Agents of Change or Not?
A Case Study of Earthchild Project in South Africa.

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AMANDA NORRLANDER


Abstract: This present case study is exploring whether an Education for Sustainable Development initiative, as exemplified by the South African Earthchild Project (ECP), which is focused on yoga, environmental education and hiking, can empower children and enhance their agency to become agents of change for Sustainable Development. With empowerment and agency theories as a backdrop, a quasi-experimental design is adopted. A drawing method is used in combination with follow-up interviews with an experimental group (children exposed to ECP) and a control group (children not exposed to ECP). Additional data were collected by a focus group session, semi-structured interviews and participant observation. These additional sources are youth who have been members of ECP for numerous years. The findings of this research suggest that that children and youth who are exposed to ECP’s activities are more empowered and have more agency in terms of Sustainable Development than those who are not exposed. Taking into account the study’s limitations and imperfections, it can be concluded that ECP, using an ESD-inspired approach, is meeting its intended objectives.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Education for Sustainable Development, Agency, Empowerment, Drawing Method, Yoga, Hiking, Environmental Education

Amanda Norrlander, Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, SE-752 36 Uppsala, Sweden
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Summary: Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a field, which is growing rapidly as a response to the on-going climate change crisis. ESD has a focus on empowering individuals and enhancing their agency so that they can develop their knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and competencies in order to transform themselves and their surroundings for a sustainable future. There are many ESD initiatives globally, yet, there is little empirical evidence that the intended outcomes of these initiatives are achieved.

Since 2007, Earthchild Project (ECP) has worked with children in under-resourced communities in Cape Town mainly teaching yoga, environmental education and taking children out on hikes in and around Cape Town. Currently, ECP has four main programmes for children in primary schools (Living Classroom: yoga and environmental education, Extra-Murals, Hiking Club and Holiday Programme), one for high school students (Alumni Programme) and a Gap Year Internship Programme for ‘Earth Children’ who wish to continue working for ECP. ECP aims to create change through nurturing children to become conscious, responsible and successful people and empowered and capable leaders. Although ECP does not identify itself as an ESD initiative, its holistic nature with a focus on empowering and enhancing children’s agency to become sustainable individuals as well as its long-term perspective match the concept of ESD.

This present case study explores whether an ESD initiative, such as the ECP, can empower children and enhance their agency in order to become agents of change for Sustainable Development. With empowerment and agency theories as a backdrop, a quasi-experimental design was adopted. A drawing method in combination with follow-up interviews is used with an experimental group (children exposed to ECP) and a control group (children not exposed to ECP). They were invited to draw their answer to the question: How do you see yourself in nature? The two groups are set in contrast to one another in order to find similarities and dissimilarities in terms of the level of empowerment and agency. For obtaining additional information that would enrich the data gathered through the drawing method, a focus group session, semi-structured interviews and participant observation were conducted with youth who have been members of ECP for numerous years.

The findings of this research suggest that that children and youth who are exposed to ECP’s activities are more empowered and have more agency in terms of Sustainable Development than those who are not exposed. Taking into account the study’s limitations and imperfections, it can be concluded that ECP, using an ESD-inspired approach, is meeting its intended objectives.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Education for Sustainable Development, Agency, Empowerment, Drawing Method, Yoga, Hiking, Environmental Education

Amanda Norrlander, Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, SE-752 36 Uppsala, Sweden
1. Introduction

‘Our mission is to create meaningful and sustainable change by providing practical skills in how to live a holistic, balanced lifestyle with a focus on self-awareness, health and the environment...Earthchild Project aims to nurture and develop a new generation of conscious, confident and responsible earth children.’

(Earthchild Project, 2015a)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a field, which is growing rapidly as a response to the on-going global climate change crisis (Venkataraman, 2009; Bangay & Blum, 2010; UNESCO, 2016). Climate change is occurring due to human interference with the natural system and these changes impose risks for humans and the system itself (IPCC, 2014). Education, both formal and informal, is said to have a significant role in addressing climate change (UNESCO, 2002; Bangay & Blum, 2010; Kibuka-Sebitosi, 2015; UNESCO, 2017). According to the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development (2014), ESD has potential to ‘empower learners to transform themselves and the society they live in by developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies and values required for addressing global citizenship and local contextual challenges of the present and the future’ (UNESCO, 2014, p.1). The Gothenburg Recommendations on Education for Sustainable Development (Samuelsson & Otosson, 2008) adds to this by saying that involvement and participation are crucial components of ESD, stressing the importance of empowerment and agency for human rights, active citizenship and societal change. In addition, UNESCO (2014) emphasises the importance of integrating ESD into education with a system-wide and holistic approach for a greater impact. It should be noted that ESD appears in many different forms since ‘there is not one single interpretation and use of ESD’ (Wals, 2009, p.7).

This thesis is an exploratory qualitative study of ESD in action. It examines Earthchild Project (ECP) in Cape Town, South Africa as a case of ESD. Since the start of ECP in 2007, the organisation has worked with children in under-resourced communities mainly teaching yoga, environmental education and taking children out on hikes in and around Cape Town. ECP primarily works with children in eight primary schools spread out in the two townships, Khayelitsha and Lavender Hill. The founder and director of Earthchild Project, Janna Kretzmar (2017) describes what the organisation is doing as holistic and experimental education where the focus is on learning while having fun. ECP aims to create change through empowering and nurturing children to become confident, conscious and responsible individuals towards themselves, others and the environment (Earthchild Project, 2015a; Kretzmar, 2017). Further, ECP specifies the outcomes of its programmes as creating conscious, responsible and successful people as well as empowered and capable leaders. To achieve these aims, ECP sees a need to work in a long-term perspective with children from the youngest age possible until they graduate high school, in some cases even longer. ECP focuses on producing high-quality educational programmes instead of expanding its geographical area in which the organisation works and Kretzmar states, ‘I believe we are achieving these outcomes because we work in the same schools, in the same communities with the same children for multiple years’ (Kretzmar, 2017). Currently, ECP has four main programmes for children in primary schools (Living Classroom: yoga and environmental education, Extra-Murals, Hiking Club and Holiday Programme), one for high school students (Alumni Programme) and a Gap Year Internship Programme for ‘Earth Children’ who wish to continue working for ECP (Ibid.). ECP’s aims and programmes are further described in chapter two. For the purpose of this study, ECP is defined as an organisation working in the ESD domain, although ECP does not directly identify itself as an ESD initiative. Nevertheless, its holistic nature with a focus on empowering and enhancing children’s agency to forge a sustainable future as well as its long-term perspective match the concept of ESD (see e.g. UNESCO, 2007; Wals, 2009; UNESCO, 2017).

1.1. Motivation

The seed for this study was planted after spending three months in Cape Town, South Africa in the
second half of 2016 pursuing an internship with ECP. As an intern, I had the opportunity to meet and interact with many current and former ‘Earth Children’ as well as ‘Living Classroom’ teachers from the primary schools ECP works with. I wrote on a blog serial to build up for ECP’s 10th Anniversary celebration in November 2016. For that, I interviewed a number of children and teachers to hear their stories about being part of ECP. What struck me was the warmth and thankfulness the individuals were showing towards ECP, as well as their statements about that ECP was bringing something different into their lives, something better. Many of the children and young adults said that they acquired skills, such as being a leader, caring and taking action for nature and confidence in oneself through participating in the Project’s activities. Some of them told me about their dreams and hopes about growing up and changing their communities to be a better place. This got me thinking: Are these individuals only telling me what the ECP staff and I want to hear? Or are these indications that the outcomes and aims of the Project are being achieved? So what are the actual effects on these children participating in the organisation’s numerous activities? And will they change and become sustainable agents of change in society?

‘Earthchild Project has a very big part in my life. It has changed me from how I was before – it has taught me about nature and it has made me become a leader. ECP has also helped me to have a positive mind saying that I can, I can do it.’ – Athenkosi Khulu, 21 years (former ‘Earth Child’ and current Hiking Club facilitator) (Norrlander, 2016)

‘Earthchild is something that came into the children’s lives that made a difference…their whole behaviour towards their fellow beings, towards the school, the environment…has changed.’ – Hayley Robertson, Living Classroom Teacher (Norrlander, 2017)

This particular case was chosen for this study due to its rather unique approach combining personal development, health and awareness, environmental education and leadership skills to achieve its outcomes. In addition, ECP was in need of an evaluation of its work, which was a suitable starting point for conducting this master thesis.

1.2. Research Question

As stated earlier, in this thesis ECP is put forward as an example of an ESD initiative due to characteristics it shares with the ESD concept. Empowerment and agency features are important within the field of ESD (see e.g. Percy-Smith & Burns, 2013; Caiman & Lundegård, 2014; UNESCO, 2017) and they are also important within the core mission of ECP. Hence, with the testimonials from children and teachers in combination with ECP’s aims and outcomes in mind, the following question is asked:

*Can a holistic approach to Education for Sustainable Development, as exemplified by Earthchild Project, which is focused on yoga, environmental education and hiking, empower children and enhance their agency for a sustainable future? And how?*

1.3. Research Aim

A 2011 review published by UNESCO noted that there is an abundance of information about the objectives and outcomes of ESD projects globally. Yet, there is little data proving that these objectives and outcomes are achieved (Tilbury, 2011). The same review further recommends that empirical data collection for actual experiences and projects should be prioritised. This study intends to contribute to filling this gap. This exploratory study is also a pre-evaluation of ECP, with a specific focus on the Hiking Club. However, the overall purpose of the ECP is also explored. Since the start of ECP in 2007, the Hiking Club has not yet been evaluated and therefore this study fills another gap. The aims, hopes and aspirations of the Project are examined through the lenses of empowerment and agency theories. The results will further be used within ECP’s operations. Specifically, a programme
description is developed, a theoretical approach to ECP’s operations is outlined and the data gathered for this study can be used for the purpose of acquiring funding to ECP’s programmes. A mixed method approach is followed for acquiring the empirical data. In this study, a drawing method namely Participatory Visual Research Method is used in combination with follow-up interviews, in-depth interviews, a focus group, participant observation and field notes. Drawing methods are seen as innovative and effective ways of obtaining data, especially when working with children, but they are still rather understudied and need more attention (see e.g. Theron et al., 2011; Literat, 2013). This study therefore also intends to illustrate how the drawing method can be used when dealing with questions related to sustainability.

It should be noted that due to the time limit of this thesis and the small data sample, I do not aim to show to what extent the children ECP works with may be empowered or have agency. Instead, this thesis is truly exploratory and serves as a pre-evaluation of ECP’s operations, which may give indications of whether ECP’s outcomes are achieved. These possible indications may further be used as a basis for future evaluations of ECP.

1.4. Structure of Thesis

In this document, the following chapter outlines the geographical area in which ECP works as well as a description of the Project itself. The third chapter contains a literature review concerning ESD and further an explanation of why ECP is a suitable example of ESD. In the fourth chapter, the theoretical framework including agency and empowerment theories is described to build up for the construction of the three indicators, Care for Oneself, Care for Others and Care for Nature in the same chapter. The following chapter describes this study’s research approach. After unfolding the different instruments for acquiring data, the empirical findings are presented in chapter six. Subsequently, the discussion of the findings is unfolded in chapter seven. Finally, this study’s conclusions, reflections and further recommendations are presented in chapter eight.
2. Context

This chapter outlines South Africa’s past and present societal, economic and environmental situation with a specific focus on Cape Town and the two townships, Khayelitsha and Lavender Hill, in which Earthchild Project works. This background aims to create an understanding of the sustainability issues ECP has the intention to meet. It also gives a comprehension for where the children, who have been interviewed for this study, have grown up and are living today. The geographical background is followed by the history of ECP and its programme description, aims and outcomes. Due to this study’s specific focus on ECP’s Hiking Club, there is an allotted section on the Hiking Club’s aims and outcomes. The ECP section is built up by information from ECP’s website, ECP documents, interviews with ECP staff as well as personal observations from my time as an intern and during the field trip (see section 5.2., pp.23-24).

2.1. South Africa: Past and Present

Many African countries are forced to address challenges related to all three most commonly expressed realms of sustainability: society (health risks, cultural change, and social justice); economy (poverty and social inequality); and environment (climate change, biodiversity loss, and natural resource depletion) due to their colonial history and resource-rich geographical locations (Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017, p.4). The country of South Africa, with its decades of social and racial oppression, is no exception to this African predicament.

2.1.1. Society and Economy

The country of South Africa has a grim history of colonisation having the first Dutch colonists set foot on South African land in 1652 (Abdi, 2002, p.1). After almost 300 years of colonisation, 50 years of apartheid followed in South Africa (Lehohla & Shabalala, 2014, p.497). The National Party put a policy of explicit racism i.e. apartheid into practice in 1948, just after the end of the Second World War (Deegan, 2001, p.20). White ‘Afrikaner first’ was the leading word and the Party decided to divide the country into racial zones where each group (classified under the Population Registration Act of 1950) – ‘white’, ‘coloured’, ‘Asiatic’ (Indian) and ‘Native’ (Black African) – exclusively would reside in these zones. This led to many people being forcefully removed from their homes under the name of the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Ibid., pp.20-23). Apartheid was further abolished in 1991 and the first democratic election was held in 1994 (Ibid., p. 78-81). However, more than 20 years after the end of apartheid most people who consider themselves coloured and black are still among the poorest in the country (Standing, 2006) and South Africa has still the position of being a ‘world leader in [racial] inequality’ (Sharp et al., 2014, p.13).

South Africa has the most advanced economy on the African continent with a ‘sophisticated’ financial system. Its stock exchange belongs to the top ten in the world and the country has well developed physical, energy and telecommunications infrastructure (SADC, 2012). In contrast, South Africa has an income Gini coefficient that is levelled above 0.66 (where 0 represents absolute equality and 1 absolute inequality), which makes the country one of the most unequal in the world (World Bank, 2016). In 2015, the Human Development Index (life expectancy, years of education, Gross National Income) was set to 0.666, positioning the country as number 119 out of 188. However, when accounting for the unequal distribution of the three dimensions of HDI, South Africa drops with 34.7% to 0.435 (UNDP, 2016, p.3).

2.1.2. Environment

South Africa is rich in biodiversity. The country has over 17 well-visited official national parks (SADC, 2012). In contrast, the apartheid period has left a complicated ecological legacy that influences national political, social and economic conditions. During apartheid, ecological concerns were reflecting the interests of the privileged white community of the society (UNESCO, 2013). In
the early 1990’s, due to the political shift ending apartheid, there was also a shift in ecological policies (Ibid.).


2.2. Cape Town

Cape Town is well known for its natural beauty and rich biological diversity. The ‘Mother City’ is located in one of the world’s six plant kingdoms – the Cape Floristic Region. This region is the most biologically diverse region in the world and also the smallest. Cape Town is also known for its culturally diverse population (Van Der Merwe, 2015). The city keeps attracting tourists from all around the world: food markets, surfing and scenic hikes are just a few things that keep people busy in the area. In addition, numerous NGO’s, companies and such are flourishing in the Mother City (see e.g. greenpop.org or entrepreneurship.co.za). In contrast, Cape Town is facing many environmental and social challenges due to rapid urbanisation, unemployment and inequalities. Issues such as water and air quality degradation, the functionality of ecosystems, social inequality (Van Der Merwe, 2015) and crime (Standing, 2006) are high on the local agenda. For example, on 21 March 2017, it was reported that the city roughly had 103 days left of the useable water. This means that only 18.6% of the drinking water dams in Cape Town (Saal, 2017), provisioning its whole population of 3.7 million people (STATS SA, 2011), are filled.

Khayelitsha and Lavender Hill, the two townships in which ECP is working, were established during the apartheid rule in South Africa. One of the consequences of the so-called Urban Areas Act of 1945 was that non-white, i.e. coloured and black, people were excluded from many South African cities (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry, 2014). The white population was allowed to reside closest to the central business areas followed by Indians, coloureds and lastly black Africans (Lehohla & Shabalala, 2014). These racial restrictions were particularly harsh in Cape Town (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry, 2014). Still today, there are high levels of social and financial inequalities in Cape Town which has led to high unemployment rates, informal settlements, low school attendance, alcohol and substance abuse, high criminal rates, gang related violence, shootings, murders, and more (Standing, 2006; Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2009; Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry, 2014). In addition, there are few natural spaces and littering is an increasing issue.

2.2.1. Khayelitsha

The high-density township community of Khayelitsha was established in 1983 and it was the last area of the City of Cape Town to be allocated to black African citizens during apartheid. Khayelitsha means ‘new home’ and it is located approximately 30km south-east of the city centre. When the township was established there were almost no houses built in the area. Still today, many residents live in areas with little access to water, sanitation facilities, or electricity (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry, 2014). The estimated population in Khayelitsha in 2014 was between 400 000 and 450 000 people with 89,8% of the population indicating isiXhosa as their native language and 98,7% describe themselves as black African (Ibid., p.37). Less than 5% of the population in Khayelitsha has a tertiary qualification and 38% of the population is unemployed (Ibid. p.36-37). Moreover, the township has the third highest number of murders in South Africa (Khayelitsha Commission of Inquiry, 2014).
However, Khayelitsha is more than unemployment, crime and low school attendance. The community is flourishing and is home for numerous local social projects and entrepreneurs such as the Spinach King.  

2.2.2. Lavender Hill

Under the 1969 Group Areas Act, Coloured and Indian people were forced from their homes around the Cape Peninsula area and relocated to Lavender Hill (Kanengoni, 2016). The township is located 25 km south of Cape Town city centre, neighbouring a popular tourist location for surfers called Muizenberg where Earthchild Project is based. In 2011, the City of Cape Town estimated that 32 598 people were living in the area (City of Cape Town, 2011, p.2). Ninety-five percent of the population describes themselves as coloured, around 3.7% as black African, 0.7% as Asian, 0.1% as white and 0.6% as other (Ibid., p.3). The most common spoken language in the area is Afrikaans (Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2009).

According to the Baseline Study Report by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (2009), more than 90% of their sample said to personally know someone who uses drugs and 87% know someone in their community who is involved in criminal activities (pp.28-29).

Lavender Hill is also a community where numerous peace and development projects are based such as the New World Foundation and Waves for Change.

2.3. Earthchild Project (ECP)

‘The underlying belief is that for holistic change to happen in society, it has to happen on an internal personal level and an external level. We have to learn how to take care of our inner environment and our outer environment. If we don’t know ourselves and love ourselves we won’t be inspired to look after ourselves, and if we don’t know the natural world and love the natural world we won’t be inspired to look after it.’

– Janna Kretzmar (2017)

Since 2007, the Non-Profit Organisation Earthchild Project has offered education with a focus on the environment, health, and self-development to under-resourced primary schools in Cape Town (Earthchild Project, 2015a). ECP focuses on the holistic education and development of children, teachers, schools and communities (Earthchild Project, 2014). Janna Kretzmar founded the organisation with the belief that human beings can live more harmoniously with each other and the natural environment. After pursuing university studies in anthropology and psychology in Cape Town, Kretzmar travelled to South America and worked in an eco-village. Her experience became an important part in the construction of ECP. Her eco-village experience had taught her that her belief could be put into practice. Another important element in designing ECP was Kretzmar’s participation.

1 In 2011, Lufefe Nomjana (i.e. Spinach King) started to sell nutritious spinach bread in his own community, Khayelitsha, starting with only a couple of South African Rand (local currency) in his pockets. The idea was to change his community into becoming more environmentally conscious as well as providing with another source of food. Today, Spinach King owns a shop in Khayelitsha Mall where he only sells products containing spinach. Nomjana calls his business Espinaca Innovations. Spinach King distributes bread to people in his community, caters for larger events and employs local farmers to grow the spinach for the bread. He believes that it is important to nurture the local economy (see spinachking.co.za).

2 The 370 participants ranged from 18 to 60 years old. 87.6% of the respondents were parents (Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, 2009, p.12-13).

3 See newworldfoundation.org.za

4 See waves-for-change.org
in and working for a youth summer camp. During these camps, Kretzmar realised that she had gained so much knowledge while having fun at camp. This nurtured the idea of creating a holistic and experiential education organisation where having fun and being active are in the centre of the learning process (Kretzmar, 2017).

ECP works in primary schools for the purpose of having access to children. Hence, ECP has found ways to connect its programmes to the national school curriculum (Ibid.). Kretzmar notes that the South African schools are in ‘crisis’ (see also e.g. Spaull, 2013) and that mainstream schools all over the world ‘are using a system and a model that was developed a very long time ago [when] the world was a very different place’⁵. She also emphasises that schools can be ‘powerful agents of change in society’. However, Kretzmar brings forward that changing the South African school system to promote Sustainable Development is not at the core of what ECP wants to achieve but rather to empower and nurture children to become confident individuals who forge a sustainable future (Kretzmar, 2017).

ECP is built on the personal passion of each member of the core team. Two yoga facilitators, one environmental education facilitator and the director (all four of them are still part of the team) were the ones to construct the basis for how Earthchild Project operates today (Abrahams, 2007). In addition to the initial team, there is today a communications manager and international interns working with ECP’s administration from the office in Muizenberg and yet another environmental education facilitator and gap year interns working in the primary schools. The Project has developed organically through its direct experience of working with the schools and seeing what is needed, what works and what does not work (Abrahams, 2017; Kretzmar, 2017; Fuyani, 2017). In the very beginning, ECP hosted a garden club and taught yoga in one primary school in Khayelitsha. By now the organisation has grown and works with a total of eight schools in Khayelitsha and Lavender Hill, with four schools in each area (Kretzmar, 2017).

2.3.1. Programme Description

![Diagram of ECP's programme structure](image)

Fig. 1. ECP’s programme structure (based on interview with Kretzmar, 2017)

Currently, ECP has four main programmes for around 3000 primary school pupils (age 7 to 13) running throughout the school year. Additionally, ECP has an Alumni Programme for children who have moved on to high school and a Gap Year Internship Programme for newly graduated high school students (see Fig. 1). Four full-time Earthchild Project facilitators and Gap Year Interns are placed within the existing school structure in the eight primary schools every week teaching mainly yoga and environmental education. All facilitators and Interns have personal connections to the geographical areas in which they work and they are all born and raised in South Africa. The ECP programmes complement the academic curriculum and help to develop practical skills in holistic and healthy living such as permaculture and stress management to use in the schools and in the children’s lives.

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⁵ See similar discussions about the need for alternative education to meet the changes in society in e.g. Vongalis-Macrow, 2013.
(Earthchild Project, 2015b). The Project as a whole has components of ‘life skills and personal development’, ‘health and wellness’ and ‘environmental education’. Together with the help of volunteers, parents and partnering organisations the facilitators introduce and maintain the programmes.

ECP only works with some of the classes in each school and these go under the name Living Classrooms. The Living Classrooms have yoga and environmental education during school hours. The system of Living Classrooms is based on the primary school teachers’ willingness to let ECP facilitators use their teaching hours. Today, the demand for having ECP facilitators teaching yoga and environmental education is increasing. Unfortunately, ECP does not have enough manpower (read woman power) or resources to respond to the demand (Kretzmar, 2017).

2.3.1.1. The Six ECP Programmes

ECP has two focus schools, one in each geographical area. These two schools have access to all of ECP’s programmes and these are where the ECP facilitators have their ‘home base’. As mentioned earlier, ECP started its operations in one school in Khayelitsha and the rest of the schools got engaged due to a snowball effect. In addition to the Living Classrooms, the focus schools have access to Extra-Mural activities (e.g. Girls Club, Arts and Dance), Hiking Clubs, Young Leaders and Holiday Programmes (see Fig. 1). Due to the lack of resources, not all schools have access to all programmes however some other schools have some additional programmes to the Living Classrooms (see Fig. 2). All of these programmes feed into the Alumni Programme (for former Living Classroom students attending high-school) and the Gap Year Internship Programme (for students who have graduated high school). None of the programmes is mandatory. In addition, ECP arranges teacher’s wellness conventions for teachers from a variety of under-resourced schools in Cape Town but in this study, no attention is put on this part of ECP (Ibid.).

\[\text{Fig. 2. The distribution of ECP’s programmes in the eight schools in Lavender Hill (LH) and Khayelitsha (K) as well as in high school and after high school (based on interview with Kretzmar, 2017 and informal chats with ECP staff)}\]

The Living Classroom Programme has weekly yoga lessons and bi-weekly environmental education lessons. More specifically, during the yoga lessons, the ECP facilitators teach yoga postures,
relaxation exercises, games and songs through interactive processes (Earthchild Project, 2015e). The Living Classrooms each have a worm farm and during the environmental education classes, the children learn about how to take care of the earthworms, permaculture, ‘reduce, reuse, recycle’, deforestation and the like. All of the environmental lessons intend to go under the umbrella of waste management. All lessons (both yoga and environmental education) start with an icebreaker and end with a custom-made song. In addition, the yoga lessons have elements of environmental education and vice versa. A common theme is that children learn about healthy living and life skills. In 2014, ECP was running 32 Living Classrooms (Earthchild Project, 2014; Earthchild Project, 2015e; Abrahams, 2017; Kretzmar, 2017; Fuyani, 2017).

Today, there are three **Hiking Clubs** run by ECP with approximately 20 children in each group. There are two clubs for children in primary schools, one in Khayelitsha (grade seven) and one in Lavender Hill (grade six and seven), and one group for alumni students. Each group hikes once a month in and around Cape Town. ECP also arranges two overnight hikes per year. The hikes have different themes (e.g. intuition, boundaries and awareness) and always include a silent walk and a guided meditation. During the hikes, the facilitators teach the children about flora and fauna as well as environmental challenges such as air pollution, climate change and alien vegetation. The Hiking Club has a large focus on conveying the message that nature is important and is in need of protection. The facilitators also run activities to empower the children with skills such as leadership, communication and teamwork (Earthchild Project, 2015d; Fuyani, 2017; Kretzmar, 2017).

ECP is running **Extra-Mural** activities such as environmental clubs (Eco-Warrior Club), yoga, girls club, dance and art after school hours. The facilitators mainly run the two former clubs whilst the latter are run by Gap Year Interns. The latter activities differ from year to year since it depends on the Gap Year Intern’s interests and ECP’s resources. The Eco-Warrior Club is where they go in more deeply into environmental and sustainability issues after school hours (Earthchild Project, 2015b; Kretzmar, 2017).

Twice a year, ECP arranges a week-long **Holiday Programme**, one in each geographical area. The Programme includes yoga and other activities such as arts, dance, music or gardening for all children at the allotted schools, even for the children who are not part of ECP. The arranged activities are based on the resources and skills of volunteers. The Holiday Programme is a platform for Alumni Students and Young Leaders (grade six and seven from all ECP schools) to run and organise sessions and being in charge of a larger project. Before the Holiday Programme, ECP staff runs leadership-training sessions with the Young Leaders and Alumni students (Kretzmar, 2017).

The **Alumni Programme** has its purpose in creating a platform for former ECP pupils to continue developing with the organisation. The Programme trains the alumni students in how to teach yoga, how to lead hikes, as well as empower them with project management and facilitation skills. The students also receive training in marketing, media and administration to prepare them for graduating high school (Earthchild Project, 2015g; Kretzmar, 2017).

After finishing high school, former Earth Children can apply to take part in the **Gap Year Internship Programme**. The interns can choose to teach Environmental Education or Yoga to children in
primary schools. The Gap Year interns are a part of the core team and attend the weekly Friday meetings. This programme started in January 2016 and currently has five interns (Kretzmar, 2017).

2.3.2. Aims and Learning Outcomes

As the quote states in the very beginning of this thesis, ECP’s core mission is ‘to create meaningful and sustainable change by providing practical skills in how to live a holistic, balanced lifestyle with a focus on self-awareness, health and the environment. Earthchild Project aims to nurture and develop a new generation of conscious, confident and responsible earth children.’ (Earthchild Project, 2015a). ECP has an underlying intention to ‘reconnect children, teenagers and adults to themselves, to each other and to the environment’ so that they will be inspired to act as agents of change in society (Kretzmar, 2017). The intrinsic idea of ECP is that personal sustainability in combination with environmental skills and knowledge is needed to create personal change for a sustainable future (Ibid.). ECP pursues a long-term perspective to its education to make the greatest change in the courses of children’s lives. The organisation works with children from grade one (age 6-7) and continues in some cases until the children have become young adults in their early twenties. The focus is set on quality rather than quantity and that is why the organisation has decided to work in the same schools, in the same communities and with the same children for multiple years rather than expanding to more schools and other geographical areas (Fuyani, 2017; Kretzmar, 2017). The staff aims to set an example on how one can live more sustainably through for example only serving vegetarian food at all ECP events and having yoga on the staff agenda (Abrahams, 2017).

Table 1 shows the outcomes of the different components of ECP. These outcomes feed into the newly developed Theory of Change (Fig. 3). Some components are stronger than others in certain programmes. For example, yoga is mainly developing life skills and teaching about health and wellness aspects of life whilst environmental education and hiking reconnect children to nature. However, all of these components work together since ECP believes in integrating all of these components into its education in a holistic manner (Kretzmar, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Skills and Personal Development</th>
<th>Health and Wellness</th>
<th>Environmental Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased self-awareness</td>
<td>• Healthy habits (drinking more water, eating less sugar, choosing to eat healthier food, etc.)</td>
<td>• Increased connectedness to the natural world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased self-knowledge</td>
<td>• Empowered with the information of how food and the way we eat impact health, wellbeing and the environment</td>
<td>• Understanding of how humans and nature are interconnected and interdependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved confidence</td>
<td>• Improved coping skills to deal with stresses and pressures in e.g. school and in the community</td>
<td>• Change in behaviour (less littering, no killing of animals, love spending time in nature, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved coping skills to deal with stresses and pressures in e.g. school and in the community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Theory of Change in Fig. 3 was created in January 2017 and is not yet completed. However, it presents the overall outcomes of the Project.
The outcomes of ECP as a whole (see on right side in Fig. 3 and in Table 2) and their meanings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. ECP's outcomes (based on interview with Kretzmar, 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conscious Person</td>
<td>• Self-awareness on a physical, emotional and mental level&lt;br&gt;• Empowered with knowledge and tools to live in a way that improves oneself, others and the environment (living sustainably)&lt;br&gt;• Understanding the consequences of one’s actions, words and thoughts&lt;br&gt;• Using this understanding in a way that is good for oneself, other people and the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Person</td>
<td>• Living consciously&lt;br&gt;• Taking on leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Person</td>
<td>• Self-Confidence&lt;br&gt;• Has a balance between health, well-being, meaning and fulfilment in one’s life (not based on mainstream perceptions of success such as just being wealthy on money)&lt;br&gt;Note: It is not success if creating something by destroying the planet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowered and Capable Leader</td>
<td>• Is a role model to others&lt;br&gt;• Changemaker in society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.2.1. The Hiking Club

‘We believe that children will not be motivated to care for the environment unless they feel a sense of respect, love and connection to the earth. And how can we love nature if we have never experienced it?’

(Earthchild Project, 2015d)

Many children growing up in Lavender Hill and Khayelitsha seldom get the chance to leave the areas
in which they live and have never seen or experienced the beautiful nature with all its mountains, forests, beaches and animal sanctuaries in and around Cape Town\textsuperscript{8} (Earthchild Project, 2015d; Fuyani, 2017). The Hiking Club has three core missions that all aim to promote a lifestyle of environmental stewardship and to further develop the children to obtain the personal characteristics found in Table 2. ECP sees the emotional and physical benefits of nature and believes that spending time in nature will increase the children’s wellbeing and environmental awareness. The idea is to introduce children ‘on a holistic approach to mental, physical health through natural play’ (Earthchild Project, n.d.) and through that reconnect children with nature. The missions and outcomes of the Hiking Club are presented in Table 3.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MISSION</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reconnecting Children with Nature | • Loving nature  
• Having respect for and caring for nature  
• Feeling connected to nature – feeling as a part of nature  
• Personal wellbeing  
• Change in behaviour (e.g. less littering)  
• Bonding with other people |
| Increasing the Children’s Knowledge about Nature | • Having knowledge about how everything is connected (nature-human relationship)  
• Having knowledge about flora, fauna, sustainability issues and areas in Cape Town  
• Knowing how to treat nature gently while hiking |
| Empowering the children with Leadership, Team Work and Communication Skills | • Empowered and confident about that one can do what one wants  
• Increased abilities to solve problems as a team  
• Increased trust in oneself and in others |

ECP has a vision of creating a safe environment for children to learn from and experience the outdoors. The Hiking Club is used as a space for children to obtain leadership skills and teach about a variety of health, nature and history topics. In addition, the Club intends to create opportunities for training children to guide their own hikes so they can take other children from their communities up the mountains (Earthchild Project, 2013; Earthchild Project, n.d.; Earthchild Project, 2015d; Fuyani, 2017; Kretzmar, 2017). Hence, the Hiking Club combines environmental education, life skills and personal development, health and wellness and leadership components (Kretzmar, 2017).

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\textsuperscript{8} During the interview with one of ECP’s Environmental Education facilitator, Xoli Fuyani, she brought up one of the reasons to why some children in Lavender Hill and Khayelitsha grow up without being exposed to nature: ‘I used to ask kids whenever I would bump into them “what do you think about going up to the mountain?” and they were like “where’s that?” and when I would talk to them about hiking they’d say, “oh no, that’s for white people”. It was just a very sad thing that they would see this mountain in their backyards but then it was just not a yearning for them to go climbing. They didn’t feel that it belonged to them or they didn’t feel that they could do it. The Hiking Club was just the best programme to really expose kids to feel the environment.’ (Fuyani, 2017)
3. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to give clarity to why ECP is defined as an exemplary case of an ESD initiative in this study. Firstly, the origin and meaning of ESD are reviewed and discussed. This section is followed by a specific focus on agency and empowerment within the field of ESD showing how important these two concepts are to nurture sustainable agents of change in society. Finally, the last part of this chapter develops an explanation of in what ways ECP can be regarded as an example of ESD.

3.1. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

There is an increased level of awareness of the effects of climate and environmental change worldwide and education has an important role in addressing this change (UNESCO, 2002; UNESCO, 2007; Venkataraman, 2009; Bangay & Blum, 2010; UNESCO, 2016). The concept of ESD was brought to the global agenda at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, also known as Agenda 21 (UNESCO, 2002). The concept was further discussed during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg South Africa in 2002. During this UN summit, it was stated that education has the capacity to put sustainability concerns within the learning context and that ESD is an important tool to achieve Sustainable Development (SD) (UNESCO, 2007). Hence, the purpose of ESD is to reorient education so that it contributes to a sustainable world (Samuelsson & Ottosson, 2008; Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017).

The most commonly known definition of SD is the one made by the UN Brundtland commission in 1987, which is as follows ‘...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (WCED, 1987). However, there are many different definitions of SD due to the concept being continuously contested worldwide (Johnston et al., 2007; Fuller, 2010; Kibuka-Sebitosi, 2015). For example, the Brundtland definition sets humans in the centre of focus whilst other definitions refer to a sustainable society as one where everyone lives within the limits of the environment (see e.g. Coomer, 1979). It has been estimated that more than 300 definitions of Sustainable Development and Sustainability exist worldwide (Johnston et al., 2007). ESD also has roots in Environmental Education (EE) (Kibuka-Sebitosi, 2015). Nevertheless, the United Nations highlights the differences between EE and ESD and states that EE ‘is a well-established discipline, which focuses on humankind’s relationship with the natural environment and on ways to conserve and preserve it and properly steward its resources’ (UNESCO, 2006, p.17). ESD adds to EE through bringing in the broader ‘socio-cultural factors and the socio-political issues of equity, poverty, democracy and quality of life’ (Ibid.).

A UNESCO report about the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2007) states, ‘ESD prepares people to cope with and find solutions to problems that threaten the sustainability of the planet’ (p.6). It should be noted that there is not ‘one single correct interpretation and use of ESD’ (Wals, 2009, p.7). ESD can for example take different forms depending on the age group it intends to adress (see e.g. Caiman & Lundegård, 2014). There is thus no ‘one size fits all’ when it comes to ESD but this does not necessarily make ESD a weak concept. Instead, ‘it can be argued that this characteristic allows for the key challenge of our time to be addressed in multiple ways from different vantage points in locally grounded but globally connected ways’ (Wals, 2009, p.7). ESD is regarded as an important force to improve lives and transform societies and is thereby seen as a catalyst for social change promoting sustainability (Teise & le Roux, 2016). ESD can be seen as both education and learning for SD (Lenglet et al., 2011). The word education is often associated with what happens in a classroom, yet, ESD learning occurs in all types of spheres in society. ESD is taught in classrooms but also in daily and professional life (Tilbury, 2011). ESD learning is sometimes viewed as the process of gaining knowledge, values and theories that relate to SD. It also prioritises the changing of mindsets and active engagement of individuals in relation to striving for a sustainable future. This transformative way of looking at education is said to not exist in current learning processes and practices (Tilbury, 2011). Further, it is noted that ESD should start during early
childhood for best effects and to encourage a process of lifelong learning (Samuelsson & Ottosson, 2008).

According to UNESCO (2007), ESD has the following eleven characteristics presented in Table 4.

### Table 4. ESD characteristics (UNESCO, 2007, p.6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education for Sustainable Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• is based on the principles and values of Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is interdisciplinary;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• uses various teaching techniques that promote participatory learning and critical thinking skills for co-creation of knowledge;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• deals with the well-being of all of the three realms of sustainability – environment, society and economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• promotes learning in a long-term perspective;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is culturally appropriate and it is relevant to the local context;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is based on local needs, conditions and perceptions but at the same time recognises that local initiatives can have international effects and consequences;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• engages formal, non-formal and informal education;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• discusses the evolving conceptualisation of sustainability;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• addresses content through discussing global issues and local priorities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• builds capacity for community-based decision-making, environmental leadership, adaptable workforce, social tolerance and quality of life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ESD is frequently criticised for being vague and having little conceptual clarity (Bonnett, 1999; Down & Nurse, 2007; Teise & le Roux, 2016). However, despite the ambiguous and different uses of the existing definitions, one thing is clear: ESD is essential for preparing every human being for this changing world and to give each and everyone the ability to forge a sustainable future (see e.g. Kibuka-Sebitosi, 2015; UNESCO, 2017).

### 3.1.1. Young People, ESD, Agency and Empowerment

The introduction to the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), makes explicit reference to children’s agency: ‘What we are announcing today – an Agenda for global action for the next fifteen years – is a charter for people and planet in the twenty-first century. Children and young women and men are critical agents of change and will find in the new Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world’ (UN, 2015). Yet, in the SDGs themselves, there are no concrete goals for children’s agency.

In order to give each and everyone the ability to forge a sustainable future and to become an agent of change, one needs to be empowered and have space for enhancing one’s own agency (Caiman & Lundegård, 2014). In a changing world affected by climate change, natural disasters, poverty and other pressing sustainability issues it is of high importance to empower the next generation (i.e.
children) through giving them positive beliefs, as opposed to messages of doom and gloom, and entrusting them to participate and contribute to a sustainable future (Ibid.). UNESCO (2017) states in an ESD report that individuals need to be empowered to have the ability to reflect on their own actions, have a sense of his or her impact (social, cultural, economic and environmental) and generally act in a manner that fosters Sustainable Development (UNESCO, 2017). Walker (2017) further argues that ESD can be seen as a way to build children’s citizenship and children’s agency should therefore be given more focus when designing ESD.

According to UNESCO (2017), ‘[ESD] empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society for present and future generations’ (p.7). Involvement and participation are essential components of ESD and to achieve these, empowerment and agency are crucial in order to encourage active citizenship, human rights and societal change (Samuelsson & Ottosson, 2008, p.4). Pluralism is also a substantial part of ESD and agency can contribute to this pluralistic component through allowing people to bring different perspectives, values and views (Caiman & Lundegård, 2014). In addition, ‘meaningful and, most importantly, lasting learning can take place only if the learners are empowered to make sustainable decisions or “care to act”’ (Lenglet et al., 2011, p.98).

This literature review on ESD shows that empowerment and agency are two crucial key concepts within ESD. Without these two, individuals cannot become agents of change for sustainable development in society and if there are no agents of change, a sustainable future will be difficult to achieve.

3.2. Earthchild Project: An Example of ESD

Just by looking at the larger outcomes of ECP, namely to develop conscious, responsible and successful people and empowered and capable leaders (see Table 2, p.11) it is clear that ECP has a focus on empowering children and enhancing their agency. ECP wants to give opportunities to children to make choices for their own lives so that they can take stewardship over their own lives and be active agents in society. Yet, Kretzmar (2017) notes that ECP is not expecting everyone to become community leaders but they should all have the ability to do so.

As Caiman & Lundegård (2014) suggest, ESD should give children positive beliefs and entrust them to participate and contribute to a sustainable future. ECP aims for the same suggestion and wants to convey a positive message regarding sustainability issues for the reason of empowering and giving hope to children instead of putting a weight on their shoulders. The organisation also has a participatory approach where children have the space to take place and act out whatever agentic features they have within them. ECP wants children to have fun while learning and there is a belief that children will not learn how to not litter by only being told not to. Instead, interactive processes are used to integrate new behaviours for the children to endeavour.

Table 5 is structured to show some examples of what ECP is doing through their programmes in relation to the characteristics identified by UNESCO (2007) (see Table 4).
Table 5. ESD characteristics (UNESCO, 2007) and ECP examples (based on Earthchild Project, 2014; Earthchild Project, 2015d; Fuyani, 2017; Kretzmar, 2017; personal observations)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESD</th>
<th>ECP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is based on the principles and values of <strong>Sustainable Development</strong>;</td>
<td>• has a vision of a world where individuals are connected with themselves, each other and the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is <strong>interdisciplinary</strong>;</td>
<td>• integrates sustainability issues throughout all of ECP’s programme (e.g. in yoga ECP facilitators also teach about environmental issues and how to take care of oneself and how to take action for the planet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uses various teaching techniques that promote <strong>participatory learning</strong> and <strong>critical thinking</strong> skills for <strong>co-creation of knowledge</strong>;</td>
<td>• is an experiential organisation who works with ‘creative facilitation’ where arts and participatory processes are in the centre of the learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deals with the <strong>well-being</strong> of all of the three realms of sustainability – <strong>environment</strong>, <strong>society</strong> and <strong>economy</strong>;</td>
<td>• is working in under-resourced communities where poverty is spread and aims to empower children to get out of the poverty trap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• teaches environmental education</td>
<td>• aims to nurture active citizens within society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• promotes <strong>learning in a long-term perspective</strong>;</td>
<td>• programmes’ starts in grade 1 and follows the children until they graduate high school, sometimes even longer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• promotes quality education with close relationships with the students rather than expanding the Project geographical reach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• is <strong>culturally appropriate</strong> and it is <strong>relevant</strong> to the <strong>local context</strong>;</td>
<td>• is founded by locals and run by locals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• facilitators come from the same culture and speak the local language used in the schools they work</td>
<td>• aims to develop the local communities through nurturing children into becoming confident Earth Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• aims to develop the local communities through nurturing children into becoming confident Earth Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• teaches children how to live more sustainably (e.g. taking care of oneself and people/environment around, eating vegetarian food, no littering, etc.) through bringing up issues such as climate change, water crisis and plastic waste in the oceans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• engages <strong>formal</strong>, <strong>non-formal</strong> and <strong>informal education</strong>;</td>
<td>• works on its own but integrate its education within the formal SA educational system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• discusses the evolving conceptualisation of <strong>sustainability</strong>;</td>
<td>No example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• addresses content through</td>
<td>• discusses for example how important water is and how the water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
discussing global issues and local priorities; crisis in Cape Town can be reduced through personal involvement reducing one’s own consumption

| builds capacity for community-based decision-making, environmental leadership, adaptable workforce, social tolerance and quality of life. | • aims to nurture and empower children to become conscious, responsible and confident individuals as well as empowered and capable leaders  
• helps to bring children out of poverty traps through for example giving mentoring in how to apply for jobs as well as opening doors through the gap year internship programme |

Ten out of eleven characteristics have a match with the work of ECP. Therefore, I conclude that through combining Table 5 and the discussion about empowerment and agency above, ECP can be seen as an exemplary case of ESD.
This chapter presents the theories that are used as a backdrop for this study’s analysis. The theories pinpoint different themes related to the concepts of agency and empowerment, which are further used when discussing the constructed indicators in the specific case of ECP. Agency and empowerment theories are highly interlinked and are often confused with one another. Some define agency as empowerment (Klugman et al., 2014), some see empowerment as an extension of agency (Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007) while others make clearer distinctions between the two concepts (Drydyk, 2013). This study takes the stance of seeing empowerment as an extension of agency, which means that empowerment is a process needed to enhance agency. Being empowered and having agency are crucial components for an individual to act as an agent of change in society. Hence, I first review empowerment and agency theories. Then, I bridge over to a section discussing what is needed for young people to act as agents of change to forge a sustainable future. Finally, I discuss the indicators used to categorise the data, which are based on agency and empowerment viewed through the outcomes of ECP.

### 4.1. Empowerment Theory

Empowerment appears as an objective with increasing frequency in many policy documents made by governments and other global agencies (Alsop et al., 2006). Drydyk (2013) states that UN reports related to human development are filled with the word empowerment without explaining its meaning. In many cases, empowerment is used as a synonym for ‘enable’ or ‘enable and motivate’. However, within each discipline and perspective, improving human lives is central to the concept. Being empowered allows a sense of control, which is highly linked to well-being and greater health. Empowerment is also connected to combating power imbalances in society (Bennet Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010). Empowerment is said to occur at three levels: individual empowerment, group empowerment and community empowerment (Zimmerman, 2000; Ahmad & Talib, 2014). This study focuses on the individual level. The three definitions of empowerment shown in Table 6 hint at the common aspect of gaining greater control over one’s own life – to set goals and achieve them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic, 1994, p.159</td>
<td>‘Empowerment may be seen as a process where individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, and a relationship between their efforts and life outcomes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterson &amp; Zimmerman, 2004, p.129</td>
<td>‘Empowerment is an active, participatory process through which individuals, organizations, and communities gain greater control, efficacy, and social justice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsop et al., 2006, p.1</td>
<td>Empowerment is ‘the process of enhancing an individual’s or group’s capacity to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A process of empowerment ‘is incomplete unless it attends to people’s abilities to act, the institutional structure, and the various non-institutional changes that are instrumental to increased agency’ (Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007, p.384). Empowerment is about gaining mastery of one’s own life (Zimmerman, 2000; Lakin & Mahoney, 2006) and therefore empowerment can be seen as strengthening individuals so they can enhance their agency.

### 4.2. Agency Theory

Agency is often generally described as ‘the capacity of individuals to influence and steer their lives’ and having agency can be seen as an intrinsic entity or internal ability (Caiman & Lundegård, 2014, p.437). Agency has an intrinsic value, which means it is important on its own regardless if activities propelled by agency lead to increased well-being or not (Hanmer & Klugman, 2016). Amartya Sen
(2001) describes being an agent as ‘someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of [one’s] own values and objectives...’ (p.19). A person’s agency needs to be understood through taking note of the individual’s aims, objectives, commitments and obligations (Sen, 1985). Agency plays an important role in Sen’s capability approach, which entails having capabilities to achieve the kind of life one has reason to value (Wells, n.d.; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007). According to Bandura (2006), being an agent means that one is intentionally influencing one’s functioning and life circumstances. People are not simply empty boxes and onlookers of their automatic behaviours but instead self-regulating, self-organising, self-reflecting and proactive individuals. Self-generated activities are important determinants of human motivation and action (Ibid.). Bandura (1989) states, ‘The capacity to exercise control over one’s own thought processes, motivation, and action is a distinctively human characteristic. Because judgments and actions are partly self-determined, people can effect change in themselves and their situations through their own efforts’ (p.1). The inner human motoric, sensory and cerebral functions are just tools for people to accomplish the tasks and goals they have set up for themselves that give direction, meaning and satisfaction in their lives (Bandura, 2001). People produce their own experiences, they contribute to their own life circumstances and are not just products of them (Bandura, 2006). However, the nature of the experiences greatly depends on the type of physical and social environments people create and select (Bandura, 2001). There are three modes of agency: individual, proxy and collective. Everyday life is a blend of these modes. People influencing their inner functioning and environmental events around them exercise individual agency. Since people do not have full control over conditions that affect their lives, people also exercise proxy (i.e. mediated) agency, which means that people influence others who have resources, knowledge and means to act on their behalf to reach the individual’s preferred outcomes. Collective agency refers to people working together and pooling their knowledge, skills and resources to shape a collective future (Ibid.).

4.2.1. Agency Properties

According to Bandura (2001; 2006), human agency has four core properties: intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness. Intentionality refers to that people can decide when acting in a certain way. People can form their own intentions for their life situations including action plans and strategies for realising them. It should be noted that there is no absolute agency since most human actions involve other participating agents (Ibid.). Forethought is the temporal extension of agency. People can set goals for themselves, foresee possible obstacles or possible pathways and thereafter select and create courses of actions to reach where they want to reach and avoid detrimental outcomes. This is a way to motivate and guide one’s actions. Humans construct these goals from observed relationships between environmental events in the world around them and the results of the actions produced (Ibid.). Self-reactiveness is the ability to perform the actions related to one’s intentions and goals. One can simply not adopt an intention and an action plan and then just sit back and wait for the suitable performance to materialise. This property is also about the ability to motivate oneself to a certain action (Ibid.). Finally, self-reflectiveness refers to the ability to reflect upon oneself and one’s actions. Humans are self-examiners of their own functioning; they evaluate their motivations, values and the meaning of their lives. People’s beliefs about their own capabilities (self-efficacy) to control their own functioning and environmental events around them are at the centre of human agency. If people do not believe and have the self-confidence that they can produce their desired outcomes, they have little incentive to act upon their intentions. Such efficacy beliefs affect whether people think optimistically or pessimistically and if they think and act in ways that are self-hindering or self-enhancing. Efficacy beliefs are part of the foundation for how people chose certain challenges to undertake and how much energy they will put into them, how long they will endure certain obstacles and whether failures are seen as motivating or demoralising. Hence, efficacy beliefs play a key role in shaping the course of people’s lives (Ibid.). Bandura (2006) states the following, ‘People who develop their competencies, self-regulatory skills, and enabling beliefs in their efficacy can generate a wider array of options that expand their freedom of action, and are more successful in realizing desired futures, than those with less developed agentic resources’ (p. 165). In the context of environmental responsibility, Eden (1993) brings forward that if one believes in the efficacy of one’s pro-environmental behaviour and if the self is perceived to be a ‘responsible agent compared with
other social agents’ environmental responsibility is enhanced (p.1743) and one can become a sustainable agent of change.

4.2.2. Enhancing Agency

Fortuity
Even though people try to exercise some measure of control over their lives through agency there is still a high level of fortuity in the courses lives take. A fortuitous event that seems rather unimportant to begin with can set in motion influences that change someone’s life (Bandura, 2006). A seemingly irrelevant moment with an encounter between two people (who do not know each other from before) can change their lives. Yet, fortuity does not mean that people have no control of its effect. People can make chance happen in their lives through living an active life that makes fortuitous events increase. As Bandura writes (2006), ‘Chance favors the inquisitive and venturesome, who go places, do things, and explore new activities. People also make chance work for them by cultivating their interests, enabling beliefs, and competencies’ (p.166). One has to be at the right place at the right time, as the saying states but also nurture self-development to shape the course of one’s life. This type of proactive activity shows how people can actively manage even fortuity in an agentic manner and thereby enhance one’s agency (Bandura, 2006).

Social Opportunities
Drèze and Sen (2002) states, ‘The crucial role of social opportunities is to expand the realm of human agency and freedom, both as an end in itself and as a means of further expansion of freedom’ (p.6). An individual’s opportunities are highly dependent on social circumstances affected by for example public policy, especially in relation to health, nutrition, education, economy, social equity, civil liberties and such (Drèze & Sen, 2002). The socio-economic status (SES), which entails the level of financial capital (material resources), human capital (nonmaterial resources, e.g. education) and social capital (resources reached through social connections), affects an individual’s social opportunities (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). In regard to children, von Braun (2017) states that they need ‘active stimulus to unfold their capacities’ and this stimulus is in many cases not given in households with low socio-economic status (p.18). It should be noted that most children ECP works with come from low SES households (see section 2.2. about Cape Town, pp. 5-6). If individuals are within an opportunity structure, which allows for high social opportunities individual agency will be enhanced since there is a close relationship between agency and opportunity structure. This relationship is said to be the condition for individual action (Archer, 2003 in Caiman & Lundegård, 2014). Thereby, having a low SES can decrease one’s social opportunities and thereby restrict the enhancing of one’s agency.

4.3. Young People, Agents of Change and Sustainable Development

According to Bandura (2006), a new-born arrives without any personal agency or sense of selfhood. Agency and selfhood are socially constructed. They further develop through direct experiences with other people and the surroundings. Through seeing and understanding the causal effects of one’s doings, children develop their personal senses. Caiman and Lundegård (2014) suggest that it is important to acknowledge children as agents of change and Fien et al. (2008) have identified that young people need to be empowered and have agency so that they can act as agents of change. As identified by Blanchet-Cohen (2008), ‘Recognising child agency is about paying attention to children’s power, or lack of power, to influence or organise events and to engage in the structures that affect their lives’ (p.261). Percy-Smith and Burns (2013) develop the thinking of seeing children as agents of change in creating sustainable communities. Von Braun (2017) follows this thought and defines young people’s agency for development as ‘a person’s active initiative toward the achievement of a goal, that is, actions undertaken in order to have an impact on someone or something’ (p.18). Percy-Smith and Burns (2013) argue that it is important that young people develop a critical consciousness and sense of their own capabilities for enhancing their sense of agency.
Developing into an agent of change for Sustainable Development is thus more likely to occur if young people construct their own learning where they have ‘space to articulate their own talents and creativity and have opportunities to put into practice ideas and action, rather than being passive consumers of education’ (Ibid., pp.333-34). Additionally, young people need to be given the space for taking on leadership in order to act as agents of change. If young people ‘are to become effective actors of social change in sustainable development, their creativity, energy and entrepreneurial inclinations need to be allowed expression as a matter of course. Adults therefore need to ensure spaces exist...for young people to be creative, exercise agency and take on leadership roles’ (Ibid., p.330).

Fig. 4 illustrates how the different theories used in this study are connected. In order to act as an agent of change, one needs to be empowered and have agency. Empowerment is also seen as a process needed to enhance an individual’s agency. The text outside the boxes show some of the ways individuals’ agency can be enhanced and what is needed in terms of space for young people to act as agents of change.

4.4. Indicators: Care for Oneself, Care for Others and Care for Nature

With the foregoing theoretical framework in mind, this study wishes to empirically observe agency and empowerment features with the children and youth ECP is working with. Since ECP does not directly emphasise these concepts in its vocabulary, a pre-determined framework needs to be constructed for the specific case of ECP in order to structure the empirical observations. As stated earlier, ECP has an underlying intention to reconnect people with themselves, each other and to nature (Kretzmar, 2017). The intended goal is to develop children and youth into conscious, responsible and confident people and empowered and capable leaders (see Table 2, p.11). All of these outcomes fit under the umbrella of agency and empowerment (see section 3.2., pp.15-17), which in turn are important parts of ESD. As stated in section 3.2., ECP is an exemplary case of ESD. Through studying ECP documents, the ECP website, interviewing ECP staff and personal observations (see also intended outcomes of ECP’s components, the overall Project and the Hiking Club in Tables 1-3, pp.10-12) the following three main themes were observed: Care for Oneself, Care for Others and Care for Nature (i.e. the 3Cs). All of which are stressed by ECP. These three components are also seen in the work of Hans Levander and his Life-Link Project (see Life-Link, 2017) where each component represents peace actions relating to Sustainable Development. The sub-indicators seen in Table 7 represent different themes that appeared when organising the data under each indicator. It should be noted that this study is not taking a stance that these indicators are suitable for any type of study related to agency, empowerment and ESD.
This study focuses on children and young people. It is difficult to ask them directly about the abstract concepts of agency and empowerment; also because ECP does not mention them at all. Therefore, this study used the 3C indicators for organising the data gathered for shedding light on the agency and empowerment ‘effects’ of participating in ECP activities including the Hiking Club.

The first indicator seen in Table 7, Care for Oneself, specifically relates to the agency properties intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness (see section 4.2.1., p.19). Having self-knowledge, self-confidence and having an ability to set up goals for oneself and foresee pathways to achieve these goals are some of the key features of being an agent. In addition, being self-confident about one’s own capabilities in relation to pro-environmental behaviour enhances the chances of becoming a sustainable agent of change (see Eden, 1993). The two following indicators, Care for Others and Care for Nature, highly relate to the notion of agent as ‘someone who acts and brings about change’ (Sen, 2001, p.19). They are also related to how individual’s agentic features materialise in real-life. As stated earlier, a young person’s agency for development can materialise through ‘active initiatives toward the achievement of a goal’ which can be any action ‘undertaken in order to have an impact on someone or something’ (von Braun, 2017, p.18), which can be seen as having an impact on others or nature. These actions can take various forms such as taking on leadership, educating others or initiating ideas (see Percy-Smith & Burns, 2013).

The following chapter describes the methods used in practice to gather the empirical data, which are later categorised using the three indicators.

**Table 7. Indicators of Agency and Empowerment for Sustainable Development within ECP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Indicators</th>
<th>Care for Oneself</th>
<th>Care for Others</th>
<th>Care for Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having healthy habits</td>
<td>Supporting others</td>
<td>Loving nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having self-knowledge</td>
<td>Taking on leadership</td>
<td>Feeling connected to nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having self-confidence</td>
<td>Teaching others</td>
<td>Having knowledge about nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setting and achieving goals</td>
<td>Being a role model</td>
<td>Taking actions for nature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Research Approach

This study explores whether children are empowered and their agency is enhanced through taking part in ECP and the Hiking Club. The current chapter outlines the different tools used to gather the data needed for finding indications of agency and empowerment. The first section of this chapter describes the position of the researcher. Next, the case study design is explained. It is the overarching method of this thesis. The third section describes the specific research instruments. Subsequently, the way in which the data is organised and analysed is presented and finally, limitations are discussed.

5.1. Position as a Researcher

The position of the researcher is an important part of the research process. How a research project is conducted is dependent on and shaped by ‘the mental modes and frames of references that we use to organize our reasoning and observations’ (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p.17). These mental frames or belief systems are called paradigms. This means that different people view social realities differently. People’s mental frames or belief systems are like glasses that control how we view the world (Bhattacherjee, 2012). In regard to reflexivity, ‘A researcher’s background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions’ (Malterud, 2001, pp.483-84). Hence, together with the design and methods, the position of the researcher becomes an important part in the way research projects are conducted. Different, though equally valid, results can thus result from similarly posed questions depending on the researcher’s paradigms. These different ways of approaching the same subject or situation in qualitative research help to understand the complex phenomenon and is not to be seen as ‘a failure of reliability’ (Ibid., p. 484).

In the context of this study, the paradigms of me as a researcher are seen as an asset for understanding the work of ECP and the Hiking Club. Evidently, after spending three months working side-by-side with ECP staff and with ECP children I have established personal connections to the people and the area itself and thereby constructed my own pair of glasses to look through. These glasses are guiding me in understanding the work of ECP and to explore its effects. Yet, it should be noted that I am very much aware of that this insight in ECP could introduce a bias in my questioning. In order to limit this bias, I posed the same or similar questions to multiple respondents (see section 5.3.) and also discussed my findings with ECP staff and teachers at the schools.

5.2. Case Study Design: Earthchild Project

There is little consensus about the meaning and processes of case studies. It is suggested that ‘there is little in the way of organizational structure to guide the intending case inquirer’ (Thomas, 2011, p.511). Despite these ambiguities, the case study design is one of the most common means of acquiring data for social sciences research (Thomas, 2011). Case study methods are used to inquiry intensively and deeply to gain an understanding of a certain phenomenon or situation (Yin, 2008). Case-based research methods are a suitable choice for a researcher who wants to understand stories and is interested in the richness of actual cases. Case studies can provide interesting and powerful stories about a certain event or a social context. This type of design requires that the researcher is familiar with the context of the case and that data is collected over a considerable time. Case studies do not require any specific methods, which gives space for the researcher to choose whichever methods are suitable for the local context (Yin, 2008; Ramon, 2009).

Hence, the case study method is suitable for this study since the core of this research question is an evaluative exploratory study of an actual case: Earthchild Project. I am interested to know more about the stories the Earth Children have to tell about empowerment, their personal agency and other intended outcomes related to ECP and the Hiking Club. In order to hear and document these stories, I undertook a field study in Cape Town between 13 February and 7 March 2017. During these three
weeks, data were collected through a variety of methods chosen due to their relevance to the context and the participants involved in the study. This is further described in the next section. I familiarised myself with the organisation and with the local context already during my time as an intern in the second half of 2016. Before arriving in Cape Town again in 2017, I was in touch with ECP and planned and discussed my research work with the ECP staff.

5.3. Methods

A combined set of qualitative methods was used to gathering data and enhancing the chance of finding clearer patterns. Each method brings a particular kind of insight to the study. The central method was the Participatory Visual Research Method, a drawing method. It was combined with short individual interviews, semi-structured interviews, a focus group, participant observation and field notes (see section 5.3.2. to 5.3.4). The drawing method was used for children exposed to ECP and for children who are not. A quasi-experimental design was chosen to determine whether there were any differences between the 'answers' of these two groups. Despite this quasi-experimental design, this study does not intend to investigate to what extent there may be a difference between the two groups. Due to the small data sample and the time limits of this master thesis, it was not possible to gather enough data to conduct a quantitative assessment of the possible differences. Thus, this study is only exploring and discussing the potential similarities or dissimilarities in a qualitative manner. Further, it should be noted that since this study is an evaluation of ECP, the questions constructed for the data collection mainly relate to the stated outcomes of ECP.

For all methods, ECP staff connected me with children and teachers with whom I collected the data for this study. Due to lack of resources and time, this study did not determine detailed personal and background characteristics of all participants. Instead, the context about South Africa and Cape Town in chapter two is given to create an understanding for where most of the participants have grown up and are living today.

5.3.1. Participatory Visual Research Method: Drawing

Since long, researchers have engaged children and adults through ‘draw-and-write’ and ‘draw-and-talk’ activities to explore their perceptions, views, and reflections on various topics (Mitchell et al., 2011). The idea of using this method within the field of social sciences is not new yet it is becoming increasingly participatory (Literat, 2013). This method has been used in projects similar to this study looking at for example children’s perspectives on environmental sustainability (see Desjardins & Wakkary, 2011) or at street youth’s resilience in South Africa (see Malindi & Theron, 2011). Fittingly for this study, participatory visual communication has a potential of 'painting a more nuanced depiction of lived realities, while simultaneously empowering the research participants and placing the agency literally in their own hands.' (Literat, 2013, p.85). Drawing methods are very suitable for working with children and youth across various backgrounds and cultural contexts due to its lack of need for linguistic proficiency. It is noted that children tend to express themselves more easily in a visual manner than through oral or written expression (Prosser & Burke, 2008; Literat, 2013). In addition, images are nonlinear and can give a more holistic representation of information, concepts and emotions (Literat, 2013). Another advantage of this method is that the respondents are given time to reflect on their responses unlike in focus groups or interviews. This added time of reflection encourages active conceptualization and thinking (Gauntlett, 2007 in Literat, 2013). In addition, ‘participatory drawing is a comparatively more expressive, engaging, and fun activity, which can turn the research study into an enjoyable experience for those involved...’ (Literat, 2013, p.89). In order to validate the evaluation of a drawing, a personal description made by the individual producing the drawing is needed. This is made for the reason of minimising the risks of misunderstanding what has actually been depicted (Mitchell et al., 2011; Literat, 2013).

The drawing method was chosen due to its suitability for working with children and youth and because it has been adopted in similar research projects and geographical locations. Additionally, it was deemed appropriate in this study to hand over the agency of the interview to the children through
letting them draw their answer without being disturbed. This drawing activity was also seen as an appropriate and fun warm-up to make the children feel more at ease in the space.

The drawing method was central to this study’s quasi-experimental design. This design is based on the assumption that the control group and experimental group are identical in all respects except participating in ECP. Children’s abilities to care for themselves, others and nature were explored with primary school pupils exposed to ECP (experimental group) and pupils who are not (control group) (Table 8). There were two control groups and two experimental groups, one of each in Lavender Hill and Khayelitsha. Both the control groups and the experimental groups consisted of children coming from the same areas and being in grade seven (age 11-14). In each area, the experimental group was recruited in the ECP focus schools, while the control group individuals were from primary schools in which they were not exposed to ECP (see section 2.3.1., p.7-8). Since the control group is not exposed to ECP, I decided to only work with children having teachers who have expressed an interest in working with ECP. This decision was made in order to exclude the possibility that differences in the characteristics of the teachers of ECP children and non-ECP children would have an effect on the research outcomes. Hence, I assume that there are no significant differences between the two groups of teachers and therefore they were “neutral” in selecting of the children partaking in the drawing sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical Area</th>
<th>Type of Group</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lavender Hill</td>
<td>Experimental Group (LH-E)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control Group (LH-C)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khayelitsha</td>
<td>Experimental Group (K-E)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control Group (K-C)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8.** Drawing method respondents

Both experimental groups were part of the ECP Hiking Club. The children taking part in the Lavender Hill experimental group have hiked regularly since January 2016 whilst the children in the Khayelitsha group started in January 2017. Due to time constraints, I could only run sessions with children who were in primary school and the Khayelitsha Hiking Club members of the year 2016 were already in grade eight (high school). The children who are part of the Hiking Clubs are also members of other ECP programmes such as Living Classroom, Extra-Murals (Eco-Warrior Club and Girls Club) and Holiday Programme. Therefore, it is impossible to isolate the potential Hiking Club’ influence from the influence of participating in the other programmes. However, since the Hiking Club integrates different learning components (Life Skills and Personal Development, Health and Wellness and Environmental Education, see Table 1, p.10) and since this study is also exploring the outcomes of ECP as a whole, this is not seen as a drawback.

**Drawing Sessions**

The very first drawing session I hosted was with the experimental group in Khayelitsha. A member of ECP staff randomly selected eight individuals from the Hiking Club to gather in a classroom at Sakumlandela Primary School (ECP focus school). The following day I ran a session with the experimental group in Lavender Hill. A Living Classroom teacher helped me locate and gather all the Hiking Club respondents from grade seven in ECP’s yoga room at Harmony Primary School (ECP focus school until January 2017). Next, I ran a control group session in the assembly hall at Levana Primary School (ECP focus school since January 2017) in Lavender Hill. A grade seven teacher selected eight students to gather in the hall. Finally, I ran the last control group session in the assembly room at Yomelela Primary School in Khayelitsha with respondents who had been selected by a teacher at the school.

Before the respondents arrived for their session, I laid out one sheet of white paper for each respondent spread out in the room. When the respondents had arrived, I introduced myself and explained why I was there. Next, I explained the outline (Appendix 1), told the respondents that the
session was voluntary and that they would be anonymous in the written study. The respondents further signed their names on a consent form (Appendix 1). In order to create a positive and relaxed feeling in the room, I taught the respondents a playful song, which includes body movements. When we were done singing and dancing, I asked the respondents to spread out in the room and take some colourful pens, pencils and crayons (I had placed a bag filled with drawing materials in the middle of the room) with them to their seats or spots on the floor. After all respondents had settled down, I asked them one open question and emphasised that they should draw whatever came to their minds. The question was: *How do you see yourself in nature?* This open question was chosen to determine whether the children feel connected to nature and whatever comes up to their minds when hearing the word nature. In accordance with Mitchell et al. (2011) and Literat (2013), each drawing activity was followed by an individual interview where the respondent had a chance to describe and explain his or her drawing. Adding a personal description made by the respondent who drew the image was deemed to be crucial for obtaining a deeper understanding of the researched phenomena (Ibid.). In addition to the description, questions were asked in relation to how the respondents take care of their bodies and mind, their relationship with nature and littering. The interviews were semi-structured so that I could adapt the questions to the interviewee depending on understanding and situation. The experimental groups were asked some additional questions related to ECP and the Hiking Club. I took each respondent out of the room for the individual interviews so that the other respondents’ behaviour or remarks could not influence the respondent’s answers. There can be issues of power imbalances between the interviewer and the interviewee (Allmark et al., 2009). For example, the interviewer has some power over the direction of the interview itself, which could lead to that the respondent might discuss issues he or she would rather have kept secret (Ibid.). In order to balance such power relations, I tried to ‘feel the room’ and not push the respondents if they did not wish to answer a question. Therefore, some of the interviews are significantly shorter than others. Each interview lasted for around three to six minutes. Each session took approximately one hour. All interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. The drawings were evaluated together with the explanations and descriptions of each drawing.

### 5.3.2. Additional Methods

This section outlines the methods used to triangulate the data acquired through the drawing method. A focus group, individual semi-structured interviews, participant observations and field notes were used to obtain data from different sources. All individuals approached with these methods are participating in one, some or all of ECP’s programmes.

#### 5.3.2.1. Focus Group

Focus groups are widely used and ‘are an extremely valuable research approach’ (Finch et al., 2003, p.170). According to Krueger and Casey (2015), focus groups have the following five common traits: (1) it is a small group of individuals, (2) the group possesses certain characteristics, (3) provide qualitative data (4) in a group discussion (5) to help understand a certain topic. When participants feel respected, comfortable and free to utter their opinions without being judged, focus groups work. Since the idea is to know what people really think and feel, it is important to focus on making the participants feel comfortable and free to speak (Ibid.).

This study had one focus group session with four participants (see Table 9). Initially, I intended to have six participants in the focus group, yet, two of them could not attend on the allotted day. All

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10 See Lewis, 2003. It has been discussed whether receiving consent from a child is enough to evade ethical issues in social studies (Morrow & Richards, 1996; Phelan & Kinsella, 2013). According to Lewis (2003), consent for children under the age of 16 should be given by parents, schools or other organisation involved in the children’s lives. For the drawing sessions, since all children are under 16 years old, ECP and the respondents’ teachers gave me oral consent for conducting interviews with the children. 11 This issue of power imbalances was considered during the following methods as well but is not discussed further in this written report.
participants were Gap Year Interns (see section 2.3.1.1., p.8) at ECP: two teaching yoga and the other two teaching environmental education. Since January 2017, one of the participants has been leading one of ECP’s Hiking Clubs. Three out of four were part of the Hiking Club when they themselves were in grade seven. All participants live in Khayelitsha. Table 9 shows that all participants are female. This is a reflection of how the Gap Year Internship Programme is currently composed. I chose these participants due to their long engagement with ECP. Before the focus group session, I interacted with the participants in the primary schools and at the ECP staff meetings so that they would be more familiar with the purpose of the study and with me as a focus group facilitator.

Table 9. Focus group participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Years in ECP</th>
<th>Gap Year</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Environmental Education/Hiking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Environmental Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus Group Session
The focus group session was held in the meeting room at ECP’s office. In order to make all participants feel comfortable, I brought some snacks for everyone and let the participants sit on chairs whilst I was sitting on the floor since there were not enough chairs. The intention was to keep an easy-going atmosphere to make everyone feel comfortable and to show that it was a space where they could share their thoughts and feelings. I started the session with introducing myself and introducing the purpose of the study. Next, I handed out consent forms (Appendix 2), which they all signed. Further, I introduced a set of rules for the session so that every participant would be heard. When everyone was clear about the purpose of the focus group and its ground rules, we started a round of introductions. When I felt that everyone was comfortably interacting with each other, I introduced the prepared questions, which were related to the outcomes of ECP (Appendix 2). Since all the participants knew each other and had been part of ECP for such a long time, a specific focus was set on discussing the development of ECP and whether the participants’ way of looking at themselves, their surroundings and nature had changed. The session was interrupted after an hour so the last questions were discussed a few hours later. The focus group session was audio recorded and later transcribed.

5.3.2.2. Individual Semi-Structured Interviews
Interview method is one the most common qualitative methods of data collection (Legard et al., 2003). The purpose of a research interview ‘is to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals on specific matters’ (Gill et al., 2008, p.292). Semi-structured interviews have several key questions that help the interviewer to explore certain themes but they also allow the interviewer to dig deeper into a certain topic or just let the interviewee follow his or her train of thought (Barriball & While, 1994; Gill et al., 2008).

Table 10. Former Hiking Club interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Years in ECP</th>
<th>Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Leads an ECP Hiking Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hikes regularly with ECP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Part of ECP Alumni Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I conducted a total of six semi-structured interviews, five of which during the field trip (see section 5.2.). I interviewed the founder and director of ECP, Janna Kretzmar, through Skype in order to get a greater understanding of the Project and its intended outcomes. During the field trip, I conducted interviews with three former Hiking Club members and two members of the ECP staff (one yoga facilitator and one environmental education facilitator). The ECP staff members were interviewed for
the purpose of supplementing information to the interview made with the ECP director. I asked questions in relation to the outcomes of the different programmes and whether they had experienced any changes in the children they work with. The most important interviews were conducted with former Hiking Club members and are presented in Table 10. These interviews were used to gather data for this study’s results. The purpose of these interviews was to dig deeper into the outcomes of the Hiking Club and ECP seen from a former member’s perspective.

All interviewees listed in Table 10 grew up and are living in Khayelitsha. They all went to ECP’s focus school in the area. Everyone participated regularly in the ECP hikes when in primary school and all have continued hiking since. The interviewees also participated in other ECP programmes such as Living Classroom, Extra-Murals and Alumni. I asked questions in relation to the outcomes of ECP, the Hiking Club and how ECP has developed in order to cover the core aspects of this study (Appendix 3). Before conducting each interview, I made sure that the interviewees understood the purpose of the study and that their participation was voluntary. Topics related to the length of the interview, anonymity and that the interviewee could ask questions throughout the interview were addressed. The interviewees are anonymous in this written document except for the ECP staff. All interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed.

5.3.2.3. Participant Observation and Field Notes

Participant observation ‘is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture’ (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011, p.12). Participant observation has been described as the primary method used in anthropological fieldwork (Kawulich, 2005). Research shows that participant observation enhances the quality of data obtained during fieldwork. It also enhances the interpretation of data no matter if the data has been collected through participant observation or other methods. Participant observation is thus both a data collection and analytical tool (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). Observations are further recorded in field notes (Ibid.).

Apart from conducting participant observations and jotting down field notes while using the other aforementioned methods, I joined a hike with the Lavender Hill Hiking Club. During the two-hour hike, I made observations and had a few informal chats with Hiking Club members. Primarily, I was there for the purpose of being a volunteer to help out with the hike and not a researcher. I did not want to disturb the children during their hike since I felt that they were not fully relaxed with my presence. Therefore, I left my notebook in my backpack and mainly spoke to one Hiking Club member who approached me. This member is named Newlands Forest 1 (N1) in the following analysis chapter (Chapter six). All observations were noted down after the hike had ended.

5.4. Organising and Analysing Data

This section outlines how the different types of data acquired during the field trip were organised and analysed.

5.4.1. Organising

Verbatim Data

Verbatim transcription of audiotaped interviews is a common method in qualitative research (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999; Oliver et al., 2005). Transcribing interviews is a way of structuring audio material into a text to facilitate an overview and is the beginning of analysis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). Transcription is a time-consuming practice, yet, to establish reliability, dependability and trustworthiness of a study it is preferable to produce full transcripts of research interviews (Stuckey, 2014).

All audio-recorded data (interviews and focus group session) were transcribed word by word. Yet, frequent repetitions were omitted from the transcriptions. In addition, pauses, hesitations or other non-
verbal recordings were not transcribed. All respondents were interviewed in English, which for most of them is their second or third language. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2008), ‘Oral language transcribed verbatim may appear as incoherent and confused speech, even as indicating a lower level of intellectual functioning. […] The publication of incoherent and repetitive verbatim interview transcripts may involve an unethical stigmatization of specific persons or groups of people’ (p.187). With these words in mind, I rewrote the quotes used in the analysis to omit grammatical mistakes, repetitions or unclear words that could disturb the understanding of the message the respondents wanted to convey.

Drawings
After every session, I scanned the drawings at a professional printing studio to make sure the material would not get lost. Some of the respondents had written their names on the drawing. Due to the anonymity principle, I erased the names on the scanned drawings.

5.4.2. Categorising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Familiarisation</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drawings</td>
<td>Misinterpretation of drawings</td>
<td>Experimental Group (Hiking Club)</td>
<td>Visual analysis in combination with verbatim transcription of interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Language barriers</td>
<td>Experimental Group (Hiking Club)</td>
<td>Verbatim Transcription</td>
<td>Dividing the data into themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td></td>
<td>Triangulate the different data sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Former Hiking Club Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Living Classroom Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ECP Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>ECP Gap Year Interns</td>
<td>Verbatim Transcription</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>Personal biases and perceptions</td>
<td>Drawing Sessions</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Focus Group Session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hike to Newlands Forest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In accordance with MacEntee and Mitchell (2011), all the drawings were laid out on a floor to allow for a kind of ‘walk through’ through the drawings and establish a first overview of the data. Each drawing was analysed in relation to the attached description, which had been obtained in the follow-up interviews with each child. The transcriptions from the interviews and the focus group were inserted into an analytical qualitative data programme called NVivo, which allowed me to detect patterns and divide the data into themes. In this programme, I first divided the data into three datasets, the experimental group, the control group and the additional data sources (focus group, former Hiking Club members, and the member of the Lavender Hill Hiking Club – Newlands Forest), which allowed
me to see the differences in answers between the groups. I further categorised the data under the three indicators discussed in section 4.4. (pp.21-22): Care for Oneself, Care for Others and Care for Nature. During the analysis, I found different themes within the indicators, which are presented as sub-indicators for the larger overarching 3Cs. Not all posed questions were directly related to the 3Cs but many of the participants spontaneously brought up issues or thoughts related to the three indicators. These spontaneous comments were included in the final analysis. When all data were sorted in NVivo, I explored the 50 most frequent words used in the verbatim data for each data set and each indicator. This word frequency analysis was made in NVivo for the purpose of discovering whether there were any differences between the experimental group and the control group in the words used in the data covering each indicator. The words had a minimum of four letters and words such as ‘mean’ or ‘because’ were omitted. All data were exported from NVivo and further triangulated with data obtained through the additional research methods in order to find similarities or dissimilarities, which are presented in the following chapter.

5.5. Limitations

Due to the qualitative nature of this study, it might be difficult to generalise its findings on a larger scale (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Nevertheless, the methods chosen are well suited for exploratory studies (Theron et al., 2011; Bhattacherjee, 2012), as this study is. Further, I could have done research over time and determining whether there had been any changes in the level of children’s and youth’s agency and empowerment. I also could have looked at to what extent there may be a difference between the control group and experimental group. Yet, due to time constraints and the small data sample of this master thesis, this was not possible.

In Table 11 on the previous page, some of the limitations of the different methods are described. First, analysing drawings might bring difficulties to the research due to the drawings’ personal nature. One of the principal limitations of this method is therefore misinterpretation. Yet, the ‘participant’s narration can help alleviate the challenge of misinterpretation’ (Literat, 2013, p.91). Therefore, the respondents were asked to say in their own words what their drawing meant. These personal descriptions were considered an integral part of the data set. In some cases, I experienced difficulties with the language. Before I arrived in Cape Town, I arranged for the ECP Gap Year Interns, who speak the same language as the children to help me with the drawing sessions. However, this did not occur in practice. Therefore, some children who did not understand my questions became insecure and gave confusing answers. In this study’s empirical findings in chapter six, I have omitted the answers resulting from linguistic misunderstandings. Some participants in the focus group were more vocal than others. There is, therefore, a possibility that the quieter ones did not want or dare to express everything they wanted to express. Yet, during the session, I made sure to make eye contact and ask each individual about their opinions while reassuring them that it was a safe space. Finally, my personal biases and perceptions were considered throughout the whole process. I made sure to discuss my observations with ECP staff and teachers at the schools before processing and analysing the data.

Due to the small sample, the data were not analysed to make a distinction between genders. Yet, I aimed to have a mix of female and male participants.
6. Findings: Results and Analysis

The following data analysis enables an understanding of how this study’s participants are relating to themselves, others and nature. Further, it explores whether there are indications that the participants are empowered and have agency, yet not to what extent. First, each indicator – Care for Oneself, Care for Others and Care for Nature – has its own section (6.1. to 6.3.), which describes the data collected from the experimental group, the control group and the additional data sources (focus group, former Hiking Club members, and the member of the Lavender Hill Hiking Club – Newlands Forest). For each indicator, the results acquired from the experimental group and control group are presented first with the apparent sub-indicators. This is made due to this study’s quasi-experimental design. The results allow for an exploratory overview of the similarities and dissimilarities between the two groups. In order to add to the results, a subsection with the additional data sources follows in each section. Next, section 6.4. explores the participant observation data collected during the field trip. Table 12 shows the seven sources from which the data were gathered. It also shows the codes attributed to the individuals belonging to each source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Data Sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group in Khayelitsha</td>
<td>K-E1 to K-E8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group in Lavender Hill</td>
<td>LH-E1 to LH-E7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group in Khayelitsha</td>
<td>K-C1 to K-C8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group in Lavender Hill</td>
<td>LH-C1 to LH-C8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Data Sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group (Gap Year Interns)</td>
<td>F1 to F4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Hiking Club Members</td>
<td>H1 to H3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of Lavender Hill Hiking Club (Newlands Forest)</td>
<td>N1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that the quotes and drawings presented in this chapter refer to the larger data sets. Hence, some data fit to more than one indicator. Due to space limits, not all data pertaining to one indicator could be included. The additional drawings and their descriptions are found in Appendix 1. The drawings were created as an answer to the question: How do you see yourself in nature? When introducing the study to the experimental group and control group respondents, it was explained that the purpose was to know more about their thoughts and feelings concerning nature and the environment. Since I wanted the data to ‘speak for itself’, the results linking to each indicator were in many cases brought up spontaneously by the different participants. Therefore, some sections are more extensive than others.

6.1. Care for Oneself

After organising all the data, the following sub-indicators appeared for the Care for Oneself indicator: Healthy Habits, Self-Knowledge, Self-Confidence and Setting and Achieving Goals.

6.1.1. Experimental Group and Control Group

When looking at the experimental group, the most frequent word for the Care for Oneself indicator was calm followed by body, drink and yoga. In the interviews with the control group, body was the most frequently used word. It was followed by such words as drink, vegetables and respect (see Fig. 5). The word clouds are rather similar except for the words yoga and hiking, which are commonly used by the experimental group and not in the control group. This is explained by the fact that the experimental group respondents practice yoga and hike while the control group respondents do not. For these two groups, only the sub-indicators Healthy Habits and Self-Confidence were observed.
6.1.1.1. Healthy Habits

When the experimental group respondents were asked about the ways in which they take care of their bodies and minds, they told many stories relating to practising yoga and hiking. Almost all of the respondents in Khayelitsha said that they do yoga to ‘calm down’ their mind, to stay ‘healthy’ or to make the ‘body flexible’. Many respondents also stated that yoga creates an environment for them to feel at ‘home’ and to be themselves. K-E7 expressed the following:

‘Yoga makes me feel excited and relaxed, it is where I relief myself, where I feel in charge.’

In Lavender Hill, six out of seven respondents practice yoga regularly with ECP, yet, only a few of them specifically said they use yoga as a tool for staying healthy. Instead, two of the respondents in Lavender Hill uttered that they take refuge in nature in order to keep their minds calm. One respondent in Khayelitsha (K-E8) specifically related to this as well. Moreover, two respondents in the experimental group explicitly expressed that hiking is one of their ways to take care of their minds and bodies.

All the experimental group respondents showed awareness in what to do to keep healthy. Most of them said that they drink plenty of ‘water’ and eat ‘vegetables’ and some of them said that they ‘exercise’, ‘listen to music’ or ‘read’. Further, two of the respondents explicitly brought up that they feel different to other children in their communities who are not members of ECP. This difference revealed itself in the respondents’ experiences of that other children were ‘drinking alcohol’, ‘smoking’, ‘doing drugs’ and/or spending time on the streets ‘making the wrong things’.

Almost all of the respondents in the control group showed awareness in what to do to keep their bodies and minds healthy. Yet, their stories were less extensive compared to the experimental group. ‘Exercising’, ‘cleaning’ and ‘respecting’ the body, listening to ‘music’, eating ‘vegetables’, ‘writing’ and ‘reading’ were some of the common themes in the respondents’ stories. In addition, only one respondent (LH-C3) expressed that she takes refuge in nature to stay calm. She said the following:

‘I always think about nature and stuff to calm me down. When I’m angry or so. I always think about when I walk through the grass, big flowers and so…I always smile or play. Skip the bad things.’

6.1.1.2. Self-Confidence

A respondent in the experimental group, LH-E2 expressed that one of the main things she learnt from the Hiking Club is ‘not to give up’ on herself. Many of the respondents brought up that hiking is tough but reaching to the top of a mountain gives a sense of joy and satisfaction. The feeling of having the confidence and the ability to do something and achieve something permeated the interviews when discussing what the respondents had learnt from the Hiking Club. Many of the
respondents brought forward a ‘Yes, I can’ spirit. In the drawing seen in Fig. 6, two respondents depicted this feeling in their answers to the question: how do you see yourself in nature? LH-E1 illustrated how he feels when reaching the top of a mountain, ‘I got the power’. LH-E6 drew how she hikes up a mountain with the Hiking Club even though she is scared of heights. She said, ‘it felt awesome to be at the top’.

Fig. 6. Drawings produced by LH-E1 (left) and LH-E6 (right)

Three of the control group respondents explicitly expressed that they are ‘confident’ and ‘proud’ of whom they are. Yet, how they acquired this confidence was not discussed. Two of the respondents presented these confidence features in their drawings (see Fig. 7) and in the attached descriptions.

Fig. 7. Drawings produced by K-C2 (left) and K-C3 (right)
K-C2 expressed the following:

‘I have been drawing myself that I am proud of who I am and that I see myself in nature as a very loving, caring and honest person – a person that likes to share.’

Her drawing contains hashtags, a ‘smiley heart’ and written depictions related to standing up for oneself and self-confidence. K-C2 expressed that to her nature means ‘that we must care for others and must love them equally’. In similar, K-C3 said the following about her drawing also seen in Fig. 7, ‘I felt like drawing who I am and my self-esteem’. She stated the following about what nature means, ‘I think nature means what you think about yourself’. The control group respondents had fewer stories relating to self-confidence compared to the experimental group.

6.1.2. Additional Data Sources

6.1.2.1. Healthy Habits

All participants showed awareness in what to do to keep healthy. During the focus group session, the participants expressed that through participating in ECP’s activities they have learnt how to be aware of themselves and also how to take care of themselves. Further, many of the individuals specifically expressed that they use the tools of yoga to take care of themselves. Two of the former Hiking Club members expressed that yoga is good for ‘stress relief’. H2 said the following:

‘When I am in university, I get a lot of assignments…and it is so stressful. Sometimes it’s really difficult so I just want to be free from everything. When I am confronted with those terms I just take refuge in yoga.’

Regarding the Hiking Club, many individuals expressed that hiking helps them to keep their minds calm. During the participant observation hike to Newlands Forest, N1 said that the Hiking Club makes her feel ‘alive’ and like a ‘different person’. An interviewee (H3) voiced something similar:

‘When I am on top of the mountain I feel very safe, calm, stress-free you know. I have nothing to worry about…there is not too much noise like here in Khayelitsha.’

In accordance with the experimental group, four of the eight participants said that they feel different to other youth in their communities who are not part of ECP, due to the fact that others have unhealthy habits (drinking alcohol, doing drugs, etc.).

6.1.2.2. Self-Knowledge

Five out of seven individuals from the focus group and the former Hiking Club members specifically said that ECP has helped them to stay true to themselves and to develop their sense of self-knowledge. F1 brought forward that taking part in ECP’s activities during the past ten years has taught her to ‘have this awareness of everything and at the same time to be grounded.’ According to her, being grounded means to stay true to oneself and by that knowing what one wants and what one stands for. In accordance to this, F4 argued that she now recognises her strengths and weaknesses and thereby she knows what she has the capacity to do in life. She further emphasised that ECP allows for ‘us to be ourselves’ and ‘creates that space for [us] to be different’, which the other focus group participants agreed to.

Concerning the Hiking Club, the former Hiking Club member H1 expressed that ECP has provided him practical skills in how to live a ‘sustainable and holistic life’. He clarified that a holistic lifestyle means to be consistent in taking care of oneself and also to keep everything in life balanced. He stated the following:
‘the Hiking Club has inspired me to connect with myself and to create that consciousness into becoming the person I am today.’

All individuals told stories about how practising yoga has affected their lives, in one way or another. Three out of four focus group participants specifically said that yoga has helped them to become more aware of themselves and their bodies. Through this awareness, they said to have acquired knowledge about how to stay healthy and how to use their capacities.

6.1.2.3. Self-Confidence

All participants expressed that they are confident and that they believe in their own capabilities to achieve what they want to achieve. When discussing how the focus group participants looked upon what ECP has helped them to develop, all four gathered around the word: self-confidence. They expressed that ECP provides a ‘space’ where they feel ‘safe’ and ‘supported’ to be themselves and to do whatever they want to do. F3 stated the following:

‘ECP gives me that spirit to do something...I know that there are people supporting me and that I have the confidence now to move forward...’

Regarding hiking, many individuals expressed that the Hiking Club has provided with a ‘Yes, I can’ spirit. For H1, this spirit has led to that he stays positive about challenges and obstacles ahead of him. In similar, F4 told the following story:

‘...when I get to the top for me it is like success because most people...do not reach the top...when we get to the top and you go down on your own...that means you can achieve and can do everything you want to...Hiking is that part where I get that spirit that I can do anything.’

6.1.2.4. Setting and Achieving Goals

Four of the eight individuals explicitly mentioned that ECP and the Hiking Club have helped them to advance their abilities to set up goals and achieve them. H3, who is a member of ECP since two years said the following:

‘Through being part of the Hiking Club, I have learnt how to take care of myself and to make goals for myself and how to achieve them in a certain time. Ever since I joined the Hiking Club, I know my dreams and what I plan to do in the next five years...’

Further, two individuals stressed that they sense a ‘purpose in life’ and that they can see where they are going in life. Due to this, they both expressed that they feel different to others in their communities who are not members of ECP. H1 stated the following:

‘ECP has given me that platform to see where I am going. ECP has protected me from some things and if I had never joined the project, I do not think I would have been where I am at the moment.’

This was reinforced by H2 who said, ‘ECP has made the foundation for us, a very good foundation’ when discussing the fact that many people in his neighbourhood never receive the chance to attend university since they do not qualify.

6.2. Care for Others

When organising the data into different themes the following sub-indicators appeared: Supporting Others and Leadership: Teaching Others and Being a Role Model.
6.2.1. Experimental Group and Control Group

In the case of the experimental group, the most frequently used word for the indicator Care for Others was people tailed by help, rest, teach and tree. For the control group, the most frequently used word was people followed by love, animals and caring (see Fig. 8). The words used by the experimental group were more action-related compared to the control group. There was little said by the control group that fit within this indicator. An explanation for this is that the questions posed to the experimental group and control group were not directly exploring the ability to care for others. Hence, the respondents in the interviews spontaneously brought up the statements related to this indicator and the control group had less to say about this topic.

6.2.1.1. Supporting Others

Twelve of the respondents in the experimental group shared stories about how they support people around them or vice versa. Some respondents explicitly expressed that they use tools they acquired through yoga to take care for others. LH-E5 stated that she uses yoga to ‘calm down’ and ‘encourage’ her friends.
In addition, K-E5 dedicated her drawing in Fig. 9 to express her willingness to help and support other people. She said the following to describe her drawing:

‘I have been drawing this tree because I am kindness and I help people with what they are struggling with. I like to be a tree because I want to help people with oxygen to breathe and with trees where people can rest. To calm down their stresses...nature is where animals were born and where animals live and where we are free, we calm down. When we are in nature we calm down our stresses and nature is built for us to be free, feel free, feel at home.’

K-E5 shows through her drawing that she knows how a tree is constructed with its roots, stem and crown. Oxygen is in this example an important variable in the depiction of how do you see yourself in nature? For this respondent, oxygen is the means for helping other people to feel better.

Four of the sixteen control group respondents expressed how they care for others. Words such as ‘loving’, ‘caring’ and ‘share’ were brought forward during the interviews. Further, K-C4 stated that he loves ‘people and animals’ and K-C8 said that he likes ‘to help people’. In addition, K-C6 devoted his drawing to express his determination of becoming a doctor to help people. He said the following to explain his drawing in Fig. 10:

‘I have been drawing that my father is a doctor. My father is now sick so he can’t go to his job...when I grow up I want to be a doctor... I want to help people when they are sick. I want to respect everyone. I want to see how I can help people.’

![Fig. 10. Drawing produced by K-C6](image)

The drawing depicts animal footprints, a doctor and other unidentified illustrations. At the top of the drawing, K-C6 wrote: ‘When I see myself in nature I must respect others and I want to be a doctor’.

6.2.1.2. Leadership: Teaching Others and Being a Role Model

In the experimental group, many of the respondents expressed how they teach others about nature: how important nature is for us humans, how we should not litter or chop down trees and the like. In
addition, some of the respondents expressed that they want to help people to calm down their stresses. Some of the control group respondents also told stories related to taking on leadership for nature (see section 6.3.1.4, pp.44-47)

6.2.2. Additional Data Sources

6.2.2.1. Supporting Others

During the focus group session, F1 voiced that ECP has taught her to take care of others in her surroundings. She expressed that she is more aware of her own and others well-being. The other focus group participants agreed to this statement. Further, while discussing the outcomes of the Alumni Programme, the focus group participants expressed that they felt a special ‘support’ from the alumni members. The focus group participants were part of the Alumni Programme before moving on to the Gap Year Internship Programme. F2 described that there was a special bond between the alumni group members, ‘if you touch one, it touches all of us’. Further, F4 added to this by telling the following story:

‘Alumni is this group where we feel accepted, we are not being judged for who we are, which background we come from or which colour we have. It is a platform for us to be ourselves. It is that space where I feel like “OK, I have the support”...’

Regarding the Hiking Club, the individuals acknowledged that the Club is more than just the act of hiking. H2 expressed that being a member of ECP and the Hiking Club is a privilege and that he has learnt about the importance of ‘unity’ and the ‘importance of people’. He stated the following:

‘[The Hiking Club] is a place where we learn a lot of things. For example, we were introduced to the thing of sharing, just that principle. You bring your lunchbox and someone else would bring his and you guys just shared...some people would come to the hike with nothing...they did not do that deliberately but from where they are coming from, their parents they did not give them that...so that thing of sharing...we work together, we do things together, that unity. We can do anything.’

6.2.2.2. Leadership: Teaching Others and Being a Role Model

The focus group participants expressed that ECP has given them an understanding of how one can become a leader. They also expressed that ECP has helped them to acquire necessary skills to lead other peoples. F3 stated specifically that the Alumni Programme has helped to develop her leadership skills. Further, all focus group participants voiced that the Gap Year Internship Programme is a platform for taking initiative. A platform where they can be creative and where they can use the skills they have acquired throughout the years participating in ECP’s programmes. According to F1, the foregoing programmes were thus ‘the stepping stones of leadership’. She stated that ECP is a space, which ‘can give you a platform to create, to resolve and to help’. The other participants agreed to this. In addition, all individuals uttered that it is a ‘blessing’ to be part of ECP. F1 expressed the following on the matter, which all the other participants agreed to:

‘It is a blessing to be part of ECP because not many people get the chance to be doing something when they are young and still do it when they are a bit older. I mean, 10 years ago I was this kid listening to the ECP staff but now I get to be them. Other kids are listening to me and it really says something about ECP. So, like if a project can do an impact on someone in a way that the person also wants to do an impact on someone else, it means that it’s a great initiative going on. It means the world.’

Five of the eight individuals explicitly expressed that being a member of the Hiking Club has developed them into leaders. Some of them expressed that they were given opportunities to ‘lead’ others and act as ‘mentors’ for younger children. H2 acknowledged that in the community in which
he grew up, ‘there are few mentors’. N1 expressed that she has learnt how to ‘guide people’ and to be a ‘leader’ through taking part in the hikes. She now knows how to tell people to stop littering and to care more for nature. Further, F1, who is now a Hiking Club facilitator, stated that she has been taught how to ‘hold space’ for children and also how to ‘motivate’, ‘encourage’ and ‘reassure’ them that they can do and achieve things. In addition, H3 stated the following about what he has learnt from the Hiking Club:

‘Ever since I joined Hiking Club I have told myself that I can be different in my community, I can make a difference in my community.’

With respect to being a role model, many of the individuals said that ECP and the Hiking Club have helped to guide them in how to take on this role. One of the Gap Year Interns, F2, specifically said that as an Intern she is a ‘role model’ for the children she works with. H1, who now is a Hiking Club facilitator expressed that he is an ‘example to people’ and that people in his community follow his example due to his positive spirit. In addition, he said the following about leading a Hiking Club:

‘The Hiking Club has given me that opportunity to give back what I have learnt to the young ones. To create a new generation to become better people...I am sort of a role model to them...now that I’m leading a hiking group it has made me become a new person.’

6.3. Care for Nature


6.3.1. Experimental Group and Control Group

The experimental group’s most frequently used word for the Care for Nature indicator was trees followed by animals, nature and people. The word at the top of the frequency list for the control group was water, followed by animals, nature and people (see Fig. 11). One reason for this difference in the words used is that almost all respondents in the Lavender Hill control group touched upon the current water crisis in Cape Town. The experimental group respondents were more focused on discussing the importance of trees and nature in general.

6.3.1.1. Loving Nature

All experimental group respondents expressed their love for nature in various ways. Many of them specifically uttered their love for ‘animals’ and ‘trees’. The love for trees often expressed itself in the fact that trees produce oxygen, which everyone ‘needs to survive’. K-E3 stated, ‘nature means like my life’. Two of the experimental group respondents showed their love for nature and how they feel in nature in their drawings.
K-E2 explained the following about his drawing in Fig. 12:

‘I love my nature because trees are the things that give us oxygen to breathe and we give them carbon dioxide. I love my nature, that is why I wrote that...there are the leaves...here are plants and here is some grass and here is some water. I love trees because I just love them...’

K-E2 showed that he knows about the different parts of a tree. In the crown of the tree, he wrote, ‘I love my nature’.
Further, LH-E2 explained the following about her drawing in Fig. 13:

‘I drew myself happy because I am always happy when I am around nature. There are hikers [in the drawing] because I love hiking. When I hike, I get full of energy and I do not want to give up even though I am tired.’

She further explained that nature makes her feel ‘comfortable’ because she can ‘rely on nature to stay alive, to survive’. This feeling was related to how she felt about her situation at home and that she has a ‘totally different life’ when in nature.

Five of the sixteen respondents in the control group expressed that they ‘like’, or ‘love’, nature (nature as in plants, animals and trees). Respondent K-C2 said that she feels happy about plants because they produce ‘oxygen’. Another respondent, LH-C5 also said she feels happy about nature due to its ‘beauty’. One respondent, LH-C3 specifically depicted her love for nature in the drawing seen in Fig. 14. She stated, ‘Nature is almost like the cover of the world. Nature is everywhere...in a park, near your house. It is almost part of your family because you live in it’.

![Fig. 14. Drawing produced by LH-C3](image)

LH-C3 explained the following about her drawing in Fig. 14:

‘I have been drawing myself in nature, watching the birds in the sky, looking at the flowers and all the wonderful stuff in nature. I like flowers and the colour of the grass and the trees. It is all in unique colours. I have been to a place almost the same like this. I love nature and all this stuff and it is beautiful and if you explore it you will get more excited.’

6.3.1.2. Connected to Nature

In all the interviews, questions were asked in relation to whether the respondents feel connected to nature or as a part of nature. Almost all of the respondents in the experimental group had something special to say about this topic. For example, LH-E5 said that she sees herself as in between ‘trees’, ‘animals’ and all the ‘plants’. Respondent K-E7 stated that nature means that ‘humans are connected to nature’ and that nature helps humans to cope and to provide with food. In her drawing seen in Fig. 15, she wrote numerous messages about how she sees herself in nature. On the path leading through her forest, it is written ‘taking one step at a time looking at the beauty of nature’. This relates to her real-life experiences acquired through the Hiking Club. She described the following about her drawing:
‘I have been drawing how I can feel when I am in nature and how it helps me to relax. I drew this forest because it reminds me of when we went to Table Mountain. So I decided to draw it instead of drawing other things I do not know. I also wrote on it because litter can make you feel angry or sad or whatever mood… I feel happy when I am in nature and a different kind of happiness.’

Concerning the Hiking Club, K-E7 voiced that she likes the Club because it teaches her about how to connect with nature. She said the following:

‘When we see an animal, you do not kick it or hurt it. When we see an anonymous plant you must ask for the name so you can know more about it.’

In the drawing in Fig. 16, K-E6 expressed that she wants to connect more with nature and through that take action for nature. She has depicted herself watering a tree with mountains as a backdrop. She said the following about her drawing:

‘I drew this because when we went hiking or somewhere else where I am in nature, I just feel like connecting more with nature and when I say this I feel like planting more trees so that we can all have oxygen in the environment and to make a change in the community where I live. Changing things such as making people plant more trees and make the environment clean. I feel so curious about wild animals and I also feel curious to teach people about animals like they must not harm them. I feel free in nature and happy because I get the chance to see animals and other plants. Here in Khayelitsha, we do not have many plants and when I hike I get the chance to see those.’

The drawing relates to the notion of that trees produce oxygen. K-E6 further said that nature means a great deal to her, ‘it is my home and a home where I feel free and comfortable’.
In comparison to the experimental group, only three of the sixteen respondents in the control group specifically expressed that they feel connected to nature or as a part of nature. LH-C5 stated, ‘I have a role in nature’, K-C4 said, ‘I like to be part of nature’ and LH-C7 expressed, ‘I feel connected’ to nature.

6.3.1.3. Knowledge about Nature

Many of the experimental group respondents were concerned about the cycle of oxygen and trees, which they knew a lot about. K-E1 expressed that if we do not have trees, ‘we cannot get oxygen, we cannot breathe and if we do not take care of the trees we will die soon’. Regarding the Hiking Club, all of the respondents said that they have gained more knowledge about plants and animals through participating in the hikes.

Some of the control group respondents explicitly showed that they have knowledge about nature. K-C8 stated, ‘Plants give us food and help us breathe. Sometimes animals help us and keep us safe, such as dogs. But other animals kill us’, which shows that he has knowledge about where food comes from and that plants produce oxygen. One control group respondent, LH-C8, depicted in her drawing (Fig. 17) that water is important for us human beings. She said the following:

‘I have been drawing that we must not mess with water. Some people think that they can mess with water and not save water because they don’t know that water keeps us healthy and strong. I drew a tree. I love water and it is very healthy for our bodies. I drew a tree because for growing plants you need water.’

Through the description of the drawing, the respondent shows that she has knowledge about water. The same knowledge pattern about water is seen in Fig. 21 (p.47).
6.3.1.4. Actions for Nature

All respondents in the experimental group said something about caring for or helping nature. For example, through picking up trash from the ground, telling others to do the same or having a strong will to plant more trees to prevent deforestation.

K-E4 dedicated her drawing seen in Fig. 18 to show the cycle of a tree while telling a story about the importance of taking care of nature. She said that she feels different to other people in her community.
who are not part of ECP because ‘they do not know why trees are important to us’. She continued, ‘many of them they also...beat them [the animals], chop trees...they do not know anything about nature, that is why they are doing that’. K-E4 said the following about her drawing in Fig. 18:

‘The tree represent that the tree gives people oxygen and the people must take care of trees. They must water them, especially plants, so that they can grow because people need the trees to survive. If there would be no trees, the people would not survive because people need them there. The oxygen is on the trees and trees would not survive without people because they need the carbon dioxide. Then the water represents how the trees need water too. I say that I feel happy when I am surrounded by trees and animals and because they are important I treat them like people because they are very important to us. I feel like a hero. I teach people to take care of nature and they listen to me. I wish people would stop chopping trees and kill animals because trees are important. That is why I drew this.’

In the drawing, K-E4 has depicted herself watering the tree with water from a river. Numerous messages about the importance of trees, how she feels in nature and her wishes about that people should treat nature better are written on the drawing. Further, K-E4 explained that nature means a great deal to her and without nature, she ‘will not survive’.

Regarding the Hiking Club, many experimental group respondents expressed that they have learnt how to take action for nature. Many of the respondents said that they want to ‘teach others about nature’ and show how important nature is. K-E1 stated that the Hiking Club has taught her that ‘we must take care of things, animals and trees because if we do not care we will suffer for many things’. LH-E5 made the drawing seen in Fig. 19, which depicts her experience hiking in Cederberg with the ECP Hiking Club in December 2016. She explained the following about her drawing:

‘I have been drawing me watering the plants in nature and this is the baboons we saw when we went on our last hike. We went to Cederberg...I see myself in nature caring about the plants and the animals and watering all the things that need to be watered such as the flowers and the grass.’

![Fig. 19. Drawing produced by LH-E5](image)

In the follow-up interview, LH-E5 said that the Hiking Club has taught her to always take care of

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13 Cederberg nature and mountains reserve is where the ECP Hiking Club goes on a 3-4 days’ overnight camp at the end of the school year.
nature and to never hurt animals. She was concerned by the fact that other children in her community are hurting animals and expressed the following:

‘I feel that children in my community should stop hurting animals because they did nothing to them and they should start taking care of earth’s plants because the plants give us food and herbs and some plants make us better.’

The experimental group and the control group respondents were asked about what they would do if they saw someone throwing trash on the ground. Almost all of the experimental group respondents voiced that they would stop that person and ask him or her to pick it up. If the person neglected their requests, they would pick it up themselves. K-E7 said she would try to motivate the litterer because ‘they are polluting our land and we need it to be clean so that the greenhouse gases can be reduced’. In addition, LH-E4 expressed the following:

‘...seeing them [other non-ECP children] doing the wrong stuff to the environment that really inspires me to tell them to pick the paper up and actually telling them about the environment.’

Many control group respondents expressed that they feel ‘sad’ about other people littering in their communities. Almost half of the respondents specifically expressed that they would tell the person littering to stop. Many of the respondents said that they would just pick it up themselves. LH-C2 expressed the following, ‘I would tell them to pick it up but if they do not, I would call people to help me to do it myself’. Another respondent, LH-C7 expressed the following:

‘People are just messing around, throwing bottles and stuff around. The paper they throw out of the bin, it just looks like dirty stuff lying around. I do not know what they do...but my thing is to keep the area clean and pick the papers up and all that stuff.’

Without it having been discussed earlier, one of the control group respondents, K-C7 depicted herself picking up trash from the ground in her drawing seen in Fig. 20.

![Fig. 20. Drawing produced by K-C7](image)

She explained the following about her drawing:

‘I have been drawing myself picking up papers and crisp papers so there is no air pollution. I have learnt about nature that there are different things like animals they are different to us and to keep nature clean we must also clean the environment.’
The drawing shows a person picking up trash among flowers. The illustration on the right side is a factory letting out air pollution. It is written ‘no to air pollution’ and ‘I see myself in nature cleaning the environment’. The drawing and the added description show that K-C7 has a perception of environmental issues and about what she can do to help prevent these issues.

Some of the respondents in the control group expressed that they care for animals and trees and that they want to help nature. K-C4 said, ‘if someone wants to cut a tree, I am going to stop him and if someone beats an animal I am going to report him’.

As mentioned earlier, most of the control group respondents in Lavender Hill were drawing or talking about issues in relation to water. LH-C1 depicted her worries about the current water crisis in Cape Town in the drawing seen in Fig. 21. She described it as follows:

‘I drew this because we need water and our plants go dead and we need water in our land. But we do not know where we are going to get water. If children do not mess with water then we can use water normally. I need water for myself to live and we must look after our plants and trees, we cannot mess with water anymore, we must use bathwater to water the trees and plants. We must look after them because if there is no water, they are going to die. Our plants are already going dead and our rivers because there is no water and if there is no water we are going to die.’

![Fig. 21. Drawing produced by LH-C1](image)

When discussing what nature means and where one can find nature, LH-C1 expressed that nature can be found ‘in the school’.

6.3.2. Additional Data Sources

6.3.2.1. Loving Nature

All individuals expressed a sense of love for nature and love for what it gives back to them. F4 voiced that she did not know that trees are important when she was growing up. After she was exposed to environmental education through ECP she understood that trees needed to be loved and to be taken care of. Due to this revelation, she stated, ‘Now, I have that confidence that I have to tell others that we have to love the earth’.

The former Hiking Club members had many stories to tell about their love for nature. H3 said that ‘nature means everything’ and that trees and birds are like humans to him. H1 expressed that being
part of the Hiking Club provided a space for him to experience nature and his ‘love for nature started to grow’ from then on. He said the following:

‘Nature means everything. I have been growing up to become a better person, the person that I am today, and it is because ECP introduced me into nature. In nature, I find that there is peace and there is love in nature.’

6.3.2.2. Connected to Nature

All eight individuals expressed that they feel connected to nature. H2 had numerous stories to tell about the topic and about what the Hiking Club has taught him about staying connected to nature. He now believes that if one has a ‘strong connection with nature’, it is easier to figure out whom one is and what one is here to do. H2 was taught in Hiking Club to stay quiet while hiking and through that truly experience nature. According to him, spending time in nature helps him to connect to people and to nature and he feels an ‘essence of being complete’. He voiced the following:

‘I believe that we as human beings have a strong relationship to mother nature because everything that is in nature is in a way connected to us. So, we have to take care of it so that it takes care of us...when I am there [in nature] I just feel complete you know. I forget about everything. I know of students, who come from backgrounds where in their families there were fights, divorce and they did not have food. But when we are up there on the mountain [with the ECP Hiking Club] we just forget about those things. We feel a sense of hope.’

6.3.2.3. Knowledge about Nature

In the focus group session, two of the participants expressed that before joining ECP they had a very different relationship to nature. F3 stated the following:

‘...if we would see a worm in a garden we would usually kill it because we were scared of it. But through being part of ECP we learnt that we have to keep these worms so they can give us the compost – the compost we use to grow food. Now we grow the experience in how to keep worms and how their bodies work. We know something other people do not know and it makes us more unique...’

Concerning the Hiking Club, the former Hiking Club members and the focus group participants expressed that they have gained more knowledge about the natural environment and how everything is connected. F2 said that she got the opportunity to see in real life that she was taught about in school, which she enjoyed. H1 voiced that for most people, nature is nothing important, ‘they did not get more knowledge about nature so they take it for granted’. In addition, F1 expressed the following:

‘Being part of a Hiking Club is something everyone should be because it is a very cool thing to know everything about the earth so that you can contribute to making it a better place. [Knowing about the earth and nature] it tells about the person you are, are you just you or are you also thankful to the nature around you? Are you an observing person? Are you appreciative of what’s around you?’

6.3.2.4. Actions for Nature

All individuals told stories about how they take actions for nature through, for example, telling others to stop littering, teaching others to love and take care for nature or to be an example of how to live in a way that promotes Sustainable Development. F1 expressed that she is more aware of the well-being of nature and of what she can do to make everything better. N1 stated that the Hiking Club has taught her to be a leader and to tell others about how important it is to not litter and to keep nature clean. Further, the former Hiking Club member, H1 said that through spreading the word of hiking and showing how much he loves nature, he has managed to engage some of his friends to join his hikes. In
addition, H2 expressed the following:

‘We were taught [in Hiking Club] that you should not throw papers and other things while hiking... We should keep the environment clean and I do not know, even now, it is so fixed in my mind when I have something I just wait until I see the dustbin for me to throw it away.’

6.4. Observations

This section serves as a description and explanation of the context in which the drawings and interviews were produced. It also provides some insights about the data collected from the experimental group and the control group.

6.4.1. Experimental Group

During the drawing session in Khayelitsha, I experienced that the children were calm and comfortable with my presence. I had met most of them during my time as an ECP intern. When the respondents heard the drawing question (How do you see yourself in nature?) they first looked a bit
confused, yet, after a little while everyone was focused on developing their drawings (see Fig. 22). Even though I had intentionally placed the sheets of paper spread out in the room, some of the respondents moved closer to one another. In contrast, respondent K-E4 (see Fig. 18, p.44) moved further away from the rest of the group and was deeply focused during the whole session. All respondents were drawing relatively fast and they seemed to know which message they wanted to convey. The first respondent was done after only 10-15 minutes and thereafter I conducted the follow-up interviews. Notably, the respondents answered quickly to each question. In addition, all respondents drew trees and many showed that trees provide oxygen. When attending the Eco-Warrior Club (one of ECP's Extra-Mural activities), I discovered that the tree-oxygen relationship is a reoccurring topic.

In Lavender Hill, the atmosphere was significantly different than in Khayelitsha. Some of the respondents were shy and seemed nervous to be in my presence even though I had met most of them before. After the icebreaker, some of them seemed to feel a bit more comfortable. The respondents finished their drawings rather quickly. During the interviews, many of the respondents were remarkably nervous about the situation. I sat down on the floor together with the respondent while conducting the interview for the reason of reducing the power imbalance between the respondent and me. In addition, I regularly reassured the respondents that it was a safe space and that there were no right or wrong answers. Nevertheless, some of the interviews were remarkably shorter than the ones acquired in Khayelitsha. Most of the respondents answered quickly to the questions whilst others were quiet or answered, ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘I do not know’. The next time I saw all the respondents was during the hike to Newlands Forest. Due to the lack of trust and the feeling of nervousness, which permeated the drawing session, I took a step back during the hike. Interestingly, the week after the hike, when I met the respondents again they seemed more relaxed and happy with my presence. As seen in Fig. 23, six out of seven respondents explicitly drew themselves while out hiking.

Fig. 23. Drawings produced by the experimental group (Lavender Hill)
All the respondents in both Khayelitsha and Lavender Hill created drawings, which were all related to nature such as trees, mountains, flowers or the act of hiking. Most of the respondents were also explicitly referring to real-life experiences. The respondents in Lavender Hill had been part of the Hiking Club for over a year whilst the respondents in Khayelitsha had only been out on one hike. Therefore, the differences in motives (trees vs. hiking) can be explained (see Fig. 22 and Fig. 23).

6.4.2. Control Group

The respondents in Khayelitsha seemed to be curious and relaxed in the space and with me as a facilitator. For this session, one of the Gap Year Interns joined to help run the session. When I asked the drawing question it took the respondents a while to start the process. Further, it took them more than 30 minutes to finish the drawings and in the end I had to ask the respondents to finish due to the session’s time frame of 60 minutes. When discussing what nature is and where one can find nature, I experienced that many of the respondents did not know what to answer. To give an example, K-C1 (Fig. 24, top left corner) answered the following to the question how do you see yourself in nature?:

‘I enjoy being a singer and I want to join a competition where people are singing. I love my mother. I’m number one of the singers in this school. I want to go to boarding school…’
people love me because I’m the singer of this school. In the assembly, I’m the first to sing the songs in school and many people love me and my mother wants to take me to school.’

In addition, for K-C1 nature means, ‘someone must clean the school’.

The session was the first and only encounter I had with the respondents. There were some language barriers, which I overcame through using gestures, reposing the question in a different manner or in some cases simply moving on to the next question.

In Lavender Hill, the respondents thought they were going to attend an ECP yoga class. The respondent’s teacher had misunderstood the purpose my study (see chapter eight). Thus, the respondents were dressed for physical education and the teacher had chosen eight students who wanted to do yoga to attend the session. Due to this, it took a bit longer to ease the respondents into the space. After the icebreaker, I got the impression that they felt more comfortable with the situation. Everyone spread out in the room to where I had placed the sheets of paper. When I had asked the drawing question it took a while before all the respondents started the process. Many of them moved closer to one another and looked at the drawings of others and started drawing the same things. I repeatedly clarified that this was not an exam and that there was no right or wrong. It took them a

Fig. 25. Drawings produced by the control group (Lavender Hill)
long time to finish the drawings (Fig. 25) and after 25-30 min I had to ask them to stop what they were doing.

The first respondent to be interviewed was the only one who was sitting completely on her own and was focused during the whole session. When I had interviewed LH-C1 (see Fig. 21, p.47) I asked the respondent to go back to class. Yet, she stayed and went back to her friends instead who were still drawing. As I was the only adult in the room and due to the fact that I was busy interviewing, I could not control this situation. All respondents ended up staying in the room after they were interviewed and sat together and talked with the other respondents. Consequently, four out of eight respondents redid their drawings and many of them brought up the water crisis in Cape Town as LH-C1 did. For example, LH-C7 made a drawing with two children holding a book where it is written ‘I love to do my education’ and ‘I see myself in the future like in studies to become a better person in life’. Yet, the drawing she decided to describe to me depicted a child standing in grass with clouds and birds around him or her. In the follow-up interview, LH-C7 repeatedly referred to the water crisis in Cape Town. Further, many of the drawings had very strong colours such as bright pink or orange and all of the drawings had a frame around the edges, often in pink or blue (see collage in Fig. 25).

6.4.3. Hike to Newlands Forest

This hike was the very first one for the Lavender Hill children in grade six. I talked to one member who was very excited about being at her first hike. The children seemed to be very curious about hiking and about what the day would bring. During a silent walk, the members were asked to use all their senses to fully experience nature. Later during a break, they first shared their stories about what they had experienced. Then, the hiking facilitator hosted a guided meditation focused on staying present, relaxed and feeling the breeze from nature. All members closed their eyes and stayed silent during the whole meditation. Afterwards, they were asked to share their thoughts and feelings about the meditation and some of them said that they felt ‘relaxed’ and that they could do this at home as well.
7. Discussion

This study is exploring whether ECP is empowering children and enhancing their agency. It is also exploring whether there are any differences between the experimental group and the control group. However, as stated earlier, due to this study’s exploratory and qualitative nature it is not discussed to what extent the children may be empowered or have agency, how this may contribute to Sustainable Development or to what extent there may be a difference between the two groups. In order to answer this study’s research question, this chapter discusses the findings with the theoretical framework as a backdrop. The central data were obtained from the experimental group and the control group, which are at the centre of the attention for this following discussion as well. The other data sources are meant to qualify and support the central findings. The first section discusses the outcomes of ECP and the second section discusses how these outcomes are realised. Finally, the last section discusses how ECP may contribute to develop agents of change who will forge a sustainable future.

Table 13. Overview Scheme – 3Cs

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<th>Care for Others</th>
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<td>TOTAL: 31</td>
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(No Data: the interview was interrupted after K-E2 described his drawing)
7.1. Care for Oneself, Care for Others and Care for Nature

As stated in chapter five, the experimental group and control group respondents live in the same areas, they go to similar schools and they are all in the same grade. The main assumed difference is that the experimental group is part of ECP’s programmes and the control group is not. Through exploring the empirical findings, there are indications that there are differences in how these respondents relate to themselves, others and nature. During the data collecting process, it became clear that the experimental group has a broader perspective on issues relating to the three indicators compared to the control group. There is an added richness in the stories of the experimental group, particularly when discussing nature. Table 13 shows whether the experimental group and control group respondents have touched upon topics relating to each indicator. It should be noted that the cross in each box does not indicate to what extent the respondent discussed the topic. It only shows the minimum, which is to say that at least one sentence relating to the specific indicator was recorded.

The findings for the indicator Care for Oneself show that all experimental group respondents and fourteen out of sixteen in the control group told stories related to this topic (see Table 13). The results imply that the experimental group respondents have a strong awareness of how to stay healthy, both in the mind and body. The data suggest that ECP creates a space where the respondents develop skills and knowledge in regard to health. The findings also show that almost all of the control group respondents have an awareness of how to stay healthy. As expressed in the empowerment theory section, a person’s health and well-being are important indicators for being empowered. Hence, both groups show signs of being empowered in this sense. Yet, there are indications that the experimental group has more tools and knowledge about how to stay healthy.

The experimental group respondents show self-confidence and a ‘Yes, I can’ spirit (see section 6.1.1.2, p.32-34), which displays strength in terms of believing in one’s own capabilities. In accordance with the theoretical framework, being self-confident about one’s own capabilities enhance the capacities to achieve the goals one sets out for oneself. In line with the thinking of Bandura discussed in chapter four, these beliefs enhance one’s agency. In addition, this positive ‘Yes, I can’ spirit relates to taking charge and gaining mastery of one’s own life, which is an indication of being empowered. Many respondents expressed that ECP and particularly practising yoga and being a member of the Hiking Club, have contributed to their self-confidence. Further, a few of the control group respondents show self-confidence through their drawings or in their statements. However, self-confidence was expressed in a different manner compared to the experimental group. The control group respondents communicated this together with self-love, self-esteem and/or to love others (see e.g. Fig. 7, p.33). In contrast, many of the experimental group’s drawings or statements were oriented towards having the power to achieve something, reaching to the top or going somewhere. The data imply that a possible reason for this difference is the experimental groups’ participation in the Hiking Club. Many of the respondents explicitly discussed that hiking is tough but when one reaches the top, one obtains a sense of having the power.

These findings are reinforced by the additional data sources. Due to the strong support of ECP and especially the Hiking Club, the individuals expressed that they now can construct goals and see a clearer relationship between their goals and the actions needed to achieve them. In addition, the individuals expressed that they feel confident and that they know what they have the capabilities to do in life, which leads to a resilient ‘Yes, I can’ spirit.

Regarding Care for Others, the findings suggest that the experimental group respondents spontaneously express more about supporting and helping others than in the control group. As seen in Table 13, twelve out of fourteen in the experimental group voiced stories relating to this indicator. In contrast, only six out of sixteen in the control group did the same. The experimental group respondents expressed that they use the tools they have acquired in yoga and in the Hiking Club, to help and support other people. In addition, many of the respondents explicitly said how and why they want to teach others about nature. The respondents expressed that the purpose of teaching others about nature is to make them care more about it and treat it better. In accordance with the theoretical
framework, the experimental group respondents thus show signs of having agency and acting as agents of change for Sustainable Development due to the respondents’ willingness to have an impact on someone. This impact is materialised through educating others and/or taking on leadership, especially in relation to nature. The control group respondents who did touch upon this indicator expressed that they care for others and that they want to help others, which also show agentic features. Some of them also expressed that they take on leadership regarding nature. However, when looking at the differences in words used for the indicator Care for Others, there are indications that the experimental group has a larger focus on helping and teaching others, which is more related to being an active agent of change in society. The experimental group’s most frequently used words were people, help, rest and teach (see word cloud in Fig. 8, p.36) whilst the control group's words were people, love, animals and caring. The individuals in both groups, who expressed stories in relation to this indicator, all give an indication of having agency. Yet, importantly in the control group, the number of respondents telling such stories were significantly fewer than in the experimental group.

The additional data sources strongly support these findings. All individuals told stories relating to them taking on leadership, being a role model or helping others to feel better and do better. They all referred to ECP as the source for acquiring the skills to take on these functions and give back to other people.

The findings linked to the Care for Nature indicator imply that the experimental group respondents feel connected to nature. This connection expresses itself in a willingness to take action for nature such as watering trees and plants, pick up trash or teach others about the importance of nature. Many of the respondents specifically voiced that through being a member of the Hiking Club, they have knowledge about nature: why it is important for humans, how to treat it in a sustainable manner and how to take action for its wellbeing. Further, all experimental group respondents connected their answers and drawings to this indicator. The drawings depicted nature as in trees, plants, water or such or the act of hiking. Also, many incorporated action-related topics such as watering a tree so that it can produce oxygen. In contrast, only ten out of sixteen control group respondents connected their drawings to nature. Two of the respondents did not refer to nature at all, even though they were specifically asked questions on the topic (see Table 13). Interestingly, the findings suggest that six of the control group respondents understood the word nature as ‘home’, ‘love yourself and others’ or ‘to be yourself’ (see Appendix 1). In opposition to this, everyone in the experimental group was seeing nature as in trees, animals or such. This difference implies that the experimental group is more exposed to nature and has generally more knowledge about it. Nevertheless, some of the control group respondents also expressed that they want to help nature, tell others to stop littering and that they feel sad about people destroying nature. With the theoretical framework in mind, teaching others or taking on leadership for nature shows that one has agency and that one acts as an agent of change in terms of Sustainable Development. Hence, the data imply that the experimental group has more agency in terms of care for nature compared to the control group.

The additional data sources strongly reinforce the suggestion that the individuals exposed to ECP are more connected to nature. The individuals have more love for and knowledge about nature and therefore they want to take action for nature. The findings also imply that the individuals’ knowledge about pro-environmental behaviours in combination with their self-confidence may lead to them acting as sustainable agents of change. As presented in the theoretical framework, if one believes in one’s pro-environmental behaviour, environmental responsibility is enhanced and one can become a sustainable agent of change.

### 7.2. The ECP Space: Social Opportunities, Fortuity and Active Stimulus

This section is discussing the reasons for why the suggested outcomes seen in the foregoing section are being realised.
First, the data suggest that ECP has helped the participants to open up doors and bring opportunities to their doorsteps. The individuals participating in ECP’s programmes expressed that being part of ECP is a ‘blessing’ and that ECP has given a ‘foundation’ for the future. In addition, some of them explicitly voiced that they stay away from drinking, smoking and doing drugs thanks to ECP. As described in the context to this study, all participants have grown up and are living in under-resourced communities. Many live in households with low socioeconomic status (SES), which often leads to a decrease in social opportunities. As stated in the theoretical framework, an individual’s social circumstances and social opportunities are of high importance for the level of agency. This opportunity structure is said to be at the core of individual action. Hence, with these theories as a backdrop, the data give an indication that ECP increases social opportunities for the children and youth they work with, which may lead to an enhancement of their agency.

Second, the collected data imply that ECP creates a space where favourable conditions for personal development are in place. As discussed in the theoretical framework, fortuity plays a large role in whether one has strong agency or not. Yet, fortuity and thereby one’s opportunities to develop one’s agency can be increased if one goes to places, does things, explores new activities or develop one’s own capabilities. The children and youth ECP works with are more exposed to nature, other people and also to themselves compared to the control group. For example, many of the individuals expressed that through participating in the Hiking Club, they have seen places they only heard about before. This shows that children’s initial fortuity might change since ECP is consciously creating conditions for children to enhance their agency and to learn a wider range of skills, knowledge and attitudes related to Sustainable Development.

Third, the findings also suggest that ECP provides an active stimulus and a creative space, where the participants can be creative, unfold their capabilities and take on leader roles. As stated earlier, many ECP individuals expressed that they have learnt many skills, increased their self-confidence and that they know what they are capable of. The individuals expressed that ECP provides a safe space for them to be supported, to be themselves, to be creative and to be in charge. The Gap Year Internship Programme, Alumni Programme and the Hiking Club were specifically brought forward as strong sources of these functions. Especially, the Gap Year Interns emphasised that ECP is a space, which gives them a platform where they can ‘create’, ‘resolve’ and ‘help’. As described in the theoretical framework, low SES households often lack this active stimulus of children, which is needed for them to become active agents of change in society. In addition, it is important to acknowledge and entrust children and youth a space where they can articulate their own creativity and talents and further put into practice their ideas and action. The theories therefore support the suggestion that ECP provides a space for children and youth to be empowered and to enhance their agency.

7.3. ECP, ESD and Agents of Change for Sustainable Development

As stated in the context chapter, ECP does not expect all children they work with to develop into leaders forging a sustainable future. Yet, as the findings suggest, the children exposed to ECP are learning more about nature than the children who are not exposed and many specifically expressed that they want to take action for nature. ECP is addressing global issues such as air pollution, deforestation and waste management and it should be noted that in the schools ECP works with there is little or no focus on issues related to SD. Therefore, ECP adds to the existing curriculum by bringing in these type of SD issues. However, it could be argued that ECP is not doing what is known as full-fletched ESD addressing all complex issues of SD (see chapter three). Nevertheless, ESD can take many various forms depending on the target group and the context it intends to address. As Wals (2009) states, there is not only one single interpretation or use of ESD. Instead of looking at this as a drawback, Wals suggests that the sustainability of the planet needs to be addressed in multiple ways from different angles in a local yet globally connected manner. The findings suggest that ECP has adapted SD related issues in a way that fits the local context and the age groups it intends to address.
Further, ECP has a large focus on conveying the message that nature is important and that nature needs to be loved. Many of the children ECP works with are not exposed to nature at all and rarely leave the rough areas in which they live. Therefore, this focus is deemed important for opening up doors for children to learn about nature and its importance, which could further lead to deeper knowledge about SD issues. Being exposed to ECP’s programmes may contribute to making children more sensitive towards learning more deeply about complex SD issues in the future. Thus, this study argues that ECP provides the initial steps for children to develop into agents of change for Sustainable Development.
8. Conclusions

With the empirical findings in mind and the foregoing discussion as a backdrop, this study has aimed to answer the following question:

*Can a holistic approach to Education for Sustainable Development, as exemplified by Earthchild Project, which is focused on yoga, environmental education and hiking, empower children and enhance their agency for a sustainable future? And how?*

By comparing the ECP group with a control group, the findings indicate that the children exposed to ECP are indeed more empowered and have more agency. The experimental group showed to be more articulated regarding all three indicators – *Care for Oneself, Care for Others* and *Care for Nature* – compared to the control group. When exploring the data collected from the additional data sources, these indications of the empowerment and enhanced agency became even clearer. They reinforce the strong suggestion that the work of ECP is achieving what it intends to achieve in terms of nurturing children to become *conscious, responsible and successful* people as well as *empowered and capable* leaders. The findings also indicate that ECP creates social opportunities, creates favourable conditions and provides a safe and creative space for children and youth to develop into empowered and active agents in society. Due to this study’s exploratory nature, these conclusions can only be seen as strong indications that the outcomes of the Project have been realised. However, they do not demonstrate the degree to which the children and youth are empowered and have agency or if the children and youth will keep these functions later in life. Nor do they show to what degree these outcomes may inspire the children to act as agents of change in the future striving for Sustainable Development. Nevertheless, this study is providing encouraging conclusions for ECP and the field of ESD, showing which effects this model of an ESD initiative can have. Additionally, these conclusions also indicate that ECP is providing initial steps to develop children who will contribute to Sustainable Development as active agents of change.

This research has met its aim by providing empirical data to the field of ESD through focusing on the effects or outcomes of an ESD initiative. It could be considered a pre-evaluation of ECP as a whole including the Hiking Club. An ECP programme description has been developed with tables and figures of the overall Project and its outcomes, which could be useful for strengthening ECP’s operations. This study has also provided a theoretical base and indications of how ECP may empower and enhance children’s agency. ECP can use this understanding when acquiring new funding for the various programmes. In addition, this current study has provided an empirical exploration of the drawing method. It showed to be a useful and rich method to use in the case of empowerment, agency, children and Sustainable Development. This method gave the power to the participants to nurture their creativity and reflexivity.

8.1. Further Research

In order to explore deeper into the effects of ECP, it is suggested to conduct a longitudinal study with a larger sample. It is also suggested to continue developing the quasi-experimental design to further investigate the differences between the children exposed to ECP and the children who are not. With these strong indications of ECP’s effects in mind, more quantitative research is needed to investigate the degree to which agency and empowerment effects are realised. It could be of value if a monitoring system is constructed, which collects data with the same children over a longer time period to see if there are any changes over time. Therefore, I recommend ECP staff to develop such system in order to assess ECP’s overall effects.

In addition, during the field trip more data were gathered than actually used within the scope of this thesis. The wealth of data, in particular the drawings and the children’s reflections on their drawings, could be explored in much greater detail, even in other spheres of research than Sustainable Development.
8.2. Reflections and Limitations

This section outlines some general reflections about this study. First, I would like to reflect on the issue of how the control group was introduced to the space. Despite the fact that efforts were made to organise all the drawing sessions beforehand, several obstacles were encountered along the way. I met with the children’s teachers before the sessions and explained the purpose of the study. Yet, when arriving at the school in Lavender Hill, it became clear that the teacher thought I was there to teach yoga for ECP. In Khayelitsha, the teacher had the impression that I would come back and run sessions every week in order to integrate her class to ECP’s programmes. These experiences might have challenged the way the respondents perceived the session. I could not control how the teachers had prepared the respondents for this drawing session. Despite this situation and due to time constraints, I decided to move forward as planned. From these experiences, I understood how much the teachers want the children to also be part of ECP. Second, the time frame available for hosting the sessions was short. In addition, I was alone in three out of four sessions, which entailed that I could not prevent the children from looking at the drawings of the other children. These issues might have had an impact on the validity of the results. Yet, I would like to argue that the results retrieved from the ECP group still reflect the outcomes of ECP irrespective of the results from the control group. Moreover, this study wanted to know about the children’s spontaneous thoughts and feelings on the covered topics. Therefore, the way in which the control group was introduced into the space is not seen as a drawback.

Some of the children drew very detailed drawings but did not express as much verbally due to them being nervous or due to language barriers. Therefore, the drawing method was a useful tool for the purpose of this study. However, for future reference, it would be better to have at least two adults in the sessions. Both because of language barriers but also for making sure that the children stay calm and to ensure them that it is not a competition.

With this said, I would like to end this thesis through yet again giving voice to one of the Earth Children who has contributed to this study with her beautiful stories:

‘It is a blessing to be part of ECP because not many people get the chance to be doing something when they are young and still do it when they are a bit older. I mean, 10 years ago I was this kid listening to the ECP staff but now I get to be them. Other kids are listening to me and it really says something about ECP. So, like if a project can do an impact on someone in a way that the person also wants to do an impact on someone else, it means that it’s a great initiative going on. It means the world.’

(Participant 1, Focus Group)
9. Acknowledgments

It should not go unmentioned that this thesis would not have been possible without the support of others. First and foremost, I would like to thank my magnificent supervisor, Frans Lenglet, for believing in this project, for challenging me and for tirelessly encouraging me in my work. Without your genuine support expressed through your reflections, contributions and thoughts, this thesis would not be what it is today. I am enormously thankful for having you as my supervisor. Furthermore, I would like to send thanks to my evaluator, Lars Rydén, for the smooth cooperation.

Second, this thesis would not have been possible without the practical and emotional support from Earthchild Project. Thank you for welcoming me (again) with open arms to the ECP family and thank you for allowing me the space to pursue this research. Special thanks go to Janna, Carly, Linci, Noks, Xoli, Denisha, Soso, Mahle, Sikie, Si, Ongie, Anita, Athi and Njongo and all children and teachers I encountered during my field trip. Thank you all for taking the time and for opening up to me, I could not have done this without you. ECP, I am truly looking forward to following your journey.

Third, I want to send thanks and love to my two MSD library companions, Larissa Kwiatkowski and Tina Schmiers. Thank you for sharing your thoughts, chocolate and energy throughout this semester – you helped to keep me sane! In addition, a big thank you goes to Julian Renz for your tireless encouragements and for being my ‘bollplank’. You are the best.

Last (but not least), dear MSD, thank you for these two inspiring years!

May 2017, Uppsala

Amanda Norrlander
10. References


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Appendices

Appendix 1: Drawing Sessions

CONSENT FORM
You have been asked to participate in this study sponsored by Uppsala University in Sweden. The purpose of this session is to know more about how school children in South Africa look at and feel about nature and the environment. The information gathered during this session will be used in a report about education for sustainable development.

This session will be audio recorded and the drawings will be collected but your name will not be used in the report. You will be anonymous. You can decide to not participate and stop at any time.

I understand this information and I agree to participate in this session:

NAME __________________________ DATE __________________________

PROTOCOL

Time
60 min

Introduction
Good morning/ good afternoon everyone and thank you for having me in your classroom. My name is Amanda Norrlander and I am a master student in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University in Sweden. I am here because I am very interested in how school children look at nature and the environment. I wish to know how YOU feel about yourself, your surroundings, the environment and nature. This will later be used in a project I am working on for my university. Is this OK for everyone? If not, just let me know because it is OK to say no and not take part in this session. This is voluntary.

Today, we will draw and talk about nature and ourselves. First I will ask you all one question and instead of answering in words I’d like you to draw your answer. Please be as specific as possible. When you are done just raise your hand and together with my colleague (or the teacher) I will ask you some questions. Please remember that there are no good or bad drawings and there are no right or wrong answers. I will record your answers and gather the drawings but your names will not be used in the final project (you will be anonymous), only your age group and geographical area (Lavender Hill/Khayelitsha).

Remember that this is NOT an assessment; I am just interested to know more about your thoughts and feelings. Do not hesitate to ask me any type of questions during this session. Now, let’s have fun together!

Icebreaker
Before we start lets sing a song together.

Song: Flea Fly Flow

Drawings (15 min)

1. How do you see yourself in nature?
Explaining Drawing

1. Please explain what you have been drawing. (*What is this? Who is this? Why? How does it work? What does it mean?*)

Follow-Up Questions

1. What does nature mean to you? (*Where is nature according to you? Do you go on outings to the mountains? Do you feel as a part of nature? Why? How? When?*)
5. What do you do if people around you throw trash on the ground? (*Why? When?*)

ECP Questions (experimental group)

6. Please tell me a little bit about the hiking club (*How does it make you feel? What do you like/dislike about it? What have you learnt?*)
8. Do you feel any different to other children in your community who are not part of Earthchild Project? (*Why? In what way? When?*)
CONTROL GROUP DRAWINGS & DESCRIPTIONS

Due to space limits, only the drawings that are not presented in the thesis are presented here.

Khayelitsha: Top from the left K-C1 and K-C4. Bottom from the left: C-K5 and C-K8.
Lavender Hill: LH-C2, LH-C4, LH-C5, LH-C6 and LH-C7
<table>
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<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>F/M</th>
<th>Drawing</th>
<th>Drawing Explanation</th>
<th>Meaning of Nature</th>
<th>Where is Nature</th>
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<tr>
<td>K-C1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Person holding a microphone saying ‘I am a singer into the world’, small figures, a heart with arrows through. Also written ‘Miky Mouse Club House’, ‘I see myself in the boarding school and I am the sing of the world and I love to sing and I want to go on competition.’</td>
<td>‘I enjoy being a singer and I want to join a competition where people are singing. I love my mother. I’m number one of the singers in this school. I want to go to boarding school…many people love me because I’m the singer of this school. In the assembly, I’m the first to sing the songs in school and many people love me and my mother wants to take me to school.’</td>
<td>‘It means to me that someone must clean the school.’</td>
<td>‘Nature is the forest. I like to go see animals in the forest.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>A person in the</td>
<td>‘I’ve been drawing’</td>
<td>‘I think nature’</td>
<td>‘I think we can’</td>
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<td><strong>C2</strong></td>
<td>middle with a t-shirt (#I&lt;3U), many hashtags, shapes, a ‘smiley heart’, dots. Also written ‘I see myself in nature as a very loving, caring and honestly person and a person that likes to share’, ‘You must know who are you’, ‘I am proud of who I am’, ‘Don’t expect someone to tell you are beautiful’ myself that I am proud of who I am and that I see myself in nature as a very loving, caring and honest person. A person that likes to share. I’ve come to draw this because I am proud of who I am and I don’t expect someone to tell me that I am beautiful. This is a smiley heart.’ means to me that we must care for others and must love them equally.’ find nature around us.’</td>
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<td><strong>K-C3</strong></td>
<td>A person in the middle with a top saying ‘Queen’, dots, smileys, heart with an arrow through it, one flower, seven ‘love’. Also written ‘I see myself in nature by know who I am and my self-esteem’, ‘love yourself’, ‘Love you!!!’ ‘I felt like drawing who I am and my self-esteem.’ ‘Nature. I think nature means what you think about yourself.’ ‘I think it is an environment.’</td>
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<td><strong>K-C4</strong></td>
<td>Person with smiling face walking a dog, dog food, grass, flower. Also written ‘I see myself in nature because I am always happy and I love people and animals.’ ‘I enjoy bicycling and I love people and animals. It’s a dog and me. It’s my dog and there’s dog food.’ ‘It means something we must love – people and yourself and animals. If someone doesn’t have something we must borrow him or her.’</td>
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<td><strong>K-C5</strong></td>
<td>Person in pink outfit, hearts, heart saying ‘Self’ heart smiley, hashtags, twenty ‘Love’. Also written ‘I see myself with nature to who am I’, ‘Beautiful’, ‘your love’ ‘I want to know who I am. I don’t want people to take me down. I don’t like others when they are fighting, I want to tell people who I am because I don’t want to fight with others.’ ‘Nature means to me that I know who I am and then it also means to clean the environment and help other people.’ ‘We can find nature in the section where you live.’</td>
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<td><strong>K-C6</strong></td>
<td>A person in a circle, animal foot prints. Also written ‘I love to help people to help is good thing to me’, ‘When I see myself in nature I must respect others and I want to be a doctor’ ‘I’ve been drawing that my father is a doctor. My father is now sick so he can’t go to his job…when I grow up I want to be a doctor…so I love his job to help people so I want to help people when they’re ‘Nature means that I want to respect people and become a doctor.’</td>
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<td>K-C7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>A person picking up crisp bags in nature, a factory letting out pollution, sun, clouds, blue sky. Also written ‘No to air pollution’, ‘I see myself in nature cleaning the environment’</td>
<td>‘I was drawing myself picking up papers and crisp papers and no air pollution.’</td>
<td>‘Nature means to me that people live in the same world and the world has animals, trees, everything and people does bad things with nature.’</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-C8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Person with orange sweater with ‘Guess Jeans’ print, smileys, tree, animal footprints. Also written ‘I see myself like you have everything you need, things you want.’</td>
<td>‘I was drawing to show myself. Just Jeans is a brand. This is a tree and this is a flower. These other things are just drawings. I see myself in the nature because I like to help people and other animals. This drawing is showing that I can feed other trees with water and with health so that I can help animals.'</td>
<td>‘Nature means to me that I could help everything in the world such as animals and flowers and trees.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-C1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, trees, stars, plants, water tap, water glass. Purple frame. Also written ‘we need water’, ‘our trees and plants go dead because we need water’</td>
<td>‘I drew this because we need water and our plants go dead and we need water in our land. But we don’t know where we’re going to get water. If children don’t mess with water then we can use water normally. I need water for myself to live and we must look after our plants and trees, we can’t mess with water anymore, we must use bathwater to water the trees and plants. We must look after them because if there’s no water, they’re going to die. Our plants are already going dead and our rivers because there’s no water and if there’s no water we’re going to die.’</td>
<td>‘In the school.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-C2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, sun, tree, mountain, grass,</td>
<td>‘I drew myself. If I go in to nature then I want’</td>
<td>‘You can find nature in’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-C3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sun, trees, flowers, birds, bird nests with nestlings, a person with a flowery dress. Pink frame. Also written 'I love nature.'</td>
<td>‘I’ve been drawing myself in nature, watching the birds in the sky, looking at the flowers and all the wonderful stuff in nature. I like flowers and the colour of the grass and the trees. It’s all in unique colours. I’ve been to a place almost the same like this. I love nature and all this stuff and it’s beautiful and if you explore it you’ll get more excited.’</td>
<td>‘Nature is almost like the cover of the world. Nature is everywhere, you can find it everywhere: in a park, near your house. It’s almost part of your family because you live in it.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-C4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, tree, smiling person. Pink and yellow/brown frame. BACKSIDE: smiley, flower and pink frame.</td>
<td>‘I drew a tree and myself in nature. It just came up in my mind so I drew it. I have been to a place like this, my grandma’s garden.’</td>
<td>‘Here in this land.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-C5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, grass, smiling person. Pink and purple frame. Also written ‘happy.’</td>
<td>‘This is me, I feel happy about the nature and I like these beautiful things you can see and the birds, butterflies and animals and people. I have not been to a mountain or a forest.’</td>
<td>‘It means that you must be happy and that’s good for you. Be nice to other people.’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LH-C6</strong></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sun, clouds, bird, flowers, tree, two smiling people. Purple/blue frame BACKSIDE: the same but without green colours.</td>
<td>‘I went to the field just to fresh my mind and I saw this boy coming and he was asking me if I’m fine and I was just telling him yes and we became friends. This happened in real life. This park is in Seawinds.’</td>
<td>‘There’s a lot of things that is created that is very beautiful. That we are not seeing. We just look at it and don’t care. It’s there, it’s a butterfly, we don’t even mention it sometimes, We don’t take it seriously.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LH-C7</strong></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, grass, smiling person. Pink and yellow/brown frame. BACKSIDE: Clouds, tree, two people holding a book saying ‘I love my education’. Also written ‘I see myself in the future like in studies to become a better person in life.’</td>
<td>‘Not mess with water and look after the nature and the and stuff and the grass. Don’t mess with water because people...the children stand by the tap and they let the water run ad run but so my teacher say when people are finding them they have to pay. I said to them [the children] and they don’t want to listen. I close the tap and then the children come and open the tap and they leave the taps open and they just go…People are just messing around, throwing bottles and stuff around. The paper they throw out of the bin, it just look like dirty stuff lying around. I don’t know what they do…but my thing is to keep the area clean and pick the papers up and all that stuff.’</td>
<td>‘Nature is the little birds and stuff.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LH-C8</strong></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, sun, flower, tree, heart, smiling person. Pink frame. Also written ‘happy’.</td>
<td>‘I’ve been drawing that we must not mess with water. Some people think that they can mess</td>
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<tr>
<td>'do not mess water.'</td>
<td>with water and not save water because they don’t know that water keeps us healthy and strong. I drew a tree. I love water and it’s very healthy for our bodies. I drew a tree because for growing plants you need water.</td>
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<td>BACKSIDE: Clouds, bird, flower, two people with Nike clothes one t-shirt says 'love.' Pink/blue frame.</td>
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</table>

**EXPERIMENTAL GROUP DRAWINGS & DESCRIPTIONS**

Only the drawings that are not presented in the thesis are shown here.

**Khayelitsha:** From the left K-E1 and K-E3. Bottom: K-E8
Lavender Hill: LH-E3, LH-E4, LH-E6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P.</th>
<th>F/M</th>
<th>Drawing</th>
<th>Drawing Explanation</th>
<th>Meaning Nature</th>
<th>Where is Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>K-E1</strong></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Clouds, sun, banana tree, child, soil, birds.</td>
<td>‘This is a tree and this is me. I wanted to climb the tree so I could take the bananas because I like bananas. It was sunny that day and the day was good and I was very happy. I haven’t been climbing a banana tree.’</td>
<td>‘It means you must take care of things and you must love the nature because we can’t live without it.’</td>
<td>‘In the mountains and forest’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K-E2</strong></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Tree, fruit, descriptions of the different parts of nature. Also written ‘I love my nature’.</td>
<td>‘I love my nature because trees are the things that give us oxygen to breathe and we give them carbon dioxide. I love my nature, that’s why I wrote here and drew some apples, pears and there are the leaves and I don’t know how to draw the roots. Plants and here are some grass and here is some water. I love trees because I just love them. We plant them and they give us…here are some apples and pear and’</td>
<td>‘Nature means a lot to me.’</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
other fruit and vegetables that the trees give us. The grass, we can play on the grass when it is clean with no broken glass, no sharp edges, and no sharp things in the grass. In the sea, we swim in there sometimes we can go every day when we like because the sea is near us.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K-E3</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Green tree, flowers, child. Also written ‘I feel like a tree animal happy boy like tree’.</th>
<th>‘I’m thinking I’m like in nature. I like the tree because it gives us oxygen. That is why I drew this because it gives us oxygen.’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-E4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Tree, cloud, rain, water, watering can, rocks, flowers, two children watering the plants and trees. Also written ‘I feel happy while surrounded by trees and animals’, ‘I treat them like people because they are important’, ‘I feel important and happy while around nature’, ‘When I am around nature I feel like a hero’, ‘I wish people would stop chopping trees and kill animals’</td>
<td>‘The tree represent that the tree gives people oxygen and the people must take care of trees. They must water them, especially plants, so that they can grow because people need the trees to survive. If there would be no trees, the people would not survive because people need them there. The oxygen is on the trees and trees would not survive without people because they need the carbon dioxide. Then the water represents how the trees need water too. I say that I feel happy when I’m surrounded by trees and animals and because they are important I treat them like people because they are very important to us. I feel like a hero. I teach people to take care of nature and they listen to me. I wish people would stop chopping trees and kill animals because trees are important. That’s why I’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘Nature means a lot to me because you will not survive without nature because the trees sometimes give us food to eat and the animals, people kills animals for meat and nature is more important to us.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K-E5</strong></td>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>Tree, roots, fruits (written ‘roots’, ‘steam or stem’, ‘have kindness by helping other people with oxygen’, ‘where birds live’, ‘fruit to eat’, ‘oxygen to breath’ ‘where people rest when they have stress’ attached to the tree). Also written ‘I see myself as a tree because I want to help other people with oxygen as they don’t chop me. A nature is where you relax your body. It’s a pleasure for me to give you oxygen. Nature is where animals where born and live. Where we are free. When I am in nature I feel happy and calmed down.’</td>
<td>‘I’ve been drawing yoga because I want to exercise so my joints are flexible and I’ve joined eco-warriors to help the nature with their food (water) and I’ve joined hiking club because I want to go to other places. I’ve been drawing this tree because I am kindness and I help people with what they are struggling with. I like to be a tree because I want to help people with oxygen to breathe and trees where people can rest. To calm down their stresses and I see myself as a tree because I want to help people with oxygen…nature is where animals were born and where animals live and where we are free, we calm down, when we are in nature we calm down our stresses and nature is built for us to be free, feel free, welcomed as our home.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K-E6</strong></td>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>Tree, mountains, sun, child watering the tree (written ‘happy’ next to the child). Also written ‘Feeling connected more with nature and to plant more trees so that we can get many oxygen we want. To also make change to the environment we live in. Also feeling curious about wild animals. And also feeling free to nature and happy because I get a</td>
<td>‘When we got the question I was feeling a little bit lost but then I knew what I was going to say. I drew this because when we went hiking or somewhere else where I am in nature, I just feel like connecting more with nature and when I say this I feel like planting more trees so that we can all have oxygen in the environment and to make a change in the community where I live. Changing things such as making people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-E7</td>
<td>Forest, path, plants, flowers, (text written in and among trees ‘free’, ‘relaxed’, ‘excited’, ‘joyful’, ‘where our animals live. Yoga helps us to be flexy and nature gives us oxygen’, ‘It helps us to cope and connect to nature. Connecting to the nature.’, ‘where we get our food’, ‘where I feel unjudged’, ‘it is where I relive myself’, ‘I feel happy when I am in nature because it calm me down when I am angry…’. Text written in path ‘Taking one step at a time looking at the beauty of nature’),</td>
<td>‘I have been drawing how I can feel when I am in nature and how it helps me to relax. I drew this forest because it reminds me of when we went to Table Mountain. So I decided to draw it instead of drawing other things I don’t know. I also wrote on it because litter can make you feel angry or sad or whatever mood…and I feel happy when I am in nature and a different kind of happiness.’</td>
<td>‘It means that we are connected to the nature and nature helps us to cope and also we get food from nature.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>K-E8</td>
<td>Sun, clouds, apple tree, ladder, rose, roots, child (written ‘rose’ and ‘roots’ attached to the flower and the tree and ‘me trying to climb a tree’ to the child)</td>
<td>‘I’ve been drawing an apple tree. This is a stepladder. I’m trying to climb it and get an apple. It’s sunny outside, like really sunny. Then this is a rose and these are the roots and the branches. Apples are my favourite fruit and I</td>
<td>‘Like wow. Nature is beautiful, what can I say? Beautiful forest, you can climb if it’s allowed. The last hike that I went to was really amazing and I loved it.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Blue sky, rocks, clouds, grass, child climbing up saying ‘I got the power’ at the top.</td>
<td>‘Climbing up the rock and I made it. ‘I got the power’ means that we did it, we climbed up the rock.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mountains, river, tree, hikers in the mountain, child saying ‘I’m happy’</td>
<td>‘I drew myself happy because I’m always happy when I’m around nature. There are hikers because I love hiking. When I hike I get full of energy and I don’t want to give up even though I’m tired.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mountains, trees, water, person walking a dog</td>
<td>‘Trees mountains and grass and me walking with my dog.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Rocks, rain, trees, flowers, butterflies, path, person at the top of the rock</td>
<td>‘This means me standing on a rock in the mountains where there are trees and there’s rain. I like standing on the rocks and looking at the view and seeing pretty animals and different flowers. Sometimes it makes me feel miserable standing up there because it’s a long hike but it’s actually worth it to be on top and see how beautiful it is. When looking at it that way it actually means a world full of beauty and it’s like heavens to look at it.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sun, mountains, river, baboons,</td>
<td>‘I’ve been drawing me watering the plants in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E6</td>
<td>Hiking trail, sun, trees, a hiker (ECP-LH-6) walking up saying ‘break!’; ‘what it isn’t the end’, ‘wait I think I’m still tired’, ‘C’mon more’, ‘So high c’mon ECP-LH-6 face your fear of heights’, ‘WATER’, ‘Beautiful view’, ‘Almost there’, ‘Made it but not I have to go back down’.</td>
<td>‘I was drawing me hiking up the mountain, taking breaks. That’s something I normally do when I hike. I started walking and then I wanted to break and then I start here until here and then I didn’t know there was more. I was going against the trees since I am afraid of heights then I took some water and I sat down to look at the view and then I complained because I had to hike all the way back down. It felt awesome to be at the top. They [ECP facilitators] said we must look for a big rock, so every time we were passing a big rock we asked ‘is this it?’ all the time and when we came at the end I could see the big rock and then I realised it’s still a long way to it. So we decided to walk to the rock, it was huge, like a fist. This was in Cederberg.’</td>
<td>‘I feel free, relaxed and calm in nature.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH-E7</td>
<td>Sun, mountains, hiking path (foot path), trees, animals, waterfall, person standing up at the top of the rock saying ‘Ya!!!’</td>
<td>‘I drew myself in the nature and about me enjoying the nature on a mountain. Just watching all the grounds bloom and grass grow and all of that. I feel ’wow’ when</td>
<td>‘Nature means a lot to me. I love nature because it gives us fruit and such to eat and the trees give you the shade so I love it. It is really</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m up there.</td>
<td>nice to have nature.</td>
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Appendix 2: Focus Group

CONSENT FORM

Date:

Full title of Project: Change-Makers or Not? A Case Study of the *Earthchild Project* in South Africa.

You have been asked to participate in this study sponsored by Uppsala University in Sweden. The purpose of this focus group is to gather information about your experiences, feelings and thoughts about being part of the Earthchild Project. The information gathered during this session will be used in a report looking at if a holistic approach to education (yoga, environmental education, hiking, etc.) is to be preferred as a model to get the wanted effects of education for sustainable development.

This session will be audio recorded but your name will not be used in the report or in the transcriptions. Anonymised quotes from this focus group will be used in the report. You can decide to not participate and stop at any time.

I understand this information and I agree to participate in this session:

Name: ___________________________________ Signature: __________________________

PROTOCOL

Time
60 min

Introduction
Good morning everyone and thank you for being here today. My name is Amanda Norrlander and I am a master student in sustainable development at Uppsala University in Sweden. I will facilitate this focus group session for the purpose of my master thesis where I will conduct an evaluation of the Earthchild Project. Here is a consent form, please read it through and then sign it if you wish to participate as a member of this focus group. You can decide to not participate and stop at any time.

*Hand out and wait until everyone has read through and signed the forms*

I am here because I am very interested in how you look at yourself, your surroundings, nature and the environment. In addition, I would like to hear about your thoughts, experiences and emotions about the Earthchild Project.

I will audio record this session so please try to speak up so I do not miss any important details. The recording will later be transcribed and quotes will be used in the thesis. However, your names will be anonymised in the thesis.

My role is to keep the discussions flowing and give space for everyone to speak their minds. I will sometimes ask you to clarify statements, ask probing questions, and sometimes close a conversation so we can move on to other questions. Please feel free to follow up on other participants’ comments and to follow your own train of thought.
Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers. This is a safe space. I am just interested to know more about all of your thoughts and feelings. Do not hesitate to ask me any type of questions during this session. Now, let’s have fun together!

I will now start the recording.

Start the recording

Questions

1. I would like to start with asking you all to introduce yourselves? (Age? Background? How did you get involved in ECP? Part of which programmes? Why Gap Year Intern?)

2. Why have you been/and why are you involved in Earthchild Project? (What is attractive about ECP? Friends? The programmes?)

3. What does it mean to you being part of Earthchild Project? (Community? Nature? Yoga? Facilitating?)

4. What have you learnt from being part of Earthchild Project? (In what way?)
   a. What have you learnt from yoga? Environmental education? Extra-murals? Alumni? Gap Year Intern?
   b. Are there any particular feelings/skills/knowledge that makes your life better? (Which ones? How?) (Focus: Leadership, self-awareness, healthy habits, coping skills, etc.)

5. How does it feel being part of Earthchild Project?
   a. How does yoga/environmental education/hiking/alumni/gap year make you feel?

6. How do you find it being a Gap Year intern for Earthchild Project?
   a. What do you get to do?
   b. How do you feel about your tasks?
   c. How does teaching yoga/environmental education make you feel? (Why?)
   d. Do you feel that there is space for your own initiative? (In what way? What do you do?)

7. What did the hiking club mean to you?
   a. What did you do during the hikes?
   b. How did it make you feel?
   c. What did you learn from the hiking club?
   d. What does nature mean to you?
   e. Do you still hike today?

8. Do you feel different to your other friends in your community who are not part of ECP? (In what way? Can you give some examples?)

9. Is there anything else that you feel that should be known about the Earthchild Project? (Which things should be done differently? Why? How?)

10. What do you do to make your body feel happy? (Focus: Successful Person)

11. What is a successful person to you? (Why? Do you feel successful?) (Focus: Successful Person)


13. Finally, is there anything you would like to add?

Thank you for taking the time to share your valuable thoughts, experiences and insights.

Stop the recording

I will now transcribe this recording and later analyse the content through finding themes in the statements. Together with this focus group, I have also conducted complementary interviews and run
sessions with ECP children and non-ECP children. After analysing all my data I will write up a thesis that I will later send out to you. Thank you for participating!
Appendix 3: Semi-Structured Interviews

QUESTIONS FORMER HIKING CLUB MEMBERS

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and how you got engaged in Earthchild Project?
   a. Which programmes have you taken part in?
   b. For how long?
   c. How does it make you feel being part of ECP?

2. Why have you been and why are you involved in Earthchild Project? (What is attractive about ECP? Friends? The programmes?)

3. Please tell me about your experiences with the hiking club:
   a. How did it make you feel?
   b. What does nature mean to you?
   c. Do you still hike today?
   d. What have you learnt from being part of the hiking club?
   e. Can you bring any of these skills/knowledge into your life today?
   f. Do you still hike today?

4. What have you learnt from being part of Earthchild Project? (In what way?)

5. How does yoga make you feel?

6. Do you feel different to your other friends in your community who are not part of ECP? (In what way? Can you give some examples?)

7. What is a successful person to you? (Why? Do you feel successful?) (Focus: Successful Person)