CONTRAST AND COMPARISON OF OUTDOOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING PRACTICES THROUGH A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK LENS

by

DARREN WEST

P.G.C.E., University of Wales, 2003
B.Sc., Sheffield Hallam University, 1999

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Physical Education)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 2007

Abstract

This study investigated program planning practices in outdoor education. The investigation looked through a conceptual framework lens at three different cases of outdoor education: Voluntary, Governmental, and Commercial. The research sought to ascertain to what extent theory is reflected in practice. During the research there was also opportunity to gain an insight into whether planning involves the learners, and more specifically whether it involves children learners. Information was gathered through investigation of theoretical perspectives of program planning and through case analysis via interviewing. Data suggests that there are varying levels of learning integrated within program planning. The data also confirms that care should be taken to reduce the gap between theory and practice with outdoor education program planning frameworks. The following pages detail the research process, the findings and conclusions.

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Chapter1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

There are many examples of the benefits that outdoor education has on personal and social development (Priest & Gass, 2005; Beard & Wilson, 2004; Barrett & Greenaway, 1995; Hubball & West, in press), however research has predominately focused on the outcomes of outdoor education programs (Baldwin, Persing & Magnuson, 2004; Freeman, Nelson & Taniguchi, 2003; Holman & McAvoy, 2005). This paper differs from previous research into outdoor education in that it examines program planning and implementation in order to gain understanding of the processes involved in outdoor education program planning. Using Herons (2005) conceptual *Planning Dimension* framework as a lens, this research examines three different categories of outdoor education organizations: voluntary, governmental[1], and commercial. The study explores the extent to which learners are central or included in the program planning process, with the ultimate goal of drawing contrast and comparisons between theory and practice.

Outdoor education experiences take place within a range of settings and contexts. It is therefore important that this research clarifies its position within outdoor education. Outdoor education is the experiential method of learning that uses the outdoor environment as a medium to promote learning (Dewey, 1938: Freire ,1970: Hahn, 1965). The outdoor environment can be used for a number of different situations. For example to build a concept or skill in an activity using "appropriate, direct and first-hand

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[1] Although the governmental organization is a private school, it has been designated under this category due to the mandated curriculum

experiences" (Hubball & West, in press; McRae, 1990); a residential setting for creating

a temporary community (Owen, Fletcher & Richards, 2001); or as a level 'playing field'

for organizations wanting to develop synergy amongst the workforce. In all of these

settings, as with other examples, the outdoor environment becomes the important

component used for participant learning.

1.2 Defining Program Planning

A program according to Priest (2001) "is a collection of several learning

experiences held together by logistics such as scheduling, staffing, equipment, meals,

housing, transportation, communication, finances, and so on" (p.34). Sork and Newman

(2004) refer to programs being distinguished from other learning events through the act

of consciously organizing the event, this act potentially reproducing "social injustice"

(McLean, 2000; Apple, 2004; Freire, 1970). The common thread joining alternative

program planning practices is the believed need for structure and order to an educational

experience.

Allison (2000) argues that traditional approaches to outdoor education program

research focuses on whether programs 'work', and that the focus ignores the individuals

experience and their understanding of such experiences. This research specifically looks

at the process involved in program planning; who is involved in decisions; how decisions

are made; and different types of outdoor experiences vary in their approach to

inclusiveness depending on constraining factors such as time, resources, age of learners

and the facilitator's experience.

Three cases have been chosen to determine how outdoor education programs are

planned and to what extent the planning involves the learners. The cases are a broad

snapshot of outdoor educational program planning practices. They are a sample of the sorts of outdoor educational programs that exist and therefore wider generalizations are tentative at best.

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Education has grown from a system of privileged Eurocentrism dominance with an emphasis on control. Hegemonic tendencies help education policy makers control and reconstruct social order. The acceptance of structured teaching programs is engrained within our educational systems; the formality of the teaching milieu; Apple's (2004) observation of the teacher being the child's first "boss" (p. 79); and even Freire's (1970) notion of students often being seen as receptacles to be filled are appropriate descriptors here. Research into literacy and hegemonic practices has been recorded (Freire, 1970; McLean, 2000; Maruatona & Cervero, 2004) over a number of years and the practice of program planning is known to enforce and maintain power and control. Through dialogue, and the creation of 'themes', Freire (1970) was able to demonstrate to illiterate peasants in Brazil the position they found themselves under. Through praxis Freire was able to show Brazilian peasants that "without dialogue there is no communication, without communication there can be no true education" (p. 93), and without true education there can be no true emancipation.

Do learners have ownership over their own learning? To answer this question it is necessary to clarify what is meant by ownership. In this instance ownership becomes a term to describe how learners gain a sense of attachment and belonging in relation to their learning. Ownership creates a feeling of control and power and allows students to attain choices with their learning. Answering the earlier question this research deemed it necessary to understand program planning practices, to gain insight into what program planners include and exclude when making decisions on program content. This paper

examines program planning practices in outdoor education through studying outdoor

education cases. The research raises questions about acceptable practices, and how power

relations in planning design become evident in the planning process. (Cervero & Wilson,

2006; Beal, Bohlen & Raudabaugh, 1962; Riecken & Holmes, 1954; Thibaut & Kelley,

1959; Luft, 1970). This paper will look at practices in outdoor education program

planning and the discourse among practitioners in this field.

2.2 "Traditional Culture" in Education

Franklin Bobbitt's (1918) use of scientific management techniques to develop

curriculum provided the fundamental educational systems that we have today. Bobbitt

developed the functionality of curriculum as an agent for social reproduction, "matching

individuals with existing social and economical order" (Flinders & Thornton, 2004, p. 3).

In 1949, Ralph W. Tyler continued in a similar vein and reduced curriculum design into

four simple questions:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?

2. How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in

   attaining these purposes?

3. How can learning experiences be organized for effective instruction?

4. How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

For Tyler "curriculum design amounted to a systematic resolution of four

questions, or a rationale" (Petrina, 2004, p. 85). Sork and Newman (2004) argue that over

time Tyler's Rationale has become too simplified and removed from its original

intention. Tyler's questions at first glance seem structured and narrow, but actually

"allow for considerable flexibility" (p. 104). Using his four questions, Tyler attempts to

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deliver the message that program planning should "take account of people, society … and experts in the subject, in deciding on our educational purposes and setting course objectives" (p. 104). At first glance this seems the essence of what educators are still trying to achieve. However this seems to happen rarely due to external and internal influences that will be discussed later in this paper.

Beard and Wilson (2004) regard the 'traditional culture' of education as the "[teacher] sprouting facts and figures, and pupils or participants regurgitating the information" (p. 1). The learning becomes ineffective through the learners lack of involvement in the learning, or what Paulo Freire (2006) referred to as the "banking concept" (p. 73) where "students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat" (p. 72), where the curriculum is seen as an act of depositing knowledge, and the students are seen as the "receptacles" (p. 72) to be filled.

Outdoor education predominately uses experiential learning as its principle instructional mode (Dewey, 1938; Gilbertson, Bates, Laughlin & Ewert, 2006). Experiential learning creates elements of action, reflection and transferable learning experiences making the learning potentially more meaningful than just filling empty receptacles. It consists of "four distinct segments: (1) active student involvement in a meaningful and challenging experience, (2) reflection upon the experience individually and in a group, (3) the development of new knowledge about the world, and (4) application of this knowledge to a new situation" (Knapp, 1996, p. 12). According to Bell (2003), outdoor education programs encourage learners to 'discover themselves' rather than "induct them into a traditional conception" (p. 47) of education.

In recent years educators and theorists (Apple, 2004; Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1970) became conscious of the need for change with respect to the latter conception. Time only served to further cloak the truth of curriculum practices with educators and administrators become increasing unconscious of the underlying political issues surrounding education or what Apple (2004) refers to as the 'hidden curriculum'. Cooper (2005), drawing on the United Kingdom perspective as an example, highlights how "a narrow restrictive National Curriculum has placed emphasis on core areas, such as literacy and numeracy, to the detriment of broader areas in the curriculum" (p. 21). Cooper refers to outdoor education's struggle to gain recognition within the traditional curriculum as an outcome of the restrictive National Curriculum. In British Columbia schools, outdoor education is only partially visible in the curriculum under the physical education umbrella and within the 'Movement Categories', entitled 'Alternative-Environmental Activities' (Integrated Resource Package (IRP), p. 3). The control over what is deemed important, and therefore included in the IRPs, fails to include input from the learners'. This is certainly true in a school context. A school or college can become so indoctrinated in traditional culture that even small changes to the institutional structure become insurmountable (Kilgore, 2003). Traditional learning is prescribed - Freire's (2006) 'banking concept', and Apple's (2004) 'cultural capital'-- are ways of viewing the power that schools have over learners. Schools have traditionally failed to empower the learners, and through the prescription of subjects, outdoor education and its potential to contribute to a student's learning has been regarded as peripheral at best as it is often deemed as extra curricula.

In outdoor management development the situation is somewhat different as often, but not always, the learners' are consulted on their educational need or requirements.

There are occasions when other stakeholders decide the learning on behalf of the learners because of the stakeholders position of power, and in view of what they want the learners to learn. Kotinsky (1933) (in Rosenblum, 1985) stated that, the more planning the adult educator does alone and separate from the learner, the less significant the learning outcome becomes. Teaching writing to adult students has led Hansman (2001) to believe that to create a positive learning environment there is a need to develop motivation among learners, and she believes the greatest motivation for learning is a program that attends to the needs of the learners.

During this research it was anticipated that findings would indicate that most programs under examination would be prescribed and decided upon without the learners' consent. It was also expected that this level of power and control would be more evident in particular cases. This assumption does not close the research to alternative findings, or that the research is a way to prove a 'guessed' theory. Rather, this research could prove or disprove assumptions made. This research looked at what is actually occurs in outdoor education program planning at a grass roots level, and whether it bears out the author's assumptions. The real practices in these cases will tell their own story.

2.3 Emancipation from Traditional Culture

John Dewey viewed Bobbitt's scientific management techniques as "subordinating the freedom of the individual to a preconceived social and political status" (Flinders & Thornton, 2004, p. 4) and believed his approach to curriculum was a preparation for life. Dewey used his process of unconscious and conscious education to enable the educational process to become more learner focused. Dewey's innovative work developed into what has commonly become known as experiential learning; "he

saw the teacher's role as enabling students to learn about things they were interested in –
not directing them to learn from a sterile curriculum" (Priest & Gass, 2005, p. 14). Beard
and Wilson (2004) refer to experiential education as "the underpinning process to all
forms of learning since it represents the transformation of most new and significant
experiences and incorporates them within a broader conceptual framework" (p. 16).
Dewey's move away from rote learning encouraged a democratic process of deeper
understanding. Kraft (Priest & Gass, 2005) paraphrased several aspects of Dewey's work
that apply to Outdoor Education program planning:

> (1) Individuals need to be involved in what is being learned, (2) learning through
> experiences inside and outside of the classroom, and not just through teachers is
> vital, (3) learning must be immediately relevant for learners, (4) learners must act
> and live for the present as well as the future, (5) learning must assist learners in
> preparing for a challenging and evolving world. (p. 14)

Kraft's ideas are crucial in developing outdoor education programs and the first
three points mentioned above are of immediate importance to outdoor education program
planning because they use experience to define the learning, and through involvement in
the learning, that experience becomes central. Acceptance of outdoor education as a
companion to traditional learning has only really just begun. Loynes (2005) credits the
acceptance through opening the discourse, and that

> "outdoor education is only beginning to engage politically with the different
> domains to which it can contribute, formal education, informal education, adult
> learning, therapy and recreation. It has begun a dialogue with the gatekeepers of
> these institutions" (p. 27).

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Curriculum negotiation between educators has meant a step forward for inclusiveness within learning, even though these negotiation's "primary enemy is social control through predetermined categories of knowledge and relationship" (Millar, 1989, p. 162). The experts shaping curriculum are often removed from the realities of enacting it, even though the experts opinions are often "received as gospel" (Rosenblum, 1985, p. 13), the classroom often being a place of "unilateral planning and decision making by experts" (p. 13). Rosenblum (1985) also notes that "of the many generalizations growing out of the experimental study of groups, one of the most broadly and firmly established is that the members of a group tend to be more satisfied if they have at least some feeling of participation in its decisions" (p. 14). Previous research (Beal, Bohlen & Raudabaugh, 1962; Riecken & Holmes, 1954; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Luft, 1970) indicates that an individual's needs as a group member is vitally important for that individual's satisfaction with the program. This points to the need to include learners' perspectives in the planning process.

Learner inclusiveness has evolved within education, and through such involvement learners have had the opportunity to gain greater participation in the planning process. Heron's (2005) *Planning Dimension* framework is one notable progression within this field, as it has the ability to use multiple lenses to deal with a range of program planning situations. Heron's work will be discussed in detail in this thesis, but for now the main point to consider is how his framework moves towards the emancipation of learners, and, in particular, outdoor education program planning practices.

2.4 Outdoor Educational and Traditional Learning approaches to program planning

Priest and Gass (2005) suggest that Outdoor Education programs are categorized into four types: recreation, educational, developmental, or therapeutic. Traditionally programs in any of these four categories have been prescribed and autocratic - the facilitators of the learning having "political authority" (Heron, 2005, p. 71) over the planning and delivery of learning. Furthermore, planning by experts was often "taken-for-granted" (Heron, 2005, p. 71).

The structure of program planning and lack of engagement with the learners' within the program planning process has been very much in evidence since Tyler (1949) proposed his systematic approach. It has been argued that this form of planning comes from a behaviorist learning theory (Wilson & Cervero, 1997) and was designed primarily for "elementary and secondary schools" (Sork, 2000, p. 172) curriculum. What is also interesting to note is how Tyler's Rationale and other similar step-by-step models including Houle's *Planning Framework*, and Boone's and Nadler's frameworks (Sork & Newman, 2004), all reflect a systematic approach to planning. McRae (1990) talks about an 'ideal [planning] model', which consists of 4 elements, the second element summarizing how outdoor education planning is engrained in Tyler's Rationale:

> 2. [it is felt outdoor education can] be developed as a discrete subject with clearly prescribed objectives, content, learning experience and assessment/evaluation procedures.

This clearly portrays how embedded in Tyler's Rationale outdoor education planning has become, and that McRae advocates program planning using prescribed learning outcomes.

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In 1955 Benjamin Bloom published an influential taxonomy of what he termed the three domains of learning. These domains consist of: cognitive (what we know or think); psychomotor (what we do, physically); and affective (what we feel, or what attitudes we have). Bloom's taxonomy still influences the design of instruction. Perhaps the most common model used for creating instructional materials is the ADDIE Model. This acronym stands for the five phases contained in the model:

1. Analyze - analyze learner characteristics, task to be learned, etc;

2. Design - develop learning objectives, choose an instructional approach;

3. Develop - create instructional or training materials;

4. Implement - deliver or distribute the instructional materials; and

5. Evaluate - make sure the materials achieved the desired goals.

Most of the current instructional design models are variations of the ADDIE model. Kilgore (2003) states that linear program models, such as the ADDIE model, are inflexible in their approach. Planners become 'lazy' and just follow the step-by-step process believing that they "will succeed in planning the perfect program" (p. 82) if they followed the suggested order of planning. This paper argues that program planning is a complex process and requires knowledge, understanding and a more democratic approach that includes learners. ADDIE is a good starting point for new program planners, but as planners become more seasoned and their understanding of the power differentials evolves they need to become more democratic in their approach and involve the learners.

Program planning styles and approaches may differ between the sub-sections of outdoor educational practices. This research (sets out) to ascertain what these different styles and approaches are and whether they have progressed from the dictated approaches

of old. It is understandable that these approaches will be different, the age of the clients being an obvious example, but what is important is the varying degrees of inclusiveness that could occur with the program planning process.

2.5 Current state of program planning in outdoor education

Teaching in an inner-city school in Vancouver, BC, McIssac (2004) noted that during his observations of children playing outside during recess the "children seemed to be happier and safer and more engaged outside the classroom" (p. 1). Despite children being happier outside the classroom, playgrounds often felt oppressive, taking on characteristics of a prison yard, with over-population and lack of stimulation leaving no sense of connectedness with the environment and often no sense of community. Studies into playground design (Susa & Benedict, 1994; Taylor & Wiley, 1998) have concluded that green spaces create creativity, imaginative play and increase children's cognitive and social development. The social development becomes social awareness and responsibility, which "is part of the required curriculum for students" (Hait, 2004, p. 7). However, students using a playground often create their own games, often with no input from adults. These games use rules, involve various age ranges, usually allow for maximum participation and activity by all children, and are democratic in decision-making. Why therefore, do program planners exclude learners, particularly school children, from the planning process at some levels?

The integration of outdoor education within the curriculum has been dogged by many factors, such as elements of risk, teachers responsibility and liability, external pressures, costs, logistical matters, increase in paperwork, and a narrowly defined curriculum (Cooper, 2005). Program planners should consider these factors to decide

how best to structure a program. It is the process of consideration and inclusion of learners that this paper is most concerned with. Democratic planning creates a sense of community, and ownership, therefore it can be argued that planning and community should go hand in hand. Kilgore (2003) summarizes these points by saying that a "democratic planning process that takes into account all stakeholders perspectives is not only ethically responsible, it represents the possibility of a holistic view of programming..." (p. 82). Although he directs these thoughts to adult programming it could be argued that the benefits can be seen across all age ranges and should be adjusted accordingly. Curriculum ownership should be local and within the classroom and not distant and external to the user.

2.6 Outdoor Education Principles of Program Planning

Throughout the evolution of outdoor education there has been a need for education relevance. No longer are learners just happy to climb, hike and paddle. Now learners "demand more than just activities" (Reed, 2005, p.20) and they want connections made between the activities and their 'regular' environment. The outdoor environment is a unique place to learn, but if the connections between activities and learning are not made, then the experience is a wasted opportunity for deeper and more substantial learning. Principles of planning attempt to gather programming techniques to enable instructional designers to incorporate the important aspects and make connections to current theories, as well as relevance to a learner's natural environment.

There are many suggested principles of planning, frameworks and models within outdoor education (Kolb & Fry, 1975; Martin, 2001a; Beard & Wilson, 2004; Reed, 2005), but very few that attempt to confront issues surrounding inclusiveness within

program planning. In 2005, the British Government introduced 'Every Child Matters' (James, 2005), which set out a framework for the School National Curriculum. Outdoor educational programs have to cover the main elements of the framework, therefore dictating the programs content resulting in programs designed to meet the Government's criteria and not in consultation with the learners. The following section will examine a few principles of planning to evaluate how historical frameworks have shaped current outdoor educational practices, and how principles of planning advances have begun to have a positive effect for learners.

2.6.1 Programming Sequence

The five models of program evaluation (Klint & Priest, 1998), as replicated in Figure 1, typically address the evaluation of the complete experiential learning process. Priest, (2001) in the following example, uses a residential center offering young offenders an outdoor experience as an alternative to prison.

> "A **needs assessment** is conducted with the youth and other
>
> stakeholders to identify the gap (objectives) between where they are
>
> (existing situation) and where they would like to be (desired
>
> potential situation). On the basis of these needs, a program is
>
> planned to fill the gap between their current and changed positions.
>
> A **feasibility study** is conducted to determine the likelihood of
>
> success for this program by considering what is probable and what is
>
> not possible due to legal restrictions, funding shortcomings, and
>
> time, staff, or resource limits.

The **process evaluation** is used to track its progress by examining

how and when the program is adjusted to suit changing stakeholders'

needs and to accommodate staff flexibility.

Outcome evaluation is employed to decide whether the

stakeholders are satisfied with the changes.

Lastly, **cost analysis** correlates the price and benefits of outdoor

tripping with the expense of such a trip." (p. 36)

Figure 1. **Sequenced positions of the five kinds of program evaluation.**
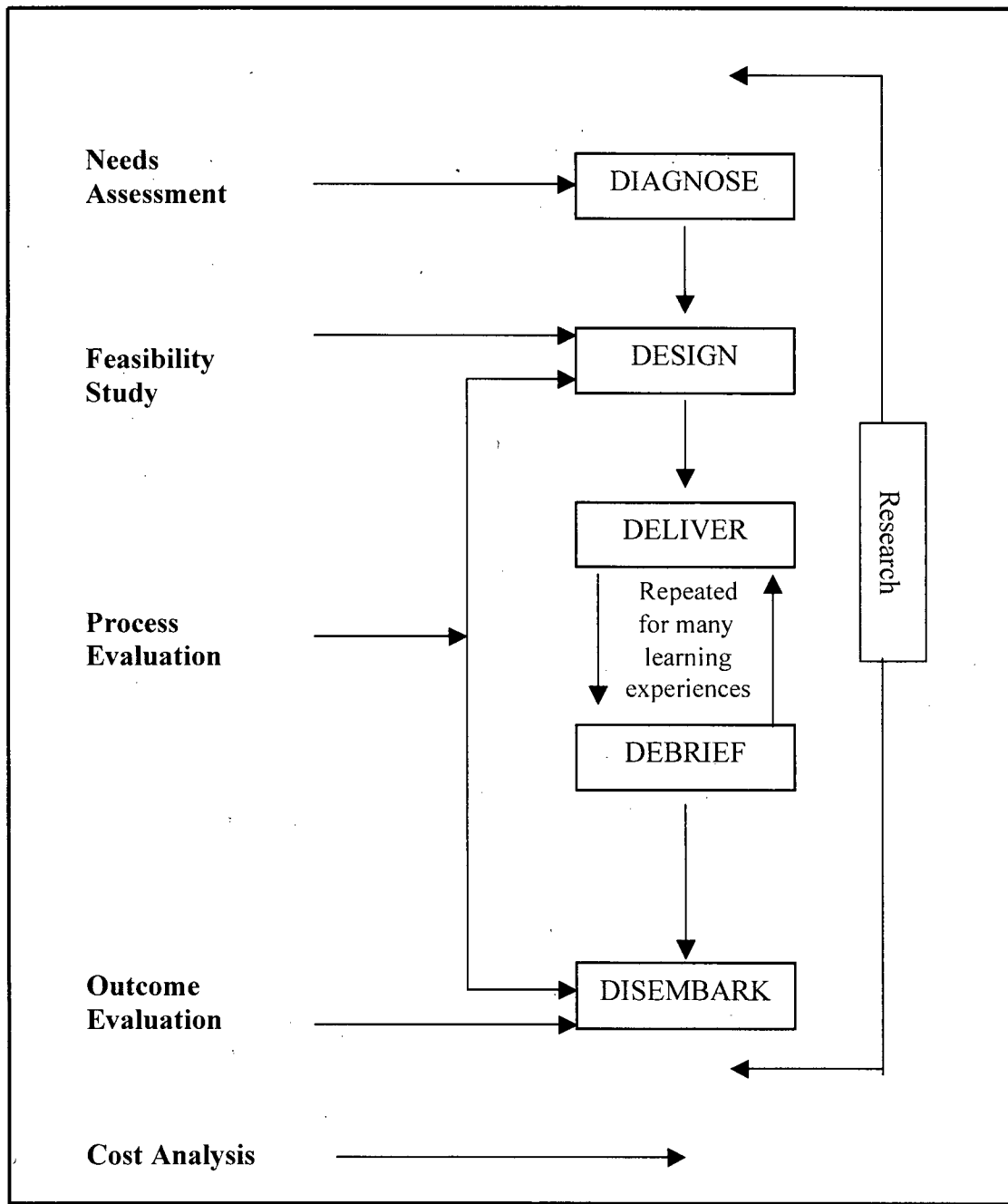
From "A program evaluation primer", S. Priest (2001), *The Journal of Experiential Learning,* 24 (1), p. 38

Priest's example paints a picture of how an inclusive program involves the

stakeholders in the planning process. Although the focus is on evaluative processes, this

example is still relevant to this paper's interests. Using Klint and Priest's *Model of evaluation* (1998), this paper's interest lies within the needs assessment (diagnose) and feasibility study (design), as these both occur during the program planning phase. The needs assessment becomes the dialogue between all the program stakeholders, although Sork (2001) cautions against labeling "any information-gathering process" as needs assessment. Klint and Priest's model is an extension of the ADDIE model, which also highlights the importance of an open dialogue between all the program's stakeholders, however it is not certain whether their theory has fully materialized in practice. Later in this paper I will show what level of engagement is actually taking place. For now this paper will compare principles of planning in an outdoor educational context.

2.6.2 Kolb's Four-stage experiential learning cycle

Kolb and Fry (1975) used their famous '*Four-stage cycle experiential learning model*' (Figure 2) to encourage experiential educators to value theory and practice and to bridge the gap between the two. They were aware that practitioners often omitted reflective practices during outdoor experiences, even though its importance and relevance has been documented (Greenaway, 1996; Reed, 2005). Reflection is a crucial part of a program, but is often left out to focus more on physical activities (Breunig, 2005). Kolb and Fry's model is clearly influential and "most program designs are based on David Kolb's four-stage cycle experiential learning model" (Wyatt, 1997, p. 80). Wyatt (1997) criticizes this experiential paradigm as it has "traditionally focused on individual learning rather than on community development" (Wyatt, 1997, p. 80). Wyatt's argument is echoed by Miettinen (2000), who "suggests that Kolb's experience and reflection occur

in isolation and that there is necessity for the individual to interact with other humans and the environment in order to enhance the reasoning and conclusions drawn" from the experience (Beard & Wilson, 2004, p. 37).

Figure 2. **Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle.**
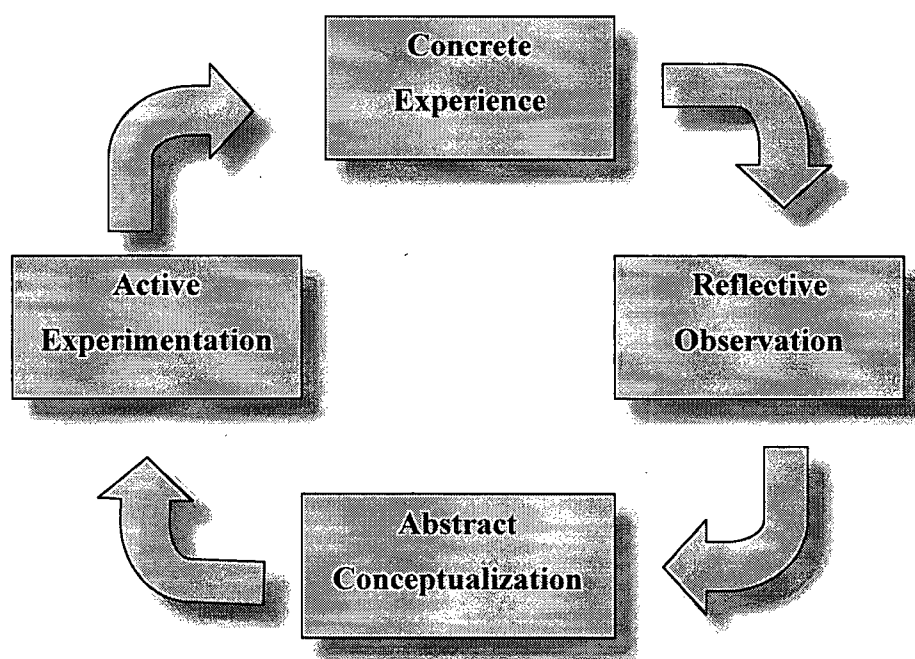
From "Dialogue, reflection, and community" by S. Wyatt, 1997, *The Journal of Experiential Education*, 20 (2) p. 81.

Kolb and Fry's model relies on trying something and being fully immersed in concrete experience; followed by reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The process then starts again. Although groundbreaking for its time and an important development for program design and understanding, this paper would argue that there seems to be a lack of structure in the early stages of the cycle. Although a learning experience can be serendipitous and spontaneous, many are planned and structured, Kolb and Fry's model omits a collective planning stage with all the stakeholders and prefers to delve straight into having full experience immersion.

Furthermore the focus on individual learning and lack of sense of community is a major drawback because democratic planning and community learning form crucial elements of outdoor education program planning.

2.6.3 Dramaturgy

Martin (2001) introduced the concept of dramaturgy to outdoor education borrowing the idea from theatre. Dramaturgy can be described as "a process involving elements of psychology, role play and theatre" (Martin & Krouwel, 2006, p. 7). Dramaturgy creates holistic learning using experiential learning techniques, it "blends and weaves a web of physical, social, creative and reflective/emotional activities" (p.7), as is represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. **The Dramaturgy Wave.**

Peak activities, for example 'Solo' for the reflection wave

Social wave

Physical wave

Creative wave

Reflection wave

Beginning of the course   End of the course
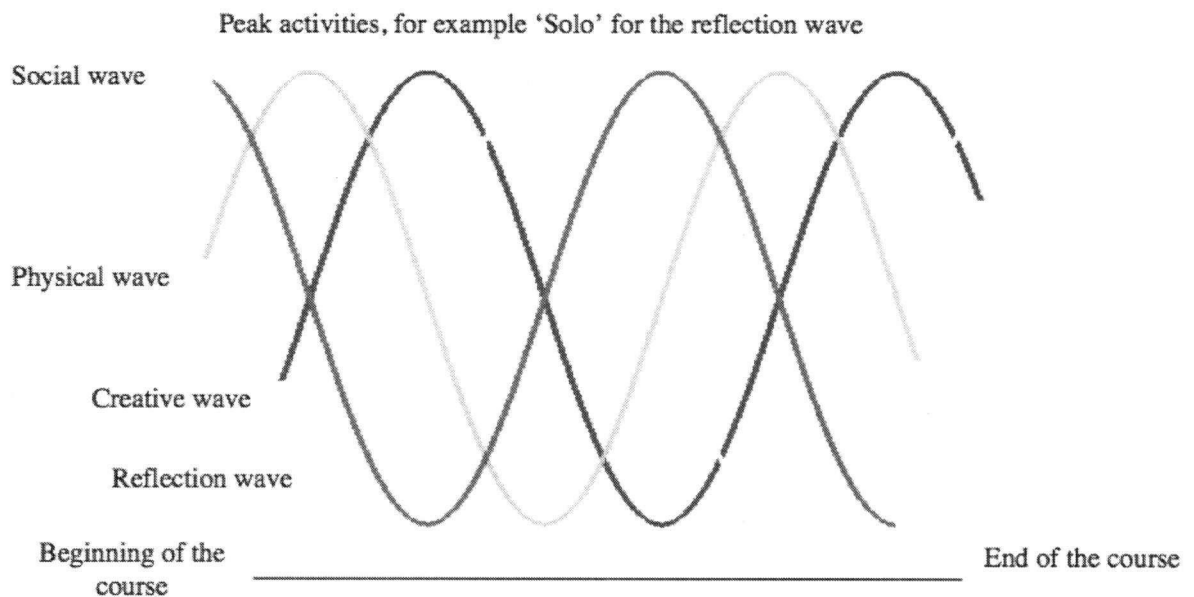
From "Creative Course Design" by A. Martin & B. Krouwel, 2006, *Horizons*, 33 Spring, p. 7.

If outdoor education providers are asked to comment on what their programs attempt to achieve, it may be assumed their responses would vary, but the themes would include the key elements to the dramaturgy wave; namely social, physical, creative, and reflective practices. The dramaturgy wave braids together the key issues of the planning process. It could also be assumed that most outdoor experiential programs achieve some of these, but generally fail to achieve all, often failing to allow time for reflective activities such as the 'solo'[1] experience used by Outward Bound (Goldenberg, McAvoy & Klenosky, 2005; Gilbertson, Bates, McLaughlin, & Ewert, 2006; McKenzie, 2003). Leberman and Martin (2005) argue that dramaturgy "involves the student-centered design of the course" (p, 319) by constantly adapting to "specific needs of individual students and the class as a whole" (p, 319). They go on to say that "frontloading the activities in terms of focusing students 'on certain distinct learning outcomes that you have ascertained as valuable' (Priest & Gass, 1997, p. 183) does not occur" (p. 321). Each preplanned learning experience is adapted to change with the learners needs. The learners are challenged and have their comfort zones pushed to develop perceived risk with activities to enhance learning from the experience. Each learner has a different threshold of risk within the dramaturgy categories; social, physical, creative, and reflective. The facilitator changes and controls the activitie's direction and level according to the learners perceived risk. Beard and Wilson (2003) warn of the risks involved with pushing learners too far from their comfort zone and say that "not all activity results in positive experience, and painful experiences may discourage future learning" (p. 89), therefore caution and skilled facilitation is required during these challenging experiences. The level

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[1] The 'Solo' experience enables learners to "reflect, relax and recharge"
www.outwardbound.ca

of skill needed by the facilitators for this type of learning experience is extremely high, especially taking into account of the diverse needs the learners may come with. A program does not always present itself with a skilled facilitator. The level of flexibility within the program therefore becomes narrowed, with the emphasis instead relying on more conventional and traditional practices.

Although it is important to keep a program fluid, adapting to changing situations and learners needs, this does demand a certain level of skill. To help facilitate and predict conflict of issues during a program, it seems appropriate to involve the learners at the planning stage. This idea, as mentioned before, is not new, however it is not often evident in practice.

Martin and Krouwel (2002) in a paper presented on experiential learning using dramaturgy techniques in Slovenia, reported the findings of interviews undertaken at Outward Bound Czech Republic School. They found that "a key point regarding Dramaturgy that emerged from the interviews is that it allows for, even encourages, changes in program content.

1. It uses outdoors (and other experiential media) to help delegates develop in areas identified by delegates as important,

2. Serendipitous learning is experienced and welcomed,

3. It is based on holistic ideas, and

4. There is high program flexibility (Martin & Krouwel, 2002, p. 26).

However, the program content within a dramaturgy experience is decided upon without the learners and they are offered what is deemed a relevant and positive learning experience. Dramaturgy as a method of course design fails to use the learners in the

design process. It does however have strengths during the program, such as constantly encouraging fluidity and observation of the learners.

2.6.4 Learning Combination Lock

The Learning Combination Lock (Figure 4) is "based on the notion that a person interacts with the external environment through the senses, i.e. external environment – sense – internal environment" (Wilson & Beard, 2003, p. 91). Beard and Wilson indicate that our external environment effects our internal environment through our senses, and that we can use the external environment to provide learning experiences specific to the learners needs. The learning combination lock becomes a visual representation of the program planning's design stage.

Figure 4. **The Learning Combination Lock.**
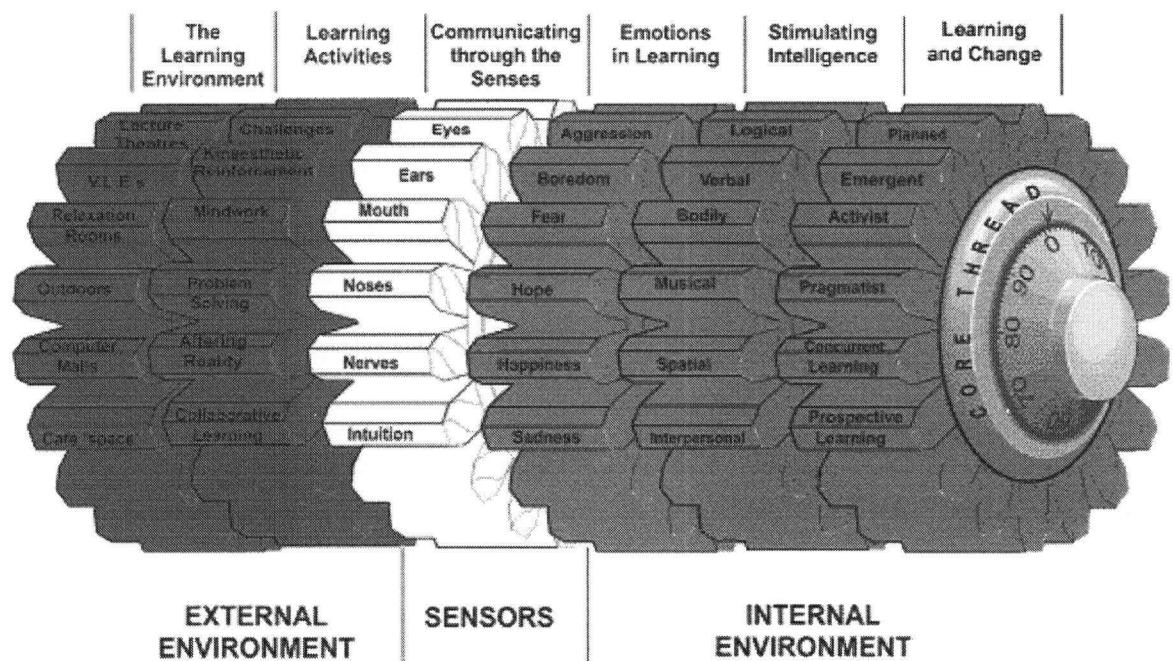
From "The learning combination lock – an experiential approach to learning design" by J. P. Wilson & C. Beard, 2003, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 27, 2-4, p. 91.

The six tumblers of the learning combination lock, places and elements; milieu; senses; emotions; forms of intelligence; and ways of learning, are used to provide "an accessible structure that is both understandable and applicable" (Beard & Wilson, 2004, p. 39). This simplistic representation of the overall complexities of experiential education programs enables program designers, in consultation with other stakeholders, to discuss what is required from the learning experience and how to achieve it through the external and internal environment. For example, a teacher may notice that her students constantly talk and don't listen to each other, the students may say that they have to shout to be heard, and the facilitator may notice that the students do not have a sense of belonging to a larger group and therefore challenge each other through the levels of volume of their voices. Using the darkness (place and elements) through blindfolding (senses), to increase the challenge (milieu) of verbal communication and active listening (forms of intelligence), it is possible to create a pragmatic (ways of learning) learning experience that instills trust and empathy (emotions).

Using the learning combination lock requires some knowledge of learning theory, however the advantage of this model is that as the facilitators' skills increase, so can the complexities of using the endless combinations of the tumbler. This framework begins to bridge the gap between the program planners and the other stakeholders by giving the program planners an opportunity for creating dialogue. What is missing in this framework, however, is how program planning should be practiced with power relations in play. Details of these power differentials will be discussed later in this paper.

To further explain how we can use these principles of planning to deepen our understanding into how programs are planned for outdoor educational experiences this

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paper will now turn to Heron's *Planning Dimensions* framework. This paper has attempted to emphasize that dialogue between all stakeholders of a program is a key element at the planning phase, "participatory approaches to program planning are grounded in theories of democratic education advanced by John Dewey (1938) and Paulo Friere (1970)" (Grundens-Schuck, in press). Heron's framework is a realistic view of power relations (Cervero & Wilson, 2006) including gaining an understanding into how they work and what can be done to counter their often-negative effects. Participation in adult education may be considered to be authentic when adult educators and planners systematically encourage people at many levels to negotiate program development through dialogue and shared decision-making (Cervero & Wilson, 1994; Heron, 2005).

2.6.5 Herons *Planning Dimension* Framework

Herons (2005) Planning Dimension framework is an important addition to existing program planning models for many reasons. One crucial element that has been developed is the awareness of opening the channels for dialogue to occur between all program planning stakeholders. The dialogue creates a two-way questioning process where key questions are asked and answered which direct the program's plan. Owen (2005) through years of developmental training is a strong advocate for question-based learning. Owen believes that questions are "central to the process of experiential learning" (p. 27). Questions make us think, make us wonder why we do something over another, or make us contemplate why something works one-way and not another. Within Herons framework there are choices to be made as to whether to involve the learners at key stages, this becomes a question of responsibility. Involving learners in planning

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requires questions to be asked regarding what they want to do, how they want to do it, and what they hope to achieve. These questions lead to clarity and offer a sense of ownership on the part of the learner.

Cooper (2004) strongly agrees with the "anecdotal evidence" (p. 11) of the constructive influence outdoor education has, but raises two important questions:

1. How can programs be designed for groups to ensure they meet their needs?

2. How can the benefits be recorded?

Cooper offers a *Model for Monitoring Educational Effectiveness* (Figure 5) for bridging the gaps in the inclusiveness of program planning. An important area of interest for this paper is the 'Prior to visit' section (Figure 5), where Cooper aims for open dialogue and discussions with the schools to create programs that are relevant to the stakeholders. A self admitted shortfall is that the model sends course objectives to the visiting leaders therefore involving the schools within the program planning decisions, but currently does not offer a pupil individual expectations sheet. The individual expectations sheet helps "to raise awareness of the purpose of the visit and gives them greater ownership of the program" (p. 12). This is a major shortfall in trying to answer and meet the requirements of question 1.

Herons *Planning Dimension* framework is a positive example of how to meet the needs of the learners whilst still considering the political negotiations that can occur between stakeholders. A further in depth analysis of Herons framework will be discussed later in this paper.

Figure 5. **Model for Monitoring Educational Effectiveness**

Prior to Visit	Centre Program	Follow Up

2 or 3 months before

Information sent to Schools → Schools decide Educational objectives → Agree a program of activities → Program → Evaluations

- Leaders written and discussed and - Children's group sheets

→ Review forms sent to schools. Evaluation of success in meeting objectives, examples of extension work and pupil progress

Children Plan for visit. They record their expectations

- Pupil sheet

From "How School Groups Benefit from Outdoor Experiences" by G. Cooper, 2004, *Horizons*, Spring (25), 10-17, p. 11.

3. METHOD

3.1 Introduction

Using a critical theorist perspective, this research collected data using a qualitative ethnographic process (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Fine, 1991; Willis, 1977). Time was spent researching literature in books, journals and online websites to determine the theoretical practices surrounding program planning, and specifically outdoor educational program planning. The information collated helped to determine the academic thinking and understanding the epistemologies that underpin program planning paradigms.

With a literature foundation in place, other forms of data were collected in the form of interviews to understand the cases program procedures and guidelines. Interviews with the organization's program planners responsible for planning design and implementation developed a foundation of the organization's principles of practice. This helped to determine the goals, outcomes and clientele of the organization. The interview then lead into the program planning process, and why planning is conducted in particular ways. As confirmation to the interview, 'in-house' data was requested to enable a visualization of the process of program planning and outcomes produced from such a process. This data collection was reliant on such data being produced and the permission to use the data in the research.

As mentioned in the literature review there were three case categories of outdoor education program planning that were studied (Priest & Gass, 2005); Voluntary; Governmental, and Commercial. The three cases are briefly discussed below to determine the organization's educational focus, and why they have been selected for this research.

A 'snapshot' was taken of the organizations planning processes to understand why they have certain planning procedures in place. With more breadth this research could have focused on ascertaining more extensive comparisons between differing cases.

3.2 Data collection process

Experiential education organizations and researchers often adopt quantitative approaches to program evaluations and assessment (Martin & Leberman, 2005). Historically programming research is outcome driven (Hattie, Marsh, Neil & Richards, 1997; Garst, Scheider & Baker, 2001; Holman, Goldenbe, McAvoy & Rynders, 2003; Goldenberg, McAvoy & Klenosky, 2005; Holman & McAvoy, 2005), however, it has been argued that a means end approach lends itself to a qualitative approach as the individuals responses encapsulate "the value and 'real' meaning of these personal experiences" (Martin & Leberman, 2005, p. 44). The process of drawing the attention to outcomes directs planners to frontload with prescribed objectives. Priest and Gass (1997) warn against this as it limits the outcomes. Traditional approaches to experiential education research have sought to answer whether programs 'work' (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000), which "tends to ignore a key feature of our work: the experience of individuals and the meanings they make of their experiences" (p. 1). Allsion and Pomeroy (2000) argue that a researcher trying to identify if a program 'works' "undervalues and underestimates its potential" (p. 5).

Using a qualitative approach this paper seeks to discover connections between theory and practice and the difference in program planning practices within and across differing outdoor educational cases. Breunig (2005) believes it important to consider theory and practice when developing a socially just world. The case approach typically

uses an "interpretive, naturalistic epistemology" (Martin & Leberman, 2005, p. 47) to understand experiences. Kolb (1991) confirms the strengths of case analysis as a "meaningful design for the evaluation of experiential programs" (p. 47). Using a qualitative case study approach this research questions program planning practices. Owen (2005) advocates that "questions are central to the process of experiential learning" (p. 27), therefore, a critical experiential learning approach to program planning has been sought to develop awareness of planning practices.

3.3 Case Studies and Research Interviews

Program planning styles and approaches may differ from one area of outdoor education to another. Reasons for this variance may be understandable through 'traditional educative eyes'. For example, planning an outdoor experience for young children may traditionally involve planning prescribed activities. Eder and Corsaro (1999) discuss the nature and dominance of adult culture over children. They talk about how children "appropriate information from the adult world to produce their own unique peer cultures" (p. 521), a term they refer to as interpretive reproduction. Children become a part of adult culture through mimicking society, and they become "constrained by the existing social structure and by societal reproduction" (p. 521). Prescribing outdoor learning experience does not allow children to have their own input into their own experience, and this further reinforces existing social order and hegemony. It is acceptable that they may not have the skills to understand safe practices, be aware of restrictions due to time or money, or know the 'technicalities' of organizing a learning experience. However, it is possible to involve them within the planning through consultation and negotiation. An example being that an 'expert' may decide on the

location of an outdoor experience due to weather, tides, instructors, equipment, and/or the groups experience level, and then discuss with the children the order of the activities, the level of involvement, fears, aspirations and personal goals for the day. This could even go one stage further and include discussions with the teachers, children and managers about what they feel they would like to achieve from the experience, including communication skills, sense of community, trust, and challenge. Once it is decided upon what aspect of learning they wish to focus upon, the outdoor 'expert' may suggest ways of achieving these goals. The planning team can now decide what activities, location, order, and intensity they feel that want, and through this back and forth consultation, a program can be developed to meet the needs of the learners, the requirements of the teachers and managers, and the specific issues relating to outdoor educational safe practices. Involving the children in a small part of the planning creates ownership, offers a sense of maturity and professionalism, and allows the facilitators to adapt and plan for future activities. This example highlights that planning has many stages, and that it is possible to involve learners' at some of these stages due to their willingness, ability and age-level.

This research uses cases, taking one example, similar to that described above, from each of the program categories to determine the approach taken to program planning. The cases used interviews with program planners or implementers of programs to offer an insight into how program-planning practice compares or contrasts to Herons *Planning Dimensions* framework.

There are a multitude of paradigms that serve to offer greater breadth and depth into how outdoor educators create programs for learners'. One important paradigm is through the dialogue of interviews, and the dialogue that unfolds. Denzin and Lincoln

(2005) state, "both qualitative and quantitative researchers are concerned with the individuals point of view" (p. 12), but it is how we use these points of view that is of most importance. During the interviews this research reflected on comments and suggestions made and transcribed the comments deemed essential to the research. The selection of comments helped the researcher to focus and create clarification, however through this selection process other comments were omitted. This selectivity may be classed as misrepresentation. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) discuss this important point using a fieldwork lens, "...transformation involves inevitable processes of selection; the ethnographer writes about certain things and thereby necessarily "leaves out" others" (p. 9). Although this may seem manipulative it was deemed essential to filter the required information in an attempt to capture the essence of the conversations. With so much other 'noise' and distraction surrounding interviews it was difficult to focus the discussion without hindering the openness. Key moments arose that allowed for the growth and flow of dialogue, but efforts needed to be made to channel the focus.

It is mentioned above that the interviews created dialogue useful for the research. Kvale (2006) argues that "referring to the interview as dialogue is misleading" (p. 483). He goes on to state that interviews are "a conversation with a purpose" (p. 483), and that we cannot have dialogue through interviews. Dialogue is a two-sided conversation, whilst an interview is one-sided. The purpose of this research and the interviews was to seek experts who can highlight the practices of program planning in their field of outdoor education. The interviewee was asked questions that allowed openness for a discussion so as to form an opinion on what is happening with current program planning practices. This exchange of thoughts and ideas, led equally by the interviewer and interviewee became

more of a dialogue exchange than a one-sided interview. To ensure research ethics were adhered to this research project gained approval (April, 2007) from the Behavioural Research Ethics Board at the University of British Columbia.

This research looked at outdoor education program planning practices through the eyes of the program planners. The three cases highlight techniques being used in three different outdoor educational organizations. This research did not set out to determine if these practices occur throughout the industry, as this is only a snapshot of three specific cases, however it is hoped that the research will offer a contrast and comparison between practice and theory. Through interviews, documentation and archival evidence it should be possible to gain insight into how program planning is implemented. It is also hoped to provide visualization between the similarities and differences between theory and practice and conclusions on how these practices involve the learners', the historical hegemonic control that has influenced education, and to see if literature on effective program planning practices is implemented in the 'real' world.

3.4 Cases

The following section discusses each case in more detail to begin to sketch a picture of the case organization and why it is of relevance to this research.

3.4.1 Voluntary organization

A volunteer organization was chosen as part of this research to enable a comparison to be drawn between programs being designed by financially driven organizations and those who do it for the love of the outdoors, education and/or sport. It will also be interesting to see whether voluntary programs are rigid from being passed

down through time, or to see if regulations from governing bodies have dictated how programs and instruction be delivered.

Hollyburn Jack Rabbit Ski Club, based at Cypress Mountain in Vancouver, British Columbia, is a "non-profit cross country ski club run by a volunteer executive and qualified volunteer coaches" (http://www.jackrabbits.ca/club). The name was developed from the Norwegian-Canadian, Herman 'Jackrabbit' Smith Johannsen, who is "considered the father of the Canadian skiing movement" (http://www.jackrabbits.ca/resources.asp?page=history_jackrabbits). The 'Club' was designed to provide cross-country skiing for children, youth and adults, and to encourage safe practices and a healthy lifestyle.

Volunteers offer great enthusiasm, a love for the sport, time, and effort. The commitment volunteers provide is needed for the sustainability of this non-profit organization to thrive. To deliver effective programs, volunteers may be requested to commit time for training, instruction and meetings; with each weighing heavily on the sheer support these individuals offer.

Voluntary organizations may be formed because of a felt need, or the desire to share an experience. 'Experts' often run programs. These expert volunteers may join the organization with highly developed personal experience and time spent gaining recognized instructors qualifications. Furthermore they may feel the need to support a common cause.

Voluntary organizations differ from the other categories, as they are not operating for commercial interest. Martin and Krouwel (2002) discuss the financial implications of organizations trying to generate income and yet stay true to their root philosophies. They

conclude that programs are typically designed based on financial needs, but this paper would argue, that although a voluntary organization needs finance to keep operating they are able to stay afloat due to their strong philosophies. Layfield (2005) uses a case study of linking a volunteer orienteering club with schools to initiate interest within the sport. She highlights how the program is successful due to the organization having clear objectives and a strong philosophy. It could be argued here that the objectives are driven by the need for the orienteering organization to entice interest in their club so that the sport can continue to grow from the grass roots level. The program is then not focused on the needs of the learners but on the needs of the organization, the learners being in the case of schools, a captive audience who might have little choice in the program. The Jack Rabbit Ski Club is somewhat different, as the learners have made a choice (albeit in some cases the parents choice) to be a part of the club, which assists in an increase in motivation in the learners, an important aspect of learning.

Throughout the interview with the program implementer, questions concerning the level of involvement of the learners is constantly addressed, as it is interesting to understand if and why this does or doesn't happen.

3.4.2 Governmental Organization

Schools often see the benefit of running team building and personal development programs for their students (Martin & Leberman, 2005; Foran, 2005; Holman & McAvoy, 2005; Freeman, Nelson & Taniguchi, 2003). They understanding that 'at risk' or 'difficult' students can be reached through outdoor education. Furthermore, students who are more practical than academic gain confidence when they are asked to participate

in tasks that they understand or are naturally talented in. Schools are also aware of positive outcomes of programs for their students: "developing relationships with others, increased understanding of themselves, awareness and appreciation for nature and the wilderness, having a new opportunity, and learning new skills" (Holman & McAvoy, 2005, p. 324). There is of course the reality of running such programs, such as the restrictions to participate due to costs of equipment and services, the pressures from an already overloaded mainstream curriculum, lack of skilled instruction and awareness amongst teaching staff, unfamiliar territory and rising insurances and liability issues, to name but a few.

From its humble beginnings in 1996, West Point Grey Academy School (WPGA) has become one of the most prestigious independent schools in Vancouver. It was chosen for this research because of the unique position it finds itself in. Firstly, WPGA is an independent school that prepares students for colleges and university life; therefore the students are high achievers. Secondly, as a registered society the schools non-profit status allows for all income generated to be reinvested into the school and ultimately the students. WPGA has a strong outdoor experiential education program that is based on three principles:

1. Development of interpersonal skills and an emphasis on individual responsibility;

2. Acquisition and application of specific skills relating to outdoor pursuits. Examples include learning to sea kayak and practicing low impact camping in wilderness settings; and

3. Awareness and appreciation of environmental issues and practices that promote

stewardship of the natural environment.

(Retrieved May 20, 2007, from http://www.wpga.ca/athletics_oe.asp)

The author has first hand experience assisting on a week long camping/climbing

trip and therefore has an awareness of program implementation. This school is not typical

of the public school system, but has the advantage of a full outdoor education program

implemented within the curriculum for Grades 3 through to 12, with students from

Grades 8 through to 12 having longer duration and multi-disciplinary programs.

Therefore, it is important for this research due to the amount of practical experience the

students receive and their level of maturity.

Multi day outdoor experiences help to create a temporary community, which is

invaluable for interpersonal skills and long-term personal developmental benefits (Owen,

Fletcher & Richards, 2001). Outdoor experiences offer a 'hands on' approach (Watson,

2005) to curriculum developing a connectedness with the environment and spiritual well

being (Hubball & West, in press).

3.4.3 Commercial Organization

The term Outdoor Management Development (OMD) is being used as an

umbrella term to incorporate 'developmental adventure programs' (Priest & Gass, 2005),

'personal development and professional development' (Heron, 2005), 'continuous

professional development', and 'corporate leadership development programs' (Beard &

Wilson, 2004). As a generic term OMD is used to encapsulate the corporate aspect of

outdoor education. In some instances it is similar to Outward Bound, however it differs

from Outward Bound by providing training specific for industrial needs, and is aimed at

human resource development. Due to the professional level of OMD training the program is more autonomous and learner centered. The dichotomy of this approach to program planning in comparison to schools has become evident through literature research. OMD providers do not necessarily solely practice in corporate training, but often diversify into personal and group development involving schools, clubs and organizations. Pinnacle Pursuits from Vancouver is an example of an OMD who's portfolio includes corporate programs, youth programs and international youth and family programs. Their welcome page on the 'Corporate Programs' section explains how they provide "team building events and experiential learning and leadership programs", and they state that their "customized programs are developed to meet your objectives" (http://www.pinnaclepursuits.com/corporate.asp).

3.5 Planning Dimension framework

Examining adult's role in educational planning Rosenblum (1985) notes how a research project examined participation in program planning and led them to deduce that participation in program planning "was important only to the extent that the decisions to be made were important to the participants" (p. 15). So, it seems that for program planning to be effective, it not only requires the involvement of the participants, but also that their involvement is of relevance to them.

Extending these ideas Rosenblum (1985) asks the question, "under what circumstances is participation in planning and decision making most appropriate and effective?" (p. 16). Herons "planning dimension" framework offers varying levels of decision making, and explains that at certain instances decisions are made by one of possible three groups; hierarchy – by one person in charge; co-operation – by the

learners; autonomy – solely by the learners. Within the hierarchy decision mode the program planner decides all planning decisions without consultation or delegation to other stakeholders. Co-operation leads decisions to be made collaboratively by the planner and the learners offering a flexible approach to planning. Finally, within the autonomy decision mode the learners decide alone. For example, Heron explains that the total educational process consists of six key areas; objectives; program; methods; resources; assessment; evaluation, and it is within each of these stages that a decision about the programming can be made using one of the decision-modes. (Table 1)

Table 1. **The three decision-modes and the elements of the educational process.**

	Objectives	Program	Methods	Resources	Assessment	Evaluation
Hierarchy You alone						
Co-operation You with Group						
Autonomy Group alone						

From *"The Complete Facilitators Handbook"* by J. Heron, 2005, p. 74

Within each decision mode there are seven possible combinations for decision-making. Table 2 displays all seven options giving a brief description. To help explain these we will look at a few examples. Row 1 is hierarchical and autocratic in its approach, it does not allow for negotiation during the process, therefore is likely to have poor learner interest as they have not been consulted or asked about the program's relevance. However, there are certain instances when this is a necessity, such as lack of time, or facilitator experience. Row 7 is the reverse of this and is a user-determined model, for example learners who seek special expertise to 'fill the gap' and assist them in

their own shortcomings. An example could be a group of friends who have decided on a

particular expedition but do not have the necessary skills and hire a guide to assist their

needs. The most comprehensive row would be row 3. This is where the decisions are

made by differing decision-modes throughout the process; there may be occasions where

the learners have complete autonomy, and other times when it is shared. This row enables

flexibility and the greatest chance for learner and planner involvement.

Table 2. Seven ways of using decision-modes in planning. Basic map of political options

	Hierarchy	Co-operation	Autonomy
1	You decide all		
2	You decide some	You with group decide some	
3	You decide some	You with group decide some	Group decide some
4	You decide some		Group decide some
5		You with group decide some	Group decide some
6		You with group decide all	
7			Group decide all

From *"The Complete Facilitators Handbook"* by J. Heron, 2005, p. 74

Even with a range of decision modes being used there will be occasions when the

program has to be decided by one or the other. Before a program can begin the idea has

to be planted and one person will make the decision to invest the time and energy to

produce a learning experience. Table 3, shows the four decision levels and the three

decision-modes taken from Level 4 (Decision Levels) it can be only one person making a

decision and therefore does not involve the learners. Once we have passed this stage the

program quickly moves to Level 3. At this level a decision is made as to who will decide

who plans the program, this level also becomes open to all permutations of decision-

modes. This level has not even started planning a program. The stakeholders will discuss

how they wish to proceed with the planning, will there be co-operation or autonomy, or will the program in its entirety be planned by one person. Level 2 now steps into the timetabling of the program, the nuts and bolts of the experience, with the final level (level 1) managing the actual learning activity. Traditionally with school programs teachers have allowed input from the students at Level 1.

Table 3. **The four decision-levels and the three decision-modes**

DECISION MODES → DECISION LEVELS ↓	HIERARCHY Direction Facilitator does it FOR people	CO-OPERATION Negotiation Facilitator does it WITH people	AUTONOMY Delegation Facilitator gives it TO people
Level 4 Deciding who decides who plans the program of learning		No Input	No Input
Level 3 Deciding who plans the program of learning			
Level 2 Planning the program of learning			
Level 1 Managing this learning activity			

From "*The Complete Facilitators Handbook*" by J. Heron, 2005, p. 77

Kilgore (2003) agrees with Heron that program planners take three approaches to planning - directive, collaborative, and nondirective approach. Each of these approaches has strengths and weaknesses. She believes that the directive (hierarchy) approach is the quickest to instigate, however it doesn't involve other stakeholders. The slowest approach, nondirective, facilitates a process where the stakeholders develop their own goals, "but it is likely to best meet the needs of those involved and affected by the program" (p. 85). The advantage Heron's framework has over Kilgore's suggestions is

the flexibility to move between the three approaches, and an awareness of the need to move between them.

Chapter 4: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

Outdoor education programs come in a variety of forms, for a plethora of clients, and for the specific needs and interests of a number of stakeholders. Program planners have a difficult task of reaching everyone's needs, producing a program that is affordable, and in some instances profitable, whilst still being of educational benefit to the learners.

Outdoor education provides the opportunity to develop community through invitation of learners to join a temporary community in an unfamiliar environment. To achieve this Wyatt (1997) believes that program planners must have a "vision" (p. 80) of what community is, to enable programs to be effectively developed. Within each case study presented here the program planners have discovered what it is to produce a community of learners within their area of expertise, tailoring the program to be effective further client group. Wyatt (1997) goes on to say that to provide a community experience the facilitators and program planners must be skilled in their design and implementation of programming and that the designing stage of programs must involve the learners in the "program design and execution" (p. 83). The element of inclusiveness in program planning is a high focus of this research and will be closely examined in the following analysis.

Observing each case study and referring the practical application of program planning to Heron's (2005) theoretical framework will allow conclusions to be drawn on the contrasts and comparisons between practice and theory, although, as Wilson and Cervero (1996) warn, "theories do not plan programs – people do" (p. 82).

4.2 Voluntary Organization

The Jack Rabbit Ski Club situated at Hollyburn Mountain in Vancouver, BC is run as a non-profit organization providing opportunities for children to experience the sport of cross-country skiing. Children gain specific training in the skills necessary to progress from grass roots through to Olympic level. Jack Rabbit Ski Club (JRSC) is influenced by the National Coaching Certificate Program, the Coaching Association of Canada, and Cross Country Canada (Figure 6). The main influence comes from the national governing body for cross-country skiing, Cross Country Canada (CCC).

> *Its [Jack Rabbit Ski Club] organized as part of a series across Canada of Jack Rabbit clubs. Jack Rabbits program was established in order to further young Canadian skiers abilities with the intention that they could go all the way from Bunnies when they are very young, right through, and get into coaching and hopefully into the National team.* (Interview – May 21st, 2007)

Figure 6. **Organizational structure of Jack Rabbit Ski Club**

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

National Coaching Certificate Program NCCP

Coaching Association of Canada

Cross Country Canada

INTERNAL INFLUENCES

Hollyburn Jack Rabbit Ski Club

President

Registrar

Coaching Coordinator
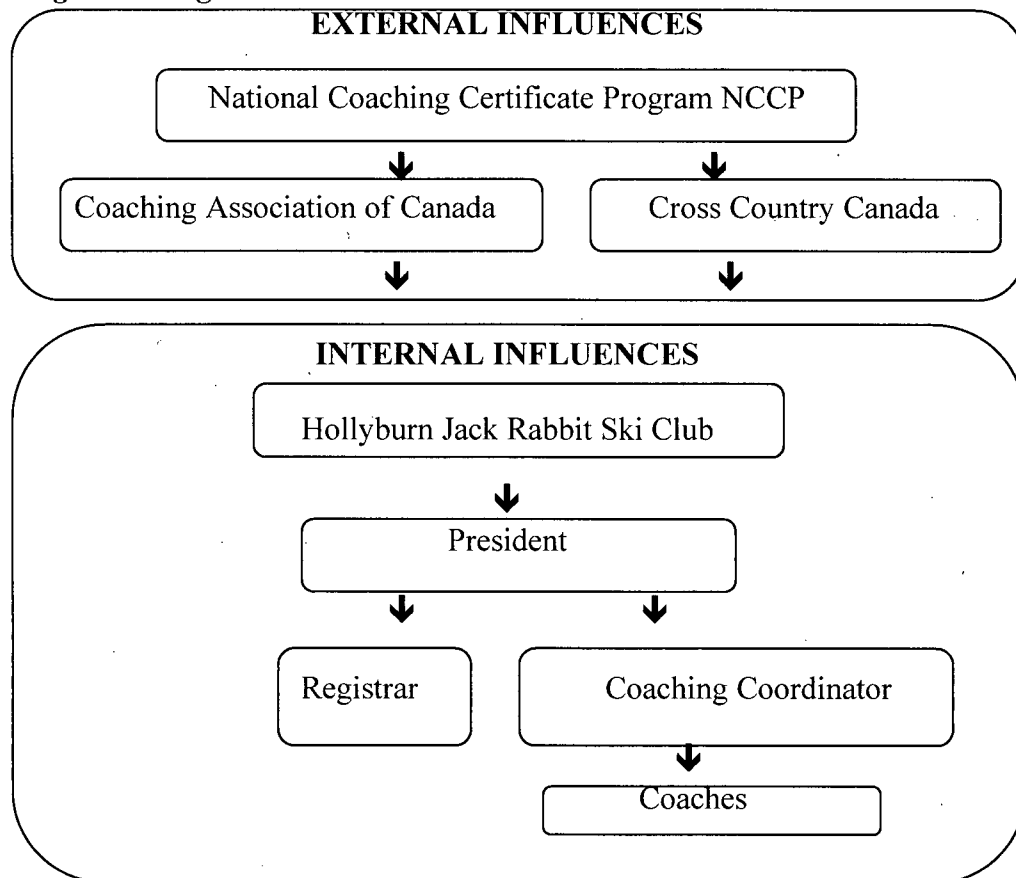
Coaches

With guidance from the National Coaching Certificate Programs NCCP, CCC prepares a Community Coaching manual designed for instructors to take children through the four levels of instruction. Training for the coaches goes hand in hand with the manual and guides them to become effective coaches. Once certified the volunteer coaches shadow certified colleagues until the volunteer is proficient in their new skills. Aiding the transition from novice coach to proficient coach the CCC manual sets out a series of programs for the winter season detailing each lesson right through to skills and games to teach, removing the coach from the decision making process allowing them to focus on the hard skills that need to be taught whilst gaining valuable soft skill experience. As coaches gain more experience they become more adept at picking and choosing skills and techniques they deem necessary and effective for the students they have, breaking out of the one size fits all approach.

The 7-week program offered to children allows them to meet once a week. A child that is new to the system will begin in Level 1 classes and be able to progress through to Level 4 in the "FUNdametal" stages. During the season a child may improve dramatically and therefore be moved up a level to keep the child challenged and stimulated. Equally a child can stay for longer than one season at the same level if they do not have the necessary skills to progress. Within the 7-week program the CCC offers new recruits guidance on lesson plans and appropriate games for each skill level. The final week is a community event consisting of mini races and fun activities.

Typically the children are of 4 -10 years of age and therefore it is assumed that they do not have the necessary knowledge or willingness to be involved in the planning of their own learning. The children are involved in the decision making during the

lessons. For example, choices involving direction of travel and when to have a break, but not on issues relating to the structure. The CCC deems this level of empowerment appropriate for the maturity level of the children.

4.3 Commercial Organization

Pinnacle Pursuits is a small commercially run organization offering programs for youth and corporations. Figure 7 shows the organizational structure and the chain of command with programming design. The Youth Programs Manager and Corporate Programs Manager split the role of programming for the International Youth and Family programs. This linear organizational structure allows for good, clear two-way communications between the managers and directors.

Figure 7: **Pinnacle Pursuits Organizational Structure**
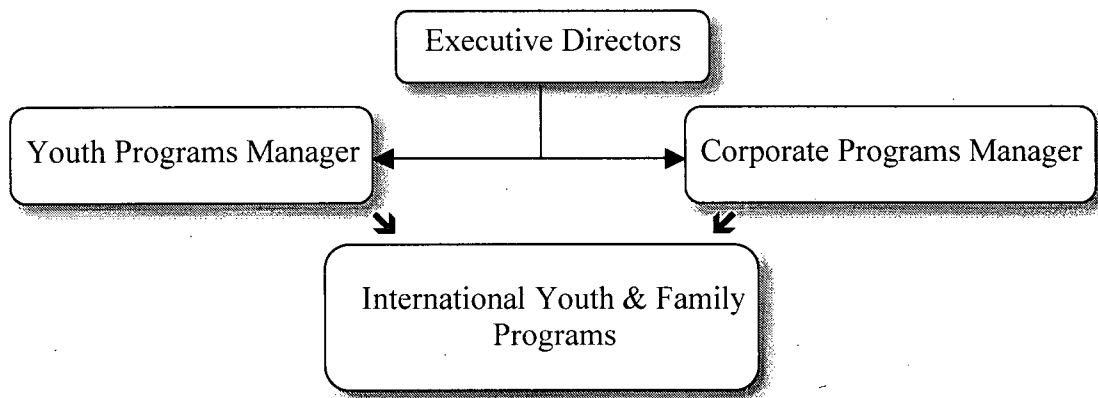
During the interview the focus was directed at youth programs but there was constant overlap with the corporate programs. Review of the youth programs revealed how Pinnacle Pursuits incorporated programs into the schools curriculum and used the Ministry curriculum (Integrated Resource Package) to focus the learning on leadership, environmental stewardship and team building. Earth Day is an example of a weeklong

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program that provides environmental workshops specific to the students' grade level and the learning outcomes of the I.R.P's.

> *This year we ran a week long Earth day event which was pretty huge, we provided programming for grade, from the Kindergarten all the way up to Grade 7. We provided environmental workshops for every single class that was unique to their grade and specific to the learning outcomes.* (Interview – May 23rd, 2007)

On forging a link with the University of British Columbia (UBC), Pinnacle Pursuits was able to develop L.E.E.P. (Leadership Experiential Education Program) which is a community program focusing on students in University Hill Elementary and Secondary School. Elementary school students are offered after school programs such as 'Outdoor Exploration' that focus on developing student's environmental education, team building and leadership.

> *The way its [program] provided is...we, first of all start out by looking at the needs, what the philosophy of LEEP. And the philosophy of LEEP is to provide programming that's not already provided by schools, umm, that focuses on interpersonal relationships and reflective learning, like looking at one's own life and deciding who am I and who I am as a leader and how do I affect the community I live in. It's got a huge focus on community. So, first of all we start with that philosophy, umm, then we look at the needs of the students and the teachers and try to see how we can incorporate the overall philosophy or belief with the needs of the students and teachers I have.* (Interview – May 23rd, 2007)

Secondary school students are offered the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme by Pinnacle Pursuits, providing 'backpacking' trips for the Bronze and Silver awards. Service projects are also offered to students wanting to develop their graduate portfolio, with students only "buying into" this program if they feel there is a benefit for them as they are already pressured by a busy curriculum and a need to pass examinations. Using the philosophy of LEEP "to provide programming not already provided by schools", Pinnacle Pursuits decides on the outdoor education program. For example, through a

needs assessment (a discussion with the teacher) it may be discovered that inter and intra personal skills need honing. Pinnacle Pursuits may then decide on a course of action that provides a community focus achieved through adventurous activities. The suggested program is presented to the teacher and a dialogue is opened to debate pros and cons of such a program. After 4 or 5 drafts, the program is finalized. This open conversation is only between the teachers and Pinnacle Pursuits as it is felt that "students don't know what they are looking for", and are often unaware of what their needs are, what activities are available to them and what each activity can achieve as a medium for learning. During the program students are given flexibility within the program and choice on what they want to do, but this flexibility is often dependent on the number of students enrolled on the program. More flexibility being offered to lower numbers of students enrolled. LEEP is a Pinnacle Pursuits success, and it is felt that due to the uniqueness of the program, students are offered a customized program specific to their needs.

4.4 Governmental Organization

Since 1996 West Point Grey Academy (WPGA) has been operating as an independent school in Vancouver, BC, preparing students for university and college life. Figure 8 shows the organizational structure, with the elementary school and secondary school split at the Head level. There is nothing unusual about this top down authority structure in an educational facility, however of interest in this case is that the Head Master is also the Head for the Elementary school. At first glance it would seem that there would be conflict of interest with the Head of the Elementary School controlling 66% of the voting rites over the Head of the Secondary school. This does not occur

however, as the both Heads share a common interest and perspective to the future of the school, in turn this common goal allows for a flow of communication between the Heads.

Figure 8. **Organizational chart for West Point Grey Academy**

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │  Board of Directors │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                              ↓
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │     Head Master     │
                    └─────────────────────┘
              ↙                             ↘
 ┌──────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────┐
 │       Head       │              │       Head       │
 │ Secondary School │              │ Elementary School│
 └──────────────────┘              └──────────────────┘
          ↓                                 ↓
 ┌──────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────┐
 │     Teachers     │              │     Teachers     │
 └──────────────────┘              └──────────────────┘
          ↓                                 ↓
 ┌──────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────┐
 │     Students     │              │     Students     │
 └──────────────────┘              └──────────────────┘
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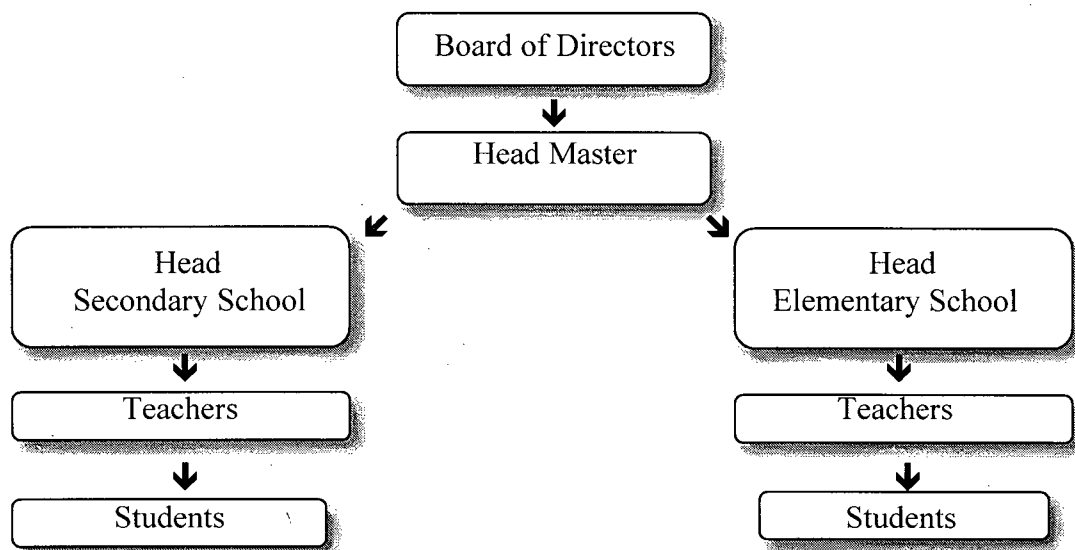
WPGA academic standards rest on four pillars; fine arts; academics; service, and athletics, with outdoor education nestling in athletics. Outdoor education sits uncomfortably in this position, as there is occasional conflict between students' commitment to sporting teams and competitions and their commitment to outdoor pursuits expeditions, often creating a challenge for the programmer when planning the programs.

Outdoor education within the school falls within two broad categories. The first category comprises year-long programs for each grade from grades 3 – 12, each grade receiving one planned expedition lasting 3 – 5 days, with the remaining focus being the integration of cross curricular activities each year.

> Outdoor education for the most part runs grade level programs, so from Grade 3 all the way to 12, with each grade having 70 students or so, currently between

60 – 85 now is involved in an outdoor education trip which runs for their grade once per year (Interview –June 21st, 2007)

These year-long programs cater for a large numbers of students creating logistical issues when planning. Students participating within this program gain an appreciation for the outdoor environment, with a focus on building a community of learners in an unfamiliar environment.

The second category of programs is the wilderness pursuits element that is available for grade 10 students for the entire academic year. The wilderness pursuits program replaces physical education for those students who choose it, and focuses the students on environmental education and the challenging attributes of the practical skills within adventurous pursuits. The numbers of students who enroll in the wilderness pursuits program are typically smaller (approximately 12 students this year) enabling greater flexibility and focus on the individual choices and desires of the students.

> *Depending on the grade level, depending on the teachers going and depending on how the programs have been developed there is opportunities to bring in academic links and integration as well, I think there is the alternative, if you look at the I.R.P's [integrated resource package] and look at alternative education there's all sorts of links and thinks that's* [outdoor education] *involved with whether its hard skills* [i.e. climbing or kayaking] *or if it's looking at camp skills, low impact, survival or whatever, there are all sorts of things that can build in, buts its not as, ...its not as comprehensive...when we get into the Wilderness Pursuits program at Grade 10 that's when there's a little bit more integration into the full year, its not a 5 day trip, it's a full year course.* (Interview –June 21st, 2007)

The physical, social, and mental attributes of outdoor education are exceptional ways of broadening a students education (Watson, 2005), and opens the opportunities of reaching their other intelligences such as spatial, physical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal that other more academic subjects fail to stimulate (Gardner, 1983). WPGA achieves this

through cross-curricular activities and 'themes' that are created during the planning stages.

The Head of outdoor education at WPGA plans the two categories solely. During this process he has to consider what external and internal influences are in place when making these decisions. Trips are planned using the curriculum as a focus with themes generated to stimulate ideas and allow for connections to be made to academic studies. Age is an important consideration during this process. Allowing students of a younger age to be too focused on physical attributes of a particular outdoor pursuit would render the program a failure because of pushing the students too far too soon. As the students move from grade to grade within the school, the challenges they face in outdoor education increase. As the students age and maturity increases their programs can focus on more challenging activities, having the ultimate challenge within the Wilderness pursuits program. Ethnicity also becomes an internal influence to consider when planning.

Service providers are an important external influence for consideration. In some instances instructors are very skilled in the physical attributes of their sport, spending many years working towards qualifications and recognition, however, in some cases this can lead to instructors becoming detached from students trying these activities for the first time meaning the instructors lack the 'soft' skills of sensitivity to younger novices and the issues that arise with culture and gender differences.

Due to the many internal and external influences affecting program planning at WPGA the choice is made to limit the input from all stakeholders to enable program planning to be manageable. Involvement from the learners in the process of planning is

kept to a minimum and really only considered in the Wilderness pursuits program, as numbers are manageable and the students benefit from the responsibility for their own learning. It is not enough, according to Rosenblum (1985), for the instructor to determine the learners' needs. The participant must recognize that the needs exist: "Unless this condition is brought about, adult learning opportunities based upon the results of the diagnosis will not be meaningful to the client" (p. 18). This may be true but is it practical?

Chapter 5
DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The benefits of outdoor education and other adventurous activities are unquestionable in the promotion of holistic education. Loynes (2005) stated that the "value of these activities is intrinsic, unquestioned and self-evident, we know it is satisfying, broadens horizons, builds character, establishes confidence, promotes a healthy body and mind and results in a sense of well being, even spiritual fulfillment" (p. 26).

Prescriptive practices in program planning from the program planner can constrain holistic learning as the learners lose the learning opportunity of interpersonal skill development through the consultation, negotiation and planning of the program of events. Learners are often not invited to the planning table, and even with modern program planning designs, teachers and managers state what they believe the outcomes of learning should be without discovering what the learners really desire. This can be seen though the structure of Jack Rabbit's Ski Club, the limited stakeholder involvement in Pinnacle Pursuits planning, and how the logistics and timings necessitate the need for one person to structure the program at West Point Grey Academy. These are not criticisms in their approaches to program planning, more an observation of the differences between stated theoretical practices and the practical application.

The overall aim of the research was to discover if program planning in outdoor education emerged differently in practice than the suggestions made by theoretical models. In particular the research discussed outdoor education program planning principles such as Heron's (2005) 'Planning Dimensions', Kolb's & Fry's (1975)

'Learning Cycle', Martin & Krouwel's (2001) 'Dramaturgy' wave', Klint & Priest's (1998) 'Program Evaluation', and Wilson & Beard's (2003) 'Learning Combination Lock', to discover if the program planner has been influenced by these principles. It would appear at first glance that they are not influential in helping program planners make decisions, but the argument could be that we do not know whether subconsciously on some level whether planners, in general, have read such works and a seed has been planted or that the system of planning is like a family tree and that it may have been passed down from generation to generation, changes being made along the way but the fundamental idea remaining the same. Or, that the planners bring to the exercise skills and abilities from previous professional development (e.g. BEd programs).

Traditional educative practices as discussed previously are typically rigid. Proposals have been made to change these patterns and bring a more modern approach to education through program planning models, but it is not evident if these are having positive effects. These new approaches to planning have been referred by Loynes (2005) as the 'child' and 'youth', the move from traditional outdoor education is known as the child moving to the youth. At this stage "our egos get in the way of social and sensual learning" (p. 25) and that program planning does not include others. 'Our egos' believe that we know what is best for our stakeholders, and this demonstrates a disconnect in the planning process. The shift towards modern practices is our 'youth' phase, and it is this phase that we "explore our identities through our exploration of the World around us" (p. 26). We begin to see others as important components in the construction of a good program, allowing for the dialogue to flow. Cervero and Wilson (2006) refer to this as a "horizontal relationship" (p. 171), suggesting that there is no one 'egotistical child' but

harmony between the planners and the learners, that the planners guide the learners throughout the program planning process. It seems that progressive thinking within program planning with regards to inclusiveness and ownership over the learning process is a new thing, however I would argue that it has been around for a while and it has just taken a long time for it to filter down through the system from academia to practice. Scholars and experts in the field research study methods and practices and decide on the success or shortcomings of the implementation of current methods and practices. It is then written about in journals and spoken about at conferences, counter arguments and papers are written to challenge ideas and eventually new research gains a foothold. It would seem that this is a lengthy process and for this theory to be reflected in practice would take even longer as the 'practical' community have to feel the relevance and ease of using such theories in a working situation.

5.2 Pros and cons of current program planning practices

The discussion will now turn to the various facets of program planning practices that became evident when researching the case study organizations. There were issues contending with pressures from heavily laden curriculum, logistics of organizing large numbers of learners, financial constraints, exclusion of all the stakeholders to the planning process to name a few. Details of these and others draw a deeper understanding on the connections or disconnections between theory and practice.

5.2.1 Pressures

Program planners are under constant pressure to perform and achieve. They are encouraged to produce innovative programs that achieve greatness for little money,

resources and time. Targets become further out of the reach of the programmers resulting in corners being cut to create a 'one size fits all' approach to programs. It would seem that Pinnacle Pursuits is an exception to the rule as they are proud of the fact that they allow time for planning and actively encourage creativity within the designing process. Within the commercial sector stakeholders often want a quick fix to a human resource issue so that complicated staffing issues can be resolved and staff can get back to work and become more cost effective and productive. Pinnacle Pursuits manage this pressure by consulting and negotiating with the stakeholders to draw out the 'real' issues and make informed decisions on the best way forward for the program. This becomes a good example of redirecting pressures and using them in a positive way.

West Point Grey Academy has the pressure of time from an already demanding curriculum. Academic studies generally take precedence over so called 'alternative' education; therefore a student's yearly timetable is crammed with studies testing their academic prowess. WPGA achieves integration of outdoor education into the curriculum through choice. During Year 10, students have the choice of being involved with the Wilderness Program or staying on the school's mainstream program. The program is a year-long extensive program developing continuity and progression in the skills that the students gain.

5.2.2 Facilitation skills/knowledge levels

As explained by Martin and Krouwel (2002) and their Dramaturgy wave, there is no need for pre-planned learning objectives to be externally set or otherwise. They state there is no need for frontloading or a predisposition of ideas into what should or should not be included/excluded in a program. They indicate that the program of events becomes

organic in that they grow and are nurtured by the learners involved. This is an interesting concept and one that they have shown to work through their workshops, however there is one important key element that holds this type of program together and that is the facilitator. During such an organic and chaotic process the facilitator must remain focused, flexible and be experienced enough to guide the learners through this process. The facilitator must be comfortable with and knowledgeable of working in a somewhat emergent context where the learning and the direction of learning can constantly change.

Jack Rabbit ski Club would have some difficulty in operating their programs under the 'Dramaturgy' wave, as the coaches are voluntary and normally the parents of children attending the classes. They have formal instruction in how to teach the hard skills of cross country skiing but not all volunteers will have the ability or knowledge to be flexible enough to allow the program to evolve from the children's perception. During a case study research on Outward Bound Martin and Leberman (2005) found that participants saw themselves as facilitators of their learning, indicating that as individuals and groups develop experience they become more responsible for their learning. It could then be assumed that facilitators also gain in confidence and become increasingly aware of their role and responsibility with the learner's development. This can be seen within the Jack Rabbit Ski Club; new volunteer coaches shadow experiences coaches and then slowly develop the skills necessary when dealing with challenging situations. As the season progresses these coaches become more flexible in adapting the program of events to meet the learner's needs. However, there is a vast difference between coaches gaining experience through practice, and the level of facilitation needed by the Dramaturgy wave.

5.2.3 Are stakeholders invited to the planning table?

Logistically it may not be possible to invite all stakeholders to the planning table due to location or numbers of participants. Therefore representation of all the stakeholders becomes an important consideration. School children are often completely omitted from the planning process due to "embedded hierarchical relationships" (Kirby & Gibbs, 2005, p. 209), adults tending to quash children's voices and opinions because they are not seen as valid or informed. Children are, however, often represented at the planning table through statistics and other information gathering processes. Kirby and Gibbs (2005) support children's participation in planning and state that adults need to "learn new ways of working; to enable children to communicate their views, develop their ideas, make group decisions and take joint action" (p. 209), the question is how adults can break down these barriers to equal or more democratic power relations. Heron's (2005) Planning Dimension framework enables the adult facilitator to move from directive role (hierarchical) through to a democratic process (cooperative) to allowing the learners to discover their own way of learning (autonomy). The flexibility within this model encourages adults to offer children opportunities to take responsibility. Adult education and participation "may be considered authentic when adult educators and planners systematically encourage people at many levels to negotiate program development through dialogue and shared decision making" (Grundens-Schuck, 2007, p. 1), but it should be possible to make learning authentic through program negotiation with children at some level as the benefits are obvious.

Involving children in planning bridges the gap formed by adults over ownership and responsibility with the childrens' own learning, but it does not necessarily mean that

the children want this responsibility or are interested in the thought of being active in their learning. This is where experienced facilitators will be able to distinguish between children open and willing to be a part of the planning process and those who are not. It is suggested by Tucker (2003) that creating opportunities for ownership over the learning for children requires adult facilitators to communicate effectively, negotiate options and foster a more democratic approach through opening and inviting children to the planning table.

5.2.4 Ownership of learning

Advocates of ownership over learning (Kolb, 1984; Rosenblum, 1985; Wyatt, 1997) believe in program design and execution that considers the learners and is learner centered. Jack Rabbits Ski Club involves the learners in decisions during the program, such as which direction to travel next, and when to take breaks. The justification for the lack of greater involvement from the learners is due to their age. From a theoretical stance it would seem as if they have this right as authors advocating ownership speak from an adult education perspective believing children to be too young to make informed decisions.

To achieve ownership of their program of learning the learners have to be engaged in the process and see the relevance of being involved (Rosenblum, 1985). West Point Grey Academy achieves ownership through their Wilderness Pursuits program as the learners have chosen to commit their time to outdoor pursuits for the full year. During the year they develop the necessary skills in making informed decisions on how their program will develop. Therefore it would seem that as adult learners we have gained the necessary skills to make informed decisions on our learning, and that the learners from

WPGA are at the early developmental stages of gaining this knowledge and experience. Ownership of programs might be a skill that is earned through participation and involvement, and that after time is served in active learning a learner develops awareness of wanting changes to their program and therefore achieves ownership through maturity.

So it can be said that age and maturity play an important role in creating ownership through inclusion, "...as learners help to chart the course of a learning program, they learn to assume responsibility by taking responsibility" (Rosenblum, 1985, 19). Learners become skilled in making decisions through participation within the choices. Choices can become mistakes, but providing the facilitator manages the mistakes and allows them to become learning experiences the mistakes are not detrimental to the learning. Decisions on choices are where power struggles play out, and where children can or have to be removed from the ownership of their learning. Levels of decision-making constantly change and "even within child-led initiatives, for example, adults have a role to play, and this inevitably includes making some decisions" (Kirby & Gibbs, 2005, p. 211). It is still difficult to know if younger children can assume the responsibility for their learning, and it would be interesting to study the effects of young children making decisions and planning their own learning with guidance for experienced facilitators.

5.2.5 Democratic planning

If democratic program planning is to occur then "all the people who are affected by an educational program should be involved in the deliberation of what is important" (Cervero & Wilson, 2006, p 99). This is an over simplistic view and does not take into consideration all of factors that come into play, such as a willingness to be involved,

cultural differences and political power relations. For the purpose of this research observations were made to see whether an attempt was made to include all the stakeholders or to see whether there was a justification for exclusion. Heron (2005) uses his framework 'The Planning Dimension' to explain the decision levels and modes that occur when planning a program. Heron's framework is useful as it allows for complete autonomy, cooperation and/or hierarchal decisions to be made throughout the planning process, ultimately leading to democratic decisions.

During a personal learning opportunity I experienced a three-month expedition to an unfamiliar environment, with a group of strangers all with a common goal. I was extremely interested to discover that once the group became settled and confident we were able to make decisions that were of benefit to the group and our intended purpose. Our 'team' had guidance from facilitators at the beginning but who began to step back when they found that our team wanted and needed to make their own choices. Maturity plays a part, the length of the expedition, the immediate need for decisions and the very real consequences all aid in making informed decisions and ultimately the expedition effective. A foreign country, an uncertain future, an unfamiliar collection of people all play a role in developing a temporary community of learners who ultimately developed democratic skills in planning their own program of events. The expedition became a personal life changing experience; I learnt to make decisions democratically and practically with regards to a group environment. Given the opportunities to lead the team and be led only served to further stimulate and cement this learning process, confirming the evidential research indicating the importance of the 'lived experience' (Foran, 2005;

Davidson, 2001) and that through being in the outdoors a learners self-concept and confident emerges.

Without democratic planning we are left with a dictatorship that creates a lack of stimulation, interest and possibly resentment on the part of the learners, which can have a very negative effect on future learning.

Chapter 6: CONCLUSION

Research has focused on program planning for many years, with most outdoor education program planning frameworks focusing on outcomes of program planning design. This research was different in its approach as it sought to ascertain whether programs in an outdoor context are comparable or in contrast to theoretical programming. Examining theory and practice, this paper had the opportunity to reflect on other issues relating to the process of planning, namely:

- o To what extent are learners central to the program planning process?

- o What are the external and internal influences considered by program planners?

- o Are there any contrasts and comparisons between theory and practice?

The intention in this chapter is to summarize answers to the above questions, highlight limitations with this research and then offer suggestions for future developments leading from this research.

6.1 Are learners central to the planning process?

Of each of the cases analyzed the majority of learners were children. This is an important observation because the power differentials with adults over children can enable or disable children's voices to be heard during the planning stages. Due to their age and level of maturity children are often not asked their opinions when decisions need to be made. It is almost as if children are unable to make decisions for themselves, and that they do not bring any preconceptions or history with them to the planning table. The variety of ages within the three cases makes this a complex issue and far beyond the scope of this research. Jack Rabbit Ski Club teaches students from an early age, and due

to the nature of the learning the students often don't have any previous skills or knowledge of the sport, with the result that the adults are seen as the experts. When a skill is being taught to beginners it is difficult for the experts to relinquish the control therefore tightening the reigns on the learning process. The Jack Rabbit ski Club attempts to give the learners an opportunity to work at their negotiation and consultation skills by offering them choices and decisions to be made that affect the taught session but this is felt to be minimal involvement. Table 4 provides a visual of how Jack Rabbit Ski Club fits within Heron's Planning Dimension framework.

Table 4: **Decision modes for voluntary organization**

DECISION MODES → DECISION LEVELS ↓	HIERARCHY Direction Facilitator does it FOR people	CO-OPERATION Negotiation Facilitator does it WITH people	AUTONOMY Delegation Facilitator gives it TO people
Level 4 Deciding who decides who plans the program of learning	✓	No Input	No Input
Level 3 Deciding who plans the program of learning	✓		
Level 2 Planning the program of learning	✓		
Level 1 Managing this learning activity	✓		

Adapted from "*The Complete Facilitators Handbook*" by J. Heron, 2005, p. 77

West Point Grey Academy does achieve a certain amount of cooperation through the Wilderness Program; achievement of this is because of the small numbers of students involved within the program, but this involvement does not involve changing the

program plans, therefore Table 5 represents the organizations involvement of learners within program planning.

Table 5: Decision modes for governmental organization

DECISION MODES → DECISION LEVELS ↓	HIERARCHY Direction Facilitator does it FOR people	CO-OPERATION Negotiation Facilitator does it WITH people	AUTONOMY Delegation Facilitator gives it TO people
Level 4 Deciding who decides who plans the program of learning	✓	No Input	No Input
Level 3 Deciding who plans the program of learning	✓		
Level 2 Planning the program of learning	✓		
Level 1 Managing this learning activity	✓		

Adapted from "*The Complete Facilitators Handbook*" by J. Heron, 2005, p. 77

Pinnacle Pursuits attempts to involve learners in the planning of the program, but only manages to involve other stakeholders with this process. It is assumed that this is due to the power differentials that the other stakeholders (teachers, managers) hold, and therefore it is difficult to bypass this. Table 6 represents the involvement of the stakeholders in the planning process.

Table 6: **Decision modes for commercial organization**

DECISION MODES → DECISION LEVELS ↓	HIERARCHY Direction Facilitator does it FOR people	CO-OPERATION Negotiation Facilitator does it WITH people	AUTONOMY Delegation Facilitator gives it TO people
Level 4 Deciding who decides who plans the program of learning	✓	No Input	No Input
Level 3 Deciding who plans the program of learning	✓		
Level 2 Planning the program of learning		✓	
Level 1 Managing this learning activity	✓		

Adapted from "*The Complete Facilitators Handbook*" by J. Heron, 2005, p. 77

6.2 External and Internal Influences

Every program is exposed to external and internal influences that affect decisions made, and the three cases mentioned within this research are no exceptions. Pinnacle Pursuits external influences come mainly from the risk management perspective. Making sure that they have the correct instructor/student ratios. Participant numbers are usually high so staffing issues can direct the program of events allowing for larger numbers of participants to attend. Jack Rabbit Ski Club has influences externally including the weather, Cross Country Canada's instructional guidelines, and parents requesting their child progress before the child is ready. In a small way each influence plays a small part in directing the planning. West Point Grey Academy becomes internally influenced when trying to implement outdoor education within an already demanding curriculum.

Decisions are constantly made to counter these problems and ease the program through issues to create cohesion for everyone.

6.3 Contrasts and comparisons between theory and practice

Throughout this research it has become evident that there is a gap between theoretical studies of program planning and the practical application of program planning. During program planning in the 'field' there is a 'real' need to make the planning easy to enact and to be understood by even the most novice planner, and easy to sell to potential planners without confusing them. Programs need to be quick so that time is not wasted on preparing programs and that optimal time is spent using programs. Diluting the planning process in this manner is detrimental to the quality and relevance of the learning, therefore it seems that a balance needs to be struck between ease of use and creativity. Herons (2005) Planning Dimension framework is an excellent starting point in which to explain a democratic planning process. Using the framework allows for a base understanding of sound planning principles, from here planners can adapt to fit their specific needs and requirements. It is also suggested here that the use of Beard & Wilson's (2004) Learning Combination Lock as an aid memoir to assist in the creative process of program planning.

6.4 Research limitations

As with any research there are limitations. Limitations due to time, resources, access, but with each limitation comes a choice. Choices are made to enable the integrity of the study to remain intact and withstand scrutiny from the academic community. This research is no different. Financial constraints hindered the length of time that could be

spent on questioning other organizations. Having the flexibility of more time it would have been possibly to shadow organizations as they work through their planning process, highlighting techniques and principles of operation.

Despite some limitations every effort was made to form a thorough and unbiased rendering of current practices of program planning in outdoor education drawing on three distinct and informative cases.

6.5 Future recommendations

This research has examined some possibilities of program planning in outdoor education. There has been extensive mention of the power relations between adults and children, and the need for children to be given the opportunity to have ownership over their learning. Exposure to this 'gap' can create opportunities for further development within the relationships between children and adults and the levels of inclusiveness due to maturity and age.

Creating ownership over the learning is said to foster a greater willingness to learn due to their 'buying into the program'. There is an opportunity to run two programs side by side to see whether an inclusive program favors an exclusive one.

Outdoor education is still really in its infancy and we do not know all the answers to, or permutations for, making the most effective learning experience. For the most part the uncertainty is what makes outdoor education unique, the changing environment, the opening of cultural barriers, greater opportunities for travel and exploration creating a plethora of learning situations.

A key focus of this research was to observe participation in planning, many theories have advocated for inclusion but as Rosenblum (1985) observes, "direct participation in planning may not alter student test scores or attitudes about the course in significant ways. What seems to be more important to participants than direct involvement in planning is that the course addresses their needs and concerns" (p. 22). This paper would argue that participation and addressing the needs go hand in hand, and that if you fulfil one you have fulfilled the other. Bridging the gap between theory and practice will go a long way in achieving this goal.

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