



**Metropolia**

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# Increasing well-being experiences through cultural events

Improving participation and communality as eventful  
well-being promotion aims

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## Abstract

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While communality and participation are foundational parts of the definition of an event, the significance of eventfulness is not often discussed with creativity, arts, and culture. In practice, most subsidies are directed to artists themselves, while the role of facilitators is not recognized. The focus of this study is the well-being effects of cultural events – their position in the prevailing literature and at municipal and national levels, as well as eventfulness as a component of arts and culture activities and health services. Based on the findings of this research, many studies measure the instrumental impact of arts but not the full extent of the participants' experience. However, the findings also show that events are a part of the culture in every community and that eventful activity runs through every sector of society.

My research aims to identify the connections between participation in cultural events and their effect. The objective is to present better practices to produce and analyze data and show that eventfulness is critical in cultural well-being promotion. My research consists of a literature review and a related analysis of expert interview data. Attending events is proven to increase well-being through the experience of participation and community, as well as through a person's sense of agency in subject that is meaningful to them. The Finnish Government's publications on arts and culture activities call for action to advance individuals' agency and community-building. Although various studies have successfully measured subjective well-being, the challenges of measuring effects can be seen in various cultural well-being strategies. It can be pointed out that the character of many arts and culture interventions is similar to the character of events. However, the analysis of expert interview data recognizes that events are not seen as instruments to increase experienced well-being.

Based on the findings, one solution to increase cultural well-being promotion could be to integrate eventful operations into the current plans of action as a procedure which would, as a result, create more space for all arts and cultural activities in general. Specifically, I suggest distinguishing existing events from the current strategies, offering past-time activities and well-being services, and starting program development as the first measure. Furthermore, these positive effects generated by the cultural events can trickle down to start changing the operating models of municipalities, non-profits, and entrepreneurs.

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# 1 Introduction

Cultural well-being is a multifaceted concept of the different positive effects that engaging in different forms of culture can produce (e.g., Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021; Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, 2019). The development of cultural well-being measures is a current and ongoing process (Daykin, 2019, 2021; Liikanen, 2010; Saukko et al., 2020), and for long art-based methods have been used in, for instance, education, mental health rehabilitation, or the integration of refugees (Gross et al., 2021; Hardiman, 2019; Houni et al., 2020, pp. 111–173; Laitinen, 2017a).

Including objectives that increase cultural well-being in national and municipal policies combine multiple areas of helping and bettering different people groups' lives (Gordon-Nesbitt & Howarth, 2019; Laitinen et al., 2020). They can be seen in Finland in several governmental publications (Liikanen, 2010; Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, 2016; Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, 2017; Finnish Government, 2021). However, accumulating publications, articles, and theses (e.g., Daykin & Coulter, 2021; Daykin, 2019; Fujiwara et al., 2014a; Staricoff, 2004; Staricoff & Clift, 2011) have proven that music, creativity, arts, physical exercise and being part of a community are essential and benefit a person's well-being in many ways. However, in these texts, the mention of taking part in cultural events is reduced to discussing the limitations of measurement of what effects taking part in cultural events has on the host locality.

The Ministry of Education and Culture's strategy for cultural policy (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017, p. 30) only mentions events in the context of the municipal economy and the government's current implementation plan for promoting well-being, health, and safety (Finnish Government, 2021, p. 4) does not mention them at all, only the instrumental use of applied art activities. Since the general understanding that participating in the arts and culture benefits well-being has been growing along with the policies, I want to look at participation through cultural events and research how well-being experiences are measured.

From my point of view as an event producer, an example of an eventful objective of an arts and culture activity would be going to an orchestra concert, taking a tour of an art museum with a guide, or painting at an art therapy session. The experience of attending an event is more than the sum of its parts, not only art and creativity as its focal point. Even though agency and engagement in the creative and art activities are studied (Huhtinen-Hildén & Isola, 2019; Matarasso, 1997) in this intersection of participation, sense of community, and experiencing arts and culture at an event, the connections are yet to be made from the perspective eventful cultural activity. Interestingly, the studies that measure the benefits of participating in arts and culture activities do not generally measure the effects of the full extent of participation in events. The focus tends to be on the participants' observations of the art subject or performance as the factor that increases well-being.

My research objective is to present evidence that cultural events create well-being experiences through a literature review and qualitative expert interviews. My findings show the basis for cultural well-being at events and that a measurement method for experiences at cultural events should be developed. My research question is: *How does attending cultural events increase one's well-being from the standpoint of measuring subjective well-being experiences in arts and culture activities?* The research problem also touches on the context of current cultural well-being initiatives and programs and the inequality between the different cultural well-being expressions, values, emphases, and operations.

In the following chapter 2, I present the implementation of my research, my research task and question, research methodological standpoint, data collection and data analysis methods and process, and research ethical matters. Chapter 3 presents my literature review, in which I approach my topic through the expressions of cultural well-being, I show from existing research the multidisciplinary nature of the cultural well-being field, and introduce the theoretical premises of the literature review and discuss measuring subjective experiences of well-being. In chapter 4, I present the findings of my interviews

and my literature review, as well as their relations to each other and the current disposition of the cultural well-being discussion. Chapter 5 is the conclusion and discussion of my research where I summarize my findings, discuss other revealed topics and the limitations of my research, as well as future prospects for relevant and related research.

## 2 Implementation of the research

In this chapter, I present the implementation of my research. In subchapter 2.1, I talk about my research task and question and how it relates to society. In subchapter 2.2, I discuss the research methodological standpoint, aims, and details of my literature review and semi-structured qualitative expert interviews. In subchapter 2.3, I explain practical matters for my literature review and conducting the interviews and how I analyzed them separately and as a part of the theoretical premises of my research task and question. In subchapter 2.4, I address what should be accounted for concerning research ethics.

### 2.1 Research task and question

In this study, I explore the topic of cultural events and how they fit into the more prominent theme of cultural well-being. This research aims to seek more precise conclusions in my established problem; of the missing research about the well-being effects of cultural events and to put the existing ideas of measuring experiences that have well-being effects from related research into event context. The broader context of the processes for cultural well-being promotion also includes perspectives about urban environments as the hosts of events, arts and culture activities, communality, and administrative bureaucracy to provide a frame of reference to my research task and question. The rationale is to show that the effects of experiencing cultural well-being at an event can be defined and recognized in existing circumstances. A central theme is to find possible evidence for a cause-and-effect relationship between cultural events and experiencing well-being.

The research question is: *How does attending cultural events increase one's well-being from the standpoint of measuring subjective well-being experiences in arts and culture activities?* I also examine this question within the framework of expert interviews to present a more profound understanding of the topic, gain a practical understanding of the measurement of cultural well-being effects, and

make suggestions about measuring experiences at events based on generalizable findings for the multidisciplinary field. This study's approach pushes the current instruments of cultural well-being promotion to present the necessity for a measurement and data collection method specific to the well-being effects of cultural events. I hope to be among the first to conduct initial research about the scope of all cultural events and their importance to experiencing well-being.

## 2.2 Research methodological standpoint

Data on the relationship between the arts and culture and well-being can be acquired qualitative and quantitatively, which can be seen in, for instance, the literature reviews of Fujiwara et al. (2014a, 2014b). My methodological starting points and research methods are pretty standard for qualitative research. This study is constructed in the tradition of pertaining research in the field. However, I can include different points of view to contribute more knowledge and understanding to build my case. I also examine evidence from quantitative studies. There are both conceptual and empirical aspects to my research. The standpoint also has aspects of hermeneutic and interpretivist methodology. The indicators of trustworthiness, which I aim to establish so that my findings can be generalized and applied to a broader context are "quality of the project, the rigor of the methodology, and whether readers of the research findings feel you have established trustworthiness" (Leavy, 2017, pp. 154–155).

My goal is to contribute rich but accurate research findings about the cultural field and events within its processes concerning creating well-being. Even though my research problem can be identified from related studies and public discussion, the gap in the literature provides a foundation on which I can base my objectives on. I explore the ideas of my topic to gain elaborated insights into this specific context conducting qualitative interviews and placing more emphasis on description and explanation than applying my findings to pre-defined hypotheses (Hammersley, 2013, p. 12).



I view that under the qualitative methodology umbrella, I came to this topic in an exploratory way; I had a general idea and a specific observation that I could not place and find more information. Exploratory research questions are designed to understand particular segments of interest, and they can help to put together ideas to understand the underlying fundamentals of the topic (Hammersley, 2013, p. 29). They are most often used when the studied issue is new or when the data is unavailable. This is not indispensably the case with my topic, but it is how I see the missing perspective; it stands unaddressed, yet simultaneously elements related to it are being vindicated.

Qualitative research methodology supports my research task since I am doing groundwork for well-being studies in an event studies context. It also allows me to compare the backgrounds of different examples to assess those involved in the investigated processes (Hammersley, 2013, p. 14). Because the qualitative paradigm is extremely diverse methodologically and theoretically and enables me to incorporate multiple tiers of analysis to the literature review and data. Even if the premise is to work in an interpretive manner within the research design (Leavy, 2017, pp. 124, 134), qualitative research can entail in-depth experiences and perspectives of segmented people groups, or persons (Hammersley, 2013, p. 54). I used judgmental sampling to gather expert data, a typical hermeneutic technique (Gillo, 2021, p. 45; Maul, 2018, pp. 914–915).

It is challenging to obtain a perspective that takes advantage of insights from prior research while simultaneously being open to new findings in my specific topic of interest (Patterson & Williams, 2002, p. 39). Hermeneutic research attempts to address this dichotomy by creating models that can be utilized to guide the search but do not predetermine pre-constructed limiting designs for the findings. (Patterson & Williams, 2002, p. 39). The questions of the semi-structured interviews follow the same concepts as my literature review. They dig into the specifics and professional knowledge of showing the layers behind experiencing well-being by participation, agency, and community at events combined with creativity, arts, and culture producing well-being benefits. This act is also a method of triangulation that gives “a more complete and nuanced understanding of the topic”; data from multiple sources makes the research more trustworthy,

and it lowers the risk of bias (Leavy, 2017, p. 153). Theoretically, triangulation refers to “looking at the data through more than one theoretical lens to allow different interpretations to emerge” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 51), which in my view, is the approach to the interview questions is exploratory.

Exploratory orientation is also required in interpretivism to learn how “patterns of action unfold in particular contexts” (Hammersley, 2013, p. 29). In qualitative research, the analysis is based on language, observations, and textual analysis. I followed the tradition of qualitative research by analyzing the context of the content analysis using research methods to describe, interpret and understand the texts. Because my data is qualitative, it can be categorized through content analysis for further insights. “Content analysis is a method for systematically investigating texts and qualitative researchers use content analysis to understand the meanings and patterns that arise from the texts.” (Leavy, 2017, pp. 145–148.) I based my data analysis on a hermeneutic organizing system I developed through the analysis. This hermeneutic process aims to identify predominant themes that can be referred to in pursuit of organization, interpretation, and presenting meaningful narrations. Its scientific and philosophical interpretation and understanding come from setting the text against history, culture, language, and context as core factors that service analysis (Gillo, 2021, p. 45.) A final organizing system that comprises the layers and themes of the theoretical premises of the literature review and the findings of the semi-structured interviews “promotes a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter by unfurling the inter-relationships among the themes and by retaining a rich depiction of individual themes” (Patterson & Williams, 2002, p. 46).

### 2.3 Data collection

Through a literature review and semi-structured interviews as a qualitative study, my research objective aims to show evidence of the connection between cultural events and increased well-being. I find this a suitable approach because qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that emphasizes the meaning of

subjectivity in the research process and can adopt a flexible research design, which can be driven by both theory and data (Hammersley, 2013, p. 12). These characteristics are also prevalent in the studies done in the cultural field. I followed the tradition of studying the literature in detail and using "verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis" (Hammersley, 2013, p. 12).

I submerged myself in the current cultural well-being and event study literature. A meta-analysis of literature begins with an "initial immersion into the content to get a sense of the big picture, determining the units of analysis, coding, and interpretation" (Leavy, 2017, p. 147). I started sourcing my material by getting familiarized with academic journals in the field of cultural well-being, such as *The Nordic Journal of Arts, Culture and Health*, and *Tafer Journal*. I also found well-being-themed issues from arts and creativity journals like *Musiikki 4/2021 – Vol 51: "Music, sound and well-being."* The Finnish Arts and Health coordination center *Taikusydän* also maintains an index of relevant research publications. Since cultural well-being is a narrower field, the initial material kept circling back to hallmark researchers and their works (e.g., Belfiore & Bennet, 2008; Diener, 1984; Diener & Suh, 2000; Fancourt & Finn, 2019; Liikanen, 2010; Matarasso, 1997; Skingley et al., 2011; Staricoff, 2004). These researchers' publications and their bibliographies provided me with ample information on the history of cultural well-being studies and policy, which then crossed over to research from social sciences and event studies that came to outline my literature review. Some keywords I used in finding related literature were 'event experience', 'well-being and events', 'effect and impact of events' gave a point of reference for me to recognize the saturation point of event studies and their recurring research findings and theories (e.g., Getz, 1997; Konlaan et al., 2000; Richards et al., 2013; Richards & Palmer, 2010; Waterman, 1998; Zukin, 1995). The articles I have used are peer-reviewed and are rated by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) in their publication forum. In addition to peer-reviewed journal articles, I began looking for Routledge companions related to my previous studies in production and management in arts and culture, such as 'Events Management' (Bowdin, O'Toole, Allen, Harris, & McDonnell, 2006), 'Event Studies: Theory,

research and policy for planned events” (Getz & Page, 2020). This starting point quickly led me to more related literature.

The literature synthesis provides a solid base of what is already known through the recent and notable studies concerning my topic (Leavy, 2017, p. 128). Because the nature of cultural well-being research is multidisciplinary, some data in my literature review had been produced according to very different traditions. Some studies used empirical evidence and a very positivist paradigm, while others were meta-analytical or longitudinal. However, the research papers have a qualitative essence at their core because “they value the depth of meaning and people's subjective experiences, and their meaning-making processes” (Leavy, 2017, p. 124). Even quantifiable measures are used in verifying and describing the human experience. These research design differences can complicate the broader generalizability of the research results. I intended to find articles and works published from 2010 onwards, but references to established definitions and concepts also vary from 1980 to 2009. The theoretical premises of the concepts of my research task and question blend into the literature review, thus building the case for my problem and discussion.

Because my goal is to gain detailed knowledge about a specific phenomenon, my choice was to do a judgmental sample. (Leavy, 2017, pp. 79–80). An advantage of judgment sampling is that participants who meet the specific criteria make judgment sampling efficient in practice due to their experiential knowledge of the research task and question and when the sample unit is small, it does not miss critical representative elements of the research topic (Bernard, 2002; Maul 2018, pp. 914–915; Tremblay, 1957). I wanted to interview experts from the cultural field with multiple years of work experience in cultural events who are also scholars whose work is related to describing events and experiences through social matters.

I contacted the participants for interview data collection in December of 2021; when my research methods had become crystallized, I chose to carry out interviews in addition to the literature review. Then timeslots for an online video

call via the platform Zoom were scheduled. I required the interviewees to agree with the conditions of the participant information form and the participant consent form. These documents included institutional approval, practical matters, and GDPR measures (appendices 1 & 2). I conducted three interviews. The interviewees were provided with two recent articles (Huhtinen-Hildén et al., 2020; Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021) about cultural well-being concepts in Finland but were not obligated to learn them or otherwise prepare for the interview. They knew the research topic and the themes that were in line with my research task and question in advance but did not have additional information about the interview questions. I asked the participants to clear an hour for the interview duration and was successful about the time-keep with every meeting.

These were the measures I took to ensure detailed insight and specific points of view on the matters concerning cultural well-being practices and events. Each expert answered the same prepared questions on their behalf, each interview lasted for an hour, and the transcriptions of the interviews were very similar in length. Each interviewee answered each question to different extents and from both overlapping and differing points of view, as they shared multiple common traits as researchers but had different backgrounds project-wise. I acted as the interviewer and facilitated the video calls; no other assistance was required. The interviews were done one-on-one. I invited the interviewees to have an interactive discussion with me; I emphasized this by making my questions open-ended and not fixed to be asked in a particular order. I had predetermined questions and a tentative order to present them, but I encouraged the participants to give free-flowing answers. I determined the order of questions depending on the topics and nuances of the dialogue but ensured that all the participants answered the prepared question in full. I wanted to engage in considerable efforts to build and sustain rapport while simultaneously trying to minimize my influence. (Cf. Hammersley, 2013, p. 68.)

The interview data was collected verbally and recorded with the participants' consent for transcription and trustworthiness. The recordings were done by the specialized software used to make the video call, saved as audio files, and

transferred to a private external hard drive. The interviews were transcribed for analysis. This research design allowed me to gather rich information, recognize patterns, and create as much room and diversity for the answers as possible.

## 2.4 Data analysis

Because of the absence of preliminary data on the measured well-being experiences at events, my research relies heavily on the textual analysis part of the literature review and conducting a textual analysis of the interview transcriptions. For this research, the literature review is a fundamental way to recognize the existing elements and variables of the research task and question. The variables include concepts of an event and subjective experience. In order to investigate the subjects of my research question according to the aims of my research, showing the connection between experiencing arts and culture at an event and its effects on increased well-being, the most suitable definitions for these concepts need to be argued.

Detailed operationalization needs to reform the theoretical constructs of the expressions of cultural well-being from the literature into concepts identified in empirical existence. Through operationalization, it is possible to collect data systematically on processes and phenomena that are not directly observable or measurable. My literature review constructs the theoretical premises and addresses the concepts that different contexts use for the topics of my research task and question. (de Groot, 1969.) To examine the experienced well-being in the context of cultural events, looked for the theoretical building blocks of experiences and well-being and conceptualized culture and events. I recognized perspectives that serve the context of the research field, which I could use to specify my observations to narrow the focus of my analysis. These perspectives were event context, measurement methods, and subjective experiences. Because the described well-being experiences in this study derive from subjective experiences, it is essential to locate and show the factors that establish the concepts as explicitly as possible.

The starting point of my analysis is to pose the same questions to both the texts, the literature review, and the transcribed expert interviews. The interviews were analyzed from a thematic and a discursal point of view, aligned with the theoretical premises of my literature review. The categories for the organizational system were not predetermined and developed so that one code could be assigned to multiple categories. I began the process with thematic analysis by recognizing the themes as inductively as possible and simultaneously developing the codes (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2017, p. 51). I wanted to commence the analysis with a systematic procedure that could increase the reliability of the analysis. However, I chose to mix analysis methods to suit the elaborate data. I coded and closely examined the texts segment by segment. Each found theme was examined to understand participants' and researchers' perceptions and identify the primary patterns first. (Hammersley, 2013, pp. 63–64). These themes were identified based on their development through the simultaneous review of existing literature research.

Because I wanted to enlighten the underlying processes and social context, I also applied meta-analysis measures. I discuss the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences in the light of the theoretical premises of my research task and question, the context of my research, the current climate surrounding cultural well-being. I also used content analysis to make qualitative interpretations by analyzing the meanings of the concepts in the literature review and the expert interviews.

Critical analysis considers different matters of analysis as power dynamics in society and the research process context. My analysis also takes a critical viewpoint because most health services under cultural well-being operations are in the public sector. Leavy (2017, p. 130–131) describes that in qualitative research, critical analysis can examine "how power is negotiated, maintained, and resisted by and within small groups." A critical perspective sees that "power is always at play" in every environment. (Leavy, 2017, p. 130–131.) Also, affecting change, developing processes further, and piloting new projects are politics and

require lobbying. It should also be considered that many target groups for increasing well-being through the arts are in a vulnerable or discriminated position.

## 2.5 Research ethics

I conducted this research according to the ethical research principles of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK, 2012, 2019). I considered my research by observing the General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR, which includes the procedures for personal processing data and the participants' privacy protection. I also followed the TENK principles about the treatment and rights of the research participants. In practice, this meant deconstructing the process of organizing and carrying out the interviews and evaluating every aspect of it in the light of research integrity. The participants' information and consent forms were extensive. They included written out sections of their rights for privacy, to store their data, and to terminate their participation at any moment during the interview process. The consent forms (see appendices 1 and 2) also consider the participants' conflicts of interest if they are, for instance, employed by an institution with a strong ideology so that their participation would not end up including lobbying. None claimed that any of these matters would inhibit them from participating.

It can be debated if I succeeded in formulating the interview questions carefully in a manner that considers the theoretical premises of my research task and question. Even though the participants have comprehensive professional knowledge of the concepts of my research context, their observations and opinions are empirical and subjective, as well as even evident critique of the field. Accidental leading questions are a risk due to 'the interviewer effect' (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015, pp. 83–84). To avoid these risks, my peers and supervisor extensively reviewed my interview questions before implementation.

According to Hammersley (2013, p. 13), when the researcher shares a fundamental identity with those they study as I do with the experts, the researcher obtaining others' perspectives will inevitably "filter through their distinctive view of



the world, their attitudes, and feelings; though it might reasonably be argued that these are not simply a source of potential blindness or bias but are also essential in facilitating understanding." Understanding still cannot be guaranteed since there will always be other ways in which I differ from them.

### 3 Literature review

In this chapter, I present my literature review, which will examine some of the literature and theories of well-being, its components, and various ways of measuring subjective well-being. In the following sections, I will discuss how cultural events create opportunities to experience cultural well-being and how cultural events can affect increased subjective well-being. I will present concepts related to promoting well-being, participating in events, and measuring subjective experiences. These notions are also connected to the instrumental use of events as a tool to achieve the aims that the current cultural well-being policies have.

#### 3.1 Expressions of cultural well-being

The arts benefit well-being, and the arts are a part of culture; therefore, taking part in culture in general benefits well-being in general. The ‘all art is good for you’ rhetoric is a characterization of the impacts of the arts (Belfiore & Bennett, 2010, pp. 194–195). However, researchers note that this claim comes from a confusion between correlation and causation (Odendaal et al., 2018). The ongoing, extensive and critical dialogue about cultural well-being is linked to the research evidence of well-being effects, the role of the arts as an instrument and intrinsic value, as well as cultural politics and funding of the arts.

Cultural well-being is described as an individually or communally shared experience that culture and art increase well-being and are connected to it. The main essence is a person’s meaningful agency amidst culture and art, which also includes the cultural nature of day-to-day life. (Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, 2019, p. 20) The day-to-day experiences that make life meaningful, whether it be reading the paper daily, social get-togethers, or karaoke at the corner pub, have a cultural nature and shape meaning into an individual’s life, values, habits, and memories. It is a prerequisite to spiritual, physical, and social well-being. (Lehikoinen & Vanhanen, 2017b; Liikanen 2010, pp. 36–37) Lilja-Viherlampi and Rosenlöf (2019, pp. 20–22) list other aspects of cultural well-being as art hobbies and activities, self-expressions and interaction through arts and culture, and

experiencing arts and culture by attending events and situations where art is available. These could take place in, for instance, galleries, concert halls, or the urban environment. Personal well-being and what is every individual's relationship to culture and art are at the center of the cultural well-being phenomenon. What is meant by the cultural nature of well-being is that the understanding of the term well-being is connected to values and norms both culturally and socially. (Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021, p. 74).

Cultural well-being is a phenomenon where culture and art carry different meanings and effects concerning the well-being benefits of an individual or a community, can also refer to cultural well-being as a professional field (Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021, p. 74). In this case, it concerns the environment of measures, development, education, and research where the knowledge of different art and health and well-being fields is used to build and apply the concepts of cultural well-being and the procedures and knowledge connected to them. (Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, 2019, pp. 21–22.) According to Daykin (2021, p. 54), "as well as studying associations between arts and well-being and trying to assess the impact of arts, the mechanisms, and processes through which arts and creativity can affect health and well-being are important to understand." Deep down, the means of experiencing, sharing, and producing well-being are also about politics, because the perception of what well-being is directs how and with what measures well-being promotion is conducted (Aholainen et al., 2021, p. 564).

The services supporting cultural well-being are central to the general operating context. The services consist of activities, concrete measures, and services that offer arts and culture substances that offer meaning and opportunities for individuals' and communities' well-being. These measures include concerts, performances, and art therapies where art is a channel of communication and rehabilitation, and the underpinnings support the possibilities of agency and participation. The 'stages' of cultural well-being services include elderly care homes, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, prisons, and work communities. These are quite new operating environments for art, and they include factors that

substantially affect making art. (Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, 2019, pp. 29–30.) Good quality and comprehensively organized cultural services create the foundation for realizing the cultural well-being dimension (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 8). From the interests of my research, the expressions of cultural well-being also extend to social capital, social sustainability, a sense of community, and urban planning.

In the spring of 2019, when the Act on Cultural Activities in Local Government (166/2019) came into effect, the implementation of the cultural activities and services was made the responsibility of the municipalities of Finland, reinforcing the importance of culture. The law requires local governments to look at the possibilities of cultural well-being and organize accessible arts and culture activities (Ranta-Meyer et al., 2021, p. 4). As well as providing cultural services, the primary functions of municipalities are promoting the habitants' health and well-being, which is included in the Act of Healthcare (1362/2010) and the Local Government Act (410/2015). The larger part of the basic cultural services in Finland are organized in typical cultural environments like libraries, museums, or the symphony orchestra. The municipalities can decide in which ways they want to organize their cultural services, and most of the cultural services the habitants use are organized by the municipality. In addition, the municipalities utilize outsourcing with cultural services and event organization. Therefore, operators from the third sector, as well as professionals, can be involved in the organizing of the local cultural field. (Hyttinen, 2022, p. 7.) Connecting culture to other municipal services and planning will be central to finding shared operating models between the social, health, and cultural sectors. Some municipalities have emphasized the importance of an interdisciplinary cultural policy strategy so that it could be implemented as a part of the municipality's well-being strategy. (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 25) The most common definition of cultural well-being in municipal publications can be described by the following such as by Pohjois-Karjalan maakuntaliitto (2022, p. 5), echoes descriptions of the likes of Liikanen (2010, pp. 36–37), Lehikoinen and Vanhanen (2017b), Lilja-Viherlampi and Rosenlöf (2019), and Lilja-Viherlampi (2021).

The health and social services reform that will take effect in Finland in 2023 also affects cultural services. The organization of public healthcare, social welfare, and rescue services will be reformed, and responsibility for organizing these services will be transferred from municipalities to new 'wellbeing services counties' from 2023 (Finnish Government, n.d.a). Cultural well-being is highlighted in operations of the wellbeing services counties' procedures 99, 100, and 104. (Finnish Government, 2021, pp. 35–36). According to AFLRA (2021), culture will be considered a well-being service when it includes a societal aim, like preventing social exclusion, on top of cultural and artistic aims. At its best, this reform could create opportunities to spread the knowledge of cultural well-being knowledge, so that they would become well-being services countywide. By the Health Care Act (1326/2010), local governments are required to publish an annual welfare report, which is one method of examining the state of well-being and its developments in the municipality (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare [THL], n.d.c). The welfare report is one of the opportunities or means of leverage for the municipalities to compose a separate cultural well-being strategy to promote cultural well-being operations. The municipalities are recommended to make cultural well-being developments visible, enable cross-sectoral collaboration, and advance evaluation from different perspectives, like the realization of cultural rights or the impact of the services. (Hyttinen, 2022, p. 6.)

Promoting well-being in public policy has not originated in the same geographical hub. The wide array of cultural well-being practices is not only because of the many expressions of arts and culture but also because they take effect in different sectors of society, and different countries place emphasis differently. Change in public policy stems from legislation. The largest differences in different countries' policies are in preserving cultural heritage, how colorful and experimental their healthcare practices are, or the implementation of research. What I think is relevant for the context of my research are the emphases that the origins of cultural well-being policies have had internationally, most recent reforms, which hold the most weight in what different national, municipal, organizational, or commercial cultural well-being strategies might become.

In 2012, all 53 countries in Europe adopted 'Health 2020', "a new common European health policy framework with aims to provide a platform for such joint working between the arts and health sectors," and committed themselves to developing integrative policies (World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe, 2019). Finland has participated in culture and well-being projects from 1992 in UNESCO's and the United Nations' culture development project 'Arts in Hospital' from 1988 to 1997 (Liikanen, 2003). One of the applied cultural services is socio-cultural animation which originated in France and has long traditions in Western Europe and Latin America (Liikanen, 2010, p. 33). In Sweden, arts and culture activities in hospitals and hospices have been developing since the 1970s. The services were not solely art-therapy, but cultural activities were seen broadly as therapeutic, and having an active part in the arts was seen as a basic humane need (Liikanen, 2010, p. 55). The Authority of the United Kingdom concluded in 1999 that "the arts clearly have a potential to make a major contribution to our health, well-being, and life skills" (Meyrick, 2000, p. 4). Pascoe et al. (2005, p. 8) concluded similarly in Australia that music has the power to "exalt the human spirit, transform the human experience and bring joy, beauty, and satisfaction to people's lives." Aotearoa New Zealand (Local Government Act 2002, s 3 (a)) specifies that one of the purposes of local government is to "promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future." The European Union promotes policy collaboration on culture among national governments and international organizations and aims to increase participation in cultural life and social cohesion (Council of the European Union, 2018).

In Finland, the general cultural well-being agenda has been nationally advanced in the past few years due to political intention. Groups of experts from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health have been central in the development processes of cultural well-being. (Ranta-Meyer et al., 2021, p. 4). The foundations for the justification of cultural well-being matters in Finnish policy can be traced back to the impactful projects and publications of von Brandenburg (2008) and Liikanen (2010), which have affected multiple government strategies. Laitinen et al. (2020) retell the history of arts and health

policies in Finland in their 2020 article. 'Taiku 2010-2014' (Well-being from the arts and culture) was a globally unprecedented government program aimed to endorse the well-being benefits of arts and culture. The Taiku government program's focus areas were promoting agency, communality, daily practices, and environments through culture; arts and culture as a part of social and healthcare services; and supporting well-being at work through arts and culture. (Finnish Government, 2020.) A central premise of the current three-year task force, Taiku3, directed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health task force is to promote establishing arts and culture operation in different sectors, to develop the grounds for research, and to support the evaluation of the quality of art and the account of financial matters. (Houni, 2021, p. 7; Finnish Government, 2020.) Cultural well-being and its meaning for health and well-being are also noted in the Finnish Government's implementation plan for promoting well-being, health, and security in 2030. The plan defines methods to decrease the inequality the Finns experience in health and well-being (Finnish Government, 2021, pp. 10–11).

The equal availability and accessibility of cultural services and agency and participation in cultural activities remain the most noted objectives in Finland throughout the years. Another standout theme in many policies is also connected with improving the position of specific people groups like children, the elderly, or immigrants. Especially in the 2000s, a wider comprehension of culture as an enforcer of the prerequisites for a good life became a part of cultural politics (Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, 2019, p. 31). Much of the focus has been on people groups who have not had the opportunity to participate in arts and culture activities due to their economic, health, or other impediments. Art projects have been imparted to those in vulnerable positions, such as hospitals, hospices, and elderly care homes (Houni et al., 2020, pp. 161–182). The government program for arts and art policies from 2002 highlighted the applied use of the arts to promote health and prevent social exclusion (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2002). The health promotion government program in 2007 emphasizes that communities construct the relation of arts and culture to well-being, arts and culture activities can strengthen social capital, and cultural hobbies birth and

maintain communality and social networks. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2007, p. 15; von Brandenburg 2008, pp. 12–23.) Hämäläinen and Rosenlöf (2020) note the importance of culture extending past cultural institutions to the environments where people are. From the perspective of accessibility, the obstacles to participation are various. This can be related to the senses, communications, understandability, preconceived attitudes, physical, gender, social, or financial factors. (Houni, 2021, p. 16) Lilja-Viherlampi (2021, p. 75) states that as a term cultural well-being describes the possibility for well-being and health regardless of circumstances, limitations, or illness. According to Huhtinen-Hildén et al. (2020), no factor concerning an individual like socioeconomic status or health defines the possibilities for cultural well-being.

Accessibility to cultural services is also about human rights. Culture and art being a basic right connected to citizenship, nationality and a part of a decent life that everyone is entitled to, are the foundation of the implementation of the Finnish government's cultural politics. Therefore, the fulfillment of these rights is more important than well-being effects. (Aholainen et al., 2021, p. 566.) The Finnish constitution rules for every individual's right to culture and art, making it a mandate for the municipalities of different regions. Issues like regional budgets and both national and local politics highly affect the actualized outcomes. Finland's constitution secures cultural rights, everyone's right to improve on themselves, freedom of art, and the right to one's language and culture (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017, p. 15). The right to participate in arts and culture, improve oneself and one's community, and freely express oneself is also protected by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, United Nations, 1948, art. 27).

However, cultural well-being contributes to diversity between people and equality. The accessibility argument and producing cultural services for discriminated groups are central to well-being strategies, but art interventions are often directed toward other audiences. There is still an imbalance in assessing who can acquire cultural experiences to have balanced lives. Accessibility is one of the main issues when critiquing the measures of cultural well-being policies. Artists, art pedagogues, and art organizations lack know-how in art education and



understanding of societally responsible operations that would dismantle the mechanisms of inequality and be inclusive. (Lehikoinen & Vanhanen, 2017b). The social and healthcare services are diverse, and the clientele might have very varied cultural needs. The social and healthcare services differ in the aims, legal foundation, financing, organizational responsibilities, and field of operators. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019, p. 56) Accessibility enables participation. Putnam (2000, as cited by Wilks, 2011, p.8) suggests that “the arts can bring together diverse groups” and thus “promote well-being by allowing the production of mutually beneficial norms of reciprocity, generalized trust, and cooperation.”

The meaning of social relationships and social capital and their connection to, for instance, good health can be observed through the lens of doing cultural activities as a hobby (Hyyppä, 2011) or to provide a lens through which audiences can be examined (Putnam, 2000). According to Hyyppä (2007), doing cultural activities as a hobby does not itself relate to well-being. However, it is the social and communal aspects and sense of belonging behind ‘basic culture.’ Putnam (2000, p. 116) explains that this sense of ‘doing with’ contributes greatly to the social capital building. Schechner (2006) and Ellis (2011) individual and social fragmentation can be understood and coped with differently by sharing the arts with the surrounding audience. Picard and Robertson (2006) emphasize that the key element of events is people and their need to do things together. According to Procter (2004 as cited by Jepson & Clarcke, 2014, p. 19) community events “function to draw people into a shared identity, shared visions of community and codes of conduct while bonding citizenry around the social and political structures of a specific locale.” Also, the opportunity for a shared public celebration and creating together strengthens social capital. (Arcodian & Whitford, 2006.)

A related expression of cultural well-being comes into existence through communality, a sense of community, and a sense of belonging. Van Winkle et al. (2013) found that the relation between festival attendance contributes to a sense of community. Arcodian and Whitford (2006) have described how social capital is created at and by festivals. It is created when the resources of the communities develop as the event organizers, local actors, and the entire community

collaborate, form new networks, and share experiences. These social networks can last for long after the event. Social cohesion, the development of the community's shared worldview, and sharing are vital to forming social capital. (Arcodian & Whitford, 2006.) The experience of participation merges cultural events and well-being to the point of view that the well-being experience entails more than just attendance. Social capital can be described as having three possible types or forms: bonding, bridging and linking (Putnam, 2000; Ruuskanen, 2001). According to Putnam (2000), cultural events can contribute to being used as a means to affect social barriers because they facilitate bridging and people making new connections there (Putnam, 2000; Wilks, 2011). Bonding includes having a sense of belonging, which can be experienced by relating to the similarities with the audience at a cultural event. This can include interests and values. (Putnam, 2000).

A remark by Ranta-Meyer et al., (2021, p. 12) is that the cultural well-being handbook from Arts Promotion Centre Finland [TAIKE] (2020) misses one notable form of arts and culture activities, which is the art done in urban and public environments. The urban environment can be seen as one of the locations where art can be accessible to everyone, and its origination is often to surprise people in different settings where they would least expect to encounter art. (Ranta-Meyer et al., 2021, p. 12.) Richards and Palmer (2010, p. 21) states that "at the base of certain urban event strategies, there is an underlying belief that events can be a new source of identity and help build social cohesion as they begin to redefine the way in which we look at cities and their communities." Cultural activities and operations have evident effects on an individual's functions, experiences, and the prerequisites of a good life, but also in a larger context by increasing vitality and well-being in cities (Mercer, 2002). The more instrumental meaning that culture has taken in cities is what has been called the 'symbolic economy,' which creates wealth through cultural activities, which according to Zukin (2004, p. 3), includes "art, music, dance, crafts, museums, exhibitions, sports and creative design in various fields." The economy of culture provides past-time activities and hobbies. It colors social life and gives life experiences for personal growth. (Kainulainen, 2005, p. 336.)

Cultural events influence the idea of a city. They form intangible and temporal products which enrich the environments of tourists and local inhabitants. (Cudny, 2016; Silvano & Hellman, 2005). By adding life to the streets, cultural events give the locals a renewed pride, but simultaneously they have become means that cities use for image benefits. They impact how the city is viewed and how the inhabitants view the community and thus themselves as a part of that community. This newfound community pride that follows a cultural event can be called the 'halo effect' (Hall, 1992), the 'showcase effect' (Fredline & Faulkner, 1998), and the 'feel-good effect' (Allen et al., 2010). Proshansky et al. (1983) describe the symbolic and emotional relationship that creates 'place identity' as an "individual's symbolic understanding of what the place has meant in an individual's own life." Place as a component of self-identity increases the belief that the individual is a member of the community they associate with (Proshansky et al., 1983; Relph, 1976). Cultural events dominate both the image of places and urban life and "have become central to urban development and revitalization processes, as cultural production becomes a major element of the urban economy" (Richards & Palmer, 2019, p. 3). Events have important impacts on the host localities (Cudny, 2016). Events even dominate the identification of cities in imagery (Burns, Hatch & Mules, 1986), which reflects how art, music, and sports are being commandeered by commercial interests (Waterman, 1998).

Events can generate economic development through income from event tourism and job creation in the event sector (Cudny, 2020, p. 9). Cities have transformed themselves into continual streams of events, called the 'festivalization' of the city (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 1). The 'symbolic economy' (Zukin, 1995) and the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) have led both culture to becoming an "important means of consuming the city" and a great presence of cultural activity, resulting in some cities to promote themselves as 'eventful cities' (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 1). According to the observation of Kainulainen (2005, p. 336), the perspective of culture enhancing the quality of life is present in the research concerning entrepreneurs' and workforce location. The image a city conveys indirectly attracts businesses and the labor force, thus adding to tax

profit, employment, and thus the well-being of the area that extends to the lives of the inhabitants (Kainulainen, 2005, p. 290). Kainulainen (2005, pp. 39–40) concluded that events might increase the attractiveness of the locality as a domicile, and active cultural life – including events – may serve as one of the reasons why locals stay in the region. Nevertheless, both economic and image effects are fundamentally instrumental. This notion, in particular, is very visible in the Finnish cultural well-being strategies and cultural strategies regions and municipalities. Event producers by profession "manage the economic, promotional and operations aspects of community festivals. However, with increased emphasis on programmed festivity also have the opportunity to manage larger social impacts" (Jepson & Clarcke, 2014). Since event managers have become experts at managing the economic, promotional, and operational aspects, or, in other words, the objective product and service aspects of community festivals, their knowledge could be harnessed to lead to a genuine transformational experience and to let significant human social impacts to develop out of their events.

In Finland, the development of an aid system for cultural events has been discussed in the field of art administration since the 1990s (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016, p. 59). The Ministry of Education and Culture admits annual national subsidies to support art and cultural festivals separately. Ministry of Education and Culture (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016, p. 15) notes that festivals are a communal function that has meaning to well-being and the development of identity and aims to strengthen the position of festivals in cultural policy, social sustainability, internationalization and competence, knowledge base, and collaboration. No components of this proposal for an action program can be seen in the current strategy for cultural policy 2025 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017) and none of its aims include cultural event organization. Participation and agency are emphasized because their sought effects benefit society – the citizens' increased well-being and agency, decreased social exclusion, and economic growth. The realization of these effects is studied in research and projects. (Honkasalo & Laukkanen, 2015; Ministry of Education Department for

Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy, 2009, p. 28; Virolainen, 2015, pp. 28-41, 76–85.)

### 3.2 Creativity, health, and well-being as a multidisciplinary field

In this subchapter, I will present how different research fields are related and have come to form the core of cultural well-being research. The main definitions of different concepts of my research stem from different theories, some prevailing approaches, different methods, and aims. The research foundation of cultural well-being is most centrally constructed on the observations that can be made of the effects of arts and culture (Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021). Even though connections between cultural well-being and the quality of a good life can be found in all cultural research, usually, cultural well-being is explicitly observed from the point of view of the well-being effects of arts and culture (Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf, 2019, p. 23). Other connected topics related to studying cultural well-being bring to light where cultural well-being is experienced and where it is not and raises the question of who is producing the cultural activity and who should. Aspects of social science like political science, anthropology, economics, education, history, law, sociology, and social work are interconnected. The ethos of art research includes recognizing the diversity of arts and culture. (Aholainen et al., 2021, p. 566)

A consensus of cultural well-being is an integral part of a balanced individual and community is forming. Equally, services based on the methods and models are constantly being developed. Due to the systematic construction of the field, resources develop in multidisciplinary collaboration. Cultural well-being expertise is multiplying, degree programs are created, and the multi-perspective cultural well-being field is an exciting research subject. (Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021, p. 80.) According to Nummelin (2011), the research on cultural well-being effects can be divided into four categories. Most cultural well-being publications and strategies concerning cultural well-being present an evidence base that hosts a mix of these categories and references a little bit of everything. The first category is formed by research about cultural activities' social and communal nature. The second

category consists of research examining the effects of cultural activities on quality of life. The third category is composed of research that concerns the effects of cultural activities or hobbies on physical and experienced health, and the fourth category is comprised of the research that is critical of the well-being effects of culture or presents opinions on such research. (Nummelin, 2011.) There are also multiple perspectives on well-being promotion research, and according to Niemi et al. (2017), they are medical, psychological, social, economic, and philosophical. The concept of creative, artistic, or cultural activity in the hypothesis is what makes a well-being study a cultural well-being study. The breadth of my literature review touches on fields that are put together concerning all of these.

Liikanen (2010, pp. 42–43) calls for more creativity in the social and health fields and more social and health angles in the creative field, because of the multidisciplinary need in Finnish cultural well-being policy (pp. 42–43). There is plenty of expertise, research evidence, and willingness in cultural well-being. The challenge is the collaboration between different sectors (Lilja-Viherlampi, 2021, p. 80). According to Daykin (2019, pp. 6-20), "the cultural well-being field has grown through evidence building, advocacy and sector development, and there is now a wider recognition of the contribution of arts and cultural engagement to a wide range of policy objectives." Specialist journals, such as *Arts and Health*, *The Journal of Applied Arts and Health*, and the *Nordic Journal of Arts and Health*, have given visibility to cultural well-being matters in the scientific field. The scoping review of the World Health Organization (Fancourt & Finn, 2019) gives a broad perspective of different studies and responds to criticism that has been posed against the research on the well-being effects of arts and culture.

In relation to this research, I want to separately mention some adjoining branches of research that are included in my literature and relate to my research context. Empirical cultural event research has been conducted more broadly since the 1990s. The challenge of the research has been the large variety of the field, which has complicated the definition of festivals in an established field. (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016, p. 20.) The importance of events, due to their multidimensional

impact, is so high that a separate field of studies was established to investigate. Like well-being, events are studied in several sciences, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, and religious studies, but also economics, management, geography, and history (Getz & Page, 2020). Sociology and anthropology have conducted event research for a long while, but according to Getz, this discourse has not encountered the paradigm of festivals. Some common themes are myths, rituals, and productization (Getz, 2011). Festival research is the interest of multiple fields of scientific research due to its multidisciplinary nature. All planned events have multidimensional economic and social impacts on host communities which can be positive or negative, which are often the focus of the research. In addition to academic research, different reports and reviews regarding events are also done in various research institutions. Events and festivals are also popular topics for theses. (Cudny, 2020, pp. 8–9; Herranen & Karttunen, 2016; Kainulainen, 2005, p. 24.) The significance and effects of festivals in the event environments raise interest in the different sectors of society and politics. Finnish cultural politics research has considered art and cultural festivals from the perspective of, for instance, the achieved goals of the government's cultural politics aims, the government's subsidies (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016), nationally consequential and multifaceted arts and culture field operators (Silvanto, 2016) and as a phenomenon which's effects and influence on society should be examined with a broad scope (Luonila et al., 2019). The research on social and cultural impacts is lesser than the research on economic impacts and productional angles. They are not as significant, and event organizers and funders are less interested in them. (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016.)

Donald Getz (1997, 2020, pp. 15–20) distinguishes three evident discourses that can be used to fashion the general makeup of event and festival research: festival travel and economic impacts, event production and management, and the role and meanings of festivals in society. As the interests in festival research have broadened, research topics have included the role of festivals in forming identity, the creation of social capital, and the well-being effects of specific factors (Robertson et al., 2009; Packer & Ballantyne, 2010; Wilks, 2011). As a result of

this development, the need for more data on events has increased both in administration and in the event field itself.

Culture can be understood comprehensively; for instance, medicine and its practices could be perceived as an element of culture (Aholainen et al., 2021, p. 565). The health humanities projects have paid particular attention to different narratives, discourse, the different possibilities through art, the constructed environment, philosophy, spirituality, religion, and history. (Crawford et al., 2020.) Experiences like “well-being, contentment, satisfaction, hope, optimism, flow, and happiness” are factors that positive psychology seeks to understand. These factors are recognized as improving the quality of life but play a role in coping with challenging circumstances. (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). According to some, the possibility to experience the most happiness is not attaining the happiest moments daily but experiencing uninterrupted periods of general well-being (Diener & Seligman, 2002; Diener, 2000; Fredrickson, 2003). Goal theorists propose that moving towards accomplishing a goal creates subjective well-being (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2003). According to Csikszentmihalyi’s suggestion (1999), engagement in meaningful activities creates the most happiness in individuals. Some remarks differ, I find many complimentary, but this is something that highlights the multidisciplinary nature of cultural well-being.

Following Allardt’s (1976, pp. 9–10, 18), example, the effects of culture or art can be viewed specifically through subjective well-being. Depending on the objective, the dimensions of cultural well-being can be derived from the concept of well-being or the elements of creativity and arts. For the whole term ‘cultural well-being,’ the most commonly used categories for the dimensions are categorized by theories of subjective well-being. According to Diener (et al., 2002), subjective well-being is a person’s cognitive and affective evaluation of their life. These evaluations include emotional reactions, cognitive judgments of satisfaction, and experience of fulfillment (Diener et al., 2003; Kim-Prieto et al., 2005). Other overlapping perspectives add to the dimensions of well-being in the theories of the different research fields. Social capital is related to subjective well-being through cohesion (Putnam, 2000).



### 3.3 Theoretical premises of well-being experiences at cultural events

To find similarities between the components of my research task and question in a theoretically-oriented study, I must define the concepts I will use to describe the elements behind experiences and the context of cultural events. I present the evidence of the connection between experiencing arts and culture at an event and its effects on increased well-being through literature review and semi-structured interviews. I am to answer the following research question *how does attending cultural events increase one's well-being from the standpoint of measuring subjective well-being experiences in arts and culture activities?*

There are many names for cultural well-being in legal, institutional, and bureaucratic language. Some include terms like creativity and arts, art activities, cultural hobbies and past-times, heritage and traditions, and practices of people groups. For the entire term 'cultural well-being,' the most commonly used categories for the dimensions are categorized by the theories of subjective well-being.

UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity states that "Culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs" (UNESCO, 2001).

For an example of my research context, I want to present a 2016 cultural strategy report for the state of Ontario that Communications MDR created where they described the context of culture like this:

Culture is the lifeblood of a vibrant society, expressed in the many ways we tell our stories, celebrate, remember the past, entertain ourselves, and imagine the future. Our creative expression helps

define who we are and helps us see the world through the eyes of others. In addition to its intrinsic value, culture provides important social and economic benefits. With improved learning and health, increased tolerance, and opportunities to come together with others, culture enhances our quality of life and increases overall well-being for both individuals and communities. Participating in culture can benefit individuals in many different ways, some of which are deeply personal. They are a source of delight and wonder, and can provide emotionally and intellectually moving experiences, whether pleasurable or unsettling, that encourage celebration or contemplation. Culture is also a means of expressing creativity, forging an individual identity, and enhancing or preserving a community's sense of place. Cultural experiences are opportunities for leisure, entertainment, learning, and sharing experiences with others. From museums to theatres to dance studios to public libraries, culture brings people together. These benefits are intrinsic to culture. They are what attracts us and why we participate. Participation in culture contributes to healthy populations in several ways. Creativity and cultural engagement have been shown to improve both mental and physical health. Culture is being integrated into health care, notably in the UK, but also increasingly in other jurisdictions, including Canada. The link between past efforts to eradicate Indigenous cultures and health issues in today's Indigenous communities is increasingly recognized. Research has shown that revitalization of Indigenous cultures plays a key role in supporting the health, well-being, and healing of individuals and communities. The vast majority of Ontarians believe that the arts help to enrich the quality of their lives, and that arts activities are valuable to their communities.

This description is almost word for word, what is used in cultural well-being strategies and reports to define cultural well-being and cultural well-being benefits. However, it is also a description of culture. Zukin's view (1995) of culture

covering all city amenities reflects what is considered culture now. It is not only the cultural institutions such as museums, theatres, and concert halls, but it has come to consist of more elements of 'popular' or 'mainstream' culture, such as pop music, fashion, 'ethnoscapes' (Appadurai, 1990), and sports. In the discussion about cultural well-being, culture is usually defined by its narrower meaning, the arts and making art. Culture can also include "a range of activities beyond what is categorized within the arts, to include sporting activities" (Karpusheff, 2019, p. 15). For example, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UNESCO-UIS, 2009.) includes all cultural activity under one 'domain,' including informal and social activities. Cultural activities are cultural expressions, regardless of the commercial value they may have. These activities may be something that one does because one wants to and not because it will help achieve or accomplish something else in themselves or contribute to cultural goods and services (UNESCO-UIS, 2005). This description supports and recognizes all cultural activities to be included and clearly distinguishes the preconceptions of culture only being 'highbrow' (Yaish & Katz-Gerro, 2012).

How can the terms 'arts' and 'culture' be understood when they are tied together? They have been evolving and changing over the centuries. Belfiore and Bennett (2008) ask if it is possible to juxtapose these modernized concepts with older and possibly incompatible worldviews. Culture and art both express human values and meanings but according to Matarasso (2019, p. 19), "art's difference lies in its self-consciousness" and that "people express their culture in everything they do," mostly being unaware of it. Much of how art is defined could equally be said of culture, so why are there confusingly overlapping terms that are often used interchangeably? (Matarasso, 2019, p. 19)

Belfiore and Bennett (2008) observed the culturally viewed impacts of the arts and how they have risen to their importance. This role is often expressed in the notion that it can transform lives. They found that the arts attract the support of governments, have legitimized their place in the educational system, and that they keep the attention of the media. (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008). Among the first, art resulting in an experience that increases well-being was made by Immanuel Kant (1893). Dewey (1934) defines fulfillment as a 'completed experience' and

recognizes art for bringing about completed experiences to happen.

What, then, is the definition of an 'event'? The term 'cultural event' is possibly even more complicated to define because there is also no commonly agreed definition of 'culture' (Richards, 2001; Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 39). Biaett (2017) describes hunter-gatherers as "mythological beings who participated in festive experiences of transcendence and feelings of ecstasy and that in early humanity festivities were tradition and were a part of everyday life." The positive experience, a shared meaning, and shared experience can result in 'communitas,' the shared belonging that is something else than the everyday. (Getz, 1997.) Sadie (1980) questions if there can even be events that are not cultural events. As for the societal context of an event, the history of cultural events spans the history of our society. The symbolic meanings have encompassed the prerequisites for forming the ways of life, local community values, ideologies, worldviews, local identities, social appreciation, and historical continuation. Festivals were the arenas of participation and celebration, as well as the expressions of collective outbursts. All of these descriptors can still be observed in the cultural events of the twenty-first century. (Duvignaud, 1976; Kainulainen, 2005; Mossberg, 2000, p. 5; Waterman 1998, p. 57.) ). Planned events are "inherent in all societies and integral to civilization itself." They are essential in terms of "public policy, industry, and corporate strategy" and are "fundamental to the experience economy" (Getz & Page, 2020, p. 14). These are the premises for the operationalization of a cultural event.

Țară-Lungă (2012) stated that the word event is of Latin origin and refers to, among other things, happening or manifestation. According to the Oxford Wordpower Dictionary (2002, p. 264), an event is: "1. Something that happens, especially something important or unusual: a historic event; 2. a planned public or social occasion: a fundraising event 3. one of the races, competitions, etc., in a sports program: the next event is the 800-meter race". Scientific definitions of events may be found in works by Ritchie (1984), Hall (1989), Goldblatt (1990), and Getz (2008). Events can be unplanned (e.g., spontaneous gatherings of people, like riots, unscheduled manifestations) or planned (Getz & Page, 2020).

According to Getz and Page (2020, p. 44), planned events " , by definition, have a beginning and an end." They are a temporal phenomenon, one-time or a sequence of events, and often confined to particular places, even though an event venue can be a wide open outside space at a series of locations. (Getz, 2020; Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 39). The event studies field has concentrated on 'special events', which are more easily understood as "unique occurrences, separate from everyday experience, and on specific categories of cultural events, such as arts festivals, sports competitions or traditional celebrations, which are recognized" (Getz, 2008). According to Biaett (2013), "the classic rhetoric of festivals and events emanating from dictionaries as well as festival and event management texts define the term event simply as an occurrence; the term special event expands this meaning to include temporary and infrequent unique experiences; the definition of the term festival further adds ideas of community and celebration." When the distinction is made that special events or festivals rarely occur, a distinction can be made that a festival is always an event, but all events are not festivals (Mossberg, 2000). In recent research on the importance of understanding event experience, Lesić et al. (2017) divided events as follows: "art events, cultural events, sports, and recreational events, tourist events, business events, religious events, environmental events, and educational and scientific events." Getz (1997) notes that there might not be events that do not have a cultural component to them. In the context of Finnish policy, arts and culture festivals are viewed as repeating time and venue-bound planned events that consist of the arts and culture content produced by the festival organization. Festivals are created by public organizations, enterprises, and the third sector. They are also organized in production networks consisting of voluntary audience members. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, 2016, p. 20)

According to Richards & Palmer (2010, pp. 41–42), a definition for a cultural event can prove complicated, but it is possible to identify critical elements. Cultural events comprise "a series of activities, have limited duration, are generally recurrent and are usually celebratory." They also clarify that cultural events generally have an artistic compound, even though they can contain other content and have roots in the community. These descriptions include the community

aspect in the term 'culture' itself. Richards and Palmer's (2010, pp. 41–42) definition of cultural event culture also includes the products of a specific society and its cultural processes. This means pieces of art, music, literature, film, food, fashion, and the larger context of lifestyle and tradition. The cultural events emphasized in this view range from 'high' and formal culture events and 'popular' culture events. (Richards & Palmer, 2010, pp. 41-42.) To my interest, the longitudinal study by Konlaan et al. (2000) defined cultural events observed by their study as "visiting a cinema, theatre, concert, museum, art exhibition, church service, or a sports event as a spectator, and reading books or periodicals." The study aimed to "distinguish between different kinds of cultural activities in a broad sense and their influences on longevity." (Konlaan et al., 2000.)

Even though the terms cultural event and cultural festival have their histories and partially differing definitions, in research such as Herranen and Karttunen (2016), Kainulainen (2005 pp. 64–65) or Pasanen and Hakola (2009, p. 14) are used side by side, almost as synonyms. The term festival is sometimes related to a cultural event and is sometimes understood as a specific type of cultural event. (Kainulainen, 2015). Falassi (1987) also looks at festivals as a form of celebration with special observances but also offers a further definition specifically for the social sciences: "a periodically recurrent, social occasion in which, through a multiplicity of forms and a series of coordinated events, participate directly or indirectly and to various degrees, all members of a whole community, united by ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical bonds, and sharing a world view ." (Falassi, 1987.) Burgess (1992) sees attendance at events can also be seen as a group celebration where the interaction of the performance and the audience and the space is produced and consumed. Festivals mean different things to different people; the organizers, the audience, the performers, and the society, and what is seen as a festival by some might not be another (Aldskogius, 1993). According to Kupiainen and Sevänen (1994, p. 7), all definitions have in common: collectiveness and communality. Along this line of thought. Van Belle (2009) coined the verb 'festivalizing' and argues that festivals should be looked at as "a collection of assorted goings-on, imagining them also as action-oriented systems

with transformative powers." Yeoman et al. (2007) describe a festival as a collective experience.

Biaett (2017) describes how "experiences make the mundane feel special" as those moments of different ranging emotions that one experiences and celebrates with spontaneous reactions and interactions concerning the surrounding environment. The meaningful relations between one's realization, functions, and objectives, which also entail perceptions, belief systems, and impressions, are what create experiences (Perttula, 2009, pp. 119, 123–124). The benefits of creative experiences enhancing agency and well-being in social and health care reveal what kinds of meanings and significance these experiences convey. The key aspects are "understanding life and creating coherence, fostering feelings of significance and purpose, constructing meaningfulness and creativity in everyday life and as a spiritual dimension" (Huhtinen-Hildén & Isola, 2019). According to Lehtikoinen and Vanhanen (2017b, p. 13–15), experiences and their meanings are tied to both social and communal reality and culture. 'Intrinsic impact' means the effects that are received from attendance to performance. These benefits are: "captivation, emotional resonance, intellectual stimulation, aesthetic enrichment, and social bridging and bonding." (Brown & Ratzkin, 2012.)

Going to a movie theater enhances the experience and the impact more than what it would be by watching at home. Shared experiences draw people to a cultural event by providing a sense of community. They are excellent means of facilitating experiences lost in modern society because of their implied 'co-presence.' (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 21.) According to Richards and Palmer (2010, p. 21), the production of a cultural event requires "a space in which people can come together in order to experience co-presence." Historically cities' infrastructures have facilitated eventful activities and "as different demographics claim to use for instance parks and town squares at different times for football matches, picnics, skateboarding or music jamming and drumming." Municipalities manage these public spaces. (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 23.) Richards and Palmer (2010, p. 19) claim that the well-being benefits

of events are widespread and visible in urban planning strategies with commercial goals because events are more flexible than certain types of fixed physical infrastructure. Events have a "greater ability to offer 'spectacle' and 'atmosphere,' events generally meet the need for co-presence and the feeling of 'being there,'" and "events can cost less and achieve greater impact in the short-term." (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 19.) Lesić et al. (2017) ask whether event organizers know what the participants experience, what variables affect the events' experiences, and whether the organizers can influence the participants' end experience. Lee, Lee, and Wicks (2004) and Bowdin et al. (2006) indicate that the experiences vary according to the type of event. As Subirós (cited in Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 25) argues, "space is more than a place where experiences occur: it also shapes and gives sense to that experience. By facilitating the act of coming together, sense of community, and identity, more value is added to the experience".

The broad spectrum of research about arts and culture creating experiences of increased well-being has also provided evidence about events. An event or an art performance is an experience to remember to the individuals, and they psychologically construct benefits attained through attendance (Konijn, 1999; Pine & Gilmore, 1998) Kahle and Riley (2004) and Hall, O'Mahony and Vieceli (2009) note that the social setting affects the experience of a sporting event. There was no more empirical evidence that the type of event made a difference in the experience. Pitts (2005, p. 268) calls concerts at festivals "the ideal listening experience for many" because the event space creates a sense of both familiarity and novelty. The atmosphere is an interaction created by the venue characteristics and the social context of the experience. In my opinion, this description applies to any event or cultural activity. The experience of participation becomes the merging point of view and entails more than just attendance. Along with it comes a sense of belonging in a people group.

Getz (1997, p. 207) noted that "people entering this zone of planned event experience come with needs and expectations, willingly enter the event set out to experience something different and rewarding, and engage with the event program and other people in terms of behavior, emotions and cognitive



processes." With the widespread proliferation of community festivals today, can the simple act of attendance still be considered a liminoidal experience for those who participate? "In a fast-paced world of unlimited entertainment options and mega-events, extreme shopping alternatives, and an insatiable demand for hedonist experiences, can the behavior of attendees at events engaged in activities of watching performances, shopping for arts and crafts, and what seems like incessant waiting in line for food, drinks, amusements, and restrooms, be regarded as out of the ordinary and impactful?" (Biaett, 2013.) Bennet et al. (2014) describe events as "liminal spaces that are removed from the more mundane process of everyday life." Liminal characteristics offer opportunities for encountering new social environments and communities born around cultural expressions. (Bennet et al., 2014.) It has also been observed that people are drawn to more "experiential consumption" than materia, which also affects why some cultural activities like cultural events have a deeper connection to social relations and self-identity (Gilovich et al., 2015).

"Although the effects of cultural participation are generally positive, it is essential to acknowledge that cultural experiences may prompt all sorts of emotional reactions. The effect of cultural participation in terms of appreciation of daily routines and facilitation of calm and peacefulness is far from unambiguous" (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019). The possible ill-being effects can result from many factors like past experiences influence how we experience the culture, and therefore reactions and feelings to it are individual and vary (Houni et al., 2020, p. 138; Rosenlöf & Laukkanen, 2017, p. 9). Utilizing art in promoting well-being also requires awareness of the side of art that can cause pain or nausea (von Brandenburg, 2012, p. 251). Simpanen (2007, pp. 12, 15) extends this to art and how all art does not speak to everyone, and culture and art pieces can remain indifferent, even though it is a great shame because art can deter from, for instance, negative thoughts.

The negative impacts that events may have on a community should also be considered when discussing cultural events' well-being effects. They can include traffic problems, environmental harm, noise, crowdedness, crime, and disturbance of private lives, and make some people experience exclusion rather

than community (Duffy & Mair, 2014; Dwyer et al., 2000). What is fascinating to someone as 'redefining public and private spaces' (Heinonen, 2012, p. 211) can appear as commotion, littering, and urination to others (e.g., Terho, 2004, pp. 84–85). Getz and Page (2020, pp. 50–96) distinguished the following as the impacts of events: personal: positive (satisfaction, happiness, meeting expectations) or negative (waste of time, lack of value, harmfulness); social, cultural and political: positive (job creation, development of skills and networks, entertainment) or negative (costs, congestion, conflicts, pollution, diseases); economical: positive (revenues from event tourism, entrepreneurship development, local development thanks to investments and revenues) or negative (organization costs, inflation, lack of revenues); media: this impact encompasses presentation of events and host locations in traditional and electronic media. The media coverage may be positive (highlighting the positive impacts of an event) but may also be negative. The latter may be due to conflicts between inhabitants and tourists, high costs of event organization, or negative environmental impacts presented in the media. (Richards & Palmer, 2010, p. 8

Empirical studies on the relationship between cultural participation to personal well-being represent a relatively new and promising line of research. However, the findings are still mixed partly due to different approaches to measuring subjective well-being (Jokić & Purić, 2020, p. 337). Węziak-Białowolska et al. (2019) and Buck & McFall (2012) emphasize interdisciplinary research on issues with complex definitions depending on the approach, such as well-being, social capital, and cultural participation. In the guidelines to measure cultural participation, UNESCO's concept of cultural participation is also complex, usually incorporating cultural production activities, engaging in art or a creative hobby, and cultural consumption at public establishments like museums and private at home (Morrone, 2006). In research, cultural participation often includes socializing as a contributor to experienced happiness (Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015). Agency is connected to the personal identity, and its continuity is constructed by the lived and shared experiences and the sense of self. (Eteläpelto et al., 2014, p. 22). Participation and its promotion are known to increase well-being and health, and they can also be utilized to affect inequality

and social exclusion (THL, 2019b, n.d.b). According to the Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare (THL, n.d.b), participation can be considered a factor that increases well-being and is a prerequisite for equality. The possibility to influence matters that concern yourself personally and the activity took part in is integral to experiencing agency (THL, n.d.b).

Matarasso (1997) cited studies to draw the connections of participation, such as people's confidence, enhanced skills, and personal growth. Participation promoted friendships and contacts, contributing to social cohesion. Virolainen (2015, pp. 38–40, 85, 88, 102–106) critiques the concept of participation in cultural politics. It can be said that even though participation is emphasized in politics, in practice, it is still rarely publicly funded. Even though much information and knowledge about participation have been accumulated, it is scattered, mainly quantitative, and produced from the point of view of the aims of cultural policy administration. The research from the perspective of the participants and non-participants is scarce. According to Virolainen (2015, p. 97), states that the experience of participation can be seen as a requirement for participating. What participation of the citizenry from the point of view of politics is; the right to participate in culture in a way that you can only 'receive' participation by participating. (Virolainen, 2015, p. 97.) According to Węziak-Białowolska et al. (2019), engagement with creative and cultural activities and attending artistic events are believed to benefit well-being and "active arts and culture participation are strongly associated with health behavior and mental well-being but also conveys health promotion messages and reduces social exclusion" (Bungay & Clift, 2010; Renton et al., 2012; Stuckey & Nobel, 2010; Zubala et al., 2013).

Cultural well-being can manifest as a part of the function of daily life - as an experiencer or through produced culture – as a participant, as well as through cultural hobbies – as an actor (Virjonen & Rouhelo, 2018, p. 4). Experience is the factor I want to observe because it creates the response to the arts and culture activity. It can be positive or negative. Participation, the structure of the audience, the arts and culture substances, locations, and artform all contribute to the experience and thus the response, the increased well-being. Events need to be

organized with intention, and the existing event within arts and cultural activities should be invested in from a well-being point of view. Demographic differences break down as participants of all ages, races, economic and social classes, gender, and lifestyle can be reached, bonding and bridging with others (Biaett, 2013).

### 3.4 Measuring subjective experiences of well-being

According to Daykin (2021, p. 53), "the assumption that a robust evidence base is the key to convincing power holders to invest in arts for health and well-being has provided the impetus for a growing number of studies." In the policies and academic research of cultural well-being, qualitative research explores the impacts of the arts by increasingly using mixed methods and subjective well-being data. Most cultural well-being studies have clinical and non-clinical outcomes, and some include an economic evaluation. (Daykin, 2021, p. 53; Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015, p. 12). Many art interventions observe the effects of the arts on, for instance, an emotional or social level that are hard to measure with clinical procedures (Laitinen, 2017a, 2017b). Evaluation of subjective well-being is possibly the only way to measure the effects of cultural well-being. However, the other side of the coin is the tradition in medical measurement. Studies about the clinical and medical effects of arts and culture hold an important place in the origins of well-being measurement and the counterpart to measuring subjective well-being. Especially the thinking based on medical research critically affects the evaluation of cultural operation (Hyttinen, 2022, p. 34).

The concept of health is usually approached concordance with medical results, which especially point to the positive effects of arts on health (Houni, 2021, p. 29). One wide branch of cultural well-being research is the studies that can gather medical data. Music therapy research can, for instance, measure hormone levels or heart rate (Grape et al., 2003). This design style crosses over to psychological research about, for example, rehabilitation or the quality of life of the elderly. These studies formed the basis for the cultural well-being evidence base but only

created secondary data on aspects like participation and community. The most well-known and researched form of cultural well-being is still the mechanism through which music has healing capabilities and effects on mental well-being. Music medicine, brain research, and neuro and cognitive science have produced information about music's well-being and health benefits. Its effects are much more well-known than other forms of art or cultural activities. (Ranta-Meyer et al., 2021, p. 7) Another reason is why many of the indicators in the findings of many cultural well-being projects are clinical. This is also why a lot of the indicators in the findings of many cultural well-being projects are clinical, observation might even be in danger of becoming so narrow that the possible positive effects of art are left outside of the observation for being art. (Laitinen, 2017b, p. 42.) There are voices in the field concerned about the wider perspective of cultural well-being being forgotten amid medical research (Ikäläinen, 2014, p. 22) and that the full definition of well-being could get lost.

The examination of the well-being effects of culture and art has been made more systematic and broader in the past two decades, and data has been produced internationally (Laitinen, 2017b; Lehtikoinen & Vanhanen, 2017b). According to Simpura and Uusitalo (2011), well-being is generally studied with objective measurement in Nordic countries. The discussion about cultural well-being and the well-being effects of culture regards specifically its instrumental value as a producer of well-being. Because of this, the focus has mainly been on how arts and culture can be measured in, for instance, the social and healthcare fields and what kind of evidence-based research of their benefits can be acquired. (Aholainen et al., 2021.) When observing the socio-cultural impacts of events, the focus has mainly been on the wide definition of culture. When discussing cultural impact, the narrower definition is rarely considered, especially in art. The cultural policy reviews show festivals as an instrument to increase and diversify art and cultural services. (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016, p. 53.) In addition, the multidimensional nature of well-being poses challenges concerning its measurement (Houni et al., 2020, p. 185; THL, n.d.a), which is why like with the concept of culture, the shared knowledge of the utilized terminology and interests of knowledge about are important. Different ways of defining culture also affect

the perspective of measuring effects and their quality or breadth. A consistent definition and policy would ensure that precise evaluation stays within the framework of the represented approach (Jansson 2014, pp. 6, 11). This also applies to related terms like participation and agency. In general, when evaluating the well-being effects of culture, for the sake of the research, it is necessary to narrow what effects are studied (Liikanen, 2010, p. 64).

Wigram and Gold (2012, pp. 164–182) have expressed concern about the increasing requirements and demands based on harsh scientific research-based evidence. They state that even though the benefit of randomized research design is to have control over the possible bias or skewing that might arise from the sampling of the participants. This research does not recognize the individual's experience or consider the effects that might strengthen the individual's personal experience of well-being. (Wigram & Gold, 2012, pp. 164–182) Subjective well-being is an important measure of social progress in the United Nations and organizations like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD]. (Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015, p. 13) Measuring subjective well-being is not simple. As Kallio-Peltoniemi (2013) has stated, the discussion about the measurement has increased in the past years because more descriptive information to support societal decision-making has been required to add to the Gross National Income [GNP], which describes the economic advancements of a country. Even though methods of measurement have been developed by the OECD and Eurostat, it should be noticed that subjective well-being measurement is sensitive to the contexts of data acquisition, different verbal frameworks, differently formed questions and replies and other circumstances. (Kallio-Peltoniemi, 2013.) According to Fujiwara and MacKerron, (2015, p.13), "affective well-being is typically measured on a more frequent basis than evaluative measures, but evaluative subjective well-being measures are more prevalent in academic and policy research because of data collection issues with affective well-being." Evaluative subjective well-being data is more available from, for instance, large long-term national surveys. Measuring affective subjective well-being requires primary data on how a person feels and measures both positive and negative feelings. It is often measured in terms of hedonic and eudaimonic

well-being, and negative feelings could ask about factors deterring them, like anxiety, depression, or stress. (Fujiwara MacKerron, 2015, p.13) Stiglitz, Sen, and Fitoussi (2009, pp. 145–146) have raised the philosophical tradition behind the concept of subjective well-being, by which the individuals are the best at depicting their personal well-being. Jowell (2004) acknowledged that policymaking built upon a narrow range of easily measurable evidence-based indicators of the effects of the arts had significant limitations.

Measuring and compiling statistics about people's emotions and feelings would have been considered inappropriate, but nowadays, many research methods have turned subjective well-being into systematically measurable and statistically compileable. Collecting different experiences becomes instinctive and reflects the subject's personal preferences when their personal evaluation is trusted. This premise makes it possible to observe the diversity of opinions when considering what different people value as important to their lives. (Ranta-Meyer et al., 2021, p. 6.) According to Lehtikoinen and Vanhanen (2017b, p. 13), generally speaking, the effects of cultural well-being are relative because they are based on the experiences and views of individuals. It has also been stated that subjective evaluation can only observe some well-being effects (Laitinen, 2017b, p. 42). Timonen et al. (2022) from the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare recently came out with their own notion about measuring the impact of cultural well-being, in which subjective well-being theory is utilized. The factors of hedonic, eudaimonic, and social well-being are proposed to together create flourishing well-being and mental health according to the definition of both Keyes (2005, 2007) and the constitution of the World Health Organization (1946). Subjective well-being is one of the factors recommended for measurement when conducting projects on cultural well-being by The Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare (Simpura & Uusitalo, 2011, p. 114; THL, n.d.a). According to Daykin (2021, p. 53), this type of qualitative research "cannot identify outcomes or prove value, it can explore participants' nuanced experiences of arts processes, providing useful insights for policy and practice."

The emphasis on personal experiences has been acceptable because, in many cultures, being happy and satisfied in one's life is the main goal. The field of

subjective well-being focuses on people's evaluations of their lives. (Diener, 2000.) Because subjective well-being research relies on a cognitive assessment of one's life, it can be biased because people can struggle to remember and make their evaluations retrospectively (Diener, 1984; Kahneman & Krueger, 2006). The question wording and order can also bias evaluative measures, the interviewer's characteristics, and the interview environment. (Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015.) People may also respond by changing their evaluation to appear more socially desirable. (Zappala, 2007). Researchers have recently begun to question the distinction between the dimensions of well-being and examine the potential for integrating the theories and components of hedonic, eudaimonic, and well-being into a hierarchical model of well-being. The findings have been inconclusive. (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, & King, 2008; Keyes, 2005, 2007; Keyes et al., 2002.)

Subjective and psychological well-being are related and stem from the distinction between experienced happiness and finding something meaningful. Psychological well-being examines the extent to which a person thrives in life's circumstances. The person can experience purpose in life and personal growth but simultaneously lower life satisfaction and feeling of happiness. (Keyes et al., 2002). To me, this positioning of the terminology explains how many well-being questionnaires and surveys usually work their inquiries and claims. These descriptions also echo the definitions of well-being, when the term is explained as the absence of negative factors and experiences. For this reason, Keyes et al. (2002) propose that quantitative and qualitative methods should be used to gain both depth and breadth in research.

The measurement of cultural well-being is always based on evaluation in one way or another (Houni et al., 2020, p. 189). Different fields conduct measurements from different starting points and with different research methods. Therefore, operators in the cultural field can feel like it is challenging to produce results understood in the social and health fields and the other way around. It has been commonly accepted that arts and culture activities have a strong connection to health. More broadly, well-being is often not unequivocally causal because multiple factors impact the experience of well-being. (Houni, 2021, p. 29.) According to Houni et al. (2020, p. 39), the studies conducted about cultural well-



being can roughly be divided into three categories: data collected by interviews and surveys concerning experiences of participation, statistical analysis on experience or participation data, and healthcare studies of the clinical effects of the arts. Diener (2000) proposed the components of subjective well-being for a national index to include: "life satisfaction (global judgments of one's life), satisfaction with important domains (e.g., work satisfaction), positive affect (experiencing many pleasant emotions and moods), and low levels of negative affect (experiencing few unpleasant emotions and moods)."

In the United Kingdom, the Office for National Statistics has evaluated personal well-being from 2011 by four dimensions, life satisfaction, meaningfulness, happiness, and anxiety. When the meaning of leisure from individual and communal well-being was recognized in 2013, a fifth dimension of culture and sports hobbies was added. (Daykin et al., 2017, p. 282.) The statistical operations of the EU, Eurostat, measure cultural participation, including practicing culture and attending cultural events. The culture in cities, such as the citizenry's satisfaction with cultural facilities and services. The cultural activities covered include "going to the cinema, attending live performances, visiting cultural sites and practicing artistic activities (for example, playing a musical instrument, singing, dancing or painting)." (Eurostat, n.d.)

By the Health Care Act (1326/2010, § 12), local governments are required to publish an annual welfare report, which is one method to collect data concerning the habitants, and the municipality implements a well-being policy (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2022a). The document is prepared in collaboration with experts from the different administrative fields, and it is used especially in governance, political decision making, and as a base for strategies, designing operations, and implementation (Finnish Government, n.d.b). The welfare report includes (Houni et al., 2020, p. 25). In Finland, the primary method to observe cultural well-being in different regions and merge cultural well-being with the strategies of health promotion and welfare reports is TEAviisari. TEAviisari is a benchmarking system of health promotion capacity for municipalities. Its goal is to assess the health benefit-enhancing effects of culture

through the services provided by the municipality. (THL, n.d.a.) The data collection is biannual and national, and the survey concerning cultural well-being was added in 2018 (Houni, 2021, p. 32). The data collection is done in collaboration with the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture's department of art and culture policy, AFLRA, the Finnish National Agency of Educations, Statistics Finland, the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Center for Cultural Policy Research, the Southern Finland Regional State Administrative Agency and TAIKE. (THL, 2019.) The strength of the data collection is longevity; in the future, the state of cultural well-being can also be observed (Houni, 2021, p. 32).

In 2019, The Finnish Institution of Health and Well-being updated TEAviisari, on the part of the culture as a part of municipal operations. The data collection included the following: culture in the municipal strategy, regarding differing demographics in the municipal cultural operating, means to participate and influence the municipal inhabitants, considering culture in the broad welfare, a cultural operations strategy that promotes the well-being of the municipality, evaluating the accessibility factors the different areas of culture services, the collaboration between cultural stakeholders and the municipality, the use of cultural spaces and venues, culture education for children and youth, and measures to improve basic education in the arts and conclusions in following the Percent for Art principle in construction. (THL, 2015.) TEAviisari also observes the status of political strategies, the likes of which I have previously mentioned as examples of Finnish cultural strategies, in municipal governance and administration.

The evaluation of the accessibility of basic services is the statutory requirement of the Regional State Administrative Agencies. Their evaluation is done bi-annually, and it oversees, monitors, and assesses the equal fulfillment of the accessibility of basic services in Finland. The analyzed material for the evaluation project of cultural services came from a survey directed at the personnel in charge of municipal cultural services in Finland. 75% of Mainland Finland. (Regional State Administrative Agencies, n.d.) Also, AFLRA commissions report producing

information to develop measurement tools and models to record and monitor the impact of arts and culture festivals. In these reports, the impacts have meant the broader long-term impacts that arts and culture festivals have generated in the host localities, nationally and internationally. (Luonila et al., 2019, p. 4.)

A currently running development project ArtWell (UEF//Connect, n.d.), aims to develop procedures and calculations for predicting the evaluation of cultural well-being operations, develop criteria for evaluation, recognize the needs for knowledge acquisition that support evaluation, and make action recommendations concerning all of the above to progress the economic evaluation of cultural well-being in Finland. ArtWell's literature review (Kippo & Koivisto, 2002) observes the cultural well-being operations in publications on society's micro, meso, and macro levels, which is necessary to verify impact. The research included different areas of life in a multidisciplinary manner, such as psychological and physical quality of life.

In addition to these operations, Finnish ministries have also periodically commissioned reports on the effects of cultural well-being, the effects of events, and measuring the effects of cultural well-being and events (Luonila et al., 2019; Saukko et al., 2021; Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland, 2016; Luonila et al., 2022). These reports are characterized by their economic underpinnings. A publication translated by Jensen (2020, pp. 1, 4) is an example of a guidebook to establish a framework to report and understand the evaluation of cultural well-being projects and operations. A recent review by Hyttinen (2022) focuses on measuring the physical, psychological, and social effects of cultural well-being. Hyttinen (2022, p. 5) calls for understanding in this time of lacking in the measurement methods for the impact of events since cultural well-being as a whole and the knowledge, operations, and know-how about it are all subject to rigorous development.

Considering my research question, the main subjects of my research are the effects of cultural well-being and experiences at cultural events. I now present examples of research that connect to their elements thematically. These studies

include different concepts of experiencing participation, analyzing data about participation and self-assessed well-being, and different ways to categorize what experiences, such as culture, events, or well-being, benefit. The broader context has been addressed by large-scale surveys that attempted to measure the connection between participation in arts and culture and well-being (Bone et al., 2021; Elsdén, Mak & Fancourt, 2021; McCrary & Altenmüller, 2021). For Bone et al. (2021), the participants and data were drawn from a repeated cross-sectional and rotating panel study of adults aged 18 and over in the US (the General Social Survey [GSS]) in which arts outcomes were measured between 1993 and 2016. The data between the years could be combined because each wave contained a unique sample of individuals. Their responses were formatted into a binary variable indicating attendance at any event in the last 12 months (0 = none, 1 = one or more). Elsdén et al. (2021) used data from a prospective longitudinal cohort study (1970's British Cohort Study [BCS70]) that followed a sample of the population across their life course. To examine relationships between frequency of leisure activity engagement and health functioning, OLS regressions were used with continuous outcome variables of health functioning: "general health, vitality, bodily pain, social functioning, physical functioning, and mental health." McCrary and Altenmüller (2021) aim to analyze the relationships between performing arts activity and health outcomes in the 500 largest cities in the US. The data from the US Centers for Disease Control's '500 Cities' project regarding "health outcomes and the prevalence of preventive and unhealthy behaviors" with 27 outcomes for adult residents of the 500 largest cities in the US. The analysis includes multiple regression models "to identify significant associations between performing arts activity and health outcomes and preventive and unhealthy behaviors."

In these different types of statistical analysis, the cohort studies that provide the primary data might have used subjective measures, even though none of these studies measure outcomes of subjective well-being. Often the original data cannot be accessed. However, it can be generalized using statistical analysis of cohort well-being studies that the data was collected with surveys utilizing Likert scales. Virolainen (2015, p. 52) observes that, in particular, Finnish arts and

culture audience research emphasizes descriptive studies that investigate motivation and effects, not causality.

Węziak-Białowolska et al. (2019) examine causality by measuring 11 different well-being-related predetermined outcomes and applying a statistical longitudinal modeling technique. They acquired the initial data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study conducted yearly to "inquire about living conditions, societal changes, economic circumstances, attitudes, behaviors, and health in the United Kingdom." The effects of specific event attendance were not measured, but attendance to events in general longevity. A positive and causal relationship was revealed between cultural attendance, cultural participation, and well-being (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019.), but existing evidence questions the causative link between attendance to cultural events or participation in creative activities and increased well-being (Węziak-Białowolska, 2016; Węziak-Białowolska & Białowski, 2016).

Ramchandani and Coleman (2012) aimed to measure a sense of inspiration as an effect of an experience at an event. They wanted to locate the factors that may trigger the inspiration effect at a football game and factors that might convert inspiration into participation in sports as a result. The assessment of the inspirational impact on spectators' willingness to participate in sport was conducted as an audience survey. An encouraging finding is that "across the three events, around two-thirds of spectators interviewed (67.6 percent) either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that their experience of attending the event in question had an effect and made them feel inspired to participate in more sport or physical activity than they would normally." Inspired spectators also regarded the impact of factors linked to general event attendance as moderately high. Ramchandani and Coleman (2012) could argue that "the potential of events to inspire audiences is higher amongst those who attend events rather than those who experience them elsewhere." (Ramchandani & Coleman, 2012.)

Kayser et al. (2022) explored the application of automated face analysis software to potentially study the emotional responses in concert audiences. Results

showed that the software *FaceReader* (Skiendziel et al., 2019) could detect and identify facial expressions and reflect them to the emotion expressed in the music.

I am interested in the well-being benefits of cultural events, what specific things I think should be taken into account when measuring those effects, what would be the most suitable, and what should be changed. I am interested in measuring experience, what experiences and impact experiences have, and what effects experience through cultural events has. The most current methods of measuring the effects of cultural events and experiences of cultural events can be divided into two. Studies commonly use surveys with Likert scales or more in-depth interviews collecting qualitative data on subjective well-being. It is hard to compare these kinds of findings when the datasets are so different, and the questions differ much from each other because the measurement tool affects the research design so fundamentally. The aspects that are chosen for the questions just vary so much.

Qualitative surveys are often used to inquire about people's experiences and perceptions. In Kinnunen and Haahti's audience research (2015), where they explored community festivals and events by asking the participants to describe their festival experiences by writing a short description of their experiences and giving suggestions to develop the event. They received 931 experience descriptions were received the informants. Packer (2008) found that museums are important because of the experiences they create, and Binnie's (2010) surveys reported reduced anxiety levels and increased well-being after viewing art.

In 2000, Konlaan et al. linked attendance at cultural events and longevity. Their 10 000 participants were interviewed and observed for 14 years. They concluded that "the prognostic importance of changes in cultural stimulation should be investigated and experiments initiated for verification." The results were explained through cultural participation activating beneficial physiological processes associated with longevity, even though a direct causal link was not established.

Belfiore and Bennett (2010) ask, how do we construct a solid argument about the effects of arts and culture activities by separating them into genres to their historical definitions? The study by Bone et al. (2021) about art engagement categorized culture, and arts activities as follows:

Arts engagement typically refers to different types of creative activity, from actively participating in the arts like dancing, singing, acting, painting, reading, to more receptive cultural engagement like going to museums, galleries, exhibits, performances and the theater. It can also encompass broader creative activities that, whilst not always labelled as 'arts', share similar properties of creative skill and imagination, this would include gardening, cooking, and hobby or book groups. (Bone et al., 2021.)

Cieślikowski (2016, as cited by Cudny, 2020) also presents an example of what elements of events could be separated for measurement. For indicators for measuring the effect of events, the categories for the different factors an event can consist of. The most popular might be by Getz (2008, p. 404). This established typology of planned events divides them according to their type, encompassing eight groups. This segmentation by Cieślikowski and Getz provides the different factors and variables that event studies that want to observe effects can most often use. In previous research, the social effects of events have been most often observed through collaboration, regional pride, image, and the attractiveness of the host locality (e.g., Kainulainen, 2005, p. 390; Pasanen et al., 2009). The social and cultural impacts of cultural events can be seen as long-term changes like the communality of the festival host locality, or the well-being experiences of the participants, requiring long-term monitoring, qualitative methods, and an evaluation of effects (e.g., Richards & Colombo, 2017). Pasanen et al. (2009) suggest the assessment scales to interpret surveys and interviews in the context of evaluating the effects of events. They mention SCIE (socio-cultural impact evaluation model, (e.g., Brown & Trimbol, 2011), SIP (social impact perception, e.g., Small et al., 2005),

or FEET (Finnish Event Evaluation Tool). The Method of Empathy-based Stories (Eskola, 1988) was used to evaluate qualitative experience data by Kinnunen & Haahti (2015).

Aside from measuring the different dimensions of events, different scales and measurement methods for well-being exist within the realm of cultural well-being research. I will present a selection of scales and models that I think are the most relevant to my research context. The Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) consists of four items, measured on a seven-point Likert scale places focus on a broader category of happiness than just momentary feelings of happiness as a relatively stable personal. This understanding of personal happiness also allows for comparisons across local communities and cultures. Jensen and Allen (1993) developed a wellness-illness model showing an interrelationship between health, wellness, disease, and illness. For their definitions of wellness and illness, Jensen and Allen (1993) referenced Benner and Wrubel (1989, p. 221), where "wellness is the subjective experience of health" and "illness is viewed as the human experience of disease." (p. 221). Other examples of existing models to measure well-being in the literature include The Psychological Well-Being Scale of Ryff and Keyes (1995) and The Satisfaction with Life Scale of Diener et al. (1985). Schwarz and Strack (1999) demonstrated that the measurement of life satisfaction could be influenced by the mood and other situational factors that the surveyed individual experiences at the moment of responding. Konlaan et al. (2002) and Bygren et al. (2009) assessed health by observing mortality rates.

The lack of established indicators has sparked criticism, but so have the indicators in use. Kainulainen (2005) points out that distinguishing the economic and non-economic impact from the benefits they created has been problematic because the cultural, artistic, social, and economic values are multidimensionally intertwined in event and festival production and participation in them. The critique received from the medical field and the funders have often concerned the clinical evidence and emphasized prioritizing quantitative research and measuring the effects. Humanist and societal critique has been directed at the quantitative



aspects of cultural well-being research and how it can not undertake the meanings of well-being and art to different people in different contexts. (Laitinen, 2017b, pp. 42–42.) Laitinen (2017b, p. 25) notes that using different study methods alongside each other enables a multidimensional depiction of a phenomenon. No study comes without the subject of discussing limitations and developments. However, a recurring theme in well-being research seems to be that the limitations are presented up front as disclaimers alongside the presentation of concepts.

Understanding self-rated health questions and their use in longitudinal studies is a topic of criticism (Fayers, 2002; Gunasekara et al., 2012; Jylhä, 2009; Weziak-Białowolska, 2014). Although these measures are "believed to provide useful information on overall individual health status, concerns about their interpretation and self-health-assessment, in general, are very elaborate. They may be highly dependent on a contextual framework, including an individual's cultural and biographical background. However, they also rely on social characteristics such as social class or standard of living" (Weziak-Białowolska & Białowolski, 2016).

Evidence of the impacts of culture, produced with measurements and procedures, is needed, for instance, to support goal-oriented cultural services and add to the health and well-being promotion basic tasks of municipalities (Hyttinen, 2022, p. 3). Even though subjective evaluation is not as highly regarded as data acquired by other research methods, it is important to understand that individually experienced effects reflect on the entire society. Thus the benefits of the individuals become public. (Houni et al., 2020, p. 11; Lehtikoinen & Vanhanen 2017b, p. 13.) According to Stiglitz et al. (2009), "despite the persistence of many unresolved issues, subjective measures provide important information about the quality of life. Because of this, the questions that have proved their value within small-scale, unofficial surveys should be included in larger-scale surveys undertaken by official statistical offices."

A new way of measurement would not completely solve the problem. However, more quantitative leaning Likert scales and qualitative interviews could overlap the topics of the questions, which could also simplify future longitudinal studies.

The studies that measure different kinds of subjective well-being are quite locked in with the usage of the subjective well-being dimension categories and, in my opinion, would benefit from both simplification and additional qualitative aspects.

## 4 Findings

In this chapter, I will first present my findings from the expert interviews thematically and introduce the common ideas shared with the theoretical premises of the literature review. I had prepared a set of eight open-ended questions in a tentative order to follow, but I prioritized spontaneous associations and conversation; they acted as a guide for dialogue.

The questions open the conversation by outlining the experts' impression of their professional experience's connection to the effects on cultural well-being. The interviews go on to cover inquiries of their views of the meanings of subjective well-being as well as participation in events. The depth of the examined details extends to different concepts of agency, experience, and measurement and their outlook on the research context.

### 4.1 Expert interviews

This is the content analysis of the three expert interviews I conducted. What should be noted about terminology and the concepts of my research task and question is that all experts used the terms festival and cultural event coincidentally. Even when mentioning theories and research findings about specific festivals, they just replaced the term with a cultural event, as if the theory or finding applied identically. The term culture production was never mentioned on its own, always inclusively culture and event production. In many instances, multiple codes from the different thematic groups could and had to be applied to the same quotation to address the layers and nuances of the experts' answers. There was some repetition to the codes that were often applied together. In some cases, quotations labeled with multiple codes carried more weight or counted more towards one code than others, but in some cases, the themes appeared in the quotation equally. Some codes do not have quotations from all of the experts.

- Interviewee 1 has extensive work experience in producing and managing arts and culture projects, events, and festivals both in the private and public sectors. As a cultural producer, a large number of their projects included an angle of well-being promotion. Interviewee 1 has master's degrees in musicology and cultural policy, and they have worked as a researcher of municipal cultural services.
- Interviewee 2 is a Ph.D. researcher with a master's degree in applied art and design, including creative sustainability. Their research regards increasing well-being through the systems of social design and urban planning, creating social well-being, social sustainability, music event attendance, and the importance of live music.
- Interviewee 3 is a researcher with a Ph.D. in tourism research. The main areas of their comprehensive personal and collaborative research and articles concern audience research, festival visitor experiences, and shared experience.

After analyzing the transcriptions, the number of recurring codes was 149, and the number of coded quotations from all three experts was 295. The most recurring categories were 'art and events to increase well-being', 'research', 'experience of well-being', and 'measurement'. The code 'art and events to increase well-being' was the most recurring. It described 35 quotations which made up 23,49% of all 149 codes. The code 'research' recurred the second most, consisting of 19,46% of all the codes. The codes 'the experience of well-being' and 'measurement' occurred 25 times and made 16,78% of all used codes equally the third most occurring.

Compared to the chosen 149 codes, the four most occurring showed up 114 times, making them 76,51% of the coded quotations in total, making them the vast majority. Overall, 98 quotations included all four of these most recurring codes making up 33,22% of all of the quotations. The 149 codes were divided into six thematic categories; 'effects', 'means of operation', 'research theory',

'tools', 'measurement', and 'research context'. Statistically, the less recurring codes belonged in the same thematic groups; in comparison, so did the most recurring. The theme groups with the most significant number of codes encompassed more abstract and immaterial terms, and the thematic groups with smaller codes dispersed between multiple thematic groups and related terms that were concrete and practical. Statistically, the numerically higher represented themes relate to the more conceptually challenging aspects of my research and my actual research question.

As a collection, these six themes are also identifiable descriptors of my research task and question. Given that the interviews stayed on topic subject-wise, it could be argued that they are very accurate and that the questions were carefully considered and formulated accordingly to give insight. They depict the subject matter of examining different well-being experiences at cultural events. Effects are the expressions of the outcomes of experiences, and measurement is a more detailed manner of observing them. Tools, research theory, research context, and means of operation are the building blocks of operationalizing the different concepts of this research. These six themes can also be seen coherently in the interview questions and my literature review. They portray the characteristics of the experts' answers and are carried through all of the ideas brought up by the interviews.

The thematic group 'research context' is composed of 6 codes. These codes paint the specifics of the features of the context that cultural well-being is research exists.

The thematic group 'research theory' is comprised of 25 codes. This is a group of verbs and nouns related to academic research. These terms are both generally related to the fundamentals of research and, specifically, the research of the elements of cultural well-being.

The thematic group, 'means of operation,' consists of 20 codes. These codes describe concrete concepts and subjects, as well as names and actions, with a sense of direction in the culture and health fields.

The thematic group 'measurement' contains 11 codes. This theme presents the facets that concern measurability, the act of measuring, and the specific aspects of measuring experiences and cultural well-being.

The thematic group 'effects' includes 43 codes. The common factors between these codes are immaterial manifestations created by some situations, like emotions, feelings, phenomena, interaction, perception, or change. The codes describe personal, social, and societal manifestations. They are also a consequence or an outcome of an experience, an experiment, or an intervention. The effect group also represents the responses, outcomes, impacts, and impacted and unimpacted areas of cultural well-being.

The thematic group 'tools' is made up of 23 codes. The codes share a nature of practicality. They have used components of operations and functions. The tools can also be related to projects on a national or municipal level or aspects of well-being promotional matters.

The findings of the topics and codes in the interviews under the theme each theme are the following. The codes grouped thematically under '**research context**' demonstrate the bigger picture of cultural and health services, government programs, and the long-term benevolent aspirations of humankind. The quotations of the experts point to the necessities and obligations of politics and economics that contribute to the required building blocks of cultural well-being promotion.

The interviews illustrate the bigger picture of the history of cultural well-being. They include municipal law, observations of different cultural well-being projects, research methods, and the most well-known benefits. Interviewee 1 has observed midst their research about the cultural services organized by local

governments that the motives for the operations are often the promotion of the well-being of locals: “when observing the cultural operations of municipalities, there is not necessarily talk about well-being and such” as a subject. It is not explained and only vaguely stated, graced, and alluded to. Interviewee 1 states that: “in my opinion, it is strongly and fundamentally included in the mission of a municipality that the provided services need to be of benefit to the inhabitants.” Culture is one means of operating, like healthcare services, elderly care, or youth services, and the essence is to provide diverse, accessible, and affordable services to the inhabitants. A central matter of participation and interaction with arts, people, and events, is that it is always voluntary.

The politics and the economics behind cultural well-being operations create the guarantee for participation, allocate funding and subsidies, affect the goals, and create differing circumstances between municipalities and countries. According to interviewee 1, the current disposition of funding for culture projects directs that: “the applicants to give reasoning about cultural well-being effects, economic effects, vitalizing city centers - everything except establishing that they have quality artistic subject matter.” Interviewee 3’s observation is that: “local politics, regional politics, and national politics revolve around money and making savings.”

Cultural well-being promotion can be viewed by what is consumed and what culture is for individuals. Interviewee 1 thinks that: “it is great more terminology is created to describe phenomena of experiences [of subjective well-being] and subjective well-being, which can also be used to describe the demographic.” Interviewee 1 also notes that from a research perspective: “different tools have such different hypotheses and theory bases.”

The findings in the interviews under the theme **'research theory'** are the following. The group of codes labeling quotations related to research theory is simultaneously practical, straightforward, and reflective. In their given answers, the experts exhibit their wide-spanning knowledge. The topics derive from the history of well-being-related cultural policies, extensive scientific research,

research articles, and literature. This substantial professional knowledge also presents another side to these matters. Concurring outlook and criticism evoke contemplation about the aspects of operationalization, categorization, issues with data, terminology, and different theories.

The mentioned arguments for the well-being effects of cultural events are claims based on research, knowledge, and general knowledge used in cultural well-being promotion and projects' aims. Schools of research have different opinions about well-being and its dimensions, and the interviews consider the literature generously. Their contradictory points are acknowledged. As one of the challenges of measuring cultural well-being experiences, Interviewee 1 describes: "the difficulty or challenge, according to my experience, is the very differing views on how the effects of culture could be measured." Different contexts, angles, theories, and professionalism of the backgrounds of the researchers all affect the impressions of how the effects of culture could be studied. 'Bridging and bonding' and 'sense of belonging' are the most referred concepts and have the most important in the discussion.

The interviewees' different theories about cultural well-being and events are from different research fields. They include categorizations, demographics, dimensions of subjective well-being, target groups, and measuring different factors. Interviewee 3 explains that: "the dimensions of well-being in my own research have been shaped by literary research which can in many places become convoluted, because of the many different schools of research and what is available."

The history of cultural well-being research in Finland and concepts related to it are included in the context of the research theories. Pilots in Finland are based on government programs starting from the 1990s, but also historical mentions cultural movements represented in time that represents different types of communities. Collaboration between the social and health field, and arts and culture field, is present in the scientific research and between experts and in different sectors like municipalities and the private sector. Interviewee 1 thinks



that in cultural well-being research, "the outcomes of participation differ within a framework of another theory, which is the problem," complicating the application of new evidence-based models.

According to interviewee 3: "especially when a researcher uses data that they have collected themselves, it is already skewed, because the researcher formulates the questions and only observes specific things." The interviews call for unification and more research on terminology to reliably analyze the acquired data and to elaborate better on the phenomena of measuring cultural well-being. Aspects of defining concepts are also philosophical. This concerns debates like what happiness is, what meaning and understanding can do as effects, what participation is, and what culture is. The experts also reflect on worldviews and responsibility for future generations. Interviewee 1 commends this research on trying to look for comparisons of the experiences of well-being: "and hopefully something is found that could be interpreted between what research talks about," even though they expect it to be challenging, especially between research perspectives and theoretical backgrounds.

The findings coded under the theme '**means of operation**' introduced the immense variety of contexts, means, and methods of promoting cultural well-being. There is a multitude of possible circumstances to facilitate cultural well-being and areas of focus and aim that fall under the umbrella of event and cultural production and management. The prevailing underlying intent is to enable participation, but the matter of producing art for the sake of well-being promotion is divisive. The professionalization, development, and growth of culture, social, and health fields affect the views and potential of this theme.

The following are the topics and codes in the interviews under the theme 'means of operation.' Interviewee 2 sees that: "cultural well-being in practice is, that we have diverse organized networks around culture" and from those communities whose intrinsic activities would include variety for everyone's preference.

Different means to use arts and culture activities and events to increase well-being are included, ranging from tourism to urban planning to projects and institutions following government programs. Many different arts and culture programs with events have been piloted, have been proven good, and are already in use. Interviewee 1 points out that projects with an objective to increase well-being are common among the operators of the cultural field and that these types of projects and cultural services can be "used to help individuals explore the means to learn how they could have agency, meaning, and influence in their daily lives, in their community, and the surrounding world."

The interviews mention and highlight arts and cultural activities related to having hobbies and being involved so that tribes and communities are born around them. These can be used to increase well-being but are not always viewed as cultural well-being. According to interviewee 3's research, a cultural event can be used to create experiences that affect both physical and mental health:" what is interesting is that in some dimensions of well-being, well-being can be generated by cultural events that can affect physical health. Some forms of well-being can have a great effect on mental health." Event and cultural production and management can be a method or tool to promote well-being, especially by facilitation. Interviewee 1 sees projects that utilize arts and culture experiences as "one [line of practice] of instrumental uses where specific well-being effects are sought after" as a clear branch of event and cultural production.

Interviewee 3 contemplates the importance of the effects of cultural well-being and how it is not accessible to all: "it should enable voluntary participation for everyone and financially, including those who cannot personally finance their attendance to cultural events, and a model to take part should be created." The matter of accessibility is about getting the well-being effects to everyone by different means. The best means to reach different people groups differ, but the best ones can be found even for different interests. Accessibility matters also come as a task from the law.

Interviewee 1 displays their opinion: "I think that there is much potential in all art consumption and because of this it is potentially positively impactful, which is what makes accessibility, participation, agency and a low threshold to participate so important, which is the reason why cultural experiences need to be made possible because it is known that for sought people groups like low-income individuals and substance abusers have a harder time seeing positive things in life and would realize that culture is a thing they can acquire positive experiences from." Interviewee 1's views of the event and cultural production being means by which different target groups could be reached and utilized in cultural well-being promotion are "the differentiating behaviors of consuming culture and art products."

Culture is one of the means social and health fields can and should use to promote well-being. The context for these strategies is based on municipal law. Projects like 'Hyvinvointia kulttuurista,' 'kulttuuria kaikille' and 'Percent for Art'-model used to purchase art pieces with 1% of the budget of a construction project, are examples of past and current implementation models in Finland. The implementation and use of well-being projects are still scattered. Cultural well-being-promoting projects are seen as often intervention-like and not very longitudinal in practice, making measuring the effects easier and more complicated when the beginning and after of the project are definite.

The common factors between the findings coded thematically under '**measurement**' are the factors to consider concerning how to measure or what to measure. Considering the more abstract conceptual elements of my research question, like experience, effect, and well-being, measurement is the point of view that grounds them in reality. It is pointed out that these matters also represent the issues of cultural well-being that are often vaguely alluded to in generalized conversations and arguments about well-being promotion. These points in question are also related to the instrumentalization of culture and theories of subjective well-being (through that the instrumental use is what the municipalities and experiments measure). According to interviewee's 3 research on cultural well-being, "aims are to go deeper, given that at some point claims in surveys

were mainly 'my well-being is increased,' only at a conceptual level and subjective" and terminology was very generalized and even vague.

A multitude of projects measure arts and culture for their instrumentalism. Different measurement goals depend on the project or operation, or organizer, and it should be noted that they can also be political. Successful preventative measures are a goal of The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, so that point of view often influences the measurement. Activity is one important highlighted component to define for measuring effects. Interviewee 1 observes that "the measures and operations of well-being promotion are targeted to the audiences differently because the means that work the best depend according to each target group." Generalization can have a negative impact on how cultural well-being findings are viewed. The entirety of the context is a key aspect that affects what and how to measure. However, interviewee 2 sees that "it is a continuum; experiencing culture, gaining interest in culture, relating to culture, and seeing commonalities with oneself and cultural expression."

Wide knowledge of medical research and evidence, the foundation of many operations, are presented, and examples are given. A multitude of scientific articles and reports are also referred to. The subjective nature of cultural well-being studies and its problems are recognized. Interviewee 1 refers to "research done in universities, where some units study music therapy at the level of neurological measurement and note that well-being effect can be very complicated to assess medically." Interviewee 3's thoughts are that "finding objective methods of measurement or factors to measure when studying well-being experiences is challenging, and the best option that comes to mind could be a heart rate monitor used by health studies, or some other physiological device." The mentioned matters of measuring subjective well-being theories and problems align with the current literature and research on the subject. Interviewee 3 expresses that "it is hard to recognize an objective measure for cultural well-being, which is why I will keep at subjective well-being and how the individual experiences and can verbalize it."

According to interviewee 1, "the measurement methods should always be developed and enriched for every specific project as well as considering what the numerical measurements could be." The presumption for interviewee 1 is that the studies would be one-off and not longitudinal. A key method that interviewee 1 would use to measure experiences at cultural experiences would be "to map out the change and measured differences at different phases of the project by surveying the organizers and participants."

The subject matter coded to the thematic group '**effects**' characterizes a perpetual narrative of an example situation beginning from an arts and culture activity. The situation of the activity can be a project in which there are intentions to promote well-being or people attending a situation, including arts and culture. These examples are all coalesced into events. Many arguments and assumptions exist about the impact of experiencing arts and culture through different means. They are described to have many positive outcomes, like improving many abilities in people, creating agency and meaning in the participants, and impact that can move from individuals to society. The originator of these effects is both the art itself and different forms of being together with people, which cause an abundance of feelings and emotions, as well as change in many areas.

The background of use in events instrumentally stems from government programs wanting to facilitate all subjective well-being and well-being effects with arts and culture content. It is observed that the culture is communicated and applied to increase value. This can be seen in urban planning, municipal strategies, and projects with multiple aims in the economy, branding, and education. Interviewee 3 sees that it is problematic that cultural well-being benefits are not often explained enough as a term and "that hedonistic parties overwhelm the scope of the long-term effects."

Culture and art are noted to have many general and nonspecific benefits, like in the form of 'a balanced life', feeling better, and associations with positive feelings. This can be in the form of hobbies, where art is experienced without a well-being goal, as operations and programs of institutions and municipalities' mission

statements. Interviewee 1 sees that many individuals steer towards well-being experiences from culture through arts and culture hobbies or by consuming media, both with and "without intention to gain increased well-being, still gaining increased well-being." Culture and art can impact and affect change and experience in many areas of life. Interviewee 1 describes that "cultural well-being, be the source of it any recognized factor, is very impactful to an individual's experience, perception of their reality, and satisfaction with their life." They evoke feelings that construct the well-being experience. Therapeutic use of arts and culture activities increases agency and supports personal abilities. Agency might be created by participation, a sense of belonging, and a sense of community experienced by the individual. Interviewee 1 talks about how "supporting activity, functioning, and personal capabilities" and "removing physical obstacles both mentally and physically" benefit through the instrumental effects of cultural well-being.

Participation is the key concept behind almost all of the well-being effects that can be named. Interviewee 2 says, "cultural content is secondary to the experienced well-being, and the spectrum of communities that form around [it] are what links to well-being." As a term, communality is mentioned almost exclusively as being created by event and eventful environments. A social environment can be created and facilitated, and social environments facilitate all of the effects named by the interviews. Interviewee 2 notes that "social pressure to accommodate to society can also be relieved when individuals have more environments they feel like they belong."

Interaction is a mechanism by which all social well-being is created. Interaction can be participation, attending, and passively experiencing, which positively affects well-being. It is specified that within the framework of cultural well-being, interaction is facilitated by cultural events and cultural activities. Shared experiences are associated with what happens at events, and it is one factor that creates the studied well-being effects. Interviewee 3 sees that the factor "emotions felt at cultural events run through all of the dimensions [of subjective

well-being]" and that "experiencing emotions can't be separated" from subjective experiences.

According to the interviews, an identity is created by interaction, community, meaningfulness, and art. Identity is an important element of belonging, communality, and a right for everyone. According to interviewee 3's research, "the area of social well-being that is the most important for mental health is a sense of belonging, – which can be seen the most in niche cultures" and concerns cultural events its attendees identify with. Out of the studied factors, mental health is one of the most affected by cultural well-being and the largest statistical meaning in research.

According to interviewee 3's research, "an individual realizing that they can use the experiences [at cultural events] to affect their feelings has positive effects on mental health." 'Bridging and bonding' is a leading theory that can be used to dissect mechanisms of interaction. It includes creating networks, sharing experiences, sharing emotions, finding a community, experiencing cohesion, and learning about one's own life or life as a whole. Experiences of well-being shape experiences of areas of life and how life is viewed. They are the aim of projects and what can happen in daily life. It is debated what their position in policy and research is, but many findings support their existence.

Interviewee 1 notes that a very general positive cultural well-being effect is: "increase in communality and life skills, gaining a sense of an ability to influence one's own life, the perception of happiness, and creating meaning." Meaning can be created by art itself, the experience of participation, or both. Something becoming meaningful is a result of an effect or experience. Meaning creates emotion, and the same meaning can be the factor that creates a community around it. According to interviewee 1, it is also generalized that: "when an individual attends a cultural function or takes part in arts and culture activities that they are known to enjoy, then the experience will be positive," just like if something experienced is perceived as unpleasant, it is hard to promote well-being by those means.

Emotions are an effect and a result, but also an aim or can contribute to an effect. Other mentioned effects of cultural well-being are empowerment, meaningfulness, happiness, and enjoyment. Interviewee 3 specifies that "experiencing shared emotions is what clearly creates well-being in a discussing cultural event." The largest factor affecting this is when audience members "observe each other react with the same feeling as them in the same way when they are experiencing the same phenomenon, and it makes them feel empowered."

This is what the quotations coded to the thematic group of **'tools'** describe. As a cultural well-being promotional term, tool is an implement used in performing an operation or necessary in the practice of an undertaking. The experts discourse about the devices, methods, and resources used in the problem-solving of different operational models and projects. These also include the instrumental use of arts and culture activities. Often the context and aims of different methods constitute according to the laws, societal mechanisms, associated institutions, and funding. Measurement is a tool to give evidence of effects. Some dimensions of well-being have an evidential effect on mental health, which can be linked to the national health statistics, for instance, through GNP, which is a tool. According to interviewee 1, producing cultural well-being experiences should be aimed toward everyone, "and through that scope, it could be considered to affect the national health."

The law sets demands for operations that are tools for governance and administration. More specifically, the local government act concerning the promotion of well-being through culture. Institutions are noted to provide 'non-specific' or 'general' cultural activity that is a part of a municipality's cultural services, in which they can function as tools. According to interviewee 1's experience and research, municipalities "want to uncover positive effects from all of the functions and projects they want to fund," whether it be the municipality or the government.



Adaptation is a necessity to operate. Adaptation according to the context needs to happen in professions, measurement, and operations need to. Interviewee 1 explains that because of this "has taught the professionals in the culture field to adapt their projects to be able to apply funds [that fit the aims of the ministry.]" Educating stakeholders in projects about operation models and methods at use is also a tool.

Funding and public subsidies enable what is implemented and also direct aims and trajectories. It is noted that what is consumed can indicate what can be used as a tool. Interviewee 2 argues that "dominant culture and popular culture are a product and that if there were no economic motives that influence the marketing of that culture, our cultural environment would be much more diverse and dispersed." Interviewee 1 summarizes that "the ministry funding is most visible for youth culture and to prevent social exclusion and that they stem from this larger turn in the funding of culture," which looks at culture from an instrumentalist view.

Needs should be recognized before developing tools. An aim and a need are different things, and there is no use for tools supporting the aim if it does not suit the need. In interviewee 1's opinion, culture projects and culture projects with well-being trajectories are not the same: "if not only discussing general well-being benefits but targeted well-being promotion operations, because I would draw a slight line there because the other has a clear well-being aim since its funder has a well-being aim" if the funding comes from a source that has a specific well-being objective, whether it be the municipality or ministry. Another is a tool, and the other is not, an example of instrumental use.

Interviewee 1 stresses that because low-income demographics who would benefit from cultural activities participate less because of their economic situation, more funding should be directed towards cultural services "to guarantee cultural experiences for individuals in vulnerable positions." Experiences can be created to create effects and benefits, and events can be created to create experiences. Facilitation is an event's most important tool in cultural well-being promotion.

## 4.2 Relating the expert interviews to the literature review

The leading themes of my literature review are *establishing the research context of events' cultural well-being promotion, looking into documented effects of events and experiences at events as well as defining a cultural event, subjective observations of well-being experiences, and measured well-being benefits related to eventful environments*. By meticulously presenting aspects and discussing the main concepts' definitions, I confirmed their relationships.

The current discourse on cultural well-being policy implementation also supports the importance of my research topic and is in the background of my context. Even if they would not be the main angle of my study, my aims benefit the issues they concern. Defining the terminology in constructing the theoretical premises for my literature review helps to ensure that results from different methods of measurement can contribute to the discussion and that I have the means to assess the specific constructs that I am investigating, such as the dimension of well-being experiences.

Analyzing the qualitative interviews brings out further information concerning the theoretical premises of my research task and question. I want to highlight the main findings that add to the established aspects of my research and show connections between the core matters. Some generalized ideas of cultural well-being are supported by the experts, who also have vast professional knowledge and work experience on the subjects. Discourse analysis revealed differences between communication in different contexts, government programs and their realization, and the origins of generalized knowledge. A present underpinning in analyzing my research context and the texts is that the information about the well-being effects of cultural events is assumed and not mentioned. There is overlap between the researched evidence and cultural knowledge that confirms this, and my interviewees assert it too. Examining the theories and concepts helps to ensure that results from different measurement methods can contribute to the

discussion and that I have the means to assess the specific constructs that I am investigating, such as the dimension of well-being experiences. It is also a form of analysis.

Interviewee 1 mirrors the positive cultural well-being effects to negative effects and feelings that can be created with the experience. According to interviewee 1, an experience can set the individual into motion: "you start to change yourself or change the entire world when you realize that something is wrong." Interviewee 2 thinks that "abilities to feel empathy and to have a wider world view increase as a well-being effect through facilitated interaction that broadens experiences." This type of philosophical reflection adds to the argument that the factor that should be observed is the experience.

The experienced effects of cultural events strongly overlap between the different elements of subjective well-being, whether they come from personal expression, doing something enjoyable, sharing life with other people, or shaping views of the environment. The areas where Interviewee 3 sees agency the most distinctly are "especially those with a strong ethos that is connected to specific genres, the agency is stronger because you participate in the creation of that cultural expression which is a connected sense of belonging" In these communities, agency is created by a sense of belonging and participation.

The claim about scientific knowledge's objectivity and culture's widely understood subjectivity is a social construct. It upholds the lack of understanding in healthcare even though many kinds of cultural values, beliefs, and traditions, as well as artistic processes and outputs, can be affected by well-being. (Ilmola-Sheppard et al., 2021.) The chosen definitions of social capital and the dimensions of subjective well-being are in accordance with the different research fields, even if the starting points and objectives differ. Multiple interviewees refer to how Rihova et al. (2015), distinguish the different features of subjective well-being and have started to utilize the definition of a sense of belonging as a jumping point in many observations. Interviewee 1 also mentions "being in meaningful interaction with other people" as a key component of communality. According to interviewee 2, paraphrasing their research, "the different social environments that are born

around [arts and culture] foster well-being effects" and "the well-being effects realize through groups, not the substance." The effects come from the shared identities and sense of belonging with peers, not through the arts and culture as instruments.

For more crossing connections, the interviews express that sense of belonging is both a concept of social well-being and a well-being effect. Gaining agency is the outcome of well-being-promoting operations, and it is created by a combination of interaction and an experience of meaningful activity. Having experienced interaction as a form of participation is also an effect of cultural well-being.

Interviewee 1's impression is that "a cultural operator's basic argument for well-being-related project funding is that the effects of cultural activity are larger when an individual does something themselves instead of passively receiving." Interviewee 1 adds that this includes the idea of "anything that makes a person contribute and be creative instead of receiving the products of someone else's creativity is better participation." Deep down, the means of experiencing, sharing, and producing well-being are also about politics, for the perception of what well-being is directed and how and with what measures well-being promotion is conducted (Aholainen et al., 2021). The current climate of cultural well-being is filled with challenges and inspiration. This can be seen in recent publications, where Houni (2021) states that the general atmosphere favors cultural well-being, but much work is needed. At the same time, Anttila et al. (2022, p. 22) view that the national support for cultural well-being is at a critical but positive point. Interviewee 3's observation that "well-being and cultural events are usually discussed in very generalized and even vague terms" supports my views on the matter.

Cultural well-being discourse, the practice of justifying the meaning of arts and culture, is currently one of the most common ways to dialogue in the cultural political conversation. Well-being and its effects are used to vindicate cultural political objectives and programs. Many service providers from the public sector and financial institutions have participated in this type of cultural political programming. (Aholainen et al., 2021.) Historically, long-term courses of action

are the ones that policies and reports still use the most as examples of cultural well-being operations and promotion, and this gives a narrow view of the fields and the possibilities, even if the next sentence is usually about the variety and never-ending options of cultural well-being activities. These include likes of social prescribing, hospital clowns, and singing in hospices (Kingsnorth et al., 2011; Poulos et al., 2019; Young & Pringle, 2018), as well as activities that support a sense of community to improve health and reduce pressure off healthcare services.

According to Moision (2017), it can be seen from the Finnish cultural policy strategy 2020 (Ministry of Education Department for Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy, 2009, pp. 23–24) that the citizenry is seen as a mass that automatically participates and benefits from culture and art. A question is raised; if one has never gotten an experience of participation from culture and art, why would they participate or feel the right to participate? (Moision, 2017.) Multiple quotes show that a specific piece of arts and culture can also be used instrumentally when a product, service, or event is directed to a target audience with a known preference. According to new longitudinal research, even though advancements in cultural policies have happened, some forms of cultural participation over others are subverted through public funding, affecting people groups' participation. Some groups intentionally withdraw or are left out. (Heikkilä & Lindblom, 2022.) Interviewee 1 makes a distinction between arts and culture activities that are publicly funded and organized and those that are "underground or more hobby-like and unofficial" because: "youth might be able to participate in their own groups, and this activity does not show up in any parameters."

Cohort studies have explored the connections between arts engagement and socioeconomic health factors. (Gordon-Nesbitt, 2015). According to Daykin (2021, p. 51), "traditionally, art activities have tended to be taken up by higher income groups, those who have received more education and reside in asset-rich areas." Another recent large survey examined arts and culture activities and attending events in the US. Both demographic and socioeconomic factors were associated with arts engagement but suggested that many people would like to engage with the arts and culture more but are prevented by matters that affect

people in more vulnerable situations. (Bone et al., 2021.) Bourdieu (1979) notes that art consumption distinguishes classes. Peer groups influence an individual's choice to attend arts and culture activities. More recent research shows that art is increasingly becoming an individual's preference choice (Konijn, 1999). These same notions are present in the context of events and daily life in communities. Interviewee 2 argues that "if [people] found cultural events where they felt like they want to go, things would be better," the largest increase in cultural well-being could be achieved.

Suppose every individual could find a cultural event they desire to attend and where they would experience a sense of belonging. In that case, the largest issue is that there isn't a large enough variety of events. The discourse is strongly related to the funding of culture because those resources create the foundation for participation in cultural activities (Jansson, 2014.) economic thinking seems to be significant concerning cultural well-being and healthcare costs. Some calculations have been made on the effects of art on health (see also Houni, 2019), but in the near future, more numerical information will be necessary (Aholainen et al., 2021).

Interviewee 1 explains how "especially from the 1990s onwards, cultural subsidies adopted a 'well-being from culture' instrumental view that culture can increase well-being, or vitality, or tourism" and the larger turn in the financial policy aims of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture began to fund cultural projects in the 90s, "which taught the professionals in the culture field to fit this affair." Some people see this development as a devaluation of art and that quality artistic subject matter is no longer enough to justify culture. Interviewee 1's opinion is that "speaking from an instrumental point of view and of the functions that have aimed to produce benefits, which are important, but in my opinion less important than the other societal effects than what art experiences are. "A notion of focusing on content quality can increase focus on diverse programming and art experience.

The Finnish government allocates funds for arts and culture mainly through the public institution TAIKE, which has many different projects with subsidies that can

be applied depending on the conditions defined by the government strategy. One of the factors that the promotion of cultural well-being still is not rooted in national and regional cultural services is that it is simultaneously viewed as a segment under the social and healthcare field, in which case it should be funded as such. Most Finnish public funding is directed to institutions with a so-called guaranteed reach for large audiences. Therefore, this funding is the most beneficial to those who already participate. (Purhonen et al., 2014, pp. 396, 421; Virolainen, 2015, pp. 38–40, 97).

Many municipalities have succeeded in their important work to advance cultural well-being by using their project funding. However, simultaneously a common experience is that the cultural well-being-specific project funding is so scarce that it is very complicated to come through with them. (Fancourt et al., 2021; Houni et al., 2020, pp. 221–222), But the scale of the operation is still quite modest in many areas, and the organization of the operations is often unclear (Anttila et al., 2022, p. 22). According to (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 42), actors in the cultural sector felt that stakeholders in charge of funding were preconceived about the project of the cultural field and that cultural projects needed extra vindication; the cultural impact or impact of the research was not enough, but business economic and entrepreneurial requirements had to be fulfilled as well. In a 2021 study by Fortier and Coulter, participants from all sectors noted that the healthcare sector is constantly changing in terms of new and competing priorities and funding new initiatives. This affects the foundation to organize collaboration to achieve the sought impact.

The administration's aims lean towards economic, social exclusion, and communality. However, it is the content that is most related to the aims in line with the authentic needs of the individuals. Hyttinen (2022, p. 15) notes that culture cannot define the effects on well-being from the outside, nor can culture omnipotently impact people or their well-being, but everything is born from their wishes and needs.

Agendas that increase cultural well-being have been included in Finnish national and municipal policies in multiple focus areas created to distinguish between

helping and bettering different people groups' lives. It is not a newly-identified issue that the provided services in the intersection of creativity and social and healthcare are not highly prioritized. Likely because of this, the correlation between art interventions and enhanced subjective well-being has been studied extensively. Successful integration of arts and creativity into policy and practice appears inoperable to many political challenges in international and national contexts and then the changing discussions about the methodologies used to evaluate arts and culture in cultural well-being research (Daykin, 2019, pp. 6–20; Mowlah et al., 2014).

The growing economic challenges that have resulted in a lack of human resources make it more evident that different sectors need each other. Some actors also felt funding is less of a problem than properly organizing things. (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, pp. 27, 37.) Work could be done to broker dialogue between arts organizations and the healthcare sector. "Making the evidence base more accessible to non-academics, identifying the gaps in evidence and influencing research policy to fill them, and promulgating research findings to influence health planning and decision-making are all areas that would benefit from agreement across sectors and stronger coordination." (Howarth, 2017.) Co-creating cultural well-being promotion between different actors, for instance, crossing sectoral borders, is very fruitful.

Due to the scarcity of resources, synergy benefits are essential (Houni, 2021, p. 89). Short-term experiments with cultural well-being content in healthcare have been successful, but feedback from the healthcare workers is contradictory (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 27; Pirkanmaa Hospital District & TAIKE, 2017). The current healthcare crisis and the healthcare system's reluctance to value humane working conditions (YLE, 2022) do not give an impression of it being fruitful soil for more multidisciplinary collaboration and integration of creative service approaches.

Researchers who have seen through many government programs concerning cultural well-being call for listening more to the subjective experiences of the individuals. They argue that examining the needs for well-being benefits should



be done through the needs of the individuals, not the needs of the administration. (von Brandenburg, 2012, pp. 258, 260–261.)

The separately funded projects of the institutions are directed towards othered target groups simultaneously as the projects are not assumed to influence the development of their 'normal' audience. (Ilmola-Sheppard et al., 2021.) In practice, the development of the cultural well-being field is often different from short-term projects with specific target groups and themes.

The arts and culture can help save money on health services and social care through prevention (Howarth, 2017), but it is not viewed as an investment. One way to increase the collaboration between social and healthcare fields and the culture field would be to show how culture increases well-being to the extent of creating savings. What might become the problem is which budget would fund this experimental project. (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 27). As for successful cultural well-being operations that include events, interviewee 1 talks about a pilot based on the Finnish 'Percent for Art'-model: "it is not only used to purchase pieces of visual art but 'Percent for Culture' where a portion of the budget of a construction project was channeled to cultural activity and events to strengthen the community and to increase the locals' well-being."

The question of doing art for art's sake, the value of art, the aims of projects using art instrumentally, and whether art is devalued or is more important than well-being promotion is not solved. Interviewee 1's opinion is that "the art experience itself has separate well-being experiences," which can affect change. Just art, not the effect of cultural well-being or event. Interviewee 1 wants to make a distinction between projects and activities that have an outlined instrumental goal to increase the well-being of their participants and "those who legitimize their operations by producing high-quality art." The effects of culture and art can be grouped as either instrumental or intrinsic (McCarthy et al., 2004; Novak-Leonard et al., 2014; Polzella & Forbis, 2014). 'Instrumental' relates to the arts as means to pursue "socially beneficial goals such as economic growth and human development and thus are of value to all people— be them involved in the arts or not." 'Intrinsic comprises' "captivation, pleasure, expanded capacity of empathy,

cognitive growth, creation of social bonds and bridges, and expression of communal meanings." (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2019.)

Challenges are well understood and addressed by the literature. The restrictions, limitations, and problems are positive incentives for the further development of models and research. Recommendations are also given in abundance, and those recommendations are further located to the cultural well-being clauses of the law's mandates. This, to me, seems to be where we are currently at. The more recommendations surface, the more influence is hoped to have to affect putting the strategies into practice and support the variety and longevity of operations and projects.

The intersection of subjective experiences and the valued state of arts and culture is also a matter of professionalism. Some issues can arise from cultural well-being being a multidisciplinary field. Established degree programs are missing or very recent. Scientific studies concerning creativity, health, arts and culture, and well-being are done by researchers of different backgrounds. Often researchers with a natural sciences background do not have a corresponding degree in the humanities. For example, someone could have studied health promotion through the arts but have credentials in neuroscience and music. Unfortunately, when the organizer of the activity is a national or regional institution, the employees in charge of the arts and culture activity job description consists of other main responsibilities (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 27). They are usually a teacher, a nurse, a librarian, a social worker, or a project coordinator, and when a new project or piloted operation begins, its addition to the employee's original responsibilities and new resources are not provided.

When experiences of creativity, arts, and culture are inevitably subjective but also experienced collectively, individuals can become experts by experience (Jumppanen & Suutari, 2013, p. 30). Mixed with a complementary background in the social and health field, this combination has become the preceding requirement for cultural well-being pioneers. Being an expert by experience can also result in science and arts and culture amateurs getting involved in the other sectors of society, for example, entrepreneurs, teachers, and politicians. One

problem is that the arts and culture subsidies are often directed to artists and specific art content, not for larger developmental purposes or to solidify piloted projects. This is, for instance, echoed by the observations of Silvanto & Hellman (2005), noting that a new generation of festival arrangers, where a growing number are amateurs of their respective arts.

Interviewee 2 sees a multitude of expressions of “[arts and culture activities, hobbies, and productions] and for instance, sports tournaments are cultural events” This supports the idea that all events are cultural events and that many arts and culture activities are eventful. Lilja-Viherlampi & Rosenlöf (2019, p. 21) list other aspects of cultural well-being as art hobbies and activities, self-expressions and interaction through arts and culture, and experiencing arts and culture by attending events and situations where art is available. Events are listed here and there, but mainly as showcases of operations in cultural well-being publications, pinnacles of a project, but not as the procedure. Interviewee 2 thinks that events facilitating interaction “is quite self-evident, but it is forgotten by many in the light of how events are currently viewed overall.”

With just little investigation, the strategies behind cultural well-being promotion reveal that most creativity and arts and culture interventions are done in the form of events. The great discrepancy is that eventful activities themselves are not recognized as an instrument in the development processes. For most, events are not mentioned in strategies, but they exist between the lines as one of the main expressions of communal cultural activity. This is very similar to the lack of usage of the term cultural well-being in culture, health-promoting strategies, and the law. To propose a solution using cultural events, interviewee 2 thinks that the promotion of cultural well-being would generate more voluntary participation in events that stem from the individuals’ interest and connection to different arts and cultural expressions: “in practice, most of all, cultural well-being is the organized networks and communities around culture, and from these multiple networks and communities there is one that would suit my mind.”

As means of art production, festivals can serve cultural policy with different emphases throughout their operations. Events facilitate participation for the

citizenry in culture and art, offer opportunities to participate in arts and culture activities, provide employment opportunities for artists, and create preconditions for business in their regions of function due to the network-like nature production models. The cultural, social, and economic impact of art and culture festivals realizes and shows up through the production operations on local, national, and international levels. From the perspective of cultural policy, festivals have become an even more central phenomenon (Ruusuvirta, 2016), of which the public funding mechanisms have been expediently developed and optimized in the 2010s.

Simultaneously, a discussion of the role of art and culture festivals as the invigorator of the host locations and the economy has been taking place. From the point of view of cultural policy, the research in these discussions has been directed more towards the observation of the impact and the questions of what benefits festivals can foster from the point of view of the habitants. The instrumental attitude growing in the discussion of the meanings of culture has been reflected in the research of cultural events. The events funded by the public sector have had more expectations for them to impact the economy both directly and indirectly. Meanwhile, the political and societal pressure to evaluate or calculate the effects of festivals has grown. (Luonila et al., 2019, p. 4, pp. 25, 31.)

Showing a connection to the insight about measuring experience and the theory-backed effects events have on subjective well-being, interviewee 1 recalls: "attending festivals is extremely important for cohesion, communality, and shared experiences, as well as what is being performed there." In relation interviewee 2 emphasizes that "in local events and culture, small phenomena can carry very large meaning in their networks." The groups that create communality and contribute greatly to sensing belonging can be small in size, and culturally very insignificant events and activities might have a strong sense of meaning in the social environments of those segments.

Interviewee 1 explains their opinion about differentiating art projects: "I somehow automatically make a slight separation between those projects and operations that do not have communicated aims to promote the well-being of the participants

but legitimize their functions by producing high-quality art. And then, what happens to the experience or when it is measured is likely very similar to those projects with the well-being promotional aims, but how effects are measured and interpreted is probably very different.”

According to interviewee 3, "specific dimensions of subjective well-being have a great influence on mental health, and mental health problems are very expensive to treat, affecting the GNP because if one has severe mental health issues, one cannot increase the GNP." According to interviewee 1, the agency created by activity and activation is the factor of cultural events that contribute to national health through meaningful interaction and being in contact with people.

Evaluating individuals' subjective well-being is used the most to measure the effects that cultural well-being projects have on subjective well-being and the experiences the individuals had. Interviewee 1 sees that: "because of people's different consumption habits of culture and cultural products, an individual's relationship to agency and participation can range substantially, which makes it hard to make statements about them categorically." The methods of measuring cultural well-being are scattered. Using existing methods can be difficult on a municipal level, where the needed measurement method or practice must be applied to observe the effects of multiple functions. The same goes for an international level as well. Multidisciplinary factors also count into making measurement very varied. (Hyttinen, 2022, p. 30.) According to Daykin (2021, p. 56), "Some fear that the adoption of standard evaluation frameworks that require identification of measurable outcomes in advance may distort their aims and obscure their successes."

A lack of appropriate indicators has sparked criticism, but so have the indicators in use. Antikainen et al. (2018, pp. 17, 42) state that Finland has developed few indicators to measure cultural well-being, and the current measurement methods do not enable observation of well-being effects according to the needs of knowledge. As for voicing problems and limitations about measuring subjective well-being, interviewee 3 lists that "bridging is an area of social well-being that

should be more observed, the most common perspectives are usually making acquaintances, getting to know new people, and creating new networks."

A large number of well-being studies use questionnaires and surveys to assess. Many do not have questions of experience, nor is there a possibility to give a descriptive reply. When asking questions about event experiences, the questions are generally about the artistic content, like questions about a musical performance or questions about a specific painting. There have been few studies about causal links, but they are inconclusive. It remains an open question whether there is no causality or depends on the studies' specific measurement tools for well-being (Węziak-Białowska et al., 2019). In my opinion, the evidence contrasts the widely accepted concepts of culture increasing well-being because these measurement issues and approaches come from different fields and have different results in the cultural well-being context.

Some interviews are about the overall experience, done with small samples, and the approach is more from the direction of social sciences. Context is an emotion or a dimension of well-being. In this case, the questions are usually about atmosphere and interactions. Of course, open-ended qualitative interviews are very hard to conduct for a large sample, which is why most studies use Likert scales about quality of life and what emotions are recognized. The Likert scale is the most used basis for a well-being survey in my literature review, often including questions about how dissatisfied or satisfied the participants view themselves overall. The surveys also rarely include perspectives of arts and culture, even if the research would be arts and culture related. Both scales with claims of satisfaction or depression or the cultural well-being experience of the event experience miss the point of the event experience.

Studies about the effects and impact of events often want to know about the impacts on the economy or image in the eyes of the locals or the audience. When a municipality conducts a study about effects, it is always survey-based. Timonen et al. (2022, p. 7) state that compiling and evaluating culture and cultural effect-related well-being information is complicated. In Houni. (2021, p. 16) goal-

oriented cultural operations are defined as" operations designed with specific aims to promote health and well-being" and that it does not exclude the positive effects of cultural operations in general, but that those operations cannot be examined through economic measures. "A deeper understanding of the development of the field needs to recognize that the way its trajectory is shaped by wider social relations," not just by evidence production. (Daykin, 2021, pp. 56–57)

In addition to the external factors that affect the measurement of the well-being effects of cultural well-being, it has been noted that another challenge is taking an account long-term effects (Lehikoinen & Vanhanen, 2017b, p. 11). Karpusheff (2019, p. 203) argues that "the analytical limitations that evaluating well-being effects have, have generated empirical approaches that are not equipped to demonstrate longer-term changes."

## 5 Discussion and conclusions

In this chapter, I look at the concepts, terminology, and findings of this study in the light of internal consistency, propose a solution to the gaps found in literature and revealed by the interviews, and contemplate a new measurement method for well-being experiences.

### 5.1 Implications of findings

As for a summary of findings, it can be generally said that the studies that measure the benefits of participating in arts and culture activities do not measure the effects of the full extent of participation in events. The focus tends to be on the participant's observations of the art subject or performance as the factor that increases well-being. In addition, more information is needed about the measurement methods to call for more evidence on the effects of well-being experiences. Reports like Hyttinen (2022) and Timonen et al. (2022) have recently started to review this aspect of current cultural well-being operations by investigating how cultural well-being has been measured. Still, experiences and experiences at events are not touched or specified.

My research task' premise is in findings like "both listening to music and attending live events are proven to increase health benefits both physically and mentally" (Dingle et al., 2021) and "live music events offer an opportunity for shared emotions when the audience acts like a like-minded group of people strengthening the personal emotions evoked by the music" (Wood & Kinnunen, 2020). Results like this are well known, but evidence of the well-being effects of arts and culture activities include overlap and contradiction. Researchers have recently criticized especially popularized texts on the impact of the arts. These studies often present general, vague, or even false conclusions and often come with an undercurrent of an aspiring political agenda. (Muurinen, 2016.) While it is believed that "there are indeed benefits to practicing and enjoying cultural activities," '5 amazing benefits of art' type internet and magazine articles are more



likely to create false expectations (Odendaal et al., 2018). Neuromyths are born from "simplifications of scientific results and offer misinformation about, and misinterpretations of, neuroscientific findings" (Muurinen, 2016). "Relational tacit knowledge is only a matter of how particular people relate to each other—either because of their propensities or those they acquire from the local social groups to which they belong" (Collins, 2010). This is why it seems common knowledge that having hobbies is a way to make yourself feel better, have fun, feel mental and physical benefits, and balance one's lifestyle.

Collective knowledge is part of communicating what has previously been shared in a community (Carpendale & Müller, 2014). Most of it exists in the form of people's experiences, the tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1967). Tacit knowledge refers to personal knowledge, and it is embedded in individuals' experiences involving abstract factors like personal belief systems, ideas, and values (Nonaka et al., 2000). Cultural beliefs are learned and shared across people (Weller, 2007). Cultural knowledge combines beliefs and holdings of justified knowledge developed from persons' experiences and equity. Most of the time, cultural knowledge reflects the questions that are the person's own opinions and shared subjects. Tacit knowledge is shared and externalized through dialogue. (Choo, 2000.) In this case, tacit knowledge about the benefits of culture and art activities could mean listening to music apropos to an emotional response, turning to a creative hobby to better one's mood, or going to a museum to acquire inspiration.

The process of Socialization, Externalization, Combination, and Internalization, the SECI model, creates knowledge in the conversion of tacit. In socialization, the process converts the new tacit knowledge into shared experiences. An example would be for a person to notice a busking musician, realize that they forgot about their grievance for a moment, and then tell about the experience to a friend. In externalization, tacit knowledge becomes explicit knowledge that can be documented. This could be, for instance, a researcher conducting brain imaging to see the physical reaction of looking at a painting and then documenting the findings. The third subject is a combination in which knowledge transforms into explicit and systematic knowledge. An example of a combination could be for an early childhood educator studying the benefits of dance movement for two-year-

olds, the benefits of singing with children under five, and then compiling a booklet of exercising for parents to do at home. The last part of the SECI process is internalization. In internalization, the individuals transform explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge, like the knowledge shared inside a workplace and then converted by the employees. Knowledge creation is always happening, and the process can never be stopped. (Nonaka et al., 2000).

The perceived outcomes of increasing cultural well-being are seen through personal experiences subjectively. Due to this nature, other common characterizations of cultural expressions and their impact create assumptions that feel universal and applicable to almost any activity. This results in the well-being benefits of all culture and art activities being common knowledge, which can be problematic. Because the vast amount of different arts and cultures and creative activities and the findings of the benefits have been popularized, the combined outcome is that the claim of experiencing increased well-being through them has become common knowledge, thus creating a false overall impression called a neuromyth (Odendaal et al., 2018).

Although neuromyths are known to affect societal outcomes and have become a part of academic discourse, they can still falsely influence the findings of certain benefits (Huhtinen-Hildén, 2014; Odendaal et al., 2018). An approach with more nuance in understanding how the arts can affect people could serve as the foundation to clarify the actual implications of the findings. (Belfiore & Bennett, 2010; Huhtinen-Hildén, 2014). Research has found that multiple individuals, social and cultural, define the effects of arts and culture activities and material factors, for example, the ability to take in the art. Previous experiences in arts and culture activities and the matters that affect the choice affect art's influence. (Laitinen 2017b).

A prominent topic of study focuses on the social and communal nature of cultural activities (Nummelin, 2011) and Hyyppä (2007) even goes as far as to say that cultural activities themselves are not linked to well-being. However, the social, communal, and cohesion in the background are. This consists of activities, concrete measures, and services that offer arts and culture substances that offer

meaning and opportunities for individuals' and communities' well-being. Supporting the possibilities of agency and participation is central.

Because the communality of events is considered a notable advantage in building cohesion and social capital (Herranen & Karttunen, 2016, pp. 8–9) and even the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture notices that festivals are a communal function that has notability on people's well-being and the construction of identity, I question the standing of cultural events regarding these stances. The importance of events to people is very similar to how cultural expression is important to humans, and they hold weight in how identity, sense of community, and sense of belonging are created. However, this connection is not directly made in the context of cultural well-being promotion. Research that observes participation in culture and art activities and events does. This research evidence emphasizes the importance of culture and art activities' benefits of that sense of community. However, I did not find mentions of the outcome being adding eventful activities.

The current situation regarding cultural well-being policies can be evaluated through regional and municipal welfare reports and a growing number of cultural strategies that include well-being goals or cultural well-being strategies that have been drawn as a result of the mandatory welfare reports and the biannual TEAviisari pursuit. It has been observed by, for instance, Houni (2021, p. 36) that these strategies are still novel and quite one-sided, and the work to provide cultural well-being experience for everyone alike has just started. The complexities of cultural well-being terminology can lead to beliefs of non-proven cultural well-being benefits that direct people's thinking instead of facts (Hyyppä, 2013, p. 15). According to Hyyppä (2013, p. 126), it is a bad thing if the positive effects of culture are taken undisputedly without research. The poorer quality of the studies regarding culture and well-being can lead to a situation where due to a lesser understanding of theory, some aspects can be dismissed from research that would be very important to consider in the full process (Laitinen 2017b, pp. 39, 43).

The public funding for the arts seems to be decreasing because there is no indisputable proof of the effects of art and because achieved advantages are never waived. The scarcer and scarcer resources keep being directed to financially secure art products directed towards traditionally valued art forms and established audiences, with large aims of maximizing profits. At the same time, welfare reports are required, and national and municipal strategies call for the use of arts and culture for well-being. Houni (2021, p. 21) comments that suggestions made to promote cultural well-being should remark those entrusted with the responsibility to carry the plans out. This can only be seen in policies' international and national aims. I would also call for transparency in funding. When responsibility is given, it should be concordant with what operations were actually funded.

The big picture of cultural well-being operations, systematic reviews, and corresponding scientific journals vary between medical evidence and embellished descriptions of the beauty and balance of day-to-day lives, which can be supported and deepened by cultural well-being. For example, Ranta-Meyer et al. (2021, p. 13) express that: "small can be big, and giving attention to the beauty of our daily lives can improve our gratitude for them and our environment. And gratitude, if anything, increases subjective well-being and happiness." This tone is found in the conclusions of articles, research papers, and strategies, where the complexities of cultural well-being effects are positioned in a positive light for their positivity.

This is also the general level in designing cultural well-being operations. It alludes that the experiences from arts, culture, and community have the evidence, but the solutions proposed are either very broad or specific or established procedures. Arts and culture activities for well-being promotion and the objectives for well-being promotion in strategies are most commonly described as 'participatory.' In practice, what the term means and how an experience facilitates the experience of increased well-being depends on the participants themselves. (Huhtinen-Hildén, 2014.)

Interestingly a distinct comparison can be made between two types of cultural well-being events. Events organized in a culture and art context and venue, including cultural activities with well-being benefits, are perceived as cultural events if the term well-being is not separately brought up. Events organized in a social and healthcare context are automatically viewed as cultural well-being events, even when a creative or arts and culture subject is not mentioned. This is how innately, events - people coming together to participate in a subject related to a phenomenon are inherently cultural. The well-being aspect of cultural events is also less likely to be mentioned if a social and healthcare field operator does not organize the activity.

Lilja-Viherlampi (2021, p. 79) describes an example of a cultural well-being continuum where every individual experiences music, is creative, and has the prerequisites to express themselves through art. Some have an inclination for a specific artistic expression, and some less, but all of them can be cultivated. They should all be cultivated. Cultural events are an excellent way to facilitate experiences for expression and introduce environments to find ways for people to express themselves and participate.

Like Biaett (2017) noted, demographic differences break down as participants of all ages, races, economic and social classes, gender, and lifestyle lose themselves, bonding and bridging with others in front of the same thing, that thing being and experience at an event or festival with culture and art content. When cultural well-being research has already justified many methods and models to promote well-being, the nature of events is the host for the experience and what can be utilized to reach the individuals. An event's arts and culture contents can also be modified and adapted according to different interests, needs, and aims. The combination of arts and culture and interaction creates an experience of well-being that is the most research already comes true in the form of cultural events.

## 5.2 Discussion

I find myself reflecting on the politics of the context of my research question quite critically, and I want to challenge action with my proposal. I observe the legislation, beginning from the constitution and currently sitting at The Act on Cultural Activities in Local Government (166/2019). I see construct after construct separating and reframing well-being issues and not investing enough to take root. I also think that, as a term, cultural well-being does not have an established definition in public policies.

In contrast, events are highly regarded as a component of urban development. Diverse events are known and emphasized in marketing strategies to make a city more attractive, enhance its habitants' satisfaction by increasing a sense of community and communication and make a difference in the brand image. These types of strategies and studies recognize that the cities' residents' observed well-being affects the image it has of their city and that there are recognized means to achieve it. When marketing realizes that cultural events increase people's well-being and detail eventful operating is an important tool, but social and healthcare do not. I find this concerning, especially because communality and the intent to increase the sense of community and belonging are dominating themes in the promotional aims of cultural well-being operations.

Also, while different functions of the cultural operation and eventful activities can offer people new means of coping, new outlooks on their lives, and vitalizing experiences within the realm of arts, the challenges that those in vulnerable positions are faced with cannot be solved who are struggling, they cannot alone solve socioeconomic circumstances or inequality (Daykin, 2021, p. 52). As an unfortunate example of the welfare state, the people who spend the most time in arts and culture activities are the privileged with the most power (Heikkilä & Lindblom, 2022).

Tusa (2002) critiqued government policies towards the arts "for failing to recognize their special nature, stating that the arts are probably instruments for social improvement, agents for social change, for social equality, or for

community harmony, but political demands set a list of challenges which are not intrinsic to the arts, are distant from their true nature, and all of which could be antithetical to their basic functions and purposes." From an intrinsic point of view, "arts have been used to communicate, to express feelings and thoughts, to reflect on experiences, and for therapeutic intent as well. Art has been used to deliver messages that are not easily articulated, such as after profound experiences where thoughts may not be expressible in words." (Fraser & al Sayah, 2011.) Because events innately incorporate culture and communality, I propose that they should be recognized as the instrument they are to expand the promotion of cultural well-being.

Despite the government programs and fruitful regional projects, accessibility still has a long way to go. As a cultural event producer, I find the absence of the instrumental use of cultural events in culture strategies and cultural well-being strategies mind-boggling, a blind spot. When a coordinator has a tool innate to the operating model of creating community, gathering people around a specific subject, reaching specific audiences, and enriching common customs, it is extremely interesting that it is not brought up and invested in.

I also want to highlight a critique from Karpusheff (2019, p. 217), where they note that "assertions of the value of cultural activities are largely derived from the views of funders, providers, and researchers. That they present the 'official' narrative that appears in the literature, which represents either the assumptions of providers of cultural activities, who argue that the intrinsic value of participation delivers a 'common good' experience for participants, or the expected instrumental value of funders, which often assumes that taking part can lead to being economically 'productive.'"

What I think needs to be done is to develop what constitutes an event. This would include what is seen as the main substance of the event, the idea, and the angle the production has for the outcome. So much of the culture and art activity is eventful. The perspective to see the existing creative, arts, and culture activity in hospices, elementary schools, libraries, and peer groups for immigrants or the unemployed as the inception of increasing well-being through events is missing.

In these kinds of examples, the well-being effects come from both participation and the influence of the culture and arts content. I notion that piloted forms of operation should look at the eventful activity already present in cultural well-being measures, culture and art activities, and community activities from the same angle that the process development projects have been approaching cultural well-being promotion as a whole.

At the core of event production is the questions of who the event is; how the audiences are reached; what is being offered to them and why, and what would be the best experience to be offered to the participants. These areas innately include well-being aspects: the main environments and networks of the target audience, the different backgrounds of the demographic are the host to different interests, creativity and aspirations, existing communities, different sub-cultures, and traditions, but also matters like challenging circumstances, trauma, illness, and inequality.

A cultural event can offer substance and content to promote well-being from many perspectives. It has the means to facilitate whichever mission and vision a project has or any means to increase well-being the most.

The means of operation should examine where the creativity of the event is, what is the art of the event, how and what aspects of culture are present and find and embrace the overlapping well-being factors. These are the building blocks for creating a cultural well-being strategy or intervention. A one-time or recurring event is flexible enough to function as either or both.

The most important areas of development are not new approaches, there are plenty, and new creative ideas never end, especially in the creative arts and culture field. The opportunity to produce communal cultural content and harness the innate sense of belonging and community needs to be recognized as the most impactful elements of event production. These notions need to extend to what is viewed as the more practical matter of production, like organization, coordination, projects management, communications, and marketing. All of the different areas of the production of a cultural event hold possibilities for creativity and



collaboration. Elements of event production can all be put to service to create impact through the experience.

When considering the launch of a cultural event project, creating new aims for departments, and thus creating more responsibility for employees in the cultural services, healthcare services, and the arts and culture field, the question of cost cannot be avoided. I would contrast creating and innovating something new with expanding what is already there. The cultural well-being events originally organized in the arts and culture context could already be counted in the cultural well-being promotion operations as they are.

From my point of view, as a producer, additional responsibilities could be avoided if the resources would just be redirected. It could be argued that making that investment of directing more resources to the activity that already has eventful aspects would not overload the employees. Suppose the resources provided for an eventful approach to cultural well-being were more paid hours for the coordinator or bringing in more professionals for project management purposes. In that case, promoting cultural well-being could be given a footing. One possible approach is to monetize the well-being benefits of culture and art activities using the well-being valuation approach (Fujiwara & Campbell, 2011) so that the value of the benefits can be compared against the costs of the investments and programs (Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015, p.12), especially if regional governance views events as more of a commercial goal.

According to Timonen et al. (2022, p. 9), generalizing individual events could enable describing the creating well-being effects of culture, which would help reveal, for instance, the well-being effects and the benefits of cultural projects in the municipalities and well-being services counties well-being and health promoting operations. In the future, it will be important to create multidisciplinary tools to value the impact that will focus on designated areas, especially when discussing the social, cultural, and economic effects created by culture and art festivals on a local, national and international level. One recommendation for developing measurement tools would be to observe effects from artistic

premises. A survey could, for instance, look into how and how much festivals base their content on new artistic endeavors. The social impacts of the festival could be observed by setting up questions on participation, agency, and accessibility. Longitudinal examinations would allow information about the operational models and the festival's development. (Luonila et al., 2019, p. 5.)

Haanpää et al. (2020) composed a report on the statistical knowledge base of the field of arts and culture in Finland. They pointed out very appropriate criticism of the operations and functions highlighted. The measurement of experiences is adjacent to the topics of the report but measuring them is not something that is wanted to be increased; measuring impact is. These are great premises for future research.

The field should be especially interested in the well-being benefits of cultural events, what specific things I think should be taken into account when measuring those effects, what would be the most suitable, and what should be changed. I am interested in measuring experience, what experiences and impact experiences have, and what effects experience through cultural events has. Making parameters to measure an experience at a cultural event can require more complexity than an existing scale. However, as a method, it would not be different from measuring subjective well-being. I propose an applied questionnaire with event-specific objectives. Cultural organizations and institutions should also collect data on momentary well-being and experience. "This data could also be linked with specific interventions and activities to provide a more fine-grained level of analysis on the drivers of affective well-being in the cultural sector" (Fujiwara & MacKerron, 2015, p. 12).

Hyttinen (2022, p. 33) considers the immaterial nature of culture in itself an important point of view and a reason to evaluate whether the measurement of cultural well-being is always necessary if the effects can be observed and stated without specific measurement. However, I think the well-being effects of cultural events need to be backed up with heft. It can still be argued if there already is enough evidence of participation and cultural contents of events. To influence strategies, significant findings seem to be necessary.

Haanpää et al. (2020) point out in the findings that defining events and festivals is overall recognized as problematic, and the general eventification of culture blurs both terms (Kainulainen, 2015), but it would be more essential to gain more accurate knowledge that can have a large regional value. The most criticism was directed at the indicators of the statistics run by Finland Festivals, which does not cover all significant festivals, and thus creates a limited picture of the size of the event sector. Some survey replies from pilot regions were concerned that the indicators might negatively affect the impressions the local policy-makers might have on the meaning of the event sector. It was mentioned that the indicators should express what events they concern, and their definitions should be broadened. It was also requested that the differences between the definitions of event and cultural event would be recorded. Statistics for the cultural operations in the third sector were called, but recommendations about what to include in them were nonexistent. (Haanpää et al., 2020, p. 114.) Aholainen et al. (2021, p. 565) argue that measurement that focuses on savings and efficiency instead of the well-being of people should be criticized because this can indicate talk with political aspirations. Measuring experienced well-being has the benefit that due to the subjective measurements and the information gained from them, the possibility that politicians would base decisions on something like hearsay can be avoided (Martela & Ahokas, 2021, p. 4). According to Simpura and Uusitalo (2011, pp. 106–107), it is worth considering whether measuring well-being top-down is even possible without the individual's subjective evaluation or what factors would be chosen if an objective evaluation were conducted.

Financially directed procedures distance the actors who are supported by volunteers and who are financially supported. It also rules out the arts and art education based on accessibility, that does not produce any apparent financial gains, is hierarchical, has its resources determined for its benefit, as well as exploits art's resources for finance, and forces the art field to justify its basic operations from the point of view of financial gain. Art that supports healthcare and healing and is seen as therapeutic is named 'hospital art.' As a result, fine-

arts professionals, higher-level education, and elite audiences consider it lesser than and thus do not include it within their premises. (Ilmola-Sheppard et al., 2021.)

The impact-orientation of operations, systematization, and creating criteria can become an obstacle if there are not a lot of project resources or the requirements are too high (Anttila et al., 2022, p. 22). Laitinen (2017b, p. 42) points out that qualitative research enables the collection of the factors that give the most meaning to the participants of arts and culture activities or experiences and that studies should follow more diverse criteria than just biological and medical models. This opposing view is not uncommon. According to Daykin (2021, p. 56), evidence-based evaluation frameworks can be seen as “medicalized, disempowering for artists and participants, and contrary to their creative ethos” (Skingley et al., 2011; Swan & Atkinson, 2012) by some actors in the arts and culture field. Anttila et al. (2022, p. 20) argue that the sparsity of impact evaluation can become a problem if the well-being services counties of Finland choose to invest based on the principles of what has the most impact. There is no knowledge of cultural well-being models.

According to Houni et al. (2020, p. 191), a good measurement method for cultural well-being would direct operations and evaluate their quality, evaluate the journey towards the impact goal, would cover all aspects of an impact and its stages, give evidence of short-term and long-term changes, produce information from the perspective of different stakeholders, including subjective, objective, qualitative and quantitative methods and that would mesh well with the operators’ practices. Martela and Ahokas (2021, p. 4) list three integral reasons to measure experienced well-being on a national level: experienced well-being reveals information that other methods cannot measure, experienced well-being as a measurement method is proactive and reactive, and the researched data reveals the citizenry’s experiences equally.

### 5.3 Research reliability

Some matters of translation should be addressed in light of research reliability. In Finnish, the word for cultural well-being is 'kulttuurihyvinvointi' and is used throughout TAIKE. They provide services in the matters of the arts and culture field and the social and healthcare field, which they call 'kulttuurihyvinvoinnin asiantuntijapalvelut'. What I have translated to 'cultural well-being,' TAIKE has translated into 'art health and wellbeing' advisory services (TAIKE, 2022, n.d.). The TAIKE publication 'Art! A handbook of Art, Health and Wellbeing' (Houni et al., 2020, p. 17) includes a footnote of the translation of the term being both 'art, health and wellbeing' and 'cultural wellbeing.' Taikusydän Arts and Health Coordination Centre of Finland, which uses the Finnish term as I do, translate it in their material to 'creative wellbeing' (Taikusydän, 2018). A membership organization for creative health across England has chosen to be called The Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance (The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, n.d.). Norma Daykin, professor emerita in Arts in Health at UWE (University of the West of England) in Bristol, uses both 'arts, health and wellbeing' (Daykin, 2019, pp. 19–31) and 'creativity, health and wellbeing' (Daykin, 2022). These are all terms that, in the Finnish translation, are connected to the umbrella term. In this study, it is suitable to use the term cultural well-being to include these variations, to show the similarities between the different operations, and to address the breadth of arts and culture activities as the source of well-being. However, it could be argued that because the same is not done in all of the source material, some examples contribute to the generalization of the effects of art on well-being.

This study focuses on the cultural well-being policies of Finland. However, I have intended to use the remarks and examples of policy changes and findings as generalizable and comparable to other research in the same context and using similar concepts from various international frameworks. Some examples can be interchangeable, and it can be argued that not every comparison is identical. It can also be debated whether articles set in the policy context of other countries can be used as sources.

In my literature review, I address the problem of construct validity because my research concerns experiences with multiple ways of measurement, and the measurable indicators vary. The concepts I focus on vary across different periods and social settings. It can also be argued that if the data fully represents the aims of my research. "Transferability is the ability to transfer research findings from one context to another; the more descriptive, the more there can be fittingness" (Leavy, 2017, p. 154), which I aim to achieve with triangulation. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I believe this research's trustworthiness increases because I also collected data through qualitative interviews in addition to the literature review. The same correlation defined by the concepts describing my research question and task is found in both texts and shows convergent validity. This also increases the quality.

My researcher's bias could be argued as my choice of judgment sampling. Jackson (2021, p. 136) calls the "two main weaknesses of authoritative sampling are the authority and the sampling process; both pertain to the reliability and the bias that accompanies the sampling technique." The risk with judgment sampling is that I could exercise judgment as the researcher on the informants' reliability, knowledge, and skill (Godambe, 1982). There could be a risk that, as a researcher, I would choose a sample to establish my professional and personal opinions on matters of event production and cultural well-being in the cultural field and the policy. To avoid sampling error brought by the experts, I required overlapping that is less represented in my research field and the public conversation about cultural well-being and events. A small number of participants can make up a sufficient judgment sample as long as the information that the research task and question require is attained (Bernard, 2002). I wanted the interviews to have as much generalizability and trustworthiness as possible for a specific topic, and the participants' backgrounds added to this.

It could be argued that my research does not allow generalization when showing the connections between my literature review and interviews or a that the sample

sizes affect trustworthiness and generalizability. "Despite its inherent bias, purposive sampling can provide reliable and robust data. The strength of the method actually lies in its intentional bias" (Palinkas et al., 2015). The judgment sampling method relying on my prior professional knowledge was the most in favor of my research task's and question's context and rationale. A focused "purposeful sampling strategy for qualitative analysis that 'complements' a broader focused probability sample for quantitative analysis may help to achieve a balance between increasing inference quality/trustworthiness (internal validity) and generalizability/transferability (external validity)" (Palinkas et al., 2015). (Bernard, 2002; Poggie, 1972; Tremblay 1957.)

The interviews' themes and codes include both professional and personal opinions. It can be problematic to draw the line between them when professional and academic background and knowledge could be viewed as a validation of that opinion as an argument. A choice had to be made on how much these arguments are considered as a part of the interpretation of the data. In some cases, the interviewees addressed their replies themselves and made a difference between the stance they were replying from. I could also be accused of cherry-picking. Content analysis already involves subjective interpreting, which can affect the quality of the results and conclusions, and this research is about subjective experiences. The operationalization cannot be poor. Inappropriate conceptualizations of agency, participation, cultural event, well-being effect, and experience leave this body of research open to critique.

In a judgement sample, the interpretation is limited to the interviewed segment (Bernard, 2002). Semi-structured interviews can be viewed as having a lower validity than structured interviews (Heneman, 1975), but the benefits of deeper reflections outweigh the other options. "The greater variety of relevant information that can be gathered via open-ended probes during a more unstructured interview can increase the validity of the interview method" (Chauhan, 2022). Other weaknesses of semi-structured interviews are that their flexibility may imply to some that there could be reliability issues. Less structured interviews can ensure that the participants do not leave out important issues regarding the research

topic. However, there is a danger that "respondents may convey irrelevant information to the researcher while the chances of researcher bias and misunderstanding cannot be ruled out." The success of obtaining information also relies on whether I was able to be the highly skilled interviewer that semi-structured interviews require (Hofisi et al., 2014).



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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Tutkittavan informointilomake

#### TIEDOTE TUTKIMUKSESTA

Karolina Lehikoinen: Master's thesis "The cultural well-being of cultural events"

#### Pyyntö osallistua tutkimukseen

Teitä pyydetään mukaan tutkimukseen, jossa tutkitaan kulttuurihyvinvoinnin näkökulmasta hyvinvointikokemuksia kulttuuritapahtumakontekstissa. Olemme arvioineet, että sovellutte tutkimukseen oman tutkijuutenne, sekä tapahtuma-alan asiantuntijuuden perusteella. Tämä tiedote kuvaa tutkimusta ja teidän osuuttanne siinä. Perehdyttyänne tähän tiedotteeseen teille järjestetään mahdollisuus esittää kysymyksiä tutkimuksesta, jonka jälkeen teiltä pyydetään suostumus tutkimukseen osallistumisesta.

#### Vapaaehtoisuus

Tutkimukseen osallistuminen on täysin vapaaehtoista. Voitte myös keskeyttää tutkimuksen koska tahansa syytä ilmoittamatta. Mikäli keskeytätte tutkimuksen tai peruutatte suostumuksen, teistä keskeyttämiseen ja suostumuksen peruuttamiseen mennessä kerättyjä tietoja ja näytteitä voidaan käyttää osana tutkimusaineistoa.

#### Tutkimuksen tarkoitus

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tutkia tapahtumiin osallistumisen hyvinvointia lisääviä kokemuksia, sekä niiden yhteyttä kulttuurihyvinvointiin ja subjektiivisten hyvinvointikokemusten mittaamiseen.

#### Tutkimuksen toteuttajat

Tutkimuksen toteuttaa Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulun CRASH - creativity and arts in the social and health fields tutkinto-ohjelmassa opintojaan suorittava Karolina Lehikoinen ja tutkimus on osa hänen master's thesis loppuyötään. Opinnäytetyön ohjaajana toimii Taideyliopiston Sibelius-akatemian tutkija ja opettaja Sanna Kivijärvi.

#### Tutkimusmenetelmät ja toimenpiteet

Osallistujalta vaaditaan osallistuminen tunnin kestävään etäyhteydellä toteutettavaan haastatteluun. Haastattelu nauhoitetaan vastausten tarkempaa ja laajempaa analyysiä varten. Osallistujan rooli haastateltavana on julkinen ja suoria lainauksia vastauksista saatetaan käyttää osana opinnäytetyön kirjallista osuutta. Osallistuja antaa suostumuksensa litteroitujen haastattelujen arkistointiin opinnäytetyön tekijän henkilökohtaiselle kovalevyllä. Kerättyjä tietoja voidaan käyttää myöhemmin opinnäytetyön tekijän jatkotutkimuksissa.

#### Kustannukset ja niiden korvaaminen

Tutkimukseen osallistuminen ei maksa teille mitään. Osallistumisesta ei myöskään makseta erillistä korvausta.

#### Tutkimustuloksista tiedottaminen

Opinnäytetyö julkaistaan avoimesti Theseus-tietokannassa.

#### Tutkimuksen päätyminen

Myös tutkimuksen toteuttaja voi keskeyttää tutkimuksen opintojen suorittamisen mahdollisista muutoksista johtuen.

#### Lisätiedot

Pyydämme teitä tarvittaessa esittämään tutkimukseen liittyviä kysymyksiä opinnäytetyön tekijälle.

#### Yhteystiedot



## Appendix 2. Tutkittavan suostumus

**Tutkimuksen nimi:**

Karolina Lehikoinen: Master's Thesis "The cultural well-being of cultural events"

**Tutkimuksen toteuttaja:**

Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulu, Karolina Lehikoinen,  
puhelinnumero, karolina.lehikoinen@metropolia.fi

**Ohjaaja:** Sanna Kivijärvi, sanna.kivijarvi@metropolia.fi

Minua \_\_\_\_\_ [tutkittavan nimi] on pyydetty osallistumaan yllämainittuun tutkimukseen, jonka tarkoituksena on kulttuurihyvinvoinnin ja hyvinvoinnin lisääntymisen tutkiminen kulttuuritapahtumakontekstissa.

Olen saanut tiedotteen tutkimuksesta ja ymmärtänyt sen. Tiedotteesta olen saanut riittävän selvityksen tutkimuksesta, sen tarkoituksesta ja toteutuksesta, oikeuksistani sekä tutkimuksen mahdollisesti liittyvistä hyödyistä ja riskeistä. Minulla on ollut mahdollisuus esittää kysymyksiä ja olen saanut riittävän vastauksen kaikkiin tutkimusta koskeviin kysymyksiini.

Olen saanut tiedot tutkimukseen mahdollisesti liittyvästä henkilötietojen keräämisestä, käsittelystä ja luovuttamisesta ja minun on ollut mahdollista tutustua tutkimuksen tietosuojaselosteeseen.

Osallistun tutkimukseen vapaaehtoisesti. Minua ei ole painostettu eikä houkuteltu osallistumaan tutkimukseen.

Minulla on ollut riittävästi aikaa harkita osallistumistani tutkimukseen.

Ymmärrän, että osallistumiseni on vapaaehtoista ja että voin peruuttaa suostumukseni koska tahansa syytä ilmoittamatta. Olen tietoinen siitä, että mikäli keskeytän tutkimuksen tai peruutan suostumukseni, minusta keskeyttämiseen ja suostumuksen peruuttamiseen mennessä kerättyjä tietoja ja näytteitä voidaan käyttää osana tutkimusaineistoa.

Allekirjoituksellani vahvistan osallistumiseni tähän tutkimukseen.

Jos tutkimukseen liittyvien henkilötietojen käsittelyperusteena on suostumus, vahvistan allekirjoituksellani suostumukseni myös henkilötietojeni käsittelyyn. Minulla on oikeus peruuttaa suostumukseni tietosuojaselosteessa kuvatulla tavalla.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_  
Allekirjoitus: \_\_\_\_\_

Nimenselvennys: \_\_\_\_\_

Alkuperäinen allekirjoitettu tutkittavan suostumus sekä kopio tutkimustiedotteesta liitteineen jäävät tutkijan arkistoon. Tutkimustiedote liitteineen ja kopio allekirjoitetusta suostumuksesta annetaan tutkittavalle.

### **Appendix 3. Interview questions, Finnish**

#### **Haastattelukysymykset**

Miten tutkimuksesi ja/tai työkokemuksesi liittyy laajempaan kontekstiin kulttuuritapahtumien vaikutuksista?

Minkälaisena näet hyvinvoinnin osuuden näissä vaikutuksissa?

Mitkä ovat mielestäsi tärkeimmät yhdistävät tekijät subjektiivisen hyvinvoinnin eri ulottuvuuksissa?

Mikä on näkemyksesi osallisuudesta muissa kulttuuritapahtumissa kuin festivaaleilla tai musiikkitapahtumissa?

Miten valitsit hyvinvointia mittaavat tekijät ja kategoriat tutkimuksessasi?/Minkälaisia tekijöitä ja kategorioita valitsisit hyvinvointikokemusten mittaamiseen?/Mitä aiemmasta tutkimuksesta ilmeni, mikä saisi sinut valitsemaan nyt toisin?

Mitä ajattelet kokemusten tutkimisesta ja mittausmetodeista suhteessa tämän hetkiseen kulttuurihyvinvointiin ilmiönä?

Miten ajattelet kulttuuritapahtumiin osallistumisen vaikuttavan kansanterveyteen?

Miten sinä näet kulttuurihyvinvoinnin?