008) refers to globalisation, while Gill (2007) notes increased individualisation that imposes increased responsibility on the individual.

Future policies related to outdoor-related PSD schemes, as in the case of Outward Bound, appear to justify their educational objectives on youth research reports such as that published by UNICEF: '*An overview of child well-being in rich countries*' drawing on findings that seem to indicate a "lack of fulfillment, unrealized potential and dysfunctional relationships" amongst British youth (Outward Bound Trust, 2007, p. 4.; UNICEF, 2007).

The direction of outdoor-related PSD also appears to be influenced by arguments for human capital, in that the concept of 'self' and 'others' is ultimately associated with workforce readiness in transitioning youth to college and the job market (Lakes, 2008; Larsen, 2005, Zink & Burrows, 2006). The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards' research on the impacts of outdoor experience highlight employment skills and job prospects that are valued attributes to their trainings (DofE, 2009).

Haydon's (2005) work on the concept of PSD associates accelerating changes in British society coupled with the need to help people's decision-making skills, thereby equipping them for a "world of choice" (p. 1). Thus an ever increasing attention on the worth accorded to "individual autonomy" becomes prevalent in Western societies (p. 1-2; see also Trägårdh & Berggren, 2006). According to some authors, however, educational policy has responded somewhat poorly to such

pressures. Commentators lament policymakers' lethargy and the poor recognition given to PSD in British schools largely due to its status as a non-academic subject (Allison & Von Wald, 2009; Haydon, 2005). Likewise the 'OfSTED report' (2004) concluded that PSD aspects of OE in Wales and England have a low profile due to lack of curricular imperative.

Despite the many debates on how to implement PSD, curricula within Great Britain have encompassed its core philosophy in their mission statements. Hence PSD is endorsed in the National Curriculum in England and Wales. It is referred to as 'personal, social and health education and citizenship' (PSHE). In Scotland the '*Curriculum for excellence*' (CfE) launched by the Scottish Executive in 2008 emphasises the importance of personal skills and attitudes of young people (CfE, 2008). Accordingly, as Nicol *et al.* (2007) suggest, the Scottish OE community has been encouraged by government to develop "successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals" (p. 2). Nevertheless, the link between policy and practice is nebulous because the curricular endorsements remain ambiguous and do not explicate "what aspect of learning was considered specific to outdoor education" (Nicol *et al.*, 2007, p. 8; see also Thorburn & Allison, 2010). This may have been improved through the recent publication of the '*Curriculum for excellence through outdoor learning*' in 2010 where school and outdoor centres are more specifically informed about the core components of CfE in relation to the outdoors (CfE, 2010).

In addition, due probably to increasing fragmentation of PSD in cross-curricular subjects, its 'continued' low profile is detrimental to OE at a national level (Allison & Von Wald, 2009; Haydon, 2005). Notwithstanding this, alternatives such as youth expeditions are suggested as additional arenas for addressing outdoor-related PSD, arguably supplementing school-based provision (Allison & Von Wald, 2009).

Further focus on PSD has been emphasised in the primary curriculum in England and Wales through the implementation of the SEAL pack (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) in 2006 to enhance emotional literacy and personal growth. In

secondary schools, a social, emotional and behavioural skills pilot (SEBS) devised as a 'whole school approach' was conducted during 2005-2007 by the National Foundation for Educational Research. Findings suggested that in future SEBS could positively impact standards of achievement, creating a positive school environment and improving pupil behaviour and attendance. The implementation is currently under development.

Overall, it appears that in Great Britain, Scottish politicians are spear-heading support for OE (Institute for Outdoor Learning, 2009, p. 1). This is supported by Thorburn and Allison (2010) who also suggest there is a strong Scottish influence in the British field where recent curriculum renewal offers the prospect of increased levels of OE.

### **3.7.2. Educational policy context**

In the last five years several publications at governmental and OE advisory level have contributed to the sharing and development of good practice and increased public awareness of outdoor education. This is evident in several publications such as: the OfSTED report (2004), the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee report (2005) *'Education outside the classroom'*, the English Outdoor Council's publication *'High quality outdoor education'* (2005) and a Scottish two-year development programme (2005-2007) called *'Outdoor connections'* which aimed to improve the quality of OE.

Although broader aspects of OE are embraced, it is the PSD theme that receives the most attention in publications. For instance, the Treasury and DCSF (2007) publication *'Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities'* highlights social and emotional skills (HM Treasury, 2007). Similarly the OfSTED report *'Outdoor education - aspects of good practice'* (initiated by Department for Education and Skills [DfES]) specifically addressed young people's PSD by identifying 'good practice' and its position within the field in England and Wales.



Also, the anthropocentric tenets of OE continue to occupy a prominent position in successive publications *via* the English Outdoor Council. The guide booklet '*High quality outdoor education*' - which incorporated the views of Chief Education Officers of Local Education Authorities in England and Wales - attempted to raise awareness of standards of OE in schools, the youth service, clubs and centres (English Outdoor Council, 2005). Typically governmental publications promote PSD rather than alternative or 'broader' practices of OE learning. Arguably the guide booklet '*High quality outdoor education*' is most outspoken in this matter. It focuses predominately on PSD and actually refers those seeking a "broader sense of learning" (e.g. environmental education) to alternative publications by the National Association of Field Studies Officers (English Outdoor Council, 2005, p. 2). Within the publication PSD is addressed as a separate entity: no further explanation of how it correlates to other activities is offered. The trend of narrowing OE towards an anthropocentric focus might be influenced however by a continuous hegemonic struggle in various departments at HE institutions throughout Great Britain. Thorburn and Allison (2010) hold that the predominance of PSD is not fully applicable to the Scottish case in that recent conceptual understanding of the "role, purpose and philosophies of outdoor education" has been "narrowed ... to outdoor education and environmental education being one and the same thing" (p. 99).

The implications for the sector are twofold in that it attempts to bring about an 'agreed' ideology and advises on the implementation of participant-centred planning for maximum ownership of the outdoor experience.

In England there has been increasing support for education outside the classroom. Following a UK Parliamentary enquiry, the '*Learning outside the classroom manifesto*', drawn together with the help of practitioners in OE and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, was launched in 2006 (LOtC, 2006). Whilst addressing broad learning in the outdoors, it specifically raises awareness of PSD that is associated with 'self-esteem', 'emotional well-being', 'confidence' and 'challenge' (LOtC, 2006). With regard to the quality of PSD currently on offer, the manifesto attempts to raise awareness for "successfully delivered" working methods and processes which are mainly concerned with the transfer, self-review



and evaluation of outdoor experiences (LOtC, 2009a, p. 3).

However the increase in the number of schools taking part in outdoor experiences seems to have stalled slightly with costs being regarded as the primary reason for non-participation (English Outdoor Council, 2009). Based on research in 2005, findings show that only 66% of pupils overall take the opportunity of a residential course. In fact in only 21% of schools do all pupils attend a residential course during their time at school (DCSF, 2005).

While the sector shows an increasing number of educational initiatives by organisations such as local authorities, charitable trusts and non-governmental organisations it is difficult to assess the degree to which this is being orchestrated through one common policy. However, while the major constituents of the British OE field, such as Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC), The National Association of Field Studies Officers (NAFSO), the English Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) and Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education (SAPOE) still exist as organizations in their own right, the field is spear-headed by the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL). The latter arose from the National Association for Outdoor Education (NAOE) in 2001 (IOL, 2009a).

This seems to have improved the cohesion within the sector at the level of provision and arguably strengthened its role in negotiation with governmental agencies. In particular, the introduction of the IOL scheme 'Accredited Practitioner' (APIOL) marked an important shift towards standardising and monitoring the educational quality of outdoor learning including less tangible dimension encompassed by the concept of PSD (Wallace, 2005). The APIOL has quickly gained attention throughout the sector and by 2009 430 practitioners throughout the UK were awarded with its accreditation (IOL, 2009b). Nonetheless there is no requirement to monitor the quality of outdoor experiences that providers deliver (Nicol *et al.*, 2007, p. 13).

However, the creation in 2009 of a new post for a development officer/steering group at national level for the UK (national-based 'Outdoor Connections' initiative

(Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2005), would suggest things are becoming more orchestrated (Thorburn & Allison, 2010, p. 106) although Nicol *et al.* (2007) contend that recent UK educational initiatives are still fragmented and “poorly directed” (p. 14). Undoubtedly, there is more commitment to and interest in the value of OE, particularly PSD.

The preoccupation with risk is echoed in the ‘Campaign for Adventure’ which focuses on the promotion of risk-taking and initiative by young people. Supported by public figures such as Tony Blair (UK Prime Minister) (in 2001) and campaign patron Ray Mears, 2007), the ‘*Campaign for adventure - risk and enterprise in society*’ emerged from a high profile UK national conference on risk entitled ‘*A question of balance*’ (2000) and is on-going (Campaign for Adventure, 2010). It attempts to influence society's attitude towards enterprise and adventure, and echoes Haydon's urging (2005) that young people should be prepared for a culture of choice. The campaign's call for realism and a quest for balance between risk and benefit resonates with many who offer assessments of OE provision within Great Britain; they suggest personal growth is hampered by society's tendency to ‘wrap children in cotton wool’ (Allison & Telford 2005; Gill 2007; Salisbury, 2004).

However, over recent years, the debate on ‘risk’ seems to have become clearer, following the English Outdoor Council (one of Great Britain's leading OE organisations) in that “the tide of public opinion has turned in favour of a balanced approach to risks and benefits” (EOC, 2009, p. 4). Moreover, the ‘culture of fear’ is being counteracted by governmental support where e.g. HM Government (2008) states that it is “important to strike a balance between protecting children and allowing them to explore and learn about risks for themselves” (HM Government, 2008, p. 8).

With regard to outdoor-related PSD, Allison and Telford (2005) suggest the safety constraints which over-emphasise the technical skills of practitioners and demands for safety are detrimental to the quality of learning. They further argue that due to the dominance of safety concerns discussions on education were relegated to the fringe of debate. Also Salisbury (2004) claims that the introduction of National Governing

Body awards (NGBs) tend to neglect practitioners' personal qualities, communication skills or abilities to educate others.

It might be concluded that although rhetoric suggests convergence within the field, some evidence of hegemonic struggle remains reflective of vested interests of certain sectors within OE (IOL, 2009). This can be seen in the predominance of publications focused on the PSD paradigm supported by many influential stakeholders - as previously discussed.

### **3.7.3. Provision at HE level**

In recent years the provision of OE in the Higher Education (HE) sector has witnessed considerable growth beyond its traditional core institutions (University of Bangor, University of Edinburgh, Liverpool John Moores University, University of Cumbria and University of Strathclyde) (Allison & Telford, 2005, p. 26). In light of this rapid expansion and diversification of outdoor courses in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) the UK pilot research project (CAPHEOS, 2003) identified well over 100 degree courses at more than 30 HE institutions throughout the UK (Humberstone & Brown, 2006).

Despite the increase in provision, Revell (2001) perceives that employers have 'reservations' about HE courses currently on offer in OE. Indicative of an ongoing debate in the philosophy of education, Humberstone (2006, p. 2) states that it as an "ever present challenge" to achieve a balance between "professional practice and demands for a rigorous stimulating academic framework". However, in some areas HE provision actually shows increased cooperation with outdoor providers such as the Graduate Apprentice schemes (Humberstone & Brown, 2006). Whether a joint ethos is achieved or not, is difficult to assess due to the paucity of literature relating to the subject which appears somewhat fragmented.

One could postulate that as a general trend outdoor courses have become more responsive to societal developments wherein market-based pressures influence course design and the planning of specialised degrees. Humberstone and Brown

(2006) suggest that such pressures shift HE's ethos away from philanthropy and more towards "becoming businesses" (p. 2). In a similar vein Barnes (2004) identified 'ideological' pressures which HE institutions face from the working field in relation to course content that responds to employers priorities. Barnes found that the latter require accreditation (NGBs) and proficiency in leading 'adventurous activities' closely followed by "group working skills" and "communication" (p. 22).

The growth in provision for OE in the further and Higher Education sector appears to have created ambivalence about the quality of PSD. As Allison and Telford (2005) argue, the increase in courses tends to supply field workers who are more activity/recreation specialists than educationalists (p. 26). Nevertheless, employers also perceive HE provision's positive influence on practice in that graduates appear to have an awareness of "influential outdoor thinkers, ... a higher level of overall intelligence ... understanding ... and good varied background of soft/meta skills and competence" (Allison, 2000; Bacon, 1987; Barnes 2004, p. 22; Priest & Gass, 1997).

Indeed Kendall *et al.* (2006) and Nicol *et al.* (2007) report a lack of opportunity to study OE provision at HE within teacher training. The former's research findings suggest that trainee teachers had minimal input regarding outdoor learning during the course of their study and little opportunity to put learning into practice outside of the classroom. Despite this most learning occurred during placements in schools. However, in the case of Scotland, Nicol *et al.* (2007) also identify a lack of "nationally co-ordinated in-service training in education outdoors" (p. 13).

This lack of curricular imperative undermines the importance of the role of the teacher for the sector's advancement. The drive to overcome barriers to delivering outdoor experiences is a widely discussed issue. For the Scottish school sector, Nicol *et al.* (2007) argue that teachers' understanding of OE benefits is key "if any future targeted development of the school sector is envisaged" (p. 6). Also, the Scottish situation may reflect the fact that in Scotland OE is regarded as an approach whereas one could argue that in the English and Welsh curricula OE is more clearly demarcated as a school subject (CfE, 2010).

Although there is evidence of increased networking *via* the OE HE field, the direction of research seems to follow that of earlier findings which revealed uncertainty about which processes lead to better quality PSD. This has coincided with a shift from “proving the value” of outdoor experiences to focusing more on “improving practice” (Allison & Telford, 2005, p. 26). It would seem that although academics seem to be ‘in the know’ about research findings, the results do not readily ‘trickle down’ to a wider audience (Allison, 2007; Allison, 2009; Humberstone, 2005).

#### **3.7.4. Providers’ perspectives**

It is evident that significant changes have occurred in the current approach to OE in Great Britain (Allison & Telford, 2005; Higgins, 2003; Loynes, 2007; Salisbury, 2004).

This can be seen within the Scottish OE sector wherein over the last 20 years one may see declining support for outdoor education (Nicol *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore financial pressures throughout Great Britain have left their mark, resulting in programmes of shorter duration, often associated with ‘high excitement’ experiences with questionable learning outcomes (Nicol, 2001; Higgins, 2002). Equally, issues of funding have shaped the prevailing political climate of the ‘youth-development’ market. In other words policy-makers in youth-services and course-directors, following Beames’s (2006) suggestions contribute to a market-driven demand for OE centres promoting predictability and formulaic programmes rooted in anthropocentric traditions.

Similarly, several authors attribute OE provision with a culture of ‘McDonaldisation’ in which ‘off the shelf’ approaches to providing adventure experiences characterise the sector (Loynes, 2007). These changes in provision imply a move away from educational perspectives towards recreation, training and competition (Higgins, 2003, see also Crossland, 2008; Loynes, 2007).

It is unclear whether the quality of PSD provision is decreasing. However Allison and Telford (2005) suggest that due to insufficient funding, constructive reflective practice is less prevalent. However the fact that workers within the field are increasingly practising self-reflexivity is supported by the number of articles (in *Horizons*) related to PSD issues such as ‘managing challenging behaviour’, ‘understanding emotional competence’ (Orton, 2009) and ‘scrutiny of claims and assumptions of PSD practice’ (Weinstock, 2009). These recent developments appear to have contributed towards the development of an educated reasoned rationale in PSD which has been disseminated to a wider practitioner audience. Nevertheless empirical evidence is scarce on this matter.

Growth in PSD provision is evident in the youth-expeditions and youth-at-risk market (Allison & Telford, 2005; Allison & Von Wald, 2009; Loynes, 2008). Here, expedition organisations regard PSD as a major force, and use much of mainstream education’s PSD terminology in marketing materials (Allison & Von Wald, 2009, p. 5). Also, PSD schemes aimed at youth-at-risk clientele have been increased in the light of those who have become referred to as NEETS (‘not in education, employment or training’). Loynes (2008) suggests that society’s current ‘moral panic’ echoes early OE programmes already in use in Victorian times (Loynes, 2008). According to the latest Government figures, more than one in ten (10.3%) of 16 to 18-year-olds were considered NEET in 2008, up from 9.7% in 2007. Against this statistical backdrop, the importance of PSD schemes that address ‘moral panics’ of accelerating shifts in modern society appear to have increased.

In conclusion, it can be stated that paradigmatic debates characterise the diversity of philosophy in the realm of OE. There is tension between various schools of thought spanning a continuum of anthropocentrism and biocentrism (outdoor adventure and environmental perspectives). Nevertheless, despite such tensions ‘human-centred’ PSD continues to hold strongly in the provision of OE in Great Britain.



## CHAPTER FOUR - Norway Literature Review

### 4.1. Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that the Norwegian tradition of Friluftsliv is associated with a strong 'naturalistic' rationale. However, relatively little has been published internationally about it, particularly in peer-reviewed OE journals (Gurholt, 2008; Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001; Nedrelid, 1991; Repp, 2004). Nonetheless, there have been texts edited by Norwegian as well as overseas scholars, which reflect principles that relate quite clearly and closely to a deep-ecological paradigm and critical theory (Henderson & Vikander, 2007; Reed & Rothenberg, 1993).

Throughout the literature the cultural roots of Friluftsliv are manifest and celebrated, and this may be a factor in the belief that the practice of Friluftsliv has substantially withstood cross-fertilisation from Anglo-American and continental influences in outdoor experiential learning (Gurholt, 2008; Tordsson, 2002, p. 24, p. 327). Norway's detached geographical position and its strong national romantic influences of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Jonassen, 1983; Tordsson, 2002, p. 92ff) are likely to be factors, as is the closely linked 'deep-ecology' movement of the 1970s (Faarlund, 1993; Næss, 1973) which emphasises cultural and ecological traditions in contemporary approaches to Friluftsliv (Gurholt, 2008; Tordsson, 2002).

Despite Friluftsliv's widely acknowledged 'naturalistic' emphasis, there are 'multiple' emergent discourses on Friluftsliv and conflicting claims regarding what its focus is and what it should be (Breivik, 1978; Pedersen, 1995; Pedersen, 1999; Tordsson, 2002). This discussion takes place in a Norwegian reality marked by debates on climate change, neo-liberal influences (through globalisation) (Nafstad *et al.*, 2007), societal changes, young people's sense of well-being and its concomitant implications for youth work in the outdoors (Sølvik, 2003; Säfvenbom, 1998).

Whilst elements of such change relate to links with culture and environment, others are more clearly associated with social and personal issues (Nordahl, 2000a; 2000b; Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2009). Following the latter, some argue (Jordet, 2007; Sjong,



1992; Säfvenbom, 1998; Westphal, 2007), that Friluftsliv practices embrace approaches that are (outside Norway) widely associated with humanistic psychology found in outdoor-related PSD schemes.

#### **4.1.1. The rationale for the review**

The review is presented in narrative form, and attempts to illuminate the diversity in schools of thought related to ‘PSD through Friluftsliv’ in general and specifically at secondary and tertiary levels of education in Norway. In accordance with research questions (see Chapter Five, section 5.1) the review explores the conceptual discrepancies surrounding the phenomena of PSD alongside the contemporary influences shaping PSD in Great Britain and Norway. Anglo-American perspectives on PSD have been used as a reference point to consider the discourse on PSD through Friluftsliv. This approach is not without its problems because comparative educational research is subject to imbalances regarding conceptual equivalence (Osborn, 2004).

#### **4.1.2. The type of review**

The scope of the review focuses on literature that deals explicitly with Friluftsliv and PSD. The aim of the review is to deliver a thematic critique of authors’ perspectives and ideological stances, which illustrates the diversities and pluralities of the phenomenon of PSD in relation to Friluftsliv. The manner in which the literature has been synthesised could be perceived as a ‘mosaic’, revealing fragmented viewpoints that contribute to a sound presentation of the current state of discourse. Indeed, as Hammersley suggests (2002), it is possible that this way of reviewing literature adds to the “complementarity” of a discourse and (for this thesis) may have bolstered scrutiny of the evidence regarding PSD and Friluftsliv (p. 3).

#### **4.1.3. The parameters of the review**

Electronic library searches were conducted with the key terms, 'Friluftsliv' together with 'personal and social development'. Other Norwegian and English words and phrases closely associated with these two terms were used to aid the search, such as 'personal and social education', 'Friluftsliv as a method' ['Friluftsliv som metode'], 'cooperative learning' [relasjonskompetense; samarbeidsl ring] and 'Friluftsliv for youth-at-risk clientele' ['tilpasset oppl ring']. These keywords were entered into Norwegian databases<sup>6</sup> and International databases<sup>7</sup>. Additional searches involved scanning reference lists, using search engines, library databases and tracing unpublished work within Norway.

Only two peer-reviewed articles related to Friluftsliv and PSD were found (see also Bischoff, 2008, p. 1) and so the search was expanded to include Masters theses, anthologies, conference proceedings and other grey literature. This still only yielded 14 documents - a signal for caution when interpreting the present review. It might also be argued that the choice of search-criteria does not take into account the implicit role of PSD in Friluftsliv-practice - something which places further limitation on the findings.

#### **4.2. The role of PSD in the Norwegian school system**

The concept of PSD has been endorsed in the Norwegian national curriculum (Education Act L 97; Education Act LK 06<sup>8</sup>). Personal and social competences are a wide and important field contained in the educational mission statement of the Education Act L 97 and LK 06, wherein the 'integrated human being' and the 'social human being' are foci. While in essence, the national curriculum also presents a broad spectrum of outdoor learning in secondary education, it does not make reference to the explicit use of Friluftsliv for PSD.

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<sup>6</sup> BIBSYS, FORSKDOC.

<sup>7</sup> ASSIA, ERIC, SCIENCE DIRECT, SPORTS DISCUS, PSYCHINFO, WEB OF KNOWLEDGE.

<sup>8</sup> National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion in Primary and Secondary Education and Training, 2006 (Knowledge Promotion Reform [Kunnskaps ftet]).

The educational focus on personal and social competencies has expanded rapidly within schools and other agencies of education in Norway. Also the dissemination of guidelines for PSD through Utdanningsdirektoratet (2009) actually encourages Norwegian schools to implement strategies for PSD. Arising from a debate on 'bullying' at schools, its key tenets hinge on dysfunctional behaviour [alvorlige atferdsvansker] associated with 'pro-social skills' [trøste-og-hjelp-atferd] and suggest ways that PSD might be incorporated via cross-curricular work in Norway's schools.

Meanwhile American-initiated research on social and emotional learning (SEL) prompted Scandinavian school-authorities such as Denmark, Iceland, Sweden and Greenland, to translate and incorporate PSD related topics [campaign called 'step for step'; Norw.: 'steg for steg'] into regular school curricula (Holsen *et al.*, 2008). During this time two Norwegian Schools of Education (the University of Oslo and University of Bergen) also formulated and expanded their own policy relating to the topic - especially that of social and emotional learning (Olsen, 2001, p. 13). British influences can be traced to the 'Fine style' campaign [Fin-stil] which was designed by British Agencies who wanted to promote development of a sound 'behavioural environment' in Norwegian schools (Bern & Nordahl, 2007; Fi4, 2007) and the rolling out of Norwegian think tanks' social competency initiatives to all Norwegian school districts in 2010.

Nordahl (2000a; 2000b), who has been at the forefront of research on social competencies, drawing on British and American research (Argyle, 1985; Marker & Mehlinger, 1992) identifies a paucity in the implementation of distinct and targeted strategies in Norwegian schools. One of the main shortcomings suggested by Nordahl's research findings seems to be that Norwegian pupils participate too little in activities associated with the notion of 'Norwegian citizenship' [people understood as self-sufficient and pertaining to citizenship; norw.: 'gagnlege og sjølvstendige mennesker'] as outlined in the National curriculum L97 and LK06 (Nordahl, 2000b). Moreover, Læringscenteret (LS) (2003) argues that teachers are not specifically trained to put PSD related activities into practice - something which

seems to be paralleled by negligence towards “explicit implementation” of strategies related specifically to the National curriculum (p. 6).

Furthermore although attention is increasingly focused upon PSD there seems to be gross shortcomings at the level of provision. According to the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research’s (2000) evaluation of intervention-programmes, the claims of 18 of 25 programmes (targeting dysfunctional behaviour and youth-delinquency) were unsubstantiated and overall there was a lack of empirical evidence and theoretical foundation.

Echoing the muted support for Friluftsliv as a vehicle for PSD the scrutinised intervention programmes show little trace of the use of the outdoors, although one programme, called ‘Mot’ [courage] was founded by former high-performance athletes and appeared to use metaphors of sports (MOT, 2010). An exception to this however is the web-based Antarctic expedition ‘your expedition’s comprehensive PSD-scheme: ‘Dare to Dream Curriculum’ (devised by the Norwegian expeditionist Liv Arnesen and the American Ann Bancroft). This scheme was specifically endorsed in the ‘integrated and social human being’ part of the national curriculum (L97) and spearheaded by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [Læringssettret] in the year 2000 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006).

#### **4.3. ‘Friluftsliv’ as a generic term**

According to Goksøyr and Solenes (2004) there is no single descriptive term in the English language that encompasses every nuance and facet of Norwegian Friluftsliv. While phrases such as ‘outdoor activities’, or ‘outdoor nature life’ refer to practical activities, they give no hint of the implicit values and moral aspects intrinsic to the cultural phenomenon in its entirety. Friluftsliv holds a unique and almost indefinable position in Norwegian culture that spans a multiplicity of activities including Sunday tours in the forests, journeys to harvest berries, fish or game, and annual celebratory outings to the Norwegian mountains during the Easter holidays. One could argue that Friluftsliv is integral to the Norwegian lifestyle and several noted authors have

concluded that it is an iconic symbol of Norwegian cultural identity, and that nature is inextricably a part thereof (Goksøyr, 2002; Gurholt, 2008; Nedreliid, 1991).

In the first English anthology on Norwegian Friluftsliv, Henderson and Vikander (2007) draw on the work of several Norwegian and international authors who suggest Friluftsliv's core rationale originates in Norway's organic or nature-caring traditions of "folklore, heritage, adventure travel, crafts, place-based education and the daily outings of families" (Henderson & Vikander, 2007, p. 8ff). Similarly, Gurholt (2008) suggests Friluftsliv embraces a "value-based green life-philosophy" that influences the socialisation of the individual and the development of the 'ecological self' (p. 131). Bischoff (1996, p. 94) further suggests that this includes "meditative-religious" associations with nature. According to Sætre's (2004) research on school programmes at OE centres [leirskoler], schemes on Friluftsliv bear a predominantly 'bio-centric' mark. The focus on naturalistic discourses is supported by other Nordic authors whose work has contributed to the perpetuation of a naturalistically-defined ethos of Friluftsliv throughout Scandinavia (Öhman, 2001; Sandell, 1999). However there is far less discussion on approaches that utilise Friluftsliv as a means of development for educational purposes like PSD.

In summary, the 'educational act' in Norwegian Friluftsliv attaches meanings that foremost originate in the replication of tradition, the appreciation of nature and quality of life.

#### **4.4. Friluftsliv in Higher Education**

Friluftsliv's introduction as an academic discipline in Higher Education coincided with the establishment of the Norwegian Seminar of Nature Life and Mountaineering [Norges Høgfjellskole] in the late 1960s. It achieved University status at the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Oslo (NIH) in 1968, and following dissemination to colleges such as the regional college of Bø [Distrikthøgskole] during the 1980s; it gradually spread throughout the country. A period of maturation and specialisation within Friluftsliv followed and to date there are approximately 20

programmes within Higher Education [including half-year programmes]. However, although research activity has experienced “continued growth” since the 1990s, Norwegian Friluftsliv research literature has only a 30-40 year history (Bischoff, 2008).

Issues related to man-nature relationships predominated during the 1970s, particularly the work of deep-ecology philosophers like Arne Næss, Sigmund Kvaløy Setreng and Nils Faarlund who influenced the proponents of Friluftsliv during the 1970s and 80s through an orthodox interpretation [det normative Friluftsliv] (Breivik, 1978; Faarlund, 1974; Kvaløy, 1978; Næss, 1973; Næss, 1986; Næss, 1989; Repp, 1977; Telnes, 1978). Indeed, the naturalistic school started to dominate the ‘core’ communities of Friluftsliv [kjernemiljøer; det friluftslivfaglige forskningsfelt] in Higher Education (Bischoff, 2008, p. 1).

According to Faarlund (1993), Friluftsliv (as a subject for Higher Education) was influenced partly by ecological concerns and partly by those wishing to counter the combative attitudes towards nature as evidenced by the rather elitist British climbing fraternity. Thus with the support of the Interdisciplinary Committee for Research and Higher Education in Friluftsliv [FOR-UT] and the Norwegian Seminar of Friluftsliv and Mountaineering [Norges Høgfjellskole] the deep-ecological principles of facilitation within Friluftsliv [veiledning i Friluftsliv] held sway when it came to devising the rationale for Friluftsliv within academic institutions (Faarlund, 1999; Odden, 2001, Pedersen, 2008, p. 136, p. 3; Ydegaard, 2003).

Ydegaard (2003) emphasizes the deep-ecological adherence towards critical theory and the ‘Frankfurt school’ during this period. Through the amalgamation of school of thoughts related to antipositivist sociology, psychoanalysis and existential philosophy a “new-Marxist criticism of positivism” arose within Friluftsliv [vegledning i Friluftsliv] (p. 135). This form of facilitation is what Gurholt (2008) describes as a “counter balance” to traditions that pursue “democratic, inductive and critical methodology in contrast to the dominant positivist approach of the natural



sciences and authoritarian instruction and competitiveness in sport and PE” (p. 138-139).

The strong deep ecological school of thought gradually became the mouthpiece for the rationale of Norwegian Friluftsliv and assumed a firm place in Higher Education. Odden (2001) and Repp (2001) highlight its unwavering opposition to a positivistic paradigm in education and society. Under such an influence the salient theme of Higher Education courses addressed the investigation of societal and cultural change (Odden, 2001; see also Tordsson, 2002). Indeed, some authors have alluded to the underlying radicalism and “misanthropic, anti-humanistic” connotations in deep-ecology (Argyrou, 2005; Gurholt, 2009; Sandell, 1999; Sutton, 2004). In the absence of any other competing discourse, this school of thought steered research towards an axiomatic affirmation of a *bona fide* Friluftsliv (Tordsson, 2002, p, 24) that cites philosophical reasoning - but not empirical enquiry - as the key to social science.

#### **4.5. Different pathways of Friluftsliv**

Several authors suggest there are a wide range of discourses on contemporary Friluftsliv. Kleiven (1993) compares this with the shape of a hydra [flerehodet troll] each strand of which represents its evolving nature (Bischoff, 1996; Gurholt, 2008; Tordsson, 2002). Whilst early research indicated a predilection for philosophical reasoning, recent research focuses more on the ‘philosophical whereabouts’ of Friluftsliv based on empirical data (e.g. Breivik, 2002; Odden, 2008; Tordsson, 2002; Vaagbø, 1993). Whilst Vaagbø’s (1993) research suggests the prevailing focus is on simplistic, traditional and contemplative values that drive the *raison d’être* of a Friluftsliv firmly anchored in ‘folkish’ traditions, the authors above describe a shift towards more modern and sports-based rationales. Furthermore, several Nordic and Norwegian authors identify a growing diversity among Friluftsliv where definitions are applied to discrete intellectual traditions: “historical concepts, disparate contexts, objectives, values” (Sølvik, 2003, p. 19).



Interestingly, the changing *modus operandi* of Friluftsliv stimulated attention on emerging trends and a growth in interest in the overt role of PSD which grew in prominence during the 1990s. Conversely, rationales for Friluftsliv currently follow different pathways along a continuum of conflicting claims which see Friluftsliv discussed as disparate ‘compartmentalised’ domains, e.g. ‘in and of itself’ [egenverdi], utilitarian perspectives [nytteverdi] related to the ‘psychological self’, therapeutic objectives and personal growth. Thus new less well-established perspectives embrace learning *in, about* and *through* Friluftsliv, and span the tension between traditional ‘organic’ Friluftsliv, ‘sportified’ forms comprising “synthetic, high risk, extreme Friluftsliv stretching one’s capacities” and ‘instrumentalised Friluftsliv’ (stressing the developmental /socio-pedagogical potential) (Ese, 2007; Tordsson, 2002, p. 341).

The ‘anthropocentric’ perspectives on Friluftsliv persist but its ‘Cinderella status’ is indicative of the formative influence wielded by the naturalistic school of thought. As early as the 1970s, Faarlund’s (1974) guidelines seem to have influenced an anti-utilitarian ethos [et mål i seg selv], in that it opposes a developmental and therapeutic transfer dimension for the participant’s context (i.e. preparing participants for a city-based society) beyond the experience in the outdoors. Stryken (1994) joins criticism of anthropocentrism arguing that an instrumental perspective is not what Friluftsliv ‘ought’ to be associated with. Although he alludes to a “typical” anti-utilitarian ethos towards Friluftsliv, other authors suggest gradual changes and a growing focus on utilitarian perspectives such as the pedagogical perspectives of youth-work [Friluftsliv med nytteverdier] (Säfvenbom, 1998; Sølvik, 2003; Tordsson, 2002; 2005, p. 165). Gradually, despite a continued preference for the ‘educational act’ as a replication of ‘tradition’ in Norwegian OE literature, the practice of Friluftsliv is showing tentative signs of transcending its autotelic nature towards a ‘method’ addressing PSD [Friluftsliv som metode].

In Norway, the somewhat tentative but increased attention afforded to instrumental perspectives [Friluftsliv som metode] - yielded something of a ‘paradigm-shift’ from

its earlier conceptualization which appears to have grown in importance from 1980s onwards (Bischoff & Odden, 2000; Gurholt, 2008, p. 147; Tordsson, 2002, p. 341ff).

In shaping the discourse on therapeutic approaches, Sjong's (1992) comprehensive literature review summarises predominantly North-American practices related to 'wilderness therapy' which she brings to the attention of a Norwegian audience. Her review describes practices such as facilitation and review which are explicit in North American literature unlike the implicitly understood PSD dimensions of Norwegian practice, which tend to follow a 'let the mountains speak for themselves' approach (Bacon, 1987). In a wider Nordic context, Sandell (1999) refers to aspects of Friluftsliv (in Sweden) as a 'method' [Friluftsliv som metode] that encompasses PSD while Andkjær (2005) suggests there is a change in Denmark from naturalistic Friluftsliv towards the notion of adventure, challenge and teambuilding.

In the new millennium Bischoff and Odden (2000) and Sølviik (2003, p. 20) identified Friluftsliv's evolving morphology in relation to the developmental and therapeutic dimensions of Friluftsliv and referred to it as a 'method' [Friluftsliv som metode; Friluftsliv med hensikt]. Gurholt (2008) claims these practices include (amongst others) sedentary lifestyle, psychological perspectives of self, dysfunctional behavior and youth-at-risk groups [tilpasset opplæring] (p. 147). It would seem that the bulk of research interest, however, centres mainly on the notion of 'dysfunctional' groups in association with the outdoors (Bischoff, 1996; Rødby, 2006; Sølviik, 2003; Sveen, 2007; Säfvenbom, 1998). Overall, Bischoff (2008) concludes that the new perspectives are an "awakening" sociological, pedagogical-psychological research paradigm (p. 2).

The field seems largely unexplored, although Skogen (1994)<sup>9</sup> constitutes an exception and suggests there is a "weak correlation between participation in Friluftsliv and [the potential to address] dysfunctional behavior and mental health" in Norwegian youth (p. 1). Whilst undocumented anecdotal evidence suggests a

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<sup>9</sup> Skogen's (1994) questionnaire research is based on data from 12000 Norwegian youth aged between 13-19 years of age. It attempts to scrutinize the effects of Friluftsliv on 'dysfunctional behaviour', smoking, alcoholism, mental health and general well-being.

vigorous interest in PSD-related Friluftsliv in Norwegian schools, residential outdoor centres [leirskoler] and post-secondary ‘folk high schools’, the sector appears to lack convincing empirical research.

In her document-analysis Bischoff (1996) identifies potential providers of Friluftsliv-oriented PSD throughout Norway, but also urges caution due to the lack of documentation from providers within Nordic countries. Amongst her findings she concluded that much provision is largely “undocumented”, comprises of “various articles”, “a lot of talk”, suffers paucity of theory and is generally immersed in “American literature” on outdoor-related PSD (Bischoff, 1996, p. 49). Also Gurholt (2008) claims that research in Friluftsliv that focuses on youth at risk is sparsely documented (p. 147). Tordsson (2005) goes further describing the field as having “conspicuously little” research (p. 163) and states that in the absence of empirical data one has to “constrain oneself to learn from belief and to speculate” (p. 167). He considers approaches to Friluftsliv-oriented PSD lacks voice in underpinning hypotheses, suggesting they are unsubstantiated due to “missing empirical testing” (p. 175). This vacuum has led to calls for further research (Sølvik, 2005, p. 16; see also Tordsson, 2002).

#### **4.6. The ‘emergent’ paradigm of PSD in mainstream Friluftsliv discourse**

When discussing PSD, many authors with a deep-ecological stance on Friluftsliv speculate about an “interwoven measure” [eit helt tiltakk] of inextricably intertwined eco-philosophical and psychological perspectives (Sølvik, 2003, p. 26; Tordsson, 2005). These perspectives commonly criticise ‘traditional’ Anglo-American-style PSD for being too narrow, with a ‘compartmentalised’ domain pivoting on psychological perspectives of self and group social-psychological perspectives (Beames, 2006; Loynes, 2002). The concept of the ‘centrality of the ego’ in particular receives criticism for undermining ecological, eco-psychological, social and cultural perspectives of outdoor education (Beames, 2006; Bischoff, 1996; see also Loynes, 1998, Loynes, 2002, Mathur, 2002).

In his Masters thesis, Tordsson (1993) presents a comprehensive picture on the facilitation of outdoor experiences and contrasts both foreign and Scandinavian/Norwegian perspectives on outdoor experiential learning (p. 121). Building on a hermeneutical analysis of texts on underpinning philosophies of OE traditions, his findings argue for an ‘ethnocentric’ Nordic/Norwegian facilitation towards PSD. He postulates that the origins of Anglo-American and Norwegian/Nordic OE traditions are ‘combative’ *versus* ‘non-combative’ respectively. Despite being influential his work could be criticised for its inflexibility regarding the possibility of cross-fertilisation in the body of knowledge of PSD.

Through historical document analysis, Repp (2004) highlights Friluftsliv’s implicit PSD dimensions. By discussing educational perspectives associated with the concept of adventure, Repp analyses Nansen’s influence on Friluftsliv oriented towards far more universal human dimensions of personal growth. While he supports Nansen’s ‘green’ influence as the primary instigator of the ideology of Friluftsliv, Nansen’s ‘challenges’ can be considered equally important for personal growth through its focus on risk, curiosity and the importance of “trail-breaking experiences” (p. 127). However, although Repp argues for a transmission of the historical lore of Nansen to a new generation of practitioners, he does not develop a theoretical foundation for the incorporation of Friluftsliv-related PSD into current practice.

In a similar vein, Breivik (2001) suggests that the notion of ‘discontinuity’ can be experienced in Friluftsliv by way of a ‘challenging pedagogy’ [utfordringspedagogikk] that delivers learning for “modern life’s ‘discontinuous’ existence, its challenges, change, its potentials and demands” (p. 10). Ongoing PhD research by Sølvi, from the Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo [Institutt for spesialpedagogikk], attempts to illuminate the nature of PSD in Friluftsliv with a focus on youth-at-risk groups.

With conspicuously few contributions relating to the potential of PSD in Friluftsliv, Tordsson’s (2005) paper which addresses those intending to work in “youth-work” is in marked contrast. By alluding to a socio-centric view placing the group and its

processes at the centre of the experience, Tordsson identifies a “diversity of human capacities” [mangfold av menneskelige evner] that materialise through “sharing life with others together, surmounting challenges ... warming oneself at campfire, sharing each others’ burdens” (p. 165) and, in his view, focuses on “attention ... spontaneous initiative” and “... responsibility, caring and empathy” (p. 174; translated by author of this thesis). Actually in an earlier work Tordsson (1996) postulated the notion of the inherent ‘self-directing’ potential of group-processes wherein personal development is subject-oriented and understood as a ‘humanising’ factor that gains legitimisation from Næss’s (1976) notion of ‘self-realisation’ [selvrealisering].

Notwithstanding this, in support of the naturalistic school of thought, Tordsson (2005) draws attention to the appropriate educational backdrop - that of “simple life in nature” (p. 175), where meaning and values emerge gradually rather than being overtly outcome-focused or facilitator-driven. Rather, group processes should emerge naturally and be utilised by group members through “holistic and integrated engagement” (p. 165).

Tordsson subsequently postulates several suggestions of his own regarding the social qualities of Friluftsliv enabling one to “... reveal multiple personal facets otherwise muted in daily lives ... establish authentic and deep personal relationships ... aspire personal authority through real personal attributes ... self-discovery by being part of a group ... solve problems through affiliation to a group ... to experience interdependence and inner cohesion of the group ... to face demanding psychological and social situations that are conducive for personal development” (Tordsson, 2005, p. 176). He continues to highlight a typology of curriculum model that would seem to be an analogy between the outdoor experience and “numerous life-areas outside Friluftsliv”. Thus, Tordsson promotes an approach to Friluftsliv that resonates with Bacon’s (1983) suggestions for a metaphoric curriculum model which rests on the notion of transferability through isomorphism<sup>10</sup> of the experience in the outdoors. In

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<sup>10</sup>A metaphorical structure for the outdoor activity which is assumed to have a meaningful link to other aspects of participants’ lives.

summary, Tordsson's (2005) work shows a tentative resolution of biocentric and anthropocentric views - having been closely involved in the former<sup>11</sup> (biocentric) (Tordsson, 2005, p. 165ff).

Following Tordsson's line of thought, other deep-ecological authors suggest that preferred forms of facilitation [vegledning] should follow an unsystematic approach conducive to incidental findings (Faarlund, 2007, p. 184; Jensen, 2007). This form of facilitation might for instance be abstracted from sherpa culture's playfulness of children and the AshLad character [Askeladden] of Norwegian fairy tales, wherein the "value and necessity of tumbling and fumbling" for deeper "knowing of oneself "[kjennskap] opposes cognitive levels of knowledge [kunnskap] through a 'hands-on' approach (Jensen, 2007, p. 102).

Furthermore, within the approach of mainstream Friluftsliv's tradition of facilitation/mentoring/guiding [vegledning i Friluftsliv], there seems to be an explicit socio-centric focus on PSD related to dynamics of the 'journeying' group (HIT, 2008). One of the major themes - gleaned from course descriptions at Higher Education institutions - appears to be issues on leadership and groups' intra-personal relations amongst Friluftsliv students (Bergsten & Seger, 2001; HIT, 2008). In particular, discussions about PSD-related learning objectives appear to focus mainly on PSD-related processes of Friluftsliv student groups within the narrower context of socio-centric issues, and related to journeying outdoor groups [Friluftsliv] in diverse settings such as coastal-sailing, mountains/glaciers and canoeing. An approach with such an emphasis might appear to neglect the notion of Friluftsliv as a working-method that emphasises the transfer of developmental perspectives beyond the outdoor setting - i.e. in the participant's daily life (Sølvik, 2003, p. 28).

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<sup>11</sup> Tordsson has 'cross-fertilised' inspirations from his long-lasting association with the Swedish Friluftsliv organization '*Argaladei*' into the Norwegian discourse of Friluftsliv. *Argaladei*'s mission statement embraces the facilitation of knowledge about nature through 'simple' organic outdoor activities and espouses fundamental cultural and societal change (source: [www.argaladei.nu](http://www.argaladei.nu)).



#### **4.7. Beyond mainstream Friluftsliv: A ‘second’ discourse on PSD through Friluftsliv**

Not all suggestions regarding educational approaches to Friluftsliv and PSD-related learning follow the line of thought outlined above. Some authors discuss a ‘second’ or ‘parallel’ discourse on Friluftsliv that gives PSD prominence with respect to socio-centric views on group and personal development beyond the outdoor experience (e.g. Jordet, 2007). University courses in special education [barnevernutdanning] and teacher education colleges have contributed to the discussion (Säfvenbom, 2005). This discourse tends to adapt foreign approaches and theory derived from wilderness therapy and collaborative learning styles (Dahle, 2007; Sjong, 1992; Säfvenbom, 1998; Sølvik, 2003). In other words, this PSD-focused discourse shows a different ontological perspective than that of traditional Friluftsliv.

Criticising traditional approaches to facilitation within Friluftsliv, Dahle (2007) suggests more refinement is required to support practitioners’ and participants’ personal development (p. 213). His perspective draws inspiration from the notion of ‘cooperative learning’ [relasjonskompetense; samarbeidslæring] that originates from theoretical work by Johnson, Johnson and Holubec (1984). They suggest the major facets of PSD should be individual accountability, personal responsibility, frequent use of interpersonal and small-group skills and regular group self-evaluation. In a similar vein, Sølvik (2003) objects to the holistic premise or ‘mountains speak for themselves’ approach and refers to the shortcomings of an ‘undifferentiated’ taken-for-granted premise of inherence, wherein social competences are assumed to be both transferred and nurtured over a prolonged period ‘by themselves’ (Sølvik, 2003, p. 28; see also Ogden, 2005; Sørli, 2000). With regard to dysfunctional groups she advocates not only a delineated working-method within Friluftsliv, but also for cross-disciplinary fertilisation via therapeutic approaches common in continental and Anglo-American approaches. She argues:

When I ... choose to talk about Friluftsliv as an arena for social learning, it is because to look at the value which lies in the application of an ‘arena with boundaries’, and not the effect of a ‘holistic’ approach. In other words,



Friluftsliv has not been accounted for a ‘finally devised working-method that addresses social competence and ‘coping of challenges’ [mestring]. Therefore, it will be important to complement the arena of Friluftsliv with other approaches which together build a ‘whole concept’ over time (Sølvik, 2003, p. 28; translated by author of this thesis).

In Norwegian Friluftsliv literature research related to group dynamics, particularly in outdoor settings, is scarce. Vikander (2007) examined the personality types found in Friluftsliv students from two Norwegian university colleges using the Jungian-based Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Saunders, 1989). These are important milestones that contribute to practitioners’ understanding of the profiles of individuals who they are educating. However this research coincides with a general shortage of empirical data associated with PSD and its relationship to facilitation for ‘functional’ participants immersed in Friluftsliv experiences.

In recent years the concept of ‘out-of school learning’ [uteskole], where parts of Norwegian school’s ordinary school-subjects are moved into an outdoor learning context of the nearby local area (e.g. once a week), has gained increased attention within educational practice of Norwegian schools. This has been researched for several reasons including its potential to serve as a vehicle for personal and social development (Garborg, 2003; Jordet, 1998; Jordet, 2007; Jørgensen 1999; Lunde, 2000; Vestøl, 2003).

Despite parallels in the concept of ‘uteskole’ compared with learning through Friluftsliv in PE, or with one-week courses in Norwegian LEA outdoor education centres [leirskoler], Bischoff (2008) maintains that these should be considered separate research fields, arguing that a schism has developed between Friluftsliv-related practice in ‘leirskoler’ and ‘uteskole’ (p. 6). In contrast, according to Jordet (1998) and Rødby (2006), practices at residential outdoor centres [leirskole] and ‘uteskole’ display inextricably interwoven principles. Related perspectives on dysfunctional groups and Friluftsliv are presented by Rødby’s (2006) and Sveen’s (2007) masters theses on ‘uteskole’ and its credentials for character ‘remediation’

[tilpasset opplæring]. Also Garborg's (2003) research highlights the positive effects of 'uteskole' on social learning and increased 'bonding' in class structure [klassemiljø].

Jordet's (2007) comprehensive study on 'uteskole' highlights its effect on pupils' communication and interaction among those participating in OE challenges [mestring]. Jordet argues for a continual review of outdoor experiences. This is similar to Barrett and Greenaway's notion of the 'processed adventure' which contributes to a strong emphasis on reviewing in outdoor learning in Great Britain (Barrett & Greenaway, 1995, p. 76ff). Several authors criticise Norwegian pedagogical practice which neglects facilitation of 'experience' in school and 'uteskole' (Imsen, 2003, p. 82; Jordet, 2007, p. 77; Klette, 2003, p. 72).

Research on practices of *'leirskoler'* suggest a largely consolidated environmental paradigm, which permeates much (although not all) of its educational practice (Sætre, 2004; see also Rudaa, 2001). However, judging from mission statements from the 'leirskole' network it appears that in the case of practices at residential outdoor centres [leirskoler] PSD has gained further prominence:

Residentials [leirskoler] have become a very popular and widely applied educational intervention in primary education. Everybody who is involved in learning in the outdoors believes that 'leirskole' is an influential tool. Social-pedagogy and other disciplines that take an interest in classroom environment and in the coping [mestring] of social and individual situations suggest the same claims ... The pedagogy of 'leirskole' has attributes that we find in modern leadership training and teambuilding in the corporate world, where there is a new focus on self-sufficiency, co-operation and discipline. Leirskole possesses the competency (Thorsen, 2002, p. 1; translated from author of thesis).

However, an internet survey that I conducted (2010) suggests that only a few Norwegian OE centres [leirskoler] specifically mention PSD as a component of a

Friluftsliv experience. One exception is Dørum (2010) who contributes to the discussion with commentary comprising verbal presentation, e-mail discussion and personal communication. In his website presentation which explicitly emphasises outdoor-related PSD outcomes (the only one of its kind in Norway) he suggests - although unsubstantiated - Friluftsliv courses are conducive to “positive development, concentration, ... expanding one’s own barriers ... strengthening of class-structures ... self-knowledge ... development of self-confidence” (Dørum, 2010, p. 2).

In the tertiary sector, Friluftsliv can be traced in-depth in the Norwegian boarding school network of ‘folk high schools’ [Folkehøgskoler]. The folk high school movement has embraced the concept of PSD as a major pillar in their educational undertaking referring to it as ‘holistic education’ [allmenn dannelse] (Jepsen, 2009). For example the ‘folk high school’ - website claims:

By ‘doing something different’ students develop self-confidence and become self-motivated, active citizens. Students leave with a broadened horizon, social insights, more confidence in themselves, and tools for lifelong learning. Students are better prepared for whatever path lies ahead of them, whether it is in a university, in the workplace, or in the broader world (Folk high school, 2006).

Several authors have highlighted the importance of Friluftsliv as a vehicle for PSD fundamental to the educational mission of ‘holistic education’ [allmenn danning] (Heltne, 1996; Myksvold, 1997). Myksvold explores both the viability and potential of PSD-related Friluftsliv in Norwegian boarding ‘folk high schools’ [Folkehøgskole] with particular regard to their collective mission statement: ‘holistic education’ [allmenn dannelse]. Due to the length of these courses (6 to 9 months) and frequent Friluftsliv-excursions they lend themselves to the concept of “broad adventure”, which as Rubens (1998) argued in a British review involves the participant more wholeheartedly and encourages them to take responsibilities (p. 65-66).

The marketing materials of some folk high schools (30 Christian institutions; 48 secular institutions) reflect Christian concepts that address tenets of PSD in their youth-work programmes. The Christian outdoor education provider 'Kristen Idretts Kontakt' (KRIK), which co-operates with a select number of 'folk high schools' (Sagavoll Folkehøgskole, Bildøy Bibelskole, Ansgarskolen, Nordfjord Folkehøgskule, Høgtun Folkehøgskole), encourages certain PSD schemes (KRIK Villmark) which uphold traditional Christian value-systems. The organisation places emphasis on the 'challenging' form of Friluftsliv in encountering "God, nature, others and oneself" (KRIK, 2006).

#### **4.8. The quest for personal growth beyond the 'traditional' domain of Friluftsliv**

Instrumental perspectives on PSD-related learning for groups with specific requirements have attracted more research interest from environments outside the classical Friluftsliv field than from within. For example, strong PSD traditions can be found in the Norwegian scout movement. The pedagogical inspiration associates its main principles for PSD-related learning with established concepts circulated internationally by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) and the World Organisation of Scout Movements (WOSM) (Norges speiderforbund, 2004). Its Norwegian brochure 'Method for Scouts' [Speidermetoden] suggests a 'learning by doing approach' conducive to engendering a sense of responsibility and a sharing of decisions. Whilst 'Method for Scouts' constitutes a most overt approach to PSD, its methods and focus on review appears not to have contributed to the pedagogical discourse of didactical principles at Higher Education in Norway (Wold, 2001).

Similar 'external incentives' to the discourse on Friluftsliv can be traced in the research focus of the Norwegian military academy [Forsvarets Høgskole]. Here, research into socio-centric perspectives of high-performance groups [prestasjonsorienterte gruppekontekster] and its impact on performance in both militaristic contexts and civil contexts is an evident theme (Høigaard & Säfvenbom, 2007-2012 research in progress).

Similar research interest in PSD-related learning is to be found in Nissestad's (2008) PhD research on personality and leadership dependent on organisational culture within leadership training led by the Norwegian Navy (Sjøkrigskolen). The psychometric study discusses the effectiveness of a three-year Leadership Development Programme for young Norwegian officers for operational leadership at sea. Among other activities the analysis includes an eleven-week sail-training intervention on the M/S Statsraad Lehmkuhl. Here the prominence of review is identified as an important component in the social training of the participants (Nissestad, 2008; see also Olsen, 2007). Similarly, with regard to outcomes, some authors allude to the importance and diverse usage of facilitation through Friluftsliv [vegledning] (as developed by Nils Faarlund) in military training and leadership development of officers (Gurholt, 2008, p. 142; Pran, 2007).

It seems that the Norwegian quest for individual and social empowerment is nurtured by high-profile Norwegian expeditionists (e.g. Ousland, 2009). Powerfully symbolic experiences of demanding outdoor situations, often recounted to a wider Norwegian audience by 'motivational speakers' such as the Norwegian explorers Børge Ousland, Jon Gangdal and Liv Arnesen serve as motivational analogies. The parallels between the mountaineering process and the business management process are brought in association with increased managerial effectiveness, particularly within profit-making organisations (Arnesen & Gangdal, 2002). Other Norwegian outdoor providers apply principles closely related to PSD. Indeed since the mid-eighties, providers such as 'Norske uteaktiviteter', have offered outdoor schemes based on experience-learning principles which are aimed at organisational development (Lapp, 2006).

#### **4.9. The incompatibility of approaches towards PSD**

In light of Norwegian authors' disparate claims about Friluftsliv, there seems to be an uneasy tension between different approaches to outdoor experiential learning. Several prolific Norwegian authors have protested the incompatibility of international research on OE and PSD-related learning with the Norwegian approach

to Friluftsliv (Repp, 1977, p. 77; see also Sølvi, 2005; Telnes, 1978; Tordsson, 1998, p. 89; Tordsson, 2002, p. 24).

Nomenclature features largely in their shared concerns because it is often perceived to be 'contrived' when transferred into the Norwegian discourse. The perceived linguistic differences (between Norwegian and Anglo-American terms) and their concomitant 'misunderstandings' subsequently influenced Norwegian discussions in the 1970s and through to current practice (Tordsson, 1998).

In this context, Tordsson (2005, p. 164), Bischoff (1996, p. 93) and Bowles (1995) draw attention in their comparative view on Nordic/Norwegian and 'foreign' (especially American) practices. Their discussions highlight differences in ontological interpretation and the incompatibility of 'foreign' concepts of PSD and Norwegian and wider Nordic practice. In particular Norwegian commentators seem to denounce (through *grand* generalisations) the incommensurate disposition of Anglo-American schemes which are believed to be closely associated with and borne of an 'American frontier spirit' and the notion of an 'imperialist Britain' of the Victorian era - each conjured in an attempt to overcome nature (Repp, 1977; Tordsson, 1993; Tordsson, 1997). The associative foreign 'offensive character-traits' contributed to a waning interest in following Anglo-American approaches (Repp, 1977; Tordsson, 1998). Tordsson (2005) in particular denounces the notion of challenge which he identifies in PSD schemes outside Norway where "one has to expand boundaries and surmount internal and external resistance" (p. 164). Instead he favours the notion of "familiarizing oneself with nature as a true home" [å føle seg hjemme i naturen] associated with the national-romantic lore of "thousand year old traditions" (p. 164).

Bischoff (1996), who initiated formal inquiry into PSD schemes for functional and dysfunctional youth-groups, cautions against the uncritical and purely accepting transfer of PSD-related approaches in the outdoors to the Nordic context and argues for a culture-specific approach. This stance echoes Nordic unease regarding what is



perceived to be an Anglo-American over-emphasis on the individual: “self-development ... self-esteem ... and self-efficacy” (Bischoff, 1996, p. 94).

A key theme in Bischoff’s (1996) work is the suggestion that the individual’s need for ‘self-actualisation’ through identification with and focus on nature and the ‘ecological self’ is inextricably linked to the “history of Nordic Friluftsliv tradition” that complements the driving rationale for PSD (p. 94). Furthermore, intra-personal dimensions are afforded a “religious-meditative” meaning (p. 94). Sølvi (2005, p. 17) supports this stance, mentioning a specific “Nordic reflexivity of outdoor experiences (Friluftsliv) and associated learning” that is incommensurate with international research literature.

Meanwhile Tordsson (2002) associates the absence of comparative studies with a relatively ‘closed’ Norwegian discourse on Friluftsliv. He suggests that ethnocentric focus on the ‘original’ [det originale] and the ethnically unique [det særpregede] within Norwegian research could be considered an axiomatic premise (p. 24). Echoing the cultural lore of Friluftsliv Weidemann Eriksen (1997) concludes from his research on ethnic youth in Oslo that the transfer potential of Friluftsliv-based PSD towards the participating youth’s daily life may be questionable due to its ‘non-modern’ rationale (p. 89-90).

In conclusion, this chapter has shown the tension that spans the continuum of different school of thoughts that are instrumental in identifying a *bona fide* Friluftsliv in the Norwegian educational debate. Whilst there is a growing ‘groundswell’ of more instrumental approaches to Friluftsliv and PSD, the naturalistic *raison d’être* appears, nevertheless, to continue to have a firm mainstay in the field of Friluftsliv.



## **CHAPTER FIVE - Methodology I**

### **5.1. Research questions**

This chapter discusses the methodological considerations, from the epistemological to the practical that determined the research design. With due regard to the contemplations identified and discussed in the following sections (below) I have framed the research questions thus:

- What are the historical antecedents of outdoor-related PSD in OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway?
- What conceptual differences in outdoor-related PSD can be found between Great Britain and Norway?
- What are the contemporary influences on the development of outdoor-related PSD within OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway?
- What is the relationship between historical and contemporary factors associated with outdoor-related PSD and accordingly the degree of their impact to the sector in Great Britain and Norway?

The investigation into the antecedents of OE/Friluftsliv (Part One of thesis, Chapter Six) adopts elements of historical research methodology fused with a critical hermeneutic approach (Best, 1970; Cohen & Manion, 1994) (see expanded discussion Section 5.5.3.). In Part Two (see Chapter Nine) of the thesis, a ‘thematic analysis’ method in accordance with ‘interpretative phenomenological analysis’ (IPA) was used as an approach for the analysis of interview data (Smith & Osborn, 2003) (see expanded discussion in Chapter Seven, Section 7.2.2.).

In the following the philosophical stance of the thesis will be further explicated.

## **5.2. Philosophical stance**

Social scientists have many ways of addressing and attempting to understand social phenomena. Therefore it is important to explicate the philosophical stance that underpins a study. The present research is heavily focused on ‘understanding’, ‘exploring’ and ‘explaining’ certain phenomena and concepts within two national discourses. In order to do this, a constructivist stance has been adopted (Glaserfeld, 1989) and in the following sub-section the concepts of ontology and epistemology are discussed in more detail.

### **5.2.1. Ontology and epistemology**

It is my belief that there is a world outside of our subjective experiences that is independent of our construction. This notion is aligned with a realist or objectivist ontology that there is an absolute truth ‘out there’. However, it is also my belief that as human beings we are perceptually incapable of stepping outside of our embodied selves and our ‘life-worlds’ to gain an objective and value-free understanding of the world. Therefore, ‘how we know’ is filtered and constructed through our perceptions of the world, thus pertaining to a relativist or subjectivist epistemology. Although this view would advocate that we can never know the ‘real’ truth about the world, it does not mean that we cannot strive to come close to it. In this sense, truth can be better understood as consensus truth, which is socially constructed rather than an absolute truth in the ‘Descartesian’ sense. This view resonates with a more ‘critical realist’ philosophy (Bhaskar, 1998; Maxwell, 1996).

### **5.2.2. Critical realism**

Following ‘critical realist’ philosophy, the concern in generating knowledge is focused on exploratory processes alongside outcomes (Bhaskar, 1998). Therefore, rather than providing just a snapshot of Great Britain and Norway’s present rhetoric about PSD in the outdoors, it is my intention to ‘dig deeper’ into the underlying processes throughout history in order to help identify the extent and reasons for both differences and similarities. I hope that this will promote conceptual understanding

through exploration of the forces at work and the relationships between them that have shaped and continue to shape this phenomenon. It is my intention in the present study to explore why the two countries presently hold the views and beliefs they do about PSD in the outdoors and what kinds of factors affect them.

### **5.3. Multiple methods and qualitative research**

The aims and foci of comparative studies of education vary widely, so too do the methods. Comparative studies may be primarily quantitative or primarily qualitative, and they may rely on questionnaires, on interviews, on documentary analysis, case study, ethnographic research and on many other bases (Crossley & Watson, 2003; Rust *et al.*, 1999). Other commentators mention the methods of research to encompass sample survey, participant observation and historical analysis (Osborn, 2004, p. 269). Arguably a lack of cohesion in research methods comprising comparative research is evident. Bray and Koo (2005) have highlighted the plurality of methods in the field of comparative education (p. 381):

Because comparative education is the product of many disciplines it cannot lay claim to any single conceptual or methodological tool that sets it apart from other areas of education or from the applied social sciences. It must be stressed, therefore, that there is no single scientific comparative research method in spite of the efforts of some scholars to argue that there is.

As there is no definite list of data-collection tools for research inquiry to answer the questions, the inquirer should ideally find appropriate methods that answer the questions being asked (Maxwell, 2004). The methodology of comparative education offers appropriate ways to scrutinize each country's idiosyncrasies whilst simultaneously identifying common patterns in how each sector of OE/Friluftsliv has evolved and is moving forward. Thus, in the present study, knowledge of the 'internal' factors became important to the cross-national research since it held the key to cultural understanding of grown identities that manifested themselves in social practices, not least in the design of OE schemes.

In summary this section has established the thesis' philosophical departure from a critical realist stance. The nature of the study lends itself to comparative educational methodology which fathoms divergent comparative research methods.

### **5.3.1. Research design**

This section provides a rationale for the research design, a presentation of its structure and research questions.

#### **5.3.1.1. Rationale for research design**

Theoretical reflections apart, the 'pigeon holing' of a research design is a serious generic challenge. The research design (along with the research questions) is used to sharpen the focus of a study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In social sciences there is no binding imperative for constructing a 'fixed' research design (King, 1994; Kvale, 2007).

This inquiry attempts to trace PSD-related OE/Friluftsliv issues - particularly those embedded in both an historical and a contemporary dimension. As such it has led me to assume the role of a '*bricoleur*'; a term introduced by Levi-Strauss (1966) who defined the term as a 'jack of all trades'. The '*bricoleur*' stance favours creative approaches that are "situationally responsive" (Patton, 2002, p. 400).

Following this perspective my rationale for conducting joint comparative and historical research responds to Llobera's (2000) suggestion of bringing together two academic disciplines that have suffered a "degree of separation" (p. 72). He reasons that it is pertinent not only to apply the historical method but to fuse it with the comparative method. With this in mind, the 'merged' research strategy facilitates exploration of the past in order to understand the present. It also explicates people's experience of different types of society whilst simultaneously allowing access to phenomena that are "far more variable and socially constructed" than those normally perceived on the basis of commonly 'limited' national experience in single case-

studies (Llobera, 2000, p. 74). As such, the applied framework is dealing with the juxtaposition of two countries in that it attempts to establish “control over conditions and causes of variation” (Osborn, 2004, p. 269). Within this framework the comparison between Great Britain and Norway deals with units of analysis in the field of education wherein the focus is on OE/Friluftsliv with regard to PSD.

When dealing with different time periods, Brymann (2004) suggests that a given temporal aspect warrants being described as ‘longitudinal’ when there is “concern to map change” (p. 56). Nevertheless, the terminological distinctions are not always perfect. This predicament is due to the fact that there is no ‘typical form’ in qualitative research strategy. Indeed, as Bryman (2004) concludes, the boundaries of a research design can be ambiguous in that a temporal dimension can be either “an example of a longitudinal design or a case-study design” (p. 57). Similar definitional ambiguities occur in the present research design which is an example of a study that crosses the two types.

The chosen methods emerged as I explored and familiarised myself with various data collection methods. The following section will discuss the parameters of the research design.

#### **5.3.1.2. Structure**

Following the previous reflections, this study comprises two components: the first (Part One, see Chapter Six) being a philosophical inquiry into the antecedents of PSD-related OE/Friluftsliv, and the second (Part Two, see findings Chapters Eight & Nine) being a set of qualitative semi-structured interviews involving two sets of informants - one set from Great Britain and the other from Norway. Each set comprised four key informants at university level.

The research design in Part One of the thesis draws on philosophical historical commentary on OE/Friluftsliv literature relating to different time periods. In Part Two the research design employs qualitative interviewing on comparable multiple

'cases'; thus it has characteristics of an 'adapted' longitudinal research design related to the meta-narrative on OE/Friluftsliv. Furthermore, in Part Two it continues to assume an 'internally' longitudinal character as the analysis maps the changes taking place as and when they are perceived by the participants in current times. However, unlike classical longitudinal qualitative interviewing, the interviews are not conducted on more than one occasion (Bryman, 2004). The terminology related to study 'cases' is used with caution in that it does not denote a classical 'case-study' research design that entails a detailed "holistic and context sensitive" and "intensive examination of the setting", typical of single or multiple cases associated with participant observation and qualitative interviews (Bryman, 2004, p. 49). Generically speaking Great Britain and Norway comprise the unit of analysis; each constitutes a 'case'.

But the interest in the participants' views, following Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) suggestions, lack "the specificity, the bounded-ness" to fulfil the requisite criteria for being called a 'case' (p. 444). Accordingly, the inquiry does not employ the full range of methods since it is not interested in the cases' "own issues, contexts, and interpretation", which arguably would result in an overly broad description. Rather, it is interested in the "interviewee's point of view", which is not amenable to observation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 450). Indeed, interviewing is essential to elicit the relevant information (Bryman, 2004, p. 319). Mindful of the fore-mentioned discourse the respective contrasted multiple 'cases' become part of a cross-national research, which uses identical methods.

In summary, by combining Part One (the philosophical enquiry) with Part Two (the empirical study), the chosen design attempts to build bridges between the past and the present. Thereby, scrutiny of the relationship between traditional and contemporary factors and its concomitant impact upon the sector is pivotal to the research interest. Thus the investigation oscillates between the past and the present, and its future repercussions on the domain of outdoor-related PSD.

Further reflections for employing a qualitative method in the form of a philosophical enquiry are provided in Chapter Five, Section 5.5. and for semi-structured interviews are provided in Chapter Seven, Section 7.1. .

#### **5.4. The researcher's role**

This section outlines the researcher's position within the research process. The concept of self-reflexivity plays an important role in the reflexive epistemological stance of critical realism and the subsequent methodological approaches used in this investigation.

##### **5.4.1. Axiology**

The researcher's personal set of values, their interpretations, perceptions and experiences shape the entire investigation.

Arguably, if any bias might have distorted this research it would be the result of years spent alongside a former market-leader with outdoor-related PSD schemes (Outward Bound Germany/Outward Bound Scotland). These formative years might have predisposed me to interpret events predominately from a personal growth, developmental and therapeutical perspective, thus traditionally British and continental European perspectives.

Whilst being aware of this influence, I would however submit that any 'bias' served rather as a kind of 'built-in emotional radar' that would 'excite' my perception carefully and non-discriminatorily embracing other ontological values towards PSD (e.g. design of pre-questionnaire and interview-schedule, see Chapter Seven, Section 7.1.6.) that would come into the study of both national discourses. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that the thrust of this thesis traces throughout the notion of character and PSD as a coherent concept comprising the chosen 'unit' of analysis and comparison.



### 5.4.2. Reflexivity

The investigation focuses on understanding contextual sensitivity and the insider-perspective, therefore it would be unjust to neglect the presence of the researcher's own insider-perspective or self-reflexivity within the research process (Breuer & Roth, 2003). In the case of empirical research involving participants, the interpretation process has been understood as a double hermeneutics process whereby the researcher attempts to make sense of the participant who is trying to make sense of their own world (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Although the focus is placed on the participants' accounts, the view taken is that it is not possible to eliminate the researcher's self-reflexivity (Kvale, 2007). In the case of historical textual accounts, attempts were made to interpret the discourse in context, to the time period in which they were written and the accounts' cultural embedded-ness.

Therefore, validity in reflexive science becomes an issue of transparency and awareness, aiming to understand how the researcher influences the conduct and conclusions of the study (Maxwell, 1996). Within this investigation, efforts have been made to disclose the impact of the researcher's self-reflexivity by using an awareness raising and other validation methods such as: clarifying meanings during the interview conversation (Kvale, 2007) and bracketing thoughts (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002).

On the backdrop that research endeavours always strive for the reduction of 'bias', reflections on my 'biased' versus 'unbiased' role as a researcher are important. I may suggest that my point of departure sufficiently strives for the criteria of objectivity, in that I cannot entertain the criteria of an inside perspective *per se*. I am neither 'of' Great Britain nor 'of' Norway, despite being deeply immersed in each country's culture after years of study, work and research. Thus, as I have both an insider/outsider perspective it confers a distinct advantage, in ethnographical terms, because it heightens the researcher's awareness of practices that pure insiders might miss due to over-familiarity. Therefore I should be less inclined (in anthropological terms) to 'defend my tribe' or to 'go native'. Indeed, ultimately I had to understand that as a familiarised 'guest-worker' to both working fields of OE and Friluftsliv; I

was the 'primary instrument' within the research process that would identify (through the eyes of a comparative researcher) the idiosyncratic 'tribal oddities' of both nations (Creswell, 1994).

### **5.4.3. Language considerations**

One obstacle commonly encountered in comparative education is that of language. Considering the comparative dimension of this study language considerations play an important part related to the self-reflexivity of the researcher. As Halls (1990) remarks, for comparative studies to thrive, "the linguistic barrier remains the greatest to overcome" (p. 63). Direct linguistic access to both secondary and primary sources permits researchers to identify important nuances, and to avoid some of the misconceptions which might arise from inadequate translations and linguistic cultural bias. Sadler's (1964) remarks that one of the key roles of comparative education is to help individuals understand their own societies more fully is challenging and concerns my own background as a researcher. The notion of a foreigner conducting research in two countries (neither of which is his motherland) raises a fundamental ethical question: "is he the right person to do this?" (Tobin, 1999, p. 115).

To justify an outside perspective I like to draw the reader's attention to the anthropologist Margaret Mead, who reportedly once said: "If a fish were to become an anthropologist, the last thing it would discover would be water", and arguably similar remarks might be directed towards research in comparative education (Spindler & Spindler, 1982, p. 24). Whilst the value of inside perspectives seems obvious, Mead's statement emphasises the value of outside perspectives.

However what is certain is that the linguistic presentation as such omits nuances that would have been conveyed if presented in Norwegian. The most rigorous interpretation of the rules for objectivity, however, would within the field under review ideally have been conducted jointly by British and Norwegian scholars investigating their mutual 'guest' habitat. Meanwhile one might conjecture that by

using only one language (English) there would be a strong temptation to apply a single common point of reference (a framework) to both countries (Osborn, 2004, p. 269).

The demands for linguistic equivalence are equally challenging. Considerations on linguistic misunderstandings are extensively explored by Shaw and Ormston (2001). They identify unexpected barriers in transmitting and understanding concepts across the language divide. There is often great difficulty in obtaining linguistic equivalence through translation. Indeed, Osborn (2004, p. 270) drawing on Hofstede (1991) suggests “the words of a language are the vehicles of culture transfer” (p. 212) while Jankowicz (1994) argues that one has to consider nuances between *langue*, language translated, and *parole*, the language as experienced in a given culture. Thus the constraints of a conducted interview through a non-native speaker lie in the mental digestion of questions and answers, possibly distorted by a language barrier influenced through change of connotations by *langue* and *parole*.

## **5.5. Historical philosophical enquiry methodology**

This section attempts to underpin the rationale for a philosophical enquiry into the antecedents of outdoor-related PSD in Great Britain and Norway.

### **5.5.1. ‘Contextual sensitivity’ - Rationale for historical perspective**

Issues of the cultural embedded-ness of cross-case comparisons have been addressed by Kandel's (1933) postulation that the scrutiny of inter-relationships necessitates the expansion from a historical comparison to temporal comparison, where a study goes forward into the future. While temporal comparisons appear not to readily find an accepted niche within the field of comparative education, they are considered legitimate and important by at least some major figures in the field (e.g. Cowen, 1998; Thomas, 1998).

In regard to the value of historical research in comparative education, Sweeting

(2001) pointed out that “efforts to stretch comparisons across places, with little or no attention paid to time, are likely to create a thin, flat, quite possibly superficial outcome” (p. 266). In contrast, he added, efforts to enable comparisons to encompass time in addition to place are likely to “enhance the profundity of analysis” (p. 266). As a consequence, the conceptual framework of the thesis expands to favour comparisons not only over places but over time. This aligns with demands from past and current comparativists to consider “contextual sensitivity” when comparing education systems (Osborn, 2004, p. 266). A further benefit of incorporating the historical dimension is the possibility of a clearer understanding of the “actors and process in education systems” and a reduced tendency to rely on “simplistic statements about products” (Bray & Koo, 2005, p. 242).

Similarly, sport sociologists such as Jarvie (1991) suggest that sporting culture does not develop within a social vacuum but within the broader context of history and social development (p. 12). Likewise Walvin (1984) views sports history as a legitimate field in the study of history, suggesting that sport reflects wider issues and relationships in society as a whole (p. 8). He claims sports activities (like many other forms of social behaviour) are largely socially and historically determined. This applies equally to outdoor traditions which are tied to “complex and contradictory historical social and cultural contexts” (Gurholt, 2008, p. 142).

Osborn (2004) argues for the identification and utilisation of innovative research methodologies which are required to develop what Crossley (2009) sees as imperative for the “contextual sensitivity” within comparative studies, and which aim to link systems such as schools and individual learners through comparative study (p. 1184). The emphasis on contextual sensitivity is important because schemes that address PSD will inevitably be a function of the national cultural contexts and national educational traditions in the specific localities where they occur.

Literature on historical research on education suggests its focus of interest is e.g. “the dynamics of educational change and increased understanding of the relationship

between education and the culture in which it operates” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 46; see also Good, 1963). Accordingly, the present study attempts to show the way educational thought and ideas have influenced educational practices on PSD-related OE/Friluftsliv. The historical dimension enables the comparativist researcher to learn from former educational ideas and practices to evaluate newer, emerging ones. Thus while the philosophical inquiry presented in Chapter Six, attempts to explore the historical antecedents of OE/Friluftsliv, it follows the remit of historical research on education in that it traces how and why educational theories and practices developed and elicit “historical interrelations between men, movements and institutions” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 46). Moreover, the particular value of a historical dimension in the field of education helps to shed light on “present and future trends and enables solutions to contemporary problems to be sought in the past” (Cohen *et al.*, 2000, p. 158). This philosophical enquiry, nevertheless, echoes common constraints of historical research in education wherein the ensuing reconstruction is a “sketch rather than a portrait” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 45).

### **5.5.2. Data-collection**

The review of literature was used both to familiarise myself with previous research on the topic and as a preparatory stage in the process of identifying data for the philosophical enquiry into the historical antecedents of my topic (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The selection of literature was guided through the first research question of this study:

- What are the historical antecedents of outdoor-related PSD in OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway?

Whilst the study identifies some of the earliest antecedents (gleaned from Greek philosophers and Nordic mythology), the scope of the investigation illustrates the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and developments up to present day, wherein the notion of ‘character development’ gradually evolved into a widely accepted concept which eventually gains sway in the educational arena. Accordingly, the historical literature

search related to Great Britain applied key search terms such as, 'history', 'development,' 'outdoor education' together with 'personal and social development', 'PSD' and 'Personal, Social and Health Education' (PSHE). Additionally, other English words and phrases closely associated with these two terms were used to aid the search, e.g. 'personal and social education', 'adventure education', 'personal growth'.

These keywords were entered into international databases.<sup>12</sup> Alternative literature search routes were also taken, such as scanning reference lists, using search engines, library databases and tracing unpublished work within Great Britain. Additionally, through searching journals key authors were tracked down and contacts were made to enquire about any further relevant literature.

In the case of Norway, Norwegian and English words and phrases closely associated with these two terms were used to aid the search such as 'history of Friluftsliv', 'personal and social education', 'Friluftsliv as a method' [Friluftsliv som metode], 'cooperative learning' [relasjonskompetense; samarbeidsl ring] and 'Friluftsliv for youth-at-risk clientele [tilpasset oppl ring]. These keywords were entered into Norwegian<sup>13</sup> databases and international<sup>14</sup> databases. Considering the less established role of PSD in the discourse of Friluftsliv, to further transparency it was deemed important to include Master-theses, anthologies, conference proceedings and other grey literature. Alternative literature search routes were also taken, such as scanning reference lists, using search engines, library databases alongside tracing unpublished work within Norway. On the backdrop of the more 'implicit' role of outdoor-related PSD, the resultant compiled literature might have left out some relevant articles.

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<sup>12</sup> ASSIA, ERIC, SCIENCE DIRECT, SPORTS DISCUS, PSYCHINFO and WEB OF KNOWLEDGE.

<sup>13</sup> BIBSYS, FORSKDOC.

<sup>14</sup> ASSIA, ERIC, SCIENCE DIRECT, SPORTS DISCUS, PSYCHINFO and WEB OF KNOWLEDGE.



### **5.5.3. Analysing data and their limitations**

The investigation into the antecedents of OE/Friluftsliv adopts elements of historical research in education (Best, 1970; Cohen & Manion, 1994). Historical research on education is typically concerned with a broad view of the conditions and not necessarily the specifics which bring them about, although such a synthesis is rarely achieved without intense debate or controversy, especially on matters of detail (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

Various commentators, however, stress the importance of using primary sources of data as the “lifeblood” of historical research (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 50). The value, however, attributed to secondary sources should not be belittled in the context of research in education either (Cohen & Manion, 1994). In a sense, the study is more a philosophical enquiry than rigorous historical research.

By referring to predominately secondary data, such as journal-articles, books and national curricula, Part One (Chapter Six) analyses descriptive data, all describing a single but different society, whose authors had themselves built their descriptions upon primary sources.

The philosophical inquiry tries to analyse the antecedents of OE/Friluftsliv at a macro-level which occasionally elaborates upon (e.g.) influential individuals and socio-historical events, whose impact had decisive ideological impact upon the field. Nevertheless, the use of single references to stakeholders in the field of OE and Friluftsliv runs the risk of being perceived as simply historically idiosyncratic rather than a trend, although elevated to prominence by the authors’ agenda (Platt, 1981).

The ‘broad’ emphasis in the historical investigation may contradict the traditional focus of qualitative inquiry, typically associated with the micro-level of “small-scale aspects of social reality” (Brymann, 2004, p. 287). Accordingly, disentangling secondary data and the fine dividing-line between analysis at micro-level rather than macro-level have been recurring challenges. The temptation to delve into either an over-detailed scrutiny at a micro-level uncovering small scale aspects of social



reality, or pursuing categories, themes, patterns and trends at a macro-level at too broad and unspecific a level of investigation have been the constant potential pitfalls.

Accordingly, this study echoes common constraints of historical research in education, in that their reconstructions tend to be “sketches rather than portraits” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 45). Thus, this study may have delivered a less profound analysis of the historical dimension. However, by tracing the main important and (arguably) influential origins and influences, I have acknowledged the embedded cultural endowments which some authors hail as the core influences on current outdoor activities practice (Nash, 1973; Nedrelid, 1991; Tordsson, 1993).

The qualitative analysis process involved is similar to the historical research methods of “collecting, classifying, ordering, synthesizing, evaluating and interpreting” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 55). In other words, by extracting underlying themes that are illustrated with brief quotations, the extraction process was fused with a critical hermeneutic approach. In parallel, the interactive process of analysis was informed by the model of the hermeneutic circle, relating “parts to wholes, and wholes to parts” (Patton, 2002, p. 497). Time-ordered, establishment-ordered and conceptually-clustered matrices helped establish a network to indicate factors and the relationships between them (Robson, 1993). Conclusions were drawn from noting recurring patterns, and by relating and linking factors. Here, the linkage between understanding the text from the point of view of the author and the “social and historical context of its production” was a guideline crucial to analysis of data (Bryman, 2004, p. 395).

The synthesis resulting in an account of the events (Chapter Six) addressing the research problem is presented through a chronological juxtaposition of national motives in both countries. The theoretical position is that of a historian rather than a sociologist, anthropologist or a curriculum theorist. By collecting the descriptive data of various authors and using data as if it were a longitudinal study, I have attempted to ‘re-construct’ the development or the journey of outdoor-related PSD and its changing nature in both countries. Thus, much data has been presented in

chronological form in order to identify and analyse the changing cultural context of assumptions, values and practices that shape PSD in the outdoors.

Educational research which purports to be comparative is frequently barely that, notably when collections of single-country studies are bound together, leaving their readers to make comparisons from the beginning (e.g. Fafunwa & Aisiku, 1982; Mazurek & Winzer, 1994). Arguably, the present study is more actively comparative. Moreover, the philosophical enquiry into the complexities of outdoor-related PSD is prone to problems in logical analysis that are deemed inherent in the scrutiny of historical research. Typically, this could include both over-simplification and over-generalisation of data (Best, 1970).

In summary, the preparatory and definitional stage of the study (Part One) entails a research design assessing relationships through secondary data, between ‘internal influences’ that have given shape to developmental schemes through the outdoors in both countries. This kind of “explanatory research” addresses influences such as statutory, ideological, practical and financial dimensions (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 7).

## CHAPTER SIX - Historical Antecedents of Outdoor Education/Friluftsliv

### 6.1. Introduction

The following chapter attempts to address the first research question:

- What are the historical antecedents of outdoor-related PSD in OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway?

Whilst this enquiry identifies some of the earliest antecedents of Great Britain and Norway' outdoor traditions, the scope of the investigation mainly illustrates the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries up to the present day wherein the notion of 'character development' gradually evolved into a widely accepted concept which eventually gained sway in the educational arena.

Throughout Europe, Great Britain and Norway have long been acknowledged as nations that give prominence to the 'outdoors' in their culture and education. Examination of each country's past gives insights into how each country's specific culture has affected their attitude towards the wilderness, its exploration, and the concept of 'self' and relationship to 'others' within outdoor-related PSD.

Both countries are informed by underpinning rationales that are unique yet divergent from each other. Due to the expansion of the British Empire, British values and relationships to nature have markedly influenced the notion of OE (Hansen, 1991; Slattery, 2004). Although unlike Great Britain, Norway lacks a globally accepted language it nevertheless had a similar drive for expansion. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Norwegian taste for adventure found expression in seafaring, mountaineering and polar exploration commonly termed 'polar imperialism' (Drivenes & Jølle, 2006). Indeed, reports of such exploits led to Norwegians being regarded worldwide as being possessed of desirable characteristics (Drivenes & Jølle, 2006; Jonassen, 1983). Virtues of energy, drive and a willingness to meet new challenges typified not only British explorers but also Norwegian emigrants who in the 19<sup>th</sup> century demonstrated dogged determination typical of a strong-willed people (Jonassen, 1983). Particularly, a 'risk-culture' amongst Norwegian coastal inhabitants could guarantee an entrepreneurial spirit through "initiative taking and

will to perform” that were highly valued personal attributes (Breivik, 1998, p. 91).

Various forms of masculine exploits [karstykker; mandomsprøver] were undertaken by Norwegian explorers such as Fridtjof Nansen, Roald Amundsen, Sondre Norheim, Ingvald Monrad Aas and Carl Wilhelm Rubenson (Horgen, 2006; von der Lippe, 2003). Their bold nature, as a “numerically predominant” Norwegian personality trait, is described in many literary works (Huntford, 1999, p. 108; see also Jonassen, 1983). Like their British counterparts their ability to cope with the extreme demands of nature became part of their national image.

Both nations have revered iconic adventurers who complemented their national image and epitomised the “character value of exploration” which became ingrained into each nation’s narrative (Higgins, 2002, p. 154; see also Drivenes & Jølle, 2006, p. 9). Indeed each nation exerted some influence on the other, and a spirit of mutual influence and cross-fertilisation grew in relation to the concept of character. It can be said that each country shaped their social agenda and utilised communal outdoor activity to counteract society’s moral malaise and promote national efficiency and social cohesion.

Yet, apart from having sufficient in common to make a comparison meaningful, both countries also have significant differences: the relationship to nature and the *raison d’être* of being in the outdoors evolved from different rationales. However, the differences evident in both national narratives actually provide a basis for meaningful comparison that can help identify the extent and reasons for the differences and similarities, and promote conceptual understanding (through exploration) of the forces at work and the relationships between them.

Accordingly, the following sections attempt to chart the paths of PSD-related OE/Friluftsliv against a backdrop of changing socio-cultural assumptions, values and practices within the two countries over time.

## **6.2. Comparative geographical - political perspectives of Great Britain and Norway**

The factors that shaped the two nations' respective outdoor traditions and influenced their notion of character are manifold. Geographical features such as terrain, land cultivation and management were fundamental, as was the influence of the legal system that regulated the inheritance of and access to the land. The emergent civilisations changed and adapted to their own peculiar landscape which in turn instilled divergent “meanings” to the profoundly different activities it demanded and permitted.

The development of a tradition of free harvesting was thwarted in Britain, where land distribution disadvantaged the majority of British subjects. The exclusive class-led system of land management was rooted in ancestral Anglo-Norman land ownership and was the privilege of the few. The 1872 Population Census documented “4 million acres owned by 12 men”; a trend which continues to the present day when “0.6% of the British people own 69%” of the British Isles (Cahill, 2001, p. 25; see also Hari, 2005).

Although socialist movements helped to increase access to the outdoors, the accelerating urbanisation of England favoured a city-orientated lifestyle (Parker & Meldrum, 1973). Urbanisation and the consequences of unequal land distribution disadvantaged the common people while the patrician landlords developed their own harvesting and hunting traditions. They enclosed the land and made poaching of game or fruits illegal, which effectively precluded any social movement of journeying and harvesting across the British landscape. It is worthy of note that the situation in Scotland was even harsher where landholding was even more extreme (Wightman, 1996). Despite this, the British ruling classes summoned the people to war, exhorting its soldiers to “fight for their home and forests” (Brox, 2001, p. 14).

The resultant vacuum made it difficult - despite any urge the British might feel - to undertake a physical exploration of their own natural environment. These circumstances provided the seed of an educational rationale that was conducive for a

person-centred concept of conquering 'inner horizons', due to being denied a physical relationship with nature (Rosenthal, 1986). This then evolved into the British notion of 'refined' character building opposed to the Norwegian rationale that encouraged the 'outer' dimension of unconstrained 'into the woods' land exploration (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001).

In contrast, Great Britain saw the emergence of class-based leadership ideals headed by the public school system which espoused redemption through an 'inward' odyssey (Cook, 2000, p. 36). The outdoors evolved to provide symbolic analogies, (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001) and constituted anthropocentric aspects which lay at the heart of the notion of character building and remediation and generated the celebration of nature as an 'arena' which became the salient theme for Great Britain (Nicol, 2002a; Rosenthal, 1986). This was equally aligned with a tradition of discovery and scientific investigation (survey, mapping) in remote places inherited from Captain Scott, that later, as Loynes (2002) points out, evolved into purposes of outdoor activities that are "variously adventure, science and service minded" reflecting the "better values of British imperialist history" (p. 116).

Industrialisation came late to Norway, as did urbanisation. There were few landowners and a negligible aristocracy, so huge tracts of common land were accessible to the Norwegian people. Furthermore, the judiciary which 'advanced the land user rather than the landowner's right' (the predecessor of *allemandsretten*) supported liberal land ownership which encouraged *wanderlust* - journeying and harvesting in the fjells and coastal waters (Tordsson, 1995, p. 30). The urge to roam continued throughout the Romantic period at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus due to easy access to land, gathering berries, fishing and hunting for food became one of the main strands of the construct of *Friluftsliv*. This far eclipsed the anthropocentric character concept affiliated with British outdoor traditions. Eventually, the pre-modern Nordic tradition was enshrined in law when an Act of Parliament (1957) ensured Norwegians could continue travelling and harvesting freely.

In Norway nature did not represent a threat to be conquered either internally from the

psychological aspect or externally from the ideological aspect. The cultural perspective hailed from the Romantic period favoured a classless aesthetic and emotional perception of the *grandeur* of nature. Consequently, it was bound to override any anthropocentrism which otherwise lay dormant in an ancient aristocratic national narrative and which prevailed in Victorian Britain's urge to rule or stoically conquer land (Kumar, 2003; Sillanpää, 2002).

Apart from its rather symbolic claims to the North Pole, South Pole, Greenland and Svalbard, which Wold terms "imperialism of the Arctic/Antarctic Ocean", Norway's lack of 'conventional' imperialism and its appeasement through orthodox Christian tendencies rendered the need for offensive assertiveness obsolete (Jonassen, 1983; see also Wold, 2001). Indeed as Jonassen (1983) holds, the "ecclesiastically suppressed" Norwegian mind-set felt no urge to respond to what had inspired the British instigators of OE (p. 38). Thus, when the 19<sup>th</sup> century American psychologist and philosopher William James exhorted educators and statesmen to develop the "moral equivalent to war", his appeal had little meaning in Norway either on the 'playing fields'<sup>15</sup> or - as here suggested - in Friluftsliv practice (James, 1906; see also Hahn, 1960).

In summary, Norwegian commoners enjoyed the privilege of journeying unrestricted through mountains and the surrounding seas, both of which naturally provided 'challenge' (Tordsson, 1995), while in Britain the restricted access to landscape contributed to a mythology that had to 'fabricate challenge' in a 'restricted' nature as an arena or through scientific expeditions to remote, wild environments.

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<sup>15</sup> In Britain, the Duke of Wellington claimed that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton (prominent public school).



### **6.3. Comparative perspectives on British and Norwegian ‘national character’ related to differing land-holding and land-laws**

The desire to nurture character has been associated with reflections on the existence of specific character traits peculiar to a nation (Magnus, 1901). Racial theories were devised and applied in order to categorise supposedly innate national differences. ‘British-ness’ was associated with the “true pluck and determination typical of character in Englishmen” that lay dormant through the “inbred love of manly exercises and field sports” (Wheelwright, 1864, p. 399-402). Similarly, eugenicist authors, associated Nordic character with the “capacity for leadership, qualities of initiative and willpower” allegedly due to natural selection within the confines of a “tough landscape” (Gregor, 1960, p. 351-360; see also Baur, Fischer & Lenz, 1931).

The discourse on the notion of character has not only encompassed views on ethnicity; indeed social parameters also played a decisive role in the diverse pathways that contributed to the formation of character as it materialised in both countries. Norway’s social arrangements had neither a strong landed gentry nor a solid urban bourgeoisie and Norwegians eschewed any form of servility. Instead, the free small proprietor embedded in pre-feudal Nordic societal traditions developed a social imperative of egalitarian consciousness that was to give Norway a somewhat collectivist ‘bolshevik’ *couleur* (Jonassen, 1983, p. 126).

To some extent the differences in behavioural dispositions between Norwegian and British ‘yeomen’<sup>16</sup> were due to the influence of their social and political institutions. Although for both countries the distribution of property materialised through primogeniture [odelsrett], the land inheritance effectively, however, went through the line of a few privileged landlords in Great Britain, whereas in the Norwegian case land was inherited by a class of free peasants. In his critical address Laing (1836)<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> ‘Yeomen’ is an antiquated term for citizens who were in former times free to cultivate their own land.

<sup>17</sup> Laing (1836) maintains that the “state of the people” in both countries correlate with different land inheritance laws. Surprisingly, Laing identifies the differences to be found in primogeniture [Great Britain] and subdivision in Norway. While Laing claims that the right of primogeniture “never had a footing in Norway” (Porter, 1999, p. 157), it has to be considered that the Norwegian/Nordic inheritance through primogeniture has been mentioned as early as in Eddic Poetry and is embedded in constitutional law (grunnloven).

recognised the role played by “the ethos of society” in both countries and its concomitant institutions, which together influenced the relationship of nations to their peoples (Porter, 1999, p. 168). Thus, in his view, the people of both nations were ‘nurtured’ into rather than pre-disposed towards the acquisition of a national character.

It seems that the Norwegian common denominator of society - the small proprietor farmer [bonde] - profited from the greater share of liberty that characterised Nordic property distribution, in that he was answerable only to “God and the King” (Witoszek, 1998, p. 45). As ‘freemen’ not owing service to a lord, Norwegian farmers displayed self-sufficient personality orientations such as “freedom to rely on themselves”, that encouraged “tremendous feeling of equality”, and (to some) precluded “servility and arrogance” (Porter, 1999, p. 158-159). These behavioural orientations represented well-established social practices that resembled social individualism, indicative of the muted social class differences throughout Scandinavian countries, and were ultimately manifested through the Democratic Bill of Rights in 1814 (Trägårdh & Berggren, 2006).

British feudalism, in contrast, caused social division and disciplined its serfs (circa 1500 A. D.) and later tenant farmers to the economic authority and jurisdiction of the landlord (Frantzen & Moffat, 1994). The unique distribution of property necessitated vertical power relationships. Leadership and ‘follower-ship’ became an integral part of the notion of character that simultaneously instilled normative instrumental virtues that had to be aligned with the demands of a class-ridden state. Consequently, it meant that British subjects remained subjugated through loyalties to a greater cause by encouraging an *esprit de corps* through “norms of gentility and its necessary complement of leaders and statesmen” (Rosenthal, 1986, p. 90-91).

Indeed, the Scouting movement in its early days promoted transference of class-based public school character ideals from the “better to the lesser” (Rosenthal, 1986, p. 91; see also Cook, 2000). Similarly, in the early establishment of Hahnian schools

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the outdoors were used to address aristocratic virtues and moral responsibility reconciling with “Plato’s ideas of an education of the soul for a small elite” which arguably supported the British class system (van Oord, 2010, p. 9). Hahn suggested: “There would always be a ruling elite under any circumstances; the job of an educational system was to train that elite to rule justly” (Worsley, 1966, p. 191).

In conclusion, the British were bred under discipline and convention, rather than the self-assertiveness and self-reliance upon which Norwegian “industry, innovation and morality” depended (Porter, 2001, p. 163). Norwegian egalitarian traditions cultivated their own cause i.e. to be free agents who were bred under self-imposed strictures rather than systematically schooled in moral refinement. Indeed ultimately, it was the Norwegian’s rural culture [*den folkelige mentaliteten*] of “ski, vinter, fjell and Friluftsliv” which provided the common social denominator (Tordsson, 1998, p. 8). Thus Norwegian virtues germinated on different soil.

#### **6.4. The mythological rationale**

Various authors suggest that discrete mythologies of national characteristics and their inter-relationships with nature have directly influenced outdoor traditions (e.g. Nash, 1973; Nedrelid, 1991; Tordsson, 1993; Tordsson, 1994). This section takes a closer look at Great Britain’s and Norway’s mythological narratives. Mythological rationales can serve as a key for a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences of mindframes, peoples’ divergent relationship to nature and concomitant outdoor traditions (Csapo, 2005; Nash, 1973; Nedrelid, 1991).

##### **6.4.1. Great Britain**

In the British context, in which a nation had been ‘shaped by war’ (which led to a warrior elite with institutionalised feudalism and chivalry), the societal structure was ultimately class-based (James, 2001, p. xv). Not surprisingly, Sillanpää (2002) postulates that in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries it was the ruling classes that instigated the search for personal virtues via the outdoors and the cultivation of blood sports.

Guidelines for conduct, enshrined in improving treatises, were the predecessors of later concepts of the virtues related to living in the outdoors. Colley (1992) argues that these triggered the cult of “elite heroism” which subsequently influenced the widely accepted definition of ‘Britishness’ (p. 170). The aspiration of the lower classes to participate in activities with an ‘aristocratic or privileged flavour’ persisted however, and is a recurring theme (Sillanpää, 2002, p. 57).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the passion for manly conduct, while ‘roughing it’ in the outdoors, manifested itself in the upper classes following their “passion for wild animals and nature” (Forester, 1850, p. 464; see also Thomas, 1983). Along with hunting excursions in the Scottish Highlands, extended tours in the Nordic countries (particularly the Scandinavian Sporting Tour), and British mountaineering in the Alps, gentlemanly masculinity evolved a *Zeitgeist* that made “imperialism tangible” (Hansen, 1991, p. 20). This expansive drive fuelled a mythology of possessive attitudes towards nature; meanwhile the needs of the Empire were satisfied by the rearing of imperialist Britons who developed personal virtues that helped them seize ownership of new land even in the face of uncertainty (Slattery, 2004; see also Tordsson, 1995).

This supposedly endemic disposition in the British character forged an association with “threatening, hostile and futile courage” (Slattery, 2004, p. 13) that equated suffering with achievement. This is exemplified by the spirit of early British polar expeditions, such as Scott’s South Pole expedition (1911-12) which some claim was the epitome of British moral fibre in that it applauds heroism for heroism’s sake - a disposition of character which denied the “fragility of human flesh and extolled the resilience of the spirit” (Huntford, 1999, p. 118). This idealistic attitude was enthusiastically received by mainstream society and added to the repertoire of attributes considered essential to the British character. Indeed the Anglican Church praised it as one of the highest human qualities.

Surely war, like every other form of suffering and misery, has its redeeming element in the beauty and splendour of the character of men, by God’s grace ...

men rise themselves and raise others by sacrifice of self, and in war the greatness of self-sacrifice is set before us (Huntford, 1999, p. 119).

This departure of a “longing to lose yourself in a common cause” (van Oord, 2010, p. 5) was inherent in William James’ address to educators and leaders of nations to seek to create a ‘moral equivalent’ of war (James, 1910). As a consequence James’ ideas partially inspired Kurt Hahn in designing Outward Bound in 1941 (van Oord, 2010).

Militaristic attitudes still echo as a linguistic heritage in the militaristic/sporting metaphors in British expedition literature. The British version of the ‘self’ revealed powerful connotations of strength, courageous wittiness and stoic endurance. The ethic of ‘fighting the elements’, for example, was inextricably associated with British mountaineers. It is not surprising, then, that the leisured classes pursued their educational *grand tour*, embarking, as ‘mountain warriors’ on ‘Fjellsport’ tours in the Norwegian mountains

Our intention had been to combine an attack on the N. face of the Kaupe with a descent to Bødal (Slingsby, 1895, p. 91).

In contrast, Norway with its relatively small upper class lacked the competitive spirit of individuals battling nature. This rationale received less attention among early Norwegian mountain guides as suggested by Horgen (1999) in the area of *Jostedalsbreen* or in actual practice throughout the rest of Norway. Indeed, it was only as an alien concept that it belatedly infiltrated and competed with non-combative Norwegian climbing ethics.

However, the elitist values that prevailed in Britain shaped a regime that had its influence on public schools. They provided an ‘educational’ rationale for outdoor activities, namely that of a class-based leadership education. The ‘building’ of character followed the classical rationale of ‘*mens sana in corpore sano*’ and was introduced via hardy team games and cold showers supplemented by activities in the rugged outdoors (Cook, 2000).

The desired learning objectives pivoted on the concept of ‘muscular Christianity’, i.e. self-mastery, team spirit and patriotism. The desired character traits were associated with notions of superiority, preparedness for war and the instilling of a desire to serve the empire in a manner which would bring the “benefits of higher wisdom to the lesser breeds” (Selleck, 1968, p. 87). Ware, headmaster of Eton in the 1890s, described the school’s educational ideals as concordant with “fortitude, self-rule, public spirit ... firmness in defeat” (Mack, 1941, p. 130). Wheelwright (1864) on meeting British youths during a summer in Lapland comments the nature of ‘muscular Christianity’ in the following way:

The lessons learnt on the Thames, the Cam and the Isis, in the cricket-field, or across country, are never forgotten; and when such men in afterlife are placed in situations of danger or difficulty, it is easy to see advantages of early training ... no fear of England going to the wall, as long as she can keep up the breed of young men like these (Wheelwright, 1864, p. 399-402).

This militaristic legacy persisted into the post-war period of British OE and on into the 1960s and was accompanied with contrasting and competing claims for both character forming and remedial properties of the outdoors (Loynes, 2008b; Nicol, 2002a).



#### 6.4.2. Norway

The anthropocentric theme of British outdoor traditions would seem to be somewhat opposed to Norwegian value-orientations. The Norwegian perspective was to cherish nature as a resource and was derived from a mythology that had shaped its own unique national narrative (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001). It was borne of a tradition that closely related its identity to nature and was inextricably bound with 'sustainable values' for survival within it (Witoszek, 1998). This orientation has been traced back to the guidelines for wise living detailed, for instance, in the Eddic poem *Hávamál*.<sup>18</sup> It highlighted both the Plebeian philosophy that addressed moderation and the more assertive concept of *superbia*, commonly associated with the 'elitist' Viking perception of manliness (Witoszek, 1998). The differing cultural orientations prevalent in Nordic mythology illustrate the ambiguity inherent in the emerging Norwegian mind set. This can be traced in the dichotomy of moderation versus dominance that resurfaced as a *sub rosa* cultural pattern, providing the building-blocks of recent Norwegian cultural history and influencing diverse constructs of the meaning of Friluftsliv (Eriksen, 1993; Godal, 1991; Odden, 1999; Tordsson, 1995). For instance, the aristocratic theme and the systemic 'green' theme of Nordic mythology resurfaced as cultural orientations and are evident in aspects of the Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen's legacy, as well as in the deep-ecology orientated Friluftsliv of the 1970s.

The Norwegian Romantic movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century readily embraced the symbolism of Nordic mythology, accepting too Gottfried von Herder's notion of a "regenerated contemporary of the past" centred on the cultivation of a *Volksgeist* that replaced the traditional concept of a judicio-political state and conjuring up instead a folk-nation whose history was organic in nature (Norton, 1991, p. 10). The cultural traditions that created the nation were extended to include "landscape, history, language and expressions in sagas, fairytales, music and art" (Tordsson, 1995, p. 9). It is in the context of an "imagined [national] community" - that the archetypal nature-consonant 'rural Norwegian' became the cultural denominator of Norway

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<sup>18</sup> *Hávamál* (*Sayings of Hár, Sayings of the High One*) is one of the poems of the Poetic Edda (collection of Old Norse poems). It sets out a set of guidelines for wise living and survival.



(Berggreen, 1993, p. 39). In contrast to the rest of Europe where ‘civilisation’ spread rapidly Norway was hailed as a protected and untouched agricultural society that convincingly echoed the old Germanic lore of a bygone era. Norway’s isolationistic line in cultural orientation continued to permeate both the origins of the Norwegian history of pedagogy and of Friluftsliv. In particular, Norwegian Grundvigionism (which is characterised by the conjoining of pre-Christian Germanic, Christian and nationalistic value-sets) wielded influence during the 19<sup>th</sup> century when educational policies were devised regarding the ‘folk high school’ system and the wider public school system (Berggreen, 1993; see also Aukrust, 2010).

According to Berggreen (1993), the theologian Christopher Bruun (1839-1920) - a strong advocator for Grundvigionism in Norway - was particularly influential in the creation of a Norwegian national identity which would persist for generations. Bruun hailed Norway’s ideological immunity, claiming that the country was “best in the world at killing the soil for the growth of Latin” and claimed that as the reason Norway was not unduly influenced by the Catholic Church (p. 45). The gradual building of a Nordic character resulted in an unspoilt Norwegian peasantry who were largely held in limbo, or as Aukrust (2010) put it “parked” in a transitory stage, between the Germanic “golden age of past and contemporary society’s decay” (p. 2).

Following this ultra-national ideology, Bruun - in support of the ‘Norwegian-ness movement’ [norskdomsrørsla] - opposed the urban ‘magistrate culture’ [embetsmannskulturen] which drew on influences from abroad (Berggren, 1993). His early educational beliefs were profoundly atavistic in nature as was evident when addressing young men in ‘folk high schools’ when he suggested:

The young men of ‘Wotan’s kin’ should be brought to the ‘sacred realm of Saga’ and then led through fairy tales and folk songs, but above all through ‘The Elder Edda’ [Den eldre Edda]... Not only the Norwegian, but the whole Germanic tribe could find itself, ‘know itself’, through the Old Norse writing. It’s not this Germanic tribe which is foremost among humankind ... ranked

first among the countries of the world: The Nordic countries come first, then Germany, Holland, England and North America (Berggreen, 1993, p. 44).

According to Berggreen (1993), Bruun's philosophy is "easily recognisable" as the dominant ideology underpinning the notion of 'Norwegian-ness' which permeated the cultural discourse well beyond the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (p. 44).

This ultra-nationalism coincided with the development of a cult concerning the archetypal Norwegian: the sportsman, humanist and polar explorer Dr. Fridtjof Nansen. As a member of the so-called 'Lysaker circle' of scientists and artists, Nansen figured prominently in the build-up of Norwegian nationhood leading to the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905. He was greatly venerated and became the blueprint for the great hero King Olav Tryggvason; indeed he was actually used as a model for the king in the illustrated edition of the '*Heimskringla*': a history of the Norwegian kings (Stenseth, 2000).

The growing preference for national-romantic cultural lore generated a new appreciation for being outdoors practicing Friluftsliv, thereby encouraging urban Norwegian travellers to return to their mythological origins in the fjells and fjords as the "instruments of their emotional life" (Tordsson, 2004, p. 6; see also Faarlund, 1985). While the elitist aristocratic orientation was tempered by the pastoral enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Romantic nature movement inspired by European philosophy and art connected with the ancient concepts of ecological humility (Witoszek, 1998, p. 51). Its Plebeian ethos re-surfaced in the glorification of the common people, who were perceived as rooted in authentic nature (Stenseth, 1991).

Thus the systemic nature-consonant theme presided over the intrinsic masculine understanding of Norwegian identity and was inextricably bound with the national character. It created a self-perpetuating myth, which claimed Norwegians were the last remaining tribe in Europe of "nature and winter's people" (Odden, 1999, p. 7).

While the broad political discourse urged “freedom, equality and brotherhood”, non-hierarchical thinking also decisively influenced the architecture of the Norwegian educational system, which emphasised a socially inclusive political ideology (Tordsson, 1995, p. 2).

It can therefore be argued that the Norwegian tendency towards an egalitarian-ecological consciousness rendered the ‘superiority’ mind-set of gentlemanly character refinement seen in Britain alien and out of the question. Thus it may seem that the Norwegian concept of character-development through the use of the outdoors, played a subordinate role, but that does not mean it did not exist: the Norwegian notion of a refined character simply comprised different ingredients and associative meanings.

## **6.5. The influence of key individuals in the emergence of an anthropocentric theme in the outdoors in Great Britain and Norway**

### **6.5.1. Great Britain**

Two individuals, the Scout leader Baden-Powell and the German emigré Kurt Hahn, contributed enormously to the OE movement. Firstly, Major-General Sir Robert Baden Powell (1857-1941) created the Boy Scout Movement in 1906, building on his experiences during the Second Boer War in South Africa in 1899. Attracted by notions of self-improvement, the Boy Scouts together with the Girl Guides saw their membership rise to a million in the 1920s (BBC News, 2005). To counteract national inefficiency, the Scout movement attempted to form its youths into “serviceable citizens for the Empire” (Rosenthal, 1986, p. 10). Activities normally associated with public schools were transmuted into Scout character training and reached out to a wider audience including working-class boys.

Baden Powell’s ambition was to actively capitalise on the expertise of the public school ‘character factory’ in order to spread some “spirit of self-negation, self-

discipline, sense of honour, responsibility, helpfulness to others, loyalty and patriotism” which was thought to make character (Rosenthal, 1986, p. 90). Furthermore, his Boy Scout movement was designed to promote self-discipline, love of country and toughness: Powell considered his definition of ‘manliness’ to be the antidote to “loafing ... thriftlessness ... disregard of others ...” (Rosenthal, 1986, p. 5).

It was feared that the ‘true pluck’ and character of the well-bred Englishman was on the verge of extinction, killed off by materialism, individualism and socialism (Rosenthal, 1986). The perceived looming decay of British ‘pluck’ persuaded consecutive governments to introduce campaigns stressing the importance of physical exercise as a matter of national importance. Therefore, concern about moral and physical decay, justified or not, helped to initiate schemes to help youth become ‘clean in thought, word and deed’.

The second figure, Kurt Hahn (1886-1974), established the progressive public school Gordonstoun in Scotland in 1934. Some of Hahn’s ideas, particularly those associated with a badge for physical fitness and service, were embraced by the Outward Bound movement (1941) and the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme.

The Outward Bound movement was begun to provide courses partly for young men joining the Merchant Navy, helping them to build the physical and moral requirement for survival at sea when ships went down to enemy submarines (Hahn, 1960).<sup>19</sup> Measures were needed and according to Miner (1990) it was thought that “unlike old sea dogs the younger men and youths had not acquired a sense of wind and weather, a reliance on their own resources, and a selfless bond with their fellows” (Miner, 1990, p. 59). Kurt Hahn was convinced that participation in expeditions would foster character and lead to moral rectitude:

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<sup>19</sup> The number of merchant ships in Atlantic convoys sunk by German U-boats rose to 409 in 1941 and peaked at 656 in 1943. The German Navy caused the death of 23,000 seamen during the Battle of the Atlantic, a large proportion between June 1940 and May 1941 (Fairbank White, 2006).

Expeditions can greatly contribute towards building strength of character. Josef Conrad in *Lord Jim* tells us that it is necessary for a youth to experience events which reveal the inner worth of the man: the edge of his temper, the fibre of his stuff, the quality of his resistance: the secret truth of his pretences, not only to himself but others (Neill, 2008, p. 3).

Much of Hahn's thinking tried to address the moral *malaise* of society by providing an antidote to the ills of the time, such as decline of compassion, self-discipline and fitness. Elements similar to those of English public schools (e.g. *esprit de corps* and the subjugation of individual needs) were regarded as appropriate means to instill moral responsibility. The social agenda behind Hahn's thinking (influenced by Plato, see Wurdinger, 1997) viewed education as a preparation for "future citizens in service to the state" (Cook, 2000, p. 18) based on a democratic system only "viable under the moral guidance of a self-appointed ruling class" (Watkins, 2005, p. 20).

### **6.5.2. Norway**

Contributing to the struggle of national independence from Sweden, the Norwegian concept of character sought to emphasise originality and independence related to nationhood (Odden, 1999). During this crucial period of Norwegian history, virtues gleaned from outdoor experiences and polar travels were used to campaign against Swedish interests. While the emphasis on communal experience was a typical trait of the British construct of 'character building', the Norwegian rationale embraced ancient traditions of wandering and journeying searching for the "great lonely emptiness", resonant of a 'detached' ego (Reed & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 162).

Also on a much more individual level, reflections on the 'instrumental' value of being in the outdoors as a concept for personal growth gained momentum. Echoing the national romantic theme, Emanuel Meyer Mohn (1842-1891), passionate explorer of Norwegian fjells and contemporary climbing fellow to British climbing pioneer of Norway, William Cecil Slingsby (1849-1929), plays an important role in the interpretation of nature through his numerous articles in *The Norwegian*

Trekking Association (DNT) yearbooks (between 1872-91). Despite the predominance of a nature-romantic style of nature worship, Mohn acknowledges the growth effect that outdoor experiences could have upon peoples' daily lives.

I see in the fjell-tours a considerable people's educating power of big significance. Because what we win there, is not only a strong 'torso' and strengthened legs so that we can move with Norwegian composure, but the strength, the courage, the stamina, the self-assurance, the dexterity, the self-confidence you acquire from out there, follow us down to the valleys and consolidates itself in the character and helps us to stand upright and hold out many situations in life where we otherwise would quickly succumb (Mohn, 1873; translated by author of thesis).

A much more concerted focus on character-attributes, however, gleaned from the encounter with the outdoors came from the 'ancestral architect' for generations of Friluftsliv-followers, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen (Faarlund, 1993). Nansen is credited as being one of the most important models for Norwegian Friluftsliv; he was uniquely poised for his role, having been bequeathed an innate 'Norwegian-ness', standing as he did "on the shoulders of previous generations of Norwegians" (Repp, 2004, p. 414). His endeavours were capitalised in that his image as an explorer, scientist diplomat and eventually Nobel Peace Prize winner represented strength, endurance, success and integrity.

The mark he set on the Norwegian version of refinement of character, following Repp (2004), echoed a universal human demand for "courage, independence and the spirit of adventure" (p. 126). It also reverberated with a "detachment syndrome" that appears to be inextricably bound to the national character of Norwegians (Jonassen, 1983, p. 266; see also Nedreliid, 1991). Based on his national elitist views - equally inspired by British intellectuals such as Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin on moral issues, Nansen feared Norwegian youth might lose their unique individuality, particularly the quality of "independence and assertiveness in the face of adversity"



(Nansen, 1943, p. 2; see also Stenseth, 2000). It was to be instilled through solitary encounter with nature and consequential ennobling of the subject's character. The urge to be alone can also be found in Ibsen's poem 'On the Heights' ['På vidderne'] reflecting a detached sentiment, that as Huntford (2001) holds, "mirrors ...the moody streaks and violent contrasts in the Norwegian psyche" (p. 17). The poem closes with the telling lines:

Up here on the heights, God and freedom reign,  
Down below the others flounder on (Huntford, 2001, p. 17)

Nansen was worried that a refined character might be "polished and rubbed off" by urban influences (Nansen, 1943, p. 2). Accordingly, Nansen's speech entitled 'Friluftsliv' which addressed young Norwegians in Christiania in 1921, commented on 'detached personality traits' and included a criticism of modern civilisation.

In the wilderness, in the loneliness of the forest, with a view towards the mountains and a distance from glamour and confusion; this is where personalities are formed (Faarlund, 1993, p. 162).

Along with the urge for solitude, Nansen re-invigorated the aristocratic *superbia* of the saga era that according to the influential atavistic Lysaker-circle was a living organism with the potential to resurface in varying intensity through the course of history, inextricably bound with medieval character-traits of Nordic mythology (Stenseth, 2000).

The assertive but unpretentiously elated nature of refined Norwegians, equipped with a 'boastfull quietness' [utstyrt med en brautende stillhet] lay at the core of his rhetoric. This was also the case with Amundsen, the very incarnation of Norwegian people's deepest roots, whose affinity for Nordic mythology reflected a desire for aristocratic renaissance conjoined with national leanings towards nature worship. Stenseth (2000) claims the latter bore a close resemblance to Ernst Haeckel's version of German monoism (Haeckel had promoted and popularised Charles Darwin's work



in Germany), in which he advocated withdrawing into nature to find “one’s church” guided by principles of pantheism (p. 117).

Nansen’s atavistic leanings become evident in (amongst others) his eulogy to Roald Amundsen in 1928 in which he adjured Norwegian youth to espouse masculine personality traits that had been highly valued during the saga era, reflecting that “a world that rears such sons is still young at heart” (Nansen, 1928). His favoured repertoire of character traits includes:

... ‘unshakable courage’ [det ukuelige mot]; ... ‘strong decision making’ [den sterke, sikre rådsnarhet]; ... ‘resilient bearlike will-power’ [ukuelige bjørnesterke viljekraft], ... ‘challenging behaviour towards the ferocious sea’ [utfordrer det ville hav med deres uhyr]; ... ‘strong decisive initiative-taking’ [den sterke, den gjerve foretaksomhet] ... ‘fearless risk-taking in the face of death’ [det lekende smil på lepen ... når det står om livet] (excerpts from audio-file NRK, Nansen, 1928, translated by author of thesis).

Although the manly concept of Nansen’s feats was criticised by leading Norwegian writers such as Knut Hamsun and Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson for its ‘unrefined boldness’, its influence, however, has reinforced a dominant “hegemonic masculinity” in the Norwegian discourse of Friluftsliv (von der Lippe, 2003, p. 16; see also Gurholt, 2008). The manly concept perpetuated and subsequently influenced Norwegian Friluftsliv philosophers even during the deep-ecology era of the 1970s and 1980s, and remained impervious to feminist criticism (Gurholt, 2008; Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001; Pedersen, 1999; Wold, 2001).

The extent to which Nansen imposed his doctrines on his audience is difficult to assess and beyond the scope of this thesis, however, it is certain that the role he assumed was that of an idealised hero. Indeed, Nansen made conspicuously few speeches, wrote few articles and generally failed to incorporate a Norwegian response (to British and other continental initiatives for character-building) into a broader youth-movement.

It was virtually irrelevant what view Nansen may have held, it was the audience, particularly the scouts, who incorporated him in their notion of character through semi-militarism and native Indian scouting (Wold, 2001). His lack of pedagogical commitment and failure to devise schemes for youngsters may seem surprising, but in fact his message of symbolic experience in the outdoors (echoed in Rolfsen's 1904 schoolbooks) received wider appreciation throughout the Norwegian youth. Beyond the Norwegian Scout movement it was the minority and somewhat unrepresentative Norwegian bourgeoisie who particularly appreciated Friluftsliv's overt role for upbringing and character refinement (Gurholt, 2008; Nedrelid, 1991).

Seemingly, due to Nansen's growing orthodox ideals and the embodiment of romantic sentiments rooted in Norwegian history, he was gradually dismissed as a post-war cultural hero. Thus Friluftsliv and its connotations of heroic saga became outdated and Norwegian outdoor educators did not wholly support the anthropocentric use of Nansen's ideology as a vehicle for individual empowerment. Outside Norway, however, Nansen's humanitarian credentials served as an inspiration to establish a 'Nansen Badge' designed to "encourage pursuits of skill and care, of exacting enterprise and of Samaritan service" (Hahn, 1959, p. 7). For Norway, the 'green' Nansen, however, regained approval among the deep-ecology movement of the 1970s.

In summary, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century both countries cultivated character through the outdoors. The national perspective of British OE emphasised the communal aspects of 'muscular Christianity' and patriotism based on public school ideas that rested on a "complex mix of ideas and feelings created through ritual and symbol" (Cook, 2000, p. 16). Meanwhile the Norwegian character concept addressed similarly patriotic, albeit atavistic components through self-initiated individualistic journeys into the wilderness. The consolidation of a serious educational directed scheme carried less weight in Norway than the arduous energetic educational schemes devised and endorsed by both Baden Powell and Kurt Hahn in Great Britain, which received general acclaim from British audiences. In return this led to an all-encompassing consolidation of the notion of character throughout British OE

provision.

## **6.6. Social concerns of the interwar years**

### **6.6.1. Great Britain**

In Britain, post-World War I educationalists such as Hall, Froebel and Pestalozzi opposed the conservative public schools' approach to character building; they extolled the healing properties of outdoor living and this 'social' mission (Cook, 2000, p. 49) became the second rationale for provision of OE. Indeed it was thought that sport and outdoor activities possessed "character remediation properties" that might alleviate society's malaise (Richards, 1981, p. 165).

The youth study movement was heavily influenced by 19th century British educational scholars whose work underpinned educational psychology. New initiatives attempted to halt the moral decline and concomitant juvenile delinquency that followed accelerated industrial change. Aside concerns for fitness of the British army, Loynes (2008) argues that these initiatives originate from "moral panics" of the late Victorian era and as such persist in current rationales for personal development (p. 75). In particular, the social decline amongst the working classes triggered a belief in adventurous education and attracted "moral entrepreneurs" into the educational landscape (p. 75). The new rationale alluded to a pedagogy that could bring about profound changes in young adolescents if they were correctly handled. Eventually in the wake of the 'Hadow Reports' (1926) (Gillard, 2006), "walking tours, school journeys and camps" were conceived to instill a sound life for children through a "love of open air and a healthy way of living" (Cook, 2000, p. 50).

By the early years of the twentieth century, the ground had been prepared to equate education in the outdoors with the domain of character building and remediation, and subsequently Britain spawned several carefully devised schemes such as the Scout Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Prince of Wales camps in

the 1930s and Gordonstoun School in Scotland (1934). Kurt Hahn's Badge scheme and Outward Bound movement (1941) were brought to the attention of the Norwood Committee<sup>20</sup> and therefore indirectly influenced the 1944 Education Act (Heck, 2005). Finally, towards the end of WWII, the Education Act (1944) democratised Britain's social classes, and a strong character movement conjoined by Kurt Hahn's Outward Bound movement saw the incorporation of character via use of the outdoors into mainstream education in elementary and secondary schools (Barrett & Greenaway, 1995).

### **6.6.2. Norway**

In the years between the First and Second World Wars the emphasis on individuality veered more towards the communal experience and the Norwegian character-concept aligned with the traditions of its British counterpart in terms of developing social qualities, solidarity and responsibility. It resembled Kurt Hahn's identification of the "six declines of youth" and his educational vision to cure the malaise of society (Richards, 1981, p. 165). Norwegian Friluftsliv was gradually perceived as a means of improving or even solving society's problems, which included the moral and physical decay believed to be prevalent at that time. The DNT, which had hitherto been sceptical regarding the social move towards the fjells, started to organise group tours from 1932 and these new activities led to the development of a Friluftsliv which was increasingly acknowledged as an effective tool for PSD.

The gradual deployment of nature as a social arena is also evident in the policies of the Norwegian Scout movement during the thirties, which addressed both the working and middle classes (Wold, 2001). Its acceptance spread as its exponents acknowledged and actively utilised the socio-pedagogical effects derived from the outdoors. Thus little by little Friluftsliv was employed as a vehicle to foster personality, social skills and citizenship, while it continued to evolve into a widely

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<sup>20</sup> In 1943 the minister of Education, Sir Cyril Norwood, and committee published in 1943 the Norwood Report on secondary school education and some of its recommendations were subsequently adopted. In particular, the report led to the establishment of three kinds of secondary schools: grammar, technical, and secondary modern (Heck, 2005, p. 157).

revered pedagogical tool.

### **6.7. Wartime and postwar developments in Great Britain and Norway**

While the promotion of social cohesion received wide acclaim during the interwar years, Friluftsliv also provided a unifying force when the Norwegian-led destruction of the German heavy-water plant at Vemork finally brought Nazi Germany's plans for the development of an atom-bomb to an end. The underlying message of this significant event was two-fold: firstly, it demonstrated the supremacy of a cultural heritage evolved from intimate living close to the elements of nature, as practiced by Norwegian soldiers [gutta på skauen] who had spent their formative years in rural Norway; secondly, it displayed the courage and daring nature of men who endured challenging natural conditions.

In the wake of the former, Friluftsliv temporarily regained its validity as a “myth to refine character” and self-assertiveness (Odden, 1999, p. 7). The Norwegian emphasis on the communal experience of Friluftsliv to soften social class differences, however, gradually lost its momentum, partly because of the Norwegian “modernization project” (1945 to 1960) when urbanisation and the love of sport increased in popularity (Tordsson, 2002, p. 363). Nevertheless it is evident that, during the war and post-war era, PSD was still neglected as a serious rationale underpinning the practice of Friluftsliv in the educational system.

In contrast, Great Britain experienced its most ‘marked expansion’ of OE at this time and a growing interest in character *per se* (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Indeed, post-war developments in British OE were enshrined in the reforms of the 1944 Education Act which resulted in a gradual transition towards ideologies and categories conceived for a broader context than the imperial (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Furthermore, the postwar situation essentially changed the provision and focus of outdoor programmes from “battlefield to playground” (Nicol, 2001, p. 37).

Loynes (2008) holds that a “postwar vision to broaden horizons saw a shift away from doing good or being correct on behalf of others towards the agency of the individual” thereby realising potential on behalf of the self (p. 95). Arguably, when it was no longer regarded as a threat, individualism achieved prevalence in Great Britain (Nicol, 2002b).

Meanwhile the term ‘character-training’ underwent a change of content and was replaced with the term ‘personal and social education’ (Roberts, White & Parker, 1974). OE became educational, developmental and therapeutic. McDonald's metaphorical remark even defines the playground as an area increasingly used “in lieu of the psychiatrist’s chair” although it was several decades before a critical scrutiny of underlying principles and their effectiveness was undertaken (McDonald, 1997, p. 10).

This, together with the Scouting movement, the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, the Brathay Hall Trust and the Outward Bound Trust (both of which used short term courses to promote PSD) provided the momentum behind the newly evolving British OE movement. They were the pillars of character tradition which consolidated its focus on PSD for decades to come. A growing interest also emerged in the use of the outdoors as a means to enable Britain to compete internationally, by focusing on attitudes, motivation and interpersonal skills within managerial workplaces and vocational training (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Primarily, these endeavours focused on employees destined for leadership roles in industry (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993).



## 6.8. Developments in Great Britain and Norway in the 1970s and 1980s

### 6.8.1. Great Britain

In Great Britain at this time the discourse on OE was only partially informed by environmental perspectives (Drasdo, 1972; Mortlock, 1984). Indeed, it would appear that ‘green debates’ at universities scarcely touched British OE centres in their daily practice (Nicol, 2001). As a result, there was “only limited, yet increasing”, awareness of environmental issues implicated in and associated with OE and nature-based sport’ (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001, p. 31).

Through a process of further consolidation of PSD, the 1970s saw a critical scrutiny of its terminology and underlying principles which resulted in some clarification of aims and methodology. This was partly triggered by the growing competition within the sector which demanded a scientific rationale to support adventure experiences. Increasingly wardens and programme directors had to provide objective evidence-based responses when confronted by sceptical sponsors or hostile critics. The Dartington conference of 1975 was a milestone both in the consolidation of PSD and the subsequent development of OE in Great Britain. However its proceedings emphasised the instrumental aims of PSD over intrinsic elements of environmental education (Nicol, 2002). They are still regarded as relevant in more recent times and have re-surfaced in texts (e.g. Hopkins & Putnam, 1993), which still consider the aims of ‘I’ and ‘we’ as the backbone of PSD practices within OE.

Due to the ‘great debate’,<sup>21</sup> the 1980s witnessed a sea of change in attitudes towards educational innovation with the introduction of a one-year full time study programme (the certificate of pre-vocational training) throughout schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. One objective was to help students explore and develop “personal and vocational skills” inside and outside the classroom (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993, p. 193). By this time schemes in the outdoors appear to have been

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<sup>21</sup> The debate was fuelled by the perceived failure in Britain to prepare young people adequately for working life (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993).



widely acknowledged as major contributors to the development of personal competence, “related both to life and to work” (ibid. 1993, p. 59).

In 1990 the National Curriculum Council (NCC) emphasised the importance of OE and in conjunction with PSD, received increased official recognition and was gradually incorporated into the National Curriculum. Presumably due to its long-standing outdoor tradition, Scotland displayed the firmest support for PSD. Its curricular endorsement through the *National Guidelines of the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) Curriculum and Assessment in Scotland 5-14* (1993 and revised in 2002) defined the human-centred approach as an integral part of expressive arts, environmental studies and OE. Indeed, the document *Personal and Social Development* makes specific reference to OE in relation to PSD such as the development of interpersonal relationships, self-esteem and self-awareness. By the SOED definition PSD emphasises life-skills that are human-centred and aligned with the spirit of a “deep-city philosophy”, which seeks to reflect aspects Western society craves, such as co-operation, teamwork and ego-centric self-actualisation (Bowles, 1995, p. 17). The SOED ‘*Structure and Balance in the Curriculum 5-14*’ states:

They will learn to identify, review and appraise the values which they and society hold and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions. They will take increasing responsibility for their own lives, will develop a positive regard for others and their needs and will be able to participate effectively in society (SOED, 1993a, p. 10).

It is evident that British OE espouses the ‘ideology of adjustment’ by complying with societal rules and standards, and “not simply for the benefit of the individual but in line with a particular social agenda” (Nicol, 2000a, p. 33).

### 6.8.2. Norway

Unlike Great Britain, the waning of the notion of PSD following Norwegian post-war developments continued to be even more widespread in the 1970s and 1980s. The prevailing rationale that informed Friluftsliv at that time was perceived as a massive protest against Western societies and its excessive exploitation of natural resources (Breivik, 1973; Faarlund, 1974; Næss, 1973). Modern society was believed to be on a collision course with nature. Friluftsliv, now venerated as “an agent of paradigm shift”, acted as an antidote to materialistic consumer society and established itself as an alternative to the perceived socio-ecological crisis taking place throughout Europe - not least Norway (Reed & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 156).

In this period (and in a move that was diametrically opposed to continental and Anglo-American rationales), Norwegian Friluftsliv denounced ‘city-based philosophies’ that tended to support modern nature-dissonant societies in that they promoted “co-operation, teamwork and self-actualisation” (Bowles, 1995, p. 17). Instead, the notion of biospherical egalitarianism came to the forefront and offered the value-system of the deep-ecology movement. Arne Næss (born 1912), regarded as the inaugurator of deep-ecology, a branch of ecological philosophy (ecosophy) that considers mankind as an integral part of its environment, derived inspiration from the philosophical works of Spinoza, Buddhism and Gandhi. Næss distinguished between what he described as “man’s narrow self” ... and the realization of our selves as part of an ecospheric whole” (Næss, 1989, p. 168). Næss’s work revolved around the individual’s relationship to nature as a familiarisation process - and it was well-received (Næss, 1989; 1986).

Deemphasising interhuman competition in outdoor activities weakens one of the driving forces behind our ecologically destructive social and political systems (Reed & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 169).

As an alternative to personal and social dimensions, it was acknowledged that deep-ecological Friluftsliv could offer its followers the opportunity to acquire life-skills that would “tackle life as such” (Breivik, 1979, p. 180) (especially modern-day

demands), and transfer systemic symbolic experiences such as the “seasonal rhythm of the year, the rhythm with landscapes and waves” (Breivik, 1979, p. 180) into holistic skills needed to support the work-life balance of daily routines (see also Myksvold, 1997). Consequently, this alternative paradigm went against the grain of adventure education’s foundations, and banished the perception of human-centredness from its agenda.

## **6.9. Outdoor-related PSD towards the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

### **6.9.1. Great Britain**

Although the dimension of learning in the outdoors may be a frequent topic of academic discourse, the traditional theme of PSD in the humanistic-centred sense (as opposed to human-nature relationships) continues to permeate the core of the OE movement in Great Britain. This would seem to be supported by Nicol (2001) who suggests that articles contained in influential publications continue to associate adventure education with learning outcomes that centre on self-esteem, self-concept and interpersonal relations. The predominant methodology for adventure experience is the employment of teaching methods which favour collaborative problem-solving as experience-based learning. Scrutiny of British OE via the recent House of Commons Education and Skills report (HCES, 2005a) highlighted the ‘soft-skills’ and social skills that can be acquired through outdoor programmes thus:

Outdoor learning supports academic achievement, for example through fieldwork projects, as well as the development of ‘soft’ skills and social skills, particularly in hard to reach children. Group activities, which may include adventurous expeditions, can develop social skills and give self-confidence (HCES, 2005a).

Indeed recent reviews of research on outdoor learning (Rickinson *et al.*, 2004) and the OfSTED report (2004) entitled ‘*Outdoor Education - good practice*’ both endorsed PSD as the *raison d’être* of OE in Great Britain, rather than the

environmental education approach provided by some outdoor centres in England and Wales (Rickinson *et al.*, 2004; OfSTED, 2004). This indicates that environmental education *per se* is not commonly put forward as the central focus of OE.

Currently, the provision of outdoor learning experiences appears to vary throughout Great Britain. While the breadth of outdoor provision appears to be “healthy” in England<sup>22</sup> (EOC, 2010, p. 5) a negative trend is discernible in Scotland where Local Authorities have acknowledged that “provision of and financial support for outdoor learning experiences had changed and often declined in the last twenty years” (Nicol *et al.*, 2007, p. 7).

This deduction is supported by the closure of twenty local authority outdoor education centres in recent years, thereby reducing the number of LEA outdoor centres to 121 across Great Britain (Higgins, 2002). Similarly, Higgins identified several decades of erosion within the previous role-model of outdoor provision of the 1960 and 1970s in the Lothian Region of Scotland, which he subsequently suggested might be applicable to the whole of Great Britain (Higgins, 2002).

The number of agencies working with PSD is varied and ever increasing. One of Great Britain’s most popular schemes, ‘The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award’, encourages and motivates young people over the age of 14 years and encompasses a programme of voluntary self-development activities. Its popularity has actually spread worldwide, so much so that five million awards have been gained worldwide since 1956. In Great Britain, to date over 3.5 million young people, aged 14-25, have entered the award programme with more than 1.5 million achieving either a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award. The scheme is notably popular in the independent school sector (85% involvement) though only somewhat less popular in state schools (68%). The mission statement of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award reveals the emphasis on the domain of personal and social development within British OE.

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<sup>22</sup> A total of 66 % of pupils take up the opportunity of a residential experience during their time at school. However, in only 21% of schools do all the pupils attend a residential (DCSF, 2005).

The Award is a process of personal and social development and the programme and activities are a means to that end. It should introduce participants to a range of new opportunities, allow them to learn from their experiences and enable them to discover hidden capabilities and talent (Duke of Edinburgh Fact Sheets, 2009).

However, as Loynes argues, with a substantial ‘decline of governmental funding’, the balance of provision has slightly shifted towards private and voluntary operators (Loynes, 1998, p. 2). Indeed the growth in private operators such as World Challenge Expeditions Ltd<sup>23</sup>, Get REAL<sup>24</sup> and PGL<sup>25</sup> demonstrates the paradigm shift from something that was regarded as a social good to a commercial enterprise or product. The end result may not be to secure specific educational outcomes but rather to provide recreational experiences.

Although the learning outcomes are explicitly advertised, critics like Loynes (2004) warn against the commercialisation of OE and expresses concern about their claim that learning outcomes encompass e.g. “instant behaviour modification for dysfunctional youth ... or ... citizenship in a week for hard-pressed schools” (p. 34).

Likewise, Beames (2006) laments the prevailing political climate of the youth-development market. There is reason to believe that the activities are no longer value-based but product-based and have become demand-led rather than supply-led.

With this in mind it is hardly surprising that newspaper headlines warn schools against outdoor centres running “too many jollies with little educational benefit” (Revell, 2004, p. 1). Indeed, it is argued here that leisure experiences such as visits to theme parks like Alton Towers or Disneyland Paris (currently associated with adventurous activities) have actually evolved into surrogate activities which merely suggest or emulate the ‘real thing’.

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<sup>23</sup> As the original schools expedition company, World Challenge offers outdoor schemes with a focus on PSD.

<sup>24</sup> Offers residential visits to teenagers over the summer holidays modelled on the US camp experience.

<sup>25</sup> PGL runs 11 centres in the UK encompassing adventure activity, ICT, environmental science and personal development residential courses.

### 6.9.2. Norway

In pre-war Norway only 30% of Norwegians lived in urban or densely populated areas, whereas this figure rose to more than 70% by the end of the century. Consequently, the rural traditions like harvesting decreased which conversely triggered a drive towards fresh pursuits including Friluftsliv as “urbanised well-to do people from the cities” began to pursue outdoor activities (Pedersen, 1998, p. 24).

Overall the concept of Norwegian-ness became increasingly complex in nature and it has been described as “wedged between the turbulence of modernity and the inertia of tradition” (Enzenberger, 1984, p. 96). Gradually, during the 1990s Friluftsliv as a political force to improve society, started to lose its impact with the advent of a growing affluent Norwegian society and the emergence of neo-liberal politics (Tordsson, 2002). Slowly, the sole emphasis on deep-ecological Friluftsliv waned and it assumed a character of diversity.

To the evolving strands of Friluftsliv, Nordic authors embraced the dimension of an instrumental approach: Friluftsliv ‘with a purpose’ [Friluftsliv med hensikt] or Friluftsliv ‘as a method’ (Bischoff & Odden, 2000; Jordet, 1998; Sandell, 1999). The working areas which became established were described as ‘therapeutic groups, management training, integration of ethnic groups, and personal development where teamwork, self-knowledge and readiness for initiative taking’ were the targeted learning outcomes (Bischoff & Odden, 2000, p. 7).

The tentative beginning of Norwegian instrumental use of Friluftsliv coincided with the emergence of a vast body of foreign OE literature. For instance Sjong (1993) introduced Scandinavian readers to the analysis of Anglo-American approaches to PSD. Gradually, despite a continued preference for the ‘educational act’ as a replication of ‘tradition’ in Norwegian Friluftsliv literature, the use of Friluftsliv as a ‘method’ was acknowledged by supporters of deep-ecology Friluftsliv.

The tentative ascendance of the instrumental approach contributed to a growing diversification in Norwegian practice. In the education sector the concept of ‘out-of-



door schooling' [uteskole] was piloted and its success led to the subsequent deployment throughout the secondary school system. Indeed, experiential learning methods were increasingly used as the philosophical foundation for the justification of activities. They were incorporated into the domain of 'out-of-door schooling' [uteskole] and educational establishments such as the Norwegian Rudolf Steiner schools (Øvsthus, 2000). Furthermore, innovative organisations like the seven centres of 'Tyrilistiftelsen', the health centre 'Beitostølen helsesportcenter' (Southern- Norway) and 'Valnesfjord helsesportcenter' (Northern Norway) and rehabilitation clinics such as 'Atføringssettret i Rauland' embraced a Friluftsliv-inspired therapeutic approach to learning, thereby demonstrating their faith and commitment to it as a worthy educational tool (Marcussen, 2004). In the tertiary sector, Friluftsliv can be followed in-depth within the Norwegian 'folk high school' movement.<sup>26</sup>

The biggest encounter with the outdoors for the secondary school age group is either through the Scout movement or residential experience at the Association of Norwegian Outdoor Pursuit Centres, [leirskoler].<sup>27</sup> While the Scout movement traditionally values the PSD concept it appears that in the case of outdoor centres [leirskoler] the more limited emphasis on PSD is due to a largely consolidated environmental paradigm, which permeates much (although not all) of its educational practice (Rudaa, 2001; see also Sætre, 2004). Apart from rhetorical remarks on the socio-pedagogical effects and its alleged potential as a deliverer for modern leadership of corporate organizations, the movement fails to provide a serious

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<sup>26</sup> In English, the name 'folk high school' often gives a misleading impression: 'residential adult college', 'residential enrichment academy', 'experiential academy', 'folk academy' or even 'folk school' would be more apt modern descriptions. The typical range of age of students is between 18 and 25 years and the courses normally last for nine months. The idea of 'folk high schools' is to engender learning for life: an opportunity for students to grow individually, socially, and academically in small learning communities where students often (but not exclusively) live on campus in close contact with staff and their fellow students. Arguably, these institutions, more than any other sectors of the Norwegian educational sphere, cultivate academic freedom. It could also be argued that they (more than any other institution) have the strongest practice of Friluftsliv.

<sup>27</sup> Norway also has a system of 'local authority outdoor education centres' (leirskoler) and over 62,000 pupils visited one in the school year 2003-04. This amounts to 10% of all pupils in the compulsory school age-range. The aim of this provision is to achieve a deeper understanding of nature and holistic ecological understanding. The intention is that in the 10 years of compulsory education every school pupil in Norway will follow a 7-10 day course at a leirskole.



rationale for PSD related schemes (Thorsen, 2002).

Eventually, albeit slowly, global issues began to exert influence on Norwegian Friluftsliv and its associated educational schemes. In the year 2000, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [Læringssettret], in co-operation with the commercial enterprise 'Your Expedition', introduced a comprehensive PSD-scheme 'Dare to Dream' curriculum, which utilised PSD themes specifically endorsed in the 'integrated and social human being' part of the National Curriculum (L97) (Skolenettet, 2006).

It seems that the Norwegian quest for individual and social empowerment is heavily influenced by an international network of high-performance expeditionists. Powerfully symbolic experiences of demanding outdoor situations are often recounted to a wider Norwegian audience by 'motivational speakers' such as the Norwegian explorers: Lars Monsen, Børge Ousland, Liv Arnesen<sup>28</sup> and Jon Gangdal in order to serve as motivational figures. Other Norwegian outdoor providers apply principles closely related to Anglo-American PSD rationales (Lapp, 2006).

The concept of PSD has also found curricular endorsement in the Norwegian National Curriculum (Education Act L97, LK 06, Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2009). In particular, the mission statement of the Norwegian 'folk high school' movement heightens its importance (Bagley & Rust, 2009). The notion of PSD is addressed through the concept of 'allmenn dannelse' [holistic education of the person], particularly in the case of Klafki's (2001) notion of educating pupil's "intrinsic resources and talents" [formal dannelse] (Klafki, 2001, p. 12; see also Jordet, 1998). Personal and social competences are a wide and important field contained in the educational mission statement of the Education Act L97, where the 'integrated human being' and the 'social human being' are the focus.

Despite its apparently growing acceptance in Norwegian practice, the instrumental

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<sup>28</sup> The most prominent authors on the notion of human potential in the context of the outdoors in Norwegian language are Liv Arnesen and Jon Gangdal (2002) through their book '*Kan jeg? Fra drøm til virkelighet*' ['Can I? From dream to reality'] (Arnesen & Gangdal, 2002).

strand of Friluftsliv holds less sway as a solidly anchored concept. This can be seen in a recent analysis of career pathways for graduates of one of Norway's largest Friluftsliv environments at the University College of Telemark (HIT) (Horgen *et al.*, 2002). Their findings show that graduates frequently request curricular refinement to increase nature studies, develop practical leadership qualities and validate the harvest traditions of Friluftsliv such as hunting<sup>29</sup> and fishing<sup>30</sup>. Horgen's work underlines the interest in traditional Friluftsliv which underpins the environmental paradigm. However, a growing interest in pedagogical knowledge related to group-dynamics and the *modus operandi* of uteskole (which focuses somewhat on PSD related topics) might indicate a trend towards 'developmental' use of the outdoors.

### 6.10. Concluding remarks

It is evident that in both countries the notion of PSD through the outdoors has undergone many changes through the course of its existence. Both countries have cultivated their own 'prescribed conservatism' in that they have closely evolved their rationales for learning in the outdoors following a period of historical inertia. The substantially different underpinning principles have led to the evolution of distinctive contemporary OE practices in Great Britain and Norway. In the British case the person-centred approach has been overtly elevated to prominence, whereas in Norway it is by far more the nature-consonant theme.

However, while the concept of PSD has played a vital part in both, despite periodic changes and differences in salience, its divergent interpretation has left its mark on current core rationales. The present enquiry has shown that the primary focus on character that prevails in the British OE context has muted the salience of alternative 'green' paradigms. Current British outdoor provision does not overtly emphasise man's relationship with the natural environment, although paradoxically this is a time of growing concern with environmental issues such as sustainability or global

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<sup>29</sup> 430 317 (8,7 % of total population) Norwegians were registered as hunters in 2010 (Statistics Norway, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> In 2010, 54% of the adult Norwegian population reportedly went fishing once or several times a year; more than 80% of children between 11-16 years old (NJFF, 2010).

warming.

The present study has also shown a historical inertia in that the Norwegian practice of Friluftsliv has substantially withstood potential cross-fertilisation from continental or British influences. Even if there is a 'hidden' legacy of anthropocentric antecedents within Friluftsliv associated with the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this appears to have lost momentum. Thus, following post-war developments, Friluftsliv's 'instrumental' use and overt application as a tool for PSD would now seem to be a somewhat muted theme.

Although resistance towards PSD has gradually diminished in recent times, policy-makers of Norwegian outdoor provision still appear to be disinclined towards wholehearted application of the concept of PSD. Furthermore although the implicit nature of PSD - in its Norwegian version - has been acknowledged, the educational potential to 'fabricate' experiences of challenge, adventure and excitement to foster personal growth were (due to its unique tradition) 'culturally' problematic or even controversial. The 'systemic' Norwegian theme of a nation living close to the elements of nature, (unlike the predominantly urban British populace who do not encounter wilderness) supports socio-culturally rooted concerns which are at odds with the notion of human-centered PSD.

Having considered the historical antecedents of OE and Friluftsliv (Part One) this study moves on to methodological reflections (Chapter Seven) considering Part Two (Chapters Eight and Nine) and presents the findings of conceptual issues and current trends by scrutinising interview data from Great Britain and Norway. The implications of the historical enquiry are revisited in Chapter Ten where the relationship between historical and contemporary factors and their impact on outdoor-related PSD is discussed.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN - Methodology II**

### **7.1. Interview methodology**

The following section is concerned with methodological reflections related to issues with comparative samples, pre-interview selection procedures and sample size.

#### **7.1.1. Rationale**

Although a tentative statement could be deduced from the secondary data of Part One, (literature review chapter, historical chapter) which might suggest that there are explicit [Great Britain] versus implicit [Norway] traditions in outdoor-related PSD in the two countries, the framework precludes the formulation of a preliminary 'field' hypothesis. In adhering to this perspective, the research approach moves from the first phase (Chapter Six) into the second phase (Chapters Eight & Nine) while opening up rather than closing down the inquiry. Thus, the research design avoids the risk of invalidating initial insights, but nevertheless links theory with practice, and assumes an inductive research approach, wherein "patterns, themes and categories contribute to the emergence of findings" from data (Patton, 2002, p. 453). Furthermore, the second part of the empirical research attempts to understand the influencing factors and values that the participants believe have shaped the field.

The decision to adhere to the 'adapted' longitudinal mode of inquiry (by combining Part One with Part Two) meant discarding an ethnographical case-study approach that could have explicated and juxtaposed two national approaches towards practice. In doing so the chosen research design shows a consistent scrutiny of the 'long threads' of the 'fabric' of the field, which Kelly (1992) terms the eternal dynamic of "contemporary events" (p. 18).

Thus, Part Two assumes the 'exploratory nature' of thesis, in that it looks for patterns or ideas emerging from data where "little or no prior knowledge exists" (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 6). Through the incorporation of the temporal dimension, the research framework seeks to analyse processes of change and thus can discard over-simplified statements of apparent conditions or 'status quo'. The framework aligns with a

typical motive of comparative education research: the attempt to present “commentary about changing fashions in the types of topics which dominate the literature during particular decades” (Bray & Koo, 2005, p. 244). In a similar vein, Kelly (1992) alludes to the investigation of recurring patterns of “contemporary events” influencing the field anew (p. 18). Accordingly these ‘new’ contemporary influences are traced in Part Two of the thesis.

Given the purpose of Part Two and its tightly-defined topic where comments on the change-process of the field in contemporary times assume a central focus, one might argue that the most appropriate research method is in accord with qualitative interviewing (Gratton & Jones, 2004). The primary use of interviews is to elicit participants’ views on a particular issue, moreover, it “allows us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 2002, p. 341). Indeed, Silverman (2000) suggests that gaining access to participants’ perceptions is pivotal to interviewing. The assumption is that the perspective of the participants is “meaningful, knowledgeable and (most likely) explicit” (Patton, 2002, p. 341).

Gratton and Jones (2004) suggest the research question steers the inquiry because it demands “what information is needed?” through a method that provides the sought-after information (p. 141). In addition to fulfilling this requirement the research design also accommodates qualitative interviewing as its data collection tool to capture “direct quotations about people, personal perspectives and experiences” (Patton, 2002, p. 40). Commentators on methodological issues allude to the legitimacy of the use of interviews in specific exploratory research, where there is “little or no prior knowledge” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 141). This is the situation with regard to the OE domains of Great Britain and Norway. As in similar approaches to case-study, the present investigation is a cross-case pattern analysis between the individual responses from British and Norwegian participants (Patton, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews are conventionally administered when the researcher has a fairly clear focus on specific issues to be addressed. Moreover it is pertinent to

uphold a fair amount of structure to ensure cross-case comparability (Bryman, 2004). Thus, the research design employs semi-structured interviews (see Appendices C & D) with university/college lecturers who are considered to be ‘information-rich’ in Great Britain and Norway (see sampling procedures, Chapter Seven, Section 7.1.9.).

Whilst discrepancy in terms of ‘informedness’ between the field and Higher Education has been debated (Humberstone, 2006), it is nevertheless argued that lecturers are identified as the population of the sector who turn a theoretical discourse into reality. They have close proximity to the field and can offer contributions which elicit and clarify current trends. Furthermore, they are influential as they both teach and organise teaching at university level and devise course programmes that take account of both the needs of employers and academic rigour.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was deemed a suitable method of data analysis for the semi-structured interviews (Reid *et al.*, 2005). It is aligned with critical realist philosophy and is an appropriate instrument for searching unexplored and unfamiliar territory (Reid *et al.*, 2005). It was felt for this study that IPA’s idiographic focus on peer-selected lecturers would address the socio-cultural complexity of each country’s discourse. In the past IPA has commonly been used in health psychology but it has more recently been adopted as a method of analysis in the wider social sciences (Reid *et al.*, 2005).

### **7.1.2. Choosing a sample**

The following section articulates the process of developing a rationale for selection of a suitable qualitative sample strategy, the identification of criteria relating to the choice of participants and considerations regarding sample size.

Initially, the selection of interviewees from both nations caused methodological difficulties relating to issues of representation and generalisation as a whole. Could the sample size or indeed the sampling strategy itself accurately reflect both Great Britain and the Norwegian situation?



One might consider that application of the term ‘nation’ as a bounded entity is problematic in itself because it conveys the notion of uniformity. Additionally, the sampling strategy had to reflect the two outdoor traditions, which were either dominated by literature on “personal growth/adventure-based tradition” (Great Britain) (e.g. Barrett & Greenaway, 1995, Nicol, 2002a, 2002b) or permeated by a rationale that emphasised “folklore, heritage, adventure travel, crafts, place-based education and the daily outings of families” (Norway) (Henderson & Vikander, 2007, p. vii). The difference in relevance they have for the respective cultures has been discussed in earlier chapters (Chapters Three & Four) which highlighted inconsistencies between the two.

Unlike the apparent consistency of commonly-held PSD concepts within the British discourse, the commonly-held Norwegian homogeneity of a naturalistic/traditional *Friluftsliv* is subject to change and is challenged by diverse schools of thoughts which are represented in its current discourse. Part of this change can be found in a moderately increased interest in the hitherto poorly-defined and fairly covert domain of PSD dimensions in Norway (see Norwegian literature review for an expanded discussion on this). Thus, matters requiring consideration, in order to achieve an appropriate sampling strategy, included the methodological challenges posed by the “imbalances of equivalence of measurement” between the two countries (Osborn, 2004, p. 269).

This dichotomy made the selection of sampling criteria for information-rich cases challenging; particularly for Norwegian participants who had to fulfill criteria consistent with valid comparability (Bryman, 2004, p. 53). These circumstances have informed the process of sampling in terms of demands for consistency. Accordingly, with due regard to lectures’ potentially varied stances spanning a continuum from an ecological paradigm to more positivistic views, I repeatedly pondered the challenges posed by the sampling process.

Would I know the geography of stances within the field of OE/*Friluftsliv* well enough to identify ‘valid’ participants? Should participants be seen as authoritative in the



broad field of OE? Would there be defined groupings? Would I be in a position to identify who is where on the spectrum of stances? Would those who were potentially stronger advocates of a traditional Friluftsliv or equally PSD approach be the allocated ‘voice’ of the field?

These considerations are pertinent because a central criterion of purposeful sampling requires the researcher to make selective decisions “based on the purpose one requires informants to serve” (Bernard, 2000, p. 176). However, despite their varied backgrounds the assumption remains that all of the participants belonging to a core group [kjernemiljø] are known to be involved in the central aspects of the discourse of OE/Friluftsliv and therefore sensitive to the development of the sector as a whole.

Thus, the challenge was to satisfy demands for accurate representation regarding the British and Norwegian cohorts. Hence the central question arose: how does one go about finding participants who can represent an ‘informed’ voice in the field?

### **7.1.3. Issues with comparative samples**

The following section discusses methodological issues related to the administration of a questionnaire survey, which was instrumental in conducting the reputational case-selection.

Qualitative sampling is associated with an intended bias, in that it “actively seeks to identify information-rich cases” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Accordingly, participants should contribute to issues “central to the inquiry” and thus be able to entertain the research paradigm (Patton, 2002, p. 230). In order to select cases that could entertain the research issues of the study, but also be ‘representative’ for each nation, I contacted lecturing staff from both the OE sections at The University of Edinburgh and the Friluftsliv section of the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences in Oslo (NIH).

In the case of Great Britain, my perception of potential interviewees prior to the employment of the questionnaire-survey was that the cohort would share a much more

homogeneous concept of the discipline of OE. The “three-circles model” of OE depicts the key features of OE: outdoor activities, environmental education and PSD (Higgins, 1995). Within these definitional boundaries, PSD appeared to be a solidly anchored and permeating the sector. However, its (reported) philosophical shortcomings and lack of consolidated social theory afforded room to anticipate a varied spectrum of stances towards the field of OE and PSD in particular (Nicol, 2002a).

In the Norwegian case the equivocal, if not the somewhat scattered, picture I anticipated prior to the questionnaire survey was partly due to the polarities that drive the ideological discussion relating to Friluftsliv (e.g. witnessed in literature on Norwegian Friluftsliv, see Chapter Four). Along with what can be described as a continuum of diverse stances, a relatively strong-voiced traditional school of thought considers that Friluftsliv possesses value in its own right [egenverdi]. This notion of traditional, ‘simple’, low-impact, pre-industrial mode of living is indicative of a naturalistic position that has hitherto eclipsed Friluftsliv’s use as a vehicle for overt developmental and therapeutical purposes (Faarlund 1974; FOR-UT, 1979; Repp, 2001; Tordsson, 1993; Ydegaard, 2005). The discourse is associated with a “hegemonic interpretation” of Friluftsliv where shared beliefs serve to justify the interests of dominant commentators of the field (Gurholt, 2008, p. 140). However there is an associated risk of misrepresenting social reality within the British OE and Norwegian Friluftsliv discourse when using a poorly envisaged sample (see discussion in section 7.1.9 on choosing a sample) which, arguably, could have undermined the veracity of the findings (Bryman, 2004).

These circumstances necessitate further scrutiny of the Norwegian field of Friluftsliv. As the current discourse on the *modus operandi* of Friluftsliv is subject to change (see Norwegian literature review - Chapter Four, Section 4.5. and 4.6.), Friluftsliv considers new emerging trends. Friluftsliv spans the tension between traditionally ‘organic’, ‘instrumentalised’ (stressing the developmental/socio-pedagogical potential; Tordsson, 2002, p. 341) and ‘sportified’ strands of Friluftsliv comprising synthetic, high risk, extreme Friluftsliv which stretches one’s capacities (Ese, 2007;

Odden, 2008).

Within the landscape of stances PSD-focused Friluftsliv appears to be part of an acknowledged ‘invisible and unspoken’ domain (see Chapter Four, Section 4.5 and 4.6.). Given the implicit nature of PSD in the Norwegian discourse, the delineation as a distinct ‘facet’ of OE (as in the three-circle model of the British discourse) - is of less significance. Notwithstanding this, following anecdotal evidence the Friluftsliv discourse appears to be increasingly challenged by demands from the working field of Friluftsliv in Norway.<sup>31</sup> This includes therapeutic use of Friluftsliv at Norwegian health centres and increasing debates on issues of personal growth [allmenn dannelse] at ‘folk high schools’ [folkhøgskoler] (Jepsen, 2009), outdoor schooling [uteskole] and OE centres [leirskoler] hints at growing interest (Westphal, 2007).

It is in the uncharted terrain of a continuum spanning varying degrees of informedness towards PSD that the sampling selection takes its vantage point (see Great Britain and Norway literature review - Chapters Three & Four - for an expanded discussion).

#### **7.1.4. The questionnaire rationale**

The following section will address the ontological presumptions that informed the questionnaire design. These questionnaire data do not form part of the findings chapter. They were used as preliminary identifying tools, purely as measures by which to select the appropriate interview participants. I will briefly discuss the outcome of this in order to make the interview selection process transparent. Eventually, from the questionnaires’ result, I identified four candidates from each nation who were deemed key-informants of their respective national discourse.

As Gray (2006) suggests, a researcher selects a sample of the population on the basis that it is “representative of the population as a whole” (p. 83). However this raises the question: what characterises a ‘population’ in the context of a national discourse?

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<sup>31</sup> Personal conversations with Ingolf Dørum, Randi Myklebust Sølvi, and representatives from Norwegian health centre (Rauland attføringssentret).

My preconception was based on the premise that participants in a national discourse about OE/Friluftsliv are widely informed regarding debates and developments in the field as it unfolds *via* conferences, publications, personal interaction and website-presentations; all of which reflect the overall thrust of work produced by its constituent members.

Also the attempt to solicit only the most well-informed experts aligns with Eisner's (1991) belief that their "educational connoisseurship" particular to the educational arena is crucial to qualitative inquiry (Eisner, 1991, p. 114). Accordingly, the OE/Friluftsliv institutions involved are perceived (rather like Schrag's notion of professional familiarity) as "the conjoint action and meaning complexes of multiple social actors" (Schrag, 1992, p. 9).

The recurrent challenges that emerged from the design of the questionnaire stem from the demand to consistently adhere to ontological decisions. The question arose: how does one consistently translate philosophical assumptions to the empirical application of a questionnaire?

These reflections become pertinent in the context of definitional issues concerning the concept of outdoor-related PSD (see Chapters Three & Four) that are fuelled by authors working with diverse paradigms. As discussed previously in the Great Britain literature review chapter (Chapter Three), the traditional approach seen in OE literature overlooks certain areas including that of human-nature relations. This was earlier referred to as the hegemony of humanistic psychological perspectives throughout the antecedents of adventurous activities addressing education (see Great Britain literature review, Chapter Three, Section 3.4. & 3.5.).

The questionnaire (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.1.5.; see also Appendix A & B) omitted narrowing further ontological perspectives to reduce the risk of precluding views broader than anthropocentric tenets. Consequently, the questionnaire permits sufficient leeway for the inclusion of participants with alternative stances. Thus permitting exploration of the multifaceted nuances within the evolving sector of PSD.

### **7.1.5. Reputational case selection**

Notwithstanding the presence of natural differences and idiosyncrasies, I strove for a consistent and common framework through which I could establish a cross-societal demonstration of viewpoints representing Great Britain and Norway (Osborn, 2004, p. 269).

One way to search for representation in a national discourse is to employ a strategy of reputational case selection administered through a questionnaire-survey, thereby identifying participants who are already considered a “knowledge source” (Gray, 2006, p. 88). Accordingly, a systematic survey was devised which requested insider-information from lecturing staff. The chosen strategy administered ‘snowball’ sampling of key-informants (Bryman, 2004; Gray, 2006; Patton, 2002). Participants were requested to identify peers, deemed to be representative, or leading, within their own national discourse at lecturing level. It was assumed that they would constitute a “miniature of the population”, comprising experts able to appreciate the field (Gray, 2006, p. 83).

As part one of a two-stage sampling frame, I requested participants to select up to five interviewees whom they considered to exhibit specific traits, which were pre-conceived and communicated through the questionnaire (see Appendices A & B). Furthermore, mindful of Eisner’s (1991) caution regarding “educational connoisseurship”, potential interviewees should fulfill the criteria of “stature and experience” and possess overview paraphrased as “a balanced perspective on the field” (see questionnaire in Appendices A & B). Also, to address the implicit nature of PSD the Norwegian translation of the questionnaire additionally encouraged the definitional boundaries of a predominately naturalistic Friluftsliv to be more widely interpreted so that individuals whose interests lay in pedagogical/didactical work could also be included for consideration as potential interviewees.

In systematic research (e.g interview) the researcher is obliged to adhere both to exhaustive scrutiny of the topic in question and the use of categories that do not blur and are clearly distinct from one another, and thus mutually exclusive (Bryman, 2004,

p. 99). Accordingly and in order to maintain consistency in cross-societal demonstration, I added further specifications as selection criteria for potential interviewees (Part II of the questionnaire). These were based on the premise of the “three-circles model” of OE (Higgins, 1995). Consequently, the sample frame devised constituted three scaled continuums: personal and social development (PSD), environmental education (EE), outdoor activities (OA) deemed necessary to identify knowledgeable participants with different emphases that constituted their work in the field (see prerequisite questionnaire, appendix A).

Additionally, participants were requested to indicate their replies using simple notations to scale the suggested interviewees between numbers one (low) to five (high), thereby eliciting potential interviewees’ involvement/interest in each of the following three continuums (Table 7.1.). This was considered ethical because such knowledge is already in the public domain. Furthermore, I considered this model appropriate for the Norwegian Friluftsliv discourse, and equally suitable to embrace the more ‘implicit’ nature of PSD (as discussed in literature review chapter on Norway, Chapter Four). In order to address the latter, and hopefully avoid misunderstandings of terminology relating to domains of OE in Norway, I added further explanations to the domain in order to align the work with the three-circle model and thus secure cross-societal comparability (see Appendix A).

**GREAT BRITAIN**

**NORWAY**

**additional Norwegian remarks**

**continuum A**

involvement/interest in personal social education				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
High				

personlig og sosial utvikling				
1	2	3	4	5
Lav (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
Høy				

- mestringsopplevelser
- sosial læring
- relasjonskompetanse
- samarbeide
- omsorg
- ansvar
- selv-tillit
- infølingsevne
- ‘pedagogiseret’ Friluftsliv

**continuum B**

involvement/interest in environmental edu.				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest) >				
High				

dyp-økologisk Friluftsliv				
1	2	3	4	5
Lav (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse) >				
Høy				

- miljøbevissthet
- verdiorientering
- Friluftsliv som ‘egenverdi’

**continuum C**

involvement/interest in outdoor activities /skills development				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest) >				
High				

Friluftsliv som aktivitetsfag /aktivitetsfelt				
1	2	3	4	5
Lav (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse) >				
Høy				

- ferdighetsutvikling
- skill-development
- hard skills
- outdoor activity

**Table 7.1.:** Equivalent continua employed through questionnaire in both countries.<sup>32</sup>

The strategy was also based on the preliminary assumption that lecturers, rather than being broadly authoritative within the diverse field of OE/Friluftsliv, actually had specialties/leanings that correlated with their ideological stance. The utilisation of this quantitative data (*via* linear scales) may give rise to “name-calling” - a phenomenon which alludes to a certain kind of positivistic objectivity (Schrag, 1992, p. 276).

<sup>32</sup> Excerpt from questionnaire (see Appendix A).



According to Schrag (1992), these data are accepted as part of the qualitative nature of enquiry as pursued in the present study. This can be seen in the non-randomised sampling strategy that attempts to identify peers, and addresses subjective perceptions across each subject's national discourse.

#### **7.1.6. Selection of participants for the questionnaire-survey**

Despite Dommeyer & Moriaty's (2000) caution regarding the practicality of e-mail attachments - the risk that they may yield lower response rates and evidence that postal questionnaires generally elicit higher response rates - I opted for 'attached' email-questionnaires aimed at the participants (Sheehan, 2001; Tse, 1998). At the level of lecturing staff, participants were identified from the staff websites of 14 outdoor studies courses in higher education in Great Britain (n = 14) and comparable institutions universities/university colleges [Høgskoler] in Norway (n = 17). The final two national cohorts (Great Britain, n = 46; Norway, n = 73) comprised heads of sections, senior lecturers and lecturers in OE/Friluftsliv with a broad range of relevant experiences.

The survey was sent to participants from the mid of academic year 2007 (December) to the end of the academic year 2008 (April). Initially, response-rates were low so I followed-up contacts by telephone at least two or three times following the launch of the survey. The final response rate amounted in Great Britain 51% and Norway 70%. From this approximately 40% of British participants and 60% of the Norwegians returned complete responses (including scaled continuums), achieving an acceptable response rate and surpassing Mangione's (1995) recommendation that for valid representative survey-studies this should be over 50%. Five British participants and six participants in Norway refused to answer due either to methodological concerns or disagreement about the study (see further discussion Section 7.1.7).

### 7.1.7. The instrumentation of the questionnaire

Although the field of OE/Friluftsliv is multi-faceted, the ‘three-circle’ model of OE appears to be a widely understood and facilitates ‘categorisation’ (into each of the three dimensions) in both countries. Although participants can ‘readily’ (full reply 40% Great Britain and 60% Norway) associate with the continuums (see Appendix A), the responses illustrate inherent limitations and methodological challenges in the sampling frame that need to be discussed.

Based on personal conversations with and accompanying e-mail-responses from numerous participants regarding the questionnaire-survey I conducted, knowledge of colleagues’ leanings appears to be ‘patchy’. There seems to be confusion amongst peers regarding the predilections of themselves along a continuum of EE (environmental education), PSD and OA (outdoor activity), which is reflected in the polarity among responses (standard-deviation of scores). Thus, expected shared ‘social ecologies’ of a national discourse appear not to materialise as a commonly agreed picture of individual experts’ emphasis within the field, which is further complicated by confusion over terminology.

Some lecturing staff commented that their assessment of peers’ *persona publica* would be “partial or incomplete” as they had met them only in a particular forum or in association with a specific topic. Probably, due to geographical distances, some participants - especially from Northern-Norway - appeared not to know their ‘patch’ throughout Norway and commented that they led a “professionally isolated existence” [faglig isoleret]. Furthermore some, albeit only a few, only had contacts from their own university or local district. The apparent detachment from colleagues gave rise to further reflections on alternative survey strategies.

The contested nature of the field (based on findings from the literature review) appears to be exacerbated by participants’ reference to disparate definitions of PSD thereby reflecting their individual educational sphere, wherein the domain of PSD overlaps the domain of EE and *vice versa*.

The data reflect disagreement among a minority of participants as to whether the suggested continuums are mutually exclusive or intelligible categories. One might question whether the administration of continuums fails to take into account the interdisciplinary nature of work-involvement of lecturing staff, described by one of the participants (Bjørn) as the “interweave of competency” [*sammensatt kompetanse*]. It is also possible that if they were regarded as ‘dissectible categories’ they may constitute too few identifiable variables contributing to a reduction in simplistic patterns.

In essence, the participants seem to regard peers and their ‘construed’ specialty as more multi-faceted, varied, complex or even heterogeneous, than otherwise might be suggested through the study of literature and readings. Thus, the ‘objectivity’ that these continuums suggest appears to have epistemological flaws.

It can therefore be concluded that this means of selection did not generate the expected consistency of data, considering the high standard-deviation of data from the second part of the questionnaire (continuums) that alludes to the ontological diversity of the field of PSD. As the pursuit of ‘framing’ participants outdoor-related leanings appeared impractical, I resorted to selecting potential interviewees who were deemed to ‘share an overview’ of the field of OE/Friluftsliv (Part One of the questionnaire).

#### **7.1.8. Sample size**

Qualitative literature on sample strategies is peppered with various specifications for minimum sample sizes. Although minimum levels of acceptability are advised, small purposeful samples can be valuable. Provided a small sample study is information-rich it can support convincing conclusions (Patton, 2002).

This research design adopts aspects of an IPA approach, which typically challenges the traditional linear relationship between number of participants and value of research. Instead it asks for an idiographic (particular) focus on few participants where e.g. 10 participants are seen at the higher end of most recommendations for

sample sizes (Reid *et al.*, 2005, p. 22; Smith *et al.*, 1999). This choice to restrict the spatial focus is also informed by IPA demands for transparency through substantial verbatim examples of empirical data, and delivering a balance of emic and etic positions in the presentation of the findings. This resonates with the research design attempt to balance between the contemporary data embedded in contextual sensitivity of the historical dimension.

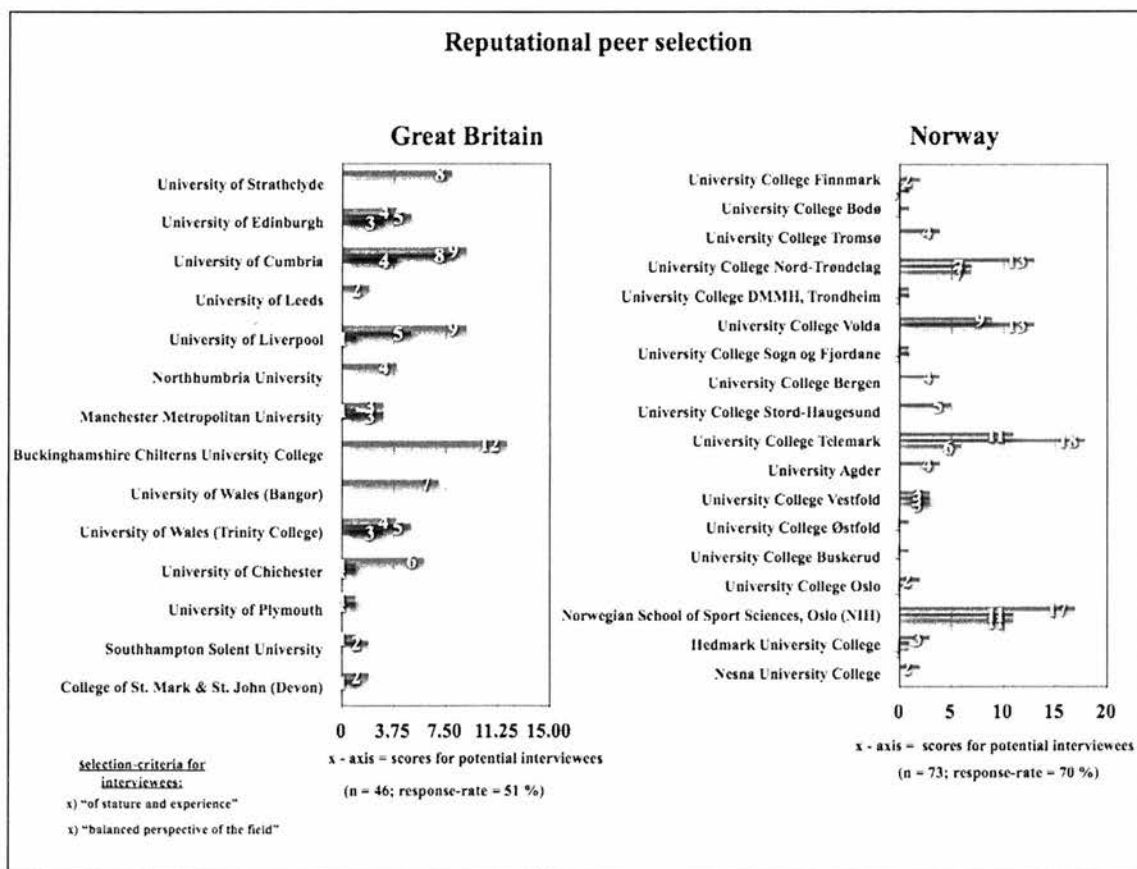
The strength of the present comparative study is in its in-depth exploration of the insider perspective of British and Norwegian lecturers, and thus it explicates similarities and variations in outdoor-related PSD. Furthermore, it is argued that the relatively modest number of participants is in keeping with the ‘particular context’, allowing the distinguishing characteristics of few cases to act as a springboard for theoretical reflections about contrasting findings (Patton 2002).

The sample size also reflects a compromise between constraints of time and the need for precision. Additionally, considering the limitations imposed by being a solitary comparative researcher I had to rely on my personal analytical capabilities in order to identify insights and perceive meanings correlated with the richness of data yielded by the cases. This was preferable to attempting an unwieldy large-scale study that in comparative research is typically conducted by a team of researchers (Patton, 2002). Thus, the sample size in the present research design has been limited to four interviewees from each country all of whom were university lecturer level.

#### **7.1.9. Selection procedures**

For the final selection of interviewees I imposed a framework on the participants with the highest scores in peer-selection. To ensure expert knowledge on PSD, I imposed the criterion of ‘sufficient publication’ within PSD-related aspects on the population of potential interviewees. Through the web-based profile-presentation of lecturing staff and their respective lists of publication, I was able to differentiate amongst potential candidates. Additionally, the framework ensured that geographical variation aligned with the notion of variation sampling, amongst both British and Norwegian interviewees (Osborn, 2004; Patton, 2002).

Thus, I intended interviewees to be selected from the three constituent countries of Great Britain: England, Scotland and Wales. However, as the population of England well exceeds over two thirds of that of the remaining constituent countries I selected two participants from England, one from Scotland and one from Wales. Similarly, geographical variation among selected participants (four altogether) was attempted for the south-north axis of Norway (see Table 7.2.). Given the small sample size a restriction was imposed; that of selecting only one participant from a chosen institution. As these names had been mentioned repeatedly they were taken as the basis for a converged ranking-list of highly regarded peers in both countries (Patton, 2002). The findings deemed this cohort of potential interviewees of “stature and experience”, with years (at least 5 years) of sustained involvement within the prevalent discourse, able to comment comprehensively upon the sector of PSD.



**Table 7.2.** Results of reputational peer selection.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Results show highest accumulated scores of peer-selected participants (max. n = /< 3) per institution in Great Britain and Norway (different colours of bars indicate different individuals of respective university).

Accordingly, from the survey, 6 participants in Great Britain and 7 in Norway emerged with the highest score of peer recommendation. The framework resulted in the selection of four interviewees per nation at lecturing staff level from the following institutions:

<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>Norway</b>
University of Chichester	Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, (Oslo)
University of Cumbria	University College Telemark (Bø)
University of Edinburgh	University College Volda (Volda)
University of Wales (Bangor)	University College Nord-Trøndelag (Lev.)

**Table 7.3.** Selected universities/university colleges.

## **7.2. Interview procedures and analysis**

This section provides a chronological account of the interview process, the data collection and how data were interpreted.

### **7.2.1. Data collection**

Prior to the interviews, I worked on the formulation of interview questions and prompts to ensure coherence with the research questions. The interview questions took consideration of the complex nature of PSD in both Great Britain and Norway by asking in general terms about OE/Friluftsliv as a field, and in successive stages of the interview narrowing down to more specific aspects of PSD. Furthermore the interview questions attempted to address potential transitional issues in the sector with focus on PSD (see Appendices C and D). The interview schedule was piloted through several iterations with lecturers and PhD peers in the OE Section of The University of Edinburgh; a process which eliminated misunderstanding and ensured conceptual clarity. Similar piloting was conducted during my research-scholarship at the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences (NIH) in Oslo, Norway. This process resulted in slight semantic adaptations of the finalised interview form when translated into Norwegian.



All but one of the interviews were conducted at the participants' workplaces during working hours. This was to accommodate the participants' work schedules and therefore the interviews were held during free periods or breaks that were convenient for the participants. One interview (Bjørn) was conducted at a participant's home during the evening as this was the time/place most convenient for him.

The interview schedule was not sent out in advance to the respondents. The purpose and the content of the interview were described by the researcher and initially easy descriptive questioning was employed to build *rappport* (Kvale, 2007). The researcher tried to engender a friendly and informal environment to facilitate discussion and participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they had the right to terminate the interview at any point if they wished to do so (Silverman, 2006). This complied with the University of Edinburgh code of ethics (see Appendix E). The interviews lasted between 60 minutes and 2 hours and were digitally recorded as .wav files (the same type of file that comes on any commercially available music CD), which were then stored on the hard drive of my personal computer with multiple layers of password protection.

During the interview, a 'pushing forward' technique through prompts was used to clarify meanings and statements, in order to aid later analysis and support cross-validation (Kvale, 2007). Directly after each interview I wrote up field notes about my reflections, during which some preliminary themes for the whole of Great Britain were noted. After completing the British sample, I focused my attention on the Norwegian participants and repeated these procedures. All interviews were transcribed and pseudonyms assigned to the participants. Although one participant was female, to maintain anonymity all participants were given male pseudonyms. Following the transcription of each participant's interview, I kept a record of initial reflections and comments about tentative relationships and themes within and between the national data-sets. They were considered an essential *aide memoir* for reference in later stages of the analysis process.



### 7.2.2. Analysing data

In order to do justice to interview data, research questions and philosophical orientation of the study it was decided that rather than using a single means of analysis, a '*bricolage*' approach would be adopted wherein various analytical techniques were employed (Kvale, 2007).

The exploratory nature of the study lends itself to the inductive nature of thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Ezzy, 2002). According to Boyatzis (1998) a theme is a pattern found in the information that at the minimum describes and organises possible observations or at the maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis falls short of imposing any categories prior to coding the data, otherwise typical for content analysis (Ezzy, 2002). It shares similar methodologies with grounded theory approaches, yet constitutes only early procedures of data analysis of grounded theory and diverges from theoretical sampling where emerging analysis typically guides the collection of further data (Ezzy, 2002).

IPA was used as an approach to analysis. This is a type of thematic analysis which is growing in popularity due to its ideographic focus (Smith & Osborn, 2003). The analytic stages were guided by conventions of thematic analysis and IPA's ideographic mode of inquiry. This approach was to fully exploit the principal merits of qualitative methods: the analysis of the insider perspective and meaning in depth and in context (Yardley, 1997). The aim therefore was, through in-depth analyses, to produce insights into individual case-histories which appreciate the complexities and ambiguities of the interrelationships between lecturers and discourse (Lyons & Coyles, 2000).

The process involved an exploration of the personal interpretation of each participant related to the rhetoric of the field, the principles and context of outdoor-related PSD in OE/Friluftsliv through detailed readings. With each successive reading, I felt more responsive to what was being said. This helped me form a perspective so that future interpretations remained grounded within the participants' accounts. Initial themes

were identified and organised into clusters of groups and super-ordinate concepts and were checked against data. Themes were then refined, condensed and examined for connections between them (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Finally 'over-arching' themes emerged, followed by more analytical or theoretical ordering (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

The aims at this stage were to analyse the over-arching themes within a single-nation discourse, and in subsequent stages within a cross-national discourse. This process resulted in super-ordinate ('main') themes through an interplay of inductive and deductive reasoning. To a large extent the themes emerged inductively from a strong focus on the participants' views, beliefs and knowledge of the field. However, there remained a deductive element, in the sense that a degree of focus remained on the study's research questions.

According to Patton there is no mandatory guiding formula for transformation of data into findings (Patton, 2002). He points out that no "precise or agreed-on terms describe varieties and processes" of qualitative analysis (p. 453). The key objective, however, for qualitative analysis involves the universally applicable process of transmuting raw data into generalisable findings. Patton reveals the air of mystery that blurs qualitative data analysis and identifies "multi-faceted analytical integration of disciplined science, creative artistry, and personal reflection" in order to mould data such as interviews into findings (Patton, 2002, p. 432).

Miles and Huberman (1984) also point out that "no shared ground rules for drawing conclusions and verifying sturdiness" exist (p. 16). However, they insist that there are various ways of conducting data analysis, offering three generally popular procedures: 'data reduction', 'data display' and 'conclusion and verification'. 'Data reduction' refers to keeping the project manageable by limiting the amount of data collected, to avoid being overwhelmed through making sampling decisions at the data collection stage. The decisions about what to select and what to summarise, and how this is then organised, are analytical choices (Robson, 2002). 'Data display' refers to the efficient means of organising and displaying information involving the

use of charts, graphs, matrices and networks. ‘Conclusion drawing and verification’ begins from the start of data collection, noting patterns and regularities suggesting possible structures and mechanisms.

The challenge of the interview data was in identifying patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal. Within the parameters of the general research questions, I started to inspect the data, using thematic analysis techniques, to develop a typology. Following the remit of thematic analysis, categories emerged during the analysis rather than before-hand. The interview transcripts were initially coded openly and by making comparisons for similarities and differences between events and incidents (Ezzy, 2002).

Research projects involving different cultural research traditions require much time spent early on in devising a common methodology and shared coding themes, whilst the use of different languages demands rigid scrutiny in exploring different “conceptual equivalences of the focus of the study” (Osborn, 2004, p. 269).

During data analysis and following comparative educational research’s remit for a common framework for the purpose of ‘contrasting’, the two main themes that emerged for the British findings (1. ‘conceptual issues’; 2. ‘contemporary changes’) were applied to the Norwegian data (Osborn, 2004). The themes were deemed appropriate for understanding contemporary influences and perceived future trends in relation to PSD-related Friluftsliv. These two main themes can be directly linked back to two of the study’s research questions, which focus on PSD in a contemporary context. Each main theme comprises numerous sub-themes (see Chapters Eight & Nine). The findings are presented in a thematic narrative format in two separate chapters (Chapters Eight & Nine). Within this narrative, participants’ accounts have been quoted extensively for three reasons. First, this follows Smith and Osborn’s (2003) recommendation of an interplay between the interpretative activity of the researcher and the data; second, Geertz’s (1973) postulation to build “thick descriptions” (p. 3); and third, Reid *et al.*’s (2005) demands for “substantial verbatim

excerpts from participants accounts to provide greater transparency for the reader” in IPA (p. 22).

Eventually, having finished the tasks of organisation and description of the data, the thesis finally goes beyond the descriptive level and in the Discussion (Chapter Ten) attempts to attach significance to data by making “comparisons and considering causes, consequences and relationships” (Patton, 2002, p. 479). Here the findings from Great Britain and Norway are discussed alongside relevant literature from the field.

### **7.3. Credible research**

The credibility of an investigation is often associated with concepts of validity, reliability and generalisability. There are numerous criteria for judging the rigour and quality of qualitative research (Elliot & Ellingworth, 1997; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992; Silverman, 1993). However, Winter (2000) maintains that there is no single, fixed or universally accepted definition of reliability or validity, but rather a contingent construct. In this thesis, credible research is understood relative to my ontological and epistemological stance (Elliot *et al.*, 2000; Kvale, 2007). The following section outlines a critical realist conception of validity, reliability and generalisability (Maxwell, 1992).

#### **7.3.1. Validity**

Rigorous and valid scientific scrutiny must strive for objectivity, yet it remains a scientific ideal in qualitative research. Striving for validity of data can be achieved through correctness, credibility of description, conclusion, explanation and interpretation (Maxwell, 2004). The following selections will discuss further theoretical aspects of validity and attempts made to ensure this.

### **7.3.1.1. A 'realist' conception of validity and reliability**

The broad concept of validity constitutes the central pillar of credible research. In essence validity refers to the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research (Bryman, 2004). Qualitative research is based on subjective, interpretive and contextual data (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Maxwell, 1992) that influence the validity of data.

Whilst in a traditional sense, positivist philosophy referred to an absolute truth that needed to be objectively verified, validity is understood as relative and dependant on the views of relevant communities (either participants or researchers) involved with the inquiry (Maxwell, 1992). Thus, the conception of objectivity becomes inter-subjective and is based on 'consensus truth' as opposed to the traditional scientific view of 'correspondence truth' (Kvale, 2007; Maxwell, 1992; Mishler, 1990). The use of objectivity as inter-subjective consensus means the term 'validity' has been used as opposed to alternative interpretive concepts of 'trustworthiness' or 'authenticity' (Kvale, 2007).

To solve the dilemma of the measurement of validity, qualitative researchers have developed measurement concepts in line with the qualitative paradigm (Maxwell, 1992; Seale, 2003). Accordingly, this section builds on Maxwell's (1992) categories to judge the validity of qualitative research: descriptive validity, interpretive validity and theoretical validity.

### **7.3.1.2. Descriptive validity**

'Descriptive validity' is concerned with the accuracy of the data (Maxwell, 1992). Walsh (2003) and Glaser and Strauss's (1967) 'credibility' captures the same concept. Descriptive validity is the foundation of interpretive and theoretical understanding thence data must accurately reflect what the participant has said or done.

Accordingly, there were a number of steps I took to ensure that my research provided a valid description. Following Runciman's (1983) remit for clarification and actual accuracy, which he calls 'reportage', I introduced prompts following each interview question. Furthermore the use of recording equipment during the interviews and detailed post-interview field notes provided a basis for accurate transcriptions (see Appendices C & D). At an overall level, descriptive transparency was sought not just in participants' accounts but also throughout the entire research process. Within this methodology chapter of the thesis, detailed descriptions of procedures were deemed important to help create a study that was descriptively valid overall. In other words, it is the transparency of descriptive validity that relates to issues of reliability.

### **7.3.1.3. Interpretive validity**

Interpretive validity strives to capture how well the researcher reports the participant's meaning of events, objects and behaviours (Maxwell, 1992). Essential here is that interpretations are not based on the researcher's perspective but on that of the interviewee. In order to preserve the emic aspect of the participant's account, I have predominately focused on one type of 'researcher effect': self-reflexivity.

Rather than striving for the elimination of my 'self-reflexivity', the aim was to use it productively by becoming aware of my influence on the study (Mishler, 1986; Myrdal, 1969). I attempted this by 'bracketing' my thoughts and being aware of my researcher's knowledge and world-view, and by taking an introspective turn where "eye-witnessing transforms to I-witness" (Breuer & Roth, 2003, p. 5-6). Subsequently, I introduced a form of immediate member checking, called 'pushing forward' (Kvale, 2007). This was carried out by following each interview question with affirming questions such as: "What I hear you saying is....? It sounds to me that you really think....? Is this correct? (see Appendices C & D ).

In Maxwell's (1992) 'realist' approach to validity, he suggests cross-validation includes the perspectives of the participants through member checking (p. 290). However, from a critical realist standpoint this investigation conforms to suggestions



that a participant may often have no more valid interpretations of their own actions than the interpretative authenticity of the researcher (Winter, 2000). In order to preserve the emic aspect of participants' accounts, I acknowledged the shift from objective knowledge to constructed knowledge (see discussion on researcher's role; Chapter Five, Section 5.4.). In this vein, 'triangulation' has been proposed to support claims made by others (Foss & Ellefesen, 2002). The latter authors maintain a critical realist stance towards issues concerning validation through triangulation, as they consider them to be inherently positivistic. This is why the depth perception approach was used instead to help raise deeper awareness but not to triangulate *per se*.

Running the risk of providing a spurious 'objectivity' based on the premise of a single reality against which emerging theory can be assessed, I have opted for the approach of 'depth perception', whereby I carried out independent mini-audits with an independent PhD researcher within the OE department of the University of Edinburgh (as suggested by Smith, 2003). Together with the researcher transcripts were read and annotations were checked.

This process included checking of overarching and subordinate themes which were linked back to the text to ensure they had some validity in relation to the text being examined (Smith, 2003). During the process some minor modifications were made to the themes. This procedure was not viewed as triangulation *per se*, but instead it was understood that gaining a peer's perspective would help to develop a 'depth perception', so that in a way this could be viewed as using two lenses instead of one (Breuer & Roth, 2003). The rationale of this process is not to remove self-reflexivity (bias), as this is not deemed possible, but rather to reduce it somewhat, so ensuring that descriptions and interpretations stayed close to the participants' 'life worlds' (Smith, 1998).

Demands for validity were also respected by following strictly analytical procedures during coding relevant to thematic analysis. Criteria for thematic analysis can be gleaned from its close relative: grounded theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967)



emphasised the requirement of ‘goodness of fit’, meaning the categories must be applicable to the data and not ‘forced’. Lyons and Coyle (2007) discuss Glaser’s subsequent critique of Strauss as being largely about the ‘forcing’ of analysis caused by the use of a coding paradigm. However many analytical procedures of grounded theory are designed to ensure robustness. Accordingly I followed procedures that are common for thematic analysis and IPA (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.2.2.).

Furthermore, the commitment to the participants’ perspectives was maintained in the research by grounding the findings in the interview accounts. Additionally, the findings were written up using rich descriptive text to help with aspects of interpretive transparency.

#### **7.3.1.4. Theoretical validity**

‘Theoretical validity’ goes beyond description and interpretation and “refers to theoretical constructions that the researcher brings to, or develops during the study” (Maxwell, 1992, p. 50). Whereas descriptive and interpretative validity strive for accuracy of accounts, theoretical validity looks for appropriateness (Maxell, 1992). In other words the researcher should show a ‘fit’ between the data that supports his/her theory. The most serious threats to theoretical validity are not paying attention to discrepant data (deviant cases) (Silverman, 2006) and not considering alternative explanations or understandings of the phenomena being studied (Kvale, 2007).

Within the present study theoretical validity strategies were taken on board to help develop valid explanations from the participants’ accounts. The type of data analysis carried out used a method of analytical induction that stems from a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994), which includes using constant comparison between accounts and documentation of extensive and rich field notes to help track theoretical patterns that may have formed within the analysis process, as well as for outlying deviant cases.

Additionally, a technique called ‘depth perception’ (Breuer & Roth, 2003) was used to raise awareness of possible alternative explanations and to help create a ‘deeper’ perception into the participant’s account. The depth perception exercise consisted of inviting a fellow researcher to make suggestions and ask questions about things that I had not mentioned in my findings.

### **7.3.2. Reliability**

Methodological literature on reliability broadly refers to the degree to which findings can be replicated at other times by other researchers (King, 1994). Some qualitative researchers contend that this ability is obsolete in situations concerning highly complex and transient circumstances (Hammersley, 1987, p. 77; Winter, 2000, p. 3), as might be the case of situated thoughts and views of lecturers on the discourse of OE/Friluftsliv. In order to achieve reliability, researchers should recognise their pre-suppositions so that a conscious effort is made to set these aside through ‘bracketing’ (King, 1994). A critical realist perspective acknowledges that validity and reliability are contingent on the purpose and circumstances of the research and the researcher’s reflexivity. Therefore, within this study the conception of reliability focuses upon research transparency rather than replication.

### **7.3.3. Generalisability**

A number of strategies may be used which seek to confirm the quality of the analysis with reference to the views of others. The ability to generalise to wider circumstances has been considered a benchmark for rigorous quantitative research; however, this seems to be of less importance for many qualitative researchers (Winter, 2000) LeCompte & Goetz (1982) argue that external validity represents a problem for qualitative researchers because of their tendency to either employ case studies and/or small samples (see also Bryman, 2004).

Many authors caution against making sweeping generalisations based on findings from qualitative research. Among them Cronbach (1980) stresses that findings can be

context bound and too variable to bear generalisation. Rather, he urges, one should treat any inclination towards concluding generalisations as a “tentative working hypothesis” (p. 124). Similarly, Bryman (2004) cautions researchers against generalising on a population level, and suggests that any generalising of qualitative findings should be applied to “theory rather than to populations” (p. 285). The implication of this is that the cases are used only to support and thus ‘advance’ understanding on a more theoretical level (Stake, 2005).

The relevance of a small sample is that it can form the basis for insight knowledge to draw tentative conclusions about an “external interest” (Stake, 2005, p. 445). In the context of the present study the ‘external’ objective was to gain an understanding about the conceptual understanding of outdoor-related PSD and of contemporary influences on the field. Stake (2002) considers small sample studies to be equally supportive for extrapolations:

They are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, and perhaps better theorising, about a still larger collection of cases (Stake, 2005, p. 446).

Accordingly, the interview sample used for this study is regarded as a contribution towards further understanding of tendencies (Stake, 2005) relevant to the field of OE/Friluftsliv, rather than an attempt to illustrate anything approaching a comprehensive picture of two national discourses. Therefore, mindful that generalisations extrapolated from qualitative enquiry are not noted for their longevity, Stake’s advice (1978) and IPA’s recommendation that one should generalise tentatively (and preferably through ‘particularisation’), has been my guiding principle (Reid *et al.*, 2005).

In line with this thesis’ conception of validity I have attempted to present the research process in a transparent and detailed manner. Accordingly, I have outlined the rationale for the interview methodology, explicated the analytical process and

contextualised the study with methodological challenges of comparative education research.

## CHAPTER EIGHT - Great Britain Findings

### 8.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the interview findings from the four British respondents (peer-selected academic staff from British universities) who took part in this study. During the interviews, participants were asked a range of open-ended questions relating to the rhetoric<sup>34</sup> and the principles of OE and outdoor-related PSD. The findings are presented in a thematic narrative format. Within this narrative, participants' accounts have been quoted extensively for two reasons. First, to support my interpretation of the respondent accounts, and second, to help build a "thick description", which aims to provide greater transparency for the reader (Geertz, 1973).

The main themes were created through an interplay of inductive and deductive reasoning. To a large extent the themes emerged inductively from a strong focus on the participants' views, beliefs and knowledge of the field. However, there remained a deductive element, in the sense that a degree of focus remained on the study's research questions. Consequently, through the analysis process (Chapter Seven, Section 7.2.2.) two main themes emerged, which can be directly linked back to two of the study's research questions and which focus on PSD in a contemporary context (see Chapter Five, Section 5.1.). Each main theme comprises numerous sub-themes. The themes are:

- 1) Conceptual issues
- 2) Contemporary changes in the field

Respondents were assigned pseudonyms, which are used throughout this chapter to maintain anonymity (**Andrew, Ben, Colin, David**). The pseudonyms reflect the gender of the participants. All are male.

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<sup>34</sup> Although the term 'rhetoric' might denote a pejorative meaning, in this context the term is used to describe the 'agreed' or 'perceived' collective commentary by peers on the field of OE.

## 8.2. Conceptual issues

Within the participants' accounts, each respondent spoke, either explicitly or implicitly, about numerous issues surrounding the concept of outdoor-related PSD. These conceptual issues have been divided into four sub-themes:

- Terminology
- Core elements of PSD
- The status of PSD in OE
- The purposes of PSD

### 8.2.1. Terminology

During the interview process, it was found that participants used a wide variety of terminology to describe and discuss both OE and PSD. All respondents emphasised the lack of agreed consensus, evident in differing, often interchangeably and somewhat haphazardly, applied terminology to these concepts.

The term 'outdoor education' was discussed as an ambiguous and relatively holistic concept. **Colin's** opinion encompasses the respondents' general views on the contentious nature of OE and the inconsistency in terminology:

The point of outdoor education is that people like to argue about what it is ... having said that you could come up with a definition of outdoor education, which encompasses everything that most people could buy into. But still that definition, which brings everybody together, I think, has been an elusive definition ... people have been trying to, but it hasn't really happened.

In relation to the concept of OE, **Andrew** and **Colin** mentioned an increasing acceptance within the field of the phrase 'outdoor learning'. **Andrew** summed this up by saying:

People have started using this term ‘outdoor learning’ in order that it can encompass all of the other titles and encompasses the three elements ... environment, personal and social education and skills learning.

Within the participants’ accounts, the concept of outdoor-related PSD was referred to in an even more ambiguous manner than OE. As a whole, the respondents used 11 different terms (see below) to discuss the concept of PSD. To add to the terminological confusion, many respondents also intermittently used the overarching term of ‘outdoor education’ in their accounts to refer to PSD focused OE. The 11 terms are:

outdoor education	informal education out of doors
adventure education	active learning
outdoor experiential learning	active education
personal and social education	experiential learning outdoors
personal and social development	learning through the outdoors
personal and social health education	

**Table 8.1.** Interviewees chosen terminology describing outdoor-related PSD.

In the following paragraphs I have provided an example of this terminological confusion. The example addresses the relationship between the term ‘PSD’ and the term ‘adventure education’.

Whilst describing the concept of outdoor-related PSD, two of four respondents (**Colin** and **Andrew**) also referred to the term ‘adventure education’ as a closely related concept. **Colin** provided a loose definition of adventure education that slightly differentiated it from PSD. **Colin** appeared to view adventure education as a more extreme version of PSD, incorporating a higher level of risk into its practice:

Adventure education is a style of education which needs to take youngsters to the edge of something. Now it might be to the edge of learning in terms of skills, about themselves or of new environments and things. But clearly a lot



of outdoor education takes place without taking children to that prime point where the adventure is maximising or optimising their learning.

Whilst **Colin** perceived PSD and adventure education to be similar, **Andrew** spoke of the synonymous use of the terms in Great Britain:

When you talk about outdoor education in relation to PSD, I always use it synonymously with adventure education because I think we [in Great Britain] have got an agreed idea.

In contrast to **Andrew's** opinion, **Ben** was opposed to interchangeably using the phrases adventure education and outdoor education (OE) stating that within the field adventure education was clearly distinguished from both OE and PSD. In **Ben's** view adventure education was an old fashioned term that demonstrated an “historical anachronism” due to the element of risk it incorporated.

It would seem that although **Colin** maintains a different stance to **Ben's** regarding the similarities of the terms PSD and adventure education, **Colin** expressed a similar view of risk related to adventure education. **Ben** felt that the original form of adventure education incorporated longer “self-reliant journeys” and the conscious exposure of risk. However, he felt that self-reliant journeys in a school context, other than programmes like the Duke of Edinburgh Award, were no longer feasible due to safety considerations:

I think it's a dead word [adventure education]. I don't hear that phrase used very much, if at all. They [the children] would have too short an experience to actually become adventurous and would have taster experiences; and not really develop skills; and not be able to do anything with these skills and even if I could develop a programme in the school, I wouldn't be allowed to do these kind of self-reliant journeys because of the risk aversion of the institution.

## Summary

Within the respondents' accounts, the underlying theoretical concepts of outdoor-related PSD and OE seem to be commonly understood. However, the different types of practice that exist in OE are described with considerable inconsistency in terminology.

### 8.2.2. Core elements of PSD

This sub-section is concerned with the core elements of PSD. The interview-data indicates the degree to which respondents believe PSD is rooted in anthropocentric and holistic/ecological ontologies (see Appendix C; question Ten and Eleven).<sup>35</sup> Although the interview questions focused on the rhetoric within the OE sector, the respondents' personal views were also discussed and have been included here to try to portray the complexity of the phenomena being examined.

All participants acknowledged that PSD is a specifically demarcated concept in OE, distinct from that of environmental education and skill-based outdoor activity education. All respondents spoke about PSD's underpinning philosophy being dominated by an emphasis on personal growth.

**Ben** and **David** explicitly mentioned the origin of outdoor-related PSD stemming from humanistic psychological perspectives (Human growth/potential movement philosophy). **Andrew** also discussed in some detail the sector's view of PSD and its allegiance with anthropocentrism, emphasising the "developmental feel" and the notion that people experience, and that "by some osmotic effect become better people and learn things about themselves". He elaborated on this view saying:

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<sup>35</sup> While the interview schedule does not explicitly ask about differences related to anthropocentric and ecological ontologies, the prompts for questions ten and eleven encourage the interviewee to elaborate on the complex nature of PSD. Emerging themes that resonated with ecological and eco-psychological perspectives of OE/Friluftsliv were extrapolated from the data and presented as coded themes in chapters 8 and 9 respectively.

It's about hierarchical needs and self-actualisation in becoming the person I really want to be. Whatever that might be! It's about having higher self-esteem, it's about feeling good about myself, and all the things that that brings with it or is said to come with it, having what we might call social capital.

**Ben** built on this opinion, mentioning how outdoor-related PSD places the emphasis primarily on the person and not the place, implicitly rejecting a more holistic, interwoven concept of PSD between anthropocentric and ecological ontologies:

It's humanistic and the environment is the backdrop or the vehicle, by and large, entirely because the young people have amazing aesthetic experiences. But even there I think the benefit is *to the person* [respondent's emphasis]: you had an aesthetic experience, rather than this place will get looked after, because you had an aesthetic experience. It's still an instrumental view. ... and there are very different markets with very different purposes. But they are all looking at how do we help people to become better at social skills, in whatever contexts they are in.

Although **Colin** and **David** do not speak directly about humanistic psychology, it was inferred from the interview data that they supported the notion that the rhetoric of PSD is somewhat severed from ecological ontology. **David** provided an insight into his view on this matter:

The conversation they [OE practitioners] are having is about personal and social issues that are independent of any ecological understanding: What was this like for you? If you were to behave like this at home what would happen to you? How does your teacher feel about you behaving like this? On a more positive note, was this good for you? What did it feel like? You know that level of internal individual experience, independent of context. Or the context being defined as independent of community context; dependent on the context that people are in at the time and ... the assumption that transfer of learning will take place.

However, the complexity of the concept of PSD seems to become apparent when participants' accounts shift from a theoretical discussion to a more practice-orientated discussion. **Ben** and **Colin** shared the view that the most overt PSD occurs in 'youth work' in the outdoors, where youth workers might separate PSD and use approaches, which according to **Colin** "in a sense have nothing to do with the environment". **Ben** does however make it clear that the practices of some providers are known to have different foci, often offering a "mix with environmental outcomes".

**Andrew's** view provided another example of the conceptual complexity of PSD and the difficulty of trying to separate anthropocentric and ecological strands of outdoor learning. The interview data seemed to suggest a conjoining of outdoor-related PSD with anthropocentric ontology (see above) throughout the field, although **Andrew** also identified "commonalities" with EE. He perceived the three domains OE as "three spheres that cannot be partitioned" which therefore relate to an interweaving of anthropocentrism with environmentalism. **Andrew** touches this issue in the following quote:

I think it [PSD] embraces the environmental issues but it isn't wrapped up solely as environmental issues; the awareness of the environment, the awareness of the impact we are having on the environment, turning lights off and not wasting energy, all those kind of things. I think it embraces that but it [PSD] isn't about that for me.

Despite the acknowledgement that, within the OE sector, the rhetoric of PSD was viewed as anthropocentric in nature and purpose, **Colin** and **David** went on to voice opposing opinions about this matter. They both perceived the need for a unification of anthropocentric PSD with an ecological ontology. **Colin's** view stresses the difficulty of taking an isolated, rather than a holistic perspective on PSD:

If you are going to improve somebody's understanding of themselves and how they react with other people then you need to give individuals and teams

the skills to be able to do something new. They need to understand something about the environment. By doing one, you are also doing the other two anyway [participant refers to three-circle model of OE]. I think it is naïve to think that you can teach any one of those three circles in isolation. They become meaningless when you start teaching them in isolation.

**David's** personal view was similar to that of **Colin's**. He felt PSD should be more holistic in nature wherein differing ontological perspectives should form a continuum comprising interrelated and interwoven streams of environmental and personal social development. **David** provides an example of his rationale for this view:

I know I would feel good if I knew I have understood something about the natural world a bit better than I did 5 minutes ago ... My self-esteem is raised, why? This has something to do with the ontological understanding! So that's why I see the two streams [personal and social development and environmental education] as very interrelated in my understanding, in my ontological and epistemological understanding. Any other definitional issues that fall outside of that, I am thinking are not worthy; it's not important.

### **Summary**

Within this sub-theme the rhetorical/theoretical demarcation of outdoor-related PSD is underpinned by anthropocentric philosophy. However, respondents argued emphatically that the practice of PSD in OE is not as straightforward as the rhetoric might suggest. It would appear less feasible to isolate PSD to a purely anthropocentric approach.

Although the interview questions were focused on the rhetorical and theoretical concepts of PSD in OE, most of the respondents alluded at some point to the difficulties of practicing a form of PSD that is purely anthropocentric. The outdoor setting that PSD is practiced in facilitates a degree of environmental learning, and therefore it appears to operationalise PSD as a somewhat holistic concept.

### 8.2.3. The status of PSD in OE

This sub-theme builds on the previous sub-theme and discusses the status that anthropocentric PSD holds in the wider field of OE.

All respondents emphasised the importance of PSD in relation to other domains in OE. **Andrew** felt that PSD was the most influential theme in the British discourse: “The outdoors was not wrapped up solely as an environmental issue”. He perceived the main thrust in learning in the outdoors as addressing “hierarchical needs and self-actualisation in becoming the person I really want to be”. **Ben** thought that PSD “occupied the centre ground” in relation to the three-circle model of domains that he believes to constitute OE. Likewise **Colin** deemed PSD the “most important driving force” of learning in the outdoors as opposed to “environment skills”. Finally, **David** attributed the “biggest circle” to PSD. In his account, **David** identified the weaker voices of the field coming from the ecological camp:

The strongest voices have been those who have come from a humanistic psychology perspective: the purpose for the outdoors is to encourage the self-actualisation of individuals and groups. Probably alongside that would be a cultural critique coming from gender studies, particularly feminist critiques. The weaker voices would be those in ecological justice and environmental philosophy.

### Summary

Within this short sub-theme all of the respondents are in agreement that anthropocentric PSD holds the strongest position within the field of OE. Many participants spoke of the “three-circle-model” (Higgins & Nicol, 2001) that incorporates PSD, EE and OA and how outdoor-related PSD takes the central stage, illustrating its contemporary dominance within the rhetoric of the OE sector.

#### 8.2.4. The purposes of PSD

This sub-theme is concerned with understanding the purpose of PSD. Two dichotomous perspectives are discussed by the participants. At one end of the continuum there is the human capital perspective, with the purpose of developing a stronger, more efficient workforce. Meanwhile at the other end there is an altruistic perspective incorporating an internal and moral purpose which advocates emancipation and self-actualisation of the individual, and which to some degree is also linked to the individual's relationship with the outdoor environment.

On the grounds of “historically evolved assumptions”, **Andrew** felt that the learning objectives of PSD were directed towards a potential liberation of participants, in which people who became involved in the outdoors “became better people”. In contrast, **Ben** ascribed a “stronger force in operation”, the “capitalistic kind of approach”. He perceived this as an oppressive influence where “young people are being silenced rather than being allowed to have a voice”. **Ben** discusses, in more detail, his view that the rhetoric of PSD is predisposed to valuing human capital:

The whole notion that is attached to a growth economy, of making something of yourself, of expecting more out of life. The idea of progress, the idea of human growth parallel with economic growth ... and the embedded values in the PSD practised in the outdoors that goes parallel with values of capitalistic society. It's about nationhood, about achievement and progress and your expectations of being educationally and socially mobile ... : a good wage; of having a good career; of achieving things; of accomplishing things for yourself. Conquering things and then moving on to the next conquest; it's never high enough; you never climb the Everest, it's always somewhere higher.

**David** mirrored the views of **Ben** stating that he felt the rhetoric of outdoor-related PSD constituted a “reinforcement of capitalistic values” which were implicitly embedded rather than exerting overtly altruistic or “liberating” perspectives. Building on the notion that human capital is an underlying driver for PSD, **Colin**



spoke about the expectation of societal instrumental learning outcomes. He provided an example of this in relation to rehabilitating dysfunctional youth into working members of society.

A lot of youngsters are not achieving their potential. The message that you give depends on the starting point for those youngsters. If you have a group in front of you who already are unemployed and already have low self-esteem etc., they clearly need to be built up: you *can* get a job, you *can* contribute to society, you *can* earn money and pay taxes [participant's emphasis].

However, **Ben** and **Colin** felt that theoretical reflections on the purpose of PSD had little impact upon the practice of PSD. Although they acknowledged the presence of a perhaps somewhat subtle but pervasive capitalistic influence, most participants claimed that it is broadly resisted in practice. **Ben** puts forward his view on this matter:

I think outdoor education remains somewhat resilient to the more human capital models ... I think both teachers and outdoor centres have much stronger libertarian values. They still have their roots in liberal education and so they resist that approach and will wherever they can transform it.

**Colin** took a slightly different stance, emphasising the resistance to capitalism in relation to EE, which has been interpreted as a form of self-development and liberation through the use of the environment:

The people that I work with ... in fact all the people around here. Ask them: how would you prefer your youngsters to use the new learning that they are going to get during the week with you in an outdoor centre? In a sustainable green way? Or in an economic personal elevation way? Then almost everyone would say the green way!

### **Summary**

The participants expressed their understanding that the rhetoric surrounding PSD in OE seems to advocate human capital and the development of socially instrumental

people who will be able to contribute to the wider workforce. As in the previous theme, ‘core elements’, there appears to be a contradiction between the rhetoric and the practice of PSD. It seems that the teachers’ and practitioners’ views, advocating a more altruistic emphasis towards the purpose of PSD, dictate how outdoor-related PSD is operationalised into practice within Great Britain.

### **8.3. Contemporary changes in the field**

The second main theme named ‘contemporary changes in the field’ is made up of four sub-themes (listed below), which focus on the views regarding the development within the practice of PSD:

- The evolution of PSD
- External influences
- Moving towards the environmental domain
- The consolidation of PSD
- Marketplace

#### **8.3.1. The evolution of PSD**

This sub-theme reflected respondents’ perspectives on the evolution of the sector’s rationale and practices. There appeared to be broad agreement among participants regarding the tension present within the PSD sector, encompassing the field’s disinclination to change its practices.

**Andrew** identified a drift within the field characterised by complacency devoid of guidance and foresight “with our head in the sand relying on past success”. He stated, “We can’t yet, at this stage, actually answer the question ... how and why are you doing it very well?”. **Colin** also claimed the sector exhibits almost no changes, except a new generation becoming “more familiar with the vocabulary and some of the tools that can be used to help develop them in PSD”. **David** acknowledged that the established rationale for PSD appeared to be unquestioned and that “they

(practitioners and lecturers) are doing what they always have done”. **David** added further:

PSD? I am not really sure that things have changed significantly in the sense that a lot of people are doing what they have done already; taking kids out and giving them a good time.

**Colin** highlighted an “historical inertia” that has led to the predominance of an anthropocentric “self-evaluating” rationale. **Ben** spoke in more depth about the historical influences still penetrating PSD practice, discussing how the practice of PSD has been influenced by two very strong contradictory strands which have fuelled the contemporary rationale for PSD. These strands have been identified as “imperialistic nationalism” and “the withdrawal from oppressive social control”. While some educational practices have been partly adapted and developed into more modern forms of PSD, other educational practices remain driven by these “quite blatantly imperialistic” traditions that, in his view, continue to influence the sector in an “un-reconstructed” or unchanged manner. The result is the reinforcement of a “sport philosophy where the landscape and nature is instrumental rather than the activity as a way of making journeys into nature”.

**David** shared **Ben**’s view about an historical inertia prevailing in aspects of PSD. However he made the distinction that inertia in the sector was not due to attachment to or celebration of history *per se*; rather he felt that practices have stayed the same due to a more lackadaisical approach in the sector.

All respondents were united in their opinions regarding the current lack of momentum and growth within the sector. However, they felt that in the future, PSD would increasingly develop a more robust rationale. **Andrew** saw the field maturing from what he perceived as being previously “blasé about ferrying people through activities” towards the development of a “professional body” with an increased “educated reasoned rationale” that was sharing a “common language”. A similar view was held by **Ben**, whose account indicated that he perceived raised standards

through specialisation and course development offered at Higher Education level.

**Ben**'s account also touched on the role of the universities in Great Britain:

I think those people [OE students] will be increasingly more professionalised through degrees like ours. There is a growth of our sorts of degrees [amongst others with specific focus on PSD] and demand for them. Students get, by and large, jobs in our field, so I think we are part of the raising of standards within the field.

**Colin** reflected on a perceived improvement in educational quality as the focus on facilitative reflection increased. He maintained that practitioners “now want to be sure how they (participants) may have changed as a person, having done a day’s rock-climbing! How they interacted with the people that they were working with”. **Colin** commented further on the depth of change in that “we didn’t give them the same level of importance 20 years ago ... and the importance of vocabulary that we use in terms of the personal and social field is much stronger”. This view was contrasted by **Ben**, who identified potential repercussions within the field, claiming the sector had formed itself into a “safe-pair-of-hands” insofar as it was “a lot less experiential than many people claim”.

### **Summary**

The participants discussed the tensions that exist concerning the evolution of outdoor-related PSD practices. On one hand the participants discussed the historical influences that have shaped, and in some aspects continue unquestioned to affect current practices of PSD. On the other hand, it seems that current practices are being driven by a need for a more robust rationale, which will inevitably lead to further development of the sector and its practices. It appears that in the future this will occur through the education and professionalisation of practitioners and organisations involved in PSD.

### 8.3.2. External influences

This sub-theme encompasses an array of external influences that respondents felt provoke change within the sector. Financial, statutory, global and more general societal influences have been imbued with differing levels of importance by different respondents and have been discussed in terms of their implications on the field of OE and the domain of PSD.

Financial pressures were perceived to be a strong influence. **Andrew** felt that these derived from a “consumer-driven competitive marketplace” and that these pressures were more prevalent today than “compared to the ’60s’ and ’70s”. In particular, **Andrew** felt that evidence-based documentation would lead to demands for a much more “tangible” facilitation and demonstrable “value for money”:

I think it goes back to the notion of competitive marketplace. If you go down to a ‘mountains-speak-for-themselves’ philosophy then your client cannot see the fruits of their money. So you have to have this much more professional, almost tangible driven outcome where people can see the value for money that they have become better people ... if you want to use the term ‘better people’.

**Ben** perceived opportunistic behaviour towards financial incentives at the level of provision. He saw the field reacting to changing “short-lived political initiatives”, which created a “policy driven marketplace” with its “buzzwords” that dictated the expectations of outdoor programmes. In **Ben**’s view this field was “constantly justifying itself in relation to the marketplace” and sought to address the kind of campaigns that “lobby to the government for funding”. While education for sustainability was identified as a growing field, the strongest financial incentives were aimed at PSD schemes that “intervene with youths who had lost their way ... become marginalised ... or were psychologically or socially challenged”. It was only **Ben** who claimed that this growth in funding coincided with “good research and good evaluation”.

**David** discussed the financial pressures that universities experienced. **David's** account appeared to suggest that universities were increasingly developing a financial focus and therefore omitting to pioneer new academic perspectives. **David** associated this predicament with a “cost-benefit philosophy” which has attracted programme directors at universities to target lucrative degrees. As a consequence, he felt that universities were “not ontologically grounded” and often were “chasing pots of money”.

All respondents felt, at various degrees, that statutory influences had been imposed in the school curriculum. **Ben, David** and **Colin** felt these influences could be seen through the development of overt learning aims and objectives, which have been designed to enforce certain PSD practices by the British government: e.g. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) at secondary level, ‘Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning’ (SEAL) for primary schools and ‘Emotional Literacy and Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills’ (SEBS) for the secondary level. Although **Ben, David** and **Colin** spoke of the impact statutory influences were having on PSD practice in schools they did not go into detail about how these influences are being operationalised throughout the OE sector.

**Andrew** and **Colin** spoke about the degree of influence that government input has on school curricula and the practice of PSD. **Andrew** spoke of how the demand for PSD schemes was channelled through the influential role of local authority OE advisors and they “almost vetoed where schools are going” and thus acted as an important “filter”. However in **Colin's** view, statutory input only had a moderate influence on the curriculum. He cited the ‘Manifesto for Learning Outside the Classroom’ launched in 2005, which he felt would “not be sustained over time” and thus would “tend to lose its force”.

**Colin** was the only participant who touched upon international influences that transcend the national origin of OE. Based upon his interaction with international students, **Colin** felt that international influences have great value. He saw the Anglo-American-Australian body of students providing a platform on which “we just

exchange ideas and influences”. These students had “worked in OE centres all over the world” and he felt that this exchange of ideas had an enriching influence on the practice of OE and PSD.

All participants discussed the impact of social influences on OE and PSD. Social influences create change by reacting to problems within society and by using PSD as a vehicle to improve aspects of society. An example of this was highlighted by **Ben**, who identified a “social trend” whereby issues of ‘dysfunctional’ youth are currently influencing the PSD sector. He spoke of a “nation” that was experiencing a “moral panic” around young people as criminals, who were excluded and marginalised from schooling, and young people who are “unfit and overweight”. **Ben** stated, “Yes, we have in this country the habit of having moral panics about young people every 20 years or so, and we are having one now”.

All participants perceived the role of therapy as a growing influence complementing traditional PSD programmes. **Andrew** felt that the “nation” recognised two major trends of therapy emerging; first, the “potential for the outdoors to confront problems”, and second for “seeing the outdoors for what it is in terms of spirituality and in seeing the great wonders of the outdoors”.

The therapeutic potential of PSD had an impact on the OE sector in different ways. At university level, **Andrew** discussed how PSD courses, orientated towards youth-work are increasingly merging with courses such as social work and counselling. In the context of practice, **Ben** saw an emerging interest in therapeutic educational welfare, which has led to an increased focus on the individual with his “particular set of experiences and needs” rather than on a “coherent group” as the focus of attention/facilitation. **Ben** stated:

I think a trend will appear out of therapy and other forms of intervention. The idea of the group will be partly challenged. Everything in the outdoors at the moment is done in groups, and the group is treated as a coherent group, with a coherent set of needs. I think that will break down a little because people



will start to recognise that each individual has a particular set of experiences and particular set of needs and you need to integrate those on a personal rather than a social level in some cases. I think that's the role of therapy. It will particularly bring that in to our practice. It's already bringing it in educational welfare.

**David** talked more generally about the therapy trend that is impacting OE. He felt that it has enormous implications in the field because it is the most valid reason, in relation to “evidence-based practice”, for taking people outdoors. In his view it can result in “profound curative effects”. **David** also went further to discuss these curative, therapeutic effects experienced in OE as a result of the “relationship between individual and places”.

### **Summary**

Although there were some mixed views between the participants as to what influences the field of OE and PSD, and to what degree, it is clear that in the opinion of the participants these disciplines are not resistant to trends within society. The practices of OE and PSD seem both malleable and reactive to external influences. The respondents have identified that at present, financial, statutory, global and social welfare influences shape the sector.

### **8.3.3. Moving towards the environmental domain**

This sub-theme identifies the tension surrounding the transition of PSD dominated by an anthropocentric philosophy to a more ecological philosophy. All participants acknowledged a growing ecological consciousness within PSD practice, but they differed in their views about how this translated into current practices.

**Colin** perceived a general increase in the sector's awareness wherein “clearly everybody was aware of environmental pressures”. He felt that practitioners were “not explicit about the green bit all the time” but rather that there exists a “quiet message” within the field regarding green issues, which is implicitly interwoven into

educational practice. However, he felt that the field has a tendency towards a unilateral approach where PSD related learning would attempt to “make you bigger and better and more important than the person next to you”.

**Ben** spoke about a “major trend” associated with “increasing demands” for educational services to address sustainability, which mirrors current societal shifts. He felt that these changes were, at best, leading only cautiously towards sustainable development. **David** shared **Ben**’s view and they both thought that to date EE has not been significantly translated into the practise of PSD. **David** mentioned his own research that found schools often opted for PSD rather than environment-focused schemes and that they “nearly always ask for personal and social work because they believe that pupils behave well and develop good relationships with the teacher”. In **Ben**’s view, recent statutory changes such as the introduction of education for sustainability may lead to a slightly increased focus, reducing the scope of education for citizenship, personal, social and health education (PSHE).

**Andrew** perceived the practice of PSD to be undecided and “not significantly driven in any direction” with regard to either ecological or anthropocentric agendas. **Andrew** felt that there would increasingly become a ‘demarcated’ parallel growth of both a PSD rationale and environmentally driven rationale. In the face of a growing societal pressure for environmental and sustainability education, **Ben**, in the same vein as **Andrew**, predicted the continuance of PSD as a demarcated domain that is anthropocentric in nature. He stated:

I think the majority of the infrastructure we have now will stay with PSD because that is established. I think what will become more environmentally focused, if it does, will actually be new practice going up in new spaces. I don’t think it will actually trespass entirely or to any great degree in what already goes on, because they are very established in their practice ... The schools and the communities really like it.

**David**, however, saw the emergence of the environmental paradigm encroaching onto PSD, initially at university level. He felt that in the future, this shift towards EE would be recognised as a “significant period in the development of OE”. In his personal view he saw this transition as OE’s “finest hour”, guided by authors in the field who addressed the “generative paradigm”, advocating a “holistic PSD” which encompasses the ecological agenda.

### **Summary**

The majority of participants saw an inertia (if not complacency) amidst ecological concerns throughout society that favoured a traditional PSD approach. While one respondent identified a strong trend for sustainability to complement the rationale for PSD, the remainder alluded more to its implicit role as an undercurrent for outdoor-related PSD schemes.

#### **8.3.4. The consolidation of PSD**

This sub-theme encompasses views about development towards a more consolidated and established practice of PSD. Participants discussed their ideas about the increasing professionalisation of PSD practice and underlying influences. The participants also spoke of a disagreement between practice and academia concerning what constitutes the development of an established practice. Disagreement about the way that PSD should be developed was also found within differing academic views.

**Andrew** felt that initiatives for health and safety as exemplified by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS) “breathing down your neck” had brought about change that has increasingly professionalised the practice of PSD. He spoke of the development of a “professionalised facilitative body”, however, with more of a focus on quantifications and certificates. **Andrew** also saw another less professionalised side to PSD practice underpinned by an unreasoned rationale, and he reflected about “what we are doing and how we are doing it”. Although he thought the field showed elements of “established” practice, he felt it only superficially addressed the

developmental side of PSD because programmes were often ‘diluted’ to include wider agendas of environmental and activity-based interests. He saw a lack in the core PSD components (e.g. self-esteem and self-confidence), which, he believed, programmes are currently failing to cover in any depth. **Andrew** felt that there was a dearth of knowledge in organisations and the wider field as to who were the real PSD experts, stating, “I don’t think we know who the people are that can talk informatively about PSD in the outdoors”. He spoke of a lack of insight amongst lecturers and practitioners saying, “I can’t imagine *that person* ... who has sufficient knowledge of PSE [personal and social education] that they can talk informatively about the spectrum of PSD related dimensions”.

Similarly, **David** also discussed the idea of increased professionalisation and established practice within the field. He felt this was occurring as a response to a rising safety culture as more and more schools and youth-group organisations referred to professionals for OE. **David** spoke of the emergence of a new “culture of litigation” which has some direct negative consequences on the clients’ experiences though the “decline in adventure” due to it being deemed as too risky. Consequently he envisioned new avenues in which “adventure” would be “redefined and expanded” including a new “milder” notion of “adventure” such as “turning over stones to see what is beneath it and feeling the excitement of finding out”.

**Colin** held a different view about the way in which the field is developing. He felt that over the last 20 to 30 years, the practice of PSD has become more reflective. **Colin** did not speak of the field establishing itself in terms of professionalisation as such, but spoke of the development of a more informed rationale for learning in the outdoors and an increasing understanding of the transfer of learning experiences. He stated:

We are better now at understanding how the learning, derived from the outdoor work, can transfer to become useful for youngsters in their own lives at home ... We are much better now using a risk assessment on a rock climb and transferring that to a risk assessment to decide whether to take drugs when you offered them in a discotheque on a Saturday night.

Some of the participants talked directly about the underlying influences affecting the development and establishment of PSD practice. **Andrew** and **Colin** spoke about the influential nature of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) and the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres network (AHOEC). They felt that these institutions were an important avenue by which change, new developments and initiatives from the outside world would be spread very quickly to all the different networks. **Andrew** spoke of a “recent effect in the last 4 to 5 years” since initiatives such as the “Accredited Practitioner Certificate” (APIOL) achieved “growing credibility”. He emphasised the implications that it had for the individual practitioner because it supported the “holistic perception of a practitioner being a facilitator for learning how to deal with people, make sound decisions and manage others’ learning”.

All participants also spoke of the increasing establishment of outdoor-related PSD as a separate entity within Higher Education courses. **Andrew** spoke of how this is essentially changing “the way people thought about the outdoors”. **Ben** felt that the “growth of specialised degrees” is helping to “raise the standards” of practitioners. He thought that the specialised study of PSD is transforming the original more “coherent” and general OE degree qualification into separated “distinctive pathways” resulting in specialised, niche qualifications. **David** spoke of how his own university offered “three distinct categories” of courses. Both **David** and **Ben** rejected these developments, with **David** stating that in his personal view, it was “wrong to completely separate people into specialities”.

It is evident, from the participants’ accounts, that academics’ view of their own academic sector and of practice differ as to how PSD should develop and establish itself. **Andrew** discussed how practice and academia are not united on “definitional stuff”, such as philosophies and terminology. **David** saw changes within academia being guided by the notion of “holistic PSD”. He also spoke of the degree of “informed-ness”, guided by an “intellectual hierarchy” that tried to define practice. **David** felt that academia lacked a realistic insight and that outdoor-related PSD has been “over-theorised” in relation to what people in practice are actually doing.

There appears not only to be differing perspectives between academics' view of practice and academia regarding how outdoor-related PSD should develop, but also within academia itself. **Colin** described the academic field as exhibiting no "consensus" among lecturers who take different ontological stances regarding PSD. **Ben** held a unique view on this matter. He felt that the current and growing pedagogical debate about outdoor-related PSD in academia was actually uncovering the differing perspectives. **Ben** thought that realising these fragmented perspectives will enable the academic sector to more clearly address how they can work towards a united perspective:

I think you see a pedagogic debate going on. Even a conflict taking place: which should be the right way to practice? And if we allow several forms for practice, than the next question would be: what is all this sort of practice best for? ... What's adventure education, outdoor leadership, outdoor education in the community, outdoor experiential learning best for? Once you have defined it, what's it then good for? So there is a sense in which we are building a research pyramid: What have we got? How is it distinctive from other things? Which might be the level we are at? What does it do? And the last state would be: who benefits? I think we are in this pyramid of working things out maybe.

### **Summary**

The insights provided about how outdoor-related PSD practice is establishing itself vary between participants however there are some united opinions. It seems that the main body of PSD practice is becoming more established in terms of professionalisation and increased understanding into learning and transfer. Also participants unanimously felt that PSD was becoming more established and independent within Higher Education. There appears to be some difference in perspectives between these academics' views of practice and academia, and also within academia between lecturers as to how PSD should develop. Some participants commented on the implications of these developments within PSD practice. The professionalisation of PSD is causing the intensity of the experience out of doors to



be redefined into a softer and safer form. This professionalisation also seems to be having an impact on the individual practitioner. Their credibility through certificates is redefining their roles from guides and leaders towards facilitators and managers.

### **8.3.5. Marketplace**

This sub-theme discusses the recent shifts that have been occurring in the marketplace. The participants discussed changes in the user-groups and the types of PSD programmes along with the changing roles of schools within the marketplace.

**Ben** felt that children of primary school age (10-11 years old) were being increasingly targeted rather than those in secondary education (14-18 years old). He suggested the change in client groups has had a “big impact upon learning outcomes. **Ben** also saw an age-shift towards certain groups of older participants; primarily marginalised youth. He spoke of how, currently, 1.2 million youths between 18 and 25 years old were identified as NEETS (‘Not in Education or Employment or Training’ [recently changed to ‘more choices and more chances’]). This section of the population is increasingly being targeted by governmental campaigns:

So the big funding was going into the ‘16 plus’ age group five years ago. Now the funding is going into thirteen year olds and even younger in order to prevent issues arising that would lead to the marginalising of 16 year olds. So that funding has shifted back down the age spectrum.

All participants, except **Colin**, commented on a current shift towards a more therapeutic and preventative market in PSD as opposed to the more old-fashioned corrective one. **Ben** spoke of the increasing influence of “values and ideologies of therapy” within the sector and felt it was already beginning to inform practice currently taking place in the outdoors, particularly “therapists and counsellors working in educational welfare”.



All participants agreed that the ‘young people market’ was the dominant platform for PSD and the ‘adult market’ was of lesser prominence. **Ben** and **Colin** discussed the “youth expedition market”, which is becoming a big business, enticing youth with glossy brochures, exotic destinations and life-changing experiences. **Colin** felt that the driving force for the youth expeditions market was linked to changes in “youngster’s expectations” and increasing competition among “half a dozen big companies”. Faced with a choice between remote expeditions or local excursions potential clients seem to favour the former. Consequently distant or foreign venues become increasingly attractive as one “climbs a snowy peak and then helps to build a health clinic in a village” (**Colin**).

**Ben** also linked the popularity of youth expeditions with the “historical passion that the British have for overseas expeditions”. **Ben** however questioned the future momentum of overseas youth expeditions, speaking of the foreseeable problems in terms of sustainability.

It will be interesting also to see what happens to the idea of the overseas expeditions as they get more expensive and as it gets ethically more problematic to travel by air.

**Ben**, **Colin** and **David** saw a trend within schools where originally they used to provide PSD in-house but nowadays they were increasingly outsourcing PSD to OE centres. **David** thought this outsourcing was due to a rise in the “safety culture”, while **Colin** linked it to a disinclination among teachers to play a pro-active part in OE: “They don’t put up a poster on the notice board saying: ‘want to come to camp for the weekend? Meet me by the minibus at four a clock on Friday.’” **Ben** thought that it was to do with the fact that “student lifes became busier” and increasingly “assessment focused” on cognitive skills along with “less inclined teachers” overburdened by administrative loads.

## **Summary**

There is a consensus that outdoor-related PSD programmes are beginning to address alternative markets. In particular there has been a shift towards overseas youth expeditions and therapeutic PSD programmes targeting marginalised youth. Most participants talked about the changing roles of schools in 'the marketplace'. While in the past, schooling was the foremost formative experience in relation to PSD there appears to be a trend that this is increasingly supplemented through PSD provision through outdoor centres.

## CHAPTER NINE - Norway Findings

### 9.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the interviews from the four Norwegian participants (peer-selected academic staff from Norwegian universities) who took part in the study. The participants' comments, observations and perceptions reflected the multiplicity of rationales currently prevalent in the general discourse on Friluftsliv - and its relation to PSD. During the data analysis, the two main themes that emerged for the British findings were applied to the Norwegian data and were deemed appropriate units of analysis for understanding the reflected contemporary influences and perceived future trends in relation to Friluftsliv and PSD related dimensions. Each theme encompasses quotes from the Norwegian transcripts that have been translated into English. The super-ordinate themes focused on:

- 1) Conceptual issues
- 2) Contemporary changes in the field

The concept of focus in this study, outdoor-related PSD, is commonly viewed as Anglo-American in nature and was found not to be overtly discussed and practiced as an independent entity in mainstream Norwegian Friluftsliv. Therefore, during the interview process it seemed that the Norwegian participants were less reflective about the concept of PSD and struggled to de-contextualise it from the over-arching practice of Friluftsliv.

The data that follows have important implications for the relationship between PSD and Friluftsliv in the Norwegian context. Because the discourse of PSD in Norwegian Friluftsliv is relatively limited, many of the views provided within this chapter are a combination of the rhetoric,<sup>36</sup> complemented by the personal views of the participants. Participants were assigned pseudonyms (**Anders, Bjørn, Carl, Dag**) which are used throughout this chapter to maintain anonymity. The pseudonyms

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<sup>36</sup> Although the term 'rhetoric' might denote a pejorative meaning, in this context, however, the term 'rhetoric' is used to describe the 'agreed' or 'perceived' collective commentary by peers of the field on Friluftsliv.

reflect the gender of the participants, with the exception of one who was a female participant.

## 9.2. Conceptual issues

The transcripts showed that all participants aired their views (explicitly or implicitly) on issues surrounding the rationale and pedagogical contents of Friluftsliv and its relation to PSD. The conceptual aspects discussed have been collated in three sub-themes:

- Terminology
- Core elements of Friluftsliv
- Status of PSD within Friluftsliv

### 9.2.1. Terminology

The term PSD was not viewed as a stand alone concept within the Norwegian Friluftsliv discourse. Rather, it was understood as a more underlying component of Friluftsliv and therefore the participants struggled to speak of any terms they would commonly use to specifically describe outdoor-related PSD. The term ‘experiential learning’ combined with ‘in a special outdoor context’ resonated with most participants. **Bjørn** preferred the term “Friluftsliv as a pedagogical-psychological working-method” but he felt that the phrase “instrumental Friluftsliv” was in itself an oxymoron as it “contributed to a fruitless contestation” of the term “Friluftsliv in-and-of-itself”.

**Carl** was “in doubt” about an agreed terminology that embraced outdoor-related PSD within the Norwegian debate. **Carl** thought that most commonly his colleagues “only say Friluftsliv” when talking about the instrumental aspect of Friluftsliv. Although he personally referred to the term “experiential learning” as an all-encompassing title for pedagogical work related to Friluftsliv, he reiterated that outdoor-related PSD was rather a “component” of Friluftsliv that addresses a “special objective”, not a concept in itself. **Dag** referred to the notion of PSD within

Friluftsliv as “competence of relation”. Although he considered that this phrase was not “explicitly emphasised” within the field, it nevertheless addresses the students capacities to develop relationships and communication skills with both individuals and groups.

### **Summary**

It was understood that in Norwegian Friluftsliv discourse there is currently no common term used for PSD. Rather than PSD being viewed as an independent concept, it is seen as an instrumental component of Friluftsliv. The term experiential learning was viewed by most participants to be linked with PSD but not synonymous to it.

### **9.2.2. Core elements of Friluftsliv**

The Norwegian participants elaborated on the core elements of Friluftsliv as opposed to PSD, therefore, the focus in this subsection is on Friluftsliv and how PSD is placed within this discipline.

In a more philosophical and rhetorical sense, all four participants discussed the rationale underpinning Friluftsliv as an educational concept, which is predominantly rooted in an ecological ontology. An individual’s unspoken and subjective relationship with nature is understood to be the central component for learning and development as opposed to a more anthropocentric and instrumental approach linked with PSD. **Bjørn** described the domain of Friluftsliv not as a “means to something else” and “an expression for a relation to nature”. **Anders** summarised this view point by saying:

Of course a lot of people [in Norway] react against the notion of Friluftsliv as instrumental, as a vehicle for something else. And they talk about Friluftsliv as an ‘in-and-of-itself’ approach [Friluftsliv som ‘egenverdi’]. And without translating it, without justifying it, that it leads to something else.

**Carl** added that this commonly held view of Friluftsliv was reinforced and disseminated into the culture by Norwegian lecturers who had developed these views from their personal formative experiences. This philosophy is being “kept alive” through their current teaching practice. Furthermore, **Carl** emphasised that lecturers “have felt” and “still feel” a very strong connection to the belief that being outdoors is guided by a notion of “in-and-of itself” where one “revitalises”, where “it feels good to be outside” and where one “develops recreationally due to the experience out there”.

Despite the commonly held philosophical view of Friluftsliv (discussed above), participants felt that the practice of Norwegian Friluftsliv adopted an integrated and holistic approach to learning. Most participants also discussed the more instrumental uses of Friluftsliv that can be found in some practices.

**Anders** discussed the holistic, all-inclusive perspective that he felt characterised the rationale for Friluftsliv practice, which he described as a rejection of a compartmentalisation of PSD and thus “leaving the constraints of a box”. Moreover, he suggested that the field largely welcomed an approach where the individual was seen in relation to “the total weave within which he functions”. Thus, Friluftsliv was “deeper and more multi-dimensional” and “dealt with the entire person in relation to the embeddedness in the setting of nature”.

Suggesting similar holistic connotations, **Bjørn** referred to a contrast of an “explicit Anglo-American” tradition and a “Nordic approach” wherein the latter applied aspects of PSD to “complex”, “integrated” dimensions of the self, which he felt worked “best” for the Scandinavian audience. For **Bjørn**, Friluftsliv was seen as an “expression for a relationship with nature” and the “foundation of holistic thinking” that constituted an “inseparable unity” encompassing “the psychological and social implication” intimately embedded with the “encounter with nature”. Furthermore, **Bjørn** emphasised that through an encounter with nature, the “activities” and both the social aspect and the thought of Friluftsliv would focus on the “integrated person”:

You are actualising both the encounter with nature that constitutes both psychological and social implications, which are located in the foundation of holistic thinking. Thus, for me it is not separated but closely connected.

**Bjørn** also spoke of how, in discourse, PSD can be found within the guidelines for the National Curriculum (Læreplan 97). He felt in this context that it was based around the concept of an “integrated human being” which he goes on to explain:

In the pedagogical work with Friluftsliv it is indeed about enabling people’s balance. It can be discussed if this can be called ‘the integrated human being’ [referring to National Curriculum]. However, the developmental processes which the individual goes through in the context of the encounter with nature, through activities, through both the social side, through Friluftsliv’s reflexivity, are based on the expectation that through the ways of being together, the ways you work, the way you encounter nature make a difference which helps the individual on her/his way to become an integrated human being.

**Bjørn** highlighted an instrumental strand of Friluftsliv that he referred to as “pedagogical work with Friluftsliv”. He suggested that this more instrumental element is practised in various arenas and that each has evolved its own particular form, spanning a whole spectrum of activities from recreational goals to skills-based training, but also addressing educational, developmental and therapeutical objectives:

You have an education in Friluftsliv where the aim is that some people will learn something new ... Additionally one could say there is one rather more ‘developmental’ level ... you can say that you have a therapeutical use of Friluftsliv where you more typically, maybe, have those who display so-called dysfunctional behaviour or not constructive behaviour. It can be juvenile youth ... however it deals with a totally different form of ‘focused’ Friluftsliv activities which trigger self-reflection such as: ‘OK! How are my coping strategies? What are my behavioural patterns?’ ... It can address self-



confidence, self-image. It can address communication; it can address temperament. It can address all these qualities. So I think we shall not see Friluftsliv and pedagogical work with Friluftsliv in unison.

**Carl** held a similar view towards the ontology of Friluftsliv, describing holistic values and perceiving PSD related Friluftsliv as “a component of something bigger”, associated with an “inner wholeness” influenced by the “older generation of lecturers”:

Those who are influential in the education of Norwegian Friluftsliv have a kind of inner holism in mind when one thinks about education. This will lead to that one looks at fragments or parts of it, e.g. individual or social development, as part of something bigger. Well, the big values for me are embedded in this wholeness.

**Carl** also discussed the instrumental “component of Friluftsliv”. He described this ‘domain’ as a legitimate role in practice where a number of institutions throughout Norway were applying more PSD related aspects of Friluftsliv - either preventative or orientated towards therapy. However, **Carl** considered this practice not to be specifically established within the traditional concept of Friluftsliv but more peripheral to its definitional boundaries. He judged the instrumental component as unworthy of association with Friluftsliv as a philosophy. **Carl** reiterated that Friluftsliv comprises “simple” contemplative dimensions such as “nature experience” and “silence”, which was seen as an alignment with the notion of a “simple life” - the latter leading to an “enriched, high quality life”, which engenders an “affinity with nature”.

**Dag** paralleled his peers’ views regarding a holistic PSD approach. He stressed the importance of incorporating PSD into the prevailing ethos of Friluftsliv but by “developing from within” to ensure Friluftsliv incorporates both a “quality in relation to development of perspectives on nature as well as relations with other human beings.” He also reflected upon the resistance towards explicit PSD programmes

(compared to practices outside Norway) stating that an explicit approach might appear “artificial” and display an “inappropriateness” at odds with the Norwegian tradition of Friluftsliv.

**Dag** held a similar view to that of **Carl**. He spoke of the diversity of the educational foundations of Friluftsliv, which in his view comprise three component-parts, wherein skills-based training [færdelskompetense], competence of facilitation [formidlingskompetense] and PSD [relasjonskompetense] appear to be integrated components. However, **Dag** went on to say that the latter component (PSD) had a negligible influence on the Friluftsliv discourse.

### **Summary**

The philosophy of Friluftsliv is grounded in an ecological ontology whereby learning and development is believed to occur through an unspoken and reflective relationship with nature. This view is reinforced in the field by long-standing lecturers. In practice, Friluftsliv has adopted a holistic and integrated approach which rejects the compartmentalisation of Anglo-American PSD, embracing the entire person in relation to nature. Overt instrumental PSD has become legitimised only in some specific arenas (e.g. therapeutic).

### **9.2.3. The status of PSD within Friluftsliv**

Participants discussed the status of PSD within the wider context of Friluftsliv. This sub-theme encompasses participants’ views about both mainstream and more peripheral Friluftsliv practices that would seem to exist in some albeit few Norwegian academic institutions and the wider field of Friluftsliv.

Although PSD is articulated in curriculum documents for indoor schooling, **Anders** felt that PSD related aspects lacked “significant prominence” in both indoor and outdoor education. He spoke of there being a substantial gap between what is supposed to be done and what is in fact engaged in by teachers and pupils at a practical level. **Anders** did, however, acknowledge that the social dimension of PSD

was more likely to be focused on leaving the personal dimension somewhat neglected.

The area of group activities, of co-operative kinds of dimensions of the educational process, this is often elevated and given prominence. And so the 'S' [participant's own emphasis] word there in PSD, I think, this is relatively well focused. Whether it is effectively done and what the cost may be to the 'P' word in PSD? I am personally concerned that there is too much focus on 'S' and not enough on 'P' *generally* in education. And in the outdoors because most of this is done in a pretty intensively social atmosphere more so than in 'indoor' schooling then the 'S' dimension becomes *even more* dramatic in Friluftsliv and especially when there are really too many people out doing Friluftsliv together.

**Dag** also associated PSD with a focus on predominately social dimensions originating in "empathy expressed in various ways". He perceived the domain as comprising a kaleidoscope of attributes such as: being in a "relational context with other people", "internal relations within groups", issues of dispute within a group or the creation of "good relations" and communication "with diverse groups".

**Carl** took a slightly different view as he associated the concept of "self sufficiency" with PSD related learning in Friluftsliv. He also stressed the importance of group-sufficiency and problem-solving, relating this specifically to the support and rescue of comrades within the group during crisis situations, which he perceived as a means of developing and improving "social relations".

It [PSD] is also an element, in relation to other norms, which has been informing Friluftsliv in all those years: that you have to be self-sufficient, to be able to solve problems. Comrade-rescue techniques: one should not rely on external help and organised rescue. At least not as a first option. As a group one should thrive in daily situations also in crisis-situations in the outdoors so well that you solve things with those you share company with. This will also

give good social relations. I think elements of this have been there all the time.

**Bjørn** associated PSD in Friluftsliv with “self-development” that would incorporate contemplative values such as “inner balance”, to “rest in one self” or to pursue “inner calm”. It would be combined with the “inclusion of co-operative skills”, although distinct from archaic themes relating to “old Nansen with vigour and force in the encounter with the great nature”. Furthermore, learning processes that address personal development within the realms of Friluftsliv as a “pedagogical-psychological working-method” would, in **Bjørn**’s view, comprise e.g. self-assertiveness, social competency of reflection, emotional competency and a sense for aesthetics.

Well I think in this area one is mostly concerned with ‘self development’: to develop balance, to rest in oneself, to find inner peace. Well, they are constituted of the old ideals of peace and quietness and balance: the contemplative values ... But I believe definitely that the focus is more on self-development, basically without it being defined, without it being expressed. It is based on the potential for co-operation. This is something typically one would incorporate. So you have something where you in a way assert yourself. But it is not in the spirit ‘à la old Nansen’ with force and courage and the encounter with the grandeur of nature.

All participants referred some regard to a parallel but somewhat separate outdoor-related PSD discourse which was being practiced at other faculties of education, alternative school-forms [Folkehøgskole] or therapeutical institutions. This peripheral yet more overt discourse was perceived by participants to transcend the ‘traditional’ boundaries of academic Friluftsliv courses. For example, **Anders** felt that an overt PSD rationale was least dominant at university level and was most resonant in ‘folk high schools’<sup>37</sup> [Folkehøgskoler] and therapeutical institutions.

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<sup>37</sup> Voluntary non-vocational Norwegian ‘boarding’ - school (9 month course; not exclusively residential). Around 80 ‘folk high schools’ exist of which approximately 40 offer Friluftsliv as a main

**Bjørn** highlighted the contrast he saw between these differing practices of Friluftsliv. The traditional HE courses in Friluftsliv emphasise nature whereas in contrast, teacher-training courses include a more informed discourse on PSD-related Friluftsliv. **Bjørn** referred to contributions by Jordet (2007) relating to curriculum-based outdoor learning as a weekly or biweekly “outdoor school” day for school children [uteskole] aged 7-16 years, and ongoing PhD research by Sølvi (Department of Special Needs Education, University of Oslo) on social-pedagogical dimensions related to Friluftsliv as current examples for an increase in interest of outdoor-related PSD. **Bjørn** stated:

You will see that for the Friluftsliv training courses within the leading institutions ... Friluftsliv [is] more directed, maybe, towards the notion of ‘group-journeying’ in diverse nature settings, which involves different activity strategies. That includes activities dealing with coastal life, canoe-paddling on placid water and on rivers and it would include winter-mountaineering with snow caving and some more traditional activities. And therefore it is a contrast to many teacher-training colleges which rather try more campus-based Friluftsliv concerned with how it can be applied in different pedagogical settings: be it kindergarten or school.

**Bjørn** had a growing interest in therapeutical related Friluftsliv. However, when lecturing on the “potential for self-development through Friluftsliv”, university students’ reaction would indicate that many considered it a “novelty”. **Bjørn** concluded that it is an uncharted field that had yet to be formally documented.

Similarly, **Carl** also talked about an overt PSD approach being discussed outside of the ‘traditional’ sphere of Friluftsliv. He noted the distinction between “ordinary Friluftsliv” - taught devoid of instrumental learning objectives at HE level, and Friluftsliv that was “devised specifically as a therapy” located in “institutions working at a preventative level”. However, the participants considered this less

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subject. These institutions are non-examination schools; nevertheless by completing a year’s studies students can gain points towards his/her application to universities and colleges.

acknowledged approach of Friluftsliv as constituting a “different professional domain” in which “elements of Friluftsliv” can be “extremely effective in special situations”.

**Carl** drew on an example to back up this view about a tentative growing emphasis on PSD in Friluftsliv. He referred to comments made by a prominent Norwegian General during his inaugural speech, which addressed the implications of the ‘Centre of Nature-life and Mountaineering’ [Norges Høgfjellsskole] during the celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of its founder, Nils Faarlund. Here, the General refers to the training of young soldiers and its impact on PSD-related learning outcomes. **Carl** reported the General’s comments in the following way:

Maybe the most important capital they [young recruits] are equipped with when they operate internationally is the background in Friluftsliv they have received in Hemsedalen [location where courses are run by ‘Centre of Nature-life and Mountaineering’; Norges Høgfjellsskole] and in the fjells. And it is not about the way one navigates in terrain. It concerns one’s mind-frame and the way one co-operates with others; the way you encounter people. This was what he [the General] pointed out to be the most important things that the military has learnt in the context of Friluftsliv since 1967/68. If it has not been an explicitly expressed element, it, nevertheless, has been an important element ... This has been inherent in Norwegian Friluftsliv maybe always.

**Carl** viewed military, youth at risk and therapeutic groups as being strongly impacted by outdoor-related PSD practices. Conversely, he felt that PSD’s systematic implementation as a pedagogical working method for “ordinary pupils” appeared to have only a subsidiary role in the practice of Friluftsliv.

### **Summary**

In Friluftsliv taught at university level, outdoor-related PSD does not have a strong holding and there is more likely to be a focus on social as opposed to personal

dimensions. However, in teacher-training courses and therapeutic practices and in lower levels of academia such as ‘folk high-schools’ [Folkehøgskoler], there is a separate school of thought which, rather than having its primary focus on nature, is more informed and impacted by PSD discourse.

### **9.3. Contemporary changes in the field**

This second superordinate theme called ‘contemporary changes in the field’ is concerned with the current tensions that exist within the domain of Norwegian Friluftsliv, which are impacting on the nature of PSD-related Friluftsliv practice. There are four sub-themes within this section:

- Is PSD related Friluftsliv evolving?
- External influences
- Resistance towards an anthropocentric domain
- The marketplace /usergroup

#### **9.3.1. Is PSD related Friluftsliv evolving?**

Participants discussed ideas about the direction in which the field of Friluftsliv was moving in Norway. Most participants spoke on one hand about the field being inert and not developing, whilst on the other hand acknowledging the occurrence of some forms of change and development.

#### **9.3.2. Inertia**

**Anders** felt the Norwegian discourse had failed to embrace the overt dimensions of PSD and as a result had not only “not consolidated” but had actually adopted a “critical approach” towards the integration of instrumental PSD into the rationale of Friluftsliv, which would continue to inform the field’s aversion to an “anthropocentric PSD” stance. Following this line of thought globalisation and international influences were often viewed as “negative” influences. The future



would require a discussion of “how we handle this from a Nordic aspect”? Do we look to adapt and integrate PSD practices into Friluftsliv or do we keep it out?

On a provider level **Bjørn** perceived complacency among health-related institutions when it came to addressing therapeutic PSD-related dimensions. They had “not initiated further research”, had not “reflected thoroughly on their work” and had not applied commonly appreciated principles. **Carl** spoke of the future direction of outdoor-related PSD in HE institutions. He felt that academia had made only limited contributions to the field. He concluded that little has been “written or formulated” on the subject but he predicted “more would come”. Thus, due to increasing academisation of the field wherein one learns to “analyse” and “write assignments” one might expect a concomitant rise in awareness on these matters. **Carl** stated:

But then gradually there are more and more Higher Education institutions who have an education which trains you. Then you learn how to analyse, then you learn to write. You have to write essays, you have to write assignments which deal with this [PSD]. You are obliged to formulate. I believe that there will be more of those things, explicated.

**Dag**'s account comprised the most critical evaluation of Higher Education lecturers, talking of complacency and claiming that those within the field “overslept”, in terms of not following up on the need to change, while the job market made demands on Friluftsliv. **Dag** also said that “course directors for Friluftsliv at Higher Education level” should acquire a more thorough understanding of PSD that he referred to as “relational competencies” [relasjons-kompetanse] addressing interpersonal skills. Higher Education institutions would need to re-assess their educational policies as “one had much to learn”. However, **Dag** acknowledged that changes had to be developed from “within” the value system of Friluftsliv by readdressing the composition of these values.

All participants discussed the ecological focus of the field. **Anders** felt that the field's overall influence reflected a green agenda with a "kind of resurrection of the deep-ecology era" which had waned in the 1990s.

I think the nature protection dimension may counteract some of the more invasive types of Friluftsliv and thereby work toward further more deeply-anchored, simplistic and more traditional forms of Friluftsliv.

**Dag** highlighted the "recently stirred" student-initiated interest in environmental issues. He felt this "new spring" would emerge as a backdrop for discussions on climate-change, thereby deflecting attention from other domains on the current agenda. **Bjørn** talked of how governmental white papers virtually ignored PSD. Overall he perceived a growing trend towards traditional, natural Friluftsliv steered by white papers whose remit was to counteract the loss of traditional Friluftsliv.

Through school reforms, that is when Friluftsliv is elevated to prominence. First in 1986, then more recently in 1997 and with 'campaign for the rise of knowledge' [LK 06; kunnskapsløftet; year 2006]. The focus will be bigger on nature related to Friluftsliv in schools and teaching. And this is fuelled by concern for youth who go the other way: youth who break the mould of traditional Friluftsliv! And again here they are met with older peoples' scepticism. And this will focus precisely on Friluftsliv. Now we have to get more Friluftsliv into the schools because here we have generations which don't go on tours in the forests or mountains.

### 9.3.3. Change

**Anders** was the only participant who did not talk about future developments of Friluftsliv. **Bjørn** thought increased competition and growth undermined the "monopoly" on the rationale for Friluftsliv at more 'traditionally-focused' HE faculties. Since the 1990s this trend appears to have led to the development of Friluftsliv courses with specialist aspects such as "pedagogical Friluftsliv", sport-

focused strands of “expedition-Friluftsliv” and public health. He said that in years to come such courses would become more “visible”. There would be a “continued and enforced” PSD-related trend within “pedagogical Friluftsliv” due to a new generation that would show “less anchorage in culture”. Nevertheless, he felt the rationale for PSD would remain “rooted in complexity and wholeness”.

**Bjørn** cautiously speculated that in future outdoor-related PSD would be more prevalent in school and curriculum-based outdoor learning as interest grew in a “number of interpersonal qualities” and “how children/youth interacted with each other”. He noted that PSD was addressed, as it would be conveyed equally through activities such as music and PE lessons. He concluded that future increase in outdoor-related PSD would depend on the interest of individual lecturers at Higher Education courses. **Bjørn** also predicted a growth of the more social focus of PSD in the field of teacher-training courses, where “social aspects” would be more influential than “individual development” and “coping strategies”.

**Carl** acknowledged the “extreme difficulty” in predicting trends, but perceived a growing appreciation of PSD because the “development of personality” had attracted attention and “more people spoke about it”, particularly those graduating from Bø University College in Norwegian Friluftsliv, who would “subsequently influence” the field when they started working as practitioners in Norwegian Friluftsliv. He predicted moderate development of PSD within domains such as extreme sports and the environmental field, which had received “enormous attention” within the past decade; but he foresaw a stronger focus on PSD-related work with dysfunctional groups. Overall **Carl** predicted a somewhat stronger development in academic research.

What I am trying to say is that Norwegian Friluftsliv influenced by X [participant refers to peers’ involvement with PSD], influenced through notion of extreme sport, influenced through environmental issues ... Which of these come to the surface? I am not certain of! But I see all these on one line: on the way upward. And it can happen that within a short while that it

is this [participant points towards drawn circle of PSD] which is highest and most emphasised.

**Dag** foresaw more “accepted and formalised processes of learning” addressing PSD-related learning outcomes. He perceived a growing trend towards graduates working “explicitly” with PSD-related aspects because “one starts to use PSD terminology” in practice, and because of the “growing integration” of course modules into curricula, an increase in specific literature and a “growing popularity at other universities.”

Yes, I see this. This, one gets to feel already ... one begins to use these terms. So, I see that more and more people are using these. You see also that they are socialised into HE courses. It is in the curricula. You find ‘relasjons-kompetanse’ [competence related to inter-personal skills] in the curricula ... I see also a growth of that in other [Norwegian] universities/colleges.

### **Summary**

It was understood that, to date, little attention has been paid to developing PSD within Friluftsliv, especially by university lecturing staff who appear to have rather overlooked this dimension. However, most participants commented on the imminent future developments that they anticipated seeing in ‘pedagogical’ Friluftsliv, sports studies and public health. In such domains PSD was regarded as becoming more prominent and influential.

#### **9.3.4. External influences**

All participants discussed degrees of cultural influences that appeared to inform PSD-related learning within Friluftsliv. **Anders**, **Bjørn** and **Dag** attributed the underlying rationale for current Friluftsliv practice to the widespread cultivation of a national stereotypical identity perpetuated through the Norwegian psyche and Norwegian society. **Anders** stated:

In many countries you can't get any funding for this sort of outdoor activities *unless* [participant's emphasis] you instrumentalise it ... You can't just say that it's great to be in the outdoors and you should fund me. In Norway the belief is that you shouldn't have to justify it ... it goes deeper and I even think people at the top of various hierarchies get cautious, when they begin to talk about Friluftsliv in instrumental terms and the notion of this. It [Friluftsliv] is enough '*in and of itself*' [participant's emphasis] without saying that it will do ... some specific other benefits that we can use when we are in other contexts and so on we can also have that. But in Norway, I think, it will meet real deep distrust and deep dislike of people who would say: reduce Friluftsliv to this level because then you can say *that*. Well, if we can reach all these goals through Friluftsliv *maybe* there are other ways that we *also* can reach the same objectives ... it is protected in a sense from competition.

**Anders** identified "huge forces" within the field resisting the influences of more anthropocentric and overt PSD. He stated:

I think each individual [lecturer] probably has this professional box whose walls are very solid, like a bunker. Although it might just be permeable, perhaps by osmosis. I think most 'categories' in the field [of Friluftsliv] like most Norwegian cultural expressions are fairly solid: this is how *I* [participant's emphasis] define it. So everything like that has little attention paid to it. So yes, whether something will change here [towards PSD]? Whether someone will drag the people kicking and screaming into a new world? ... I don't know. There are some huge forces there [against overt and anthropocentric PSD].

**Bjørn** spoke of how the ongoing perpetuation of the Norwegian identity is associated with Friluftsliv tradition. For Norwegians it is still viewed as normal to explore forests and to just 'be' in nature and experience nature-in-itself, as opposed to viewing nature in terms of posing a challenge.

I believe that ... [Norwegians] experience it as totally normal to go into the forests. So I believe that there are differences in attitudes and differences in values which originate from a cultural background and this transpires through how one understands oneself in relation to nature.

**Dag** discussed the overwhelming national identity that was deeply embedded with the “workers’ movement holiday in the fjells”, the royal family’s association with skiing and the ‘lore of Fridtjof Nansen’. All of which are conducive to the ‘natural’ rationale for Friluftsliv, particularly the influence from Nansen which still fuels a drive to imitate the lore of historical ‘expeditionary-style’ Friluftsliv. **Dag** stated:

One has to go to the North Pole in all different weird ways: First man with skis, first man with sledge, without dog and with this and that and so on. The experience to ‘adhere’ to this is ‘sub rosa’, I believe. A history both positive and with some concerns about it, because it will become a wrong focus when one begins to experience: that to really embark on real Friluftsliv that you have to almost follow Nansen’s footsteps. Thus, expeditionary style Friluftsliv, all this appears, I believe, to be associated with Norwegian culture.

**Anders, Bjørn** and **Carl** spoke of the Norwegian national mind-frame when in nature, which was understood to be introverted, reflective and at times detached from other human beings. **Anders** stated:

There is a broadly accepted culture here that foreign visitors sometimes comment on. That when you go out with Norwegians into nature, the longer you are out or the higher up you go the less people talk and interact, until eventually there is almost silence. And then as you come back down or even closer to civilisation, then the banter and all the interaction, the talking of this and that begins to grow.

**Bjørn** perceived that Anglo-American approaches differ from Nordic and Norwegian cultures because they are “genuinely different” in their rationales. He thought that locating PSD practices, which explicate concepts such as self-confidence and self-development, within the Norwegian educational agenda was largely considered “alien” by “most Norwegian lecturers” and not their “chosen path” for PSD. This addressed an ontological stance wherein Norwegian issues related to PSD appeared more often to be seen as intimate, unspoken, internal and of a personal nature. According to **Bjørn**:

In relation to personal development, well, again in USA it is operationalised explicitly. In Norway it belongs in a way to something that you can decide upon yourself. In Norway it is presumably to one degree or another more privatised; it belongs to me and myself.

**Bjørn** talked of social-democratic influences wherein certain schools of thought perceived the “individual tightly embedded in community”. Thus, PSD was guided by a cultural imperative of “extremely strong” communal bonds forged from the notion of an ‘individual socialism’ that promoted self-sufficiency, asserting oneself but not excessively, clinging to an egalitarian spirit of Norwegian society that ultimately overruled the emphasis on the individual.

What I rather believe is that social-democratic traditions are prevalent at a level where one wishes young people and pupils should work together and should develop together. One is more concerned with sociability than one is concerned with the ‘separate’ individual. There is something of that ‘law of jante’ [Janteloven]: ‘You shall not believe that you are somebody!’ This is, I believe, still prevalent in current times. But I also believe that to a high degree one is looking at things related to self-development: such as an assertive self-image, such as good self-confidence; but a balanced self-confidence, as this can also go towards another direction and be destructive. This is inherent in this [PSD], as far as I see it.



**Carl**'s explanation for the current state of the field came back to the hegemonised values and beliefs disseminated by the 'old guard' of lecturers who appear to perpetuate the 'Norwegian man in nature' philosophy, to the detriment of psychological perspectives of 'self':

Those people (referring to lecturers) did, and presumably still feel very strongly about the inherent values of being outside. It is therapeutic for me to be outside. I develop myself through being outside there and I have been doing this all my life since I was very young. We have a generation of such people who go into Higher Education, on to teacher-training courses and then to sports education [idrett]. Thus one ends up in the facilitation of Friluftsliv. But for many of us it has been due to our own experiences, our own backgrounds and a wish to continue in the outdoors.

### **Summary**

The Norwegian culture seems to be embedded in the traditional concept of 'man being in nature' - not fighting against it. According to the participants, Friluftsliv is strongly reinforced as being autotelic in practice and justifiable 'in and of itself' as opposed to for instrumental purposes. The notion of national identity being closely linked to nature is supported by funding bodies, laws, the royal family and HE lecturers.

### **9.3.5. Resistance towards an anthropocentric domain**

The participants discussed the influences from the predominant school of thought that appeared to hamper an 'overt' PSD focus in Friluftsliv.

**Anders** identified the "protective factor of tradition" as a primary force to have shaped the field. He stated that the "educational act" was not "developmental" but rather more a "replication of folkish traditions" and in his view the term 'tradition' was an "enormously weighty word" in Norway. He also expressed his view that

other countries' "conventional" focus on PSD would be alien to the Norwegian context because it lacks "ecological validity":

PSD, in a way, it's too limited of a definition. It *cuts off* [participant's emphasis] the connections between people and societies to the natural setting. It looks as if it is a kind of extraction, for the purpose of analysis. It's like a laboratory which eliminates these variables in the context and we sort of create something more researchable: few variables involved here so that we can understand that. And this is ok. But you *cannot* [participant's emphasis] forget the context. It's all about the notion of ecological validity that PSD as such doesn't have. It doesn't have ecological validity until you contextualise it within nature.

**Anders** also described what he perceived to be a "state of complacency" in which Norwegian lecturers appeared to regard themselves, in an international context, as "leading the pack" in OE. He felt that the Norwegian lecturers were shaping the field in that they "react against the notion of Friluftsliv as instrumental, as a vehicle for something else". **Anders** considered the field "not equipped" to systematically facilitate and review overt PSD, generalising that one assumed it "happened by itself". **Anders** also felt that the national discourse preferred a more "expanded" form of PSD in which an "all inclusive perspective of all life-forms" was addressed. In addition, he spoke of how his colleagues would hesitate to adopt an overt approach, insofar as the terminology of 'conventional' Anglo-American PSD displayed "a lack of something" and was understood to be somewhat superficial. He stated:

I think some, maybe all my colleagues, would emotionally and intuitively take exception to beginning to use all of this terminology of the PSD area as a kind of intellectualisation of something which is deeper and more multidimensional than that: dealing with the entire person in relation to an embeddedness in the setting of nature.

**Bjørn** and **Dag** spoke of resistance to PSD related strands of Friluftsliv stemming from key figures within Higher Education, which they termed an “order of monks”. This was understood as a hegemonic school of thought that reinforced the traditional values of Friluftsliv. According to **Bjørn** this ‘excluding spirit’ initiated by core institutions in the 1970s until the early 1990s strove to “narrow” the perspective of Friluftsliv by discarding strands associated with socio-pedagogy which were - as he put it - considered non-legitimate. **Bjørn** felt that the development of “instrumental strands of Friluftsliv” was constrained by tightly knit, tradition-oriented HE communities and that it was likely to remain so “as long as prevalent core institutions were dominant”.

A similarly rhetorical view regarding the resistance to instrumental uses of Friluftsliv by lecturers in the field was voiced by **Carl**. He thought that a “big percentage of lecturers who have “dominated” Norwegian Friluftsliv would be equipped with an “inner ballast” and “different soul” through their primary socialisation into a nature-centred philosophy of the outdoors. Therefore, Friluftsliv would be informed by a “ballast from nature” and took a stance where the notion of ‘Friluftsliv in-and-of-itself’ was of overriding importance.

**Carl** and **Dag** also voiced concerns about the emphasis placed on expression of experiences into language, that they felt was associated with more overt strands of PSD practice. **Carl** spoke of the Norwegian rhetorical view, which is one he used to follow strictly:

Language is insufficient in relation to a full experience ... This is not a totally simple affair in Norway. I have been previously rather stringent on this subject. It is concerning experience in relation to language. For me it has been such in many years. Gradually I think differently but from early onwards it has been such that experience in nature - it can be an intensive climbing-experience, a calm ocean or a peaceful day in the forest; just strong experiences - this transcends language. The language is small in relation to a ‘full’ experience. If I wanted my participants to verbalise this,

then I learn to be able to simplify, substitute ... ways to press one's experiences into 'boxes'. I have been very much against it, earlier.

Seemingly in accordance with other lecturers' views within the field, the enforcement of "intellectualising experiences through language" would cause the participant to be "dragged away" from the "good and pure experience". **Dag** viewed this PSD-linked focus on verbalising experience as "contrived", or "too artificial and formal" for the general perception of Norwegians. Despite this, **Dag** spoke of the growing pressures, in an international context, for documentation and evaluation by school authorities and youth work agencies.

Well, there are programmes out there in the world [outside Norway], but I think maybe in many ways, the way they are run may appear very artificial. It will only be this way. It becomes a very artificial situation which maybe translates insufficiently into the Norwegian Friluftsliv-tradition, which is a very informal situation.

**Bjørn** and **Dag** held similar personal stances and they all questioned the more explicit, spoken and evaluative form of learning and development associated with Anglo-American PSD in the outdoors. Anders stated:

The mountain speaks, you know, we may be more or less open to listening to it. If we are open to the mountain then I think we can't be unaffected by the mountain. And maybe to some degree speaking about it and analysing it, it doesn't do the mountain justice, you know. You should not stop there but you should place that into much deeper and broader context that connected to the whole again. And I think in western civilisation we are poor at doing that.

**Bjørn** spoke of his scepticism towards the Anglo-American approach to outdoor-related PSD. He felt that operationally it was challenging to run Friluftsliv programmes that address this more anthropocentric style of PSD:

It is difficult to create a method which can address these things [PSD]. I believe that often in the USA and maybe in England, without knowing it too well, one embarks on these PSD programmes that in a way are ‘closed up’, which have a method from A-Z: then we have a briefing, and then there are activities, and then there is a de-briefing, and then we do so and so. I actually don’t believe in just having one method.

Nevertheless, when referring to the therapeutic use of Friluftsliv, **Bjørn** felt that Norwegian approaches were neglecting the programming process.

The issue with a lot of Norwegian programmes is that one just initiates something and then one believes: Yes! This is good! It happens through itself ... The essential point is that it doesn’t. You actually have to be extremely aware of what you do and with whom and how you devise a process from the beginning to the end.

Although **Carl** and **Dag** agreed that the field was reluctant to adopt overt methods of PSD, they did however both acknowledge a recent trend towards more “explicit” PSD-related Friluftsliv. They claimed staff at Norwegian OE centres [leirskoler] were “ill-equipped” to deliver PSD-related learning outcomes being “bogged down in daily routines”. Similar to **Bjørn**’s comments (above) relating to neglected programming within therapeutic Friluftsliv, **Carl** and **Dag** felt that OE centres put too little effort into programming of PSD. **Dag** thought that the field had neglected and somewhat overlooked this strand of Friluftsliv:

One has believed that it [PSD] happens ‘by itself’ through these processes which have been instilled. But it shows that it does not. So therefore we have all of these Friluftsliv students in Norway who graduate from Higher Education institutions but who are not equipped with the interpersonal skills needed to work effectively with other people.

All participants spoke of the lack of communication and transparency within the field, contributing to a failure to inspire further development of Friluftsliv and PSD-

related learning. Thus discourses between Norwegian universities were described by **Anders** as an “archipelago” where “some islands were building bridges to others” but the remaining academic environments are either “unknown” to one another or “seldomly contacted”. **Bjørn** shared this view, alluding to the “sporadic” and “occasional contact of stakeholders”. **Carl** talked about a limited interaction, which he attributed to his “limited overview” about other university courses, while **Dag** thought the field lacked transparency. Overall the increase in “more intensive interaction among the professionals” was welcomed.

Interestingly, **Bjørn** thought that the dominant institutions exhibiting this narrower and more traditional understanding of Friluftsliv do not acknowledge the true value of teacher-training courses that include smaller amounts of traditional Friluftsliv and more of a focus towards PSD. **Bjørn** concluded that a “generation-shift would be needed” to energise the current discourse. Both **Bjørn** and **Carl** perceived that PSD-related learning - particularly within the institutions addressing social pedagogy clientele - had grown and consolidated.

**Carl** and **Dag** thought it necessary to see a merger between therapeutic education and Friluftsliv wherein more social educational skills were acquired. **Dag** perceived a lack of appropriate academic qualification in pedagogical degrees among Friluftsliv lecturers, claiming only a few (notably those few with a background in pedagogy or social pedagogy) had “influenced” the merging of Friluftsliv and social work thereby giving it “direction”. **Dag** maintained PSD was peripheral to HE Friluftsliv-courses, which are traditionally closely bonded with faculties of physical education as opposed to youth work/pedagogical course-degrees.

### **Summary**

Participants generally considered the protective traditional views visible in statutory education acts and universities to be resistant to a more Anglo-American style of PSD penetrating Friluftsliv. PSD in this sense was seen as superficial and contrived. In Norway there appears to be scepticism towards trying to express experiences in language. Norwegians view the relationship between man and nature as unspoken

and profound which directly contrasts the commonly held view of Anglo-American PSD.

### **9.3.6. The marketplace/usergroup**

The participants made little reference to there being an established commercial or mainstream school-based marketplace existing from the instrumental ‘commodity’ of PSD-related Friluftsliv. Rather PSD was primarily discussed as a learning provision within university courses. Thus, when discussing aspects of PSD in the practice/training of Friluftsliv, the participants generally elaborated on the ‘professional’ development of Friluftsliv students, as opposed to a commercial or school-based practice. Alternative interfaces of instructor with participant, in terms of a client or pupil level, were a largely neglected dimension.

In his account, **Anders** discussed PSD-related learning, citing examples involving HE student groups. **Bjørn**’s account predominately described the development of Friluftsliv students. He perceived that at HE level Friluftsliv appeared to address the students’ “personal development” through a self-reflectory process as the student developed into a facilitative instructor. Furthermore, it was “assumed” that HE courses in Friluftsliv would transcend PSD-related approaches by “copying down the ranks” thereby enabling a “penetrating force” to address all levels of the “system.”

**Bjørn**’s account suggested a serendipitous approach to the development of PSD-related dimensions, which consequently affects a smaller circle of pedagogical clients and it was perceived to have less effect upon their daily lives. Furthermore, **Bjørn** and **Dag** perceived a demand within the field for the development of a “Norwegian adaptation” to develop PSD-focused Friluftsliv programmes.

**Carl** emphasised that it was back in the 1980s that his institution was involved in more overt PSD programmes in association with special needs education [barnevernutdanningen]. In current practice, HE courses would “vary relatively much” in terms of course contents spanning both PSD and ecological dimensions.



**Carl** was the only participant who felt that outdoor centres [leirskoler] did focus on more overt PSD, but stated that it would “vary with each individual centre” depending on the respective “element of the programmes” the pupils would take part in.

**Dag** also discussed the marketplace for PSD in relation to HE students. He emphasised students’ PSD during outings as “relational competence” [relasjonskompetanse] which would enrich the teacher-student relationship. However, dimensions regarding human growth at the level of pupil/participant devoid of the outdoor setting were not articulated in his response. **Dag** provided an example of the usefulness of delivering PSD to HE students:

When they looked for a job and they included me as a reference then I was contacted and interviewed. Then I emphasised specifically this dimension of ‘relational competence’ [relasjons kompetanse] and their capability to co-operate with others and so forth. This is a vital experience that is an important criterion to incorporate into work life.

### **Summary**

The participants primarily discussed the academic marketplace for outdoor-related PSD in terms of the delivery of HE courses to students. In this sense PSD was viewed more as a learning provision to develop self-reflection and relational competence, as opposed to being viewed as a commodity. Although one participant did highlight PSD as being an important criterion post-study, when students would be searching for work.

## **CHAPTER TEN - General Discussion**

### **10.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents a comparative discussion on the findings of the present study. It draws on the philosophical and empirical findings and relevant bodies of literature to fulfil two objectives: first, to provide some insight into the three main research questions that form the rationale for this thesis, and second to critically contextualise the findings within the broader spectrum of relevant literature.

It is important to note that the idiosyncrasies of educational philosophy and ontology pose difficulties for the comparativist when attempting to establish generalised statements about education that are valid in more than one country (Noah, 1985). Indeed cultural distinctness inherent in dissimilar societies such as Great Britain and Norway are indicative of their respective outdoor traditions and this constitutes a continuous thread throughout the thesis. This also impacts upon the presentation of this discussion chapter.

British outdoor provision is traditionally associated with an overt focus on PSD and as a consequence it is an explicit and coherent theme. The convoluted Norwegian narrative however, requires a more detailed commentary in order to capture the intricacies of the phenomenon. Hence, the following discussion attempts to contrast each nation's specifics whilst identifying similarities and differences therein.

It seems that the reported perceptions of participants alluding to national tendencies or specific generalisations within the respective discourse are equally divorced from a 'nationally orchestrated voice' (Turčová, 2004). This discrepancy also highlights certain difficulties associated with interpretative research, and, according to Howe (1992), intentional explanations of social actors seldom establish "contingent regularities" (p. 241). This plethora of stances has repercussions on the validity of generalisations extrapolated from the data.

The discussion comprises three main sections each of which addresses the research questions. The first discusses the difference in how outdoor-related PSD is conceptualised in the two countries. The second addresses contemporary influences on outdoor-related PSD, while the third section explores the historical-philosophical findings and contemporary empirical findings. These will be contextualised in order to illustrate the key points that have emerged from this thesis.

## **10.2. Conceptual differences between Great Britain and Norway**

This section considers findings from the interview data and literature review, and discusses conceptual differences in outdoor-related PSD in Great Britain and Norway.

### **10.2.1. Terminology**

An important conceptual difference that emerged from the empirical findings was the use of terminology. Although in the British discourse there appears to be more terminology relating to the concept of PSD than witnessed in Norwegian accounts, there was no agreed terminology relating to outdoor-related PSD.

This supports Turčová's (2004) view that the British discourse reflects a 'jungle of terminology'. In Norway, it appears that there is no direct translation of any outdoor-related British PSD terms, but that PSD was well understood whilst not resulting in a proliferation of terms [e.g. Friluftsliv som metode; relasjonskompetanse]. Common to both countries, however, is the fact that the term PSD is used alongside the 'umbrella' headings: 'outdoor education' (OE) and 'Friluftsliv'.

### **10.2.2. Ontology**

Both literature and participants' accounts addressing outdoor-related PSD reveal discrete ontological perspectives at the core of the debate on OE/Friluftsliv. Norwegian deep-ecological perspectives seem substantially at odds with those

espoused by philosophical antecedents of outdoor-related PSD, which resonate with the humanistic psychological perspectives found in the British discourse (e.g. Hopkins & Putnam, 1998; Loynes, 2008 Nicol, 2002a, 2002b).

Norwegian commentators in particular seem to denounce Anglo-American schemes borne of an 'American frontier spirit' and British schemes reflective of an 'imperialist Britain', because each is interpreted as intending to 'overcome' nature and this is incommensurate with Nordic themes (Tordsson, 2002; Tordsson, 1993; Tordsson, 1998; Repp, 1977).

Many British participants clearly expressed an understanding of theoretical concepts underlying outdoor-related PSD which they perceived to be anthropocentric and independent of the environment. Whilst in Great Britain the sector is criticised for a lack of ecological understanding, the British participants, nevertheless, expressed differing views about whether outdoor-related PSD should be isolated and primarily 'compartmentalised' or interwoven and holistic. According to British participants, it is particularly at a practical level that the actual practice of PSD schemes seems to be more holistic and open to the inclusion of environmental elements.

Meanwhile the Norwegians perceived Friluftsliv to be firmly grounded in ecological ontology and did not regard PSD as a stand-alone concept. The theoretical concept of outdoor-related PSD was understood to be synonymous to anthropocentrism. Although this is also the common view within Great Britain, the insight that Norwegian participants have about the practice of PSD in the outdoors differs from the more established views and practices within Great Britain. Rather, the Norwegian participants tended to refer to PSD as a holistic concept of Friluftsliv which addresses intra- and inter-personal dimensions as well as man-nature relationships. Furthermore, the Norwegian group were referring to PSD largely as a somewhat muted and implicit rather than explicit theme. While these participants' comments were indicative of a naturalistic position, the lack of commentary may echo the fact that PSD in Friluftsliv is a relatively poorly documented field that needs more research (Bischoff, 1996; Sølvi, 2003; Tordsson, 2005; Tordsson, 2002).

Common to both nations is a preoccupation with the attempt to introduce a reflective element into outdoor-related PSD, albeit with differences underpinned by diverse educational philosophies.

The British group referred to explicit reviewing as part of outdoor-related PSD schemes. In this context rationalistic models that draw on “cyclic matter of reflection and experience” (Stonehouse *et al.*, 2009, p. 35), as suggested by Dewey (1933), Greenaway (1996) and Kolb (1984), embrace much more readily the articulation of the experience combined with a ‘drama’ of language and thought. This tradition of a “processed adventure” (Greenaway, 1996, p. 50) is paralleled with increased financial pressures for evidence-based documentation that one participant saw in conjunction with increased demands for a much more “tangible” facilitation and demonstrable “value for money” (**Andrew**) (see also Beames, 2006).

The Norwegian group were critical of the ‘drama of language’ approach in Anglo-American style outdoor programmes and its transfer into Norwegian programmes, which one respondent called “contrived” (**Anders**). While this Norwegian perception could have been influenced by Boas’ (1974) concept of cultural relativity that points towards the loss of semantic integrity when translated and applied to another country, the criticism appears to reveal more profound conceptual concerns.

The same participant also referred to an Anglo-American style as an intellectualisation of “something which is deeper and more multi-dimensional”. Drawing from the accounts of the Norwegian participants it seems that Friluftsliv philosophy draws more readily on phenomenological philosophies such as that found in Merleau-Ponty’s objections to “rationalism, reflection and of consciousness”, wherein making meaning is facilitated through ‘embodied’ knowledge at a pre-conscious level (Spurling, 1977, p. 13).

It might be argued that a ‘drama of language’ approach sits uneasily in the Norwegian context due to a reticent Norwegian personality orientation which has been described as “not easy going ... private and introverted ... lacking mannerisms

of sophisticated urbanities ... compensated through sincere and trustworthy character” (Eriksen, 1993, p. 5). Other contemporary writers refer to the reticent Norwegian personality orientations as the ‘Askeladden-ideology’<sup>38</sup> bridging the uneasy tension between oppositional concepts such as longing for recognition despite social rules against self-praise (Borey, 2001; Huntford, 2003; Jonassen, 1983).

By relating the literary figure of Askeladden to Friluftsliv pedagogy, Jensen (2007) suggests that rewards are achieved by ‘trial and error’. Thus the Askeladden routine becomes a playful unarticulated “tumbling and fumbling” process of self-discovery (p. 102). The introversion/extroversion disposition seems paradoxical in Norway, however. Breivik (1998) questions the predominance of a reticent national character by juxtaposing it with the extroverted, risk-seeking and entrepreneurial coastal culture of Norway (p. 91).

Whether these are authentic Norwegian characteristics - in a generic sense - is difficult to assess. Nevertheless Friluftsliv authors of the deep-ecological perspective seem generally to employ a much more tacit approach (Jensen, 2007). Their justifications underlining ‘sensory knowing’ of oneself [kjennskap] and the notion of *phronesis* (practical wisdom; [praktisk klokskap]) seem to be at odds with the cognitive levels of knowing [kunnskap] (Faarlund, 2007; Jensen, 2007) prevalent in Great Britain displaying an overt focus on reviewing the outdoor experience. Disinclination towards explicit reviewing also seems to be prevalent in the Norwegian school system. Jordet (2007) even suggests there is a lack of understanding of Dewey’s principles of reform pedagogy in Norwegian schools and as a result the “relation of external experience towards intellectual processing” is not properly acknowledged (p. 77).

Arguably those who hold a more positivistic stance might consider the Norwegian participants’ call for an ‘a-theoretical’ approach in Friluftsliv practice rather surprising. However, Norwegian lecturers seem to recoil from British ‘packaging’ of

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<sup>38</sup> Askeladden is a well-known character from Norwegian folk-tales who acts sincerely and morally, and receives numerous accidental rewards by being modest.

the outdoors, regarding it as somewhat contrived and commercialised. This accords with some British authors' criticism of British 'formulaic' and 'off the shelf' OE experiences (Beames, 2006; Higgins, 2001; Loynes, 2007).

Although the implicit nature of PSD in the Norwegian discourse has been acknowledged both in the literature and by participants, the educational potential to 'fabricate' experiences of challenge, adventure and excitement with which to foster personal growth are deemed 'culturally' problematic or even controversial (Bischoff, 1996; Sølvik, 2005; Tordsson, 1998; Tordsson, 2002). As evidenced by participants and literature, the 'systemic' Norwegian theme of a nation living close to nature nourishes socio-culturally rooted concerns that bolster the reluctant acceptance and occasional disapproval of human-centered PSD (Sølvik, 2005; Tordsson, 1993; Tordsson, 1995).

From a Norwegian and Nordic perspective, Tordsson (2005), Bischoff (1996) and Bowles (1995) highlight the differences and incompatibility between 'foreign' (i.e. British and especially American) concepts and research concerning outdoor-related PSD and Norwegian practice (see also Sølvik, 2005; Telnes, 1985; Tordsson, 1998; Repp, 1977). Similarly, the inclusion of 'English' terms relating to PSD into the Norwegian discourse was perceived as contrived. One participant (**Dag**) encapsulated the Norwegian resistance towards foreign concepts on the grounds of tradition. He stated that an explicit approach might appear artificial, inappropriate and at odds with the Norwegian tradition of Friluftsliv. Echoing the atavistic lore of Friluftsliv, Eriksen Weidemann (1997) concludes from his research on ethnic youth in Oslo that the transfer potential of Friluftsliv-based activities into their daily life may be questionable due to its 'dismodern' rationale (p. 89-90).

Tordsson (2002; 2005) suggests a general absence of a comparative dimension in Norwegian Friluftsliv with other nations research due to a relatively 'closed' Norwegian discourse. He suggests that ethnocentric focus on the 'original' [det originale] and the ethnically unique [det særpregede] within Norwegian research could be considered the *ultima ratio*, namely an "axiomatic premise" underpinning



the *raison d'être* of Friluftsliv (Tordsson, 2002, p. 24).

Bischoff (1996), one of the few who has initiated formal enquiry into Friluftsliv-related PSD schemes for functional and dysfunctional youth-groups, cautions against an uncritical and purely accepting transfer of PSD to the Nordic context, and argues for a culturally-specific approach. This stance is particularly associated with a perceived Anglo-American over-emphasis on the 'individual': e.g. 'self'-development, 'self'-esteem, 'self'-efficacy. These leanings, one might suggest, conflict with the readily acknowledged collective consciousness of Norwegians which, was also noted in participants' comments (**Anders, Bjørn, Carl**) highlighting particularly communal bonds forged from the notion of an 'individual socialism' prevalent in Norwegian group-dynamics. Nevertheless, according to Tordsson (2002), these might be threatened in the light of current neo-liberal trends impacting Norwegian society and youth.

A key theme in Bischoff's (1996) work suggests that the individual's need for 'self-actualisation' through identification with and focus on nature and the 'ecological self' is inextricably linked to the "history of Nordic Friluftsliv tradition" that complements the driving rationale for PSD (p. 94). Furthermore, intra-personal dimensions are afforded a "religious-meditative" meaning (p. 94). Sølvi (2005) supports this stance and makes reference to a specific "Nordic reflexivity" of outdoor experiences (Friluftsliv) and associated learning that is perceived as being incommensurate with international research literature (p. 17). Particularly, the legitimisation through effect-studies of OE programmes on participants' PSD is seen as being problematic (e.g. the meta-analysis by Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997). Also Bischoff (1996) and Sølvi (2005) are dismissive of compartmentalised anthropocentric strands of PSD that can be witnessed both in Anglo-American countries and Norway.

In summary it seems that the dominant 'educational' asset of British OE, though differentiated in both environmental and developmental domains, appears to be driven overall by a 'developmental' rationale, and characterised by a fairly well-

consolidated theory (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). The British accounts reflect the fact that lecturers being part of the discourse are well-acquainted with PSD-related themes. In contrast, the main thrust of the Norwegian rationale, although partly undergoing slow transformation, is to a lesser extent embedded in ‘theorised’ pedagogy and generic terminology (see also Tordsson, 2002). Rather the discourse opts for an atavistic rationale focusing on traditional ways of using the land, such as being outdoors as part of an inherited harvest tradition and ‘tour’ tradition (learning of ‘life’-skills; [livsl ring]) (Tordsson, 1998; Tordsson, 2002). The ‘developmental’ dimension of PSD may be seen as a tolerated ‘by-product’ - and as such is less systematically reviewed and evaluated. Indeed, it would seem that the ‘educational act’ of focusing on ‘personal growth’, such as seen in the British discourse, transmutes instead to the ‘educational act’ of replicating a ‘folkish’ [folkelig] tradition in Norway.

### **10.2.3. Purpose**

Against the backdrop of a more established discourse on PSD, the British group discussed further specifications of its purpose and use within OE. They referred to ideological perspectives of PSD in conjunction with perspectives on human capital (or a ‘stronger’ workforce) versus moral purpose (or ‘emancipating’ the individual). The British group’s comments addressed concepts such as ‘individual autonomy’, ‘life-skills’, contributions to the national efficiency of workforce or altruistic perspectives that are discussed in the body of British OE literature (e.g. Baillie, 2008; Furedi, 1997; Gill, 2007; Haydon, 2005).

Half of the British group alluded to the notion of socially desirable citizens and/or human capital that some commentators perceive to be historically a strong motive in British OE (Nicol, 2002a; Roberts *et al.*, 1974). Historically, the notion of human capital was a strong theme in the establishment of Outward Bound and the Brathay Trust (Hopkins & Putham, 1998; Nicol, 2002a). Paradoxically the other half of the British group seemed to resist the capitalistic paradigm and rather saw practitioners as displaying libertarian values that would be more inclined to question the notion of

‘social desirability’. This half of the group sympathised with a more integrated and implicit development and self-actualising process that would occur from being exposed to nature. One participant (**Colin**) thought outdoor-related PSD specifically embraced ecological perspectives and felt this was common in established practice.

The paucity of Norwegian participants’ comments on outdoor-related PSD may be indicative of the low presence it has in mainstream Norwegian Friluftsliv. Also, the latter’s ethos extends towards shaping people into socially desirable citizens and draws on Neo-Marxist and phenomenological traditions inherent in Norwegian pedagogy related to the facilitation of Friluftsliv [vegledning i Friluftsliv] (Tordsson, 1993; Ydegaard, 2003). The paucity of rationalist approaches in Norway appears to be associated with hermeneutic interpretations of Marx and Freud that were commonplace on the continent and which are embodied in the work of the existential phenomenologists (Spurling, 1977). However, as Spurling suggests, they have made “little impact” in Britain (p. 4).

Hellesnes (1975) reasons that any socialisation process that focuses heavily upon ‘conforming’, *per se*, teaches students society’s ‘rules of the game’. Accordingly, ‘liberating education’ encourages students to question the rules and policies to which they are subjected. In this context didactic principles of Friluftsliv based on critical methodology and anti-authoritarian values have shaped an egalitarian ‘liberating’ ideology, particularly witnessed in the ‘folk high school’ movement (Myksvold, 1997; see also Gurholt, 2008).

The difference in philosophical reasoning would seem to originate in disparate yet overriding hegemonic schools of thought in both countries. The difference in purpose related to encouraging ‘socially desirable’ behaviour amongst citizens within a prevailing political economy (Great Britain) versus social theory oriented towards critiquing and changing society as a whole (Norway) resonates with the disparate historically evolved educational philosophies of OE and Friluftsliv. In this context, Tordsson (2002) addresses criticism at reform pedagogy’s rationalist pragmatic

tradition - with its “modernistic optimism of progress” - and accords the “modern subject Friluftsliv” an ambassador role to relieve the eco-social crisis (p. 263).

Whilst divergent educational philosophies influence the emphasis of outdoor-related PSD, it is noteworthy that the Norwegian participants mentioned outdoor-related PSD in the context of leadership issues and inter- and intra-personal relations predominately amongst the ‘journeying’ group of Friluftsliv students in the outdoors (HIT, 2008). An approach with such an emphasis might appear to neglect the notion of Friluftsliv as a working-method that emphasises transformational learning opportunities beyond the outdoor setting, i.e. in the participant’s daily life.

#### **10.2.4. Prominence**

The prominence of outdoor-related PSD within the wider field of OE and Friluftsliv is also an important factor mentioned in participants’ accounts. The status of PSD in Great Britain was discussed in the wider working field (e.g. commercial and schooling). In contrast the Norwegian participants reflected almost exclusively on PSD practice within academic institutions. The British group suggested that PSD was the main focus of OE, whereas the Norwegians discussed mainstream and peripheral practices predominately in the context of HE academic institutions where there was limited focus on PSD HE level. There appears to be limited overt practice of PSD in mainstream Friluftsliv so participants were unable to elaborate further on its purpose.

Although Friluftsliv is associated mainly with a deep-ecological ethos, the participants identified an important ‘second’ discourse. This ‘parallel’ discourse transcends the deep-ecological paradigm and has been highlighted in Norwegian literature on the periphery of Friluftsliv from areas such as the youth-work arena and research supporting military organisational psychology (Høigaard & Säfvenbom & Tsjekkeland, 2007 - ongoing; Nissestad, 2008; Olsen, 2007; Säfvenbom, 1998; Sølvi, 2003).

Nevertheless, according to the Norwegian participants, it seems that an overt focus on PSD in mainstream practices (partly due to the aforementioned ideological stances) is still at an embryonic state in Norway. Indicative of a protective stance, the majority of participants expressed concern that a parallel discourse might potentially dilute an otherwise ‘purist’ philosophy of traditional Friluftsliv. One participant (**Carl**) encapsulated the Norwegian group’s concern by saying that for him outdoor-related PSD was a “different professional domain” transcending traditional boundaries of Friluftsliv.

### **10.3. Contemporary influences on outdoor-related PSD**

The second research question explored the contemporary influences on and potential future development of PSD within OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway.

#### **10.3.1. National imperatives**

The British participants identified financial, statutory, historical, global and social welfare influences that impact upon outdoor-related PSD. For the Norwegians the foremost influence was the cultural imperative of national identity and the closeness to nature that informed the approach taken by funding bodies, ‘white papers’ and peers (HE lecturers).

Both groups identified a historical inertia that drove the national rationale of OE/Friluftsliv in each country. Although faced with a body of literature that expresses the need for a more robust and evidence-based rationale, the British participants perceived a disinclination amongst the field to alter established practice (with focus on a ‘person-centred’ approach). The participants identified a lack of momentum and growth within PSD-related OE in Great Britain, underpinned by complacency. Nevertheless, most British respondents predicted a stronger focus on PSD in the future, increasingly defined through a more robust rationale.

Similarly, the Norwegian participants identified inertia within the field, reflecting satisfaction with the dominant naturalistic rationale that resonates with the national and cultural links of Norwegian Friluftsliv. The interviews supported the view of some authors (Bischoff, 1996; Henderson & Vikander, 2007; Tordsson, 1993) that there was resistance to anthropocentric programmes in mainstream practice. Overall, the current development of an overt PSD practice in Norwegian Friluftsliv was deemed somewhat undeveloped and poorly documented. One participant's view (**Bjørn**) was that there was no current Norwegian research in the field, while another (**Carl**) thought that "little had been written or formulated".

Against this backdrop of perceived uninformed-ness, the Norwegian Friluftsliv community could be considered reluctant to embrace PSD/OE research from other countries (Sølvik, 2005; Tordsson, 2002). One participant went so far as to allude to a 'national arrogance' in which Norwegian lecturers appeared to regard themselves as "leading the pack" internationally in the context of OE (**Anders**). In a similar vein, one participant (**Bjørn**) was of the view that governmental papers were ignoring PSD and rather were concerned with cultural traditions.

This protective stance reflects the claims of some Norwegian authors that modern sport-influences have 'broken the mould' of traditional Friluftsliv (Ese, 2007; Odden, 2008; Tordsson, 2002). Echoing signs of active resistance to what Festeu & Humberstone (2005) term a 'uniform-isation' of national discourses through international OE trends, participants suggested that potential changes in the field of PSD-related Friluftsliv should be generated from within the Norwegian discourse. However, the Norwegian discourse concerning mainstream Friluftsliv does not seem to have included a substantial debate on PSD-related schemes.

### **10.3.2. Relationship between anthropocentrism and biocentrism**

The British and Norwegian participants discussed the tension between anthropocentrism and biocentrism in outdoor practice.



Against the backdrop of growing environmental concerns, most of the British participants viewed the continued focus on outdoor-related PSD as paradoxical, and the presence of human/nature relationships as only an implicit aspect in PSD-related OE. When commenting on the direction of the field as a whole one British participant (**Colin**) suggested there is an uncontested prevalent premise that PSD “made you bigger and better”. Nevertheless, the majority of the British group objected to this stance and aligned themselves with recent criticisms of the British discourse (e.g. Higgins & Lugg, 2005; Loynes, 2007) that claim sustainability education had not been significantly embedded as a central focus of OE.

In stark contrast, the Norwegian participants referred to a general resistance towards outdoor-related PSD which they feared might penetrate the fundamental ecological basis of Friluftsliv. They referred to several factors that contributed to their view: the lack of holism; the role of historical antecedents that served as a ‘protective factor’; and ‘naturalistic’ formative years of lecturers. The majority of the participants were explicit regarding the reason for resistance which they related to a strong hegemonic circle of influential people within Norwegian Friluftsliv. They described this as the “old guard” (**Carl**) or an “order of monks” (**Bjørn & Dag**) which still had an impact on the sector by “narrowing the perspective” (**Bjørn**) of Friluftsliv leading to limited focus on outdoor-related PSD, as this was considered non-legitimate. This naturalistic phenomenological stance has been confirmed widely in Norwegian OE literature (Gurholt, 2008).

### **10.3.3. Marketplace of provision**

The British participants commented on developments and shifts in the types of PSD programmes within the ‘marketplace’ of provision. While they noted the use of OE centres by schools, the participants also confirmed the pre-occupation in OE literature with a ‘youth-at-risk’ clientele, which according to one participant had received the most funding. These findings tally with recent British OE literature (Allison & Telford, 2005; Allison & von Wald, 2009; Loynes, 2008).



The Norwegian comments, however, revealed an absence of an established Norwegian outdoor-related PSD practice *per se*; rather they focused on implicit traditions of PSD making comparatively few references to an established commercial or mainstream school-based PSD-focused provision. Symptomatic of the current situation, PSD was viewed as a component of the curricula in Friluftsliv in HE, rather than a ‘product’ delivered by OE centres [leirskoler] and other providers of Friluftsliv.

Participants’ views on the ways in which HE courses would further develop in relation to PSD were rather speculative, though one respondent (**Dag**) considered PSD proficiency essential for graduates seeking employment. One participant (**Bjørn**) assumed that HE courses in Friluftsliv would incorporate a person-centred approach which would become a “penetrative force” by itself when they brought their experiences to the job-market. However, he did highlight the uncoordinated role that PSD appears to play in the sector.

#### **10.3.4. Future developments**

While the Norwegian participants perceived PSD only to be at a ‘juvenile stage’, they generally predicted an increase in interest in outdoor-related PSD in the coming years. Increasing competition in the HE sector and diversification in the field seems likely to lead to growth in outdoor-related PSD. Participants perceived PSD-related jargon as being increasingly assimilated into the discourse with one participant (**Bjørn**) predicting that students who were “less anchored in culture” would be more likely to embrace PSD. A growth of overt PSD was especially associated with a peripheral discourse to Friluftsliv in the therapeutic sector (**Anders, Bjørn**). However, the most critical view of the sector was that the Norwegians had “overslept” and still had much to learn (**Dag**).

When reflecting on the future of the field the British group envisioned increasing development of PSD. Although OE in Great Britain is rich in diversity with a wide variety of organisations, schools, individuals, facilities, programme styles,

programme activities, viewpoints, associations and resources it nevertheless appears to be well co-ordinated. Half of the British participants felt there was a growing consolidation and professionalisation of practice, citing the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) as a professional organisation that offered a new avenue by which change, new developments and initiatives from the outside world would be spread very quickly to all the different networks (see also Wallace, 2005).

Generally, the British participants also felt that increased professionalism brought along with it a concomitant increase in understanding of learning and transfer. Nevertheless, participants expressed divergence regarding the degree to which outdoor-related PSD is understood. One participant (**Andrew**) expressed the view that in Great Britain there are not enough people who can speak “informatively about PSD”. This was contrasted by another (**Colin**) who stated that the British field is “now better at understanding how learning derived from outdoor work can be more efficiently transferred by youngsters to their lives at home”.

Indicative of a more mature stage of development of the British sector, participants discussed the growing independence of PSD through diversification of specialist degrees in OE courses at university level. Following pressures from employers within the ‘outdoor sector’, programme developments at HE institutions show different pathways and specialisms, such as adventure therapy and separate OE courses related particularly to PSD. In this vein, one participant (**Andrew**) discussed how outdoor-related PSD courses orientated towards youth-work are increasingly merging with courses such as social work and counselling (see also Humberstone & Brown, 2006).

Although it has been suggested that there is discrepancy between practice and academia (Humberstone & Brown, 2006; Humberstone, 2005) considering the level of activity in rising numbers of OE courses, increased training of practitioners, growing research, regular publishing, regular conferences and established directories of programmes (IOL, 2010) one could be forgiven for thinking the field is in the process of consolidation. Indeed judging from this it would seem that Priest’s (1999)

suggestion that there is a decline in the British “national life cycle of OE” (based on reductions in provision and closures of several OE programmes) is erroneous (p. 1).

#### **10.4. Historical and contemporary factors**

My third research question concerned the relationship between historical and contemporary factors and their impact on PSD in the outdoors. To address this historical findings have been contextualised with the empirical contemporary interview findings to provide an overview of the situation.

##### **10.4.1. Introduction**

The relationship between ‘old’ and ‘new’ influences and their degree of impact on outdoor-related PSD is complex and only partly conclusive. Outdoor-related PSD has followed many paths and changes in values. In the debate over historical origins, one has to acknowledge that the indistinct shape of OE and the difficulties of allocating it a fixed meaning and source of ideology originates from - as Nicol (2002a) suggests - it not being a “fixed entity of common consent”, nor “homogenous over time and space” (p. 29; see also Loynes, 2008). Nevertheless, the interplay of ‘old and new’ factors relevant to Great Britain and Norway offers some relevant insights.

Contrasting the British and Norwegian discourses brings forth two distinct historically evolved traditions. These stem from different early beginnings of British and Norwegian culture. The juxtaposition of the ‘civilised’ ethos of early British society (James, 2001; Kumar, 2003) with a much more nature-consonant Norway (Nedreliid, 1991; Witoszek, 1998) shows that one country increasingly alienated itself from nature, whereas the other used it as its foremost premise of existence. The consequence of this was the perpetuation of different mythological rationales that led (as the historical findings show) to divergent stages of development in British and Norwegian society. In the British case an urban culture was established whereas in

Norway a nature-based ethos evolved - each of which affected the nation's outdoor traditions (Jonassen, 1983; Kumar, 2003; Loynes, 2008; Tordsson, 2002).

Societal determinants have further shaped distinctive approaches to the way the individual relates to nature. In this context 'who owns the land?' is a crucial factor which has a profound cultural impact upon each country's development. The influences that impact relations with land are also evident in historical determinants of social position and political power, which can be found both in British feudal traditions and Norwegian egalitarian traditions. They have, arguably, influenced current social behaviour and educational philosophies in both countries. In the largely meritocratic culture of Norway during the 19th century an egalitarian ethos undoubtedly influenced concepts of 'self' and 'others' (Huntford, 2003, pp. 17-18) in comparison to the hierarchical organisation in British culture (Kumar, 2003; Rosenthal, 1986). Thus, distinct distribution of resources, care for land and hierarchical constructions all have their part to play in a national narrative, as do power relations, education, employment and interpersonal relations.

Furthermore, the Norwegian landscape undoubtedly influenced its inhabitants' perceptions and the development of Norwegian values and virtues - many of whose origins may not be immediately apparent but according to Jonassen (1983) "tend to persist even though the original reason for their acceptance may to a large extent have passed" (p. 107). In direct terms this national image led to Norwegians enshrining in both culture and law the 'right to roam' and 'be' in nature. Thus, Norway's unconstrained access to land plus a strong harvest tradition fuelled an ethos of exploring an 'outer horizon' by journeying as a 'man of nature' in the surrounding seas and fjells.

In Norway the *raison d'être* of Friluftsliv became synonymous with a lifestyle that is the very essence of its national narrative. Conversely in the British case, as the historical findings show, severe limitations were imposed that supported an 'ethos' of conquering 'inner horizons', which became conducive to the overt focus on educational and social rationale for PSD. Although it must be noted that in recent

years, within Scotland, there have been profound legislative changes regarding land use and recreational and educational access to the countryside (Higgins *et. al*, 2004).

However, on the whole, outdoor-related PSD in Norway assumes the role of an undercurrent that was invisible, unspoken and implacable. In contrast, in Great Britain as far as 'formalised' OE is concerned the rationale for being outdoors remained located in a 'sector' and an outdoor 'industry', with various outdoor centres taking charge of learning in the outdoors.

#### **10.4.2. Great Britain: The interplay of old and new**

The review of British OE literature highlighted moral decline, the weakening of social distinctions, imperialism, the spirit of adventure through expeditions and physical well-being as salient themes underpinning the antecedents of OE (Cook, 2000; Higgins, 2002; Loynes, 2008; Nicol, 2002a).

The anthropocentric perspectives were evident in most participants' views. They acknowledged the influence of social hierarchy, imperialism and nationhood on the current concept of OE. The force of its influence into the current discourse, however, is difficult to assess from the somewhat ambiguous data set. While one participant's (**Andrew**) comments referred to the British as having their "head in the sand, relying on past success", another participant (**David**) hinted towards new academic thinking that supports the indivisibility of anthropocentrism and biocentrism. Furthermore, the British participants were largely unapologetic about the dominance of PSD in OE, viewing this as a declared goal, which assumed that "everybody knows it" and that it "occupied the centre ground" (**Ben**). One participant (**Colin**), who spoke most explicitly on this matter, thought the field was still influenced by "blatantly un-reconstructed" imperialistic traditions.

Moreover, it would seem that the strongest historical association with imperialism might be seen in the growth of youth-expeditions, in which one participant (**Colin**) saw associations with the historical passion that the British have for overseas-

expeditions. Another (**Ben**) widened this perspective and alluded to a rather multi-faceted nature of historical antecedents, stressing that “withdrawal from oppressive social control” was also a major driver in the development of OE.

Despite ascribed historical inertia of OE, some contemporary writers claim historical concepts of ‘self’ and ‘others’ appear to have been re-conceptualised over time, albeit drawing on “intact roots” (Nicol, 2002b, p. 96). It is interesting to note that British youth organizations such as the British Schools Expedition Society (BSES) and the Ocean Youth Trust (OYT) appear to have re-interpreted their rationale for their educational undertakings in recent times (Loynes, 2009). Other commentators emphasise that educational programmes appear to gain inspiration from a ‘character remediation’ theme that addressed the ‘moral panics’ of the late Victorian era. Loynes (2008) argues that PSD schemes are “again drawing on these early roots in outdoor education” in order to deal with current social issues amongst youth (Loynes, 2008, p. 75; see also Cook, 2000).

Nevertheless, the important role that tradition is seen to play in PSD practice may not be as influential as one might believe. Simply crediting this to a strong ‘imperialist’ tradition is probably too simplistic because the degree to which traditions persist is difficult to assess, and must remain speculative. In this context it is telling that the British participants’ accounts voiced a far ‘greener’ approach than expected judging from OE literature. One participant (**David**) in particular seemed to represent a new imperative emphasising the indivisibility of PSD with an ecocentric view.

Yet, addressing problem-solving skills and life skills such as co-operation and interpersonal communication continue to be the bedrock of educational initiatives in the field of British OE. Thus the current British belief that experiences in the outdoors can influence moral behaviour and that the energy of participants can be channelled into new and potentially more positive directions appears to be in-line with historical antecedents.



The pre-eminence of PSD through adventurous activities is clearly evident in the OE field at national curricular level throughout Great Britain. Indeed the Scottish Government have recently reviewed national education provision '*Curriculum for Excellence*' (CfE, 2008) and as part of this have published '*Curriculum for excellence through outdoor learning*' (CfEtOL, 2010). This document builds upon the intent outlined in CfE – that young people should develop the four 'capacities' of "successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals" (CfEtOL, 2010, p. 3). Its focus in CfEtOL re-affirms the established emphasis on PSD through the outdoors. Also introduction of the term 'outdoor learning' encompasses a wider and more holistic approach which might suggest a Friluftsliv-like tenet within Scottish OE. This focus on such 'capacities' is overtly stated as intended to help young people meet the "social, economic and environmental challenges of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century". '*Curriculum for excellence through outdoor learning*' also encourages "staff and students to see each other in a different light, building positive relationships and improving self-awareness and understanding of others" (CfEtOL, 2010, p. 7).

Similarly, the Welsh National *Curriculum Key Stages 2-4 Physical education in the National Curriculum for Wales* (DCELLS, 2008) elevates adventurous activities to prominence to address PSD through: activities that are underpinned by "problem solving, communication, leadership and teamwork and often have an outdoor living and learning focus" (p. 14). Similarly, the English Outdoor Council's (2009) claims for the value of OE are clearly PSD-oriented: the development of "resilience ... physical, psychological and social well-being" reducing "disengagement from education, anti-social behaviour and crime; and that it "helps people to manage risk and encourage them to welcome challenge" (English Outdoor Council, 2009). Often these arguments cite the value of residential experiences, and are supported by campaigns and published guidelines from the professional field of OE. They often refer to the endorsement of 'Personal Social Health and Economic education' (PSHE) in the National Curriculum echoing the theme of personal growth in dealing with risks and challenges in life (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007).



The leading British youth charity, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (annual participants 275,000; year 2009; working with a range of youth clubs, schools, voluntary organisations, young offender institutions and other 'youth-at-risk' programmes) exemplifies an educational rationale for PSD (Duke of Edinburgh's Award, 2009). These have, to some extent, been supported by government agencies such as the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OfSTED, 2008). OfSTED emphasises the value of outdoor-related PSD to the detriment of an eco-centric message. One of its key findings in a thematic report on learning outside the classroom in October 2008 refers to outdoor-related PSD:

When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

Participants' views on societal ills and their influence on the sector are mirrored in literature and rationales from providers. **Ben**'s account encapsulates these views, as he identified a "social trend" whereby increasingly issues on dysfunctional groups and young people who are "unfit and overweight" came to the fore. Also, OE providers seem to justify their educational objectives drawing on 'moral panics' gleaned from youth research reports such as that published by UNICEF: *'An overview of child well-being in rich countries'*. This report identifies a lack of "fulfillment, unrealized potential and dysfunctional relationships" among British youth (UNICEF, 2007), and suggests social malaise amongst British young people, parents and teachers. This may be due to relentless examination pressure and parental anxiety which results in children being 'wrapped in cotton wool' (Outward Bound Trust, 2007, p. 4). Preoccupation with technology that isolates young people from contact with their peers, environmental deterioration due to a decrease in green-spaces and consequential lack of contact with nature are all considered to contribute to societal ills and, of course, the latter have led to the obesity 'time bomb'... (Outward Bound Trust, 2007, p. 5).

Hence, judging by recent initiatives and evidenced by participants it appears that there is much debate within Great Britain about how young people should be

nurtured. The latter is characterised by both complacency (according to some British participant's accounts) and current demands to proactively counter society's ills.

#### **10.4.3. Norway: The interplay of old and new**

Norway is a country with an 'ambiguous' national narrative. The Norwegian ethnologist Berggreen (1993) perceives two salient themes in Norwegian cultural history which create ambiguity between the "homespun, valley-bound and introspective", and the "outward looking" in pursuit of a connection with the wider outside world (p. 39). Considering the latter, this can also be exemplified by both the Arctic/Antarctic exploration as well as the Viking era, Hansa era and international relationships through shipping.

The aforementioned ambiguity is also apparent in current Friluftsliv practices throughout society (Odden, 2008). This includes e.g. the royal family wherein Queen Sonja's traditional outdoor interests were awarded with the prestigious *fjellgeit*-award [lit. mountain goat] by the Norwegian Mountain Trekking Association (DNT) during the Norwegian Fjell festival in 2005 (NRK, 2005), while Crown Prince Haakon transmutes challenging outdoor activities into lessons that promote the development of coping-strategies for 21<sup>st</sup> century modern life (DNT, 2010; VG, 2005).

As the findings have shown, nature's omnipotence achieves prominence in Norwegian/Scandinavian literature as can be seen in folk ballads and folk tales deriving from the medieval skaldic tradition of Iceland celebrating Norse mythology, which pre-dates the Christian era. According to Larsen, (1984) the overwhelming influence of rural lore in Norwegian culture impeded the development of a "well-rooted urban culture" and precluded it becoming the ruling moral imperative (p. 16).

Arguably, an anthropocentric focus in outdoor-related PSD evolved from early antecedents of Friluftsliv. However, outdoor-related PSD appears to assume an implicit role which bears traces of belief-systems whose long-rooted history

developed predominately in an “economy of scarcity” (Jonassen, 1983, p. 5). This is also evident in the Norwegian ‘presentation of self’ here exemplified through Fridtjof Nansen, who - as Repp (2004) puts it - stands on the “shoulders of previous generations of Norwegians” propagating qualities of stoicism, humility and the notion of detachment (p. 414).

The latter in particular is congruent with reticent Norwegian personality orientations (see Chapter Six, Section 6.5.2.) and assumes a strong theme as Nansen’s notion of ‘detached’ character building through the ‘great silence’ in a solitary encounter with nature (Nansen, 1942). These components contributed to the shaping of a Norwegian mind-frame and are a salient theme in Norwegian Friluftsliv literature (Tordsson, 1995; Repp, 2001; Repp, 2004).

In view of the aforementioned one might deduce that adherence to the isolationistic theme of Norwegian cultural history resulted in a rather staid and traditional approach to the outdoors - and one might further conclude that it persists to the present day.<sup>39</sup>

However, with the advent (in the 1970s) of the deep-ecological school of thought traditional and nationalistic leanings were subjected to outside influences from a “fertile blend of ideas from a variety of lands and times” (Reed & Rothenberg, 1992, p. 159). Significant to this were the philosophy of Heidegger, Næss's ecosophy related to self-realisation and the Frankfurt School of Sociology which criticised the objectivity of natural science. Others such as Thoreau’s spiritual discovery and manual for self reliance, Spinoza’s vision of truth and Ghandi’s pacifist ideology were contributors, as were philosophies of indigenous peoples such as the Himalayan Sherpa, the Sámi of Northern Europe and Native Americans. This mix of influences,

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<sup>39</sup> Two referenda (1972 and 1994) resulted in the rejection of a Norwegian EU membership. In 2010, the majority of voters for all parties throughout Norway continue to be opposed to Norwegian EU membership (DN, 2010).

shaping an anachronistic facilitation through Friluftsliv [vegledning i Friluftsliv]<sup>40</sup> undoubtedly challenges modernity.

The distilled essence of the influence of these schools of thought formed an ‘alternative naturalistic’ paradigm that muted the emphasis on nationhood and tradition somewhat and underlined the importance of the meaning of place and the connection of people within an ecospheric whole. Subsequently, the educational remit for PSD assumed a ‘holistic’ role, wherein the human mind is readily inspired and comforted by the wider natural world (Næss, 1986). The latter bears evident marks of eco-psychological dimensions with political and practical implications that show human ways of healing alienation and helping build a sane society and a sustainable culture (Roszak, 1992).

While the aforementioned refers to more recent influences, the extent to which Norway’s historical heritage has influenced current anthropocentric concepts of PSD in Friluftsliv is difficult to calculate - it being complex in nature and not clearly manifest in the interview data. This inconsistency permeates the participants’ comments. One participant (**Bjørn**) considered an ‘archaic’ approach of Nansen with “force and courage and the encounter with the grandeur of nature” would not support current approaches to PSD, whereas another (**Dag**) felt that Nansen’s legacy still fuelled a drive to ‘expeditionary-style’ Friluftsliv throughout the Norwegian populace.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the direction of outdoor-related PSD it would appear that the ‘Nansen syndrome’ with its emphasis on the individual appears to have shifted somewhat. In fact, PSD’s periodic changes from the atavistic ‘I’ (related to Nansen’s ‘detachment-syndrome’ of ‘meeting the outdoors’ and pre-Christian Germanic lore to the ‘we’ of concerns for social cohesion (of the inter-war period), and its transition to an ‘ecological self’ and focus on community during the deep-

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<sup>40</sup> The Norwegian term ‘vegledning i Friluftsliv’ is often referred by the deep-ecological school of thought in the English translation as the ‘philosophy of nature worth and con(w)aying Friluftsliv’. The deliberate misspelling of conveying with a ‘w’ aspires to refer to - metaphorically speaking - helping people on a new ‘way’ of life through Friluftsliv (Faarlund *et al.*, 2007).

ecological period of the 1970s and 1980s (see Chapter Six) have paved the way for the social dimension evident in current rationales. The accounts of the Norwegian interviewees accord with this shift by discussing the social dimension rather more than that of the 'separate and individual' dimension. One participant's comment (**Bjørn**) encapsulates this by emphasising that "one is more concerned with sociability than one is concerned with the separate individual". When considering 'the individual', interestingly, Norwegian participants embrace a 'balanced' concept of self where implicit contemplative values take their metaphors from spirituality and 'sensual intimacy' with land and the people.

The preference of the 'S' in PSD is also congruent with Friluftsliv literature. Bischoff (1996) suggests that there is a Norwegian disinclination towards an overt focus on the individual as suggested by Anglo-American approaches to developing, for example, 'self-esteem' and 'self-efficacy' (p. 94; see also Jonassen, 1983). However, regarding the elevated prominence of Maslow's notion of humanistic psychology in mainstream Norwegian schooling one can evidently trace Arne Næss' influence in Norwegian Friluftsliv propagating the "realization of our selves as part of an ecospheric whole" (Næss, 1989, p. 168) and the rationale of "deemphasising interhuman competition in outdoor activities [perceived to be] the driving forces behind ... ecologically destructive social and political systems" (Reed & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 169).

In a similar vein, the participants' accounts also point towards a Norwegian personality orientation which seems to be a difficult 'fit' with foreign outdoor-related PSD programmes. Particularly, the prominence of individual-focused PSD perceived as a 'cult of self' (self-regarding, individualistic, and arguably self-interested) was regarded by all Norwegian participants as problematic and contrary to its egalitarian traditions. Likewise, this is also resonant with Borey's (2001) postulation that suggests a socially encouraged predisposition of reticence, humility and being 'down to earth' as cherishable Norwegian virtues (see also Jonassen, 1983). It is telling that despite the demands for self-esteem and recognition, Jonassen (1983) suggest that "[the Norwegian would seem to] secretly enjoy a very positive self-attitude without

being liable to severe sanctions against self-praise and without displaying it and thereby risking guilt feelings or the envy, hostility and aggression of others” (p. 256).

The aforementioned would also resonate with reticent Norwegian behavioural patterns that appear to mute a ‘public’ pre-occupation with an overt ‘individual’ dimension (Borey, 2001; Eriksen, 1993; Jonassen, 1983; Nedrelid, 1992). In this context, one participant (**Bjørn**) perceived aspects of PSD to be generally made a personal and private focus rather than nurtured in the public sphere. Such concerns regarding the social and cultural specificity of Norwegian personality orientations would also seem to resonate with participants’ demands for a nationally-specific approach to PSD rather than the overt Anglo-American approaches.<sup>41</sup>

This stance is supported by the Norwegian interview findings that suggest cultural re-affirmation aligned with deep-ecological beliefs are strong and coherent themes inherent in the discourse of Norwegian Friluftsliv. Some participants (e.g. **Bjørn**) saw the latter as the prime concern of Friluftsliv and associated PSD with what Loynes (2002) describes as an “empowerment ... understood as establishing congruence with an inner sense of self” through contemplative values, such as “to rest in oneself and to pursue inner calm” (Loynes, 2002, p. 124).

The influence of ‘old’ and ‘new’ factors on Friluftsliv with regard to the debate on risk is not clear. The Friluftsliv literature shows divergent stances. For example, Tordsson (2005) deplors the notion of challenge that he identifies in PSD schemes outside Norwegian practice where “one has to overcome inner barriers and surmount internal and external resistance” (p. 164). Instead he favours the notion of

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<sup>41</sup> Research findings related to an inherent Norwegian ‘detachment’ - disposition by Vikander (2007) suggest in Norwegian Friluftsliv students’ data that 46% were introverts according to Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). In Nordvik (1994) findings 38% of the general Norwegian population (N=959) was found to be introverts. A predominant extrovert-disposition of US citizens has been suggested by Keirse & Bates (1978) with underpinning data from the US, which suggest only 25% introverts in the general population. For the UK, Shen *et al.* (2007), suggest that the general population is, however, slightly more extrovert (above 75%) than the US population. This is in contrast to many earlier studies which reported that the general US population was more extrovert (see also Wankat & Oreovicz, 1993).



‘familiarizing oneself with nature as a true home’<sup>42</sup> [å føle seg hjemme i naturen] associated with the national Romantic lore of “thousand year old traditions” (Tordsson, 2005, p. 164).

Conversely, Repp (2004) postulates that the individual’s teaching *via* Friluftsliv, with its challenges in regard to socialising and educating Norwegian youth, should not only espouse the ‘green’ and ethnocentric interpretations of Nansen’s character but should also acknowledge the adventurer’s role as a pioneer of developmental traits such as risk-taking and dealing with uncertainty which would legitimise PSD (p. 127). One participant’s comment (**Bjørn**) that ‘sport-focused strands of expedition-Friluftsliv’ (particularly at ‘folk high schools’) appear to have come more to the forefront might hint at a further consolidation of the notion of challenge and risk in the educational landscape of Friluftsliv.

However, in the holding of seemingly oppositional concepts such as the introversion/extroversion, individualistic/communitarian and reticence/’risk-culture’ disposition in both historical and contemporary Norwegian personality orientations (Breivik, 1998; Jonassen, 1983), the Norwegian rationale is blurred by disparate schools of thoughts. In other words, the Norwegian rationale embraces an uneasy tension by demonstrating their ambivalent positions in both.

The degree to which more recent educational imperatives have influenced the sector appears inconclusive. While some educational initiatives seem ambivalent about the wholehearted application of the concept of PSD in learning outdoors (Jordet, 2007; Jordet, 1995; Westphal, 2007), a recent Government white paper on Friluftsliv acknowledges a ‘broadened’ definition of Friluftsliv [romsleg Friluftsliv] in which it (as a ‘pedagogical working method’) is encouraged to address issues such as social

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<sup>42</sup> The notion of wild nature as a ‘semi-domestic space’ reverberates with indigenous people’s ancient relationship to nature which has also earlier been discoursed outside Scandinavia by the Icelandic-Canadian arctic explorer and anthropologist Vilhjalmur Stefansson. Particularly, Stefansson (1922), *The Friendly Arctic: The Story of Five Years in Polar Regions* (1922), discusses issues on logistics, mental attitude and technology necessitated by traveling on ice and extreme cold. Drawing attention to Inuit lacking desire to battle the environment in which they lived, he challenged the orthodox, literary notion of the Arctic as necessarily “barren, dismal and desolate” (Conefrey & Jordan, 1998, p. 12). Stefansson is frequently quoted as saying that adventure is a “sign of incompetence” (NOVA, 2010, p. 1).



deviancy among young people through the “development of the person with the intention of changing the attitudes and behaviour of the individual” (Ministry of the Environment, 2001, p. 2; translated by author of thesis).

In conclusion, it would appear that in the case of Norway the concept of national culture and identity is intimately connected with Friluftsliv and consequently places demands on the field (Bischoff, 1996; Sølvi, 2005). The participants’ uncertain stance towards future policies, however, seems to indicate a lack of unity in developing one.

#### **10.4.3.1. Conceptual imbalance: Norwegian stance of resistance**

It would be fair to say, that a certain form of conservatism continues to persist and impact the educational sector of Friluftsliv. Undeniably, the deep-ecological movement of the 1970s and 1980s led to a ‘narrowly defined’ Friluftsliv rationale with a clear leaning towards ethnic engagement in nature and relationship to place (Faarlund, 1993; Gurholt, 2008).

However, the deep-ecological school neglected to give credit to alternative interpretations of Friluftsliv’s antecedents. As a consequence the discourse became less focused on personal attributes and human-centric character refinement. Judging from the participants’ accounts this still appears to permeate the current discourse. The deep-ecological school of thought, in particular, remains influential in tightly knit, tradition-oriented HE communities referred to by some of the Norwegian participants as the “old guard” (**Carl**) or the “monk order” (**Bjørn, Dag**).

Arguably, the Norwegian disinclination towards an overt focus on PSD as witnessed in Friluftsliv literature and participants’ accounts might be seen as resistance towards a perceived threat of cultural homogenisation, which (in the Pan-European context) Festu & Humberstone (2005) associate with the globalised “imposition of English speaking peoples’ values and traditions” on OE (p. 36).

In a wider context, the firm resolve towards keeping an established rationale shown in the Norwegian discourse may be perceived as a manifestation of a long-established tendency towards protectionism (as evidenced in the historical findings) inherent in Norwegian cultural history (Berggreen, 1993; Nedrelid, 1991). The ethnocentric predisposition is especially potent in Norway which Berggreen (1993) refers to as a country that has stuck to the “self-image of the independent and innocent individual grown out of Norwegian soil, rain and fresh air, with a national culture where nothing was inherited from ‘others’” (p. 51).

Despite global and particularly American (Erikssen, 1993; Eriksen 2005; Scott, 1946) life-style patterns imported into Norway, the isolationist view - such as suggested by Witoszek (1998) who refers to a Norwegian ‘ideology immunity’ against foreign cultural ideologies that draw on “sophisticated town culture” - continues to hold strong as a national narrative and in Norwegian Friluftsliv literature (p. 58). In this vein, Friluftsliv’s resistance to urban ‘city-based’ philosophies common in foreign approaches to outdoor experiential learning are more easily understood.

Against such an inert backdrop it is possible that ‘foreign’ influences might damage the concept of Friluftsliv as conceived by the instigators of the deep-ecological movement, and ‘tarnish’ Friluftsliv as the ‘legitimate child of romanticism’ [ektefødt barn av romantikken] (Faarlund 1973, p. 15) (see also Jensen 2000, p. 98; Leirhaug, 2007, p. 57). In this line of thought it is hardly surprising that participants’ rhetoric reveals a perceived ‘alien-ness’ associated with a concern that outdoor-related PSD might infiltrate and dilute ‘traditional’ Friluftsliv (Bischoff, 1996; Sølvi, 2005; Tordsson, 1998).

A prescribed conservatism also reverberates in the educational debate about Friluftsliv. Although PSD is embraced overall in the National Curriculum framework (Core Curriculum/L97, 2005; National Curriculum, 2008), participants (e.g. **Bjørn**), suggest the “force of tradition” (supported by ‘white papers’) maintains resistance to

a new generation of outdoor activities which are seen to be “breaking the mould of traditional Friluftsliv” (see also Odden, 2008).

Furthermore, an unwillingness to adopt new approaches might be discernible in what most Norwegian participants alluded to as a “lack of transparency” within Friluftsliv’s discourse. One participant (**Anders**) encapsulated this by saying: “Norwegian universities are an archipelago where some islands were building bridges to others”, but the remaining academic environments are either “unknown” to one another or “seldom contacted”. The latter simultaneously cautions the observer not to over-ascribe the influence of a ‘nationally-orchestrated’ voice of Higher Education on the Friluftsliv sector.

However, it is entirely plausible that Norway’s disinclination towards outdoor-related PSD might be due to a genuine belief that specialist skills are needed to foster personal growth. The participants’ accounts emphasised that the programming process (**Bjørn, Carl and Dag**) was neglected and claimed that staff at Norwegian OE centres [leirskoler] were “ill-equipped” to deliver outdoor-related PSD (**Carl and Dag**). This would uphold Sølvi’s (2003) suggestion that Friluftsliv does not entirely address outdoor-related PSD, particularly with regard to youth work. She contends that Friluftsliv lacks a “finally devised working-method” that addresses social competence [sosial kompetanse] and ‘coping with challenge’ [mestring] and argues for an “arena with boundaries” to improve focus (p. 28).

#### **10.4.3.2. Friluftsliv’s ‘second’ discourse**

A somewhat ‘tentative’ ‘second’ discourse at the periphery of mainstream Friluftsliv - that the findings also have identified - gives PSD prominence with respect to socio-centric views on group and personal development, where events associated with being outdoors are transferred into lessons of everyday life, such as self-knowledge, understanding of others and increased capacity to learn from future experience. This discourse addresses the ‘overt end-objectives’ of PSD (e.g. task orientations, health and fitness outcomes and confidence) which feature in Norwegian fields of ‘outdoor

therapy', youth-work, folk high schools and military organisation (Bischoff 1996; Tordsson, 2005; Säfvenbom, 1998; Sølvik, 2003, 2005). This overt focus can be seen in association with initiatives that predominantly address dysfunctional behaviour and that have increased PSD's prominence<sup>43</sup> in the Norwegian school system (Nordahl 2000a, 2000b; Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2009; F4i, 2009).

Indeed, neo-liberal trends and a fast-evolving affluent society impose changes on the psyche of Norwegians (Eriksen, 1993; Eriksen, 2005; Nafstad *et al.*, 2007). This can also be exemplified by Nafstad *et al.*'s (2007) suggestion that a hegemonic shift in Norway appears to have increased individualism at the cost of communal values (p. 1). Tordsson (2002) highlights individualistic tendencies permeating Friluftsliv; linking his postulations with the lack of a unifying socio-cultural vision and with change in the sector fuelled by "modern consumer culture" that is hedonistic, individualistic and consumer-oriented in nature, which drifts away from communal ways of life, solidarity and egalitarianism (p. 322).

Arguably, the 'second' discourse can be viewed in the context of outdoor experiential learning that responds to global changes by speaking globally to the human condition transcending nations and cultures (Loynes, 2002). Also, this discourse is set in a context wherein Norwegian society has become increasingly complex and influenced by neo-liberal trends, and that according to Enzenberger (1984) has evolved into a country increasingly "wedged between the turbulence of modernity and the inertia of tradition" (p. 12).

It is telling that against the backdrop of these developments, the authors of a 'teacher's guideline' for PSD in Norwegian schools '*Utvikling av sosial kompetense - veileder for skolen*' strive to counterbalance a currently perceived increased preference on the individualistic dimension in the most recent Norwegian National Curriculum (Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet gjennom grunnopplæringen). These changes are imposed through a "global trend which demands for

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<sup>43</sup> A recent major theme in the Norwegian school system is the concept of the 'inclusive school' where diverse varieties of pupil's skills and capacities constitute educational aims. The increased focus of PSD can be interpreted in the context of this concept (Egelund, 1999; Haug, 2000).

specialisation, fiercer competition and increased liberalism” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2009, p. 6). With this perspective, the Norwegian educational debate seem to align with the attention also given in Great Britain to a trend towards individualisation that imposes increased responsibility on the individual (Furedi, 1997; Gill 2007, Loynes, 2008). However, in Norway, there remains a tension related to the public debate on PSD, while the Norwegian discourse on Friluftsliv appears to adhere to the notion of communal values most wholeheartedly.

Notwithstanding this, it seems, however, that an overt focus on outdoor-related PSD is likely to remain only as a marginal feature of mainstream Friluftsliv. One participant (**Bjørn**) was the most explicit on this matter. He felt that the development of “instrumental strands of Friluftsliv” was constrained by tightly-knit, tradition-oriented HE communities and that it was likely to remain so “as long as prevalent core institutions were dominant”. He further suggested that it seems a ‘parallel’ discourse will be stimulated by a future generation of Friluftsliv-students who are perhaps “less anchored in culture”.

In conclusion, the current discourse on the validity and location of outdoor-related PSD is characterised by an uneasy tension between the relationship of ‘old’ and ‘new’ influences. Gurholt’s (2008) criticism addresses the generic problems caused by the ‘narrowness’ of mainstream Friluftsliv in the formalised sector of HE which, she contends, constitutes a “hegemonic interpretation of Friluftsliv ... the worshipping of national romantic ideas ... [and] ... the post-modern mixing of ideas, interpreted as historical truths” (p. 140). In other words friction in the discourse of Friluftsliv with regard to outdoor-related PSD arises from the need to comply with the strong cultural lore of Norwegian history whilst ‘moral panics’ and an increasing ‘world of choice’ within Norwegian society put increasing demands on ‘instrumental’ approaches to Friluftsliv.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN - Concluding comments

In comparative education research, the value of theory has been challenged. Theory-building and revision as a goal of comparative studies assumes not universal acceptance (Fairbrother, 2005). Following from this there needs to be acknowledgement of a division between “qualitative methods geared towards a search for understanding of educational phenomena and quantitative ones for generalizable explanations” (p. 13). Considering the former, valuable insights can be inferred from “detailed qualitative case studies where comparison is more implicit” (p. 13).

Accordingly, this thesis stands in the latter tradition and does not assume the remit to inform a specific form of social theory. It seeks to contribute to an advancement of a philosophical understanding of a subsection of outdoor learning in a pan-European context, rather than attempt to illustrate a comprehensive picture of two national discourses.

As such, this thesis constitutes a philosophical contribution to the theory on outdoor learning exemplified by two countries. The previous chapters have shed light internally within the complex nature of OE and Friluftsliv. Each is based on amorphous concepts which are difficult to pin down in definitional, philosophical and practical terms. The findings suggest that OE and Friluftsliv are associated with a multi-factored socio-cultural context, and has supported the view that there is a lack of coherent understanding in each nation regarding outdoor-related PSD (e.g. for Great Britain: Nicol, 2002; and for Norway: Gurholt, 2008).

For both countries, there are similar societal drivers such as the global increase of liberalism, competition, specialisation (Nafstad *et al.*, 2007; Gill, 2007) and financial demands driven by the youth-market and HE courses that impact on the nature of PSD aims. Essentially, the concept of PSD in Great Britain and Norway seems to depend on disparate ontological paradigms, mythological rationales and ethnocentric constructions of self. However, there is a philosophical understanding of



OE/Friluftsliv that seems to be more disparate in Great Britain and more inclusive in the Norwegian case. Still, overall, there is neither philosophy building nor practice building that would constitute a 'national' voice. Rather, the findings have unveiled diverse stances - expressed in literature and interviews - along a continuum of relative comfort (Great Britain) and discomfort (Norway) to a process of globalised induced influences.

Interestingly, the responses to change differ from nation to nation. While both countries coherently demonstrate a prescribed conservatism towards new theory and change, by the same token the findings show that, for example, the British discourse has much more readily embraced global influences than has Norway.

While Norway has shown a certain form for robustness based on cultural grounds and thus nurtured its more home-grown, culture-oriented, place-based approaches, the discourse on Friluftsliv has only recently opened up to an overt PSD approach. Despite tendencies to declare the human-centred approach of PSD unworthy of association with Friluftsliv, these recent developments are fuelled also by a strong rhetoric concerning yet unfulfilled demands for a culturally-specific Nordic PSD approach. Although participants' accounts pointed towards the latter, they have been interpreted in this thesis as being undecided. With this in mind, the discourse needs more clarity.

As previously discussed, Sølvi (2003) has called for the introduction of a 'delineated' working method of Friluftsliv to address these unresolved tensions. Such an approach may both lead to recognition of the longstanding (historic) role that PSD has had in Friluftsliv and to future programme-related developments in Norway. However, considering Friluftsliv's inherent isolationistic line of thought, the discourse is potentially in danger of 'reinventing the wheel' in the development of approaches to outdoor-related PSD. Equally, current Friluftsliv provision appears to be generally characterised by a lack of evidence-based practice.



Great Britain and Norway are disparate examples of how nations resolve the inherent conflict between the universal needs for community and individuality while by the same token both are challenged by an increasing global attention accorded on the worth to individual autonomy (Dumont, 1986; Gregory, 1986; Miller, 1987). As nations differ in the extent to which they are based upon predominately 'self-regarding' rather than 'other-regarding' personality orientations, Norway's notion of PSD continues to follow the social imperative of egalitarian consciousness. Thus the notion of personal enhancement within PSD-related Friluftsliv programmes in Norway - will continue to subdue the 'P' in PSD. The downside of this cultural imperative, as it has been argued for other group-oriented societies (particularly Asian countries e.g. Japan) is that personalities will be less 'developed' in relation to self-awareness and self-efficacy (Gregory, 1986; Dumont, 1986; Miller 1987).

Paradoxically, the operationalisation of both countries' cultural ideologies into their respective national outdoor practices, result in unique 'tribal oddities'. A prominent theme in the findings suggests that while the British discourse is permeated through an 'individual ethos' that is nurtured through collective outdoor experiences, conversely, the Norwegian disposition resorts to a 'collective ethos' nurtured through solo experiences.

Conversely one might argue that in Great Britain, some of the findings related to future trends in outdoor-related PSD practice indicate a growing individualism within British society. Likewise one participant (**Ben**) perceived a challenge to the idea of 'the group' in that new programme design appears to favour the developmental and therapeutic needs of the individual. One might argue that this subtle change builds on historical precedents seen in the transition of pre-war British practices from engendering cohesion in society to the post-war period when OE increasingly valued individual autonomy, the notion of 'potentials' in relation to being successful in life and in preparation for working life (as discussed in Chapter Six, Section 6.5. & 6.6.; see also Cook, 2000; Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Loynes, 2008).

Arguably, in the absence of a strong British cultural tradition embedded in landscape (in contrast to the Norwegian tradition) and the seeming absence of a social community dimension in outdoor learning, the discourse has partly been influenced by 'globalised' US OE paradigms which can be summarized as unilateral and reductionist approaches (e.g. Priest and Gass) (Loynes, 2002). Furthermore, it would appear that the driving forces of OE provision in Great Britain are shaped by pragmatism in that it appears to follow the political arguments of the day, often associated with a lack of ontological 'backbone' as the universities are forced to respond to market pressures (**David**) (Humberstone & Brown, 2006). Simultaneously there is a trend for specialism in HE course design towards PSD particularly associated with the therapeutic dimension (**Andrew, Ben**) (Humberstone & Brown, 2006).

Comparative educational research is a tricky affair; it seeks clarity along the continuum of universalism *versus* isolationism. The universalist position advocates wandering at will among the education systems of the world, selecting favourites and (regardless of the system's origin or social context) conducting research that is supposed to have a broad contextual relevance. The isolationist stance challenges this and is strongly in favour of cultural uniqueness (Broadfoot, 2000a).

As divergent stances continue to dominate OE/Friluftsliv the question arises: should the traditions incorporate diverse paradigms from the 'global knowledge economy' in the hope that this will strengthen and improve their conceptual and practical basis? Or should individual countries protect and retain their own cultural integrity along with the national mythologies on which they are based? The answers to these questions are pressing - more so in light of educational demands to 'rescue the planet' or 'rescue the child'.

As for Great Britain it may be said that despite the advent of a new school of thought (e.g. Nicol, 2000) that supports the indivisibility of outdoor-related PSD and eco-centric views, the human-centred approach with its focus on self-confidence,

decision-making, and teamwork remains prominent, although such concepts appear to lack a “stated philosophy” (Nicol, 2002b, p. 89).

However, the human-centred focus may be considered particularly problematic in view of unprecedented environmental concerns (e.g. global climate change). This was apparent in the national literature reviews and in the comments of both the Norwegian and (somewhat less emphatically) British participants. Throughout the study (particularly from participants) there was little support for the almost ‘dogmatic’ anthropocentric approaches to outdoor-related PSD that dominate Anglo-American practice.

Meanwhile, although it is relatively easy to organise curriculum and educational initiatives around an historically established and accepted concept such as outdoor-related PSD (as in the case of Great Britain) it is much more difficult to do so for a concept which is nebulous and poorly defined as in the Norwegian situation. Despite references to PSD in ministerial white papers (e.g. Ministry of the Environment, 2001) Friluftsliv still lacks unequivocal support such as clear policy implementation which incorporates typical curricular-markers such as defined learning objectives. The paucity of overt outdoor-related PSD practices which goes hand in hand with a general lack of documentation seems to impede further development of ‘instrumental’ strands of Friluftsliv. Also, the absence of an established theoretical framework and poor consensus regarding practice, may explain why most participants in Norway showed inconsistency in their use of language relating to PSD.

Whilst Friluftsliv’s lack of documentation concerning outdoor-related PSD has been repeatedly stated, its paucity in terms of eco-centric justification also confirms that Friluftsliv was conceived and evolved as a predominately ‘a-theoretical’ approach (Gurholt, 2008). One Norwegian participant (**Anders**) implied that the strong traditional view of Friluftsliv undermines demands for its scrutiny, stating that evidence-based documentation was not valued as there is a historically grounded belief that one should not have to justify Friluftsliv practice. Similarly, with

reference to the academic sphere, Tordsson (2002) suggests Friluftsliv's axiomatic 'a-theoretical' ethos actually protects it from demands for further evaluation (p. 415).

The Norwegian stance towards outdoor-related PSD results in a lack of focus on learning outcomes such as 'life-skills' which address the social 'daily context' of the participant. The origins of this disinclination are evident in the dogmatic schism between culture and nature that Gurholt (2008) links with a "romantic illusion whose presumption is the existence of an absolute distinction drawn between nature and culture" (p. 140). The resulting *ultima ratio* might be viewed in the context of particular ethnic predispositions and a national narrative that emphasises a 'Norwegian-ised disposition' towards being in the outdoors [det særnorske i Friluftsliv] (Nedrelid, 1991; Nedrelid, 1992; Woon, 1993).

With this historical heritage, pressure to evaluate outcomes of outdoor-related PSD programmes (e.g. from the Norwegian youth market) might actually be less than that in Great Britain, where one participant (**Andrew**) emphasised demands for "tangible" facilitation and demonstrable "value for money" (see also Beames, 2006). British participants' comments on the need to further scrutinise outdoor-related PSD's particularities concerning what leads to effective learning outcomes resonates with the British focus on "solutions that attempt to enhance, accelerate and guarantee the outcome" (Loynes 2002, p. 118). However, the Norwegian stance may indicate the presence of an academic elitism that does not capitalise on opportunities to acquire knowledge and scholarship; and the paucity of Norwegian research seems likely to remain problematic regarding the future credibility of the sector.

This may be a thorny issue in light of the increasing global Western modernist culture with its neo-liberal trends (Eriksen, 1993; Eriksen 2005; Nafstad *et al.*, 2007; Tordsson, 2002) that are increasingly 'product and evidence' driven. As a consequence, instrumental approaches in Norwegian Friluftsliv will be subject to growing pressure to capture 'tangible' evidence of outdoor-related PSD.<sup>44</sup> Arguably,

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<sup>44</sup> Growing pressures for evidence-based practice and demands to secure funding from Norwegian educational authorities has led to the Norwegian Folk High School movement's commissioning of an evaluation study: 'Som en sang i sinnet - som et eneste sollyset mine - Elevers utbytte av

developmental or therapeutic claims that are not evidence-based are problematic, indeed in such a context it remains to be seen whether in future Norwegian funding organisations will require practitioners to articulate learning outcomes, particularly for short-term interventions. At the very least, facilitation methods in Friluftsliv practice seem likely to be challenged when they rely on a 'mountains that do their magic' - approach.<sup>45</sup> Growing pressures from a youth-market which address dysfunctional and personal-growth themes will undoubtedly demand new policies in Norway as they already have in Great Britain. In this vein, anecdotal evidence from Norway indicates future demands on the field will be more rationalist.<sup>46</sup>

One can certainly expect the condition of 'being human' to be influenced by modernity and globalised knowledge in Norway as in other 'developed' nations. The flow of ideas from the west to the east appears to penetrate the discourse on outdoor-related PSD as gradually external influences from British or American sources (as the literature review has shown) complement the discussion on PSD in Norway. Remarkably, however, in view of the small size of Scandinavia and particularly Norway, there is simultaneously a considerable Anglo-American interest in Scandinavian Friluftsliv, though arguably with regard to PSD this is only implicit (Faarlund *et al.*, 2007; Henderson & Vikander, 2007).

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*folkehøgskolen*' (Knutas & Solhaug, 2010). The study attempts to scrutinize potential correlations between the attendance of a 'folk high school' - course (where Friluftsliv is often an integral part of the course) and students' life skills and efficiency in ensuing attendance and completion of HE courses.

<sup>45</sup> A recent guideline '*3D Veiledning - Veiledning av elever i Norsk Folkehøgskole*' (Haddal & Sødal, 2010) published by the Norwegian 'folk high school' movement which addressed both students and staff offers varied facilitation 'techniques' to foster personal and social growth related to - amongst others - sense of self, life-skills, morality, confidence etc. .

<sup>46</sup> Anecdotal evidence from conversations with one of the leading authorities (Randi Myklebust Sølvi, PhD candidate) on issues of PSD-related Friluftsliv suggests a growing demand for evidence-based practice from Norwegian local authorities (personal communication 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, 2008). Notwithstanding this, Ingolv Dørum [warden of outdoor centre 'Drageid leirskole'] reports that local authorities' [Overhalla municipality in Nord-Trøndelag] belief in the supposed transferability of PSD schemes - particularly related to assumptions made on 'positive' future workforce efficiency and citizenship - has led to partial sponsorship (by the commercial sector) of pupils' participation in PSD-related programmes at his outdoor centre. In the year 2009, 'Drageid leirskole's approach has been awarded with the 'Fosen region' (eight municipalities in Western Norway) development award for innovative programme design as the outdoor centre's programmes "within short time manages to induce positive changes in pupil's outlook [tankegang] and coping strategies [mestringsfølelse]" (personal communication with Ingolv Dørum, 11<sup>th</sup> of March, 2011; see also Drageid, 2010).

The Norwegian findings (literature and participants) identified a 'second discourse' in Friluftsliv - the tentative growth of an overt approach towards outdoor-related PSD. Arguably this undermines Friluftsliv's potential to develop cultural connections and traditional lore, which according to Brookes (2002) (writing from an Australian perspective but within an international analysis) reduces the role of 'place' somewhat to "empty sites on which to establish social or psychological projects" (p. 2).

Furthermore the growing impact of such overt approaches to outdoor-related PSD demonstrates the power of globalisation. Although this may potentially endanger the Norwegian culture of Friluftsliv with its relationship to nationhood, landscape and place, what we can learn from Norway's reluctance to embrace outdoor-related PSD is that people's relationship to landscape is not a 'globalisable' commodity.

It can be said with some certainty that this thesis has unearthed two philosophical departures that in their current core discourses display conflicting claims. On the one hand approaches to learning in the outdoors speak globally to the human condition transcending nations and cultures, while on the other each nation seeks to develop its own indigenous approach to experiences in the outdoors (Loynes, 2002). This tension inherent in disparate philosophical departures is tangible internally in both the OE/Friluftsliv discourses of Great Britain and Norway. Indeed, the British and Norwegian discourses - like other national discourses in OE - attempt to resolve uneasy tensions between an eco-systemic premise to 'rescue the planet' and the anthropocentric premise to 'rescue the child'.<sup>47</sup> While these can be seen as complementary, undoubtedly, the British outdoor tradition displays a stronger focus on the latter despite criticism that it is oblivious to the context of community and climate change debate (Higgins & Nicol, 2002; Loynes, 2002).

Although environmental concerns are becoming more evident in the British OE discourse, judging from participants' accounts it seems however, that despite the fact that some of the more recent environmental ideas are being incorporated, essentially the discourse still follows a PSD tradition. This stance seems to be continued judging

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<sup>47</sup> In this context related also to the notion of a 'dysfunctional' child.



from the most recent publication *'Time for change in outdoor learning'* by the English Outdoor Council (EOC), a leading British OE organisation (EOC, 2010). The EOC demonstrates unwillingness to take on an eco-centric message as the publication hardly mentions the association of OE with e.g. science, environmental studies or the notion of 'sustainability'.

In contrast, the mainstream approach to Norwegian Friluftsliv with its emphatically holistic and eco-centric thrust is characterised by an almost 'dogmatic' neglect of the person-centred approach, which begs the question: "why wouldn't one *also* 'rescue the child'?"<sup>48</sup>

It remains to be seen if the two nations can 'cross-fertilise' each other's approach to OE/Friluftsliv. This thesis has tentatively identified diametrically opposed trends. Great Britain has become 'greener' in its discourse and in Norway the 'second discourse' has shown some signs of overcoming its deep-rooted disinclination towards a person-centred approach through Friluftsliv.

At this stage it is not clear whether the concept of outdoor-related PSD will be incorporated, enthusiastically or otherwise into the general approach of Friluftsliv in Norway. Indeed the Norwegian discourse still seems to struggle to find its own generic terminology and underlying principles that would locate PSD more solidly within the field of Friluftsliv. Perhaps a modern construction of a rationale for Friluftsliv might create a valid overt approach to outdoor-related PSD which nonetheless still maintains its traditional strengths.

With regard to the universalist stance in comparative educational research the question of how to overcome the historical inertia that permeates the outdoor traditions of both nations may lie in the words of Johann Gottfried von Herder, the 18<sup>th</sup> century instigator of European Romanticism. He described national glory as a 'deceiving seducer' and warned against setting boundaries that address the 'specificity' of nations. Herder extolled the significance of the universal existence of

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<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*



the '*condition humaine*', arguing that notwithstanding the varieties of the human form there is but one and the same species throughout the whole Earth:

No nationality has been solely designated by God as the chosen people of the Earth; above all we must seek the truth and cultivate the garden of the common good. Hence no nationality of Europe may separate itself sharply, and foolishly say, 'With us alone, with us dwells all wisdom' (Herder, 1968, p. 17).

Complementing this perspective, the analysis developed through this thesis suggests that nations should avoid a 'dualistic trap'. In particular there is a clear need to invest in ecologically, personally and socially 'developed' people in order to tackle the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The recent publication '*Shaping the outdoor profession: Creative diversity in outdoor studies courses in UK*' (Humberstone & Brown, 2006) has helped elevate the philosophical and pedagogical debate on OE to further prominence. It also attempted to highlight the most recent rationales that are driving the British outdoor sector. However, it appears that the current pedagogical debate will need further momentum to address issues such as: What is better practice? To whose advantage? (*cui bono?*) What are the benefits of divergent practices?

In order to make more authoritative claims on the discourse in the two countries, further research should focus on comprehensive single-nation studies with increased number of participants and inclusion of data from the level of provider as this would help to make more valid generalisations on trends in the discourse (Bryman, 2004; Stake, 2005).

Great Britain has a well-established platform for debates on the intricacies of outdoor-related PSD which includes established organisations, conferences and means of publication (as discussed in the British literature review). In Norway, however, where one participant lamented the lack of transparency claiming "little islands of people who do this and that but not knowing much about each other"

(Anders), it would appear that there needs to be debate on a higher degree of collaboration. In particular, the findings of the present study seem to indicate that the Norwegians may need to embark on an inter-disciplinary pedagogical debate on Friluftsliv as a distinct pedagogical working method for outdoor-related PSD.

Such a process which embraces the Norwegian cultural particularities may eventually elevate an overt PSD approach to more prominence. The recently established 'committee for Friluftsliv' [Friluftslivråd] in Norwegian Higher Education may here serve as a potentially new juncture to achieve this.

Moreover, such a debate would shed further light on Friluftsliv's ability to act as a serious educational approach that could ultimately satisfy a range of developmental and therapeutic imperatives. In this respect, the present thesis aligns with Tordsson's (2002) postulation that there should be further research and empirical testing of hypotheses related to methods in Friluftsliv that may be viable approaches to outdoor-related PSD (p. 415). In particular the debate on a culturally-conformed Norwegian/Nordic approach to outdoor-related PSD needs further refinement.

Against a background of the hegemonic nature of "shared ideas or beliefs which serve to justify the interests of dominant groups" (Giddens, 1997, p. 583) (as identified in this thesis) further scrutiny of the intricacies of respective national pedagogical debates is pertinent. Thus, applying the remit of historical research in education to the contemporary situation of the OE/Friluftsliv discourse it would appear that further research on the "interrelations between men, movements and institutions" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 46) would help to unveil the mechanisms that nurture the two dominant national paradigms.

Arguably this could aid in devising interventions, assist in counterbalancing imbalances through policies, and thus help shape the future direction of the field. There also seems to be considerable potential for research on programme designs which have more 'authentic' OE approaches that encompass themed journeys and engagement in communities where learning is being negotiated - rather than

approaches that would be described as episodic or interventionist and potentially criticised as formulaic and ‘off-the-shelf’.

While the British findings indicate an historical inertia towards changes to the anthropocentrism inherent in British outdoor traditions, the Norwegian findings offer a corollary with regard to its eco-centric focus (exemplified by both literature and participants’ accounts).

Current dissimilarities in outlook regarding PSD through the outdoors in Great Britain and Norway are reminiscent of the tension between two antecedents of OE, the ‘Scouting’ and the ‘Woodcraft’ movements at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Loynes, 2008b; Smith, 2002). Ernest Thompson Seaton’s libertarian Woodcraft concept reflective of indigenous native people and the acknowledgment of natural drives, recreation, self-government and the societal life of the group find many parallels in Norwegian Friluftsliv ideology. However the imminence of war (World War 1) favoured the conservative (Baden-Powell) rather than the radical ‘moral entrepreneur’ (Seaton) and thrust the ‘semi-militaristic’ strands of scouting to the fore (Smith, 2002).

Baden Powell’s rather more authoritarian notion of striving to give the “mass ... some of the spirit of self-negation, self-discipline, sense of honour, responsibility, helpfulness to others, loyalty and patriotism”, sustained the notion of youth ‘being correct’ and serviceable as ‘capital’ in the prevailing system of the time (Rosenthal, 1986, p. 90). These ideals emanated from public schools, which for the British historian Wingfield-Stratford were ‘character factories’ “every bit as important a feature of the time as the great machine houses of the North” of England (Worsely, 1940, p. 17).

Malleable equally for ‘war and business’ purposes, it might be argued that the notion of character and physical preparedness for war has been replaced by the notion of character related to a human capital concept in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century global knowledge economy. In this context, it is arguable that certain tenets of the person-

centred approach are entangled in the quest for national economic supremacy and issues related to workforce efficiency<sup>49</sup>. Global neo-liberal influences seen as external pressures on the person-centred concept seem to constitute new contemporary societal drivers (particularly in the case of Asian countries) that (arguably) follow historical precedents and seem to favour conservative ‘character factories’ rather than libertarian approaches to PSD.<sup>50</sup>

While global pressures identified in the present study may quite properly be viewed with suspicion by these nations, there may yet be merit in a cautious but open-minded approach to future philosophical and programme-related developments. Both of the nations studied have deeply-rooted, internationally-regarded traditions of OE/*Friluftsliv*. For Great Britain, it may be this very situation that has led to an apparent reluctance to embrace ‘new’ approaches that would open up the notion of community, environment, place, spirituality and sensual intimacy with landscape and thus broaden its hitherto relatively narrow scope.

This thesis has attempted to systematically highlight relationships between education and society in relation to the outdoors in both Great Britain and Norway. Beyond a potential cross-fertilisation between the two countries involved in this study, the findings are of a much broader salience internationally. This thesis is proffered as a starting point from which it is hoped further research endeavors - involving more countries - will grow so that those who employ the outdoors as an arena in which to teach might learn from the ‘flaws’ and ‘potentials’ of other national ideologies.

In particular, European countries now taking an interest in the outdoors - could

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<sup>49</sup> Stuart (2010) suggests that the decrease of UK-based manufacturing and the increase of service work has entailed an increased demand for young people’s social skills. This trend is particularly to be put in the context of high unemployment rates where young peoples’s resilience and personal agency to find a job appears to be of paramount importance. UK based studies such as UKCES (2010) and Balzagette (2010) suggest that the labour market is looking for socially and emotionally developed young people more than ever before.

<sup>50</sup> In the case of e.g. Singapore, a country with few natural resources, the populace is regarded as a ‘resource’ and thus the rationale of OE is firmly supported by governmental initiatives tightly connected with the notion of human capital. Learning objectives in OE seem to follow the principle of the ‘three ‘R’s’ (resilience, ruggedness and robustness) (personal communication with Mr. Kim Seng Tay, education officer at outdoor section, Ministry for Education, Singapore, May 2008).

potentially be inspired towards informed decision-making respectful and inclusive of their own 'unique' national practice, while encountering globalised educational challenges. However, comparative research based on outdoor traditions in a wider pan-European context remains in its infancy. Further, outdoor-related comparative research could aid development of a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality in national contexts.

Ultimately, it is hoped that this work may foster development of guidelines for informed programme design that - while continuing to respect socio-cultural roots - open up new horizons so that educational ideas from all over the world can enrich the field and be enjoyed by all who participate in them.

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## APPENDICES

### A. PREREQUISITE QUESTIONNAIRE (Great Britain)

Ralf Westphal  
University of Edinburgh  
PESLS  
St. Leonard's Land  
Outdoor Education Section  
Edinburgh  
EH 8 8 AQ

Tel.: 0131- 6514111  
email: WestphalRalf@Hotmail.com

Dear lecturing staff!

I am a third year PhD-student at the outdoor education section of the University of Edinburgh. In co-operation with the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences (NIH) in Oslo I am involved in a comparative analysis of outdoor education in Great Britain and Norway. As part of this study I wish to gain knowledge of current developments in the field in both countries.

I would like to gain insights about the field from respondents (lecturers and programme directors in outdoor education) in Great Britain and Norway, and I would like to select these on the basis of their reputation/overview. In order to select appropriate interviewees I would appreciate your invaluable advice on who might be appropriate.

All your responses will of course be treated completely confidentially. All data will be anonymised in accordance with the standard ethical procedures of the University of Edinburgh. My request is that you help me in two ways:

**First**, please list (see table below) **up to five** lecturing staff in higher education of stature and experience throughout Great Britain (not only your own University) who can be relied upon to take a balanced perspective of the field.

No.:	Name	University/Institution:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

**Second**, in order to ensure a 'balance of interest' in the field of outdoor education I would like you (for each individual) to place him/her on each continuum: A, B and C

(see tables below) according to their involvement/interest in each of the following three dimensions:

- PSE (personal and social education)
- EE (environmental education)
- OA (outdoor activities/skills development)

Please send your responses to my email address: WestphalRalf@Hotmail.com. I would really appreciate responses as soon as possible and by **Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2007**.

Upon completion of the thesis it will be posted on the university website at <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored/research.html>. For further information about my project please look at: <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored/staff/westphal.html>, or contact my supervisors, Professor Peter Higgins and Dr Peter Allison.

Thank you for your help with this request.

Yours sincerely

(Ralf Westphal)

PS: An example for name "Charlie Brown" could be:

continuum A: <b>involvement/interest in personal social education</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
High				
Name/number as above: <b>Charlie Brown, No.1</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
			x	

continuum B: <b>involvement/interest in environmental education</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
High				
Name/number as above: <b>Charlie Brown, No.1</b>				
	x			

continuum C: <b>involvement/interest in outdoor activities/skills development</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
High				
Name/number as above: <b>Charlie Brown, No.1</b>				
				x

Here is your list:

continuum A: involvement/interest in personal social education				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
<b>High</b>				
Name/number as above:				
1	2	3	4	5
Name/number as above:				
1	2	3	4	5
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				

continuum B: involvement/interest in environmental education				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
<b>High</b>				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				

continuum C: involvement/interest in outdoor activities/skills development				
1	2	3	4	5
Low (involvement/interest)				
<b>High</b>				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				
Name/number as above:				

## B. PREREQUISITE QUESTIONNAIRE (Norway)

Ralf Westphal  
University of Edinburgh  
Outdoor Education Section  
St. Leonards Land  
Holyrood Road  
Edinburgh  
EH 8 8 AQ  
Scotland

Tel.: 0044-131-6514111  
Email: WestphalRalf@Hotmail.com

Kjære høgskole ansatte i Friluftsliv!

Jeg holder på med et forskningsprosjekt som PhD-student ved Friluftsliv-seksjonen (outdoor education section) Universitetet i Edinburgh/Skottland i samarbeid med Norges Idrettshøgskole (NIH) i Oslo.

I denne sammenheng gransker jeg ut i fra en komparativ synsvinkel den britiske og den norske Friluftslivtradisjonen. Som en del av denne undersøkelsen belyses den nåværende utviklingen innenfor begge felter. I del II av denne undersøkelsen ønsker jeg å henvende meg til informanter som f. eks. lektorer i Friluftsliv ved norske høgskoler og programmansvarlige ved institusjoner som f.eks. leirskoler, folkehøgskoler, DNT etc).

Før jeg foretar det endelige utvalget av potensielle informanter, ønsker jeg herved å konsultere deg i forhold til din erfaringsbakgrunn innenfor Friluftsliv-feltet. Det skal samtidig nevnes at ditt svar vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. All data kommer til å bli anonymisert i overensstemmelse med etiske standarder ved Universitetet i Edinburgh.

Mitt anliggende gjelder to aspekter:

**Den første** er, vær så snill og nevne **opp til 5 personer** ved norske høgskoler som representerer etter din forståelse faglig tyngde/pondus og gjenspeiler erfaring samt at de har et balansert perspektiv overfor Friluftsliv-feltet i Norge. I dine overveielser kan også ingå fagfolk som ligger med deres ideologiske ståsted inn i periferien av feltet som her betegnes som 'transisjonsfeltet' mellom Friluftsliv som fagdisiplin og den pedagogiske-didaktiske arenaen som er representert i feltet: pedagogikk/didaktikk.

Nr.:	Navn:	Høgskole
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

**For det andre** for å få til en balansert seleksjon, ber jeg deg om å ‘posisjonere’ hver enkelt navn på nedenstående liste:

- Kontinuum A
- Kontinuum B
- Kontinuum C

jfr. en tallrekke (1 til 5) i forhold til vedkommendes grad av involvering/interesse i følgende faglige dimensjoner:

- personlig og sosial utvikling med hjelp av Friluftsliv (a)
- dyp-økologisk Friluftsliv (b)
- Friluftsliv som aktivitetsfag/aktivitetsfelt (c)

(a) eksempler kunne være: mestringsopplevelser; sosial læring; relasjonskompetanse; samarbeide; omsorg, ansvar; selv-tillit; infølingsevne; ‘pedagogisert’ Friluftsliv; etc.)

(b) eksempler kunne være: miljøbevissthet; verdiorientering; Friluftsliv som ‘egenverdi’ ; etc.

(c) eksempler kunne være: ferdighetsutvikling, skill-development; hard skills; outdoor activity; etc.

Vær så snill og send svaret ditt hurtigst mulig til min e-postadresse:

WestphalRalf@Hotmail.com. Svarfristen er **Fredag, den 05. Oktober 07.**

Ved avslutningen av prosjektet vil resultater ble offentliggjort ved Edinburghs Universitets webside: <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored/research.html>. For ytterligere informasjon omkring det pågående prosjektet henvises til: <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored/research.html> eller til veilederne Prof Peter Higgins og Dr Peter Allison.

Tusen takk for din hjelp.

mvh

(Ralf Westphal)

PS: Her er et eksempel for “Ola Nordmann”:

Kontinuum A: <b>personlig og sosial utvikling</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Lav</b> (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
<b>Høy</b>				
Navn/nr.: <b>Ola Normann, nr.1</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
	x			

<b>Kontinuum B: dyp-økologisk Friluftsliv</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Lav</b> (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
<b>Høy</b>				
Navn/nr.: Ola Normann, nr.1				
1	2	3	4 x	5

<b>Kontinuum C: Friluftsliv som aktivitetsfag/aktivitetsfelt</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Lav</b> (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
<b>Høy</b>				
Navn/nr.: Ola Normann, Nr.1				
1 x	2	3	4	5

Med litt konsentrasjon klarer du sikkert nu de følgende lister:

<b>Kontinuum A: personlig og sosial utvikling</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Lav</b> (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
<b>Høy</b>				
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Kontinuum B: dyp-økologisk Friluftsliv</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Lav</b> (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
<b>Høy</b>				
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5
Navn/nr.:				
1	2	3	4	5

<b>Kontinuum C: Friluftsliv som aktivitetsfag/aktivitetsfelt</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Lav</b> (grad av involvering/engasjement og interesse)				
<b>Høy</b>				
<b>Navn/nr.:</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Navn/nr.:</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Navn/nr.:</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Navn/nr.:</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Navn/nr.:</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>



## C. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (Great Britain)

### Semi-structured Interview



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ UNI/institution: \_\_\_\_\_

**Informant:** lecturing staff - advisory position (circle one)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Years in work: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Preamble:

I am doing a study regarding the relationship between traditional and contemporary factors that influence the field of OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway. Over the course of this interview, I'll be asking you to reflect on a series of questions related to the field of OE in your country. Are you comfortable? Any questions? Ready to start?

1) What is your professional role/job title?

prompt:

◇ any other affiliation?

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2) How did you come to work in this field?

prompts:

◇ Tell me something about your background

◇ Why do you do what you do?

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3) At an earlier stage I asked respondents to place their peers onto three continuums. Which continuums (relating to the questionnaire) would represent the focus of your work?

prompt:

◇ Is there something else you would like to say on this?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

4) In your view is there a particular 'agreed' notion of what OE is in your country?

prompts:

- ◇ What is the sector comprising of?
- ◇ national characteristics?
- ◇ historically embedded?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

5) Thinking back, has the field changed much compared to say five years ago?

prompt:

◇ have there been obvious influences that has brought the field to where it is today?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

6) If there are changes, what are the key reasons for this?

prompts:

- ◇ statutory?
- ◇ practical?
- ◇ financial?
- ◇ ideological pressures?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

7) Have 'historical' factors influenced your understanding/practice of the field?

prompt:

◇ Historical inertia versus new development?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

8) As you see the situation now, what are the major influences on OE?

prompts:

◇ What are the pressures at the moment?

◇ Key aspects that influence?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

9) Can you offer any thoughts on the trends in OE in Great Britain over the next 5-10 years?

prompts:

◇ What is new?

◇ In which direction are we developing in Great Britain?

◇ Is it sufficient?

◇ How should we change it?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

10) How is the concept of PSD through the outdoors defined within the field of OE in your country?

prompts:

◇ demarcation lines: anthropocentric versus more holistic?

◇ How is PSD manifested in national curriculum? (e.g curriculum for excellence, achievement versus attainment) (What consequences for OE sector?)

◇ What are the driving forces? (pedagogical contents that are imposed e.g. through human interest paradigm versus human capital paradigm?)

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

11) In your view, what are the particular ‘national’ characteristics that would help me to understand schemes that foster PSD through the use of the outdoors.

- prompts: ◇ What is the landscape of the sector?  
◇ What comprises functional? dysfunctional groups?  
◇ What contents? How does it materialize?  
◇ How conceptualized?  
◇ Historical connections of contemporary PSD?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

12) Can you offer any thoughts on trends/directions specifically with regard to PSD in OE?

- prompts:
- ◇ What is changing in regard to PSD?
  - ◇ What role does initiative ‘Campaign for Adventure’ play? (risk, challenge, litigation culture, culture of blame?)
  - ◇ Where do you see PSD’s role versus EE in the context of ‘global warming/climate concerns?’
  - ◇ more research in PSD?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

13) If there is change, how will pedagogical contents of PSD schemes change?

prompts:

◇ refinement versus negligence of methods/facilitation?

◇ refined facilitation methods versus 'having a jolly'?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes

(For later transcriptions, try to jot some reflections on what has been learned, general impressions, tone of interview)

## D. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (Norway)



### Semi-structured Interview

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ UNI/institution: \_\_\_\_\_

**Informant:** lecturing staff - advisory position (circle one)

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Years in work:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Preamble:

Jeg holder på med et forskningsprosjekt som PhD-student ved Friluftsliv-seksjonen (outdoor education section), Universitetet i Edinburgh/Skottland i samarbeid med Norges Idrettshøgskole i Oslo (NIH). I denne sammenheng gransker jeg ut i fra en komparativ synsvinkel den britiske og den norske OE/Friluftslivtradisjonen. Som en del av denne undersøkelsen belyses den nåværende utviklingen innenfor begge felter. I del II av denne undersøkelsen ønsker jeg å henvende meg til informanter som f. eks. lektorer i Friluftsliv ved norske høyskoler og programmansvarlige ved institusjoner som f.eks. leirskoler, folkehøgskoler, DNT etc. Jeg kommer til å stille noen spørsmål i forhold til Friluftsliv i Norge. Har du noen spørsmål? Er du klar til intervjuet?

<p>1) Hva er din profesjonelle tilknytning?  What is your professional role/job title?</p> <p>prompt:  ◇ andre tilknytninger? (any other affiliation?)</p> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>2) Hvordan kom du til å jobbe i Friluftsliv-feltet?  How did you come to work in this field?</p> <p>prompts:  ◇ fortell meg lidt omkring din bakgrunn  ◇ Tell me something about your background  ◇ Why do you do what you do?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>3) Tidligere spurte jeg respondentene om å plassere kollegerne sine på tre faglige dimensjoner: (a) personlig og sosial utvikling ved hjelp av Friluftsliv (b) dyp-økologisk Friluftsliv (c) Friluftsliv som aktivitetsfag/aktivitetsfelt. Hvilken faglig dimensjon representerer ditt ståsted? At an earlier stage I asked participants to place their peers onto three continuums. Which continuums (relating to the questionnaire) would represent the focus of your work?</p> <p>prompts:  ◇ Er det mer du har lyst å tilføye?  ◇ Is there something else you would like to say on this?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?</p>
<p>4) Etter din mening, er det en felles forståelse av hva Friluftsliv-feltet omfatter i Norge?  In your view is there a particular 'agreed' notion of what Friluftsliv is in your country?</p> <p>prompts:  ◇ Hva består feltet/sector av? (What is the sector comprising of?)  ◇ nasjonale karakteristika? (national characteristics?)  ◇ historiske røtter? (historically embedded?)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?</p>



5) Hvis du ser tilbake, har Friluftsliv-feltet forandret seg, sammenliknet med 5-10 år tilbake?

Thinking back, has the field changed much compared to say five years ago?

prompts:

- ◇ Hvilke utviklingstrend ser du? have there been obvious influences that has brought the field to where it is today?

◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

6) Hvis det er forandringer, hva er årsaker til det?

If there are changes, what are the key reasons for this?

prompts:

- ◇ legislative?
- ◇ praktiske?
- ◇ finansielle?
- ◇ ideologiske ?

◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

7) Har 'historiske' faktorer påvirket praksisen innenfor Friluftsliv? Have 'historical' factors influenced your understanding/practice of the field?

prompt:

- ◇ Historisk inertia versus forandring? (Historical inertia versus new development?)

◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

8) Hvis du ser på situasjonen nu, hva er hovedpåvirkningene på Friluftsliv-feltet? As you see the situation now, what are the major influences on Friluftsliv?

prompts:

- ◇ Hva påvirker trenderne i dag? (What are the pressures at the moment?)
- ◇ Hovedpåvirkninger? (Key aspects that influence?)

◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

9) Har du noen tanker omkring mulige trender innenfor Friluftsliv i Norge i de kommende 5-10 år?

Can you offer any thoughts on the trends in Friluftsliv in Norway over the next 5-10 years?

prompts:

- ◇ Hva er nytt? (What is new?)
- ◇ I hvilken retning utvikler vi oss i Norge? (In which direction are we developing in Norway?)
- ◇ Er det tilfredstillende? (Is it sufficient?)
- ◇ Hvordan skal vi forandre det? (How should we change it?)

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think ...  
.....? Is this correct?

10) Det å bruke gruppens møte med naturen, hvordan brukes dette instrumentelt i Norge i dag? (eksempler for Friluftsliv som metode: mestringsopplevelser; sosial læring; relasjonskompetanse; samarbeide; omsorg, ansvar; selv-tillit; infølingsevne; 'pedagogisert' Friluftsliv; etc.)

- prompts:
- ◇ Hvordan er dette pedagogiske arbeidsområde definert? How is the concept of PSD through the outdoors defined within the field of Friluftsliv in your country
  - ◇ Hva skal formes/utvikles?
  - ◇ antroposentrisk versus holistisk? Hvor ligger grensene? (demarcation lines: anthropocentric versus more holistic?)
  - ◇ Hvordan er PSD manifestert i det nasjonale læreplanverket? How is PSD manifested in national curriculum? (e.g curriculum for excellence, achievement versus attainment) (What consequences for Friluftsliv sector?)
  - ◇ Hva er drivkrefterne bak implementasjon av PSD? (Humanitær dannelse versus human kapital dannelse tankegangen?)
  - ◇ What are the driving forces? (pedagogical contents that are imposed e.g. through human interest paradigm versus human capital paradigm?)

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

11) Hvilke 'merkelapper' finnes for personlig vekst og sosial utvikling i Friluftsliv som metode/PSD-konseptet?

prompts:

- ◇ Hvilken terminologi blir brukt?
- ◇ eks. mestringsopplevelser; sosial læring; relasjonskompetanse; samarbeide; omsorg, ansvar; selv-tillit; infølingsevne; 'pedagogisert' Friluftsliv; etc.)

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12) Hva er 'nasjonale' karakteristika som hjelper meg til å forstå nærmere pedagogiske aktiviteter som fokuserer på personlig og sosial utvikling innenfor Friluftsliv-feltet?

In your view, what are the particular 'national' characteristics that would help me to understand schemes that foster PSD through the use of the outdoors/Friluftsliv.

- prompts: ◇ Hvordan arter seg disse aktiviteter? (What is the landscape of the sector?)
- ◇ Hva slags klientel? Funksjonel/dysfunksjonel? (What comprises functional? dysfunctional groups?)
  - ◇ Hvilket innhold? (What contents?/How does it materialize? How conceptualized?)
  - ◇ Historiske årsaker for utformingen/evtl. blokeringen versus nye innflytelser?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

13) Hvilke trender ser du på personlig og sosial utvikling i Friluftsliv-feltet? Can you offer any thoughts on trends/directions specifically with regard to PSD in Friluftsliv?

- prompts:
- ◇ Hva forandrer seg i forhold til PSD? (What is changing in regard to PSD?)
  - ◇ risk, challenge, litigation culture, culture of blame?
  - ◇ Where do you see PSD's role versus EE in the context of 'global warming/climate concerns?
  - ◇ more research in PSD?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

14) Hvis det er forandring i feltet 'Friluftsliv som metode', hvordan vil pedagogiske innhold forandre seg? If there is change, how will pedagogical contents of PSD schemes change?

prompts:

- ◇ utvikling av tilrettelegningsmetoder versus “Det kommer av seg sjølv”?
- refinement versus negligence of methods/facilitation?
- ◇ refined facilitation methods versus ‘having a jolly’?

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◇ for member checks: What I hear you saying is.....? It sounds to me that you really think.....? Is this correct?

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes

(For later transcriptions, try to jot some reflections on what has been learned, general impressions, tone of interview)

## E. INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT



The University of Edinburgh  
Outdoor Education  
St. Leonard's Land,  
Holyrood Road,  
Edinburgh,  
EH 8 8 AQ  
Scotland  
<http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored>

### **Informed Consent Document**

According to the policy of the University of Edinburgh with regards to ethical issues in data collection, it is required participants to consent before they engage in the research.

**Project Title:**

Comparative educational research on OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway - historical and contemporary influences

**Principal Investigator:**

Ralf Westphal, PhD student, section outdoor education, University of Edinburgh, Scotland

**Purpose:**

This is a research study. The purpose of this research study is to elicit the relationship between traditional and contemporary factors that influence the field of OE/Friluftsliv in Great Britain and Norway. The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether you want to participate. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about: the research, what you will be asked to do, the possible risks and benefits, and anything else about the research, or this form that is not clear. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to take part in this study or not. This process complies with the notion of "informed consent". You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

I am inviting you to participate in this research study because of your involvement in the national discourse of OE/Friluftsliv. If you do participate you will be one of an anticipated 8 interviewees.



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Scotland  
<http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/outdoored>

**Procedures:**

The data-collection process comprises a semi-structured interview. I will ask you questions related to your perception of the field of OE/Friluftsliv in your country. These interviews will be voice-recorded, and later made into transcripts for analysis. Please see confidentiality statement later in the form. Your time involved in this procedure will be brief. The interview should not take more than 40 minutes. To seek respondent validation I will provide you with an account of the key-themes coded from your interview, and if you wish you can provide feedback on these points.

**Risks:**

There are no known risks in participating in this research.

**Benefits:**

You contribute to the discipline of OE/Friluftsliv by participating in a study that aspires to illuminate comparable aspects of two 'national journeys' in the field of OE/Friluftsliv.

**Confidentiality:**

Records of participation in this research project will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. The confidentiality will comprise with the guidelines of the University of Edinburgh Research Ethics Committee. If you choose to participate in this research project, any notes made in the field will use a number in place of your name or other mentioned respondents (e. g. lecturing staff No. 3), thereby securing confidentiality. Strenuous efforts will be made to keep recordings safe throughout the post-interview period. If your ideas or comments are used in my dissertation or any published articles, a coded name (pseudonym) will be given in substitute of your own.



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**Audio recording:**

The interviews will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis. By initialling in the space provided below, you verify that you have been told that audio recordings will be generated during the course of this study. A professional, recognized by the University of Edinburgh, may transcribe the recordings. Beyond the possible temporary contact of a transcriptionist, my supervisors and I will have sole access to the data. The interviews will be digitally recorded as .wav files (the exact same type of file that comes on any commercially available music CD), and stored on the hard drive of my secure personal computer with multiple layers of password protection. The computer is located in a locked building within a locked office. If the recordings are kept for future research, they will be stored digitally on CD's with password protection and kept under lock and key.

**Questions:**

Questions are encouraged. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:

Ralf Westphal  
University of Edinburgh  
Outdoor Education  
Holyrood Road  
Edinburgh  
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### **Declaration of consent**

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you. Moreover, that you are aware that the interviews will be recorded, that your questions have been answered. You will receive a copy of this form, prior to the interview through email. I have read and understood the above and consent to participate in this study.

Participant's Name  
(printed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of participant)

### **Researcher Statement**

I have discussed the above points with the participant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of researcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**F. DATA CODING DESCRIPTION AND FRAMEWORK (Great Britain; Part one)**

Themes	Sub-Themes	Description of subthemes
1. ISSUES OF CONCEPT	1.1 Terminology	
	1.2. Core elements of outdoor-related PSD	To what degree PSD is rooted in anthropocentric and eco- logical ontologies
	1.3. The status of PSD in outdoor education	The position of PSD in the wider field of outdoor education
	1.4. The purposes of PSD	The learning objectives of PSD

**F. DATA CODING DESCRIPTION AND FRAMEWORK (Great Britain; Part two)**

2. DYNAMICS OF THE FIELD	2.1. The evolution of PSD	Participant's perspectives on the evolution of the sector's rationale and practices
	2.2. External influences	Array of external influences (financial, statutory, societal, global) that provoke change in the sector
	2.3. Moving towards the environmental domain	Tension surrounding the transition of PSD dominated by an anthropocentric philosophy to a more ecological philosophy
	2.4. The consolidation of PSD	Views about development towards an established practice of PSD
	2.5. Marketplace	Recent shifts that have been occurring in the marketplace

## G. DATA CODING DESCRIPTION AND FRAMEWORK (Norway)

Themes	subthemes	Description of subthemes
1. ISSUES OF CONCEPT	1.1. Terminology	What terms 'mean'
	1.2. Core elements of Friluftsliv	Definitional issues on Friluftsliv and PSD
	1.3. Status of PSD within Friluftsliv	Status of PSD within a wider context of Friluftsliv including peripheral practices
2. DYNAMICS OF THE FIELD	2.1. Is PSD-related Friluftsliv evolving?	Ideas about the direction in which the field is moving along a continuum of inertia and change
	2.2. External influences	Degrees of cultural influences that appeared to inform PSD-related learning within Friluftsliv
	2.3. Resistance towards an anthropocentric domain	Influences that appeared to hamper 'overt' PSD-related learning in the educational agenda
	2.4. The marketplace /usergroup	Views reflecting the marketplace of PSD-related Friluftsliv