

Manifestations of social capital

A study on the local grass-roots groups and initiatives advocating for the rights
of refugees

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Abstract:

The following paper is a case study on the network of activist and volunteer groups in Helsinki active throughout the event of Refugee Crisis of 2015. Using the triangulation between the theories of Social Capital as defined by Robert D. Putnam and Pierre Bourdieu this research identifies the relationships within the field and their connections to the theoretical framework. The study includes members of four grassroots groups usually holding numerous group affiliations. The fact that the interviewees were referring to each other's experience despite not being aware of the participation in the research of the referred person speaks in favour of representativeness within the sampling.

The result of this research can be presented as a scheme of interrelations between the context and theoretical framework. The study operates with a wide analytical toolkit, encompassing abductive reasoning, qualitative content analysis and thick description/interpretation. The analysis on the interview data brought out several categories derived from the theory but having their own specifics due to the locality of the study. Thematically these categories refer to the modes of embodiments and manifestations of social capital and their effect on the field of civic engagement.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Volunteering, participation in associations and provision of informal altruistic help are attributed to the societies with the high level of social capital. While there are many other indicators reflecting the distribution of this resource, for the purpose of my research I will emphasize specifically such activities as activism and voluntary work within the grass-roots initiatives during the European refugee crisis of 2015. Using the collected narratives of actors involved in this field the aim is to identify categories related to the concept, which would provide an evidence to attributing previously noted forms of civic participation to the manifestation of social capital. As a theoretical tool for the research I refer to the vast field of studies on social capital mainly represented by two different sociological approaches. Understanding the limits behind the application of a singular notion to the phenomena has lead me to the idea of validation of the results with an alternative perspective on the related concept.

The first perspective on social capital used in the following research was defined by Robert D. Putnam and it operates with three major groups of components: 1) moral obligations and norms 2) social values 3) social networks (Putnam 1993, 167). On the other hand, as way to triangulate the findings of the primary inquiry I refer to the notion of habitus and its relation to the forms of capital, more specifically to the social capital as defined by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Despite the fact, that semantically I refer to the singular concept, the differences in interpretations of the phenomena by the chosen scholars reveal differing aspects and applications of the original notion. Therefore, by employing these notions as a conceptual tool for my research the multi-level relationship between the actors, the environment and the social capital can be explored.

2 EUROPEAN REFUGEE CRISIS

The European Refugee Crisis of 2015 in this research is used as a temporal framework for the inquiry on the manifestations of social capital. The prerequisite for the event is found in the escalation of the social crisis in several areas of the Middle East and Africa. The crisis presented itself through an unexpected influx of asylum seekers making their way to Europe through the transit countries such as Turkey or Libya. However, during the indicated period the greatest proportion of asylum seekers came through Turkey (Eastern-Mediterranean route), while the Libyan (Central-Mediterranean) route to the South Europe played greater importance during the following years. It is estimated that approximately 1,005,504 people have made their way to Europe in 2015 with only 3% coming by land with the greatest proportional share of arrivals to Greece (816,752) and Italy (150,317). It is estimated that approximately 3771 people have lost their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea in 2015 (IOM 2015.)

2.1 Crisis and European policies

According to the data of Eurostat the overall number of first-time applications for asylum in Europe in 2015 has doubled in comparison with the previous year (European Commission 2016). The entire situation was later defined in terms of “continent’s worst humanitarian crisis since the second world war” (Jeffery 2015). The crisis has exposed multiple vulnerabilities on different levels of the system. While the politicians and international institutions were discussing over the possible solutions to the crisis the international community of volunteers, small aid organisations and compassionate citizens have organized to assist refugees on their route and destination points. Their engagement was represented in many different forms and consisted of various activities depending on the local context: from spreading food and clothes to accommodation, advocacy and legal help.

The crisis has played a crucial role in reconsideration of certain policies on the European and national levels. This mostly applies to the sphere of politics affected by the new wave of mass migration, such as border control, asylum granting and welfare. The overall trend towards tighter border control was expressed on the level of EU and several of its member countries. Such measures have included increased presence of the border control services along the national borders, construction of borderline fences or implementation of legislative measures to prevent refugees from entering a country. In addition to the changing border policies throughout the European Union the tendency towards stricter asylum granting have supplemented the list of measures. This refers to the extension of the list of safe countries, introduction of temporary protection instead of permanent (implemented in Belgium) and reduction in financial, legal and other aid for asylum seekers (Hangartner & Sarvimäki 2017, 9-13.)

Throughout the first year of the crisis the overall amount of asylum seekers in Finland has exponentially increased by 814% topping the number of 32.000. Despite the fact, that on the pan-European level these numbers did not constitute a great share of refugees, on the national level Finland has experienced the greatest exponential growth in percentage among the other European countries. For example, even though Germany went through the biggest influx of refugees in general (476,510 applications in 2015 versus 202,645 in 2014 according to Eurostat) the dynamical swift did not represent such a significant change (European Commission 2016.) Therefore, while some countries were leading in general indexes or statistical ratios, it presents quite obvious that Finnish migration and welfare systems have faced a situation challenging their capacity and operational mode.

On the general level Finnish policies in the time of crisis have reflected the measures implemented on the pan-European level, with the consideration of the specific features of the migration routes and local legislation. The Government plan elaborated in October 2015 as a response to the crisis has emphasized the importance of the cooperation on the EU and regional level of Nordic countries. Accordingly, the priority within this plan was given to stop the uncontrolled flow of asylum seekers into the country, bring the financial expenses under the control

and integrate those who were given protection. Secondly, the importance of the securing the EU borders, increased cooperation and updated asylum granting, return and integration practices were stated. In addition to the latter the Finnish Government commits to the plan of development and improvement of the of the countries of origin and transit (Prime Minister's Office 2015.)

2.2 Crisis and local activism

As public policy was not capable of providing a quick response to the situation the civic community has taken the initiative. In Helsinki the crisis had an impact on already existing grassroots groups and in addition to this has boosted the process of development of new communities. The agenda of immigration was previously addressed by various groups on the whole spectrum of political affiliations. Among the notable initiatives existing before the crisis to be mentioned are: informal groups such as Vapaa Liikkuvuus Verkosto (Freedom of Movement network), Refugee Hospitality Group (informal network of different grass-roots projects) and Paperittomat (Project for Undocumented immigrants) a collaboration of NGOs, church, volunteer and state actors founded in 2012.

As it was mentioned before the crisis has boosted the expansion of the already existing field of activism. While already existing initiatives have adopted themselves to a rapidly changing situation with increased level of activity, the new ones have also emerged. Previously mentioned Freedom of Movement Network, a group of volunteers advocating for rights of immigrants and providing legal counselling on a regular basis, has increased the regularity of open events for refugees from monthly to weekly basis.

The demand for specific services and groups to be represented in the field of activism has led to the emergence of groups specifically oriented towards a specific agenda. This can be illustrated with an example of the LGBTQ+ group for refugees. As the cases of discrimination of LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in reception centers have been reported, a group of local activists have organized a monthly

support group advertised within the wide network of reception centers, NGOs and other activist groups (Queers without Borders 2016.) Within the third sector the agenda was raised to provide services for women, children and other more concrete groups rather than addressing refugees as a homogenous group. Finally, the networking has led to emergence of temporary projects addressing specific need. Such as, during the winter of 2015 a refusal to host 22 Roma immigrants in Helsinki's emergency social services shelter has led to the opening of the emergency shelter by the Feminist Association Unioni, Free Movement Network and independent activists (Yle 2016).

Hence, as it was mentioned before the crisis has exposed vulnerabilities of the entire system. The inability to find and implement adequate measures in short time as a response to the crisis has left the refugees in the situation where no adequate action could be applied to them to ensure their safety and well-being. This vacuum was eventually filled by the volunteers, grassroots initiatives and networks. It can be argued that at the situation of crisis these self-organized initiatives were substituting the role of state institutions, hence representing the high level of social capital in the society. As a concept the phenomena of communal action against the social threat is familiar and discussed within the academia (D'Alisa & Forno & Maurano 2015). The following research thematically addresses this topic from a specific theoretical angle.

2.3 Asylum process in Finland

In order to be granted a status of the asylum seeker an individual is supposed to file an application in person upon the arrival to Finland. While the application is being processed, asylum seekers are provided with a free place in the reception centers, however alternatively they can live outside of the center at their own expense. During this time asylum seekers are not allowed to leave the country but are entitled to a work permit after a period of 3 or 6 months, depending on a possession of a valid travel document (Finnish Migration Office.)

Throughout the time the applicants are invited to a series of interviews with the representatives of the migration office to clarify the grounds for granting the asylum. Finish immigration service provides the service of the interpreter during the interview. An individual might be granted the status in case if in their home countries they can become victims of prosecution due to their origin, religion, nationality, political views or belonging to a social group. An alternative form of subsidiary protection is granted to those who are not entitled to the asylum but are threatened by a death penalty, execution, torture or serious personal damage caused by an armed conflict (Finnish Migration Office.)

The individual whose applications are rejected have a right to appeal the decision in the Administrative court and further instances. However, in case if this procedure is not implemented a person is subjected to a deportation. Other grounds for deportation are arrival to Finland from another country member of the Dublin agreement or a country defined as safe, war-crimes or crimes against humanity, other serious non-political crimes committed upon arrival and provision of false information on application. However, the individuals willing to return to their country of origins can apply for the voluntary assisted return (Finnish Migration Office.)

3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The concept of social capital is usually referred to as a set of norms of reciprocity, social networks and trust, however the formulations might bring out differing nuances depending on the field of application. These notions are commonly met in the writings on the concept by various scholars representing differing aspects and approaches of the study. The history behind the development of the idea of social capital presents an attempt to encompass social realm to the analysis of the economical prosperity. Despite the longer history it has started to attract growing attention throughout the 90s. Nowadays the social capital has become a multi-disciplinary tool for the analysis of the welfare through the perspective of involvement of the population into the civic activity. It has been recognized and used by major international (OECD and the World Bank) and national (various national statistics offices) actors as a valid indicator (Tilastokeskus 2006, 11).

3.1 Putnam and popularization of the concept

Robert D. Putnam's studies on social capital presented in his books such as "Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in modern Italy" (1993) and "Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community" (2000) are considered to be pivotal in bringing the discussion on the phenomena to a higher institutional level and general popularization of the concept. He defines the concept as "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam 2000, 19). For Putnam the social capital is an explicit communal attribute, which represents the positive features of societal development and ensures the sustention of democratic processes.

Putnam's social capital represents the level of vitality of community. It is seen as stock of collective resources such as trust, networking, norms and obligations. Therefore, the high levels of social capital are usually represented with high indicators of participation in the life of the society, which can be manifested in the

variety of forms: from participation in the elections to the involvement in voluntary activities for the common benefit. Despite the fact, that social capital according to Putnam is spread among the individuals its operationalization lays within the societal or communal level, therefore it cannot be converted to the property of an individual. Social capital in this interpretation is largely defined by the characteristics of locality and collectivity (Siisiäinen 2000, 4).

Within this perspective the social capital is attributed with positive effect on the development of the society. Analyzing the implementation of the Government Reform of 1976-77 in Italy, Putnam notices the difference in the outcomes between Northern and Southern regions. He points out that less hierarchical relationship and increased involvement of population in the social processes has led to a development of a model of civic community affecting economical prosperity of the region. The author addresses this effect with the ethos of trust among the citizens, evolving to establishment of atmosphere of cooperation, reciprocity, equality, tradition of civil involvement and therefore development of social networks (Putnam 1993, 6-7.)

Within the concept researchers identify two modes of its production which go under the names of bridging and bonding. The first concept is connecting people with different background therefore ensuring the diversity and heterogeneity. On the other hand, there lies another model which brings together people with common or similar background (Dudwick & Kuehnast & Jones & Woolcock 2006, 14). Putnam clarifies these terms emphasizing exclusive character of bonding social capital and inclusiveness of bridging. More specifically bonding produces solidarity and reciprocity inside of the close groups, thus bolstering the narrow self-identities. While the bridging social capital is attributed to networks from across wide social spectrum. This form of social capital is hence capable of generating wider range of identities and reciprocity (Putnam 2000, 23-24.) The contrast between these two forms can be exemplified with such examples as social movement(bridging) against an ethnic enclave(bonding). However, it is crucial to mention that these forms are not interchangeable and are attributed with a great positive social effect.

These relationships and modes behind them are seen as a communal asset dynamically changing throughout a time. Tending to accumulate within the environment defined by the its key attributes, social capital can also decrease in the hostile environment. The increase of social capital is characterized by an increase of its indicators, which practically can manifest in variety of forms including exchange of information, help and cooperation on individual and organizational levels and establishment of trustworthy relationships.

Putnam's theory presents social capital as a resource and tool for communal development and describes mainly its positive outcomes. However, the very same set of features applied in a different context may contradict the assumption of positivity of results. As James Coleman states "Social Capital is defined by its function" (Coleman 1988, 98). Coleman's social capital is seen as a set of resources used by the actors to achieve their common goal. Despite the fact, that this analysis was originally meant to emphasize positive aspects of the phenomena it brings the discussion closer to inclusion of the groups whose intentions are contradictory to the sustainable development of society, such as Italian criminal syndicates (Mafia) or militia (Grootaert 1998, 12). In the context of the following research this form of social capital can be attributed to a new wave of grass-roots anti-immigrant groups, such as Soldiers of Odin.

3.2 Habitus and the forms of capital

Prior to the popularization of the concept by Robert D. Putnam French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has developed a symbolic-interactionist perspective on the Capital, becoming one of the key figures in the field. Bourdieusian notion of social capital refers to the larger schemata of the Capital and its forms, hence stating its origins in the history of social conflict. Developing Marx's theory of the Capital he differentiates its three separate forms: economic, cultural and social. In opposition to a dominance of the field of economics within the analysis Bourdieu introduces the perspective on cultural capital as an asset which enables a holder to express a cultural hegemony and is manifested in embodied (incorporated

cultural dispositions), objectified (possession over cultural artifacts) and institutionalized (diplomas and degrees) forms (Bourdieu 1986, 243).

Another crucial notion of the Bourdeusian social theory is the concept of fields, which he defines as a multitude of social and institutional arenas where actors struggle for redistribution of the capital. A field therefore is expressed as a network relationship between the actors. Hence, the control over the stock of capital by an actor defines the degree of dominance over the field (Bourdieu 1993, 30-51).

Unlike Putnam who describes social capital in terms of a common resource attributed to communities, Bourdieu defines it as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu 1993, 51). The importance of mutual recognition brings out the symbolic character of the social capital, as it is mediated by the reciprocity of its perception and acceptance.

Considering the latter, the possession of the social capital within the field according to Bourdieu is seen as a form of hegemony. The presence of social capital in the society according to Bourdieu follows the capitalist logic of distribution. The possession over one is rather attributed to the old boys’ network ensuring sustention of its power.

Bourdeusian social capital has another differentiating feature, which is a mode of the embodiment. As it was noted before for Putnam social capital is a resource which is accumulated by the community. Pierre Bourdieu on the other hand attributes it to both individual and group. Personal social capital within this perspective is a set of interpersonal relationships and group memberships which are used to obtain the recognition within the field. Therefore, it is seen also as personal asset in the competitive environment of the society. Within the Bourdieusian scheme social capital is not autonomous but is mediated by the cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986, 250).

Embodiment of cultural dispositions in Bourdieusian theory goes under a term of habitus. The term refers to inheritance and acquisition of the embodied culture in its declarative and non-declarative forms (Lizardo 2017,91-95; Swidler 1986,276-283). Despite the fact, that habitus has partly inherent origin it is not a constant variable but is subjected to changes through the multiple acts of interactions and lived through experiences. As position of the actor within the field changes accordingly to a possession of the Capital, the manifestations of habitus are subjected to change. However, on the other hand habitus is not a mere reflection of the past positions within the field but also structures and determines future positions (Wacquant 2018, 3-4).

For Bourdieu habitus is an open and dynamic system of dispositions, which implies its non-deterministic character. However, the note of critic to this perspective comes from the side accusing Bourdieu in reductionism and structuralist approach to the concept. The habitus is seen as an objective structure preconditioning free will and determining every action. Despite that, Bourdieu defines latter as a practice not the structure itself, which in its creativity evolves into variety of forms, which nevertheless reflect the objective social structures (Siisiäinen 2000, p. 17-18).

3.3 Grassroots activism and Social Capital

Involvement in the civic activities is largely recognized to be a symptom of possession of the social capital. The OECD has adopted a framework of analytical indicators for measurement of the social capital which consists of following criteria:

1. Social participation

- involvement in organized groups and voluntary work.

2. Social networks and support

- providing unpaid help to others outside the household,

- receiving help from others,

- other interaction with friends and neighbors.

3. Reciprocity and trust

4. Civic participation

–involvement in civic group or political party,

–contacting politician or local government official, signing petitions

The brief look through alternative analytical frameworks (UK, New Zealand, Australia etc.) shows that social participation and voluntarism have a significant role in defining the social capital (Tilastokeskus 2006, 17-18.)

Referencing the statistics on the average time spent on the social capital related activities to a thematic time use survey conducted in 1999-2000 Finish statistics center stated that at this time can be indicated with approximately 57 minutes a day. In the aggregated general statistics this time was divided in three categories of activities: 42 minutes for socializing, 10 minutes for neighborly help and 5 minutes for volunteering. While the first most statistically represented category is found in the everyday life of the individuals, the distribution of time within others is widely spread across the time span (Tilastokeskus 2006, 45). However, considering the development of the means of communication and digital technologies contemporary indicators would present a significantly different picture.

Robert D. Putnam in his analysis of declining social capital in the USA exemplifies social participation with the involvement of the population in voluntary activities. Within his study they mostly consisted of sport clubs and cultural associations. These voluntary associations are seen as a the most important form of horizontal interaction and reciprocity, influencing social interaction and cooperation among the actors (Putnam 1993, 173-174).

Bourdieu does not address the issue directly as his concept operates with different categories than Putnam's. However, within the general theory of society as consisting of fields, voluntary social participation can be seen as a specific field within which actors fight for recognition. Alongside with the field of civic engagement a multitude of other fields is also related, such as academia, art and institutional politics. This logic defines volunteering and activism as modes of acquisition of social capital. Bourdieu's skepticism towards romance of altruism here is

totally oppositional to the one of Putnam. Sociologically predisposition towards altruism and disinterestedness is defined by a specific habitus (Siisiäinen 2000, p. 18).

3.4 Forms of civic engagement

Finnish parliament recognizes civic engagement as a necessary tool of democracy which can be represented in a variety of forms including local residence initiatives; representative associations and NGOs; petitions, boycotts and demonstrations (The Finnish Parliament). Within this research political activism and voluntary work are used to address the broad network of actors. Despite the fact, that at certain extent these terms are interchangeable there lays a demarcation line separating one phenomenon from another.

The voluntary and non-forced participation is a core prerequisite for both concepts. However, while the volunteering is usually seen as a practice of finding solution to a specific problem via accumulation of personal skills by the community members, the activism is tightly linked to the field of politics and practices which go beyond the ordinary procedures such as voting. Both terms are attributed to the model of “active citizenship” and can manifest themselves in the variety of practices and social arenas (Pecnikova 2016, 1237; Clark, Khan & McLaverty 2002, 456-457.)

3.5 Research question

The formulation of the research question in the context of this research is derived from the way the theoretical framework is related to the studied event. The notions of social capital and its attributes applied to the event of the Refugee crisis despite shaping the understanding of the context do not draw a question itself. Moreover, it brings a variety of subtopics which cannot be studied within a single paper. Thus, formulation of the core research concepts means to narrow down

the field to a set of comprehensible but representative topics (Flick 2009, 100-102).

The analytic concepts of this research are derived from the theoretical framework described above. The multidimensionality of the research should be properly represented within the research question, as the theoretical notions address the embodiment of social capital on the communal and individual level. Additionally, the characteristic of the social capital as expressed and manifested in the variety of forms leads towards representation of this category within the research question. Thus, the interest of this research is formulated in the following questions:

- 1) The relation between the attributes of social capital and the activist scene during the Refugee crisis. How does social capital function and present itself in the context?
- 2) How is social capital embodied by the community and individual?

4 METHOD

The following chapter provides with a methodological toolkit for a qualitative measurement of social capital. Additionally, it justifies the use of chosen data production and analysis methods. The subchapters on the research process and ethical considerations are meant to verify the findings and affirm validity of results.

4.1 Ways to measure social capital

The field of the social capital studies is mainly dominated by the quantitative research tradition. The roots of this approach can be found in the attribution of the concept to the large-scale communities and such systems as well-being and economical prosperity. Therefore, the data collection is usually conducted in the amounts not compatible with the tools of a qualitative research.

The employment of the qualitative method by such institutions as the World Bank is justified by a purpose of enhanced understanding of the relationships between the individuals and individuals versus institutions. Incorporation of both methods reduces the epistemological gap of a single method biases and thus serves as triangulation of findings. The ground level application of qualitative and participatory methods explores the nuances of the multilevel relationships within the narrower context and provides with a tool for practical implementations (Dudwick et al. 2006, 4).

Being a rather complex issue, the researchers are recommended to adopt both methods due to the complementarity of their weak sides. The qualitative study of the social capital encompasses larger sampling and number variables. It is widely used to establish the connections among the variety of factors and draw possible scenarios and outcomes. However, within the given context this method would not be representative as such categories as experience, perceptions and identities are not reductive to numerical data.

On the other hand, the qualitative research methods applied to the study of the social capital can be used to explore the concept in the variety of its dimensions (groups, networks, norms, and trust). The study of the social capital of a scene or a specific community should address the issue of relative character of the concept. The manifestations of the social capital to a degree have different formulations and implications, which can be explored through the collection of narrative data.

The use of the qualitative research methods in this specific study is meant to give a voice to the community and the participants. Moreover, the field of the study is rather narrow and close. Therefore, these factors complicate the possibility of the statistical inquiry and justify the chosen approach. The problem of the interpretation of qualitative data in the following research is addressed with the method of theoretical triangulation described in the previous chapter.

4.2 Indicators of social capital and attributes of habitus

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter social capital is defined by a variety of the forms through which it can be studied. In Putnam's theory these forms are referred as "the stocks of social capital" (Putnam 2000, 27). Therefore, a study of the concept is primarily a study of these "stocks". The logical aim of an inquiry here is to find the ways of how they are represented and interconnected within the context. Operating this research within the theory of Robert D. Putnam provides with already developed set of indicators for the study, which as mentioned earlier are networks, trust, norms and obligations.

Habitus manifests itself through the dispositions of behavioural patterns reflecting the structuralized system of lived through experiences. The interest of this research is concentrated around previously indicated social field, which defines the demand to the specific data attributed to habitus. As it was mentioned earlier the disinterestedness and altruism are the dominant values within this field. Therefore, these two characteristics are pivotal within the inquiry on the production and

construction of habitus. As it was elaborated earlier habitus is not defined by the objective and subjective structures but reflects their effect on the individual (Sisänen 2000, 18). Hence the habitus will be studied as a casual effect of these structures.

4.3 Theory triangulation

The concepts of social capital as described by Putnam and Bourdieu represent its different aspects. As it was stated before, Putnam's notion is attributed with a positive effect and belongs to the community, while the second one is seen as an asset benefiting to the holder (individual/group) within the power relationship dynamic. Further in the research I will be referencing to both notions to describe the manifestations of the social capital within the activist groups and by the activists themselves. However, due to the fact, that Bourdeusian social capital is just a stock within the general schemata of the Capital, I will address these manifestations to the habitus as practice reflecting possession of the Capital. Despite the fact, that this approach might be seen as a contradictive, within the data sampling and analysis the emphasize will be put on the social capital rather than economic or cultural.

Considering multidimensionality of the key concept the theory triangulation will help to provide a substantial quality of the research (Flick 2009, 443-445). In order to do so the variety of perspectives is applied in a way which is meant to support and complement the findings. As it is presented above chosen theories despite their thematical relativity operate with different categories of data, thus exploring differing dimensions of the concept.

4.4 Abduction and qualitative content analysis

Despite the highly theoretical atmosphere surrounding the concepts described earlier they are arisen from the practice of the social life. Both are found in every day routine of an individual. As simple as a singular act of conversation with a colleague or a neighbor represents the social capital in one of its forms, the manner of speech and constructing own behavior around the act represents the holders' habitus.

Operating with the presented above theoretical framework in the given context, within the following research abduction is used as a logical model of reasoning. In relation to Pierce's schemata this model relates to the terms of "observed facts and the rule". Therefore, these two categories (theory and context) serve as an epistemological framework to construct a knowledge (Svennevig 1997, 1-2.)

The social capital and related concepts here serve to explore the phenomena, which is not unique and repeats itself in the variety of contexts. Being defined in terms of a "continental crisis" the events of 2015 have affected to certain extent countries around the whole Europe and beyond. The early notes on citizens creating groups to support refugees on their way to the destination countries have been presented throughout the media during the time of crisis. Outside of the event chosen for the temporal context of this research events with presumably related subtext could be observed during the Financial crisis in Greece or in the areas which underwent natural disasters or cataclysms. However, considering the applied epistemological model the findings do not necessarily provide the universal model for the events outside of the defined context.

In order to proceed with the analysis, I apply the method of QCA (qualitative content analysis) to the raw interview data. Hence, the transcribed text is observed through the theoretical model and relevant categories are identified. This method serves the purpose of reducing the data to specific parts which constitute the interest of the research (Flick 2009, 324-326.) The categories identified within the

data are further divided thematically and analyzed against the indicators of social capital and structures of habitus.

4.5 Interviewing and production of verbal data

Interviewing is a commonly acknowledged tool of qualitative research, meant to produce a stock of verbal data. As a data production method, it is generally used to obtain the information which is not subjected to universal interpretations, and therefore is encoded in the experience of the interviewee. The experience of civic engagement used in this study as a representation of social capital resides within the individual phenomenology of the participants. The use of theory in shaping the interview in a non-structured manner reconstructs this individual experience in a specific thematic order (Flick 2009, 154).

Considering the fact, that the research operates within determined theoretical framework I have decided to adopt semi-structured interviews as a tool for production of verbal data. This format of interview enables the researcher to apply a range of techniques with a purpose of elaboration and clarification of the phenomena. Being provided with a greater degree of flexibility the researcher has an opportunity to go beyond the answer to the meaning (May 2010, 134-135.) The structure of the interview reflects the theoretical framework of the following research with a theoretically-driven questions (Flick 2009, 153). Thematically the questions can be divided in two major categories: 1) addressing the group social capital; 2) addressing the habitus as the embodiment of capital. The first category operates with a set of question addressing the group relationships and levels of trust and reciprocity. While the second category emphasizes the relationship with the structures affecting the production of habitus and therefore addresses the interviewee as an individual.

4.6 Sampling and the interview process

My sampling consists of 7 group leaders and participants representing 4 grassroots initiatives active during the refugee crisis in Helsinki and Capital area. Interviewing of the group leaders and other actors carrying a perspective relevant to the study is recognised as an important qualitative method of measuring social capital by the World Bank (Dudwick et al. 2006 ,17). Despite the fact, that the interviewees have indicated mostly one major group affiliation, considering the intersecting character of the field, they played a variety of roles usually being active in several initiatives. Thus, their experience represents a larger network of related groups. On several occasions the participants of the research have referred to each other without knowing that the referred individual was also included in the study. This method of interviewing largely refers to the concept of expert interviews as the participants not only hold a perspective on the phenomena but also represent a group of their affiliation (Flick 2009, 165). Despite having the access to a larger number of possible interviewees, I have limited my sampling after the interview data has reached the saturation point (Flick 2009, 138). Additionally, the increased number of participants could affect the ratio of representation of members of the specific group in the study.

The interviews were conducted with each participant individually upon a preliminary agreement and took place in different places such as NGO offices, university campuses and coffee shops. On average an interview would last for 40-60 minutes. At certain points of my research I was referred to new possible interviewees by my previous contacts, which has played a significant role in getting access to the information. Most of the participants have asked to see the interview guide in advance to familiarise themselves with the research question.

With a permission of every participant the interviews were recorded for further transcription. Due to the fact, that the linguistic structure was outside of the research interest the transcription has only included the detailed entry of the conversation. Thus, the emphasize was rather put on what was expressed rather than how (Flick 2009, 299-301.) The use of this technique has largely helped to

identify the categories related to the study within the raw data. Considering the fact, that I was already well familiar with the data upon the transcription it was easy to identify the thematic patterns relevant to the topic. The large blocks of texts carrying the relevant ideas were linked to the manifestations of Social Capital and further reduced to the statements carrying the core ideas.

4.7 Thick description and thick interpretation

The existence of predetermined theoretical framework at a great extent assists the researcher in case if the study is to be performed within a short period of time, but in the same time possesses a set of hidden complications. The epistemological scheme of this research has been described earlier and was referred to abduction, meaning that the production of knowledge is partly based on the existing theory(rule). An inquiry conducted within the defined theoretical field sustains a risk of turning from the analytical to purely descriptive research practice.

Within the ethnography descriptive analysis bears a significant research value, however it is not compatible with the aims of the present research. Therefore, I will apply the method of "thick description" to the interpretation and production of the data (Geertz 1973). Considering the fact, that the topic of the research encompasses partly the notions of the embodied culture, the semiotic implication of the description hereby is presented with the analysis of the interconnections of the structures of the phenomena (social capital and habitus).

Despite the fact, that the concept has originated in ethnography, nowadays it is largely applied in other fields of social research and not reduced to participatory-observation. Alongside with thick interpretation this method encompasses categories of meaning, development of the action and relation to the context (Pontorotto 2006, 4-7.) Therefore, in opposition to thin(descriptive) analysis it provides with a deeper report on the action essential to the interpretation of culture and related concepts (Geertz 1973, 1).

4.8 Consideration of ethics

The consideration of ethics is vital for the qualitative research as the researchers' position has an impact on the data flow and its interpretation. Despite this aspect, the duty of the researcher is to protect and ensure the well-being of the participants. The principles of non-maleficence, beneficence, autonomy and justice have been applied and followed throughout the process (Flick 2009, 36-37.) Every person who has benefited with their time and effort to this study was informed on the purpose of the research and the research questions. The interviewees were presented with a preliminary interview guide to ensure their comfort throughout the process. It was ensured that the participants are aware of their rights and that the participation can be terminated at any stage.

In addition to this as the field of activism is constantly interconnects with other fields of social life, including employment and politics, the information acquired from the interviewees contains a lot of private content. In this case disclosure of the identities as much as non-considerate presentation of data might have a serious impact on the life of the informant. Therefore, the politics of non-disclosure of the identities and careful demonstration of the data were implicated in this research. In order to ensure this degree of privacy the interviewees were assigned with the numerical code, followed by a brief background information.

As it was mentioned before the interviews were recorded for further transcription, which has ensured my full dedication to the process instead of sharing the time with the simultaneous writing. The participants were asked beforehand whether this measure would create any discomfort for them and were ensured that the recording will not be used for any purposes except the transcription and will be deleted upon the completion. Despite the fact, that no problems have occurred I had a back-up plan to keep notes of the conversation. However, in my opinion the integrity of the research has benefited from a possibility to record all of the interviews.

5 FINDINGS

The body of the results of this research consists of the analysis and interpretation of the interview data through the established theoretical framework and method of thick description. As a result of the interview analysis at this point the sequence of the related notions have been brought out. The thematic analysis of these topics is presented as a conceptual model of interrelation between habitus and social capital and their effect on the phenomena of citizen's mobilization during the European Refugee Crisis of 2015.

5.1 Trust and values as a prerequisite

The interview data identifies the variety of manifestations of social capital among the group members and within the groups. Some of the respondents have claimed to possess a higher trust in official institutions before the event of the crisis, however have shown lower interest and commitment towards them as the institutions did not manage to provide adequate response to the event. In addition to this, multiple cases of the violations of the rights of refugees and inhuman treatment were considered as a factor affecting the decrease of this indicator. On the general level the participants have expressed larger level of trust to other grass-root level groups, small NGO's and parishes.

“And I remember that maybe I was quite naive, but I believed that because we live in Finland, there is a certain way in which things are done here. There is a certain way in which officials work, and there are certain things you can trust. ... and then when it crumbles you feel like “my god was I being an idiot, or has it always been like that?”” – participant #1 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker)

“Police doesn't know how long it takes to rebuild the trust which has been broken. The mistrust has already spread.” – participant #1 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker)

“Sometimes you get so surprised realizing how much the system doesn’t work but they still take tax payers money.”- Participant #4 (Political activist/ researcher)

On the other hand, the interviewees have largely expressed the high level of trust, reciprocity and responsibility within the community of volunteers and activists. This predisposition towards trust have led to emerge of networks of people, who have never met each other, but got united by the common agenda. The collaboration within the field presented itself in the variety of forms: from mutual projects and assistance to flow of information. The cooperation has also been established on the regional, national and international levels to address the common agenda and share the experience. Considering the decreasing confidence in the hierarchical structures and the arisen self-reliance the alternative mode of action was elaborated within the networks. Referring the phenomena to the theoretical framework of the research this tendency represents Putnam’s bridging form of social capital (Putnam 2000, 23).

“Everybody who is in the same field are my people despite how they identify themselves and to which group they belong. Even myself I’m a part of many groups.” – participant #2 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker)

“We had the same values: “Finland says welcome, refugees welcome”, that’s how it all started. It was out duty to help. I’ve got to meet people I’ve never mingled before. Like I never knew any priests for example or people from the church. Our path would never have crossed otherwise. I wanted to help, and this was my set of skills and this what brought people together.” – participant #1 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker).

“The problem often is that the society is structured in a way that all of these big actors are competing for visibility and fame ... And eventually people who might have similar goals might not work together ... Grass-roots groups are so radical that you know that they are not playing games. But when there is a lot of power involved, I do not trust.” – participant #3 (activist/ community organizer).

“Wouldn’t have been able to do anything without receiving lots of favors ... if people wouldn’t help me and I wouldn’t help them.” – participant #3 (activist/ community organizer)

5.2 Networking in the field

The experience of the new groups in this context can be used to illustrate how the social capital of the community has manifested itself in response to the crisis. The civic action at an extent was rather spontaneous and as was mentioned before has brought together people not related to each other. The prerequisite for the establishment of the networks was the common agenda and ability to participate. While the immediate reaction has mobilized thousands of people throughout a time they would usually reduce to the active core and a circle of supporters.

“At first when it has started at the police station, we have organized quite quickly actually. Because it was all people who wanted to help. And we’ve all came together... We were on Facebook, we had a group for translators, a group for people who were responsible of medical things or food, transportation. And then we would have a list of people who would bring the soup or who could be a translator there tomorrow... I don’t know how people got the information. I’ve found on Facebook, but then there was this group created something about helping ... and it was always someone asking other people: “I need transportation” and someone would say that they know someone who has a van, or we need food...” – participant #1 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker)

“When we have just organized our network has included over than 3000 people and the active core of 300-350 volunteers... by now we have approximately 1000 people and 100 active members.” – participant #6 (Activist/ NGO worker/ academic).

Some of the interviewees have claimed to have a networking relationship with other groups and active individuals, despite the fact, that they were not aware of

participation of these actors in the research. Moreover, within the interviews the participants would often refer to some notable figures. For example, one of the local church leaders was mentioned in 4 interviews by the people from the groups not directly related to each other.

There was presented a common idea within the narratives that at a certain degree the activist/volunteer community have filled the functional gaps of the state institutions and large NGO's. Despite the fact, that this tendency largely represents the importance of the network a degree of frustration was expressed throughout the interviews. It can be stated that the involvement to into the activism and volunteer work was partly perceived as a civic obligation.

“Some social workers disapprove our group, but they still refer asylum seekers to us for a legal aid” - participant #5 (political activist/artist)

“Right now, because of the legal aid modification we totally substitute the governmental institutions ... I would really love to live in the country where this level of activism wouldn't be needed” - participant #6 (Activist/ NGO worker/ academic).

“I wish there was a system where the government does it job and we don't need these activists but it's more of a utopic idea” - Participant #4 (Political activist/ researcher)

In addition to the networking between the actors within the field another notable feature referring to the Bourdeusian theory schemata is found within the interview data. The entire concept of civic engagement in the variety of its forms is described and seen as actively interrelating with other social fields. These aspects are highly emphasized by the participants themselves describing the formation of the network or the history of personal engagement and affiliation. These interrelations occur as the fields share some of the thematic categories such as agenda (various perspectives and agendas in the larger activist scene), practice (activism versus art or academia) and an infinite variety of other categories.

“I’ve been active in no borders movement and animal liberation when I was younger and in many human rights associations. I have started when I was approximately 13 so by now I have over than 30 years of experience. I have also been studying political sciences and teaching. I have started building my network in the beginning of 90s. Consider myself being rather an activist, but occasionally do things which can rather be described as volunteer and be seen by the authorities as a volunteer.” – participant #6 (Activist/ NGO worker/academic).

“Nowadays I can’t separate my work from my activism. ... Within the last year my job has turned into my activism.” – participant #1 (Volunteer/activist/NGO worker)

“It has also affected my art as it is tightly connected to my activism.” - participant #5 (political activist/artist)

5.3 Values as habitus

The participants have expressed a significant value of the altruistic behaviour. Despite the fact, that for several participants it had a casual effect on their social status, the original intention was rather caused by the sincere wish to help the refugees and the local community. At a great extent personal experiences are seen as drivers for the involvement into the field. Within the narratives there were identified following categories: 1) immigrant background (of the interviewee or family member/friend) 2) previous activist/volunteer experience 3) feeling of being affected by the crisis. Within the applied theoretical framework these notions reflect the objective structures shaping and producing the habitus. Thematically they are linked to the enhanced solidarity and therefore to the manifestations of the social capital.

“I think that having experience of being a minority and having this identity makes me feel empathetic to foreigners who come here and racialized people, because I know what it’s like to be different.” - participant #2 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker)

“For me crisis have started before 2015. My parents have fled their country 30 years ago. So, for us it has started way before. In 2015 it was only that Turkey has opened the borders.” – participant #5 (political activist/artist)

“I lived in Finland for so long I consider myself a Finn, but I still have an immigrant background and I worked with immigrants for over than 10 years already.” - participant #1 (Activist/volunteer/ NGO worker)

“My parents have been volunteers and myself I have a previous experience volunteering for the Red Cross in the 80s... When the crisis have started I lived in a small village of 500 people where there was opened a reception center for 300 people” – participant #7 (Activist/ Volunteer / NGO worker)

Throughout the interviews a visible distinction between volunteers and activists is unveiled. In terms of habitus and the social structures shaping the embodiment of culture, the acquisition of these identities is largely defined by the holder’s experiences rooted in the dynamic of the position within the social fields. The distinction between two approaches according to the interviewees lies within the idea that the involvement to the voluntary activities during the crises represented a fragment within the larger political discourse. Nevertheless, the importance of the specific set of values emphasizing egalitarianism, justice and solidarity was expressed by both activists and volunteers as a universal prerequisite.

“A lot of people who came had a similar background in the broader activist network in Helsinki, like people from the squatting scene or post-marxist or anarchist ... There is a problem that sometimes activist circles are exclusive as you don’t want some information to go away or you want to have specific ideological perspective. But nowadays we are getting more pragmatic, more open ... We have decided that we have certain principles and global goals and we wanted people to share them... We work with some institutions and we criticize and debate with some. But you know it is politics and groups have different perspectives ... We are always open to talk with everyone, but we are always strict about not compromising our goals and ideas” - Participant #4 (Political activist/ researcher)

“The main motivation for me and other people doing the same thing is that you get to know the person and his or her struggles and it affects you. And the anger that arises makes you feel these things that motivate you. Especially when you feel that you are able to help.” - Participant #4 (Political activist/ researcher)

“I trust good people like other activists and someone who takes responsibility. I need commitment and expertise. And activists have that, because only if you are committed you can spend hours of your free time in the detention centers.” - participant #6 (Activist/ NGO worker/ academic)

6 CONCLUSION

The following chapter summarizes the analytical results of the research in a structured sequence of notions . Additionally, it addresses the aspect of the research related to the concept of community development. Despite the fact, that the study was not oriented on the practice of social work the last subchapter analyses the practical outcomes of professional development in relation to the study program.

6.1 General conclusions

The presented above research draws the attention to several related topics. While being primarily directed on the activist/volunteer community, it additionally addresses larger topics such as sustention of the social processes, social crisis and embodiment of the culture. Despite the fact, that the qualitative analysis tradition has a tendency of being accused of the implied subjectivity of the interpretation, the elaborated method was meant to avoid this epistemological fallacy. The combined results of the parallel inquiries addressing two differing dimensions of the studied phenomena provide with the analytical scheme for this case study. The major categories of this model present themselves in terms of: 1) networks existing prior to the event of the Crisis; 2) values of mutuality and trust. As the inquiries were meant to address both individual and communal manifestations of the social capital, these categories incorporate both levels. It can be claimed that these parallel inquires deserve separate representations by conduction of separate researches. I can never doubt that as following more detailed study is likely to unveil the dimensions of the phenomena not included or revealed by the presented research.

The preliminary field research and the analysis of the interview data show the importance of the already existing grass-roots and independent networks. For sure, the crisis has affected the expansion of the activist field, but it reveals quite clear that at certain extent even the “new generation” of the activists had some

degree of a previous affiliation. From the Putnam's perspective it represents pre-existing stock of social capital. Even within the sampling the networking structure of the field reveals itself. We see that a single participant occupies a variety of positions. As one the interviewee #6 has mentioned: "*Nowadays I can't separate my work from my activism.*" This pre-existing stock of social capital had a direct effect on the growth of the field also in terms of people sharing their knowledge and experience. The experience and the tradition of the civic engagement from the previous years has naturally transferred and applied itself in the new circumstances.

In relation to Bourdeusian schemata this category can be linked to the "objective structures" which shape habitus. As it was elaborated earlier habitus is not a permanent practice but is organized in accordance with lived through experience. Accordingly, group affiliation affects the mode in which cultural dispositions are obtained. At even larger extent it is manifested through the symbolic identities. As one of the respondents have noted the possession of the minority identity makes you more empathetic to people with the similar identity.

As defined by Putnam, values and trust are essential stocks of the social capital. Within the interview data respondents emphasize the importance of pre-existing trust among the people in general and within the activist groups more specifically. This can be exemplified with this rather simple interview quote: "*If you don't trust you can't be open and can't work with people*". In addition to the pre-existing atmosphere of trust, the importance of shared values as a basis for the cooperation is largely emphasized. However, the level of commonality of values varies depending on the background of the actor. Even though this case study does not appeal to the universal statements, the analysis has brought up that a sense of community on the levels of the larger society and the activist group was expressed and manifested because of these relationships.

6.2 Community development

As it was mentioned in the theory chapter the concept of Social Capital is directly linked to the models of sustainable development. The difference in the developmental outcomes between regions with high and low indicators of civic participation, networking and mutuality was illustrated in Putnam's "Making Democracy Work". These manifestations of Social Capital serve as a prerequisite for sustainable development of economy, political and social systems. "In the North people were citizens, in the South they were subjects" – this quote greatly illustrates differences between two models (Putnam 1993, p 121.)

In the context of this research the idea of community development is addressed with the same set of concepts. As it is seen in the chapter 5, within the local context actors identify the same categories as the ones that are attributed to social capital (networking, mutuality, shared values). Moreover, this paper shows how these dispositions have presented themselves in the field. How the trust among people and shared values have brought a great number of previously unrelated people together. Even though the presented work does not develop a universally applicable scheme of dispositions, it shows how the community with a strong civic tradition can respond to a crisis.

6.3 Professional development

Considering all of the preliminary stages of the research such as searching for contacts and entering the field it would be quite difficult to give even an approximate estimation of time spent on this paper. However, this time can be analyzed in terms of my development as a professional in the fields of social work, research and community development. For sure, the implementation of the research requires getting an access to large volumes of theoretical and methodological data. The theories and concepts applied in this work are directly related to the community and the models of development. I fairly believe that that a social practitioner should possess a wide range of theoretical knowledge on the phenomena, as the practice without a reflection and understanding of the mechanisms behind the

process might not always be applied adequately. In addition to the expansion of my theoretical knowledge I see this paper as an exercise in production and analysis of data, which are valuable practical skills in the social field. At some extent I see a great degree of similarities in the interviewing for the purpose of the research and the communication skills required for social work. Lastly, I see this research as great source of acquisition of knowledge. Throughout the months of interviews, correspondence and communication with participants of the research I have learned from their experience. With this paper I am trying to interpret and transmit this knowledge to a broader audience.

6.4 Implications of further research

As mentioned earlier the presented research has applied two theoretical approaches to validate the findings. However, the conduction of separate inquiries might investigate the deeper dimensions behind the concept. In addition to this, the work partly addresses a set of notions, such as construction of identity which can be studied further using the European Refugee Crisis as a temporal framework. The findings of the research can also be used to formulate a hypothesis for a quantitative study on the social capital.

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APPENDIX

Interview guide for group leaders and participants:

- 1) Brief story of the group/initiative (if relevant)
- 2) (If appropriate) a short story of personal involvement to activism prior/during to refugee crisis
- 3) Have you been personally affected by the crisis in any way
- 4) How did you get in touch with people in the field? Means of communication.
- 5) On what common basis do you build the relationship with other community members?
- 6) People you would rather not get involved in a common activity with?
- 7) Do you feel an “obligation” to return the favor if one was made to you?
- 8) Would you say that people around you can rather be trusted?
- 9) Do you trust to bigger institutions? (Police, courts, municipalities, church, NGOs, charities, political parties, parliament) To what extent?
- 10) Do you cooperate with other groups (or other actors within a local area)? (horizontal networking)
- 11) Do you cooperate with other formal institutions? (vertical cooperation)
- 12) International cooperation?
- 13) Do you experience a feeling of belonging to your group? Sense of community among the volunteers and activists?
- 14) Do you think your previous relationships and experiences have had an impact on your decision to get involved?
- 15) What makes you continue to contribute with your involvement to the field?