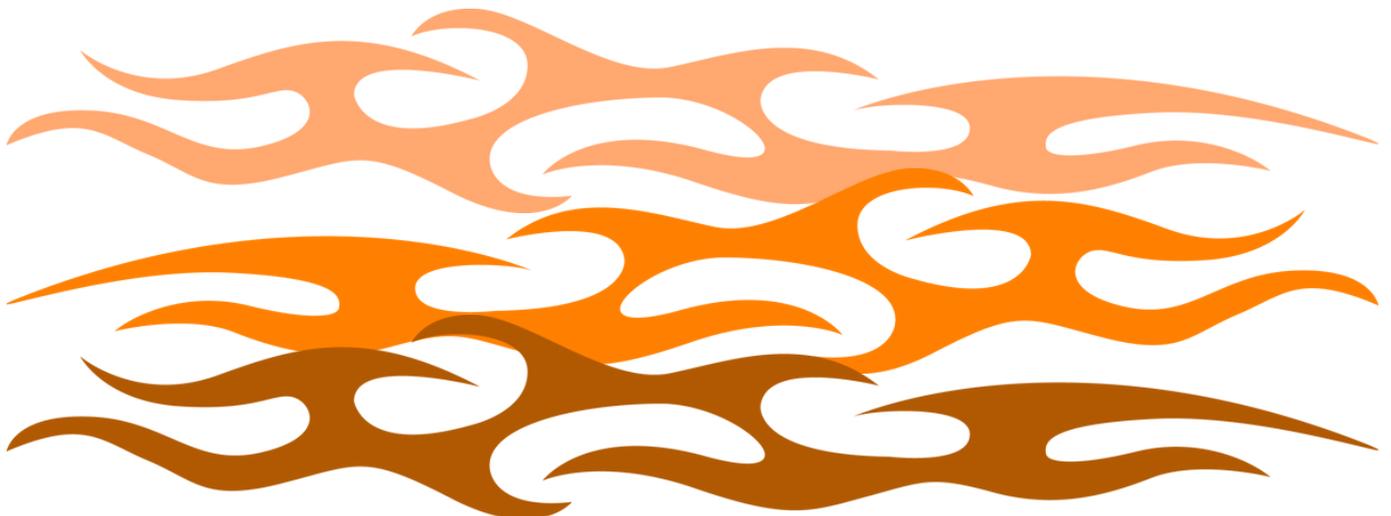# World Scout Education Congress

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Youth Development through Nurturing and Cultivation of Values Education

Hong Kong

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1. Scout Association of Hong Kong

1.1 Background

Scout Association of Hong Kong ("SAHK") is the largest uniform group in Hong Kong. As of 2022, there are close to 90,000 Scout members and leaders. The Association Headquarters is further divided into 5 regions and 44 districts. Five different sections, namely Grasshopper Scout Rings, Cub Scout Packs, Scout Troops, Venture Scout Units and Rover Scout Crews, each corresponding to members' age level, are set up and they are available from over 1,200 Scout group units across the territory.

The youth programmes are designed in accordance with the Scout Method, Educational Objectives and the respective training schemes. With progressive awards and proficiency badges, scout members are able to develop their interests and extend their potentials over the course of their growth and personal development at their own pace.

1.2 Vision, Mission and Values of the Association

The Vision of the Association is "to be the best voluntary organisation for the development of young people in Hong Kong for the betterment of our society", while the Mission is "to operate an education movement for young people providing them with challenging and progressive training programmes that can contribute to their physical, intellectual, social, spiritual and aesthetic development."

To achieve the mission, the Association seeks to involve young people in a non-formal educational process throughout their formative years, use the distinct Scout Method that makes each individual the principal agent in his or her development as a self-reliant, supportive, responsible and committed person, and assist young people to establish a value system based upon spiritual, social, ethical and personal principles as expressed in the Scout Promise and Law.

As a youth development agency, the SAHK will strive its best to: 1) promote Scouting to the community and increase its membership; 2) identify and provide suitable training for adult leadership and guidance for young people; 3) uphold good governance; 4) obtain the recognition and support of the community to Scouting and its activities; 5) be recognised as a major contributor to policies on youth issues; 6) provide opportunities for its members to participate in local, national and international activities; and 7) provide support for the development of World Scouting.

The Values of the Association are to recognize the importance for adults to act as role models to nurture young people to develop a sense of self-worth, national identity and civic responsibility; to respect equality and fairness in dealings with all people; to appreciate diversity and inclusion; to possess global perspectives; and to promote world peace and sustainable development.

2. Education Landscape of Hong Kong

2.1 Youth Development and Education

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, safeguards the basic human rights of children, which include, among others, the right to the development of their full physical and mental potential. The Convention came into force in Hong Kong in 1994 (Home Affairs Bureau of Hong Kong, 2005).

Under Articles 28 and 29 of the Convention, the child has the right to education in order to develop his or her personality, talents and abilities to the fullest, develop respect for human rights, respect for others, respect for the natural environment and a sense of responsibility.

The Hong Kong government fully supports the Convention through various education services and policies. It has provided, since 2007, subsidies for pre-primary (kindergarten) education. In 2008, on top of 6 years of education at primary and 3 years of education at junior secondary level, mandatory universal basic education was further extended to cover senior secondary education through the public sector primary and secondary schools. Students may articulate to four-year undergraduate programmes at local universities. Alternative pathways include vocational education and training, with the Vocational Training Council (VTC) being the major provider (Home Affairs Bureau of Hong Kong, 2005).

Education authorities have followed up on recommendations by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child with the adoption of the following policies:

- reducing competition by abolishing the Academic Aptitude Test in primary school and reducing student bandings for allocation of Secondary 1 places from five to three (2000);

- lessening result-oriented pressure through life-wide learning policies (2001); - fine-tuning of medium of instruction for secondary schools (2010)

Additional resources from the education authorities in Hong Kong include:
 - teacher training and resources for students with special education needs
 - school placement and educational support services for new students from mainland China - boundary crossing services for students residing in China
 - additional grant for "designated schools" to support non-Chinese speaking students

2.2 Youth Development

Various initiatives to promote government and non-governmental cooperation are also in operation. The Commission on Youth, set up in 1990, remained the main advisory body for youth development until its restructuration in 2018 as the Youth Development Commission (YDC) chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration. The Commission coordinates policies relating to young people, which includes youth education.

Another instrument to promote youth development was the Charter for Youth, drawn up in 1993. The Charter enunciates the principles of youth development and provides a point of reference for policy makers, youth service providers and others involved (Commission on Youth, 1992).

Recently, YDC has established a Youth Development Blueprint, a detailed plan with actions, implementation measures, events and activities to bond and connect youths, as well as to provide opportunities for students to enrich their experience and broaden their horizons. Some major projects include the Youth Festival, the Youth Development Fund and the Youth Ambassador Programme.

The Vision and Guiding Principles of the Blueprint is to 1) Nurture a new generation of young people equipped with global perspective, an aspiring mind-set and positive thinking with an affection for our country and Hong Kong; and 2)Provide young people with an enabling environment to cherish hope for the future and strive for continuous growth, so that they can unleash their full potential in society and contribute to Hong Kong, our country and the world.

2.3 Non-Formal Education

Non-Formal Education was first mentioned by government agencies in 1999, when the Education Committee considered non-formal education as an integral part of the education system in their consultation paper on a proposed education reform (Education Commission, 1999).

However, no policy or guideline has so far been formulated by education authorities of Hong Kong to acknowledge non-formal education work in the community. The government often refers to non-formal education as a means to foster youth development. In the most recent Policy Address delivered in October 2018, the Chief Executive pledged to "work with different stakeholders, including uniformed groups and other NGOs involved in youth development, to provide young people with appropriate non-formal education and training. We will also make use of the Youth Square and the Civic Education Resource Centre to enhance youth development and promote civic education outside school." (Chief Executive's Office, 2018)

In fact, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, instead of education authorities, is responsible for providing recurrent subvention to uniformed groups and other NGOs rendering non-formal education and training programmes for young people. The groups under subvention are: -

1. Scout Association of Hong Kong

2. The Hong Kong Girl Guides Association

3. Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps

4. Hong Kong Sea Cadet Corps

5. Hong Kong Adventure Corps

6. Hong Kong Red Cross

7. Hong Kong St. John Ambulance Brigade Youth Command

8. The Boys' Brigade, Hong Kong

9. The Girls' Brigade Hong Kong

10. Hong Kong Road Safety Association (Hong Kong Road Safety Patrol)

11. Association of Hong Kong Flag-guards

12. The Hong Kong Award for Young People

13. Agency for Volunteer Service

At about the same time, the "Big 6" (World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, World Young Women's Christian Association, World Organization of the Scout Movement, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and International Award Association) published a statement entitled "The education of young people: A statement at the dawn of the 21st century" in 1998. This was also the first time these organizations acknowledged their role in non- formal education.

Following up on the statement, the six respective local bodies organized a seminar on non-formal education in the same year and pledged to continue serving the educational needs of the youth, as well as calling on other organizations and groups to deliver non-formal education to reaffirm the principles.

3. Education for a Sustainable Future (Values Education Curriculum Framework)

3.1 Introduction
Values Education is an essential element of whole-person education, which aims at fostering students' proper values and attitudes through various Key Learning Areas/subjects and the provision of relevant learning experiences. On this ground, it is to develop students' ability to identify the values embedded, give objective analysis and make reasonable judgement on different issues they may encounter at different developmental stages so that they could take proper action to deal with challenges in their future life.

To cope with the directional recommendation on according a higher priority to values education put forward in the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum Final Report (2020), the Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version) was prepared by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC), to provide schools with suggestions and exemplars for the planning of their school-based values education curriculum, within and beyond the classroom, in order to cultivate students' positive values and attitudes from an early age, in preparation for the challenges they may face in their studies, in their daily life and as they grow up.

Taking cultivation of Proper values and attitudes as the direction, schools are encouraged to make use of everyday life events to strengthen the coordination of learning activities, and enhance the connection, among various cross-curricular domains in values education, including moral education, civic education, national education (including Constitution, Basic Law and national security education), anti-drug education, life education, sex education, media and information literacy education, education for sustainable development, human rights education under the legal framework, etc. so as to provide students with an all-round learning experience conducive to their whole-person development.

3.2 Ten Priority Values and Attitudes
In light of this scheme, the CDC has established ten priority values and attitudes recommended to be introduced into the curriculum, namely Perseverance, Respect for others, Responsibility, National Identity, Commitment, Integrity, Care for Others, Law-abidingness, Empathy and Diligence.

(i) Perseverance: Students are encouraged to set goals and prepare for the future. During the process, they should learn to think positively and build up the courage to overcome difficulties and obstacles they may face along the way. Throughout their school life, they should develop a mindset to not give up easily no matter what happens, in order to truly achieve "continuous self-improvement". They should embrace difficulties and changes in their studies and life with a serious and positive attitude.

(ii) Respect for others: Chinese culture places great emphasis on ethical relationships. At the family level, emphasis is on mutual respect, so that couples can be loving and respectful, fathers are kind and sons are filial, and brothers and sisters are harmonious. In a diverse society like Hong Kong, it is key to train students to respect others and practice "harmony without diversity". In daily life, whether at home, school or online, they should be able to accept and respect different opinions, and establish peaceful and friendly relationships with others. Ultimately, it should promote social

harmony and inclusion through enhancing their social skills, strengthening their connections with others, and establishing good interpersonal relationships.

(iii) Responsibility: Students should understand that they must do their part to cultivate their moral character and develop their own strengths despite the circumstances, so as to achieve the ancient Chinese saying of "the poor will be good for themselves, and the rich will be good for the world." No matter your role or position on the social ladder, one should do one's best to fulfill one's responsibilities, live up to one's entrustment, and truly achieve "self-cultivation, family harmony, state governance, and world peace."

(iv) National Identity: Hong Kong is an inseparable part of China, and only when you have a country do you truly have a home. Therefore, cultivating students' national identity is an important mission of the school curriculum and is also the school's due responsibility. As the country continues to develop, deepening students' understanding of the Constitution, the Basic Law, national security, "one country, two systems" and national development, as well as their identification with Chinese culture is essential. The curriculum should establish and consolidate students' identity as a member of the country, to allow students to gradually contribute to the overall well-being of the society and the country.

(v) Commitment: Students should not only fulfill their own responsibilities, but should also actively strive for excellence. Moreover one should also take the initiative to help improve public welfare, so as to achieve Fan Zhongyan's vision of "worry about the world's worries first, and be happy after the world's happiness"; even when one makes mistakes, one should dare to admit them and pull oneself back on the correct path.

(vi) Integrity: A kind of personal cultivation and asset. Without integrity, there is no way to establish any principle. Students should be encouraged to keep their promises, and live up to what they say. On a personal level, one should be able to face oneself without any regret or shame, while also able to build mutual trust and develop good relationships on an interpersonal level.

(vii) Care for Others: To use care and love to understand other people's situations and needs. Students should be nurtured to be caring, to be able to get along with family members, teachers and friends with a cordial and caring attitude. They should also be aware and care for the wellbeing of the disadvantaged groups in society, and even learn to care for other stakeholders living in our world, like to prevent and eliminate bullying and harming of animals, and help form a caring campus and a harmonious society.

(viii) Law-abidingness: To establish a sense of community, to understand the basic responsibility of obeying laws and regulations as a citizen, so as to protect the public interests and promote harmonious coexistence in society. Law-abiding also means self-discipline and prudence, which is the restraint of personal behavior. Internalization becomes part of the values, rather than just behavioral compliance with regulations to avoid punishment. We must cultivate students' positive values and attitudes as norms of behavior from an early age. Only when everyone strictly adheres to them can our society be stable.

(ix) Empathy: Students should uphold "compassion" towards all beings, to be able to think in other's shoes and consider different perspectives in order to reflect the core idea of Confucianism - "benevolence". It also allows them to appreciate the strengths of others, accept their

shortcomings, understand others' behaviors and thoughts to create a harmonious and caring society.

(x) Diligence: After mastering knowledge and understanding the principles, one must also learn how to revise and practice in daily life, so that what one has learned will not just be theory. Diligence does not emphasize the need to work continuously, but encourages students to put what they have learned into action through life; to cultivate the virtue of hard work through personal experience; to become diligent, actively helping others; to become courageous in accepting responsibility, and at the same time work hard for the well-being of themselves, their families, the community, the country and the world, to ultimately become the future pillars of society.

3.3 Implementation of Ten Priority Values through Education
This curriculum structure covers the four learning stages of primary and secondary schools from Primary 1 to Secondary 6, providing a comprehensive, systematic and sustainable curriculum structure. Schools are encouraged to build on this framework and plan relevant courses and learning activities to achieve the learning objectives of values education.

Each learning stage covers five areas of life, namely: "Individual", "Family", "School", "Social" and "Society, Country and World". Each area of life includes "suggestions on students' learning expectations" and relevant "positive values and attitudes". It is emphasized that the five areas of life cannot and should not be treated separately. The learning of different areas should be closely related, and the positive values and attitudes learned should be applied across different life domains.

3.3.1 First Learning Stage (Primary 1 to 3)
Students at this stage only have some abstract, incomplete moral concepts (such as self-discipline, temperance, responsibility, and self-care in personal life). In line with their physical growth, they will actively strive for more opportunities of personal autonomy and self-care. This is to help them learn to take care of and protect themselves. Due to the new environment in which they have just entered, they will rely more on the guidance of others to solve their learning difficulties and build up social circles.

In terms of establishing moral concepts and positive values, children at this stage are more likely to obey and follow the requirements of parents and teachers. It is an ideal time to cultivate good character, healthy living habits, proper manners and the importance of obeying laws and regulations.

3.3.2 Second Learning Stage (Primary 4 to 6)
Students at this stage value their studies and hope to be recognized and appreciated by others; if their academic performance is not satisfactory, they will doubt their competence in other aspects as well and develop a sense of inferiority. Furthermore, some students may begin to enter adolescence. In addition to having volatile emotions, they will also begin to become curious about heterosexual interactions and "sex", thus requiring additional guidance.

In terms of establishing moral concepts and positive values, students at this stage all desire recognition, no matter as a child or as a student. Therefore, they will become very active in taking

up roles to serve their fellow classmates and the school, seeing it as an indicator of recognition from others.

3.3.3 Third Learning Stage (Secondary 1 to 3)
Students at this stage begin to develop their own values without the influence of their parents and seniors. They often have some unique views and tend to have conflicts with their families and teachers. At this stage of adolescence, peers exert significant influence; in order to gain recognition, it is easy for adolescents to accept and follow their friends' values and behaviors.

During the establishment of positive values, they begin to understand the importance of law in maintaining social order, and also begin to connect abstract concepts (such as family roles, social responsibilities, national well-being, environmental conservation, and life values) and themselves, and hope for inspiration and guidance in these fields.

3.3.4 Fourth Learning Stage (Secondary 4 to 6)
Students at this stage have to face important life events such as public examinations, school selection, and employment decisions. They begin to plan for their future, and will require opinion and support from others. It is also an important stage of transition to adulthood, as they have a strengthened sense of responsibility and begin to develop leadership skills.

At the same time, as their understanding of society increases, they often hold an open attitude towards personal and social issues. They will understand how to identify the authenticity of information collected from different channels, and know how to make decisions that are legal, reasonable and emotional. Value judgment thus becomes more and more important. Families, schools and the society in general creates a higher expectation on students as they mature, prompting them to think about taking up more roles and responsibilities.

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Scouts Versus Gender Discrimination: An Ongoing Fight

Mellissa El Feghali

Scouts Versus Gender Discrimination: An Ongoing Fight

Melissa El Feghali

Abstract

One of the largest youth movements in the world, the Scout Movement can play an important part in the fight against gender discrimination. This starts with raising awareness about gender inequality among its 50 million members. To date, scouts have played a major role in breaking gender norms. This work includes awareness raising and educational initiatives, notably in the Middle East and North Africa region. This paper reviews these initiatives and simultaneously points to future actions that the Scout Movement can take to strengthen its approach to gender equality.

The scout movement is a voluntary non-political movement dedicated to the education of the youth. It gives them the opportunity to further develop their potential and skills on different levels, whether it be emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, or physical. It helps them become responsible young global citizens and active members of their local, national, and international communities. The World Organization of the Scout Movement, known as the WOSM or World scouting, is the organization currently governing the scout movement at the world level. It is an independent, non-political, non-governmental organization, open to everybody regardless of their gender, origin, race, or ethnicity. Being one of the largest youth movements in the world, with more than 40 million members, scouting can be a great asset to fighting gender discrimination and biases through its diverse programs, events, activities, projects, and initiatives. Scouts can become agents of positive change and in turn, inspire others to act as well. More specifically, scouts can contribute to major changes in regions where it is most needed, such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This paper will discuss how scouting has played an important role in raising awareness on gender issues and in fighting gender discrimination in the MENA region.

Indeed, on International Women's Day, the WOSM asked scouts across the world how can they step it up for gender as scouts (What is gender equality? How can you as a Scout #StepItUp4Gender, 2016). One of the people who was interviewed, May Abdelhadi, a scout leader at the Sadaqa Palestinian Girl Guides Group, said that as scouts, it is our role to create a safe and equal environment for everyone to participate in. Additionally, she stated that as scout leaders educate their members about diversity, rights, and respect, they are contributing to the support and empowerment of marginalized groups through the future projects and community services that their members will plan. Recently, the WOSM has been invested in organizing gender-related events in the MENA region. In fact, it held its first Women and Girls Empowerment workshop in the Arab Region; the four-day event took place in Saudi Arabia (Arab Scout Region join forces to empower women and girls through Scouting, 2019). The main purpose of this workshop was to support National Scout Organizations (NSOs) from Arab countries in educating boys and girls on the importance of women in scouting. Men and women worked together by sharing ideas on how to enhance the inclusion and engagement of women and girls in scouting. Through this event, it was affirmed that Scouts across the region are putting women's and girls' empowerment at the top of their agendas by designing new action plans and agreeing to move forward as more unified and equal communities. A scout leader from Egypt, Hoda El Agaty, reported that "the workshop was a great success on many levels, one of them was witnessing the constructive dialogue and willingness of men to empower women and girls and achieve equal opportunities for them." (Arab Scout Region join forces to empower women and girls through Scouting, 2019). Additionally, Dr. Abdullah bin Sulaiman Al Fahad, vice-president of the Saudi Arabian Scout Association, stated during the event that scouting is about developing young people's capacities and that the most important skills in life are needed by both men and women to better contribute to society (Arab Scout Region join forces to empower women and girls through Scouting, 2019).

Figure 1. Adapted from *Arab Scout Region join forces to empower women and girls through Scouting*, 2019, World Scouting. https://www.scout.org/es/node/547097

Figure 2. Adapted from Arab Scout Region join forces to empower women and girls through Scouting, 2019, World Scouting. https://www.scout.org/es/node/547097

Scouting has and is still positively influencing youth and spreading awareness on issues of gender equality and the important role of women in the community. Abeer Hamed Baalousha, a scout leader from Saudi Arabia, talks about the great impact that scouting has on women and girls as she has personally witnessed and experienced it (للكشافة الهام الدور في تنمية الفتيات والشابات في المملكة العربية السعودية, 2020). She mentioned the several opportunities made available for girls in Saudi Arabia through the scout movement and emphasized the important role played by scouting during the COVID-19 pandemic in developing young girls' skills. Girls have acquired the true meaning of service, volunteering, helping their community in times of crisis, and making their own decisions according to their own abilities and preferences. Moreover, the scout movement has made the world's largest coordinated youth contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), so far, through its initiative "Scouts for SDGs" (Scouts for SDGs, 2018). An official website is available online for anyone who wants to learn more about the SDGs and the contributions made by Scouts toward achieving those goals. SDG Number 5, Gender Equality, has a section with a to-do list, an information section to know more about this goal, and projects from around the world that are done by scouts to attain this goal (Scouts for SDGs, 2018).

Despite the numerous efforts of the scout movement in the MENA region to fight gender discriminations, the WOSM and NSOs have only just scratched the surface. Countless suggestions and potential solutions can be implemented to strengthen this commitment to gender equality. For example, it is important to make global scouting resources available to scouts in the MENA region. With the development of technology, sharing ideas and projects online has become easier and more efficient. For example, the WOSM has developed a category on its official website dedicated to sharing projects and initiatives done by scouts across the world. However, scouting groups in the Arab region are often not aware that this information exists. Thus, promoting this official World Scouting website to all members of the organization is a first simple, yet crucial step to be done in the MENA region. NSOs from the MENA region are not very active or present among the projects being posted on this website; this does not necessarily indicate that no action is being taken by them, but rather that they might not be aware of certain initiatives and opportunities made available to them by the WOSM.

It is true that scouting is commonly conceptualized as primarily learning how to care for the environment and how to problem-solve and survive in difficult circumstances. But scouts are taught much more than that: they learn valuable skills in order to make the world a better place. In fact, a major step towards achieving this goal was taken at the 41st World Scout Conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, where a new partnership with UN Women's HeForShe initiative was created through which millions of scouts will strive for a more gender-equal world (HeForShe partners with the Scout Movement to advance gender equality, 2017). The first output of this partnership completed in the MENA region was the implementation of the HeForShe Action Kit that was developed by the UN Women and WOSM for scout leaders. This kit includes a series of activities designed to get young people of all ages to think about gender equality and what they can do about it. Additionally, a website dedicated to this partnership was developed by the WOSM and includes the kit and several other steps to be taken to start one's journey as part of the initiative (#HeForShe, n.d.).

During an international scouting event, the Roverway 2018, scouts were interviewed about gender equality and the scout movement. Men rovers—male scouts aged 18 to 25—were asked about why men and boys should stand up for gender equality. Overall, the answers were very similar and highlighted similar conclusions: the lack of gender equality hurts everyone, not just women and girls, and the effort to fight gender inequality should not be one-sided but rather a joint effort from all genders (World Scouting, 2018). This shows that men and boys in scouting are willing to take part in the fight against gender discrimination and that they acknowledge the importance of their involvement in this opposition. As a first step, men and boys in scouting can partner up with activists from the MENA region and learn from them. For example, Laith Abu Taleb, a young activist in Jordan, redefined masculinity by leading workshops throughout his country and has mobilized more than 22,000 HeForShe commitments (HeForShe, 2016). In Jordan, many youths would like to participate in the HeForShe movement but are not capable to do so because their parents would not allow them to interact with people of the opposite sex. As a man, Laith Abu Taleb stated that his role is to deconstruct the stereotypes that are present in small local circles. Scouts in the MENA region can contribute to the HeForShe initiative by partnering up with

people like Laith and encouraging scout members to join the movement first, to encourage others to join after.

NSOs and local scout groups in the MENA region can also implement ideas from previously completed HeForShe projects, such as the bicycle rally in India. The main idea behind this event was to create a symbolic image of gender inequality. Toward that end, they used a picture of a bicycle to represent the two genders in harmony and used the theme "You are not stuck in traffic, you are traffic." Another interesting campaign that scouts in the MENA region can participate in is the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes campaign, an international men's march to stop rape, sexual assault, and gender violence. This event would be a great contribution from scout boys and men to the fight against gender violence and discrimination. Similarly, MENA NSOs and local scout groups can participate in global scout campaigns, such as the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) campaign "STOP THE VIOLENCE" to end violence against women and girls. As part of this campaign, scouts have been tackling violence in their communities through advocacy, education, awareness raising, community action, and research. A website is available and includes past projects made by scouts from all around the world that can be used as a source of inspiration for future actions.

All the actions that were taken and are currently being taken by the WOSM and by NSOs and local groups in the MENA region are not to be discarded, but before seeking to make change and influence others and fight gender discrimination one should start with oneself. In other words, the scout organizations from all around the world should seek to fight gender discrimination inside their organizations before extending their cause to their local, national or international communities. But the question is, are these activities gender balanced? Is there really equality between boys and girls in Scouting? For this reason, the WOSM, in partnership with the Swedish Guide and Scout Association, has published a handbook entitled "Him 'n Her – A Handbook on Scouting and Equal Opportunity for Boys and Girls". This book is written with the firm conviction that Scouting has not yet come that far down the road towards gender equality however, reading this book will be a step towards this.

One example of this gender imbalance in scout programming worldwide is the fact that today there are still two competing organizations in the scout movements, WOSM and WAGGS (The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts): the WOSM has been gradually including girls, meanwhile the WAGGS is restricted to girls, only. Gender inequality is rampant in the Boys and Girl Scouts of America organizations as well; there is an obvious "gender-ization" of skills that are learned with the scouts (McGowan, 2013). Girl Scouts earn badges based on creativity and domestic skills, while Boy Scouts earn merits that involve more rugged and outdoor activities. It is the existence of these kinds of gender separation practices that limits young members' abilities to overcome societal gender norms. In Europe, scouting organizations have started to adopt the concept of mixed troops and patrols where boys and girls are included in the same activities rather than being separated based on gender. Contrarily, countries in the MENA region still divide their members based on age and sex and often have restrictive rules regarding direct interactions of the genders in activities or camps. Even if the camp includes all the members at once, the activities are still divided. Furthermore, in certain scout groups in the MENA region, gender stereotypes can be seen through the official uniform that is worn by the members at official events and ceremonies. While boys can wear pants or shorts with regular shoes, girls have to wear skirts and tie their hair (Figures 3 and 4).
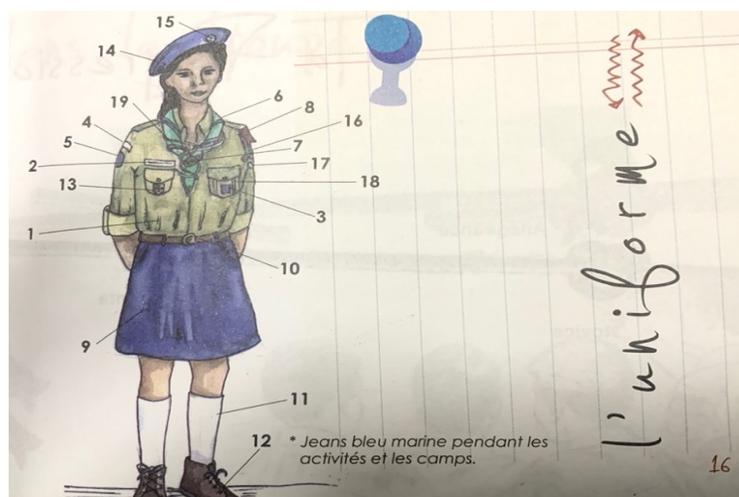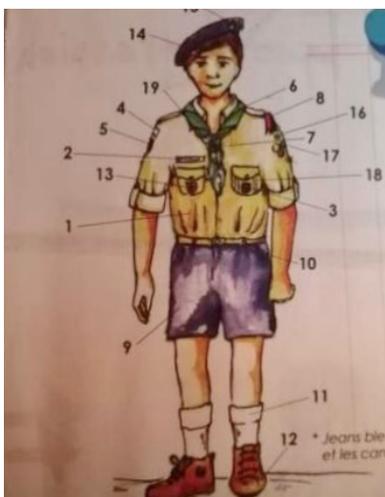

Figure 3, Figure 4. Adapted from "L'uniforme", 2012, Kabestan, 2, p.16. Copyright 2012 by Association des Scouts De l'Indépendance

Certain countries replicate their specific gender discriminatory practices at international events organized by the WOSM such as the World Scout Jamboree or the World Scout Moot. NSOs request special patrols that are girls-only and require no interaction with the opposite sex in activities that mainly focus on cross-culture communication and inclusion, which is quite ironic. In fact, Saudi girl scouts did not participate in the World Scout Jamboree until the 24th Jamboree held in West Virginia in 2019 (Saudi girl scouts attend 24th US Jamboree, 2019).

Figure 5. Adapted from Saudi girl scouts attend 24th US jamboree, 2019.

Finally, in a study done on scouts in Russia, Slovakia, Portugal, and Denmark, it was shown that even though leaders try to divide the tasks to include both boys and girls in activities, gender finds a way to structure the divisions of work and duties: "boys are glad to have girls in their teams as girls prepare meals, while boys deal with woodwork and hard jobs." (Nielson, 2002, p. 56). Also, it was noticed that girls get attention when they did not work well enough or did not take care of their health and are often perceived as fragile beings compared to boy scouts (Nielson, 2002). More attention should be given to the non-stereotypical and individual desires of the young members of the scout movement: the girls who love sports and physical challenges and the boys who love crafting activities and cooking meals. Both boys and girls feel restricted by the other gender in the work tasks that they are allowed to do. Boys want to cook more; girls want to so some of the more tough or exciting tasks.

Making scouting more gender-equitable does not imply that the main concept of activities should be changed. What should be worked on, however, is the gender culture and expectations surrounding these basic activities. This means that more attention should be paid to three aspects in the practice of scouting: the perceived dichotomy or separation between activities and relationships, the hierarchy between activities and relationships, and the underrating of girls' competence in activities. As long as these aspects are not addressed, the girls will remain 'the second sex' in scouting, left to negotiate their gender on unequal terms with the boys. The scout movement is crucial to help fight gender discriminations, stereotypes and biases through the youth which are the future leaders who will shape a better world. Nonetheless, being aware of one's own problems and fixing them is an essential first step, followed by actions to be taken on and for others in our communities.

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Discussing whether Scout education should be incorporated into Taiwan's vocational education curriculum

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Abstract

Scout education has nurtured many prominent individuals, from the first astronaut to walk on the moon, Neil Armstrong, to Nobel Prize winner Peter Agre. Scout education has indeed shown significant effectiveness in career planning and life skills development. In Taiwan, the curriculum guidelines for the 12-Year basic education incorporate Scout education into the junior high school learning stage, aiming not only to cultivate students' self-management and interpersonal skills but also to address the importance of respecting life and sustaining the environment. Scout education promotes holistic development, with different age groups exploring various topics and acquiring knowledge in different domains. However, a review of the literature by researchers revealed that technical high schools' integrated domains only include the introduction to law and environmental science due to their need to prepare students for the workplace. Therefore, the researchers propose the following recommendation: to integrate Scout education into the Comprehensive Domain of the curriculum guidelines for the 12-Year basic education for vocational senior high school in Taiwan.

Keywords: Scout education, Curriculum Guidelines for the 12-Year Basic Education, Vocational Senior High School, The Domain of Integrative Activities

1. Introduction

The rise of the Scouting movement can be traced back to the early 20th century when young people in the United Kingdom were influenced by Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting, and his 1908 book "Scouting for Boys." This book described the attire and organization of Scouts and provided instructions on how to make Scout uniforms. Inspired by this, young people spontaneously formed groups and teams, and this grassroots initiative laid the foundation for the Scouting movement, which has

continued for over a century. Scouting is a comprehensive educational experience that not only helps children develop physical, mental, and social skills but also cultivates their character, making them responsible and ethical citizens (Chen, 2017).

In Taiwan's education system, going back to the nine-year integrated curriculum or the curriculum guidelines for the 12-Year basic education, there is an emphasis on how to cultivate students into good citizens. The expectation is that through education, students should not only acquire subject knowledge and skills but should also cultivate a sense of social responsibility, moral values, and awareness of civic engagement. (Ministry of Education, 2005).

To achieve the goals of the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines, which emphasize the concepts of *taking initiative*, *engaging in interaction*, and *seeking the common good* the curriculum objectives include four main goals: inspiring the potential of life, nurturing life skills, promoting career development, and fostering civic responsibility. However, the Scouts' programs that contribute to the cultivation of various essential qualities and skills are currently limited to the junior high school stage within the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines. This article will briefly discuss the significance of the Scouts' programs within the curriculum, conduct a comparison and analysis of the Scouts' movement in relation to the curriculum, and conclude with recommendations.

2. The Position and Relationship of Scout Programs within the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines

The design philosophy of the 12-Year Basic National Education Curriculum Guidelines is envisioned as *developing talent in every student—nurture by nature, and promoting life-long learning*. This vision, while considering individual needs, respecting cultural and ethnic diversity, and caring for marginalized groups, places the individual's life at the core. Through personalized education, it aims to inspire students to experience the joy of life, cultivate self-confidence, enhance the desire for learning, and foster the courage to innovate. Simultaneously, it encourages taking on social responsibility, showcasing the wisdom of coexistence, and becoming adaptable lifelong learners with social adaptability, ultimately promoting the improvement of individual and societal life and well-being. The curriculum places "core competencies" as its primary learning elements, emphasizing the integration of learning with life, and through practical implementation, it highlights the holistic development of learners.

The core competencies are divided into three dimensions: These competences are divided into three broad dimensions, *namely, spontaneity, communication and interaction, and social participation* These three dimensions are further subdivided into

nine categories: Each dimension involves three items. Specifically, spontaneity entails physical and mental wellness and self-advancement; logical thinking and problem solving; and planning, execution, innovation and adaptation. Communication and interaction entails semiotics and expression; information and technology literacy and media literacy; and artistic appreciation and aesthetic literacy. Finally, social participation entails moral praxis and citizenship; interpersonal relationships and teamwork; and cultural and global understanding (Ministry of Education, 2013). Figure 1 illustrates the main concept of the core competencies stressed in 12-year Basic Education.
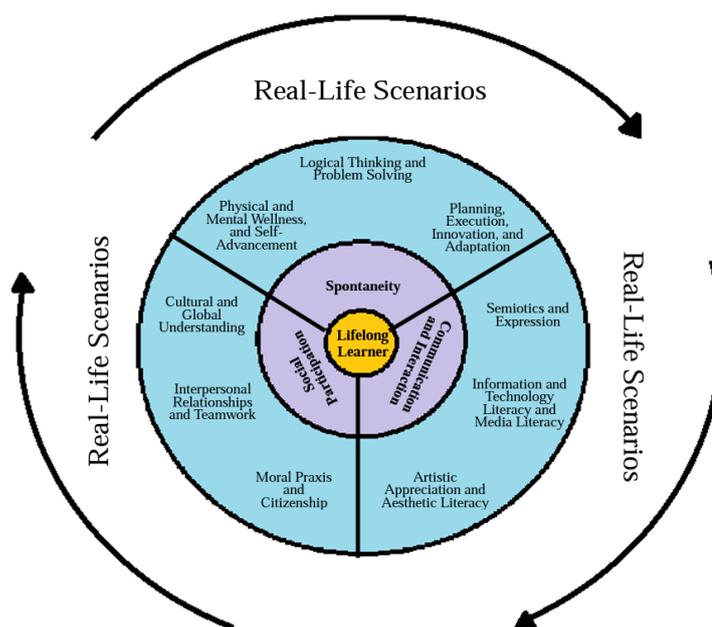
Figure 1. Wheel-in-action diagram of core competencies

According to the concept of whole-person education, to adapt to the constant development of knowledge structures, societal changes, knowledge innovation, and learning psychology, the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum is organized into eight main domains, including *Mandarin, English, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Studies, Arts, Technology, Integrated Activities, and Health & Physical Education*. This framework provides students with diverse and interconnected learning experiences, cultivating the essential competencies required for modern citizens and fostering a lifelong learning capability.

To cater to students' physical and mental development as well as their specialized knowledge differentiation at various educational stages, Scout education is categorized within the scope of *The Domain of Integrative Activities*. Through an analysis of the "Integrated Activities Field Curriculum Guidelines" published by the Ministry of Education, its framework design considers the *life skills* component of comprehensive education in primary and secondary schools. It also considers students' learning

development and adaptive guidance, adopting a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary integrated curriculum design to guide students in thinking about the content of their learning from different knowledge perspectives.

The curriculum objectives of *The Domain of Integrative Activities* are focused on nurturing students' abilities to explore value, integrate experiences, and practice innovation. These objectives are further detailed into three points: promoting self and career development, implementing life management and innovation, and incorporating social and environmental concerns. In accordance with these objectives, subject areas, required courses, and elective credits are established for primary and secondary schools,

upper senior high schools, and vocational senior high schools, see Table 1 for details。

Table 1 Educational Stages and Subject Names

Educational Stages	Subject Names		Description
Elementary School	Integrative Activities		NA
Junior High School	Integrative Activities		home economics, scouting, and counseling
Upper Secondary School	Integrative Activities	Required	Life Education、Career Planning、Home Economics
		Elective	Thinking: The Foundation of Wisdom, Future Imagination and Career Paths and Innovative Life and Family
Vocational Senior High School	Integrative Activities		Life Education、Career Planning、Home Economics、 Law and Life、Introduction to Environmental Science
	Technology		Living Technology, Information Technology

Note: The Domain of Integrative Activities

Based on researchers' findings, Scout education is only included in the curriculum for junior high schools, up to the next educational stage of regular and vocational senior high schools, where the focus shifts to subjects like career planning and life education. However, the qualities cultivated through the Scout movement are closely related to various dimensions of competency-based learning. They can help students achieve comprehensive growth in character, social skills, citizenship, environmental awareness, and learning, contributing to their ability to adapt to different situations and challenges and achieve success in various aspects of life. Scout education goes beyond academic knowledge and emphasizes holistic personal development and social participation, all of which are core elements of competency-based learning.

3. Comparing Scout Movement with Scout Competencies in the Integrated Domain

From the introduction in the second section, it can be inferred that the concept of lifelong learning emphasized in the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines is closely related to the objectives of the Scout Movement. However, whether the essential qualities cultivated by the Scout Movement align with the core competencies expected to be fostered by the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines will be explained in the third section.

According to the World Organization of the Scout Movement's published World Scout Development Strategy document, the Scout movement is defined as an educational activity that achieves its goals through entertainment and leisure. It aims to provide activities designed for youth of all ages, connecting individuals to society and making a positive contribution to it (The General Association of the Scouts of China, 1994).

As for the detailed definition of the Scout Movement, in the book "Scouting Round the World" published by the World Organization of the Scout Movement in 1990, it explores the objectives, principles, and fundamental spirit of the Scout Movement, including nine defining characteristics: providing life education, having educational purposes, serving as an educational and mentoring force, being a non-political or government organization, aiding youth development and improving communication, having an international scope, being non-discriminatory, promoting a code of living, and offering motivational programs. It also elaborates on the important qualities cultivated by the Scout Movement. see Table 2 for details.

Table 2 Qualities Cultivated by the Scout Movement

Qualities	Description
Leadership skills	Learning how to organize and lead teams.
Teamwork	Learning how to collaborate and assist within a team.
Character and moral values	Learning the importance of moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and kindness.
Outdoor survival skills	Acquiring survival and safety skills like camp construction, navigation, and fire-making techniques.
Self-directed learning	Learning to set personal goals, pursue one's interests and passions, and practice self-management.
Social skills	Building friendships, improving communication skills, and learning how to interact with people of different age groups.
Environmental	Learning to protect the natural environment and fostering

awareness	environmental awareness.
Critical thinking and Problem-solving	Learning to protect the natural environment and fostering environmental awareness.

Note: Researcher's self-compiled

According to *The Domain of Integrative Activities* researchers have categorized the Scout competencies into the following twelve categories, as shown in Table 3. Both aim to emphasize how to apply the Scout spirit to learn life skills, integrate into community life, and become lifelong learners as responsible citizens.

Table 3 12 Categories of Scout Literacies

Scout Literacy	Description
Self-exploration	Through participation in various activities, explore and understand one's abilities, interests, thoughts, and emotions.
Self-management	Become aware of and identify personal emotions and stress, explore one's learning style, and develop and implement learning plans to cultivate a self-managing and responsible attitude.
Respect for life	Cultivate respect and appreciation for one's own and others' lives through observing and sharing insights into the processes of life. Gain an understanding of the true meaning of life and the value of existence.
Life management	Learn and demonstrate personal life skills through Scouting, including effective time and money management, understanding and respecting differences between genders, and understanding interpersonal relationships and family dynamics.
Adaptation and innovation in life	Engage in family affairs, use creativity to enrich life, promote interaction and communication among family members, and actively face adversity and problem-solving.
Resource utilization and development	Collect and analyze various resources, make accurate assessments, and effectively utilize or develop them to assist oneself and others in problem-solving.
Interpersonal interaction	Participation in group activities helps in learning group dynamics, fostering good interpersonal relationships, and developing effective communication skills.
Social concern and service	Participate in service activities and experience their significance, cultivate a sense of care for others, and strengthen the willingness to participate in community service.
Respect for diversity	Participation in cultural activities demonstrates an understanding of diversity, learning to respect and care for different ethnic

	groups, and enhances the ability to adapt to a diverse society.
Crisis recognition and handling	Identify potential hazards in the living environment, utilize resources to devise the most appropriate solutions to ensure one's and others' safety.
Outdoor living	Participate in and plan outdoor activities, fostering an appreciation and respect for the natural and cultural environment, enhancing wilderness living skills, and learning to harmoniously coexist with nature.
Environmental protection	Cultivate care for the interaction between humanity and the environment through exploration, experience, and appreciation of the relationships between humans and the environment. Learn to develop strategies and actions for protection and improvement to promote environmental sustainability.

Note: The Domain of Integrative Activities

4. Analysis of the Scout Movement and Technical High School Curriculum

The General Association of the Scouts of China (Taiwan) have established progression standards for Scouts at different stages, with the age group of 14 to 18 years old Scouts coinciding with regular and technical senior high school students in Taiwan. However, the curriculum guidelines for the Integrated Activities Domain in technical senior high schools focus on subjects such as Life Education, Career Planning, Home Economics, Law and Life, and Introduction to Environmental Science, rather than adopting the curriculum of Scout education. Therefore, the researchers will compare the learning objectives of the Integrated Activities Domain curriculum guidelines with the Scout competencies to analyze whether there are differences in the curriculum goals.

As indicated by The Domain of Integrative Activities in Technical Senior High Schools (implemented in 2019), the focus of each department's learning is summarized as follows:

(1) Life Education

The goal of Life Education is to develop a profound belief in one's own life through the choice of values, cultivate the ability for philosophical thinking, and put life values into practice. The learning domains encompass five major categories: Philosophical thinking, Exploration of anthropology, Ultimate concern, Value speculation, and Spiritual cultivation.

(2) Career Planning

The primary learning content of Career Planning includes in-depth analysis and integration of individual traits, cultivation of career interests and leisure life

skills, and the establishment of connections between the developmental tasks of various life stages to develop the ability for career transitions and adaptations. The curriculum focuses on the following eight categories: Growth process and career development, Self-awareness and integration, Self-regulation and attitude cultivation, Life challenges and adaptation, educational development and occupational choice, Career life and social needs, Career assessment and wise decisions, Career action and practice.

(3) Home Economics

The core content of Home Economics education includes interpersonal relationships and love, life management, practical life skills, covering five main categories: Diet, Clothing, Life management, Family, Workplace preparation, and image management. Learning in this domain aims to cultivate students with knowledge of healthy family life, practical life skills, innovative thinking abilities, and to broaden their international perspective, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for both individuals and families.

(4) Law and Life

The "Law and Life" curriculum aims to emphasize the legal issues that technical high school students may encounter in their lives and cultivate their ability to address these issues. The course comprises four main categories: Legal concepts, Public law and life, Private law and life, and Labor relations act and life. These objectives are designed to help students understand their rights, enabling them to proactively apply their knowledge to protect their interests in employment. Additionally, it encourages employers and businesses to comply with national laws and fulfill their social responsibilities.

(5) Introduction to Environmental Science

The course "Introduction to Environmental Science" integrates theoretical knowledge and practical applications, aiming to combine the fundamental theories of environmental science with real-world environmental issues. In addition to imparting basic scientific knowledge, the course is structured around specific environmental problem cases to guide students in critical thinking, exploration, and discussions. The key learning focus of the course includes six main themes: "Effects of environmental issues, Basic concepts of environmental science, Energy and resource management and application, Pollution and waste management, Justice and social responsibility, Environmental ethics and sustainable development." These themes are designed to foster students' concern for environmental issues, promote a sense of justice, and encourage them to engage in actions that support sustainable development.

Based on the literature collected above, the researchers have compiled a

comparison of the learning focus in the comprehensive domain curriculum of technical high schools with the qualities cultivated through the Scout movement. The comparison results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Comparison of Learning Emphasis in the Comprehensive Domain Curriculum and Scout Literacy

School Type	Department	Curriculum Emphasis	Corresponding Scout Competencies
Vocational Senior High School	Life Education	1.Philosophical thinking 2.Exploration of anthropology 3. Ultimate concern 4. Value speculation 5. Spiritual cultivation	1. Respect for life 2. Self-exploration 3. Self-management 4. Life management 5. Social concern and service 6. Respect for diversity
	Career Planning	1. Growth process and career development 2. Self-awareness and integration 3. Self-regulation and attitude cultivation 4. Life challenges and adaptation 5. Educational development and occupational choice 6. Career life and social needs 7. Career assessment and wise decisions 8. Career action and practice	1. Self-exploration 2. Respect for diversity 3. Crisis recognition and handling 4. Resource utilization and development 5. Self-management 6. Life management 7. Interpersonal interaction
	Home Economics	1. Diet 2. Clothing 3. Life management 4. Family 5.Workplace preparation and image management	1.Respect for diversity 2.Adaptation and innovation in life 3.Resource utilization and development 4.Self-exploration

		5.Self-management
		6. Environmental protection
		7. Life management
		8. Interpersonal interaction
		9. Social concern and service
		10. Respect for life
Law and Life	1. Legal concepts 2. Public law and life 3. Private law and life 4. Labor relations act and life	1.Self-management 2.Respect for diversity 3.Adaptation and innovation in life 4.Resource utilization and development
Introduction to Environmental Science	1. Effects of environmental issues 2. Basic concepts of environmental science 3. Energy and resource management and application 4. Pollution and waste management 5. Justice and social responsibility 6. Environmental ethics and sustainable development	1. Environmental protection 2. Social concern and service 3.Respect for diversity 4. Respect for life

Note: Researcher's self-compiled

Based on the above synthesis and analysis, the qualities and competencies cultivated through the Scout movement, in addition to the Scout skill-based curriculum, exhibit a high degree of relevance to the comprehensive domain curriculum developed by academic and technical senior high schools.

5. Conclusion

The Scout movement, which originated from its founder Robert Baden-Powell's first Scout camp on Brownsea Island, United Kingdom in 1907, has now been in existence for over a century. It not only encourages young people to develop their intellectual abilities but also cultivates a spirit of courage and adventure, sparking curiosity towards the unknown world beyond the confines of the classroom. The Scout movement emphasizes learning by doing and the practical application of knowledge, aligning with the philosophies of the renowned American philosopher John Dewey. This interpretation resonates with the principles of experiential learning in vocational education, underlining the importance of students learning through active participation and practical experience rather than solely relying on the transmission of theoretical knowledge. Integrating Scout education into vocational education curriculum design has the potential to meet the needs of students' future careers and real-world applications effectively.

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Building Leaders, Building Well-Being: The Role of Mental Health in Interamerican Leadership Training

Monica Figueroa Arias[1]

Abstract:

This academic paper explores the pivotal intersection of leadership and mental health, with a particular focus on the evolution of the Interamerican Leadership Training Course program. The core objectives of this study are threefold. First, to illuminate the underlying philosophy of care within the program, both for staff and participants, emphasizing its role in promoting mental well-being. Also, the paper seeks to advocate for the integration of mental health as a central component of youth leadership capacity-building processes. By achieving these objectives, this paper aims to shed light on the significance of mental health within leadership education and provide practical tools and insights for developing more mindful and effective leaders.

Introduction

Since 2013, the Inter-American Leadership Course (ILT) has played a pivotal role in shaping the leadership skills of over 600 young individuals, equipping them with essential attributes like teamwork, project management, and effective communication. This remarkable initiative owes its existence to a collaborative effort, receiving support from various donors over the years, including the Global Messengers of Peace Fund and the Interamerican Scout Foundation, among others. Within the framework of the ILT, the primary objective is to nurture the leaders of the upcoming generations, extending this impact beyond the Scout Movement. The ILT seeks to cultivate capabilities that empower individuals to make a meaningful impact in diverse arenas, spanning academic, professional, philanthropic, and the Scout Movement itself.

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In addition to its core programs, the Interamerican Leadership Course (ILT) has successfully launched a subsidiary project known as 'ILT in a Box.' This innovative initiative aims to equip ILT attendees with the necessary tools to replicate the course at a national level. As a result, national leadership courses have sprouted across the continent, nurturing young leaders on an even larger scale. Since its inception in 2016, 'ILT in a Box' has contributed to the formation of approximately 5,000 young leaders throughout the Americas, providing them with essential leadership skills. Notably, several Scout Associations, including those in Guatemala and Ecuador, have embraced this concept and established enduring programs for leadership development.

Furthermore, the Interamerican Leadership Traning (ILT) has served as a beacon of inspiration for leadership development programs in various other regions across the globe. Its success has spurred the creation of similar continental leadership courses, such as the African Leadership Training. The impact of ILT's model has also reverberated in the Asia-Pacific region, where leadership initiatives have been established. Most notably, in June 2023, the ILT's influence reached the Arab Region, where its program served as a source of inspiration to shape the next generation of leaders. This cross-regional dissemination of leadership principles underscores the global significance of the ILT's innovative approach to leadership education.

Evolving Leadership Education: The Journey of the Interamerican Leadership Training in terms of program

From its inception, the Interamerican Leadership Training (ILT) program was grounded in academic concepts, specifically drawing inspiration from the theory of transformational leadership, which promotes an emphasis on empowering beneficiaries with tools to facilitate self-transformation and achieve exceptional outcomes (MacGregor, 2013) Concurrently, a valuable insight emerged as we observed that leaders in the business and finance realms employed multiple highly effective tools. These tools proved to be remarkably useful and relevant for shaping the next generation of leaders in the Interamerican region, contributing to the enrichment and diversification of the ILT program's focus.

After the introduction of the 'ILT in a Box' strategy aimed at fostering national leadership courses, it became evident that a thematic renewal of the Interamerican Leadership Training (ILT) was necessary. Many national courses already covered topics similar to those addressed in the continental course. Additionally, given the ever-changing realities faced by young individuals, the ILT program evolved to create forums for the exchange of knowledge and discussions about the prevalent issues affecting the continent's youth. This adaptation ensured that the ILT program remains current and relevant in addressing the dynamic needs of young leaders across the region.

The 2019 COVID-19 pandemic marked a critical juncture for the ILT project and the evolution of its program. Initially, the physical event had to be canceled, leading to its transformation into a virtual platform in 2021. This shift had a positive outcome, enabling over 400 young participants to engage in the program. Moreover, it presented a compelling opportunity to incorporate crucial themes such as mental health, technological tools for leadership management, and the various forms of persisting violence and strategies to combat them. The pandemic, while challenging, catalyzed important changes in the ILT program, allowing it to remain resilient and responsive to emerging global circumstances.

Prioritizing Mental Health: A Cornerstone of the Inter-American Leadership Course

After the introduction of the mental health dimension into leadership education, a pivotal paradigm shift occurred within the Interamerican Leadership Training (ILT). It became increasingly evident that issues related to anxiety, depression, and stress were surfacing among our participants and staff members. These challenges, which had not been as prevalent in the past, became more pronounced in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the ILT took proactive steps to establish a culture of care that prioritized psychological well-being. This initiative entailed creating dedicated spaces for open conversations and devising effective strategies to bolster the psychological health and resilience not only of the participants who engaged in the post-pandemic in-person course in 2022 but also of the ILT staff. By addressing

these issues head-on, the ILT program aimed to provide a holistic and supportive leadership education experience.

The philosophy of care within the Interamerican Leadership Training (ILT) is centered on fostering the psychological well-being of both participants and staff members. Acknowledging the intensity and breadth of the course, we have instituted a proactive approach to provide personal time for participants to reflect on their ILT experience. Additionally, a qualified psychologist is available should participants wish to discuss any concerns, such as anxiety or stress. The program also offers various safe spaces for participants to engage in open dialogues with their peers about these issues.

For the dedicated staff members who manage the intricate execution of international events, we've implemented strategies to support their well-being. Each staff member is assigned a mentor or trusted individual to consult with, facilitating the preparation of presentations and activities. Furthermore, an 'Oasis of Care' exists within the ILT framework, offering staffers a respite and a space to alleviate tension and stress. A designated staff member is responsible for monitoring the health and well-being of the staff, as we recognize that a well-supported team can provide the best experience for participants. This approach aligns with the humanitarian work philosophy, emphasizing the importance of caring for the well-being of staff to deliver optimal assistance in stressful situations.

In conclusion, the ILT has evolved into an event that distinguishes itself from traditional leadership education programs. It embodies the notion of 'learning by doing,' providing an experiential learning journey from Scouting. What truly sets this course apart, however, is its unwavering commitment to prioritizing the psychological well-being of all participants, whether as staffers or participants. Beyond being the leaders of the next generation, they are fundamentally human beings who require the tools to confront the challenges of an ever-changing society. Equipping them with strategies to nurture all aspects of their lives ensures that they become proactive leaders, capable of making meaningful contributions within their unique contexts. The ILT program not only molds future leaders but also empowers individuals to lead fulfilling lives.

Fostering Resilience: Integrating Mental Health in Youth Leadership Capacity-Building

Another pivotal component of the ILT program is the incorporation of emotional intelligence and mental health into the curriculum. We firmly believe that equipping our participants with the ability to understand and navigate their own emotions, as well as those of others, and fostering a deeper awareness of themselves and their surroundings is essential for cultivating resilient and empathetic leaders. Through dedicated workshops and resources, we empower participants to develop a heightened emotional intelligence, which, in turn, facilitates a more profound comprehension of their own mental well-being. These tools, ranging from self-reflection techniques to stress management strategies, provide invaluable resources for confronting challenges with a greater sense of emotional resilience and empathy, reinforcing our commitment to the holistic development of our young leaders.

Incorporating mental health education into youth leadership development is of paramount importance, as it not only addresses the well-being of future leaders but also enhances their effectiveness. A study by Fergusson et al. (2013) found that mental health issues during adolescence can significantly impact an individual's trajectory in leadership roles later in life. Additionally, research by Stoll et al. (2019) demonstrated that leadership development programs that include mental health components lead to improved leadership outcomes and a more supportive organizational culture. Such inclusions offer numerous advantages, including increased self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and stress management skills, which are vital for effective leadership. Moreover, promoting mental well-being fosters greater resilience, empathy, and a more inclusive leadership style, ultimately contributing to the personal growth and the success of young leaders.

Anchoring mental health within youth leadership education is instrumental not only for individual well-being but also for fostering essential leadership qualities. A growing body of scientific research underscores the pivotal role of mental health in developing resilience and empathy, two cornerstones of effective leadership. Studies such as Masten and Narayan's work (2012) have demonstrated that individuals who prioritize their mental health are better equipped to withstand adversity and adapt to challenges, characteristics central to leadership in dynamic environments. Furthermore, research by Klimecki et al. (2014) reveals the profound connection

between mental well-being and enhanced empathy. This empathy, stemming from emotional regulation and self-awareness fostered through mental health practices, paves the way for compassionate and inclusive leadership. Thus, by promoting mental health awareness and providing practical tools, leadership education not only safeguards individual mental well-being but also nurtures resilient and empathetic leaders, better equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of mental health within leadership education, whether within the Scout Movement or in broader contexts, serves as a cornerstone for equipping individuals with the awareness, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being needed to navigate the complexities of today's world. As we venture into an era marked by unforeseen challenges, such as global pandemics, humanitarian crises, and intricate project development scenarios, it becomes increasingly evident that fostering resilience and psychological well-being is not merely a matter of personal growth but a fundamental requirement for effective leadership. Prioritizing mental health in leadership education empowers individuals to lead not only with technical proficiency but with a profound sense of self-awareness, purpose, and a holistic approach to life. This, in turn, ensures that leadership is driven by a genuine understanding of self and others, guiding a new generation of leaders toward transformative and impactful endeavors.

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DEMOS

THE EMPLOYABILITY BADGE

SKILLS FOR LIFE, WORK AND A STRONGER SOCIETY

ALICE DAWSON
DR. KATE HARRISON

MAY 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

This milestone report from Demos comes at a vital time, when the world of work and society is rapidly changing. Our young people are under more pressure than ever to have the right skills and experience to help them succeed – while protecting their mental health and wellbeing.

At the same time, employers are saying that they're struggling to find candidates with the resilience, teamwork and leadership skills they need. These are the skills that make all the difference, and yet are also the most challenging to develop. They're the kind of skills you only gain when you're given opportunities to challenge and stretch yourself – when you have the courage to reach out of your comfort zone to learn and grow.

This is where extra-curricular activities such as Scouts come in. For over 100 years we've prepared young people with skills for life. We help young people step up, speak and dream big. We raise aspirations and give them those vital opportunities. Other out of school activities can do this too of course.

It's clear from this report that those who get the opportunities to take part in these out of school activities are better prepared for the future. It's heartening to see that over half of former Scouts felt they were ready for the world of work.

That was certainly the case for me. It was Scouts, martial arts, climbing and adventure that helped me discover who I was, and what I could do. I know for sure these skills didn't all come from the classroom. It's expeditions, community projects and volunteering where these skills are forged. When it comes to the qualities that really matter, mud and rain have just as much a part to play as whiteboards and PowerPoints.

Our challenge now is to make these skills and opportunities available to all, and from every background. Let's make the best possible use of these insights. They make a compelling case for widening access to the power of skills learned outside the classroom - doing so would create real change – for the next generation and a stronger society.

Bear Grylls OBE
Chief Scout

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS HIGH

The UK is facing a significant youth unemployment challenge that is detrimental to the economy, society and the lives of young people. In the first quarter of 2023, the youth unemployment rate was 10.8%, considerably higher than the rate for all UK adults at 3.7%.

The cost of youth unemployment to the UK economy over the next decade has been estimated at £28 billion. The costs to young people themselves are just as dire - exposure to youth unemployment can have a life-long impact on an individual's earnings and mental health. If youth unemployment does not fall quickly, the UK will face lost talent and skills that will hinder economic growth and leave too many young people financially worse off, marginalised and lacking hope for the future.

YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY IS HINDERED BY A DOUBLE SKILLS GAP

Equipping young people with the skills that employers need is key to tackling youth unemployment and promoting the UK's future prosperity. In this report, we identify what we call a double skills gap: a lack of both technical and transferable skills that are crucial in the workplace. We found that 60% of employers struggle to hire young people with sufficient technical skills, while 50% say they struggle to hire young people with sufficient transferable skills like leadership, teamwork and emotional resilience.

However, while technical skills are important, we found that transferable skills are particularly valuable for young people's employability. 57% of employers told us they value transferable skills over technical skills, compared to just 10% who say they value technical skills more.

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE BEING LET DOWN BY THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

One of the factors driving this skills gap is a lack of emphasis on transferable skills at school. Education reforms over the last decade have narrowed the focus of education to academic subjects, with less emphasis on skills like teamwork, leadership and communication. Employers told us that they are concerned about young people not being given opportunities for work experience or to undertake coursework that helps them develop skills such as speaking and listening.

YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO BE ABLE TO EFFECTIVELY ARTICULATE THEIR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Young people do not feel that a lack of transferable skills is hindering their employability like employers do. Only 1% of 18-25-year-olds we surveyed said they felt a lack of transferable skills made them unprepared for work.

This mismatch can partly be explained by young people not effectively articulating the transferable skills they have in job applications. Employers we spoke to expressed concern that young people do

not know how to effectively articulate their transferable skills throughout the hiring process. Some of the young people we spoke to also said they didn't receive much support at school or university on how to demonstrate the skills they've learnt, even if they did feel confident that they had these skills. This suggests there is a need for young people to receive much more comprehensive careers support that not only helps them gain skills, but also show employers that they have them.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS ARE GOING TO BE CRUCIAL FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

The future of work will be affected by automation, environmental sustainability, inequality and globalisation. For the young people of today, 'future-proofing' skills will therefore become increasingly important and research shows that it is transferable skills, like creativity and critical thinking, that set us apart from artificial intelligence (AI).

Extra-curricular activities are an important way for young people to develop the skills they need

We wanted to understand the impact that extracurricular activities have on filling the skills gap and boosting young people's employability with a particular focus on the model used by The Scout Association. Our research found that taking part in extracurricular activities is strongly associated with several positive outcomes including employment status, career optimism and preparedness for work:

- 78% of full-time employed people say extracurricular activity had a big impact on their lives compared to 62% of unemployed people.

- The majority of people who attended most of the extracurricular activities in our survey say they feel optimistic that they have what it takes to get what they want out of their career, but less than half (47%) of people who didn't attend any extracurricular activities said the same.

- The majority of people who attended each of the individual extracurricular activities in our survey say they felt prepared starting work for the first time after school or university, but only 37% of people who did not attend any extracurricular activities said the same.

- 53% of Scouts alumni said they were prepared for starting work for the first time compared with 48% of people who did not attend Scouts when they were younger.

- 74% of Scouts alumni say they feel optimistic that they have what it takes to get what they want out of their career in comparison to 62% of people who did not attend Scouts.

Extracurricular activities are particularly valuable in helping young people develop the key transferable skills that employers want. Of those in our survey who felt extracurricular activities had helped prepare them for work:

- 54% gained teamwork skills that have helped their careers.

- 43% gained leadership skills that have helped their careers.

- 42% gained emotional resilience skills that have helped their careers.

Extracurricular activities also help many young people to build their confidence. Several of the current Scouts and Scouts alumni we spoke to mentioned that being in Scouts had given them the confidence to talk to new people, for example. One employer we spoke to said the badge structure in Scouts helps make young people confident that they can achieve things, which can be especially powerful for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Boosting young people's confidence could be invaluable for helping them feel ready for work - not feeling ready for work (e.g. because of a lack of confidence) was one of the main reasons people we surveyed said they felt unprepared for work after school or university with 49% giving this reason.

THE VALUE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Extracurricular activities can help young people build their social capital. 18% of people who told us that extracurricular activities helped prepare them for work said this was because of the connections they gained. Several of the current Scouts and Scouts alumni we spoke to said the contacts they gained through Scouts have been valuable sources of careers guidance. For some, their Scout connections had directly helped them secure jobs.

As Demos argues in *The Social State*, we believe strong relationships lead to better outcomes in almost every aspect of people's lives, including employment. We therefore argue in this report that extracurricular activities' role in building social capital is important for maximising young people's career development.

MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE TO BOOST YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY

Despite these benefits, there are barriers to releasing the full impact extracurricular activities can have on young people's employability. Children from low socioeconomic backgrounds are still less likely to participate in extracurricular activities. This is due to a combination of factors including the cost of participating and poor social infrastructure that leaves many children without activities in their local area.

It is crucial that more is done to tackle youth unemployment, through supporting young people's development and increasing access to extracurricular activities. With this aim, we have identified three broad drivers for change that guide our policy recommendations to a cross-section of stakeholders, including national government, extracurricular organisations and employers. The 'key recommendations' section summarises our recommendations.

DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

1. **Harnessing the power of extracurricular activities to improve young people's skills and drive economic growth.** For example, national and local governments should provide extracurricular organisations with additional funding targeted at widening access to extracurricular activities to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, so that all young people have access to the skills that can support their employability.

2. **Enhancing the impact of extracurricular activities on employability.** For example, Scouts and other uniformed extracurricular organisations should set up alumni mentoring schemes where alumni provide careers guidance to current members.

3. **Improving access to work experience and careers guidance.** For example, more employers should aim to develop links with schools to support young people's career development, particularly highlighting to pupils the value of transferable skills and extracurricular activities.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

DRIVER FOR CHANGE	RECOMMENDATION
Harnessing the power of extracurricular activities to improve young people's skills and drive economic growth	1. National and local governments should provide extracurricular organisations with additional funding targeted at widening access to extracurricular activities to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, so that all young people have access to the skills that can support their employability.
	2. The UK Government should expand the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to include an element that funds extracurricular and volunteering organisations, giving more people in all parts of the UK opportunities to develop their transferable skills and improve their employability.
	3. The UK Government should work with employers to establish an employer-supported volunteering programme that gives employees time off once per month to volunteer with extracurricular organisations, helping to widen young people's access to extracurricular activities.
	4. Local authorities and Multi-Academy Trusts should provide financial support to schools to allow volunteer extracurricular organisations to use their spaces after school for regular activities, again helping to widen young people's access to extracurricular activities.
	5. Extracurricular organisations should continue to work on widening access to extracurricular activities for children from disadvantaged communities through outreach initiatives in schools in disadvantaged areas.
Enhancing the impact of extracurricular activities on employability	6. Scouts and other uniformed extracurricular organisations should set up alumni mentoring schemes where alumni provide careers guidance to current members.
	7. Extracurricular organisations should aim to expand engagement with employers as a means to recruit more volunteers and widen access to extracurricular activities.

DRIVER FOR CHANGE	RECOMMENDATION
	8. Extracurricular groups and organisations, including those run by schools, should tailor their activities to help to futureproof young people's employability skills. This means developing more activities that help young people build the skills they need for the future workforce, including digital skills and skills for the green economy. 9. Researchers should aim to fill the evidence gaps on the links between extracurricular attendance, employability and inequality. More research is needed on the extent to which inequality in extracurricular attendance causes inequalities in employment outcomes between social grades.
Improving access to work experience and careers guidance	10. The UK Government should reintroduce the statutory requirement for Key Stage 4 pupils to undertake work experience ensuring more young people, particularly those from lower socioeconomic groups, can gain crucial exposure to the workplace. 11. The Government and schools should work together to bring employers into schools more often to support students' career development, with a particular focus on schools in deprived areas across the UK, building on the Access for Aspiration scheme which connects students on free school meals with businesses across London to deliver a range of impactful employer experiences such as work experience, mock interviews, and CV workshops. 12. UCAS, the Association of Colleges and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education should encourage older teenagers to participate in extracurricular activities by promoting the benefits for university, further education, and apprenticeship applications. This should also include supporting young people to effectively articulate their skills in job applications and at interviews. 13. More employers should aim to develop links with schools to support young people's career development. This should involve using schools as a venue for career events for young people, where employers can explain to students what skills, experience and attributes they are looking for in job applicants, particularly highlighting the value of extracurricular activities.

INTRODUCTION

The UK is facing significant youth unemployment that is detrimental to the economy, society and the lives of young people. At the end of 2022, the youth unemployment rate was 11.3%, considerably higher than the unemployment rate for all UK adults at 3.7%.[1][2] This rate has been steadily declining from its peak in 2011 following the financial crisis, but progress is slow.[3] If youth unemployment does not drastically fall, the UK faces the loss of vital talent and skills. This will hinder economic growth and risks leaving many young people financially worse off, marginalised and lacking hope for the future.

This report aims to address the challenge of youth unemployment by exploring the role extracurricular activities can play in equipping young people with the skills and experiences they need to enter the workforce and progress in their careers. For this report, we focus on Scouts, as an example of how, through building strong relationships and social capital, young people can develop the skills and attributes employers value the most.

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE UK'S LABOUR MARKET

The UK's labour market as a whole is facing multiple challenges. The UK is suffering from a significant skills shortage, with employers struggling to hire people with the right skills for the job. 80% of small firms face difficulties recruiting applicants with suitable skills, while 78% of UK organisations suffered a decline in output, profitability or growth due to a lack of available skills.[4][5] Further, the UK economy is grappling with slow productivity growth with rates substantially slower than comparable advanced economies.[6] This productivity crisis is intrinsically linked to the skills shortage: employees often lack the skills needed to maximise businesses' productivity.[7][8]

Given the particularly high rates of youth unemployment in the UK, addressing the youth unemployment challenge will be integral to solving these wider problems facing the UK labour market and economy.

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8   Mullins, C. *The answer to the UK productivity slump" Fix the skills gap*. Real Business, October 2019. Available at: https://realbusiness.co.uk/fix-the-skills-gap [accessed 22/03/2023]

THE IMPACT OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Employment is a key driver of economic growth and growing the economy is the stated ambition of both the government and opposition. Youth unemployment is a direct threat to economic growth in the UK, as well as a blight to the lives of young people. In 2021, the Learning and Work Institute predicted that the economic cost of youth unemployment, in terms of lost national output, would rise to £6.9 billion in 2022.[9] The cost of youth unemployment over the next decade has been estimated at £28 billion and reducing the UK's NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) rate for 20 to 24 year olds (at 14% in 2022) by 5% would increase GDP by 1.8% in the long-term.[10]

Youth unemployment also has a concerning life-time impact on people's careers. Unemployment early on in a young person's career can negatively impact future earnings, career prospects and wellbeing.[11] The Learning and Work Institute predicted that the cost of unemployment for young people entering the labour market is forecast to be £14.4 billion over the next seven years. These scarring effects are not limited to young people's finances - research also shows that unemployment can have a long-term impact on young people's mental health.[12] If more is not done to significantly reduce youth unemployment, the costs to individuals and the UK economy will only worsen.

An increasing number of young people are also becoming economically inactive, meaning they are neither in work nor actively searching for work. This is distinct from youth unemployment which measures young people who are out of work but actively searching for work.[13] Like youth unemployment, economic inactivity can be detrimental to the economy and to individuals. It is beyond the scope of this report to analyse the drivers of economic inactivity in young people, but it emphasises the need for attention on young people's relationship with work.

SKILLS TO DRIVE EMPLOYABILITY

In 2022, the House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee concluded that a skills shortage is one of the main "longstanding drivers" of youth unemployment.[14] Skills can be transferable, such as teamwork and communication, or technical, meaning job-specific skills that are needed to complete particular tasks. The Lords committee found that there is a skills gap in both transferable and technical skills.[15]

Similarly, in a recent survey, 42% of UK employers said that a lack of skills was a major obstacle to young people accessing good quality employment.[16] The Learning and Work Institute has also argued that the UK has a lagging skills-base in comparison to other OECD countries. This includes weaker numeracy and literacy skills as well as transferable skills like problem-solving, teamwork and communication. They argue this is a "major cause of youth unemployment" and that enhancing this skills base is central to economic growth.[17]

Equipping young people with the skills that employers need is therefore key to tackling youth unemployment and promoting the UK's future prosperity.

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EMPLOYABILITY AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Research shows that extracurricular activities are an important way for young people to develop their skills. Attendance at extracurricular activities is a predictor of intention to stay in education after compulsory schooling and boosts social networks and confidence in social interactions. Extracurricular activities are particularly associated with transferable skills, including readiness to learn, problem-solving and planning.[18] However, there are also benefits for educational achievement: the more intensively students attend, the more likely they are to benefit.[19] This suggests that extracurricular activities can be a good way for young people to improve their employability.

However, there is limited evidence on the link between extracurricular activities and employment. As such, this research explores the impact that extracurricular activities have on employability and the skills gap.

We used Scouts as a case study to understand how young people can develop teamwork, emotional resilience and problem-solving skills through extracurricular activities. Scouts is an extracurricular organisation where young people aged 4-25 take part in activities, like camping, sports, fundraising and volunteering, that are typically organised around challenges and rewarded with badges.[20]

We also spoke to employers, who told us which skills are necessary for adapting to and coping with the workplace of the present and the future. We found that through extracurricular activities young people develop skills that are crucial to filling the double skills gap of both technical and transferable skills as well as adapting young people to the future of work.

In *The Social State* we made the case that strong relationships lead to better outcomes in almost every aspect of people's lives, including employment.[21] This report applies this idea to extracurricular activities, as we argue that they play a role in building social capital, which is important for young people's career development. This builds on our earlier research in *Working Together* which showed that 'bridging' social capital - relationships between people who are different from each other - helps people move into work. This social capital helps people find jobs - between 30% and 70% of people say that their social connections helped them find their job.[22]

RESEARCH METHODS

The research methods we used are as follows:

- Review of the existing literature on youth unemployment, the skills gap and extracurricular activities.

- 3,000-person nationally representative poll that includes 1,000 Scouts alumni.[23]

- 500-person poll of employers.

- In depth interviews with ten employers and employment experts.

- In depth interviews with ten current Scouts ten Scouts alumni.

- Three focus groups with 17 Scouts alumni.

Qualitative and quantitative data can be useful in understanding the relationship between extracurricular activities and employability, for example we were able to ask people whether they thought extracurricular activities affected their experiences of work. However, as we discuss in Chapter

18   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field*. 2019. Social Mobility Commission. Online. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818679/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf
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23   Scouts alumni in this report are people who participated in Scouts when they were younger.

2, participation can be impacted by demographic factors, such as income, gender, ethnicity and geographic location.[24] It is therefore important to acknowledge that it is not always possible to identify causal relationships in quantitative data, even where we see strong correlations. Those who are less able to participate in extracurricular activities are also more likely to experience disadvantages in employment, so it is not always possible to separate out extraneous factors.

In particular, demographic variation in polling responses may reflect underlying social issues and variation in access to extracurricular activities, rather than the sole impact of those extracurricular activities. As such, we have been cautious in how we have drawn conclusions from the data, including about the relationship between attending extracurricular activities and employment status, for example.

24   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field.* Social Mobility Commission, 2019

CHAPTER 1
UNDERSTANDING THE EMPLOYABILITY GAPS

To understand what is driving youth unemployment, it is important to explore the skills gap in more detail. To begin, in this chapter we examine what employers and employment experts told us are the main employability gaps they see today.

We show that there are significant gaps in both technical and transferable skills, but that employers value transferable skills the most. Transferable skills are expected to be vital for young people to adapt to the future of work, however currently the education system is not set up to adequately support young people to develop these skills. We also argue that where young people do have the skills they need for the future, they need better support in articulating the skills and experiences they already have. To achieve this, young people need better careers support and work experience opportunities, which they highlight as their biggest gaps in feeling ready for work.

THE DOUBLE SKILLS GAP

Through our polling and interviews, we found that many young job applicants have a double skills gap: they often lack both the technical and transferable skills that employers most need. 60% of employers said they struggle to hire young people with sufficient technical skills, while half of employers said they lack transferable skills.

While more employers struggle to recruit young people with technical skills, narrowing the technical skills gap shouldn't take priority over enhancing transferable skills. First of all, the extent of each skills gap depends on the sector. Our survey found that employers in the private and third sectors more often struggle to hire people with sufficient technical skills, at 61% and 63% respectively, than in the public sector (56%). Meanwhile, the transferable skills gap is significantly higher in the third sector, at 71%, than in the private (48%) and public sectors (49%).

In our interviews with employers, there wasn't a consensus on whether the technical or transferable skills gap was greater - it varied by sector. For example, a chef recruiter told us he mainly struggled to recruit people with enough technical pastry experience. In contrast, some recruiters for office work told us they needed more people with a can-do attitude and a positive work mindset. This suggests that employability means different things for young people depending on their career plans and aspirations.

However, we found significant gaps when we asked employers about how much they struggle to hire young people with specific transferable skills. We asked about leadership (the ability to make

decisions, inspire others and take responsibility); teamwork (the ability to work well with others, even those you disagree with); and emotional resilience (the ability to deal with setbacks and criticism). As Figure 1 shows, leadership skills are particularly lacking, with 69% of employers saying they struggle to hire young people with sufficient leadership skills. In comparison, 61% said they struggled to hire emotionally resilient young people, while 45% said the same of teamwork skills. This shows there are gaps across the board in transferable skills.

FIGURE 1

STACKED BAR CHART SHOWING THE EXTENT TO WHICH EMPLOYERS AGREE OR DISAGREE THEY STRUGGLE TO HIRE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SUFFICIENT TRANSFERABLE SKILLS
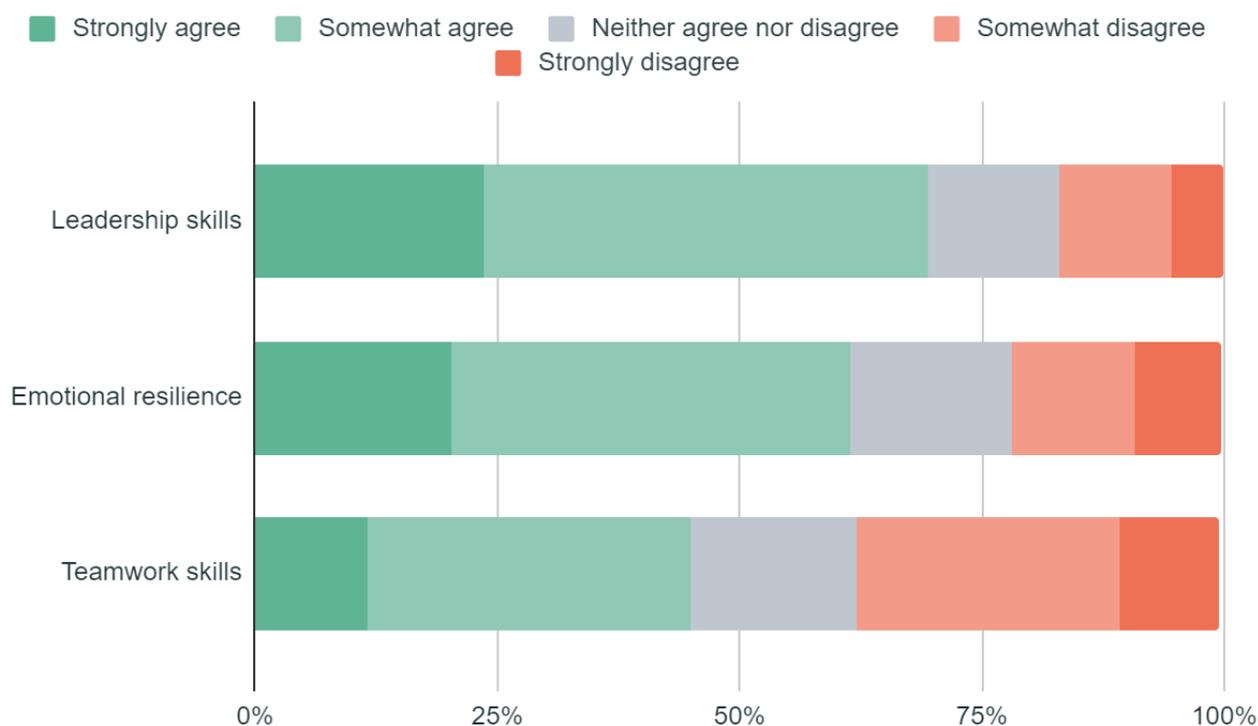
THE EDUCATION CONTEXT

A narrow focus on academic education in schools is contributing to these skills gaps. Particularly, the Government's education reforms that took place between 2010-2014 caused schools to move to a narrower focus on more academic education. For example, compulsory work experience was removed from the Key Stage 4 curriculum and the speaking and listening components were removed from GCSE English.[25][26] This has left many children lacking the essential transferable skills that they would previously have learnt in school.

In 2022, the House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee said that "the narrow focus of the national curriculum on academic subjects did not help young people to "learn and showcase" their digital, technical or creative skills, nor help them to develop "essential skills like teamwork, problem-solving and communication".[27]

25   Guyoncourt S. B*ring back compulsory work experience in schools, say business leaders*. The Independent, April 2019. Available at: https://inews.co.uk/news/business/business-leaders-say-bring-back-compulsory-work-experience-283744#:~:text=Work%20experience%20for%20Key%20Stage,taken%20to%20the%20next%20level. [accessed 31/03/2023]
26   Walker. P. *GCSE English to drop speaking and listening components*. The Guardian, August 2013. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/aug/29/gcse-english-speaking-listening-drop.
27   Tudor, S. *Causes of youth unemployment: Lords committee report*. House of Lords Library, November 2022.

Similarly, work by the Tony Blair Institute argues that the current education system incentives cramming and knowledge rather than transferable skills. It sets out that children instead need more space to develop the overlooked '4Cs' - critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaborative problem-solving.[28]

Our own research with employers supports this. Some employers and employment experts we spoke to stated that schools are not equipping young people with sufficient transferable skills. They felt that schools now have a narrower focus on academic achievement than they did before the Government's reforms, for example with the speaking and listening components being taken out of GCSE English.

> *"There's an imbalance. A focus on the academic side and route to university has created other issues for young people, where they're missing out…If we're looking at well-rounded individuals, for life, for career, for wellbeing, you need that well-rounded perspective"*
> *- Employer*

Further, some Scouts alumni we interviewed said that an overemphasis on academic achievement in schools did not help them feel prepared for work:

> *"This was just my school experience. They only focused on the route of GCSEs, A Levels, then you go to uni. There was such a big focus on going to uni as the only next possible thing. There were so many people left behind that either couldn't afford to go to uni or didn't want to, or whatever. So, I think more focus on other options." - A Scouts alumni*

The 2022 review of the Government's Post-16 skills plan shows a recognition of the need to improve young people's employability skills.[29] However, the Government still appears to be placing greater value on academic education, for example with the recent announcement to make maths compulsory in schools until age 18. This was framed as making young people better equipped for jobs of the future.[30] While numeracy skills are important, an equal emphasis must be put on transferable skills for employability.

As one employment expert said, the overemphasis on academic achievement causes fewer problems for children planning to go to university. Young people are more likely to receive careers support at university as they typically have careers services that offer mock interviews and CV support.

Those who don't go to university miss out on much needed careers guidance and tailored support at school. According to our survey, lack of work experience (61%) and career guidance (44%) were the main reasons people did not feel sufficiently prepared for starting work after school or university. Interestingly, people who had university degrees (65%) were more likely to say that lack of work experience had left them feeling unprepared for work than those without degrees (59%). This suggests that a lack of emphasis on practical experience could be detrimental to some young people's job preparedness.

WHAT BEING EMPLOYABLE LOOKS LIKE

When considering what makes young people employable today, it's not enough to just know what skills employers struggle to hire for. It's also key to understand the skills, attributes and experiences that employers most value.

The value of transferable skills

The double skills gap comes with a paradox. While the overall technical skills gap is bigger, our survey of employers found that transferable skills are valued a lot more by employers than technical skills. As shown in Table 1, 57% of employers say they value transferable skills over technical skills, compared

28   Department for Education. R*eview of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below*. GOV.UK, March 2022. Available at: https://institute.global/policy/ending-big-squeeze-skills-how-futureproof-education-england [accessed 31/03/2023]
29   Department for Education. *Review of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below*. GOV.UK, March 2022.
30   Scott, J. *All pupils in England and Wales to study maths until age 18 under Rishi Sunak's 'new mission'*. Sky News, January, 2023. Available at: https://news.sky.com/story/all-pupils-in-england-to-study-maths-until-18-under-rishi-sunaks-new-mission-12779266 [accessed 31/03/2023]

to 10% who say they value technical skills more; 31% say equal. The higher value put on transferable skills was consistent across employers working in the private, public and third sector in our survey. This suggests that even if employers have a bigger shortage of technical skills, transferable skills are the priority when hiring young people, regardless of sector.

TABLE 1
THE EXTENT TO WHICH EMPLOYERS VALUE TECHNICAL SKILLS OR
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS MORE WHEN HIRING YOUNG PEOPLE

STATEMENT	OVERALL	PRIVATE SECTOR	PUBLIC SECTOR	THIRD SECTOR	OTHER
When hiring young recruits, I value technical skills more	10%	11%	10%	0%	15%
I value transferable skills more	57%	58%	58%	67%	23%
I equally value technical and transferable skills	31%	30%	30%	33%	54%

In terms of specific transferable skills, teamwork is the transferable skill most highly valued by employers, with 81% saying they value it moderately or greatly. Emotional resilience and leadership skills are also highly valued by employers: 70% valued emotional resilience and 59% valued leadership skills either greatly or moderately in young people.

FIGURE 2
STACKED BAR CHART SHOWING THE EXTENT TO WHICH EMPLOYERS VALUE DIFFERENT TRANSFERABLE SKILLS.
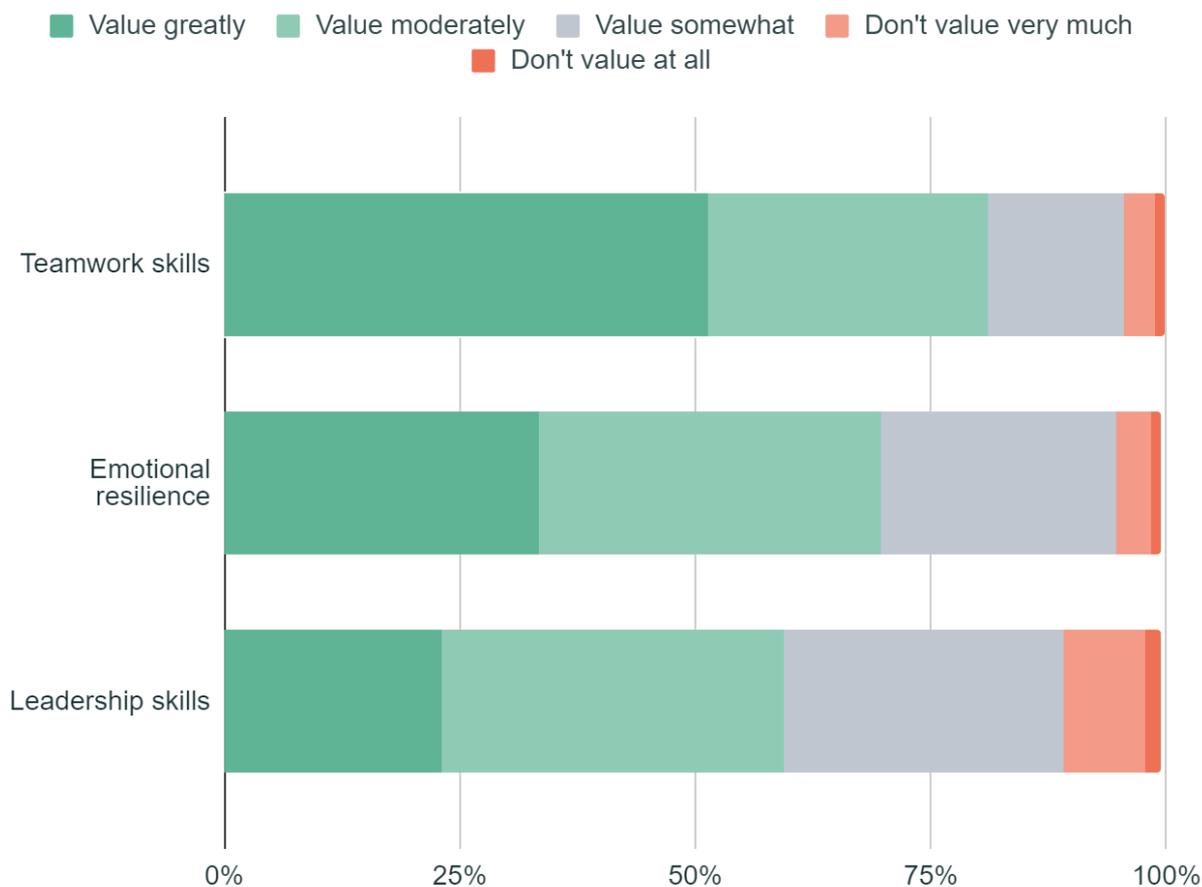
Similarly, the CBI found that employers most often sought 'soft skills and behaviours' in school and college leavers and 'attitudes and aptitude for work' in recent graduates.[31] This reinforces our argument that having those key transferable skills are particularly important for new job seekers entering the workforce.

The importance of transferable skills was also reflected in our interviews with employers and employment experts. One employer we interviewed told us that "softer employability skills" are the most important skills young people need to get hired - especially creativity, but also communication and teamwork. They said that even in the most technical of jobs, like working in a laboratory, it's not good enough to show that you can do the experiments, you need to be able to communicate and work with the team.

Another employer said they valued particular traits over technical skills - primarily being hardworking, a "grafter", goals-oriented and resilient. They said that these attributes show that a potential recruit is committed to the job and that if they had low resilience they would be more likely to be "quick to up and leave if things don't go their way".

Emotional resilience skills are also increasingly important in light of the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on young people's mental health. Analysis from Nuffield Trust shows that in 2021, **one in six** children in England had a probable mental disorder, up from one in nine in 2017. They found that this can partly be attributed to pandemic restrictions including school closures that may have aggravated known triggers for poor mental health, through reduced social interaction, isolation and academic

31 CBI. *Skills for an inclusive economy: CBI/Birkbeck Education and Skills Survey 2021*. CBI, July 2021. Available at: https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/7020/12684_tess_-survey_2021.pdf [accessed 31/03/2023]

stress.[32] There is also evidence that having good emotional resilience is strongly associated with better mental health in children and adolescents, suggesting that building these skills can play an important role in preventing poor mental health.[33]

While of course the causes of mental health problems are extremely complex, we cannot miss opportunities to support young people's mental wellbeing and reduce the risk of poor mental health. The ways extracurricular activities can benefit young people's mental and emotional wellbeing will be discussed further in chapter two.

The value of technical skills

While transferable skills are valued most by employers, this does not mean they are the only solution to the youth unemployment challenge. Employers still value technical skills - 28% of employers we surveyed said they greatly value technical skills when hiring young people while 43% moderately value them. Qualifications are also important: one employer said that the only non-negotiable technical requirements are a basic standard of qualifications and knowledge, such as Maths and English to a GCSE level.

Further, in 2021, the CBI found that 60% of businesses identified industry-specific technical knowledge as their biggest priority area for skill development over the next three to five years.[34] Nonetheless, many of the employers we spoke to said that while technical skills are valuable, they can be developed on the job more easily than transferable skills. Transferable skills, meanwhile, are seen as essential to the modern workplace and are particularly important for those just starting out.

Adapting to the future of work

As technologies develop, 'future-proofing' skills will become increasingly important. We need to not only consider the skills that will make young people employable today, but the skills that will sustain that employability throughout their lives.

The future of work is likely to be affected by automation, environmental sustainability, urbanisation, inequality and globalisation, among other factors. One in five people are in occupations that are expected to shrink as a percentage of the workforce, while only one in ten are in occupations likely to grow. Winners are likely to include creative, digital, design and engineering roles, especially green jobs, so the technical and transferable skills needed in these sectors are likely to be particularly valuable for young people.[35]

Both globalisation and technological developments could lead to a decline of many low and middle-skilled jobs, like manufacturing occupations, meaning it's even more crucial that all young people have access to high-skilled jobs, regardless of their socioeconomic background. In Chapter 3, we will explore further the impact Scouts has had on developing young people's interpersonal skills, and the role extracurricular activities can play in improving social mobility.

In McKinsey's work on the skills needed for the AI era, they found that, unsurprisingly, digital skills will become increasingly important. This includes digital literacy, digital ethics, programming literacy and data analysis skills.[36] However, Deloitte argues that employers overemphasise the need for digital skills, which ultimately are not immune to automation. They argue that transferable skills are particularly valuable because, unlike many technical skills, they are uniquely human and can't easily be replaced by

32   Morris, J and Dr Fisher, E. *Growing problems, in depth: The impact of Covid-19 on health care for children and young people in England.* Nuffield Trust, February 2022. Available at: https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/resource/growing-problems-in-detail-covid-19-s-impact-on-health-care-for-children-and-young-people-in-england. [accessed 31/03/2023]
33   Mesman, E, Vreeker, A, and Hillegers, M. *Resilience and mental health in children and adolescents: an update of the recent literature and future directions.* Current Opinion in Psychiatry, November 2021. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8500371/ [accessed 31/03/2023]
34   CBI. *Skills for an inclusive economy: CBI/Birkbeck Education and Skills Survey 2021.* CBI, July 2021.
35   Bakhshi, H., Downing, J. M., Osborne, M. A. and Schneider, P. *The Future of Skills: Employment in 2030.* Pearson, 2017. Available at: https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:86577437-1353-4743-8520-401c1f99ad1b/download_file?file_format=pdf&safe_filename=Future%2Bof%2Bskills%2BVoR.pdf&type_of_work=Report [accessed 31/03/2023]
36   Dondi, M, Klier, J, Panier, F et al. *Defining the skills citizens will need in the future world of work.* McKinsey and Company, June 2021. Available at: https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/defining-the-skills-citizens-will-need-in-the-future-world-of-work [accessed 31/03/2023]

technologies like AI. Skills such as creativity, leadership, and critical thinking are also key for adapting technical skills as business needs change.[37]

Research by Mckinsey supports this work, setting out 'foundational' skills needed for the AI era, which mostly consists of transferable skills. They argue that skills such as active listening, conflict resolution and self-leadership skills, including 'grit and persistence', will be critical.[38] Further, in an increasingly globalised world it is likely that companies will demand more interpersonal skills to navigate cultural contexts.[39]

New applications, like the AI chatbot ChatGPT, have prompted further discussions on the impact AI will have on skills in different sectors. For example, it's been suggested that Chat GPT could assist lawyers by creating summaries of case notes, creating lesson plans for teachers, or writing social media posts for Public Relations professionals.[40] This would remove the need for people to undertake such technical tasks themselves, leaving them with more time to focus on tasks that require a personal and human touch (like building relationships with clients, for example).[41]

Meanwhile, the transition to Net Zero and tackling climate change will place further demands on the changing workforce. There is already a significant green skills gap which is affecting employers' ability to meet their net zero targets. There is high demand for technical skills in this sector (like design and construction skills), but also transferable skills like project management, change management, leadership and communication, which are needed to help organisations successfully reduce their carbon emissions.[42] Further, the Government has highlighted risk management and the ability to make environmental impact assessments as necessary skills for the green economy.[43]

While the demand for certain technical skills will change over time, the requirement for transferable skills will remain as an essential means of adapting to these changes. Such transferable skills are central to extracurricular activities, including Scouts, as we will learn in Chapter 2 of this report.

Work experience

As part of the earlier education reforms, compulsory work experience at Key Stage 4 was removed from the curriculum. According to recent research by Youth Employment UK, only 36% of young people in education today have been able to access work experience.[44]

This leaves many young people feeling unprepared for work. According to our nationally representative survey, lack of work experience (61%) is the main reason people felt unprepared for starting work after school or university. Of the two youngest age groups in our survey, 48% of 18-24 year olds and 53% of 25-34-year-olds cited this reason. Similarly, the 2022 Youth Voices Census found that lack of work experience was one of the biggest barriers young people say they face to accessing work.[45]

While our research with employers shows they place less value on work experience than transferable skills, it is still considered important. 20% of employers we surveyed said they greatly value work

37   Radin, J, Hatfield, S, Schwartz, J et al. Closing the employability skills gap: The answer is simpler than you might think. Deloitte, January 2020. Available at: https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/focus/technology-and-the-future-of-work/closing-the-employability-skills-gap.html [accessed 31/03/2023]
38   Dondi, M, Klier, J, Panier, F et al. Defining the skills citizens will need in the future world of work. McKinsey and Company, June 2021.
39   Bakhshi, H., Downing, J. M., Osborne, M. A. and Schneider, P. The Future of Skills: Employment in 2030. Peaston, 2017. Available at: https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:86577437-1353-4743-8520-401c1f99ad1b/download_file?file_format=pdf&safe_filename=Future%2Bof%2Bskills%2BVoR.pdf&type_of_work=Report [accessed 31/03/2023]
40   Marr, B. What Does ChatGPT Really Mean For Your Job?. Forbes, February 2023. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2023/02/13/what-does-chatgpt-really-mean-for-your-job/?sh=58c416325bda [accessed 31/03/2023]
41   Marr, B. What Does ChatGPT Really Mean For Your Job?. Forbes, February 2023.
42   Jones, E., Bradley, T. and White, Y. Skills for a net-zero economy: Insights from employers and young people. Learning & Work Institute, June 2022. Available at: https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/skills-for-net-zero/ [accessed 31/03/2023]
43   Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Skills for a green economy: a report on the evidence. GOV.UK, October 2011. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32373/11-1315-skills-for-a-green-economy.pdf [accessed 31/03/2023]
44   Youth Employment UK. Youth Voice Census: 2022 report. Youth Employment UK, September 2022. Available at: https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/dev/wp-content/themes/yeuk/files/youth-voice-census-report-2022.pdf. [accessed 31/03/2023]
45   Youth Employment UK. Youth Voice Census: 2022 report. Youth Employment UK, September 2022.

experience while 31% moderately value it. In our interviews they told us that it can be a means for young people to develop and demonstrate key transferable skills, like time management and self-management. One employer described it as the "gold standard" for young job seekers. However, she also acknowledged that these skills can be gained from extracurricular activities like being in a sports team or volunteering, as well as part-time work.

Another employment expert said that young people can become trapped in a cycle of being unable to get experience because they don't already have experience:

> "Young people are trapped in an annoying cycle, they want to get experience, but can't get experience. A blame has got to be at the door of cutting statutory work experience and cutting careers guidance (in schools). No exposure to the workplace." - Employment expert

Research by the Institute for Employment Studies also acknowledges this "catch-22 for young people who then struggle to get their foot in the door." They found that certain hiring practices contribute to this issue, such as AI applicant screening and recruitment agencies that tend to hire based primarily on experience.[46]

One of the Scouts alumni we interviewed also expressed frustration with this challenge:

> "Trying to get into psychology and the social sciences is quite difficult without work experience but it is one of those things where it is like if you don't have experience, they tell you to get experience. But you can't get experience until you have got the experience. So I found that quite difficult." - A Scouts alumni

According to employers, a lack of work experience is problematic because young people lose crucial exposure to the workplace at a young age. One highlighted that work experience is more accessible for middle class and privately educated children, as they can more often afford to take gap years and unpaid internships. The removal of compulsory work experience is therefore likely to have a disproportionate impact on the employability of children from working class backgrounds.

Some employers do see work experience as having unique benefits for young job seekers that extracurricular activities do not necessarily have. One person told us that relevant work experience or volunteering was most important because it demonstrates an applicant's passion and commitment to their industry in a way that unrelated extracurricular activities do not.

It is crucial that young people can access work experience so they have more opportunities to develop their transferable skills as well as gain valuable exposure to the workplace. However, the lack of compulsory work experience also emphasises the importance of extracurricular activities. Despite the unique benefits of work experience, young people can gain many of the transferable skills through extracurricular activities that they might have otherwise gained through work experience.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE SKILLS GAP

Having understood employers' perspectives on the skills gap, we now draw on more of our polling and qualitative data to explore what young people think is holding them back in their careers. We identify a mismatch between young people's and employers' perceptions of what the main challenges are.

As discussed, employers highly value transferable skills, more so than technical skills, and cite a lack of these skills as a top reason they struggle to hire young people. However, only 1% of 18-25-year-olds we surveyed said they felt a lack of transferable skills made them unprepared for work. In contrast, 40% of 18-25-year-olds said that a lack of technical skills made them feel unprepared for work.

This suggests there is a mismatch between employers' and young people's perceptions of the transferable skills gap. Young people do not feel that a lack of transferable skills is hindering their employability like employers do.

46   Orlanda, C, Winton, A and Alexander, A. *Bridging the Gap: Making young people a vital part of every workforce.* Institute for Employment Studies, January 2023

Research by the Institute for Employment Studies found a similar inconsistency between employers' and young people's perspectives on the skills gap. Employers cited a lack of skills as the main obstacle young people feel to accessing good quality work (42%). Young people believed not having enough connections and poor mental health were the main obstacles they faced.[47]

This mismatch can partly be explained by young people not effectively articulating the transferable skills they have in job applications. A 2015 survey of employers by YouthNet found that about two-thirds reject young job candidates because they do not clearly articulate their abilities, including their transferable skills.[48]

One of the Scouts alumni we spoke to also said they found it difficult to effectively articulate their skills when looking for jobs:

> *"For me, it's about learning practically, the skills that are useful when looking for a job. Like a lot of emphasis is put on gathering skills and stuff but not a lot of emphasis is put on how to apply them effectively when the time comes. For example, I was told all of the things I'd need to do to make a nice-looking CV, but I wasn't ever given anything like a mock interview or stuff like that. More practical simulations of the world of work, I think would have helped me feel like I was more prepared for it, I guess." - A Scouts alumni*

Similarly, several of the employers we spoke to emphasised the need for young people to clearly articulate the skills gained from extracurricular activities in job applications to demonstrate their employability. This suggests that, even if young people feel confident they have these transferable skills, many are not articulating this well enough to employers. This means that employers struggle to identify the transferable skills that young people do have. In the final chapter, we will recommend how young people can be better supported to articulate their skills and how employers can emphasise the importance of transferable skills.

47   Orlanda, C, Winton, A and Alexander, A. *Bridging the Gap: Making young people a vital part of every workforce*. Institute for Employment Studies, January 2023.
48   Alsop, R. *This is the real reason new graduates can't get hired. BBC*, November 2015. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20151118-this-is-the-real-reason-new-graduates-cant-get-hired [accessed 02/04/2023]

CHAPTER 2
HOW CAN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES HELP SOLVE THESE YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY CHALLENGES?

In this chapter, we draw on our nationally representative survey and our qualitative research with current Scouts and Scouts alumni to examine the impact extracurricular activities have on people's skills and employability.

While we look at a range of extracurricular activities, including social clubs and sports, we focus on Scouts as a key example, looking at the impact the specific Scouts model of extracurricular activities has had on people's careers.

We found that taking part in extracurricular activities is strongly associated with several positive outcomes including employment status, career optimism and preparedness for work. As we will see, the impact of extracurricular activities on young people's transferable skills, including their teamwork, leadership and emotional resilience, has been particularly invaluable for improving their employability.

EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

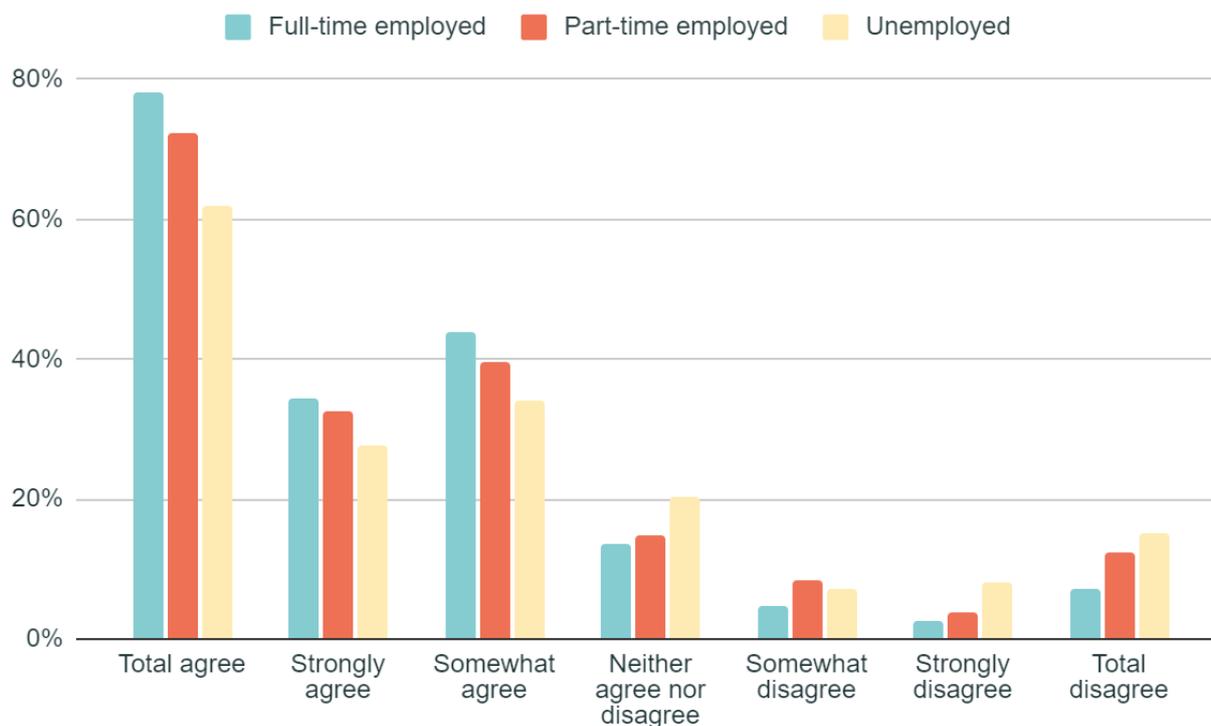People who attended extracurricular activities when they were young are now more likely to be employed than those who did not. In our survey, 74% of full-time employed people say they attended an extracurricular at least every week compared to 66% of unemployed people. For people who had attended Scouts, 79% of full-time employed people attended every week in comparison to 74% of unemployed people.

Overall, 73% of people said the extracurricular activities they attended have had a big impact on their lives with this number being even higher for full-time employed people. As shown in Figure 3, 78% of full-time employed people say extracurricular activity had a big impact on their lives compared to 62% of unemployed people.

FIGURE 3
BAR CHART SHOWING THE EXTENT TO WHICH PEOPLE AGREE OR DISAGREE THAT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES HAD A BIG IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES.

Numerous factors, including socioeconomic status and health, can influence people's likelihood of being employed, so it is difficult to draw a direct causal link between extracurricular activities and employment. However, it's likely that the greater impact that extracurricular activities have had on the lives of employed people includes the impact it's had on their careers and employability.

For example, several of the former and current Scouts we spoke to said they had been able to use some of their experiences at Scouts, like volunteering as a Young Leader,[49] as examples of leadership or teamwork in their job applications. As discussed in Chapter One, these are key transferable skills that employers want. We will discuss how Scouts has helped young people develop their skills and impacted their careers in more detail in the next chapter.

CAREER OPTIMISM

Extracurricular activities were also associated with greater career optimism. Of those who had never taken part in extracurricular activities while at school, only 47% agreed with the statement: 'I feel optimistic that I have what it takes to get what I want out of my career'. People who had taken part in extracurricular activities felt markedly more optimistic. Notably, 74% of Scouts alumni agreed in comparison to 62% of people who did not attend Scouts when they were younger.

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49   A Young Leader is a Explorer Scout between the ages of 14 and 18 who volunteers to be part of the leadership team for the Squirrel, Beaver, Cub or Scouts sections. See: Scouts. Young Leaders' Scheme. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/running-an-explorer-unit/explorer-scout-young-leaders-scheme/ [accessed 04/04/2023]

That young people feel optimistic they can achieve their career aspirations is particularly important post-pandemic. A 2021 report by the UCL Institute of Education (IOE) found that 53% of 16-15 year-olds feel their career prospects are worsening as a result of the pandemic while 44% believe that their learning of "work skills" has worsened as a result of the pandemic, potentially because they have had less opportunities to pick up skills that would be needed in the workplace.[50]

As we will see, extracurricular activities can play an important role in supporting young people to develop the skills they need for their chosen career paths, and in turn help increase young people's optimism that they have what it takes to achieve these goals.

FIGURE 4
PROPORTION OF PEOPLE WHO FEEL OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR CAREERS, BY TYPE OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY
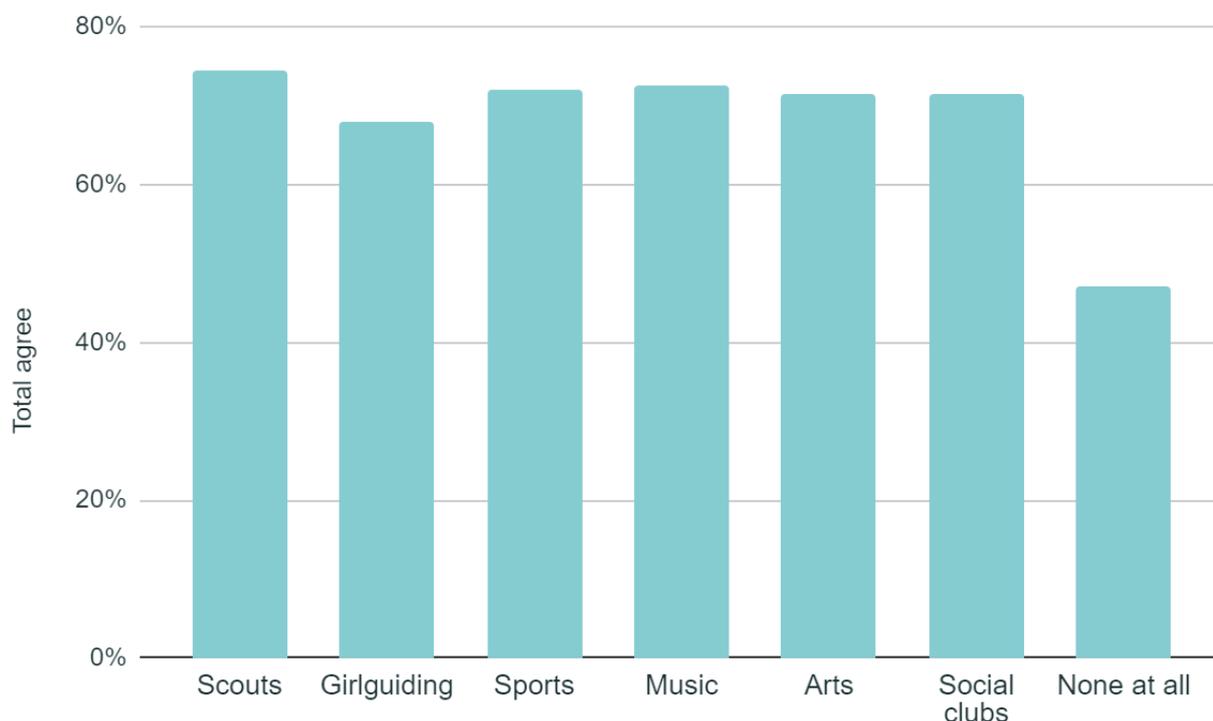
PREPAREDNESS FOR WORK

There is also a strong association between having attended extracurricular activities and how prepared people feel for work after leaving school or university. Only 37% of people who didn't attend any extracurricular activities said they felt prepared starting work for the first time, while the majority of people who attended most of the extracurricular activities in our survey said they did feel prepared.

Scouts alumni are slightly more prepared for work with 53% of Scouts alumni saying they were prepared for starting work for the first time compared with 48% of people who did not attend Scouts. We don't see a marked Scouts Impact here, however - as shown in Figure 5, 53% of people across almost all extracurricular activities said they felt prepared.

50   UCL Institute of Education. More than half of 16-25-year-olds fear for their futures and job prospects. UCL, April 2021. Available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news/2021/apr/more-half-16-25-year-olds-fear-their-futures-and-job-prospects [accessed 02/04/2023]

FIGURE 5
STACKED BAR CHART SHOWING THE EXTENT TO WHICH PEOPLE SAY THEY FELT PREPARED OR UNPREPARED FOR STARTING WORK AFTER SCHOOL OR UNIVERSITY.
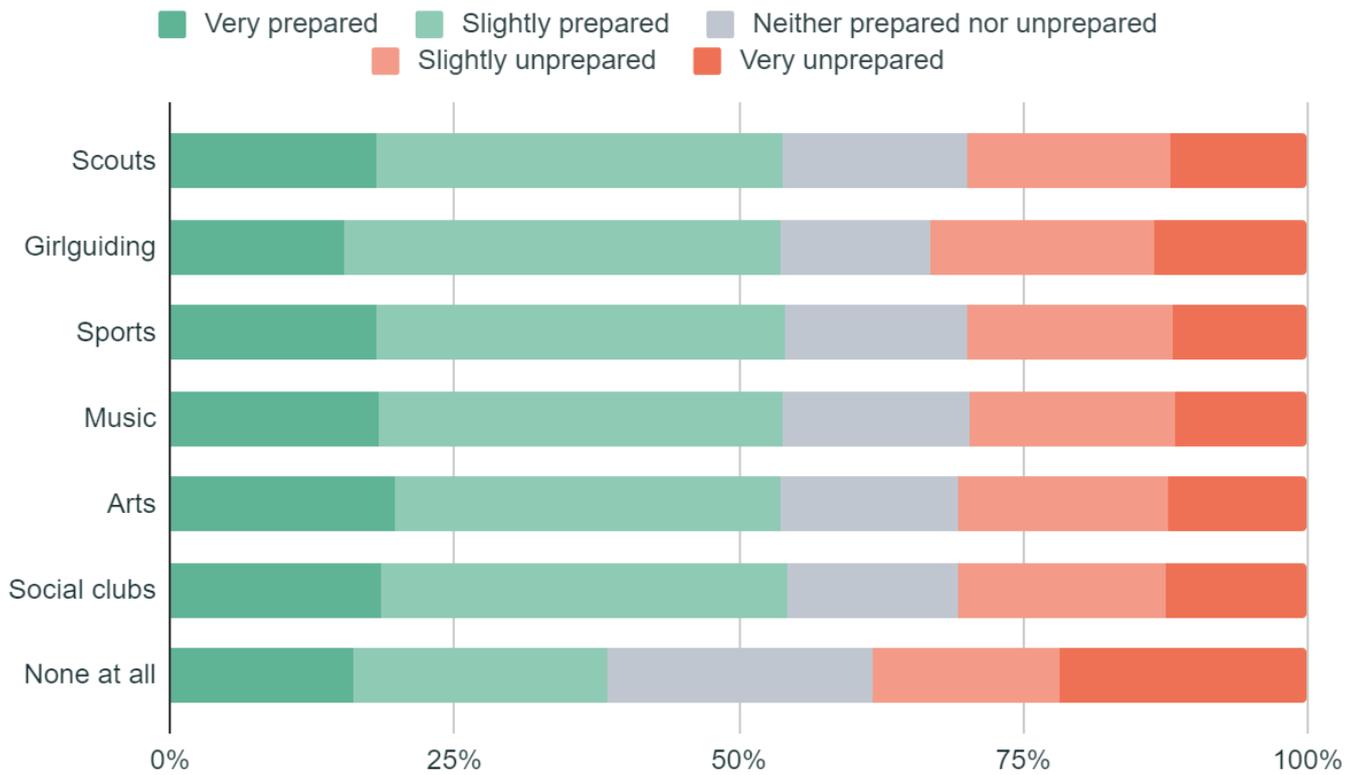
We also wanted to look at whether people believe that having attended extracurricular activities when they were younger contributed to their preparedness for work. We asked those who had participated in any extracurricular activity the question: "Did participating in extracurricular activities help prepare you for your career in any way?" Figure 6 below shows the percentage who agreed with this statement, broken down by the type of extracurricular activity they had engaged in. Scouts, Arts and Police Cadets were among the most impactful.

When comparing people who attended Scouts and those who did not - 60% of Scouts alumni agreed that participating in extracurricular activities helped prepare them for their career in comparison to 49% of non-Scouts (non-Scouts includes people who did no extracurricular activities at all). As we will see, the breadth of activities Scouts get involved in, from expeditions to community service, allow them to develop a range of important employability skills that many of the people we interviewed felt helped make them more prepared for work.

FIGURE 6

PROPORTION OF PEOPLE FOR WHOM EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES HELPED PREPARE THEM FOR THEIR CAREERS, BY TYPE OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY.
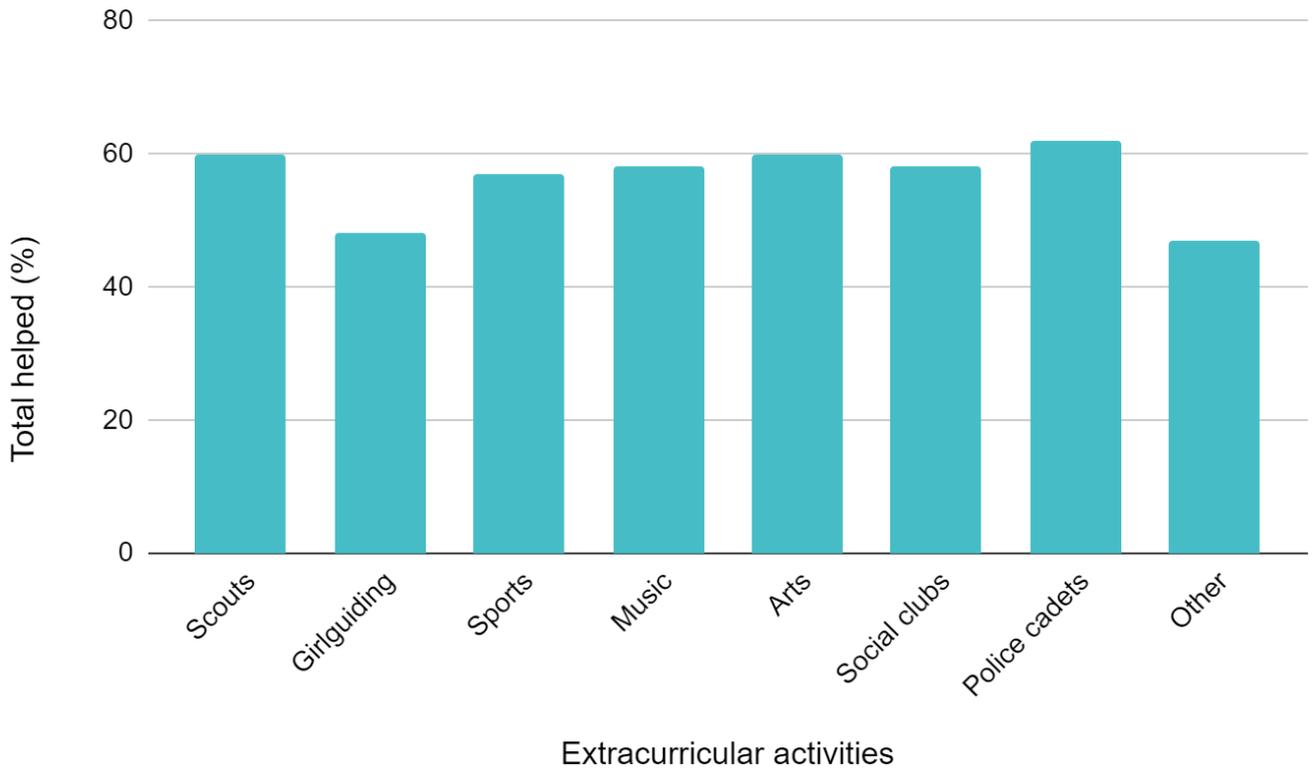
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

The transferable skills people develop through extracurricular activities play a particularly important role in helping young people feel more ready for work. As discussed in chapter one, employers want to see job applicants who have a strong set of transferable skills like emotional resilience, leadership and teamwork. As shown in Figure 7, a significant amount of people who attended extracurricular activities when they were younger believe extracurricular activities have helped give them these skills.

FIGURE 7

BAR CHART SHOWING THE WAYS IN WHICH PARTICIPATING IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES HELPED CAREERS.
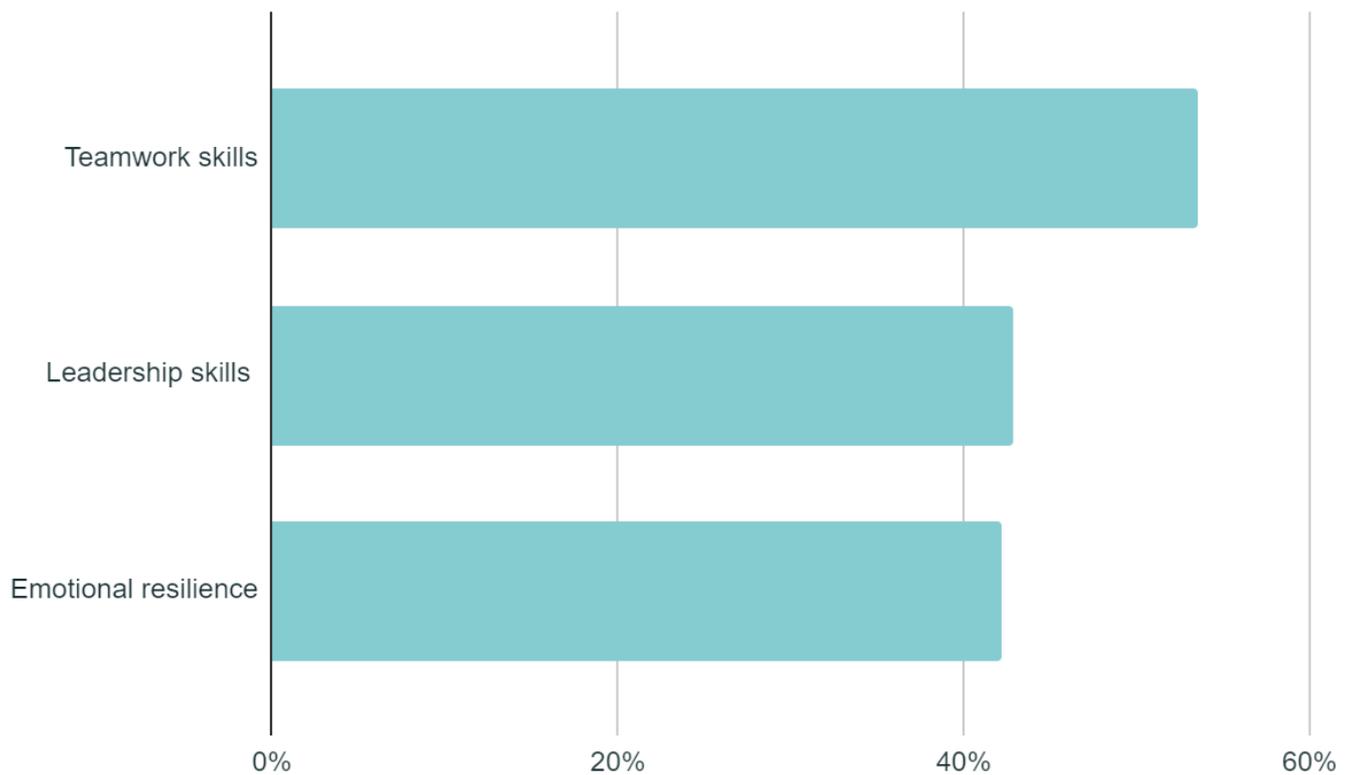
According to a 2019 report by the Social Mobility Commission, *An Unequal Playing Field*, taking part in extracurricular activities when younger can have substantial benefits for people's employability. [51]The Commission set out the importance of extracurricular activities for developing transferable skills and social networks in particular:

> *'Extracurricular activities are important in developing soft (especially social) skills as well as being associated with a range of other positive outcomes (e.g. achievement, attendance at school). We found from our analysis that extracurricular activities - specifically music classes and playing a wide range of sports – are important in predicting intentions to remain in education after compulsory schooling.'*

Similarly, research from SocStats on the impact Scouts has on people's employability skills found Scouts score 19.5% higher on Life Skills and Employability than non-scouts. Over 90% of Scouts surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that by part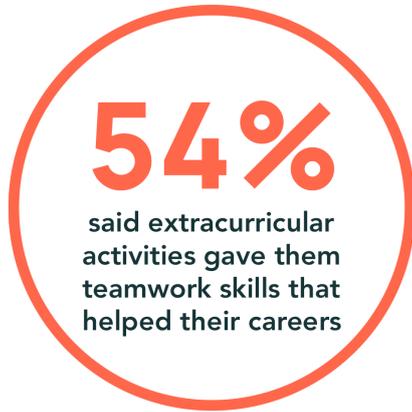icipating in Scouts they "got the chance to develop skills which will be useful to me in the future". 99.6% of Scouts surveyed said they had worked in teams and 95.7% had made decisions and had taken leadership roles. The SocStats research also found that Scouts score higher than non-Scouts for leadership, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, resilience, responsibility and trustworthiness, and teamwork.[52]

We will now draw on our nationally representative survey and focus groups and interviews with current Scouts and Scouts alumni to explore the impact extracurricular activities have had on their employability. We find that the different skills and opportunities that people gain through extracurricular activities including the Scouts - such as leadership, teamwork, communication and emotional resilience are key to these improved employment outcomes.

51   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field.* Social Mobility Commission, 2019
52   SocStats. *The Scout Association: Pilot impact survey analysis for the UK August 2017.* SocStats, August 2017. Available at: https://cms.scouts.org.uk/media/3221/changing-lives-strengthening-communities-the-scout-association-2017-impact-report-technical-document.pdf [accessed 03/04/2023]

TEAMWORK

54%

said extracurricular activities gave them teamwork skills that helped their careers

Teamwork was the most common transferable skill people gained through extracurricular activities. Of those in our survey who felt extracurricular activities had helped prepare them for work, 54% cited the teamwork skills they gained as being useful for their careers. For people who had been part of Scouts when they were younger, the same impact can be seen with 55% saying Scouts gave them teamwork skills that have helped them in their careers.

Scouts often undertake challenging tasks where they have to work with others to get things done, for example cooking for large groups of people or trekking through the night in the rain. Current Scouts and Scouts alumni we spoke to said that these experiences really helped build their teamwork skills. One participant told us that at summer camps they and their fellow Scouts would be responsible for all the jobs including cooking and lighting fires to keep warm. They said, "you weren't getting babied and had to pull your weight." The need to contribute and help others with these tasks showed them the importance of looking after others and working as a team to get things done.

One current Scout told us that when learning practical skills, like knot-tying, he was able to identify where his own strengths were and help others who were struggling to develop these skills. This shows that the day-to-day activities Scouts get involved in play an invaluable role in developing their ability to work with and support others in their team.

55%

said Scouts gave them teamwork skills that helped their careers

More formally, the internal structures of Scouts, such as Sixes and Patrols, also enabled people to practise teamwork by giving them the opportunity to take on different roles within a team. As one person explained:

> *"you run one of the sixes, they give you a bit of responsibility. The people that get given those responsibilities, you see them build confidence over time and can communicate with and lead other people." - A current Scout*

It's important to acknowledge that how frequently people attend Scouts and other extracurricular activities makes a difference to the impact it has. 59% of those who attended Scouts at least every week say their careers have benefited from the teamwork skills they gained, compared to 37% who attended at least every month. Beyond Scouts, 57% of people who attended any extracurricular activity weekly say they have benefited from the teamwork skills they gained in comparison to 39% who attended monthly.

As discussed earlier, teamwork is the transferable skill valued most highly by the employers we surveyed, with some of the employers we spoke to directly linking teamwork skills to Scouts. One employer told us that:

> *Teamwork is very different from your class at school. Expeditionary learning is about bringing in outward bound learning into the school. The scouting movement replicates this in more of an informal, family group. Building that bond in a different way to school. - Employer*

This suggests that Scouts, by providing young people with opportunities to get involved in challenging and

adventurous activities, and learn about the different roles that make up a team, is providing young people with the teamwork skills that make them employable, more than other key institutions like schools.

43%

said extracurricular activities gave them leadership skills that helped their careers
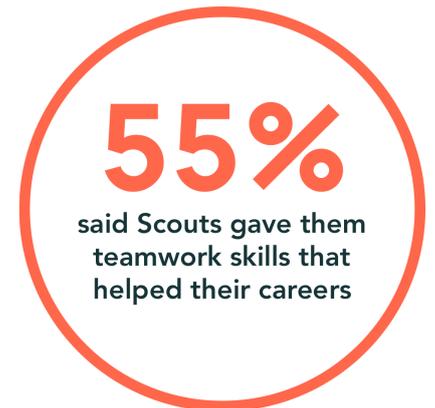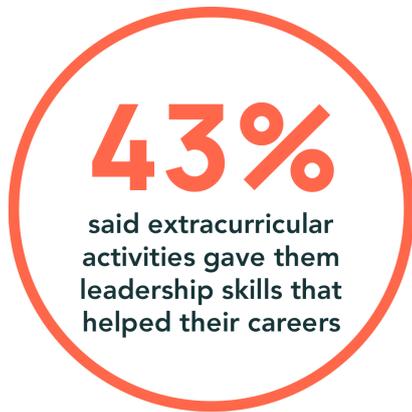
LEADERSHIP

Leadership is another important transferable skill people gain through extracurricular activities. In our survey, 43% of people who said extracurricular activities have helped prepare them for work said the leadership skills they gained have helped their careers. Of the Scouts alumni we surveyed, 51% cited leadership skills as one of the skills they had learnt that had helped them in their careers.

Much of this can be attributed to some of the unique responsibilities and experiences Scouts gives young people. For example, Scouts are offered leadership responsibilities, like leading Patrols, from a young age while Cubs are also given the opportunity to lead Sixes.[53]

They also gain a lot of experience of being away from their parents and taking on challenging situations. One person who attended Scouts when they were younger told us that a boy on his trip had an allergic reaction, and due to the leadership and first aid skills they learnt in Scouts, they knew how to handle the situation themselves. Another to told us that frequently being put in situations that he was "unaccustomed to" and having to find solutions to difficult circumstances really helped him develop his leadership skills:

51%

said Scouts gave them leadership skills that helped their careers

> *I think leadership opportunities were there if you grasped them… people who really grasped them could become head of your patrol or head of your Six, I did kind of grasp that a bit, I remember sitting at my last Scout camp before I went to Explorers, sitting in the rain and woods…there three or four eleven year olds, they were terrified and wet and they were looking at me like "he knows what to do…he's been here quite a while"...It was through situations like that I got a bit of, kind of, leadership experience, and like, staying positive in adverse circumstances. - A Scouts alumni*
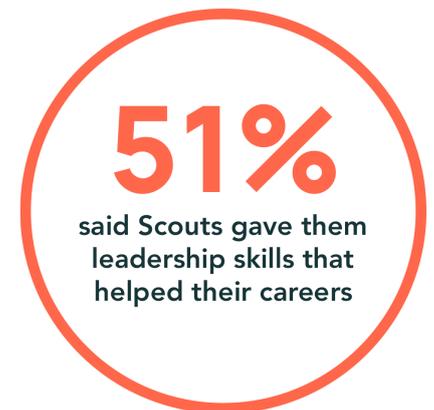
Older Scouts (18–25) also have the opportunity for more formalised leadership positions, such as the Youth Commissioner and Trustee roles.[54][55] Many of the Scouts alumni we spoke to told us that taking on these roles had been useful for their careers - particularly, many said that when looking for jobs these roles provided them with solid, demonstrable leadership experience that they could put on their CV. Others were able to apply what they had learnt about being a leader directly to the day-to-day work they do in their current jobs. For example, one of our focus group participants told us that, while she doesn't feel like being in the Scouts has helped her in all the jobs she's had, she can see that the leadership skills she gained have helped her career in hospitality:

> *In terms of hospitality and stuff, I remember there were quite a few times in my Scouts days that leadership and training to be a Scout leader, you pick up a lot of skills. Then, later on, as I managed bars and things, I think it definitely influenced how I managed and how I was able to persuade people to do the jobs that they didn't want to do. - A Scouts alumni*

Further, one current Scout told us that she applies what she learnt as a Scout Leader and District Youth Commissioner, particularly empathy and holding people accountable, in her job as a practice manager in a GP practice. Research on employers' perceptions of trusteeships show that they believe it can play a valuable role in improving employees' skills, like team building as well as leadership, and boosting their confidence, emphasising the value having experience of formal leadership roles can have in improving young people's employability.[56]

53   Patrols are smaller groups Scout troops are organised into, each group has a Patrol Leader. Sixes are smaller groups that Cub Scouts (aged 8-10) get split into, one member of the group is chosen to be a Sixer and gets to take on leadership responsibilities - usually sixers will rotate so that each Cub gets the opportunity to take on this role.
54   Scouts. *Youth Commissioners.* Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/youth-shaped/youth-commissioners/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
55   Scouts. *Trustee Roles and Responsibilities.* Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-things-locally/executive-committees/trustee-roles-and-responsibilities/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
56   Yeowart, C and McKenzie, D. *The Benefits of Trusteeship*. New Philanthropy Capital, March 2012. Available at: https://npproduction. wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Benefits-of-trusteeship.pdf [accessed 04/04/2023]

As discussed earlier, leadership is one of the main transferable skills employers say are lacking among young people. Our conversations with Scouts alumni show that extracurricular activities that entrust young people to take on important responsibilities, like formal leadership responsibilities, and empower them to have a level of independence from the adults in their lives, can play a valuable role in filling this leadership skills gap.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is another important skill people develop in Scouts. A recurring theme that came through from our interviews was that, having attended Scouts, people felt able to communicate with people from different backgrounds, ages, and nationalities. For example, Jamboree - a celebratory gathering of Scouts from across the world - was frequently cited as an invaluable opportunity to meet new people:

> *Spent two weeks on a campsite with all these different nationalities and people. The confidence I've got from that from speaking to new people, and speaking to people through language barriers.*
> *- Current Scout*

Through this experience they still had friends who lived in other countries. Another person who attended Scouts when they were younger told us that in the early stages of their career, he would put going to Jamboree in Chile on his CV as an example of team building.

One of our focus group participants also told us that they liked that being in Scouts gave them the opportunity to communicate with people both younger and older than them. This was something they didn't really do at school due to only ever working and socialising with people in their year group.

A number of people told us their Scout groups were more diverse than the schools they attended, which was something they valued. Research by the Youth United Foundation found that members of uniformed youth groups, including Scouts, Police Cadets and Girlguiding, are more likely to say they mix with people who are different to them, particularly people of different ages.[57] In this way, uniformed groups, including Scouts, can be more reflective of modern-day workplaces, where people will commonly need to work with people of different ages and increasingly due to globalisation, work with people from different cultural backgrounds.[58]

Another common theme was that Scouts taught people how to communicate with others they don't necessarily agree with. For example, some Scouts alumni from our focus groups told us that they had many debates at Scouts where they learnt how to effectively get their own points across, but also hear and understand other people's views. They were exposed to people with different views, so learnt empathy and how to understand other people's experiences. Some explicitly linked this to their careers, as working in a team with colleagues they don't necessarily like or agree with is something they often have to do.

> *There was a lot of debates and stuff going on, quite a lot. So, I definitely learnt how to get my point across but also, hear other people's points. We put on big debate nights but also, a big thing was you were exposed to so many different people from different backgrounds that I think empathy became a big thing…just hearing about different people's experiences and different ways of living.*
> *- A Scouts alumni*

Many of the current Scouts alumni we spoke to also said being in Scouts has given them the confidence to communicate with different people, which has helped them at work. One person told us she uses the confidence she developed communicating to a range of different people, including those she doesn't know, in her fundraising job today:

> *Being able to speak to people about something I'm passionate about is something I do with scouts anyway…RNLI is something I'm passionate about and it was very easy to go out and speak to the public all day. - Current Scout*

Another person noticed the benefits of Scouts when he took on his first job in retail. He explained that:

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57   ComRes. *Social Integration: The role of uniformed youth groups.* Youth United Foundation, June 2018. Available at: http://yuf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/FULL-REPORT-COMJ6149-Social-Integration-Youth-Groups-Report-0106-WEB.pdf [accessed 04/04/2023]
58   Eswaran, V. *The business case for diversity in the workplace is now overwhelming.* World Economic Forum, April 2019. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/04/business-case-for-diversity-in-the-workplace/ [accessed 04/04/2023]

Scouting does give you confidence talking to people. That is what supermarkets are looking for, especially as a team leader you have to be bold and have a personality. - Current Scout
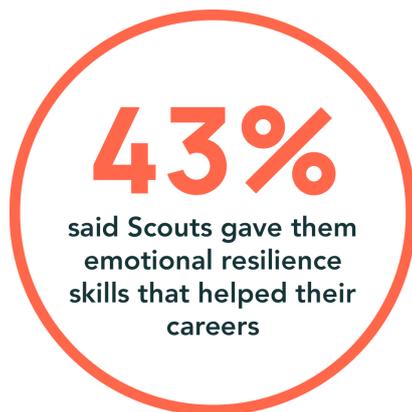
One current Scout said that the media training she received at Scouts has helped with her role as a Young Leader - particularly she feels confident in her ability to send emails and answer the phone and communicate with other Young Leaders and Scouts' parents as a result of this media training. It's clear that opportunities to interact with a diverse range of people at a young age play an important role in giving people the confidence they need to effectively communicate with others, a quality that is integral to the modern workplace.

EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING

The highest thing that Scouts gives you is attributes that are hard to capture on the CV. It makes you better at dealing with stress, good at taking responsibility, and leading. - Current Scout

Resilience

As well as skills like leadership and teamwork, extracurricular activities can also play a valuable role in developing qualities like emotional resilience. Of those in our survey who said extracurricular activities helped prepare them for work, 42% believe this was because of the emotional resilience they gained. Similarly, 43% of people who attended Scouts said that being in has helped them develop their emotional resilience.

42%
said extracurricular activities gave them emotional resilience skills that helped their careers

43%
said Scouts gave them emotional resilience skills that helped their careers

As discussed in Chapter One, emotional resilience is a transferable skill valued by many employers. Having opportunities to develop the ability to deal with setbacks and cope with challenging situations in the workplace is therefore imperative for young people's employability.
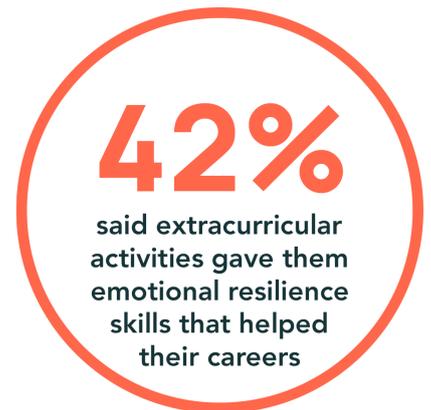
In our interviews with Scouts and Scouts alumni, some people cited the expeditions and opportunities for international travel while they were in Scouts as being especially good for building their resilience. One person we spoke to told us that he struggled when he went to Japan with his Scouts group as it was a long way away from home, he disliked the food and the weather was so hot they had to sleep outside their tents. However, he told us that having to find solutions to difficult situations like this had helped him build resilience, particularly as he didn't have his parents around to solve the issues for him.

Similarly, one person who volunteers as a Scout Leader explained how going camping over the weekend brought him out of his comfort zone, which helped build his resilience:

I think that comes from the more adventurous side of things, pushing yourself out of your comfort zone...This weekend was really windy and was quite difficult, with the cubs it was no bother, they just got on with it. They weren't moaning about it or anything like that…It's like facing those challenges, next time you're put in that situation would be easier. - Current Scout

Our participants really valued the emotional skills that Scouts had taught them, including that people felt validated to express their feelings. One interviewee told us:

It wasn't a place where it was 'shut up and don't complain'. Part of the training was being wary of what people were feeling […] It did build people up and took them out of their comfort zone […] It proved to kids who were maybe under-confident that they could achieve things as part of the group and not let the team down. - Current Scout

This suggests that despite the tough situations Scouts are put in, the reassurance that they can ask for support and be open about how they're feeling helps them to be more resilient to these challenging situations.

Further, the role models that Scouts gain can also help develop young people's emotional resilience. For example, one participant told us:

> You do have a different perspective on each (Scout) Leader, some you admire more. You build emotional resilience through communicating with them and how they deal with different situations.
> - Current Scout

This suggests that being able to see how others cope with challenging situations can be useful for young people learning how to build their own emotional resilience. Research has shown that near-peer mentorship - where the mentor is close to the social, age and professional level of the mentee - can also help young people persist through academic difficulty, again emphasising the benefits of role models for building young people's resilience.[59]

This resilience had real-world benefits for many, including in their education and their careers. One participant explained that being in Scouts when he was a child "helped with the ability to cope under pressure" and that this had been valuable in helping him to deal with stress during his exams as he got older. Another participant told us that the emotional resilience they developed at Scouts helped them to cope with challenges in their job as a teacher, including her students being "mean" and feelings of being undervalued as a teacher.

As with teamwork, however, frequency of attendance matters here. Attending Scouts at least once a week was more strongly associated with emotional resilience - 45% of people who attended Scouts every week when they were younger said the emotional resilience they developed benefited their careers in comparison to 33% who attended monthly. Similarly, 45% of people who had attended any extracurricular activities every week said this gave them emotional resilience in comparison to 35% who attended monthly, suggesting that frequent and regular engagement with extracurricular activities is key for young people developing and benefiting from these important transferable skills.

Wellbeing

As well as resilience, being in Scouts has helped some people learn how to look after their emotional and mental wellbeing in other ways. In particular, people told us that the support networks they have gained through Scouts have helped them look after their mental wellbeing during testing life events. Several people mentioned that participating in Scouts throughout GCSEs and A-Levels helped make them less stressed as going to Scouts gave them a designated time and space away from revision:

> To be able to take a step back from that [GCSEs and family problem], my explorers was a break from that one problem, that was going on doesn't have to take over everything. - Current Scout

The opportunity to make friends and be part of a supportive community also benefited the emotional and mental wellbeing of some of the people we spoke to. One person told us that Scouts had helped them to make friends when they were struggling at school. Similarly, another participant told us that through Scouts they had developed a strong social network that has given him 'emotional support', both at school and university:

> Gives me the skills to know I can go to the support group when I'm sad, to not just panic and freak out. Being around people who are emotionally mature - much more open to talk about mental health or specific things going wrong with them. - Current Scout

Another participant told us that the friend he made in Scouts had helped him cope with the death of his mother, even after he had left Scouts:

> The better friends I have, the best ones from that period of my life are the Scouty ones. When I left at 16 and a bit, my mother was diagnosed with cancer and she died at the end of upper sixth, and whilst the school were great, it was the friends and the parents of friends I made through Scouts in

59   Destin, M et al. *A field experiment demonstrates near peer mentorship as an effective support for student persistence*. Basic and Applied Social Psychology, July 2018. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01973533.2018.1485101?journalCode=hbas20 [accessed 04/04/2023]

that specific area, and they just scooped up, I wasn't coping that well with it…they really carried me through. - A Scouts alumni

The views expressed by our interviewees here are reflected in research by the Commission for Young Lives. They found that young people see engaging with activities like sports, creative activities such as drama, being outdoors and volunteering as important for preventing ill-mental health. They want to be able to go for walks and for day trips, to sometimes escape the situations they find themselves within and 'reset'. [60]

The Commission also found that young people believe youth club groups and youth settings, and building relationships with people they know are also important for their mental wellbeing.[61] This reinforces the importance of extracurricular activities and support networks for young people's mental wellbeing.

However, it's important to acknowledge that not everyone we spoke to felt that being in Scouts had benefited their mental wellbeing. For example, one person who attended Scouts when they were younger told us that he had a "mixed experience" and "struggled to fit in a lot" when he was there. Another person said that while they enjoyed some of the activities, like camping, due to having autism and social anxiety, they didn't enjoy the weekly "forced socialising with large groups of people" - this played a role in them eventually quitting Scouts. Further, one person told us that he didn't enjoy Scouts partly because he was bullied, by some of the other children there, which he perceived to be racially motivated.

These are of course a small handful of individual experiences that do not reflect any systematic problems within Scouts. As we've seen, the overwhelming majority of people have had positive experiences. However, this does reinforce why it's so important for extracurricular groups and organisations to continue making active efforts to ensure everyone feels welcome and benefits from their experience.

Further, it's inevitable that Scouts will not be the right extracurricular activity for everyone. This is why it's important that young people and their parents/carers are aware of and have access to a wide variety of extracurricular activities, so young people can find activities that they are happy taking part in.

Given the link between mental health and employability we discussed earlier, the impact being in Scouts has had on some people's general emotional and mental wellbeing is important for young people's future careers. All extracurricular groups and organisations should consider these kinds of hidden benefits extracurricular activities can have on young people's future careers, and aim to maximise their impact in this area.

CONFIDENCE

Confidence building was also a key theme in our interviews and focus groups. A number of people told us that attending Scouts had helped to build their confidence from a young age and that this had lasting effects:

> *I was a lot shyer when I was younger, scouting has boosted my confidence quite a lot and that stays with you. - Current Scout*

The confidence-boosting benefits of being in Scouts was also acknowledged by one of the employers we interviewed:

> *I've seen that the badge structure can really help. One of the participants, only time he'd received any kind of recognition, taking the certificate home, he felt that he could achieve things. This can be incredibly powerful. - Employer*

They also said that this can be especially beneficial for kids from disadvantaged backgrounds:

> *You can definitely tell that kids from independent schools are more confident, articulate from the beginning. The net benefit from being involved is greater for children not from independent schools. Especially profound for children with special educational needs. Gentler approach. - Employer*

60 Commission on Young Lives. *Heads Up Rethinking mental health services for vulnerable young people*. Commission on Young Lives, July 2022. Available at: https://thecommissiononyounglives.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/COYL-Heads-Up-Report-July-2022.pdf [accessed 04/04/2023]

61 Commission on Young Lives. *Heads Up Rethinking mental health services for vulnerable young people*. Commission on Young Lives, July 2022.

Lack of confidence was one of the main reasons the people we surveyed said they felt unprepared for starting work after school or university with 49% giving this reason. This means that the confidence-building benefits Scout has had for some people can play an important role in enhancing young people's readiness for the world of work.

FURTHER BENEFITS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMPLOYABILITY

Technical skills

The experiences that people gain through extracurricular activities are not limited to transferable skills. In our survey, 27% of people who said extracurricular activities helped prepare them for work said they gained technical skills - specialised skills or knowledge that can be applied directly to their area of work - that have helped their career. Among Scouts alumni who said Scouts had helped prepare them for work, 29% said it had given them technical skills that have helped their career.

From event organisations to map reading, the tasks and activities Scouts undertake can give them a range of technical skills that will be useful for their future careers. For example, one current Scout told us that he uses the technical skills he learnt in Scouts in his job in the RAF, including map reading and especially navigation. As a result, he felt that he had an advantage over others in the RAF who hadn't been in Scouts. Another current Scout we spoke to, said that carrying out risk assessments has given her an advantage at work over others who didn't go to Scouts:

> *I learnt how to do a risk assessment when I was 14 in Explorers. I now go into a PhD and I do one every day. They thought they'd have to train me for it, but they didn't have to. When I did Engineering, most people failed the risk assessment. - Current Scout*

Some of the Scouts alumni we spoke to also said they had gained technical skills that have been useful for some of the jobs they've had. One person who attended Scouts when they were younger had previously worked as a historical reenactor and told us that archery and putting up tents were skills they learnt in Scouts that they directly used in this job role. Another person who organised charitable events and concerts for their job told us they believed that organising events and setting up camps in Scouts helped them with the logistical side of these jobs.

The examples given by the current Scouts and Scouts alumni we spoke to show that the technical skills young people develop in Scouts can be useful for a number of different careers. Fewer Scouts alumni (29%) say Scouting has given them technical skills that have helped them in their careers compared to transferable skills. However, our interviews show that activities like Scouts have the potential to go beyond transferable skills and help young people to develop some of the technical skills they need to boost their employability.

Not only can Scouts provide young people with some of the technical skills they need for their careers, it can also help share their career aspirations and drive their passion for their chosen career paths. One participant, an engineering student at university, told us that her interest in engineering stemmed from her experience of practical tasks in the Scouts. She said that building shelves and go-karts "piqued my interest, encouraged me to do a degree like engineering."

This is important for enhancing young people's employability. As discussed earlier, many employers greatly value job applicants who are driven and have a good work mindset, which can serve as a basis for them developing the technical skills and industry knowledge they need.

We know that employers face a significant technical skills gap when hiring young people. One employer we spoke to said how the experience that young job applicants gain from attending Scouts could sometimes be more valuable than other extra-curricular activities.

> *If someone can communicate what skills they've learnt, that's a strong point to sell. If someone turns around to me and said I did the Scouts, and said I did all the registers and I planned this event, [that's more impressive than] playing in an ice hockey team. - Employer*

It's important then that young people have the opportunity to develop technical skills as well as transferable skills through extracurricular activities.

Work experience

While people most often told us they had benefited from experience of specific tasks and skills through scouting activities, some described more formal work experience they had gained directly from attending extracurricular activities. 21% of people who said extracurricular activities helped prepare them for work cited work experience they gained as being helpful for their careers. 23% of Scouts alumni who said Scouts had helped prepare them for work said the work experience they got through the Scouts had benefited their careers.

As discussed in chapter one, lack of experience was the top reason people in our survey gave for not feeling prepared for work after leaving school or university. Likewise, many of the employers, Scouts and Scouts alumni we spoke to expressed frustration at the lack of work experience opportunities in schools, which as discussed is largely due to the removal of compulsory work experience from the KS4 curriculum. Therefore, it's valuable that some extracurricular activities can play a role in filling this gap.

The formal positions of responsibility some people get through Scouts was frequently mentioned by our interviewees as something that has given them valuable work experience. For example, one participant told us that he had the opportunity to sit on a youth council and to act as a trustee to Scouts. He really valued the mentorship that went along with this work. These experiences had directly helped him in his career - he told us that a role he had applied for asked for 5 years of experience and at 19 he was already able to demonstrate that he had that experience from working with Scouts since he was 14. One current Scout we spoke to aspires to be a human rights lawyer. She believes that her experience as a Youth Commissioner with Scouts has given her work experience in advocacy that is relevant and valuable for her career ambitions.

Similarly, one participant told us that Scouts afforded them experience that was directly relevant to his chosen career. He told us that he was the Treasurer of Scouts at university and through this role he had to run the accounts. This included documenting accounts according to the constitution, following strict protocols and following guidelines. This was ideal work experience for him as he wants to become an accountant, so he gained skills relevant to his future profession and demonstrable experience that he said he's been able to put on his CV.

Another participant had been part of the digital team at Scouts. Through this, he had helped to develop the website for Scouts, which as a computer science student was hugely valuable work experience. He explained:

> *It allowed me to do a lot more than just my education does. In an actual real world, hands-on practice…the people there (at Scouts) knew that I had an interest in computing so they taught me it.*
> *- Current Scout*

Many of our participants with recent work experience told us that they didn't include Scouts on their CVs because they felt it was less relevant to job applications and increasingly so as they gained more direct work experience that they could draw on. However, people told us more often that they had included Scouts in their applications when they applied for their very first jobs:

> *I don't think now, I'd put it on a CV, just because it feels like too long ago and I've done stuff since. But definitely, in my first jobs, when I was 16, it would have helped me get those first jobs. It was in retail, but it was just…more relevant, getting your first job, in my experience. - A Scouts alumni*

> *For me it is way down at the bottom of my CV as extra skills rather than like a major employment gap. But I have definitely brought it up in the past, in job interviews, especially when I was trying to get first jobs and had less experience…I think at an early age it is really important to show that you have those skills, especially a lot of my early jobs were working in bars or retail and having that ability to prove you can talk to people is quite invaluable, I think. - A Scouts alumni*

As discussed earlier, many employers value work experience when hiring young people - it shows they have had exposure to the workplace and also helps them demonstrate a genuine passion for their chosen profession. To help more young people feel as prepared as they can for starting work, extracurricular organisations should strongly consider ways they can further support more young people to gain work experience.

Networks and connections

Many people also gain connections through their time in Scouts that have helped them with their careers. 18% of people who said extracurricular activities helped prepare them for work said they gained connections that have helped with this. 19% of Scouts alumni who said Scouts had helped prepare them for work cited the connections they gained as being useful for their careers.

For some, these connections can directly help them secure a job. For example, one Scout we spoke to was offered two jobs through Scout leaders and is going to use his Scout leader connection to ask for work experience at a finance company:

> *I do think it's helped in a lot of ways. When I got the job in Tesco, I'd been offered two other jobs both through Scouts, one of my Explorer leaders worked at Mountain Warehouse, and he was like, "I think you'd be excellent for it." It's exposed me to people who can employ me. - Current Scout*

As well as helping some people to gain employment, the contacts people gain through Scouts have also been a source of careers guidance. Several people we spoke to said that having older role models like Scout leaders was useful for having someone a few years older to speak to about university and careers. Another person told us that through her Scouts university group, she has gained connections with Scouts at other universities. She has found it particularly useful for meeting people with work experience in engineering, the industry she wants to work in:

> *SAGGA [Scout and Guide Graduate Association] has helped…We're linked to lots of other universities, I've met people doing similar courses who are a couple of years older who are going into the industry now, who have done their placement years….all sorts of opportunities I may have never thought of or heard about without meeting those people. - Current Scout*

Lack of career guidance was one of the most commonly cited reasons for not feeling prepared for work by people in our survey, with 44% of people saying this made them feel unprepared for work. We also know that social capital helps people find jobs - between 30% and 70% of people say that their social connections helped them find their job. The experiences of the former and current Scouts we spoke to show that through role models and social connections, extracurricular activities can play a valuable role in supporting young people gain the guidance they need to feel more prepared for work, as well as helping them secure jobs through their Scouts connections.

Shaping values

The final theme that came from our research with current Scouts and Scouts alumni was that people benefit from the way Scouts shapes their values, which can have positive repercussions for their careers. Several Scouts told us that their experience made them a better person. For some, this has made them want to do good in the world which in turn has influenced their education and career choices. One person said it gave him a sense of duty, public spiritedness and optimism about the world. He jokingly said he could "psychologise" that the reason he was struggling to become a corporate lawyer was because it went against his sense of giving back to the world and wants to do pro bono work. Similarly, one focus group participant said that the focus on charity in Scouts influenced their choice to work for a charity because they are aware of charity as a career option because of Scouts.

Another person told us that Scouts had impacted their degree choice at university:

> *[Scouts made me] a happier, kinder and more virtuous person. I feel a bit responsible towards the world a bit. That's partially why I ended up doing my degree, my love for the planet, renewable energy. Scouts made me determined to do something to help the world a bit. - Current Scout*

One focus group participant also said that Scouts made her question traditions and ideas she wouldn't have questioned before. For example, they had debates about why women weren't included in the organisation earlier on in its history. This developed her ability to think critically which has not only helped shape the way she perceives the world, but is also an important skill for her current PhD research. She believes that having others at Scouts with other viewpoints was helpful in this sense.

By shaping people's values and outlook, Scouts has helped people develop careers that they are passionate

about and thrive in. As discussed, this is crucial for overall job satisfaction and supporting people's wellbeing at work which in turn benefits employers through increased job retention.

CONCLUSION

Whether it is through leading a group of Cub Scouts or meeting new people through Jamboree, Scouts offers young people a variety of enriching experiences. As we've learnt, these experiences not only help young people develop their employability skills, but also help shape their values and aspirations. For example, formal leadership roles give people teamworking skills and enhance their ability to inspire others and take responsibility. Going abroad to Jamboree events provides young people with opportunities to meet new people from different cultures, strengthening their communication skills. Going on expeditions and spending time away from their parents also helps young people build their emotional resilience and problem-solving skills, all skills and attributes our research shows employers highly value and want young people to have more of.

Group work and relationships are at the core of how Scouts run these activities, and what we've seen is that these relationships have been integral to the impact Scouts has had on young people's lives. It is from working with diverse groups and having role models that people have been able to develop those crucial transferable skills that employers need. Scouts build participants' social capital, helping them to make friends that have been a source of emotional support through challenging times. It also builds connections that help people secure jobs and work experience.

As Demos sets out in *The Social State*, we believe strong relationships lead to better outcomes in almost every aspect of people's lives, including employment outcomes.[62] By prioritising relationships, extracurricular activities can play a valuable role in building the social capital needed to enrich young people's lives, develop their skills and boost their employability.

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62   Mackenzie, P. The Social State: From Transactional to Relational Public Services. Demos, 28 July 2021.

CHAPTER 3
THE INEQUALITY CHALLENGE

We have heard clearly that being involved in extracurricular activities can help bridge the skills gap, helping young people to be more employable from the day they leave school or college. However, there are inequalities in who can access extracurricular activities which, if left unaddressed, can further exacerbate inequality. If extracurricular activities are accessed disproportionately by the more privileged, that can entrench advantage later in life.

THE EXTENT OF THE INEQUALITY CHALLENGE

Social grade

The stark contrast in participation levels between working-class and middle-class young people is made clear in a report by Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson[63] (cited in The Social Mobility Commission (SMC) report).[64] It states that nearly half of middle-class children (42%) took part in five or more extracurricular activities, compared to less than a tenth of working-class children (6.5%).

The SMC report, citing Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson, says:

> *"There was a high proportion of non-participation among their working-class participants, about 22% compared to 2% from children belonging to middle classes. Whilst significant social class gaps in participation were identified here, both middle-class and working-class parents saw extra-curricular activities as fun, healthy and offering social opportunities."*

Using data from the 2016-2018 wave of the Understanding Society survey, the SMC's own analysis found that as household income rises, young people's participation in different extracurricular activities also increases.[65] This was especially the case for music, with 11% of the lowest-income households taking part compared to 32% taking part from the highest income households.[66]

For "organised activities", including Scouts and youth clubs, the gap was smaller but still notable with just over 30% of young people from the lowest income group taking part in comparison to around 46% of young people from the highest income group.[67]

In our survey, with the exception of social clubs such as youth groups, all other extracurricular activities were shown more likely to be attended by those in the higher social grades. Figure 8 shows the percentage of

63   Holloway, S L and Pimlott-Wilson, H. *Enriching Children, Institutionalizing Childhood? Geographies of Play, Extracurricular Activities, and Parenting in England*. Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Jan 2014. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080 /00045608.2013.846167 [accessed 04/04/2023]
64   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field*. Social Mobility Commission, 2019
65   ibid.
66   ibid.
67   ibid.

people from each social grade who attended each of the extracurricular activities listed when they were younger.[68] Many extracurricular activities are more likely to be accessed by higher social class groups, and that people who accessed no extracurricular activities were far more likely to be from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. One in four people from the lowest socio-economic grade E[69] had never accessed any form of extracurricular activity.

FIGURE 8
BAR CHART SHOWING HISTORIC PARTICIPATION IN
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES BY SOCIAL GRADE
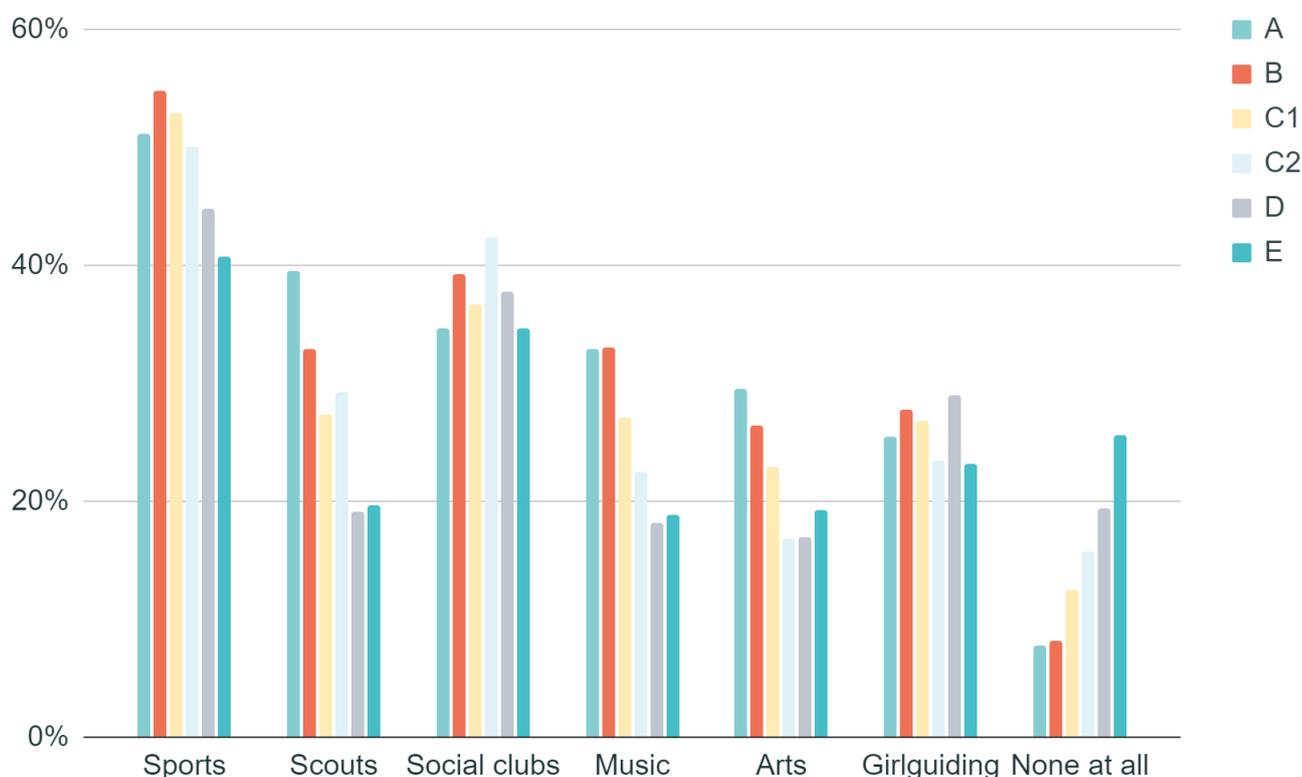
CAUSES OF UNEQUAL ACCESS TO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES BETWEEN SOCIAL GRADES

The SMC's qualitative research with school children found several reasons for this inequality in access. Perceived financial risk for parents was a key barrier to taking part in some extracurricular activities. This was particularly the case for music clubs - many said that their parents couldn't afford to buy the musical instruments they needed to take part. Other than music, one child said his mother couldn't afford to buy the food for an after school food-tech club he wanted to join, which stopped him from joining. Others said that activities like badminton are provided by their local leisure centres, but the membership fees are too expensive, preventing them from getting involved.[70]

As well as the perceived financial risks, lack of confidence was another barrier surfaced in this study - working-class pupils tended to be less confident in their abilities to take part in extracurricular activities in comparison to the middle class kids, with some saying they would feel uncomfortable and shy about taking part.[71]

Finally, time and availability of parents was also an issue that tended to impact working-class children more than the middle-class children interviewed. Several pupils said that taking part in some extracurricular activities would require "a car journey" that their parents didn't have time to do, for example.[72] This was

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68   Note that respondents were able to select more than one answer to reflect that people often attend more than one extracurricular activity.
69   Defined as state pensioners, casual or lowest grade workers, and unemployed with state benefits only.
70   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field.* Social Mobility Commission, 2019.
71   ibid.
72   ibid.

particularly the case for the pupils in rural areas, where transport was often essential for taking part in extracurricular activities.[73] This suggests that there is a need to improve social infrastructure so children can access extracurricular activities close to where they live, without having their parents having to make long journeys.

Ethnicity

The gap in access to extracurricular activities goes beyond economic status. Our polling found that ethnic minorities were much less likely than white people to say they attended extracurricular activities at least once a week when they were younger (56% vs 80%).

There are also notable disparities in the type of activity people from different ethnic groups attended. Of the people who responded to our survey, people from ethnic minority groups were significantly less likely to attend Girlguiding when they were younger than white people (18% vs 28%). On the other hand, people from ethnic minority groups were much more likely than white people to say they participated in arts activities when they were younger (32% vs 21%).

The SMC's research found that young people from different ethnic groups take part in particular activities to differing degrees. Their analysis of the Understanding Society survey showed that 60% of Black Caribbean youth attend organised activities (like youth groups, Scouts and Girl Guides) in comparison to only 12% of Indian and around a fifth of Black African, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Asian youth. By comparison, around 44% of white young people take part in these activities. Further, young people from ethnic minority groups were less likely than white young people to take part in music and dance.[74]

It's unclear from the data why these disparities exist. The SMC suggests that these disparities may partly be explained by "ethnic stereotypes associated with certain activities", but more focused research is needed to understand why different ethnic groups are less likely to participate in some extracurricular activities than others.

As we saw in the previous chapter, extracurricular activities can help young people identify what they're passionate about, which can help shape their career ambitions and put them on a path to finding a job they are happy in. Likewise, some people develop technical skills through extracurricular activities that are relevant to their chosen career path, boosting their chances of getting the job they want. This is why identifying barriers and addressing stereotypes that cause these disparities is important for ensuring young people can find an extracurricular activity they enjoy doing and that will help them find a career they are passionate about and thrive in.

Gender

Our research also reveals significant disparities in the type of extracurricular activities men and women participated in when they were children or teenagers. As shown in Figure 9, women were much less likely than men to have participated in sport when they were younger (43% vs 58%) while men were much less likely than women to have attended music (22% vs 31%) and arts activities (15% vs 30%).

Women in our survey were also significantly less likely to have attended Scouts when they were younger (14% vs 44% of men). However, much of this disparity can be attributed to the fact that the people responding to our survey attended extracurricular activities in the past when Scouts used to be a youth group exclusively for boys. It was only in 1991 that UK Scouts became fully mixed[75] and many of the people responding to our survey attended Scouts before this.

The latest data shows that there are 325,350 boys in Scouts and 115,052 girls in Scouts who make up 73.3% and 25.9% of Scouts membership respectively.[76] While there are still disparities, it is likely that a much higher percentage of girls and young women now currently attend Scouts than the people who responded to our survey.

73   ibid.
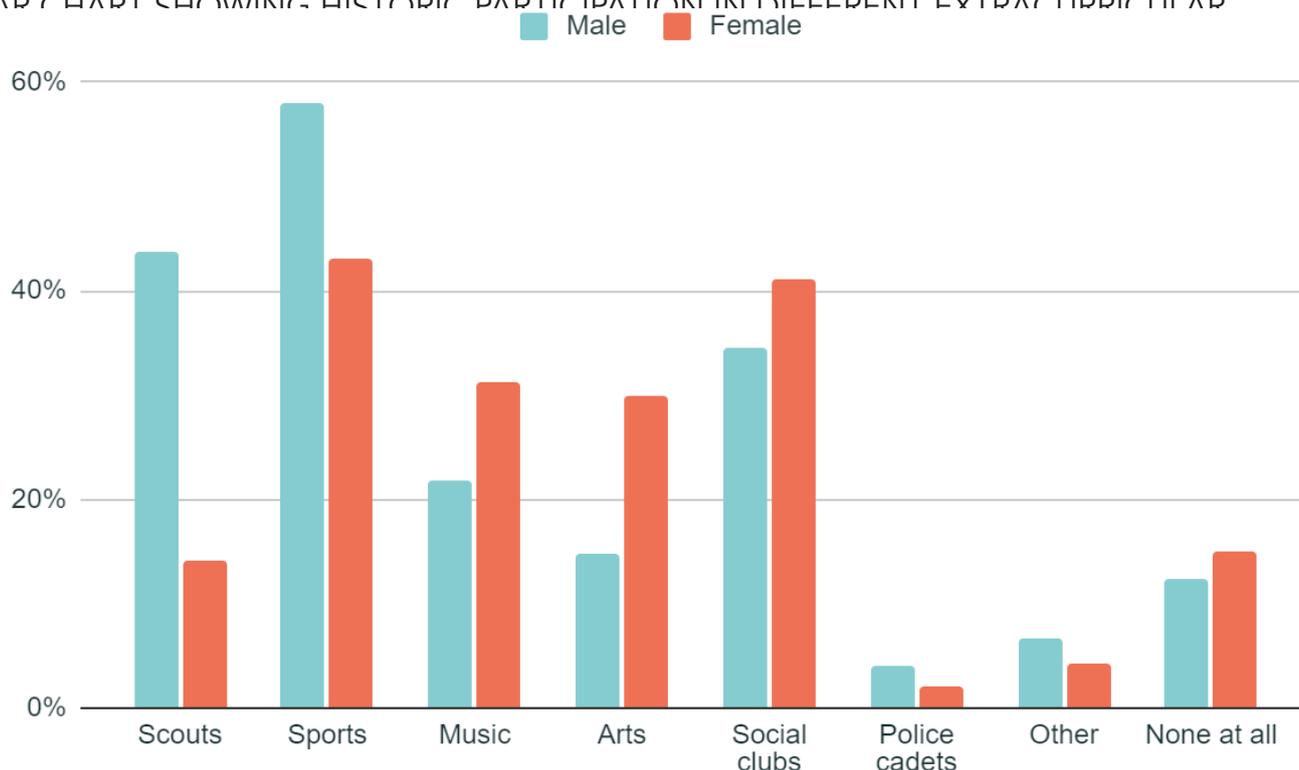74   ibid.
75   Scouts. *Girls and Women in Scouts*. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/inclusion-and-diversity/including-everyone/girls-and-women-in-scouts/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
76   Scouts membership data, 2023.

The SMC's research shows that these gendered disparities in different extracurricular activities are still prevalent among young people today. They found that in the domains of music, dance, art, and voluntary work the percentage of women is found to be disproportionately higher than men. This gap is particularly notable for dance - 3% of boys said they took part in dance activities compared to 23% of girls. Like our survey, the SMC also found that sports are still particularly gendered, 63% of boys said they take part in sports compared to 41% of girls. [77]

Cultural and social perceptions help in part to explain why these gender disparities exist. For example, the SMC's qualitative research with school children found that one boy left his gymnastics club because he was the only boy there, which made him feel uncomfortable.[78] According to the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, perceptions that sport isn't 'feminine' enough is a key barrier to getting more girls to take part in sport activities.[79]

Lack of opportunities to take part in some extracurricular activities also partly explains these disparities. This is particularly the case for sports - the SMC's qualitative research found that some girls enjoyed playing football, but couldn't because there was no girls' team for their age group at their schools. Furthermore, research conducted by England Football in 2022 found that just over a third of secondary schools offered girls equal access to football coaching through extracurricular clubs outside school hours.[80]

WHAT IS ALREADY BEING DONE ABOUT INEQUALITY OF ACCESS

It's important to acknowledge that many extracurricular organisations including Scouts are making active efforts to equalise access. For example, Scouts have incorporated growth plans in deprived areas into

77   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field*. Social Mobility Commission, 2019.
78   ibid.
79   Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation. *Barriers to Sports Participation for Women and Girls*. Active Together, August 2008. Available at: https://www.active-together.org/uploads/barriers-to-sports-participation-for-women-girls-17.pdf [accessed 04/04/2023]
80   Wood, P. *Football inequality revealed as just 44% of secondary schools teach girls same lessons as boys*. The Independent, July 2022. Available at: https://inews.co.uk/news/girls-only-get-to-play-as-much-football-during-pe-classes-as-boys-in-44-of-english-secondary-schools-1765144 [accessed 04/04/2023]

their strategy to increase access to Scouts - in 2019, it was reported that over 20,000 young people in areas of deprivation had joined Scouts as a result of the new Scouts groups set up in these areas.[81] They also recently launched 'Squirrels' for 4-5-year-olds to help young people develop important life skills at an earlier age, targeting communities that may benefit most, including areas of deprivation and ethnic minority communities.[82]

Scouts also recently set up a Cost of Living Support Fund to help young people impacted by the UK's cost of living crisis to continue taking part in Scouts. As well as Scouts, Girlguiding also offers grants to 'units' in deprived areas that can help cover the costs of members' uniforms and entry fees.[83] Financial support like this can provide young people from low-income backgrounds with opportunities they otherwise wouldn't have had. One of the current Scouts we interviewed told us that he was from a working class background, but Scouts subsidised his travel to international scouting events:

> *(Scouts) made me more internationally aware and want to travel and meet the world, and work across the world. I'm from a very deprived area. It has been a very unique experience to even have a passport and travel and go abroad. Scouts subsidises so much - half price of a school trip…Made me more aware of the world, and the things you can do to help to make the world a better place. I don't think I would do the voluntary part of the scouting stuff if I hadn't been abroad. - Current Scout*

The Government has also recently announced a large capital fund for the youth sector with over £300m allocated to rebuilding and renovating youth facilities in areas of deprivation.[84] Alongside this, they have announced £16.9m of funding to expand access to uniformed youth groups, aiming to create 20,000 places for 10-18-year-olds across the country.[85]

Nonetheless, tackling the inequality challenge will require increased and sustained efforts, so we will return to this issue in our recommendations.

Given that our polling shows that people who attended extracurricular activities have better employment outcomes, unequal access to extracurricular activities seriously risks exacerbating inequalities in employment outcomes between the richest and the poorest. Research has shown that children from poorer backgrounds are twice as likely to be out of work in later life than their better-off peers, even when their qualifications are just as good.[86] Similarly, university graduates from low-socioeconomic groups are less likely to enter top-level jobs in their 20s, suggesting that having high-level qualifications is not enough to narrow the gap in employment outcomes.[87] We believe there is an important evidence gap here charting the links between extracurricular activities, employability and social class that urgently needs addressing.

81   Slaughter, J. *Over 20,000 young people in areas of deprivation join Scouts*. Scouts, May 2019. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/news/2019/may/over-20-000-young-people-in-areas-of-deprivation-join-scouts/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
82   Scouts. *Squirrels - 4 to 6 years*. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/squirrels/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
83   Girlguiding. *UK unites in need grant*. Girlguiding. Available at: https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/running-your-unit/finance-insurance-and-property/grants-and-funding/uk-units-in-need-grant/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
84   Department for Culture, Media and Sport and The Rt Hon Frazer, L MP. *Hundreds of youth facilities in deprived areas to be transformed with new investment*. GOV.UK, March 2023. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hundreds-of-youth-facilities-in-deprived-areas-to-be-transformed-with-new-investment [accessed 04/04/2023]
85   Simpson, F. *DCMS announces youth investment fund recipients*. Children and Young People Now, March 2023. Available at: https://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/article/dcms-announces-youth-investment-fund-recipients [accessed 04/04/2023]
86   Weale, S. *Poorer children 'twice as likely to be out of work in later life'*. The Guardian, April 2019. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/apr/24/poorer-children-twice-as-likely-to-be-out-of-work-in-later-life [accessed 04/04/2023]
87   University of Edinburgh. *Social class still dictates graduate job trends*. University of Edinburgh, November 2020. Available at: https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/2020/social-class-still-dictates-graduate-job-trends [accessed 04/04/2023]

CHAPTER 4
RECOMMENDATIONS

As we've seen, the challenge of youth unemployment will not be solved unless the skills shortage among young people is addressed. In the final chapter of this report, we set out our recommendations for national and local government, employers, schools and extracurricular organisations to tackle this skills shortage and enhance young people's employability.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SKILLS AND DRIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

National and local government:

1. **National and local governments should provide extracurricular organisations with additional funding targeted at widening access to extracurricular activities to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.**

   We know that extracurricular activities can be even more beneficial for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. To enhance social mobility, it's even more important that children from such backgrounds access them.

   As noted in the previous chapter, the Government has recently announced a large amount of funding for the youth sector and uniformed youth groups to expand access.

   However, it is clear from our research that the scale of unequal access to extracurricular activities is substantial across a range of demographics. Whilst this large capital pot will be sure to improve the current situation, if future Governments are serious about turning the tide in overcoming gaps in access, there will need to be continued revenue funding on a sustained basis for youth organisations across the sector going forward.

   There should also be system wide considerations for future Governments as to how they can help to directly tackle the barriers that prevent access to extracurricular activities for those in lower social grades. Whilst the current investment will provide welcome support for youth organisations to sustain and expand their infrastructure, consideration should also be made on how structural barriers, such as parental finances, and access to transport can be better overcome.

   As we learnt earlier, financial costs for parents can be a barrier to children taking part in some extracurricular activities, for example, music classes. Scouts currently offers substantial financial support to its members from low-income backgrounds, including a cost of living fund and financial support for members with additional needs.[88] Additional funding should be provided to extracurricular organisations

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88   Scouts. *Cost of Living Support Fund*. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-things-locally/grants-and-funds-for-your-local-group/grants-from-ukhq/col-support-fund/ [accessed 04/04/2023]

to help them develop more financial support packages like this for young people from low-income backgrounds, removing the high-cost barriers many young people face.

Additional funding should also be provided to help extracurricular organisations set up more local groups or clubs in deprived communities. Ensuring more children have activities close by in their local areas should help to minimise the need for parents to make long journeys they don't have time for, widening access to extracurricular activities to those living in deprived areas.

Whether national government or local governments provide this funding will depend on the particular extracurricular organisation. National organisations, like The Scout Association or Girlguiding should be provided with regular, sustainable funding from the national government. Local governments should aim to fund smaller organisations, such as local youth clubs or sports teams. National and local governments should work with extracurricular organisations to determine how much funding is needed to effectively widen access.

Ensuring every young person has the opportunity to take part in extracurricular activities and develop their employability skills is key to boosting productivity and economic growth, helping the Government to save money in the long term.

National government:

2. **The UK Government should expand the criteria of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to include an element that funds extracurricular and volunteering organisations,** helping to give more people in all parts of the UK opportunities to develop their transferable skills and improve their employability.

   Launched in 2022, the UKSPF provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment. A key part of the UK's Levelling Up agenda, the fund aims to improve life chances, partly by investing in employability skills.[89] The funding will be distributed across local authorities in the UK each year up until the end of the 2024-25 financial year.[90]

   Currently, funding for skills mostly focuses on "core" technical skills (like numeracy skills). However, as our research with employers has shown, transferable skills are just as important for people's employability.

   The UKSPF should therefore aim to expand its criteria to allow some of the funding it provides to local authorities to be allocated to extracurricular and volunteering organisations as means to support more people to develop the transferable skills they need to improve their employability.

National government and employers:

3. **The UK Government should work with employers to establish an employer-supported volunteering programme.** By supporting employees to volunteer with extracurricular organisations specifically, employers will be investing in the development of young people's skills which will help to reduce the skills shortage that has been so detrimental to employers and the wider UK economy.

   This programme would enable employees to take time off work each month to volunteer with extracurricular organisations or in schools. As part of this programme, the Government should aim to facilitate engagement between businesses and relevant extracurricular groups, potentially by encouraging more employers to sign up to the Do IT volunteering database[91] and respond to volunteering advertisements posted by extracurricular organisations.

89   Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. *UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus.* GOV.UK, August 2022. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus [accessed 04/04/2023]
90   Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. *UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocations: methodology note.* GOV.UK, May 2022. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-allocations-methodology/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-allocations-methodology-note [accessed 04/02/2023]
91   Do IT. *Find your next volunteering role.* Do IT. Available at: https://doit.life/volunteer [accessed 04/04/2023]

Volunteering for half a day once per month should be the target for employers in the programme. As extracurricular activities tend to take place in the evenings and at weekends, this time should be flexible e.g. allowing employers to take time off in lieu (TOIL) if volunteering in the evening or at the weekend falls outside their normal working hours. This time could also be accumulated, allowing employees to take 6 days off in a row each year to volunteer.

However, employers who cannot realistically give employees that much time off should still take part in the programme - even 1 or 2 days of volunteering per year can be valuable. This volunteering programme would create more opportunities for children to access affordable extracurricular activities, giving more children the opportunity to develop the skills they need for future career success.

The Government should aim to incentivise employers to take part in this programme by highlighting the benefits of allowing employees to take time off to volunteer. According to the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD), employer-supported volunteering can act as a cheaper form of employee development. Existing initiatives have helped employees develop transferable skills such as leadership, communication and presentation skills, as well as professional skills like advising businesses and providing pro bono support.[92] It can also help boost a company's reputation by showing that they are contributing to the community and also improve employee satisfaction.[93]

Local government and Multi-Academy Trusts:

4. **Local authorities and Multi-Academy Trusts should provide financial support to schools to allow volunteer extracurricular organisations to use their spaces after school for regular activities.** Research by the Social Mobility Commission found that one reason some children couldn't attend extracurricular activities was because of a general lack of extracurricular groups in their area, and extracurricular activities requiring a car journey that parents did not have time to make.[94]

While some schools already allow extracurricular organisations to use their space, if more schools across the UK are able to act as venues for these extracurricular activities, it would help to widen access to participation in extracurricular activities across regions and social grades. On-site after school activities would remove the need for students to travel to another venue, for example. Financial support should be provided to schools to make it easier for them to open up more of these spaces e.g. by covering maintenance costs.

Local governments and Multi-Academy Trusts should also aim to incentivise more schools to offer up their spaces by emphasising the positive impact extracurricular activities can have on children at school. According to the Social Mobility Commission, regular extracurricular attendance is associated with a range of positive outcomes for students including, achievement and attendance at school.[95] As our own research has shown, participation in Scouts enables many people to cope with the stress of school life and exams, by giving them a breather from studying, for example.

Extracurricular organisations and local councils:

5. **Extracurricular organisations should continue to work on widening access to extracurricular activities for children from disadvantaged communities and local councils should help facilitate this.** This should include widening access to children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds through targeted outreach in disadvantaged communities across the UK.

As discussed in Chapter Three, lack of confidence had been found to be a barrier to children from disadvantaged backgrounds taking part in extracurricular activities. This outreach should therefore involve

92   Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). *Employer-supported volunteering guide*. CIPD. Available at: https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/employer-supported-volunteering-guide_tcm18-27612.pdf [accessed 04/04/2023]
93   Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). *Employer-supported volunteering guide*. CIPD.
94   Donnelly, M., Lažetić, P., Sandoval-Hernandez, A., Kumar, K. and Whewall, S. *An Unequal Playing Field*. Social Mobility Commission, 2019.
95   ibid.

extracurricular organisations going into schools in these communities, speaking with young people and their parents or carers to encourage them to participate, reassuring them of their capability to take part and the development support they will get. Extracurricular organisations should also promote the social and wellbeing benefits of extracurricular activities, as well as the benefits for young people's employability.

We also know that perceived financial risk is a barrier to participation. Therefore, this outreach should involve providing accessible information on the financial support on offer. Further, extracurricular organisations should ensure that they explicitly communicate the financial support they provide through the different media channels they use (e.g. on their websites, social media accounts, newsletters etc.).

Local Councils should help facilitate this engagement by linking up extracurricular organisations in their local areas with nearby schools, prioritising schools with a high proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g. with a higher number of pupils eligible for free school meals).

ENHANCING THE IMPACT OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON EMPLOYABILITY

Scouts and extracurricular organisations:

6. **Scouts and other uniformed extracurricular organisations should set up alumni mentoring schemes where alumni provide careers guidance to current members.**

    As we've seen from our interviews with current Scouts and Scouts alumni, role models play a valuable role in building young people's transferable skills, and many people valued having older role models, like Scout Leaders, that they could go to for career advice. Therefore, uniformed extracurricular organisations should aim to set up mentoring schemes where alumni of these organisations can sign up to provide careers advice to current members, so current members can see how the experiences they've had and the skills they've gained can help them in their careers. This could include advice on writing CV's and preparing for job interviews as well as general advice on career paths and aspirations.

    Uniformed groups typically have large networks with current Scouts and alumni living across the whole of the UK - the Scout Network (18-25 year olds) currently consists of 20,000 people, for example.[96] This means young people can benefit from being connected with alumni across the UK. To facilitate this, digital infrastructure could also be used to give mentors and mentees the option to connect virtually if needed or preferred.

    As many of our interviewees told us they wouldn't want Scouts to be explicitly focused on employability, taking part in this mentoring scheme should be optional and aimed primarily at older teenagers and young adults who are more likely to be thinking about their careers than younger children.

7. **Extracurricular organisations should aim to expand engagement with employers as a means to recruit more volunteers and widen access to extracurricular activities.** This should involve proactively reaching out to employers, whether they be large employers or smaller local organisations, promoting the benefits of volunteering as a way to upskill employees and give back to the community.

    Scouts currently has a waiting list of around 100,000 children, largely result of there not being enough adult volunteers to meet demand.[97] This means that many young people are facing barriers to joining due to there being a lack of space available as a result of this volunteer shortage. Increasing the number of volunteers will help extracurricular organisations to offer activities to more young people.

8. **Extracurricular groups and organisations, including those run by schools, should tailor their activities to help to futureproof young people's employability skills.** This means developing more activities that help young people build the skills they need for the future workforce, including digital skills and skills for

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96   Scouts. *Being Part of a Network*. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/network/being-part-of-network/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
97   Tominey, C. *Bear Grylls: Scouts weren't prepared for so many people on waiting lists.* The Telegraph, April 2022. Available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/04/28/bear-grylls-scouts-werent-prepared-many-people-waiting-lists/ [accessed 04/04/2023]

the green economy.

Some extracurricular organisations are already carrying out activities that will help young people build the skills they need for the future workforce. For example, the Scouts offers a Green Young Leaders scheme where participants assess the relevant environmental needs in their communities and then decide on the most beneficial and impactful course of action.[98] This involves activities like creating 'evaluation postcards' where Scouts make postcards to reflect on what they achieved and what else they could do to create more change.[99]

As explained earlier, being able to assess the impact that businesses' actions and decisions will have on the environment will become an increasingly crucial skill for the green economy. Extracurricular organisations should aim to develop more schemes or activities like this that help young people to develop the skills that will be increasingly demanded by employers in the future, ensuring they stay up to date with relevant research on the future of the labour market to help inform what these activities should look like.

Researchers:

9. **Researchers should aim to fill the evidence gaps on the links between extracurricular attendance, employability and inequality.** More research is needed on the extent to which inequality in extracurricular attendance causes inequalities in employment outcomes between social grades.

   Existing research, including our own research in this report, shows that young people from low-income backgrounds are less likely to access extracurricular activities than those from wealthier backgrounds. Children from low-income backgrounds also tend to have poorer employment outcomes than children from wealthier families. We know from our research that attending extracurricular activities can improve employability, however, more evidence is needed on the causal relationship between unequal access to extracurricular activities and inequalities in employment outcomes.

Employers:

10. **Employers should encourage job applicants to talk about the skills and experience they have gained from extracurricular activities** by clearly stating the value of these activities in job descriptions, and by asking questions on extracurricular activities in job interviews.

    As discussed in Chapter One, there is a mismatch between what employers most want from young job applicants (sufficient transferable skills) and what young people themselves believe is making them unprepared for work. Employers should use job descriptions and interview questions to show young job applicants that they highly value transferable skills, and recognise the role extracurriculars can play in building these transferable skills, helping to encourage more young people to talk about these experiences and skills when applying for jobs.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO WORK EXPERIENCE AND CAREERS GUIDANCE

National government:

11. **The UK government should reintroduce the statutory requirement for Key Stage 4 pupils to undertake work experience.** As we've discussed in this report, the majority of young people today leave school without any work experience, leaving many of them feeling unprepared for work. The removal of work experience from the compulsory curriculum is likely to have had a disproportionate impact on the employability of children from working class backgrounds, who can't afford to do unpaid work experience

98   Scouts. *Green Young Leaders' Scheme*. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/take-part-in-generation-green/green-young-leaders-scheme/ [accessed 04/04/2023]
99   Scouts. *Birds, Bugs and Bees*. Scouts. Available at: https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/take-part-in-generation-green/birds-bugs-and-bees/#step1 [accessed 04/04/2023]

and internships during the summer.

Reintroducing the requirement for work experience will help to ensure that all children can receive important exposure to the workplace, explore potential career paths and have more opportunities to develop their skills, boosting their employability.

National government and schools:

12. **The government and schools should work together to bring employers into schools more often to support students' career development.** Widening young people's exposure to employers is crucial for tackling the problem of youth unemployment, social mobility and levelling up. The Department for Education (DfE) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) can work with schools that have a high number of students from low-income families to develop more schemes for employer-led careers guidance.

Such a scheme should build on the Access for Aspiration scheme which connects students on free school meals with businesses across London to deliver a range of impactful employer experiences such as work experience, mock interviews, and CV workshops. To date, the programme has delivered over 22,000 employer encounters and supported over 15,000 students from across London.[100]

To broaden the benefits beyond London, DfE and DWP should provide funding for schools to carry out this scheme across the country. To maximise the chances of students developing a career path they are happy and can thrive in, the scheme should aim to include employers from a variety of industries to ensure students can meet employers from their chosen career field, or learn about different career paths if they don't know what this will be yet.

UCAS, Association of Colleges, and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education:

13. **UCAS, the Association of Colleges and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education should encourage older teenagers to participate in extracurricular activities by promoting the benefits for university, further education, and apprenticeship applications.**

Sustained participation can reap rewards for employability, so it is important to encourage more young people to participate in extracurricular activities during their late teens. To do this, these organisations should provide detailed and accessible information on their websites highlighting the benefits of extracurricular activities for further and higher education applications, as well as for future employability and general wellbeing. This information should also come with guidance on how to get involved in extracurricular activities at school or with relevant extracurricular organisations outside of school.

Furthermore, they should provide advice and guidance pages on their websites showing students how to articulate what they learnt, including the technical and transferable skills they gained through extracurricular activities in their applications and interviews. School teachers should also ensure they signpost students to this guidance.

As we learnt from our interviews with employers, simply stating that you attended an extracurricular on a job application is not enough, applicants need to be able to effectively articulate the skills they gained and link these skills to the job. Therefore, supporting students to do this at an earlier age in university, further education, and apprenticeship applications will help prepare them for doing this on future job applications.

100   Mayor's Fund for London. *Access Aspiration Linking Young People and Business.* Mayor's Fund for London, 2021. Available at: https://www.mayorsfundforlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Access-Aspiration-Impact-Report-v15.12.21-small.pdf [accessed 04/04/2023]

14. **More employers should aim to develop links with schools and extracurricular organisations to support young people's career development.** This should involve employers using schools as a venue for career events for young people, where employers can explain to students what skills, experience and attributes they are looking for in job applicants. In particular, employers should provide students with advice on what skills employers are looking for and how they can effectively articulate both the transferable and technical skills they have on their CVs.

Extracurricular organisations could also take part in these career events to highlight to students the activities they offer and how taking part in these activities can help them develop the skills that employers want.

Employer engagement with schools could be part of a government-supported scheme like the one we proposed in recommendation three, but employers should also aim to proactively reach out to schools themselves to maximise the number of students that can be reached. As this report has discussed, the skills shortage among young people is one of the biggest challenges facing employers today. It is therefore in employers' interests to proactively support young people to develop their skills and help them better articulate those skills on job applications.

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THE SCOUT METHOD PROTECTS THE PERCEPTION AND WORKING MEMORY OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AGAINST THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

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SUMMARY

Background:
Social networks are effective and easy-to-use means of communication in the modern age technology. They remarkably influence the young users' behavior being so entranced in such a virtual world which would easily develop into addiction. In this study we aim to measure the impact of addiction to Facebook on perception and working memory comparing two groups of young people, and how to protect scouting young people against this attachment or addiction.

Material/ Methods:
The study was carried out in the national center of scouting of Morocco at Ibn Tofail University on 53 master students with an average age of 24.45 years and 50 young scout leaders of Hassania Marocain scouting, who have an average age of 24.06. The educational level of these young people is between the 1st year of higher studies and the master degree. Digital test of complex Rey-Osterrieth figure and a Facebook addiction test questionnaire were used.

Results:
The comparison of the means of attachment to Facebook between the two studied groups using T-test showed significant result (t = -2.510; P = .014 <0.05) with scout leaders demonstrated higher average of attachment to Facebook than that detected by master students. The results showed a statistically significant negative correlation between the hours consumed per day on Facebook and the perception and working memory. The perception of young Scout leaders is better than that of master students.

Conclusions:
We concluded that attachment to social networks influences working memory and perception, while the Scout method would serve as a new remedy for this scourge.

Key words: addiction, internet, smartphone, youth

INTRODUCTION

Social networks become a great element in our modern-age life given to the great development in the communication technology. This era started with a category of young people representing active users in which in no time most young people showed attachment up to addiction to their touch screens or laptops however, Smartphones are the most used devices to access these networks. According to **we are Social and Hootsuite**, among 3.484 Million active social media in 2019, 3.256 Million users connect from their Smartphones which represent easier and faster tools (We are Social & Hootsuite, 2019). The addiction linked to Smartphones influences the daily life at different levels including work and study through behaviors manifest themselves by being distracted thinking all the time of these social networks with no matter how many hours been consumed surfing, browsing and searching the networks (Pantic 2014).

The current study is aim to measure the impact of addiction to social networks on neurocognitive performance. Young master degree students from Ibn Tofail University and young Scout leaders from the Hassania Moroccan Scout Association are recruited for the study. An integrated model of non-medical remedy was used to stop or reduce the behavioral addiction to virtual networks through the concept of scouting which is based on performance of multidisciplinary activities practiced in reality and to encourage the users to leave the virtual world via a famous approach called "Learning by doing" (World Scout Bureau, 1998). Such approach constitutes a social environment full of interactions between young people which transform the pleasure or the need for social attachment of young addicts from the virtual world to the real world

We emphasize on Facebook platform given to its massive use in Morocco compared to other social networks (We are Social & Hootsuite, 2019). The Rey-Osterrieth complex figure, type 'A' ROCF-A through the digital traces of the ELIAN test battery was used, to precisely detect the influence of this type of non-substance addiction on working memory and perception.

The Rey-Osterrieth complex figure RCF is a clinical neuropsychological test of neuronal activity, developed by Rey in 1941 and standardized by Osterrieth in 1944 (ROCF; Osterrieth, 1944; Rey 1941), It is evaluated: visual perception, memory, attention, working memory , the ability to construct visually in space and also to measure executive function (Shin, Park, Park, Seol & Kwon, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to measure the impact of addiction to Facebook on perception and working memory and to assess the protective effect of the scout method against such addiction to social networks.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Participants

The study was carried out at Ibn Tofail University in Kenitra in February 2018 for first-year master students and in August 2018 for the scout leaders of the as-

sociation "Moroccan Hassania scouting" within the national center of scouting of Morocco. It is a comparative descriptive study between two groups of young people using social networks: the difference between this groups it is the practice of activities and specifically scouting which encompasses different activities. This study is carried out with a sample of 53 participants of master students with an average age of 24.45 years and 50 participants of young scout leaders, who have an average age of 24.06. The educational level of these young people is between the 1st year of higher studies and the Master.

Method

In our research, we used standard neuropsychological studies to get socio-demographic data, to evaluate perception and working memory as well as to find out the addiction to Facebook.

General questionnaire

A general questionnaire was used to identify factors related to socio-demographic data such as ,Age, Nationality, Sex, etc, and variables related to the use of social networks such as, the number of hours consumed per day, the most used tool to connect and preferable application, and factors related to education, such as: educational level, how to prepare homework and exams etc.

The Rey-Osterrieth Complex Figure Test (ROCF-A)

In our study we used the ROCF-A digital version to measure working memory through the ELIAN tool (Expert version), which is a battery of tests. This material consists of a digital pen (Anoto DP-201) contains an infrared camera and trace with the help of an exchangeable pencil lead, A woven paper (invisible to the eye) linked by a mathematical algorithm which read by the pen camera, and we
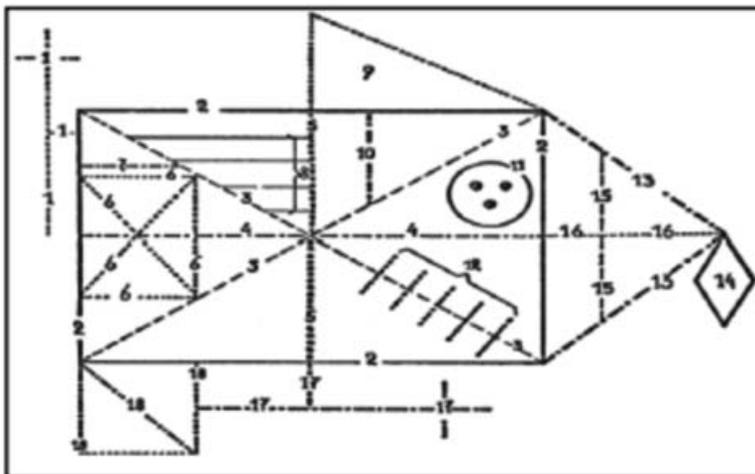

Fig. 1. Rey-Osterrieth figure in 18 Elements
Source: Mesmin and Wallon (2009)

have the ELIAN software (Expert Line Information Analyzer) developed by P. Wallon is his team (1995-2005) and allows us to give the drawing on the screen and processed, analyze and highlight the results in the form of graphs or literature and also gives us in Excel table form.

The ROCF-A test consists of two stages

The ROCF-A test consists of two steps:

- The first step: presentation of the model of the Rey-Osterrieth figure (Fig. 1) horizontally in front of the subject and clearly visible, but it is prohibited for the subject to move it or modify the position of the model, and he begins to copy the drawing on a sheet of A5 format and it takes their time in a free way.
- The second step: we remove the drawing and we turn the sheet to the blank side and we ask the subject to remain calm in the same position and after 3 min he begins to reproduce the drawing freely without time limit.
  The listing is done according to two procedures, either with:

1. The numerical rating which allows to establish a score up to 72 points from the 18 elements which constitute the FCR-A, and each element noted from 0 to 4 according to these criteria:
   - correctly drawn and well placed (4 points)
   - correctly drawn and badly placed (2 points)
   - correctly drawn, well placed but imperfect (3 points)
   - distorted or incomplete but recognizable and well placed (2 points)
   - distorted or incomplete but recognizable and misplaced (1 points)
   - not recognizable or absent (0 points).
2. The rating by type: it is through the strategy and the method used by the subject to copy and reproduce the drawing, and we can determine which type among the 7 types which are determined according to Osterrieth as the following:
   - type1: construction of the structure
   - type 2: details included in the structure
   - type 3: the main lines
   - type 4: the juxtaposition of details
   - ype 5: the details on a confused background
   - type 6: reduction to a familiar pattern
   - type 7: scribbling

We use ELIAN software (Expert Line Information Analyzer) to determine the types thanks to this option which allows us to review the drawing from the first traces to identify the organization used in the phase of copying and reproduction by the subject.

Measure of Facebook addiction

The addiction to Facebook was measured by the Bergan Facebook addiction Scal BFAS test which was developed and validated by Andreassen et al. (2012), and it consists of 6 items reflect characteristics of the addiction (to knowledge,

salience, mood change, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict and relapse) (Griffiths, 2005) on a scale rated from 1 to 5, ranging from (very rarely = 1) to (very often: 5), And the scores vary between 6 and 30 points, which answered with degree 3 or more on at least four items out of the six items, named addictive to Facebook.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows socio-demographic variable of two groups have almost the same average therefore are in the same age category and also for the level of study all the participants have between the 2nd year and the master of higher studies, while for sex we have the percentage of the female workforce and more than the poor for the group of master students (Mal = 24.5%; Female = 75.5%) and the opposite for the group of young scout leaders (Mal = 62, 0%; Female = 38.0%); and for the hours consumed per day in front of the PC, Smartphone and on Facebook we always find the group of young scout leaders higher than the students of the master.

Table 2 shows a negative and significant correlation between the hours consumed on Facebook per day and the score of the working memory (r = -.198 *; P <0.05) and the perception (r = -.330 **; P < 0.001) and a significant and positive relationship with the Bergan Facebook Addiction Scale BFAS test score (r = .311 **; P <0.001), and there is no correlation with the latter and the memory score of

Table 1. Statistics of the variables

		Master Students	**Scouts Leaders**
Age	Mean	24,45	24,06
	SD	3,969	3,02
Gender (N ; %)	Men	13 ; 24,5%	31 ; 62,0%
	Woman	40 ; 75,5%	19 ; 38,0%
Social level (N ; %)	Better-Off	2 ; 3,8%	3 ; 6,0%
	Average	48 ; 90,6%	46 ; 92,0%
	In difficulty	3 ; 5,7%	1 ; 2,0%
Education level (N ; %)	Master	53 ; 100%	8 ; 16,0%
	Licence	-	16 ; 32,0%
	Bac+2	-	26 ; 52,0%
Laptop hours/J	Mean	1,35	2,26
	SD	1,84	3,28
Smartphone hours/J	Mean	4,32	5,17
	SD	2,87	3,40
Facebook hours/J	Mean	1,70	2,83
	SD	1,76	2,65

Table.2.Correlation between working memory, perception, attachment to Facebook and BFAS

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1-facebook (nbr H/D)	1				
2- perception	-,330**	1			
3- working memory	-,198*	,517**	1		
4- groups	,240*	-,561**	-,353**	1	
5- BFAS Score	,311**	-,031	-,031	,051	1

Table 3. Results of the difference in means of perception and working memory according to the types of group

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	Test t	p-value	Sign
Working Memory	Master	53	35,0755	7,96591	3,733		
	Scouts	50	29,5000	7,14071		0,000	-
Perception	Master	53	45,698	3,5496	6,501		
	Scouts	50	40,200	4,8865		0,000	+

Table 4. Results of the difference in means of perception and working memory according to the types of group

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	Test t	p-value	Sign
Facebook	Master	53	1,708	1,7689	-2,510	0,014	+
	Scouts	50	2,830	2,6546			

work and perception, So we find between these last two a significant and positive correlation (r = .517 **; P <0.01).

Verification of the hypothesis

For the verification of the hypothesis we carried out a Test of the independent T-Test samples after having the conditions of this test, and the results are as follows:

Is there a difference between the average perception and working memory of master students and that of young scout leaders?

According to the data in Table 3 we find out that the average and the standard deviation of the working memory of master students (M = 35.0755; SD = 7.96591) and those of young scout leaders (M = 29.5000; SD = 7.14071) and according to the results of T-Test (T = 3.733) with a significance greater than 0.05 so we accept H0 and there is no difference between the means of the two groups with significance bilateral of P = 0.000 <0.05, while for the average and the standard deviation of the perception of master students (M = 45.698; ES = 3.5496) and those of young Scout leaders (M = 40.200; ES = 4.8865) and according to the results of T-Test (T = 6.501) with a significance lower than 0.05 therefore one accepts H1, there is a difference between the means of the two groups with a bilateral significance of (P = 0.000 <0.05).

According to the data in Table 4, we find that the average and the standard deviation of the hours consumed on Facebook per day of master's students (M = 1.708; SD = 1.7689) and those of young scout leaders (M = 2.830; SD = 2.6546) and according to the results of T-Test (T = -2.510) with a meaning greater than 0.05 so we accept H1, there is a difference between the means of the two groups with a bilateral meaning of (P = 0.014 <0.05).

Comparison of the means of (working memory, perception, attachment to Facebook) between master students and scout leaders is presented in Fig. 2.

The relation between Facebook Addiction Scale and the type of group is presented in Fig. 3.
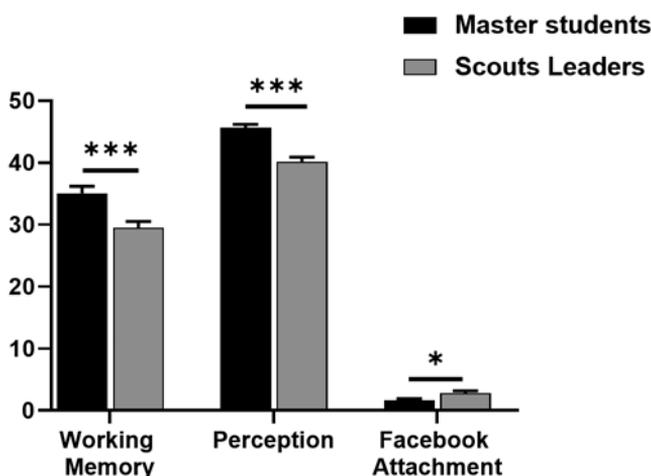
Fig.2. Comparison of the means of (working memory, perception, attachment to Facebook) between master students and scout leaders
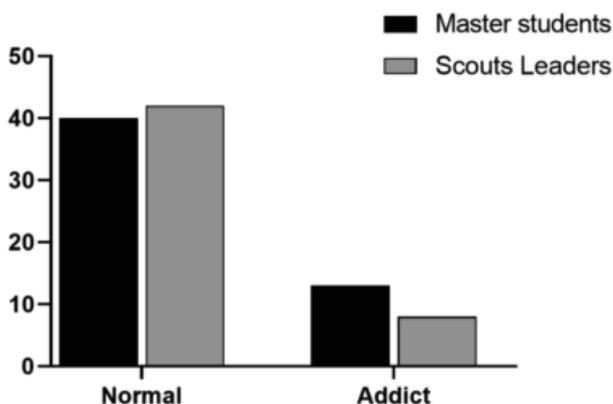Source: our own research

Fig. 3. Relation between Facebook Addiction Scale and the type of group
Source: our own research

We presented the relation between the Bergan Facebook addiction Scal (BFAS) and type of group. Moreover a chi-square test was not performed between BFAS and the type of group which gives a relationship between these two variables χ^2 = 1,153a, P> .000, but we found that the group of master students was more addicted than the group of Scout leaders.

DISCUSSION

Our study focused on the objective of testing the relationship between social media addiction and their influence on memory and perception through the com-

parison of scores between two groups of young people, the first consists of 53 Master students at the Faculty of Science, Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra and the second is made up of the 50 young scout leaders of the Hassania Marocain scouting association.

As a result, we obtained a significant negative correlation between the number of hours consumed on Facebook and the memory rating (r = -0.198 *, p <0.05) and perception (r = -0.330 **, p <0.05) for all participants. Therefore, attachment to Facebook has a negative effect on working memory and perception. According to a study conducted by (Rom and Alfasi 2014) to explore the role of attachment style to social networks among adults and its consequent effect on cognition and behavior, researchers showed that attachment tendencies are associated with negative consequences on cognitive functions. While the Bergan Facebook Addiction Scale BFAS test score found a positive correlation with the hours consumed on Facebook (r = 0.311 **, p <0.001) but there was no correlation with the memory score (r = -0.31, p > 0.759) and perception (r = -0.31, p> 0.758). Study of Eroglu, 2015 examined the style of attachment and addiction to Facebook among university students showed that there is a positive relationship between the scores of attachment style and the score of addiction to Facebook. Additionally, one study that was carried out by our research unit Louragli et al. (2019) aimed to show the impact of addiction to Facebook particularly using Smartphones on the school performance and mental health, demonstrated that the BFAS test score has a positive correlation between the number of hours consumed on Facebook and a negative correlation with the general average of the 1st semester, which implies that social networks influence working memory, and in a study carried out by (Eloirdi, Ahami & Mammad, 2019) there is a positive and significant correlation between working memory and the score of the general average.

The results obtained following the comparison of the means of perception and working memory by the T-test (t = 6.501; P = .000 <0.05) demonstrated that the perception among the Scout leaders are better than those detected for the Master students. This difference might be explained on the base of using the scout method regularly (World Scout Committee, 2017) which allows scout leaders to obtain a strong performance in perception compared to master students who use the classic method learning. However, for the working memory we did not find any difference between the two groups.

The comparison of the means of attachment to Facebook between the two studied groups using T-test showed significant result (t = -2.510; P = .014 <0.05) with scout leaders demonstrated higher average of attachment to Facebook than that detected by Master Students. A chi-square test between the state of addiction to Facebook and the type of group was performed and insignificant result was obtained (χ² = 1,153a, P> .000). Even if the group of scout leaders is more attached to Facebook but it was not translated into addictive behavior, and this can be explained by the activity of scouting which protects scouts against addiction to social networks thanks to the Scout method that satisfies the social needs of practitioners and provides an ideal climate for expressing and exchanging

knowledge in a real world, which leaves no psychosocial void favorable to the use of social networks. And in a study review of 32 articles published between 2000 and 2018 on the evidence regarding internet / social media addiction and attachment style and which performed by (D'Arienzo, Boursier & Griffiths, 2019) they described that the use of Facebook meets the need for care and affection, and replaces and compensates for the missing ailments of family members, according to (Rao and Madan 2012), and the use of Facebook becomes a means of social compensation (Eroglu 2015).

And in parallel we find the number of Facebook addicts in the group of master's students and higher than that of Scout leaders.

Our results might be interpreted in acordance to the microgenetic theory of symptom formation (Brown & Pachalska 2003; Brown, 2015; Pąchalska, MacQueen & Cielebąk 2018). One of the most important factors, without a doubt, is social life variously understood, which activates and strengthening the reward system (see fig. 4).

Pleasant experiences, during the use of Facebook, release positive emotions (e.g., joy), because they stimulate the reward system by creating connections from the basal part of the frontal cortex to the anterior (emotional) part of the anterior cingulate cortex of the right and the left haemisphere. At the same time, the punishment system is weakened. The strength and duration of these emotions are associated with the importance of the event for the particular person used social media. Therefore, positive reactions of other users of Facebook, might modify the minimal (working) self, and the longitudinal (autobiographical) self, strengthening the significance of a given (negative or positive) event (see: Pachalska, 2019).

The microgenetic theory allows a better understanding of why a group of scout leaders, although more attached to Facebook, did not develop addictive behavior. The scouts method, which satisfies their social needs and provides an ideal
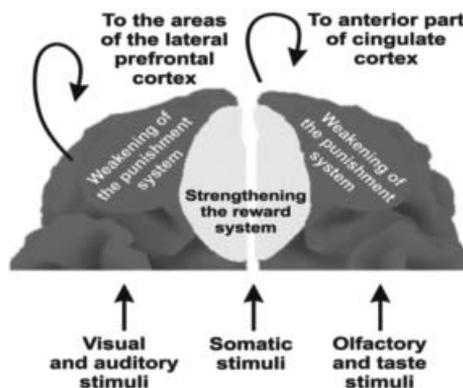

Fig. 4. The reward / punishment system and social media
Source: Pachalska 2019, modified

atmosphere for expressing and exchanging knowledge in the real world, which does not leave a psychosocial emptiness conducive to the use of social networks, strengthens the reward system and thus makes them happy. This way the Facebook becomes a means of social compensation (see also Eroglu 2015).

To sum up, in our research we shed light on a new concept that linked working memory and perception with addiction to social networks specifically the Facebook platform. The variation of attachment based on the activity performed was compared between the two studied groups of young people in which one group does not practice scouting while the other does. This opens up a new vision that "learn by doing" might be a protected tool for young people against addiction to social networks even if their degree of attachment to Facebook is higher. This also implies that the lack of family attachment and the need to be in social interactions force young people to use Social Networks to satisfy the need in a virtual world that facilitates communication in an easier way. And through this study we will focus in the future to put a model of behavioral remediation against addiction to social networks from the base of scouting activities. The problem we are addressing in this paper is new and requires wider, global research.

CONCLUSION

We concluded that attachment to social networks influences working memory and perception, while the Scout method would serve as a new remedy for this scourge.

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