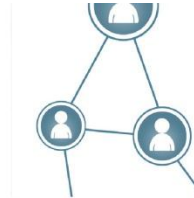


Ethnic Minority Representation in UK Military Cadet Forces

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Overview

- Sponsored and supported by the MOD, the Cadet Forces are voluntary youth organisations that aim to provide challenging and enjoyable activities for young people living in the UK, and to better prepare them for their role in the community.
- Cadets have the opportunity to learn new skills and engage in adventurous activities. They can work towards a range of qualifications based on their achievements.
- The Cadet Forces could not exist without the support of Adult Volunteers who help run meetings, activities and events.



Background

- Anecdotal evidence suggests that cadets appear to be ethnically representative of their local communities; however, the same level of representation is not necessarily reflected in Adult Volunteer Instructors.
- This study provided an opportunity to understand why young people from different ethnic backgrounds are attracted to uniformed, structured organisations such as the Cadets, with a view to:
 - Informing MOD models of diversity; and
 - Provide a baseline against which the career options considered by the cadet and Adult Volunteer Instructors can be understood
- This was the first tri-Service investigation of cadet ethnic diversity.

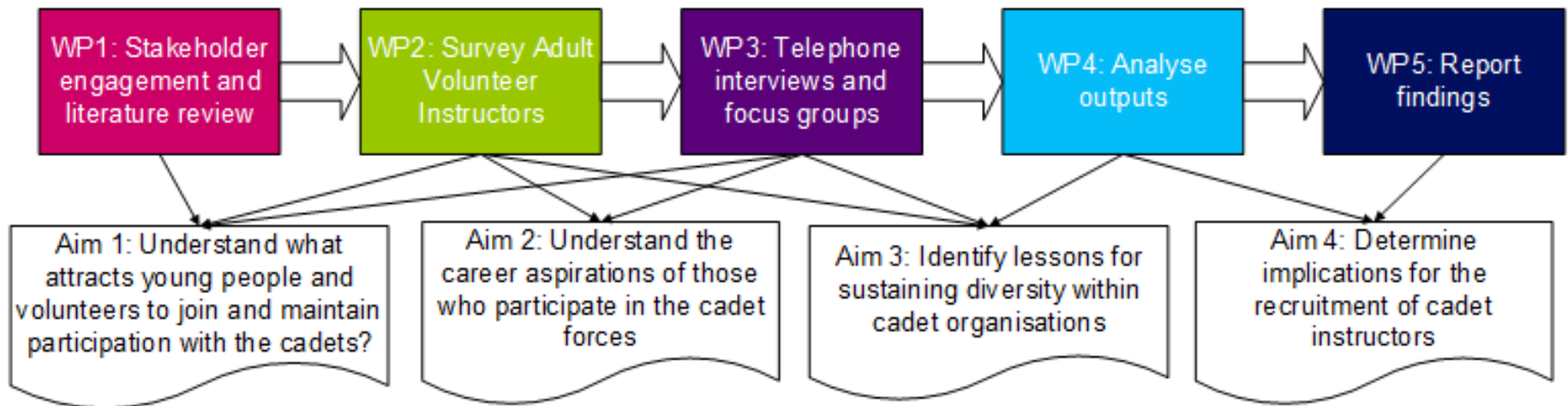


Aim

The aim of the study was to understand:

- What attracts young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to join and maintain participation with the cadet organisations.
- The career aspirations of those who participate in the cadet organisations (and the extent to which the experiences gained through the cadets might influence career choices).
- What attracts Adult Volunteer Instructors and what the implications are for recruiting them.

Overview of Approach



Methodology (1)

Literature Review

- Reviewed psychological/sociological literature to:
 - Understand young people's motivations to join, and maintain participation, in youth activities.
 - Identify the wider cultural structures that also influence how young people from minoritised ethnic groups construct their social lives.

Survey of Adult Volunteer Instructors

- Online survey exploring the motivation and experiences of Adult Volunteer Instructors in relation to joining and remaining within the Cadet Forces.
- The survey was distributed for a period of nine weeks from May 2014.
- 1,713 Adult Volunteer Instructors responded.
- 3.4% of respondents (N= 48) identified themselves as Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME).

Methodology (2)

Focus Groups (FGs) with Cadets

- To understand the lifestyle and expectations of participants before they joined, what influenced them to join, their experience of being a cadet and how it may have influenced them.
- 10 FGs with 65 cadets (average six per FG).
- High, mixed and low BAME locations (according to the 2011 Census).

Telephone Interviews with BAME Adult Volunteer Instructors

- Cadet volunteers and volunteers for other youth organisations who consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority family background.
- Explored motivations for joining and remaining in the Cadet Force/other youth organisations.
- 10 interviews with BAME Adult Volunteer Cadet Instructors.

Literature Review (1)

Ethnicity and Identity

- Administrative data show different patterns of disadvantage across BAME populations, and within the groups also. Expectations of discrimination are evident.
- Generational differences, and differences related to gender and religion, mean ethnic identity can vary.
- Ethnic identity becomes more or less important (even irrelevant) in different contexts. It is fluid, not constant.
- Understanding the transmission of social capital (perhaps ethnic capital) is important.

Literature Review (2)

Ethnicity & Participation

- All youth organisations prioritise youth development. Military sponsored youth organisations also recognise their role in career development in those expressing interest.
- Studies show benefits in participation over time (e.g. personal, social and career decision-making).
- Sustained engagement related to ‘psychological engagement’ – personal relevance/meaningful, competence, autonomy/control, relatedness/belonging.
- Ethnic groups tend to be under-represented in youth organisations.
- Specific barriers appear to exist e.g. cultural priorities, norms, expectations, perceptions, economic circumstances.

Ethnic Diversity vs. Representation

Whilst Adult Volunteer Instructors from more multi-cultural areas reported that they had a *diverse* group of cadets within their organisation it was not always the case that they were ethnically *representative* of their local communities.

“Personally for me and my ‘ACF unit’ - no there is absolutely not a representative Cadet Force...”

“We don’t; if we did we’d have more Eastern Europeans and Somalis...”

Consensus that volunteers were generally less ethnically diverse and/or representative than the cadets.

Joining the Organisation: A Cadet's Perspective

- Before joining as a cadet, awareness of the cadet organisations is limited.
- Not making an 'informed decision'.
- Joined with other friends.
- Recruitment/awareness tends to be word-of-mouth (or chance encounters).
- Cadets joined because it looked 'fun' or because they had been 'encouraged' by parents.
- Outgrown other activities.
- Expectations: military-style, lots of shouting!
- Thrown in at the deep end on their first night.
- Parental support.
- Reactions from peers and wider society.

Maintaining Participation: Cadets

- Forging new relationships.
- Personal development.
- Inclusivity.
- Support (including financial).
- Improved family relationships.
- Respect.

"I trust my mates in cadets more than I do at home"

"...but then you join cadets and there are so many things that you can do that you can be good at"

"They are not prejudiced against anyone..."

"Just before I came on camp my Auntie was going on about how much I have changed and grown up a lot."

Cadets join for the 'fun' and stay for the friendship, activities, support and responsibility.

Cadet Career Aspirations

“I want to be a physical trainer. So rather than just doing it through the school or college, I can do it through cadets...”

“I joined because I have wanted to be in the Army literally for as long as I can remember...”

- Some cadets had clear career goals/aspirations before they joined a cadet organisation (slightly skewed in favour of males); others had none.
- A small cohort joined specifically because of their interest in pursuing a military career.

Recruiting Adult Volunteer Instructors (1)

Adult Volunteer Instructors tend to be from one of three groups:

1. Ex-cadets.
2. Parents of cadets.
3. Ex-military.

Awareness of volunteering opportunities:

1. Their time as a cadet.
2. A family member or friend who was/is a cadet.
3. Their time in the military.

"I wouldn't have joined if my son hadn't joined because I assumed I would have nothing to give because I don't have a military background..."

"I didn't know the Sea Cadets existed until a rugby friend introduced me - she was a volunteer"

- Lack of formal recruitment strategies.
- Recruiting via word-of-mouth.

Recruiting Adult Volunteer Instructors (2)

- Volunteers wanted more formal (active) recruitment strategies.
- Cadets welcomed both ex-military and civilian instructors.
- Ex-cadets are a prime group for volunteer recruitment, but the transition from cadet to instructor is problematic.
- Parents are a potential group to be tapped into; however, hard to reach parents were often from ethnic minority (and less privileged) backgrounds.
- So, what makes a good instructor?

“You tend to find that the parents or family members of cadets [from ethnic backgrounds] don’t volunteer...”

“...You can’t just say we are recruiting, you say we are having a taster weekend, on such a day in such a place. Get people to come and see what you actually do.”

Desirable Adult Volunteer Instructor Qualities



Why do Adult Volunteer Instructors join?

- Adult Volunteer Instructors typically joined because they:
 - Wanted to develop young people.
 - Were a cadet and wanted to continue to serve.
 - Wanted to gain new skills or develop existing ones.

Maintaining Participation: Adult Volunteer Instructors (1)

Serial	Reason	Percentage
1	To help/work with and develop young people	68.0%
2	I am proud to be a volunteer in the Cadet Force	66.3%
3	I think volunteering in the cadets is fun	50.5%
4	I was a cadet and want to continue to serve in the Cadet Forces	49.5%
5	Being a volunteer in the cadets is personally meaningful/motivating	49.0%

Maintaining Participation: Adult Volunteer Instructors (2)

- Employer support was an enabler:
 - 68.4% of survey respondents said that they committed up to 45 hours a month to a cadet organisation.
 - 62.8% of survey respondents said that their employer made some sort of allowance to support their role in a cadet organisation.
- But some stayed for less positive reasons (through a sense of obligation and a fear of letting others down).

Issues Faced by the Cadet Organisations

- Lack of awareness.
- Links to the military:
 - Negative views of peers; wider society.
 - The uniform.
- Transition from Cadet to Instructor.
- Minority representation:
 - Females.
 - Role models.
 - Socio Economic Status (SES).

“A lot can change in two years. Your perspective can change. You can have kids in that that time or you can die in that time. Anything can happen. You can become disabled.”

Conclusions

- There is no evidence from this study that there is anything that is unique to attracting and retaining participation of young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds.
- Perception that ethnic diversity in Adult Volunteer Instructors will increase naturally over time.
- Cadet organisations do appear to aid development of career aspirations of cadets.
- The cadet organisations are a positive and transformative influence.
- The link to the military is both positive and negative.

Recommendations:

- Sustaining diversity within the Cadet Forces:
 - Active recruitment. Offering taster sessions.
 - Active engagement with communities.
 - Emphasise personal development.
 - Positive role models.
- Recruiting Cadet Instructors:
 - Raise awareness with better (and targeted) recruitment campaigns.
 - Better facilitate the transition from Cadet to Instructor. Ensure consistency across the cadet organisations. Consider timeframe and gradual increase in responsibility.

Any Questions?

