

Impressions from the wild: A thematic  
analysis of adolescents' experience on  
Project K's Wilderness Adventure

Impressions from the wild: A thematic  
analysis of adolescents' experience on  
Project K's **Wilderness Adventure**

Impressions from the wild: A thematic  
analysis of **adolescents' experience** on  
Project K's Wilderness Adventure

Impressions from the wild: A **thematic analysis** of adolescents' experience on Project K's Wilderness Adventure



# Participants

23 Year 10 students

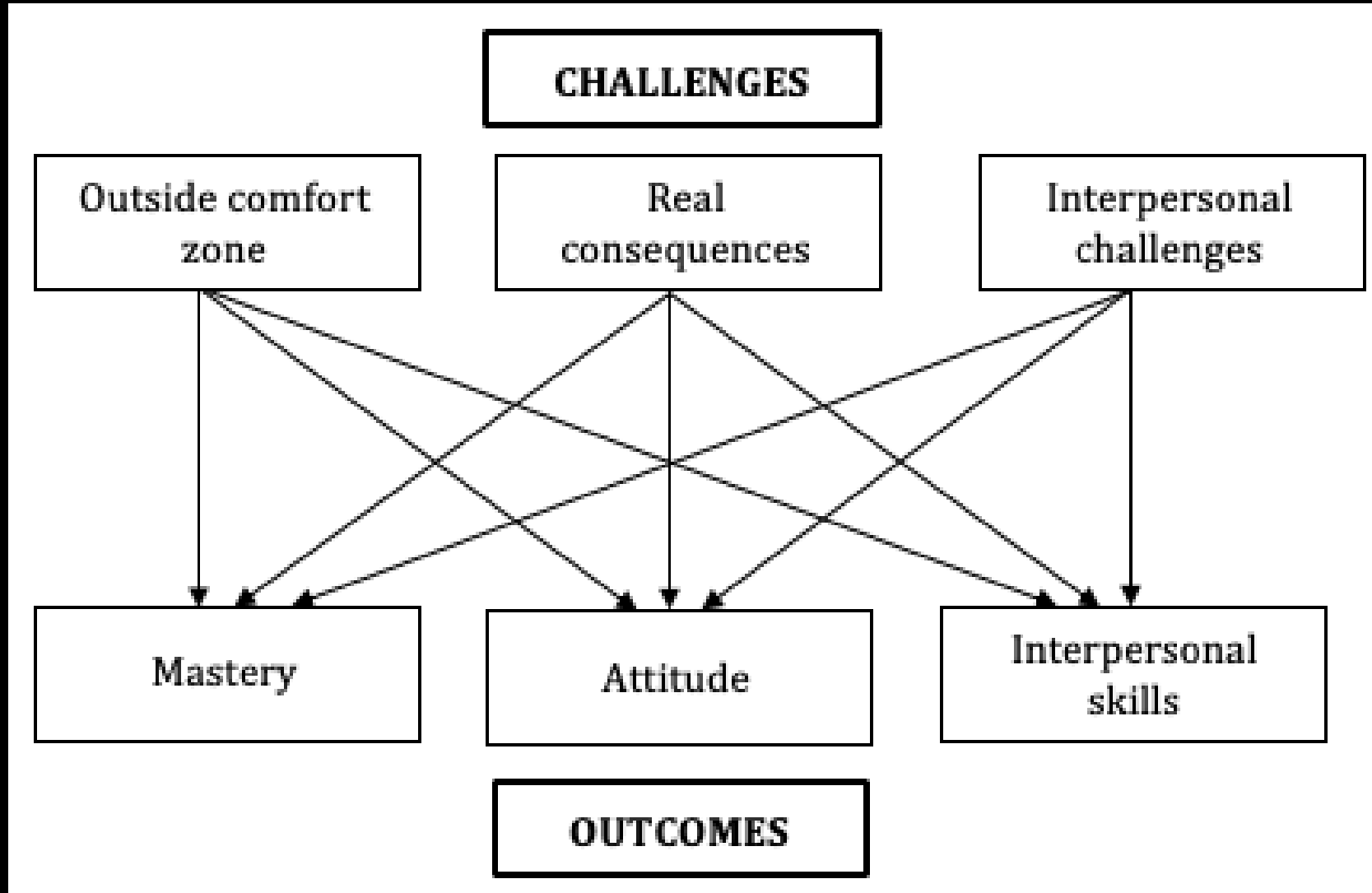
8 focus groups

12x Otumoetai College, Tauranga

6x Waitakere College

5x Northcote College

# Themes



# Challenge: Outside comfort zone

*“not a part of my normal life. Yea, it’s quite different, to kind of everything.” (Alexa)*

# Challenge: Outside comfort zone

- **Wilderness environment**

*“like kind of rough, like a rough way to like, live for 17 days.” (Smith)*



# Challenge: Outside comfort zone

- **Being away from family**

*“17 days, like, [...] it’s too long. For like, if you’re going away for the first time away from your family, 17 days is like a bit much.” (Jock)*

# Challenge: Outside comfort zone

- **Wilderness activities**

*“It was like, really hard, like the physical stuff.  
[...] I cried so much, I’d just be walking and start  
crying.” (Ella)*

# Challenge: Real consequences

- **Taking responsibility**

*“The more breaks we take the more, like, less time we actually have to get there.” (Tim)*

# Challenge: Real consequences

- **Being embedded in the experience**

*“I kind of just knew that, like, no matter how hard it is, you’re in the middle of nowhere so you have to keep pushing.” (Jess)*

# Challenge: Real consequences

- **Relying on each other**

*“Everybody realised we needed to stick as a family and work as a team. Like, we’re gonna get nowhere if it doesn’t work.” (Rose)*

# Challenge: Interpersonal challenges

- **Being stuck together**

*“Being with each other for ages was probably like not a good thing? ‘Cause we [...] had to do everything together, everything. (Whispers) everything! That probably wasn’t like, a good thing I guess.” (Ella)*

# Challenge: Interpersonal challenges

## ○ Tensions

### Auckland group

*“Yea there was a bit of like um, like tension sometimes, but naturally not too bad.”  
(Oliver)*

### Tauranga group

*“Pretty much no one worked together at the beginning. [...] But towards the end we kind of just were like, well, we’re now like family so we kind of all have to.” (Jess)*

# Challenge: Interpersonal challenges

- Leadership

## Auckland group

*“In the future if we ever do something where we have to lead a group, we know what to do, we know how to lead.”  
(Jack)*

## Tauranga group

*“I feel like when you’re a leader, you have to be like, kind of angry, [...] they don’t listen to you if you’re not like, kinda like, angry.” (Smith)*



# Outcome: Mastery

- **Motivation**

*“Just like having a strong mind. Just keep like, if you like, say fall over, just tell yourself keep going, it’s almost over.” (Jack)*

# Outcome: Mastery

- **Experience of success**

*“I mean, it felt easier, the more it went on. Like less challenging, ‘cause like, I dunno I just kind of adapted to the challenge, so like, it felt easier I guess.” (Oliver)*

# Outcome: Mastery

- **Exceeding expectations**

*“Parts of the Wilderness, all the tramping and stuff, like, I would like just tell myself I couldn’t do it, but then I would end up doing it like every time.” (Ella)*

# Outcome: Attitude

- **Effect on their experience**

*“We believed we couldn’t do it. But we did it anyway, ‘cause we just thought happy thoughts and we encouraged ourselves.”*

*(Lacey)*

# Outcome: Attitude

- **Attitude outside of the wilderness**

*“Like, not arguing with my brothers, as much. [...] Like, attitude towards class like, towards school work. Like just putting my head down and doing it.” (Blake)*

# Outcome: Attitude

- **Gratitude**

*“I dunno just, being out there, you can like realise what’s like actually around you.” (Jess)*

# Outcome: Interpersonal skills

- **Working with strangers**

*“When you were like, cooking dinner and stuff you’d like, just talk to people. And I guess people kind of just, found like the common ground.” (Jess)*

# Outcome: Interpersonal skills

- **Not judging others**

*“You got to make a lot of new friends that you wouldn’t think about talking, like, approaching before the project.” (Smith)*



# Outcome: Interpersonal skills

- **Two schools versus one**

- **Auckland group**

*“And like, if they believed that we could do it, then we could do it. ‘Cause [...] they don’t really know us. But they still believe that we can do it. (Nadia)”*

- **Tauranga group**

*“I mean if, if we had to like, go with strangers, it’d be harder ‘cause you’d have to like, make that connection with them.” (Jess)”*

“If anything’s like real hard, I can  
be like I did Project K I can do this.”  
(Ella)