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TOWARDS A STRONGER SENSE OF COMMUNITY – CASE KLAUKKALA

ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis was to explore the existing positive elements and possible threats regarding the sense of community in Klaukkala, a residential area of Nurmijärvi. The purpose was to explore what should be done to improve the situation regarding the youth of the community and to enhance the overall sense of community. The connection between the concepts of sense of community and social capital was also examined. The research was ordered by the municipal youth work of Nurmijärvi. The research methodology followed the principles of community-based participatory research and mixed methods. The qualitative data was obtained through community meetings, focus group interviews and open-ended replies of online-surveys, and was analysed with theory-based content analysis; the quantitative data was gathered with online-surveys. The results were compared, merged and then analysed and discussed together.

The major findings can be summarized as follows. Possibilities for hobbies and participating in them are regarded as positive aspects and reflecting the sense of community. The majority of the youth are considered to be well-behaved. Views regarding alarming development vary, including e.g. negative atmosphere, attitude of adults, vandalism, crimes and substance abuse of the youth, separation among the community and among the youth, bullying, alienation, lack of support in schools and lack of interest from parents. These aspects diminish the sense of community. The main result is that the sense of community varies within the community. The different experiences of community members are a sign of disruption within the community. The existing sense of community does not benefit the whole community, of which the alarming development of the youth is a symptom. The results suggest that active participation is central in enhancing the sense of community and that community members are willing to make change happen. Participation of the youth is seen central in developing the community and sense of community; however, community members of all ages are needed in enhancing the sense of community. The youth want more caring adults in their life, in school and in spare-time. The authorities are needed to offer platforms for participating and to take care of the public spaces in a more sustainable way, which would also have a positive impact on the sense of community.

The results suggest that the sense of community and social capital consist of similar attributes. However, the conclusion is that sense of community is the feeling of individuals that generates visible action in the community, which eventually forms into social capital, which traditionally is regarded as characteristic of a community.

Keywords: community, neighbourhood, sense of community, social capital, participation, community-based participatory research

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1 INTRODUCTION

Urbanization – people moving from the rural areas to big cities – has been described as one of the major global megatrends of the modern time. It has taken place also in Finland and has had an impact on the local communities, as people leave and arrive. However, in Finland also another phenomenon appeared in the early 2000s. Families with small children started to move outside metropolitan areas, to live in neighbouring towns with more space, nature, cheaper housing and good access to work in the city. The Finnish Prime Minister of the time, Matti Vanhanen, named it Nurmijärvi-phenomenon, after his home town close to the Greater Helsinki area. In Nurmijärvi, the inward migration had a major impact on population. (YLE Uutiset 2017; Maaseudun Uutiset 2018.) The phenomenon of people moving in to smaller towns has eventually caused similar symptoms in Nurmijärvi than those linked with urbanization; social problems, diminishing sense of community, lack of social control, feeling of insecurity, crimes, differences among neighbourhoods. This has been the case especially in the biggest residential area of Nurmijärvi, Klaukkala.

In Klaukkala, especially the alarming development among the youth has raised high concerns. Whereas the amount of crimes committed by the youth has been decreasing in Finland year after year (Näsi 2016), in Nurmijärvi, particularly in Klaukkala, they have been rising in the recent years. In addition to the rising crime rates, overall substance abuse and the negative atmosphere among the youth are considered alarming by different authorities; the youth work, school personnel, social work personnel, police, church youth work and local politicians.

The behavior of the youth was noticed also in the local newspaper, Nurmijärven Uutiset. It wrote in August 2017 (2017 a), how a group of young people are causing trouble in Klaukkala. Within a weekend, 2 teenagers were assaulted. Once the police arrived, a group of young people started throwing sand and rocks towards the police and their car. The detective inspector stated that the same group of 13- to 18- year-olds had been causing trouble for several weeks in Klaukkala, causing fear and disorder. They do not show any respect for the police, either. (Nurmijärven uutiset 2017 a.) According to the police,

the teenagers causing trouble are indeed local youngsters and that young people in Klaukkala have never been as aggressive as they are appearing to be now. Police called out for parents to look after their children, and to be aware of who are they spending time with. (Nurmijärven uutiset 2017 b.)

Working as a special youth worker for the municipality of Nurmijärvi, I follow and participate in the discussion concerning the daily phenomena regarding the local youth. When discussing with my supervisor, head of youth work Merja Winha-Järvinen, we shared the thought that something needed to be done to stop the negative development. The local authorities would like to find out, what should and could be done for the restlessness and violations to diminish. For this, the whole community is needed, not just the youth. The youth are part of the community, and their actions effect the community and vice versa. We decided to utilize my thesis, to get fresh perspective from the community members. Participatory research in a community was seen as new, practical and effective approach on the matter.

Therefore, the main aim of this research is to examine together with the community, what are the existing positive elements and possible threats regarding the sense of community in Klaukkala. The purpose also is to explore what actions are needed from different operators, to improve the situation and enhance sense of community. The results will be reflected also with the principles of social capital, as it is a characteristic of a community, more clearly so than sense of community. The ordered of this research is the municipal youth work of Nurmijärvi and its leader, Merja Winha-Järvinen. The methodological approach taken in this study is community-based participatory research. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the research.

2 COMMUNITY

In this section I take a glance at the concepts of community and neighbourhood. After that I present an overview regarding the target community of this research; the residential area of Klaukkala in the municipality of Nurmijärvi. The definition of community in this research is also clarified.

2.1 Place-based community

Communities take many forms and operate in various means. According to Gilchrist (2009, 21), the traditional definition of community is based on geographical location. Bhattacharyya (2014, 12) concludes, how instead of defining a community merely as a spatial occurrence, it should be understood as a solidarity of people, people sharing an identity and norms. Green and Haines (2016, 4) also mention that community can be a group sharing a common interest. Gilchrist (2009, 21) alongside Dominelli (2007, 3, 7) emphasize that communities today take many forms and operate in various levels and areas, for example there can be communities of identity, interest, purpose or support. Morse (2014, 5) states that communities are where people live, act and exist with each other. Both positive and negative things can and do occur in communities, in different ways in different communities (Morse 2014, 5).

No matter the definition of community, the concept of belonging links them. Feeling of belonging depends on how welcome community members feel they are and do they feel they are in the right place. According to Born (2014, 56), what mostly defines community as a place, is the cohesiveness of the people living there. (Born 2014, 52, 56.) Without people and the ties that they share, a community of place is just a collection of streets and buildings (Phillips & Pittman 2014, 7).

For Chaskin (2013, 95), focusing on community as “space and place” assumes that social connection of some level is organized spatially. Local community is bounded and defined by different actors for different purposes. Both organizational actors and individuals draw the community boundaries, inside and beyond community. (Chaskin 2013, 95.)

Community is also a place of face-to-face contact. Especially in the geographically or territorially based communities, a chance for collective action is always present, and relationships develop and grow. Communities are important, as they are the places of people's daily life and its activities. Those are carried out via interactions of different informal processes, state services, various organizations and companies. (Defilippis, Shragge & Fisher 2010, 16 – 19.)

2.2 Neighbourhood

As Smith (2015, 6) concludes, neighbourhood is most commonly considered as a place where people live, or the area surrounding one's home. That area is differentiated from other neighbourhoods with a boundary of some kind. Similarly, Green and Haines (2016, 4) define neighbourhood as an area of specific geographical location, for example residential areas, limited by major streets or other physical barriers. Moulaert (2010, 7) also holds the view that neighbourhood is a spatialized urban community.

People living in the same area share the same experience and usually share similar characteristics, economic status and living conditions, as people seek out other people like them to live among. Smith (2015, 6 – 7) argues that usually this leads to acting collectively as a community to maintain the status quo. Conversely, Green and Haines (2016, 4) write that there might not be any social interaction or common needs in a neighbourhood. Social problems tend to bundle together (neighbourhood effect), and certain problems can be concentrated in specific places. Neighbourhoods can influence the behavior of the youth through socialization. Adults of the neighbourhood can also shape the behavior and values of the youth in the area. Social problems (i.e. crimes, gangs) can spread in the neighbourhoods through social interaction. Through institutional processes these social outcomes can be shaped in a neighbourhood. According to Green and Haines (2016, 4), contextual effects of the neighbourhood are stronger than individual characteristics. Therefore, policies and programs should aim at changing the context for individual behavior. (Green & Haines 2016, 4.)

In this work community is one of geographical location, meaning community of place and territory; a population center of a town, consisting of neighbourhoods.

2.3 Community of research and cooperation partner

Nurmijärvi is one of the fastest growing municipalities in the Greater Helsinki area, and Finland's largest rural municipality in terms of population. Currently the population of Nurmijärvi is 41 000, and it is expected to grow up to 45 000 over the next decade. Nurmijärvi is situated approximately 40 kilometers north from Helsinki. Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport is 25 minutes' drive away by motorway. (Nurmijärvi in English.)

In Nurmijärvi it is possible to live in an urban area close to services or in the countryside, close to nature. Three-quarters of the population live in the residential areas (Rajamäki, Nurmijärvi center and Klaukkala). There is plenty of open landscape to be found in between the population centers. For several decades Nurmijärvi has grown through inward migration. Many families have chosen to live in Nurmijärvi, since the prices of houses and building plots are lower than in the metropolitan area, and the location is convenient. There is a wide range of services to be found, from early childhood to basic education and further training, also elderly people are offered a high standard of care. Around quarter of the population is under 15 years of age. There are plenty of schools and day-care centers to be found. There are possibilities for upper secondary school studies and vocational studies as well. (The municipality of Nurmijärvi 2013, 2 – 6.)

Klaukkala is the most southern area of Nurmijärvi. It has 17 341 residents and therefore is the biggest and the fastest growing population center. The number of residents from 13 to 19 years old is 1764. The services of Klaukkala are focused in the town center, surrounded with vast residential areas, favored especially by families. In addition to houses and row houses, a good amount of apartment houses has and are being built. The public services (daycare, seven elementary schools, three junior high schools, health-care center with variety of services, dentist, social services etc.) are accompanied by ice hockey-, tennis- and football halls, as well as private upper secondary school. A modern style Evangelical Lutheran church was built in 2004. Community center Monikko was opened

in August of 2017. Klaukkala has the widest range of commercial services found in Nurmijärvi. (The municipality of Nurmijärvi a.)

The municipal youth work of Nurmijärvi supports the growing up of youth, focusing on responsibility, participation and in taking care of oneself and of the environment. The main work is done in the youth centers and in the camp center of Märkiö, with professional employees. Employees of the youth work are also involved in different projects and actions supporting the youth. Youth workers visit local schools, organizes group activities as well as individual counseling for the youth. (The municipality of Nurmijärvi b; personal communication, 8.2.2018.)

The youth work of Nurmijärvi has five youth centers, of which two are situated in Klaukkala. Youth centers are safe, intoxicant-free places for 9 – 17 -year-olds, where bullying is forbidden. There is also chance to participate in developing the work done in the youth center. Youth center is used also by other operators, such as art- and dance schools and non-governmental organizations. (The municipality of Nurmijärvi b.) Klaukkala has its own multiprofessional team, which examines the phenomena regarding children and youth of the area. Participants of the team come from school personnel, social services, school health care, municipal youth work, police and youth work of the Evangelic-Lutheran church. Team has monthly meetings, which youth work organizes. (Merja Winhjärvinen, personal communication, 8.2.2018.)

The Youth Work Act states that there must be a possibility for the youth to participate in developing the local youth work and town policies. The youth must also be heard in matters concerning them. Following this, there is a functioning youth council in Nurmijärvi, coordinated by the youth work. The youth council represents the youth of Nurmijärvi and provides the perspective of youth to the local town council, for example by taking part in the boards and passing on initiatives. It organizes events and collaborates with other youth councils. Anyone interested in taking part is welcome to the youth council. Youth council elects a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and vice-secretary and has meetings approximately once in a month. (The municipality of Nurmijärvi c.)

3 SENSE OF COMMUNITY

In this chapter I present an overview on the concept of sense of community, as this research examines how do the community members perceive the positive and negative aspects of the community. Sense of community reflects the experiences community members have regarding the community and how connected and safe they feel they are in the community, hence it is used as the main concept. Social capital is also examined in comparison to sense of community, as it is a characteristic of a community. However, the level of social capital is not measured in this research as such, so the concept is used as supplementary content.

3.1 Defining sense of community

Sense of community has been defined by Sarason (1974 in Mahmoudi Farani 2016, 363) as “the sense that one was part of a readily available mutually supportive network of relationship”. The other classic definition is the one of McMillan and Chavis, from the year 1986 (9), presented in Figure 1.

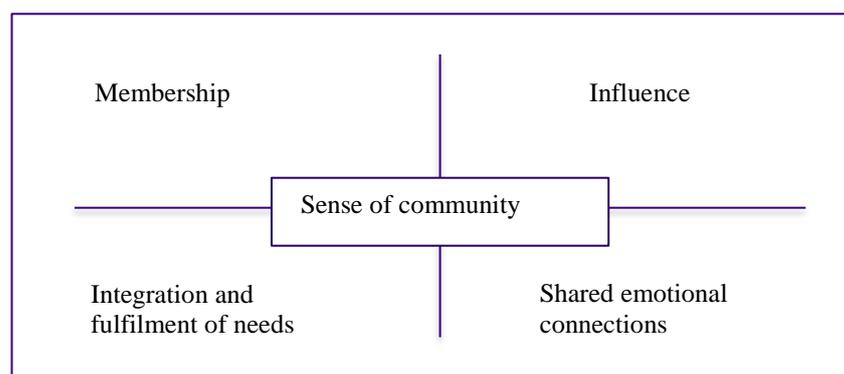


FIGURE 1. Elements of sense of community (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 9)

They argue that sense of community has four elements. Membership (1) means the feeling of belonging to the community, the feeling of acceptance and knowing who is and is not part of the community. Influence (2) as an element means the influence a member has on the group and vice versa, and the feeling of being influential. Integration and fulfilment of needs (3) means that being a member of the community satisfies some needs and

membership is awarded somehow. Lastly, shared emotional connections (4) means the shared history of the members. (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 9).

According to Neal and Neal (2014, 2) these four dimensions of McMillan and Chavis reflect individuals' perceptions on cohesion, belongingness and the bond with a group. The definition is often cited by community psychologists. The feelings of cohesion, belongingness and bonding are often strongest with those, who possess relatively dense personal social networks. Network density forms from having ties to people, who have ties to other people (person A – person B – person C – person A). This creates dense social networks and the feeling of belongingness and being a member of a strong, supportive community. In neighbourhoods, situation like this leads to strong sense of community. (Neal & Neal 2014, 3.)

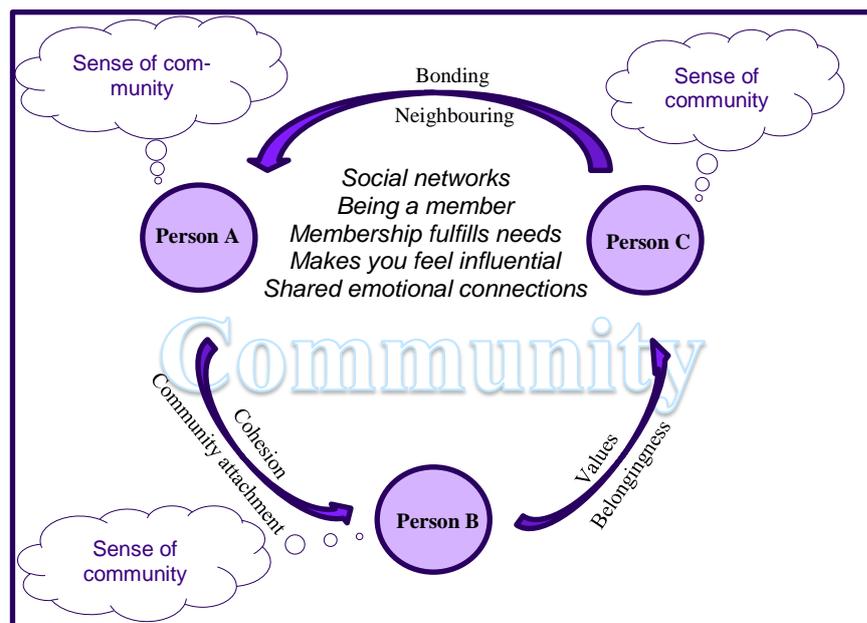


FIGURE 2. The combined dimensions of sense of community. Following the ideas of Sarason (1974), McMillan & Chavis (1986), Nowell & Boyd (2010) and Neal & Neal (2014).

In addition, Evans (2007, 693) finds sense of community relating with the feeling of being influential or powerful. Nowell and Boyd (2010, 836) argue that sense of responsibility is one dimension of sense of community and that sense of community is also value-based. Individual's sense of community may not depend only on benefits or value one gets from being a member of the community. It can also depend on normative sense of responsibility

for the well-being of the community. (Nowell & Boyd 2010, 836 – 837.) Different dimensions of sense of community are presented collectively in Figure 2.

3.2 Sense of community in practice

Sense of community is often used to characterize the relationship between individual and the social structure. Chavis and Wandersman (1990, 56) emphasize, how in bringing about healthy community development, building a sense of community is important. According to McMillan and Chavis (1986, 12, 15), when there is a strong sense of community, members will feel they have more influence on their immediate environment. They also feel more secure with their neighbours, communicate more with them and feel more comfortable taking part in local associations, as Chavis and Wandersman (1990, 73) propose. Sense of community is important also for neighbourhood development, helping neighbours meet shared needs through acting collectively. It helps people in mediating the negative effects of things they have no control over. Overall sense of community holds community development efforts together. (Chavis & Wandersman 1990, 72 – 73.)

In a neighbourhood, sense of community is the feeling of being a member of the local community and these social ties lead to community attachment. In addition to community attachment, sense of community is connected also with the concept of neighbouring; friendly recognition, helpfulness, proactive intervention and embracing and resisting diversity. Having sense of community changes the stranger next door in to a neighbour with potential shared interests in the local community. (Mahmoudi Farani 2016, 365, 368 – 379.) Sense of community drives people closer together, but it can also separate and polarize subgroups of people. Sense of community as a tool should be used for fostering cooperation and understanding, and facilitate open, free and accepting communities. (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 20.)

3.3 Participation and public spaces in sense of community

According to O'Connor (2013, 977), participation, such as neighbourhood associations, political activities and church or school groups, is usually related to sense of community.

However, this may not always be the case, and there is not exact knowledge of what kind of interventions could create sense of community. Similarly, Mannarini and Fedi (2009, 224) note in their study that not all participation leads to high level of sense of community. There are various types of participation with different activities, aims and effort required. For example, expressive and instrumental participation may have different effect on sense of community. Expressive participation aims at expressing common values and belonging, whereas instrumental participation is goal orientated. Political participation includes campaigning, voting, boycotting, whereas in social (or civic) participation people volunteer, organize cultural events, mobilize to defend an area or promote the quality of services. (O'Connor 2013, 977.)

In their study Francis, Giles-Corti, Wood and Knuiman (2012, 406) concluded that the quality of public spaces (such as public open spaces and shops) correlates with the sense of community, even more than actual size and number of public space. In enhancing sense of community, the presence of high quality public spaces in local neighbourhoods were considered important. (Francis et al. 2012, 406, 408.) Likewise, Wood, Shannon, Bulsara, Pikora, McCormack and Giles-Corti (2008, 16), hold the view that built environment influences social relations among residents. In their study it was concluded that built environment has a role in creating socially supportive and safe suburbs. (Wood et al. 2008, 28.)

3.4 Youth, sense of community and participation

Evans (2007, 694) brings forth that youth can perceive community in quite different ways than adults. This should be taken in to consideration when assessing the sense of community regarding the youth. If connected, responsible, supported and influential people make strong communities, such environments should be created for and with young people. This enhances the development of those characteristics. Often young people are expected to behave in respectful, caring and responsible manner, yet they are excluded from the matters of the community. Often those young people, who do have the opportunity to be involved in community, are from privileged families, when those left out could benefit the most from feeling a sense of purpose and belonging. (Evans 2007, 694, 697.)

In Evans' (2007, 699) research findings, youth experienced sense of community especially connected with themes of voice and resonance, power and influence and adult support and challenge. Especially experience of being heard made young people feel like they were an important part of the community. They appreciated the opportunities of contributing their voice, which made them want to contribute even more. The youth saw the value of their voice for the community, especially when adults heard and responded to their concerns. In community context, getting one's voice heard made the youth feel like they matter and belong to the community. By gaining power, young people also become aware of the responsibility involved with it. Adults of the community have an important role in helping youth build skills, and in forming opportunities for using them. When the blend of support and challenge is added, the community opens to the young people in a new way and builds sense of community. (Evans 2007, 699 – 703.)

Aistrich and Absetz (2013, 8) conclude in their study regarding youth participating in Finland that participating does have positive impact on interventions. According to them, high level of participating among the youth can be reached, but it requires variety of opportunities for taking part, in different levels and for different needs. In addition, levels of commitment for participating should be various, as well. (Aistrich & Absetz 2013, 8.) Merikanto (2013, 4) concludes in her participatory action research regarding youth participation, how the youth are not interested in participating using traditional representative ways. Instead, they are interested in loose, unorganized and project-type civic activities, i.e. organizing events. (Merikanto 2013, 4.)

3.5 Sense of community versus social capital

The most common way of defining social capital is the combination of social networks and the norms of reciprocity associated with them, building trust and thus helping in achieving mutual goals. (Putnam 2000, 19; Putnam & Goss 2002, 4.) Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993, 1995a, in Lin 2001, 22; 2000) have studied collective social capital, among others. For Bourdieu (1986, 16), there are three forms of capital; economic, cultural and social capital. Social capital is a disguise for economic capital, consisting of social connections and obligation which can be converted indirectly into monetary profit. Being a member of group produces collectivity-owned capital which is

owned by those with whom a person is connected. This way, social capital is dependent on the size of one's connections and on how much capital those connections possess. So, it is a collective asset and a production of a certain group and its members, with obligations of exchange (members can use the capital as credits), clear boundaries and mutual recognition. (Bourdieu 1986, 16 – 24.)

In Coleman's (1988, 98) view, social capital has two elements, it is an aspect of a social structure (1), and within that structure it facilitates certain actions (2). Social capital is gained from relationships, through events of actors and exercising control and exchange and transfers of resources. The functions of individual actors are facilitated in social relationship, thus being the basis of social capital. (Coleman 1988, 98 – 103.) For Putnam (1993, 1995a in Lin 2001, 23), social associations and the degree of participation reflects the social capital of a society. Social networks and participation promote and enhance collective norms and trust, which are key elements for collective well-being (Lin 2001, 22 – 23). The views based on Putnam's ideas act as the main basis for the analysis concerning social capital in this research.

According to Lin (2001, 24), all these views for social capital share the idea of interacting members making the maintenance and reproduction of social capital possible. Individuals have access to social capital resources once they have created social ties (DeFilippis et al. 2010, 106). Green and Haines (2015, 166) alongside Lin (2001, 24) bring forth, how creating those ties, i.e. social relationships and networks, require investments in energy and time. Investing takes place with the anticipation of individuals being able to utilize those resources when necessary. Therefore, the resources are referred as a form of capital. The more one invests in those resources, the more benefits one likely receives in the future, and the resources can be mobilized for community benefits as well. (Green & Haines 2015, 166 – 167; Lin 2001, 24, 26.)

According to Neal and Neal (2014, 2) sense of community has connection to social capital. Sense of community reflects individuals' perceptions regarding a group, and bases on personal social networks. Similar mechanism of network density, having social ties to people, forms also social capital (Neal & Neal 2014, 3). In the same vein, Perkins and Long (2002, 291), note that while social capital is considered as a characteristic of communities and societies, sense of community is often seen more as a construct of

individual-level. They see sense of community as one dimension of social capital (Perkins & Long 2002, 293).

Social capital can be thick as in closely bound, or thin, meaning weaker bond. Both can be beneficial in their own way. Inward-looking social capital focuses for example on memberships (i.e. clubs, unions), while outward-looking social capital is more concerned with public goods (i.e. civil rights movements, charitable groups). This is closely related by bridging and bonding social capital. Bridging social capital brings people, who are different to one another, together. Bonding social capital brings people with similarities together. Bridging networks are likely to be positive, while bonding networks have the risk of having negative impacts. Both, bonding and bridging should happen simultaneously. (Granovetter 1973 in Gilchrist 2009, 11; Granovetter 1975, Burt 1992, Warren 2001 in Green & Haines 2016, 171; Putnam & Goss 2002, 10 – 12.) Bonding social capital is crucial for the creation of social ties. However, in order for the neighbourhood to successfully address social problems of their spatial environment, the residents must learn to act collectively with others outside their own neighbourhood. This means forming bridging social capital within the place-based community. (Payne 2006, 10.)

DeFilippis, Shragge and Fisher (2010, 106) point out, how in addition to individual level, networks can also occur between individuals and organizations in local communities. Individuals or groups can utilize the resources of social capital, to conduct actions benefiting individuals, groups and/or the wider community. (DeFilippis et al. 2010, 106). Putnam (2000, 296, 287) argues that social capital can affect individual's life and well-being through its impacts on education, health and happiness and children's welfare. However, social capital affects the health of the community as well. Social interaction creates generalized reciprocity and builds trust, making social capital at the same time a private good and a public good. Social networks create individual and collective value, but social capital is not always and everywhere a good thing. Some forms of social capital can be destructive, for example in forms of groups not respecting the norms of democracy. (Putnam & Goss 2002, 4 – 8, 10.)

Social capital theorists see the lack of connection between people declining community dramatically and undermining civil society. Reviving social connections and communities will produce the capacity to solve both social and economic problems at the local

level. (Putnam 2000; DeFilippis et al. 2010, 105.) Usually measuring social capital focuses on three aspects; levels of trust between social institutions and people, participation in civil and social activities, and networks of personal contacts. (Putnam 2000, 21, 26 – 27; Gilchrist 2009, 9 – 10.)

Putnam (2000, 404) states that rising civic engagement and bridging social capital are the main goals in reviving social capital in modern communities. Participating in public life of the community should even be taught in schools. His point of view is that if the youth learn the value of for example volunteering, they will continue volunteering as adults. Also, children participating in extracurricular activities is proven to increase both civic and social involvement later in life as well. But the social participation of the youth should not be limited to schooling; good and appealing ways of increasing civic engagement should be found overall. (Putnam 2000, 404 – 406.)

4 METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS DESCRIPTION

In this chapter I introduce the research questions and the method used in conducting the research. I describe the process, which was multifaceted in many ways, as it was done together with the community. Data collection was done in several steps, which are presented, alongside the analysis of the data. Ethical views regarding the research process are examined, as well.

4.1 Research question and method used

As the problems among and with the youth seemed to be increasing in Klaukkala, municipal youth work of Nurmijärvi wanted to find out from the members of the community, what could be done to stop the negative development. Naturally the voice of the youth was important to be heard, but not only the youth as the community is formed by people of different ages and the situation affects them, as well. The purpose of this research is to find out, how do the community members perceive the community and find ways of improving the situation of the community and diminish the current restlessness of the youth.

Research questions for this thesis are:

What are the existing positive elements and possible threats regarding sense of community in Klaukkala?

What could be done to enhance the sense of community in Klaukkala?

In conducting the research, I used community-based participatory research (CBPR), in which the community is a part of every step of the research (Hacker 2013, 2; Coughlin, Smith & Fernandez 2017, 15). The aim was to find reasons behind current problems and needs of the community and see, what processes may be needed to improve the situation in a sustainable way. In this research community is defined with geographical location. Residents of different ages, associations, institutions and public officers of that specific area were invited to participate in the research. Community meetings were assembled to bring the community's input on the contents and process of the research.

As CBPR was used as the methodology for the research to emphasize the role of the community (Coughlin et al. 2017, 23), I used mixed methods as the data collection method (presented in Figure 3) to allow a deeper insight on the community. In mixed methods, both qualitative and quantitative data is collected and integrated to get a more comprehensive understanding of the situation (Creswell 2015, 15). This can also be referred to as triangulation, usage of multiple approaches to enhance the credibility of the research. In merging the data, the qualitative and quantitative results are brought together. Using convergent designs, more holistic view of the research problem is developed, as combination of the data adds more complete understanding (Creswell 2015, 3, 75, 83; Ivankova 2015, 5, 128 – 130; Leavy 2017, 175).

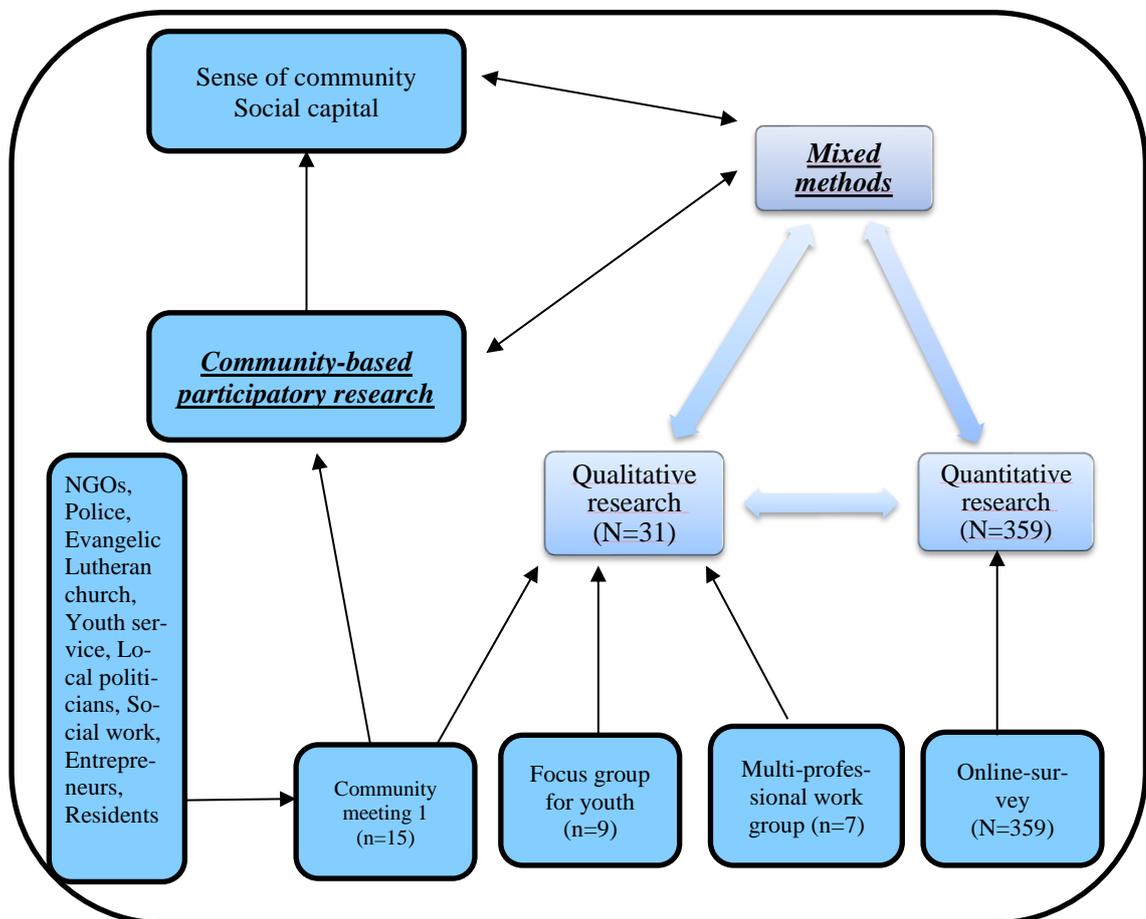


FIGURE 3. The methodology, method and concept words of the thesis

In this research, the methods integrated in the data collection phase, as the contents of the quantitative research based on the qualitative research, and in data analysis, as the results are both compared and analyzed together (merged). In integrating phase, the datasets were

compared in a complementary way to produce more comprehensive understanding on the situation (Leavy 2017, 182).

4.2 Data collection and community participation in practice

The target community of this work was Klaukkala, a residential area of Nurmijärvi. Organizations I collaborated with are the municipal youth work of Nurmijärvi and the junior high schools of Klaukkala. Target group of the research were the residents of Klaukkala.

Conducting the research followed the principals of CBPR, to ensure community participation and to get relevant outlook on the community. Community meetings formed the base for community participation and cooperation with the head of youth work continued through the process. The community was involved in different steps of the process, starting from the first community meeting on the 2nd of May 2018. The meeting was open for all members of Klaukkala, and it was promoted with emails and in social media. In addition to myself and the head of youth work, 14 people took part in the meeting, consisting of people in working-life, retired community members and representatives of local associations. The meeting took place in the main hall of the community center Monikko. In the first community meeting outlines for the research were agreed on. Contents of the research are presented in the following chapters.

The second community meeting was held on the 4th of September 2018 in Monikko. Community members were again invited via emails and social media. Nine people participated. Analyzing the results was initiated in the meeting, as well as the ideas for disseminating the results. Unfortunately, no youth took part in neither of the community meetings, although for example members of the youth council were invited.

Data collection for the qualitative research started in the first community meeting. Participants cooperated well and took part in the assessment of the community. Thematic questions regarding the positive and alarming aspects of the community, formed by Eriksson, Arnkil and Rautava (2006, 15), formed the basis for the discussion. With them, the situation concerning the youth of the community was contemplated on, alongside the actions needed to change the situation for the better. The questions are found in Appendix 1. The

discussions in the community meeting were carried out in four groups, handling one question at a time. Three participants in addition to myself wrote down in each group what was discussed, on flip chart-papers. After each question the ideas and matters that rose in small groups were presented and discussed with the whole group. Written notes of each group were left to me, I made a word-document of them and forwarded them to the participants on the next day.

I also interviewed the multi-professional work group of Klaukkala on the 11th of June 2018, where seven persons were present. The group interview took place in a meeting room in the Evangelic-Lutheran church of Klaukkala, where the group has its monthly meetings. I wrote down notes based on the discussions and confirmed from the participants at the end of the meeting that my notes were accurate.

The focus group interview for the youth was carried out on the 22nd of August 2018, taking place at the youth center of Monikko. It was marketed via schools and the members of the youth council. One member of the youth council and a colleague of mine from the youth center assisted me in conducting the interview, writing down memos of group discussions. There were nine participants in the interview, aged 15 to 18, including the member of the youth council. The interview based on the same thematic questions mentioned earlier. Participants were divided into two separate groups. For each question, they had ten minutes of time to discuss and write down their thoughts, and after that approximately five minutes time for presenting them.

I recorded the spoken presentations and collected the written notes. I did ask for a permission for recording the presentations. Some of the spoken presentations took longer than the anticipated five minutes, as can be seen from Table 1. The written memos were left to me. Participants on all events were thanked for their time and effort and for taking part on the research.

TABLE 1. Details of qualitative data transcript

Qualitative data gathering style	Attendance	Recordings/Memos	Transcription (Times New Roman 12, spacing 1,5), pages	Statements used from the data in the analysis
Community meeting	15	No recordings, 5 flip chart papers	1,5	34
Multi-professional work group	7	No recordings, 2 flip chart papers	0,5	17
Online-surveys	-	-	9	77
Focus group for youth	9	Positive aspects: 2 min 55 sec Alarming development: 20 min 27 sec Actions needed: 16 min 39 sec Sense of community: 6 min 42 sec. 7 flip chart papers	24	78 (statements or clips of dialogue)

The community meeting wanted to find out, which ideas would be the most preferable among the residents of Klaukkala. Therefore, I conducted two online-surveys, one for 13- to 19-year-old residents and one for over 20-year-old residents of the community. The contents of the surveys based on the ideas gathered in the first community meeting. The quantitative research was not conventional, measuring variables or numeric values, but merely measuring the preferability of options relating to the situation of youth in Klaukkala.

I consulted the youth council of Nurmijärvi regarding the contents of the online-survey for youth and attended their meeting on June 21st, 2018 in community center Monikko. The contents of the survey were also tested and commented by the head of youth work and once more by the youth council of Nurmijärvi, before publishing.

The online-surveys were standardized, as the questions were the same for all respondents. In forming the online-surveys I utilized the Google Forms -application. Emails were collected to draw lots for movie-tickets among the respondents. Leaving an email was not

mandatory for filling the survey. Movie-tickets were purchased by the municipal youth work of Nurmijärvi. The target group of the survey included all residents of Klaukkala (17 341, out of which the number of 13- to 19-year-olds is 1764). There was no specific picking of respondents for the surveys, as anyone could fill them. Surveys were marketed openly in the social media. The surveys were also marketed via junior high schools of Klaukkala, and for that I applied for a research permit from the education services of Nurmijärvi. Both surveys were also marketed with a direct message from schools to homes.

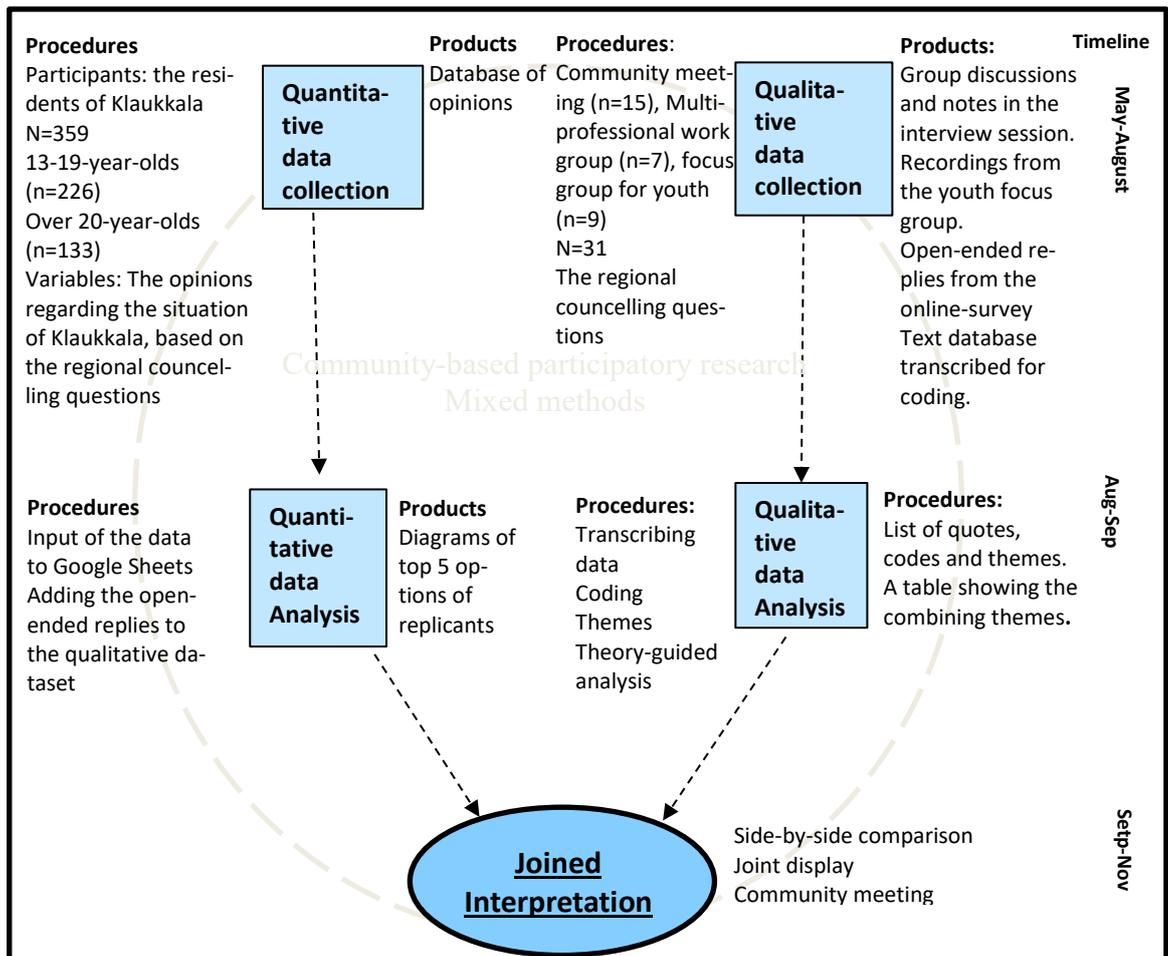


FIGURE 5. A convergent mixed methods design and timetable of the thesis (following Creswell 2015, 59)

After some feedback concerning the online-survey questions I together with the head of youth work decided to add also “I cannot say” as an option for question concerning sense of community. Also, mandatory 5 replies were changed to maximum 5. For the online-survey of the youth the questions were modified according to the feedback from the youth council. Contents of the survey for youth are found in Appendix 2. The surveys had

questions with multiple choices, there also was a chance for open reply. Respondents could not skip a question but could answer with ‘other, what’.

As can be seen in Table 1, responses to open-ended questions of the online-surveys were added to the qualitative data. I deleted similarities, such as similar responses of 2 words and “I cannot say” -responses. The entirety of the research process and timetable is presented in Figure 5.

In the second community meeting it was decided that in my thesis I would present the 5 most preferred options of each question of the online-survey. Those results I would then compare with the qualitative results. Eventually I together with the head of youth work decided to analyze the 5 most preferred options of first 4 questions of the online-survey (Appendix 2). Qualitative data I utilized entirely for this thesis. However, the entirety of the research data can be utilized later in the community, or for developing the work of authorities, including youth work.

4.3 Data analysis

In analyzing the qualitative data, I used the principals of theory-guided content analysis, generating categories and combining themes for those categories. The beginning of the coding was done based on the research material but the final combining themes for the categories were based on the main concepts. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 123 – 127, 133). Before the coding I made a transcript of the recordings from the group interview with the youth (24 pages of written text). Memos and open-ended replies from the surveys were added to the transcript (11 pages). As was shown in Table 1 earlier, I used 206 statements from the collected data for the analysis. I modified them into plain expressions, to help the coding. After this I combined plain expressions in to primary categories, based on the content and meaning of the expression. I use the term neighbourhood instead of the names of the areas of Klaukkala named in the results.

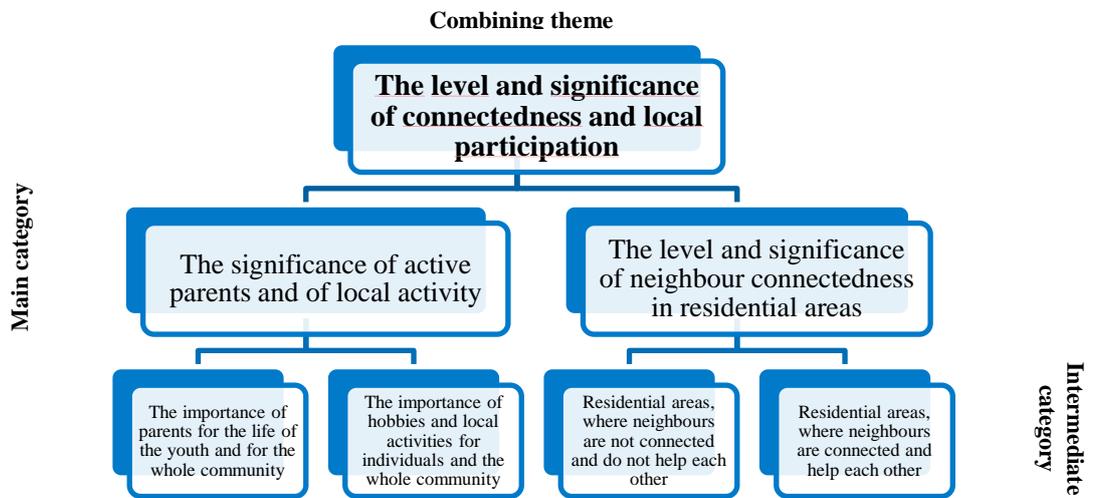


FIGURE 6. Example of forming combining themes

Convergent primary categories were combined into upper categories, followed by main categories, intermediate categories and finally combining themes, as can be seen from Figure 6 and Appendix 3.

In the quantitative research total sample of the online-survey was 359, which is approximately 2 % of the population of Klaukkala. Survey for the 13-19 years old got 226 replies, which is approximately 13 % out of all residents of Klaukkala that age. The survey for residents over 20 years got 133 replies. In processing the quantitative results, I utilized the Google Sheets -application. The results were edited into percentages, depending on the votes for each option. From the results I made diagrams focusing only on the top five results of each question, excluding the other replies. This I made to help with holding to the plan and prevent the analysis from spreading bigger. Diagrams of the first four questions and the percentages of the top five results are shown in Appendix 4.

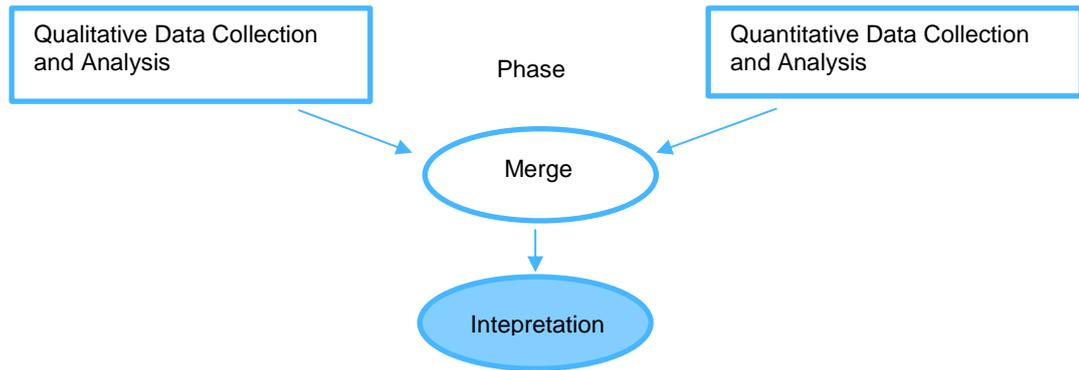


FIGURE 6. Convergent designs for mixed methods research (from Creswell 2015, 37)

Both datasets were then brought together and presented and discussed together in convergent manner, following the guidelines of Creswell (2015, 36, 82 – 83), shown in Figure 6. Results are also presented and discussed together. Findings are presented in chapter 5 and discussed in chapter 6, alongside reflecting the aspects of social capital.

4.4 Ethical views on the research

In community-based participatory research it is required that the community is a part of every step of the process (Hacker 2013, 19). This principle actualized in this research, except for analysis, which was launched in the second community meeting but finalized by me. This was due tight schedule. It is a limitation for the research, as it would be important for the community to be included more also in the analysis phase. However, analysis of the results will continue in the community after the completing of this thesis. The dissemination of the results and the realization of the plans based on the research will also take place after finalizing this thesis. They will be done together with the representatives of the community (Hacker 2013, 101 – 102). Community meeting did not give much input on the research question, but the meeting did play a big role in deciding the contents of the research and on how the research was carried out.

Another limitation of this research was that despite the effort, no youth participated in the community meetings. However, approximately 13 % of the targeted youth of the community replied to the survey, which the community meeting saw giving value to the results. The focus group interview of the youth was also considered an important part of the

research. Higher participation of the youth needs to be ensured in the future, in the follow-up work of the research.

I have used relevant and up-to-date literature but also some older literature, which I saw fit and to which current researchers based their work on. I have reported the research process in this work thoroughly. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 151, 163 – 165.) Co-learning and shared decision making with the community were achieved, as the contents of the research and results were contemplated together on community meetings. Shared ownership for the results was agreed on, both in the community meeting but also with the town council, which wants to hear concrete suggestions for improvement in the community, based on the research. (Hacker 2013, 99.) Community participation gives the contents of the research more value, and the community wants to utilize the results in practice.

As mixed methods was used for gathering data, triangulation actualizes in various ways in this research, adding reliability. In gathering the data several groups of informants were utilized (residents of different ages, professionals). Different means of obtaining data was used (mixed methods). Triangulation of theory is also found, as different perspectives on the main concepts have been taken into account. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 168.) Results of both datasets were comparable and thereby brought reliability to the results.

In all occasions of qualitative data gathering, the purpose and contents of the interview were explained to the participants. No specific age or gender can be recognized from the research data. No personal data was gathered in any stage of the research. Memos were written without names. In transcription of the youth focus group I used codes for the respondents. In the written thesis the replies from youth focus group can be recognized because of those codes, however I did not use the same code for the same respondent in presenting the results, but sequential numbers. In translating the quotes from Finnish to English I aimed at preserving the original meaning and atmosphere as well as possible.

The contents of the online-survey should have been tested in more effective manner. By doing so I would not have needed to change the contents while the survey was open for replies. Changing the contents could cause some distortion in the results, although only approximately 7% of the replies were given when the changes were made. Emails can reveal the identity of the repliers of the online-survey, which is one ethical risk (Vilkka

2015, 61 – 62). However, leaving email address was not mandatory. Emails were used for drawing lot only and this was stated in the introduction of the survey. For marketing the online-survey in schools I had a permission from the head of schools in Nurmijärvi. Nobody else has access to the research material besides myself.

Working as a special youth worker for the municipality helped in conducting the research. I had useful contacts within the town and community, and if not, I knew who to ask. It also helped in reaching out for the youth, in marketing the surveys and in collaborating with the youth. From the perspective of my profession it was interesting to view the results. However, I have aimed in being objective in the analysis. Although, because of my profession, my way of thinking and analyzing the results can occur as being more on the side of the youth and finding solutions and ways of support for them.

In the practices of conducting the research, timing proved out to bring challenges, which is a limitation, as using CBPR would require more time and no rush. The schedule was tight, and the amount of data gathered turned out to be large. As the research based on the situation regarding the youth in the community, it was important to hear their views. Especially, as there were no youth in the first community meeting which was a downside. Hence, including the group interview for the youth was important, even though it meant that research data would get bigger. However, as the method used was CBPR, everything was not solely in my hands, and the wishes of the community had to be heard (Hacker 2013, 11 – 12). Decision on what to include in to the written report was done mutually in the community meeting and with the orderer of the research.

5 FINDINGS

As was described in chapter 4, both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed separately and then brought together to be examined and presented together, in convergent manner. In this chapter I present the findings, starting with the positive aspects of the community and followed by the alarming aspects of the community. Lastly, I present the findings regarding the needs of the community. I present the findings mostly joined, with some numeric results from the quantitative results within the text. Those consist of the number of responses for an alternative, and/or the percentage that alternative got from all the responses of the question. The entirety of the quantitative results used in this research are found in Appendix 4. In presenting the findings, quotations from the youth interview are coded with ‘Y’, from the other group interview memos ‘M’, and quotations from the survey ‘S’.

5.1 The positive aspects of the community

The first question aimed at locating the existing positive elements of sense of community in Klaukkala, by focusing on the positive aspects of the community. Based on findings it can be said that on average, the opportunities for hobbies and the activities of sports clubs are regarded as the most positive aspect of Klaukkala. In the surveys 83 adults (15,7 %) and 119 youth (15,6 %) saw possibilities for hobbies as a positive feature. 67 (12,7 %) respondents of adults indicated that the activities and events of sports clubs are positive aspects of the community. The qualitative results confirm that taking part in those activities makes it easier to get to know other local people. Sports clubs are considered to have an important impact in the local connectedness and in building social networks – if people are interested in taking part. The results indicate that participating in the local events demonstrates and increases the existing sense of community in Klaukkala and participating helps residents to get to know each other. As one respondent stated:

In the activities of sports club we get to know youth and their families --- If parents want to know their own youth and other youth and their families, getting to know them is easy via hobbies (as long as there is will to do so). (S)

The findings concerning the positive aspects of Klaukkala are mostly convergent, but also some differences and contradictions occur. In quantitative results new youth center is regarded as one of the most positive aspects by both, adult (11,8 %) and youth (10,9 %). However, in qualitative research it was shown, how the youth need places where to spend their spare-time, and how the youth of Klaukkala are divided in different groups who spend spare-time differently. Not all the youth utilize the services of the youth center.

...that those who live for example in the center of Klaukkala, like they are totally different... well, they hang out somewhere in the center and go to the youth center and it never even crossed our minds to go there. (Y1)

In the quantitative results one positive aspect for the adults is how most of the youth are well-behaving, as it got 13,3 % of the results, but the experience of the youth is that all youth are stigmatized because of the behavior of few. In the online-survey youth saw increasing services as a positive thing (11,1 % with 83 responses), but from the qualitative results rises the concern of long queues and occasional difficulties in receiving help.

The findings show, how the level of neighbouring varies within the community, and the experiences of knowing one's neighbours are different, which affects the way residents perceive sense of community. There are neighbourhoods in Klaukkala, where neighbours know and help each other and where living is peaceful and safe, and families interact actively, as this comment illustrates:

When we moved here we got to know few families, with whom we have gatherings, including children --- We also have mutual hobbies. Help is always available. This is like a small village, where the children are also looked after, in a positive way. This has had a really big impact in my own feeling of comfort in living here, as I am originally from somewhere else. It is worthwhile to get to know others and stay connected! (S)

The quantitative results show, how youth see the various ways they know how to utilize the internet as a positive thing (12,3 %) and are also happy with the renovated school yards (12,2 %). For adults, the services and events of the new community center appear as a positive development, with 14,8 % of the responses.

5.2 The alarming development of Klaukkala

The findings regarding the alarming development of the community are similar in both datasets and support one another. The behavior of both youth and adults, and how that behavior is demonstrated, is a concern and it is seen to be a threat to sense of community. The concerns of the youth are clearly reflecting the every-day experiences and lives of the youth, and they do have their impact on the overall atmosphere of the community, whereas adults see disturbing moped driving as one of the most alarming aspects, with 50 (7,7 %) responses.

Especially the qualitative findings demonstrate, how residents of Klaukkala recognize the significance of local connectedness and participation. Getting to know other families and building networks with them requires interest, especially from the parents. It is found alarming how some parents do not have good connection with their children and do not care what their children are doing. In the quantitative results, in total 54 adult respondents (7,9 %) felt that parents shifting the responsibility of raising children to the authorities is an alarming phenomenon. Parenting skills should be enhanced, so that parents would be interested on the matters of their children and encourage them. It would be important for parents to pass on good practices to their children, also on how to act within the community. Families should also interact more with other families. It is mentioned, how the youth would not necessarily be misbehaving that much, if residents knew their neighbours and their families.

...so that parents wouldn't force into anything, but parents would encourage to do something, so that parents wouldn't just come home and try to talk to the youth who is not listening, but that they would really try to connect with the youth and try to come up with something to do together with them... (Y2)

The sense of community between families should be strengthened, meaning that families should be doing things together. (S)

One major finding is, how there are plenty of aspects diminishing sense of community in Klaukkala. 96 adult respondents (14,8 %) and 84 young respondents (8,4 %) felt that vandalism and crimes are increasing, and they together with untidiness of the community and inoperative infrastructure lower the feeling of comfort and safety. The negative atmosphere of the community group in social media, mainly Facebook, is viewed to have

an affect also on the actual community. Surprisingly, this is the doing of adults and is seen alarming by the adults in the online survey, with 56 responses (8,7 %). Overall, the role of adults in creating the atmosphere of the community and thereby impacting the life of the youth is acknowledged in the findings. This is a rather remarkable result. Some feel that adults do not show enough interest for the situation or on the behavior of youth, as adults should intervene when there is misbehavior. According to the results adults also show poor example for the youth with their behavior and prejudice, as the comment below illustrates:

---adults with their bickering, nagging and behaviour that is downright similar to bullying in schools, give a really poor example. People bad mouth each other straight up, including others' children, if there is even the slightest chance that SOMEBODY ELSE'S youth or child has been involved in some mischief. If somebody grows up even in a slightly normal way, and end up to be a well-behaving youth, it is not thanks to the good example of the community. (S)

Another interesting finding is that there is a deep concern especially among the youth for the wellbeing of certain youth of the community. Their attitude towards substance abuse, whether it is alcohol, snuff, or illicit drugs are seen worrying. In the online-survey 81 (8,4 %) of the youth respondents were worried about snuff usage. It seems to be relatively easy for the youth to buy intoxicants, and their attitude towards illicit drugs is getting more positive (8,10 % with 81 responses from the youth). As two interviewees said:

-And it is so easy nowadays to get for example alcohol, some parents give their children alcohol, and then those of legal age buy from the shop and give to younger... (Y3)

-And it is so scary how those younger ones dare to take it, even if they don't know the buyer, still they dare to take it, just because you want the substance... (Y4)

According to the findings, some of the youth are not concerned about their own wellbeing. There is a wide difference between the youth that are doing well and those who are not. Concerns were expressed about some of the older youth giving bad example to younger ones, who may even idolize them. The respondents feel that some of the youth do not care about the impact they have to other people and the surroundings, they do not show any respect for the community:

There is no interest even for the wellbeing of those living close to you, as long as you can do whatever you want, never mind the others. This goes for both adults and the youth. Misbehaving, messing up and smashing of places etc. (S)

What also rises high concern is the lack of connectedness and safety among the youth. The youth of Klaukkala have formed strong groupings, even gangs, and those groups do not interact with each other at all. One interviewee expressed this concern as follows:

It is a bit disturbing to see like from Instagram, when they take pictures where they have edged weapons and I also heard from a friend that one of them has a handgun, so... (Y5)

Youth of different neighbourhoods spend their free time differently, and the disruption is making some areas less safe for some of the youth. This was a surprising outcome, alongside the fact that there is even threat of violence between the youth, which effects on where the youth can move and with whom. The youth seem to know, who the ones causing the atmosphere of violence and fear are, as there are certain aggressive and even dangerous individuals among the youth.

Interestingly, opposite to the well-connected neighbourhoods mentioned earlier, there are also neighbourhoods in Klaukkala where neighbours are connected very little if at all, and which are restless. Especially the town center is experienced as restless and an unsafe area. Different neighbourhoods do not really socialize, people have their own groups that do not interact that much. One respondent commented as follows:

Klaukkala is a mixture of many very different residential areas. As a new person living in Klaukkala I rarely hear somebody saying proudly that they are from Klaukkala. After living here for a year and a half I still don't know all my neighbours (in a residential area of private houses), which hasn't happened before. (S)

The findings show how the differences between families of different neighbourhoods are many, and there is inequality to be found. All families cannot afford a hobby for their children. Some areas are restless, and infrastructure is in bad shape, which causes distress to the residents of that neighbourhood. Residents do not have energy for being active and connected. According to the findings, asking for help is difficult when you do not know anybody, and the feeling of being an outsider causes indifference towards the matters of the community. Concern was expressed, regarding how the residents of Klaukkala do not

care for each other and are unfriendly or cannot promote communal initiatives. This lack of community activity is considered to worsen the atmosphere of the community.

The youth are concerned also on how the modern society puts pressure on the youth, regarding their appearance for example. In addition, the replies for the online survey raises concerns for the bullying (107 responses, 10,7 %), loneliness (77 responses, 7,7 %) and alienation (77 responses, 7,7 %) the youth face. There are experiences of youth not getting help when they are seeking it and on how getting help takes a long time. Not getting the needed help increases the risk of alienation, and especially those youth are a big concern.

5.3 Views regarding the needs of the community

The views on what should be done in Klaukkala also are convergent, and the results of the qualitative research support the results of the online-surveys. Variety of perspectives were expressed on the matter. An interesting outcome is that no matter what the personal experience on neighbouring is, connecting with neighbours is considered to have a significant meaning in the community. Responses to question number four in the online-survey reflect this outcome. Higher level of participation from people of all ages is considered as an important dimension. According to the findings from the online-survey, there is willingness among the community members to accomplish this need for better connectedness and participation.

According to both set of results, there is a need for youth to be more participated in common activities (80 responses from the adults, 83 from the youth). The youth should also take responsibility for common matters and for their own actions. The actual costs of vandalism should be made concrete for the youth.

...those youth, who trash up places or do something, they should be made responsible for their actions one hundred percent --- they should compensate totally for what they have broken up or done... (Y6)

There should be more chances for the youth to be active, their voices should be heard, and they should participate in the development of the community. The findings of the

quantitative research show that the youth would be willing to participate more and take part in developing the community.

The findings show, how there is a need for more adults in the life of the youth – in schools and in spare time. The quantitative results show, how also the adults feel that youth work should do more outreach work and go on foot to the streets and to places where youth spend time (68 responses, 11,3 %). Adults of the community are also called out to do so, and they could volunteer, which would offer another opportunity for participating. Qualitative results confirm that this would increase the feeling of safety, not only among the youth but also among the residents of all ages.

A common view among the youth is, how schools have an important impact on how the youth perceive the community. According to the findings there are different experiences on sense of community among the youth, depending on the school, its resources, networking of parents and the connection between home and school, especially between the headmasters and the parents. Better cooperation with the school headmasters is wanted, as their role is considered important for the overall development of the community (e.g. school yards), but also in how families interact. The findings show that overall the impact of schools is substantial for the well-being of youth. It is brought up that the way teachers handle group dynamics effects the feeling of comfort and belonging. The youth wish teachers to be more easily approachable. Teachers should care about the well-being of the students. It is suggested in the findings that the teachers hired in the schools of Nurmijärvi should be trained locally, focusing in the importance of group dynamics and in encounters with the youth. Students should have more chances of participating also in the development of school policies. School personnel should help bullied students more and in various ways. The usage of intoxicants, such as snuff, should definitely be intervened in schools. School social worker and psychologist should be more available for the students, and the work of the school social worker should be promoted better.

There is also need for more professionals in schools, to be present for the students and offer possibilities for genuine encounters, offer accessible service counselling and just be there to talk to, to listen and help if needed. Alongside school personnel, also youth workers are regarded to be highly suitable for this – but it would require funding from the authorities. According to the findings, youth workers in schools is a positive thing, and

youth work should find more ways of cooperating with schools, as one interviewee suggests:

And in our school, there would be plenty of need for extra help, like for youth workers, but that has costs too, but the town can't help in that but then they wonder why youth are alienating, well isn't that interesting if you can't get help... (Y8)

For the youth, there should be more places where to spend spare time, including an area for those who drive mopeds. The youth feel that they are often driven away from public spaces for no reason. Also, there is a need for more neighbourhood sport sites according to the youth (69 responses, 8,7 %). The majority of the respondents state that there should be more opportunities for free or affordable hobbies for children and youth, as not every family can afford a hobby, as one interviewee argued:

I also know many, who have said that I would like to skate, but I can't afford it, so that there would be the chance to, it should be known for the family that they want to do something, but there really isn't like an easy solution to the money situation... (Y7)

In the online surveys, 56 of adults (9,3 %) and 76 of the youth (6,8 %) saw the importance of easily accessible hobbies. The overall view in the findings is that youth need more chances for positive activities, which could prevent youth from ganging up. Also, forming of the gangs should be prevented somehow. It is noted in the results, how having your “own thing” could prevent being idle, and how having interesting activities in spare time could decrease vandalism.

The results indicate that community members are not happy with how the authorities of the town are handling things, there should be more preventing work and courage to really start handling the problems.

Public places are deteriorating and that is causing more smashing of places. The initiatives and actions of the town are frustrating, takes too much time and the needs of the residents are not heard. For example, tidiness, there are no trashcans and if there are they are full, and birds spread the trash. (S)

As the comment above demonstrates, some of the community members feel that authorities do not listen to the needs of the residents. Municipality initiatives are regarded slow,

and in addition community members do not stand together and promote mutual communal causes. Respondents feel that they are not cared for and the environment of the community is not looked after. The community members' view is that as the physical environment gets in worse state, vandalism increases. Based on the findings, a clear message from the residents of all ages to the authorities is the need to take better care of the public spaces, for example getting more trashcans to the areas where youth spend time, and for those trashcans to be emptied accordingly (72 of adults, 11,9 % and 165 of the youth, 20,8 %).

6 DISCUSSION: REVIVING SENSE OF COMMUNITY

In this chapter I discuss the findings of the research and reflect the results with the key concepts. Different aspects regarding the sense of community is pointed out alongside the role different actors have in enhancing the situation. The findings are also reflected with the features of social capital. The concepts of sense of community and social capital are compared based on the findings.

6.1 The significance of participation

I begin the discussion of research findings by looking in to the aspect of participation. One interesting finding is, how in both sets of results, the value of hobbies and sports clubs is emphasized. Hobbies and participating in local events are viewed as a good way to get to know other community members and thus build networks within the community. The level of participation in Klaukkala is experienced differently among the community members. One explanation could be that those who participate, notice the overall possibilities for participating in Klaukkala as well and are active in various ways. Conversely, some community members feel that chances for participating occur merely via the sports clubs and that there are not enough communal events. Some say that even if there are communal events, the amount of people taking part is minimal.

Personal networks can be formed via participation, and those networks are essential for sense of community. Looking at the definition of the dimensions of sense of community by McMillan and Chavis (1986, 9) and comparing them to the significance hobbies and sports club activities have based on the results, it is obvious they build sense of community. Being a part of a sports club or a collective hobby makes you feel that you belong, it has influence on your life, being part in the ups and downs of the group forms shared memories and builds commitment. In addition, hobbies do fall under the categories of instrumental and social participation regarding sense of community (Mannarini & Fedi 2009, 213).

The findings show, how participating in local events is also considered to increase sense of community. Participating in the events and in the different activities of the community offers a chance to meet other community members and build networks, and this is what the respondents would be willing to do. This indicates that members of the community are willing to be active and build networks even outside one's own, familiar networks, which would increase the overall sense of community.

6.2 Bringing people together or dividing them?

As was examined, the findings show how residents of Klaukkala acknowledge the importance of participation, and they link it with sense of community. However, do different and separate hobbies really bring people together and build sense of community for the whole community? According to Mannarini and Fedi (2009, 224) all participation does not lead to high level of sense of community, whereas Chavis and Wandersman (1990, 73) argue that taking part in local activities is more comfortable, when there is sense of community. Hence it is not clear, does sense of community build participation, or participation build sense of community. Findings of this research indicate that in community members' view, participation builds sense of community. Indeed, the results show, how participation is what is needed and wanted in the community of Klaukkala, and from both, adult and youth members of the community, to increase sense of community.

According to the findings, members of the community feel that the sense of community formed in hobbies and sports clubs has an effect in to the every-day life of the whole community as well. However, there is a risk that the sense of community concentrates more on the similarities of the members of that certain group. In that case sense of community separates subgroups of people, as McMillan and Chavis (1986, 20) argue. The findings reflect that notion, as the experiences on connectedness vary, depending on the activities of the family. People who are part of different groups feel that there is plenty of sense of community to be found, as they know their neighbours or the members of the certain hobby group, get help from them, and participate in the events of that group or neighbourhood. In other words, they have dense social network that brings them the feeling of belonging and cohesion, meaning sense of community (Neal and Neal 2014, 2).

People who are part of these dense networks also see it as a positive aspect of the community.

However, the findings demonstrate how the level of sense of community varies depending on the neighbourhood. There is lack of connectedness in certain neighbourhoods, which diminishes community attachment. A common view amongst the respondents was that also the youth of Klaukkala are divided in different groups which do not really interact. This is one of the alarming aspects of the community and is also sign of sense of community dividing subgroups of people (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 20). The findings show, how a certain group causes fear among the youth. This indicates strong sense of community within that group, but it is used in a destructive manner, as the influence on the overall community is negative. This, alongside other negative aspects of the community are considered to diminish community attachment and act as a threat to sense of community.

This disruption of the community is quite significant finding of the research. Sense of community is formed only locally, within certain neighbourhoods and groups (e.g. hobbies, sports clubs) of the community. Neighbourhoods and groups formed inside the community do not interact or intersect, and sense of community does not benefit the whole community and is not mutual, as is presented in Figure 8. Building networks would require effort from the community members and positive connections with other community members. Intersecting networks would also be needed, between different subgroups. The results indicate lack in this, which diminishes the sense of community.

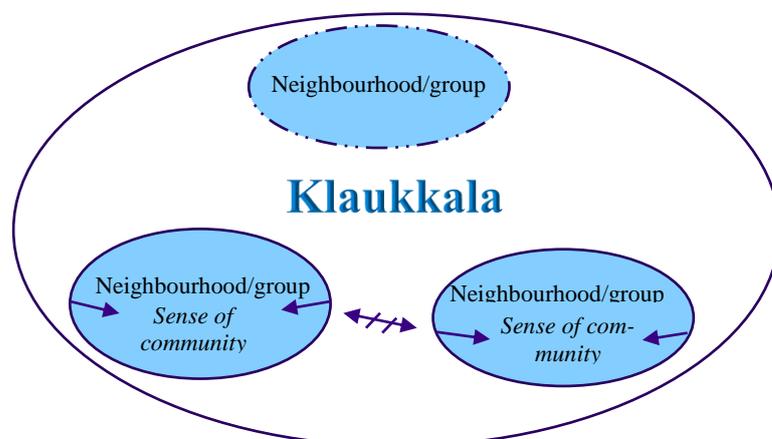


FIGURE 8. Disruption of neighbourhoods and groups in Klaukkala, sense of community dividing subgroups

The findings show, how affordable and free hobbies are needed and even demanded in Klaukkala. This indicates also, how the existing sense of community in the community is not divided evenly between families and among youth. It is pointed out in the findings that the children of low-income families cannot necessarily participate in the activities of sports clubs, as they usually are costly. This causes inequalities between families, also regarding sense of community. These findings reflect those of Evans (2007, 697). He found that often youth from privileged families have opportunities to be involved in the community and thereby utilize the sense of community, while those left out are the ones who would truly benefit from the sense of purpose and belonging formed by participating. Having better chances for participating, as the community members wish for, could balance those inequalities of sense of community. Interestingly, other hobbies beside sports clubs do not come up in the results. This indicates how sense of community is formed in the individual level, and it bases on personal experiences of the community members – those who took part in the research are involved with sports club activities and it reflects in the findings.

6.3 The role of the youth in reviving the community

Another important finding was, how especially the youth should have better chances of participating in communal matters. There is also demand for the youth to take more responsibility in their actions and be involved in both in developing the area (e.g. participatory budget) and in taking care of the environment (communal cleaning effort). The findings show that youth indeed would be willing to answer the call and participate. Furthermore, the findings support the views of Evans (2007, 694) as the community wants to hear the voice of the youth. This would make youth feel they are important part of the community and they are influential and powerful. The community wants to utilize the potential of the youth and this would increase sense of community in Evans' view (2007, 700).

There is a functioning youth council in Nurmijärvi, coordinated by the youth work, and it can be labeled as political participation (O'Connor 2013, 977), however not all youth are interested in such kind of participation. Hence, other means of participation are needed. For example, the findings of Aistrich and Absetz (2013) and Merikanto (2013)

regarding youth participation, and the need for various means of participation, are relevant. Such information should be utilized in Klaukkala, as higher level of youth participation is required and wished for.

Adults play an important role in achieving better youth participation, as they need to appreciate the voice and efforts of young people. The findings indicate that the adult members of Klaukkala are ready to help the youth contribute to the community. This would help the youth gain power in a positive way, which in turn would increase the sense of responsibility regarding the community. Nowell and Boyd (2010, 836), see sense of responsibility, caring for the community beyond individual benefits, as one dimension of sense of community. As sense of responsibility is what the community in fact is demanding from the youth, it makes the situation two-sided. The community needs to help the youth be more responsible and achieving in it, overall sense of community would increase.

The findings corroborate the dimensions regarding sense of community identified by McMillan and Chavis (1986, 9), concerning youth participation overall. Youth participating in developing the community, i.e. working for mutual goal, for better community to be part of, having an influence, feeling that you belong, building commitment and caring for the community, would increase sense of community in a positive way, compared to the current situation. And as adults are needed in achieving this, the increased sense of community would benefit all.

Youth see their ability to utilize the internet in various ways as one of the positive aspects. This may partly explain the disruption of the youth in Klaukkala, as the youth spend more time online and are familiar with different online-services. This finding is in line with the suggestion of Mahmoudi Farani (2016, 358 – 360), of virtual communities diminishing the importance of local communities. Participating in the communal activities decreases and the meaning of the local community diminishes, impacting sense of community.

6.4 The role of adults in reviving the community

Adults play an important role in the lives of the youth and for the whole community, and the findings show that residents of Klaukkala acknowledge this. The findings indicate that the behavior and attitude of adults – negative and positive – are significant for the overall atmosphere in the community and thereby sense of community. This finding is consistent with that of Evans (2007, 694) who proposes that to increase sense of community, adults should create connected, responsible and influential environment for and with young people, to make the community strong, and raise respectfully, caringly and responsibly behaving youth. The findings show how adults are needed and wanted to do this in Klaukkala, also. Sense of community is formed and built together, with community members of all ages.

The research found that active parents are seen to have a substantial impact, not only for the life of the youth but for the whole community. Active parents care for their children, are encouraging, interact with other families and look after the youth of the community by intervening when there is need for it. This kind of active parenting should be encouraged in Klaukkala. It would have positive impact on youth participation and on sense of community. However, as was mentioned earlier, there are areas in Klaukkala where sense of community is weak, people do not know their neighbours and are not connected, and where asking for help is difficult. These findings indicate that those areas would benefit from active parents forming connections with neighbours (neighbouring) and other families of the area, and thereby building sense of community.

The adults should show in their behavior that they do not generalize all the youth to be similar, since according to the findings they do consider well-behaving youth as a positive aspect of the community. However, the youth feel that they are all blamed for the mistakes of few and treated in an unfair manner. Improved networks between adults and the youth and working together for the better of the community would be also increase sense of community.

6.5 The role of the authorities in reviving the community

The findings of the research confirm the association between sense of community and the personal networks formed by the members of the community. However, the results show how different organizations and institutions play a role in enhancing sense of community in Klaukkala, as well. The value of hobbies and of the activities and events of sports clubs is a good example of this.

The feeling of not being cared for by the local official authorities is quite an interesting finding. Residents of the community feel that their needs are not heard, and that the physical environment of the community is not properly looked after, which all diminish sense of community. Taking better care of the physical environment would send the signal that the community and residents are cared for by the authorities, which, according to the findings, would in turn enhance sense of community. This seems to be consistent with the findings of Francis, Giles-Corti, Wood and Knuiman (2012, 406) alongside Wood, Shannon, Bulsara, Pikora, McCormack and Giles-Corti (2008, 16), about the importance the condition of public spaces in local neighbourhoods has on sense of community.

Regarding the preventive work and planning for and of the community, the authorities have a chance of offering opportunities of participating for the members, also for the youth. As has been presented, adults are needed in helping the youth getting their voices heard, and authorities can help both adults and youth in achieving it. These findings are in line with the thoughts of Green and Haines (2016, 4), on how neighbourhoods can shape social outcomes. Individual behavior can be changed through policies and programs. To succeed in this, the authorities must hear the voice of the members of the community, to make the policies and programs truly effective. When people feel that they have an influence on their immediate environment, sense of community increases (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 12, 15). The findings indicate that the community members of Klaukkala, including youth, would be willing to take part in the decision making, which is regarded as capacity building and would bring better results regarding the development of the community (Morse 2014, 21 – 22), which is an important outcome.

In the findings it was brought forth how residents of Klaukkala fail to run communal initiatives or stand together for a cause. Local institutions and authorities could help in

improving this (i.e. capacity building). Campaigning for a mutual cause, for example, is political participation, which according to O'Connor (2013, 977) can also increase sense of community alongside goal orientated (instrumental) participation. Overall, authorities and institutions could offer opportunities for the community members to come together for different purposes, build networks and find mutual ground for developing the community. In other words, authorities could help community members to increase sense of community. Achieving this would make cooperation more effective and have a lot of positive impact, as has been demonstrated.

According to the findings, youth wish adults would care more for the youth. One important finding of the research is, how concerning the youth, the school personnel has a major impact in how youth perceive the community overall. The results show, how the way teachers handle classes has an impact also on how the youth experience sense of community. A range of easily approachable professionals in schools alongside teachers would be needed, which would require funding from the town authorities, which the youth acknowledge, based on the findings. The findings indicate that having more caring adults around would enhance sense of community from the youth's perspective. Also, as was discussed earlier, active parents bring positive things for families, neighbourhoods and eventually to the whole community, and schools could help in achieving this. The networks created in neighbourhoods, schools and hobbies are crucial for sense of community and authorities could help in building them.

The findings show, how residents of Klaukkala would want higher feeling of security, especially in the centrum on the weekends. Experiences of the community being unsafe diminishes the sense of community and lowers sense of trust among residents. Doing outreach work in places where youth spend their spare-time would send a message for the youth that it matters how and when they spend their spare time and that they are cared for. Authorities could offer an opportunity for the adults of the community to participate in this outreach work. Doing that would increase the feeling of safety, which, according to the findings, is linked in the overall sense of community in Klaukkala.

Town authorities are also hoped to help in getting more free or affordable supervised hobbies for the children and the youth, through which they would have a chance for positive activities. The findings indicate that differences in income between families does

have an impact on the level of participation. There are inequalities among the youth, for instance regarding the possibility to have a hobby. However, according to the findings, having meaningful activities and getting help and support when needed, would prevent the negative behavior of the youth, e.g. substance abuse and vandalism, which now are a major concern. As vandalism and crimes would decrease, sense of security would rise, alongside sense of community. Participating in hobbies would also offer possibility of networking for families and hence help in building sense of community. Authorities should help those families that do not have the means to provide a paid hobby for their children. It should be noted that even though it did not appear in the results, there are other possibilities for hobbies too, besides sports. Different kind of arts, playing, scouting and so on, offer good ways for participating and in having positive activities as well.

From the perspective of youth work, the contradiction between views regarding youth center, and the need for places to spend spare-time is interesting. It is clear that not all youth visit youth centers or want the guidance or presence of adults in their spare-time. However, youth center is a place where all the youth of the community should feel at ease to visit. Youth centers should not be perceived to be only for the youth of a certain area or neighbourhood, and by that enable the disruption of the community. Youth centers should work for diminishing the disruption among the youth, offer ways to participate and network with others. Signs of this are seen, thanks to well-planned junior-activities, which target the primary school students of the area.

6.6 Social capital and sense of community

The findings show that the respondents link participation strongly with sense of community. However, this finding is contrary to the views concerning the concept, as participation is regarded as more of a feature of social capital than sense of community, and level of participation is one way of measuring social capital. Personal networks can be formed by participation, and those networks are essential for both sense of community and social capital. The findings show, how the aspects of social capital and sense of community cross each other and even mix, as especially the personal networks and their influence are an important feature of both, and respondents see participation as an important aspect.

This follows the thoughts of Neal and Neal (2014, 2), alongside Perkins and Long (2002, 293), who suggest that sense of community can act as one dimension of social capital.

Social capital has public effects, as it benefits also those community members who are not part of the networks (Putnam & Goss 2002), and it can be utilized by the community (DeFilippis et al. 2010). However, the findings indicate that this is not happening in Klaukkala. Vandalism, drug abuse and crimes are considered to be increasing and are viewed as alarming aspects of the community. As sense of community can separate sub-groups of people (McMillan & Chavis 1986, 20), similarly the social capital of hobby groups can be more inward-looking and bonding (Putnam & Goss 2002, 10; Green & Haines 2016, 171), so the two aspects share similarities in this sense. The findings do indicate that there is a lot of bonding social capital to be found in different neighbourhoods and hobby groups in Klaukkala. People who invest in the social capital of certain area or group, are also benefiting from it (trust, reciprocity), reflecting the thoughts of for example Green and Haines (2015, 166) and Lin (2001, 24).

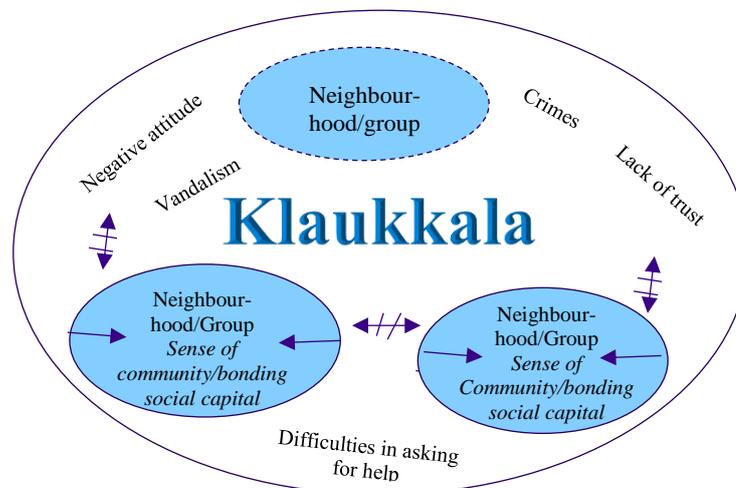


FIGURE 9. Sense of community vs. bonding social capital without bridging social capital, the impact to the whole community of Klaukkala

However, bridging social capital is crucial for the well-being of the community (Payne 2006, 10), and should be formed simultaneously with bonding social capital (Putnam & Goss 2002, 10 – 12). Lack of bridging social capital in Klaukkala is demonstrated in figure 9. More bridging social capital would be needed across the community. Higher level of participating, for example in local events, would help forming it, as community members of different backgrounds come together. Residents have different networks,

depending on their neighbourhood and hobbies, and once they build new networks crossing those familiar networks, bridging social capital is formed.

It is quite an interesting finding how while referring to sense of community, the attributes community members use link with social capital as well. Networks and the density of those networks, mutual support and reciprocity, trust and mutual norms are all seen connecting with both sense of community and social capital. The difference is that sense of community reflects the perceptions of an individual, regarding the community and his/her own networks. As the term suggests, it is a 'sense', sentiment. It can be defined as the feeling of belonging, feeling of being influential, feeling of responsibility, feeling of being a member, the feeling of bonding. In the findings community members link participation with sense of community, but in the definition of the concept, participation does not appear as central. However, in social capital level of participation is central.

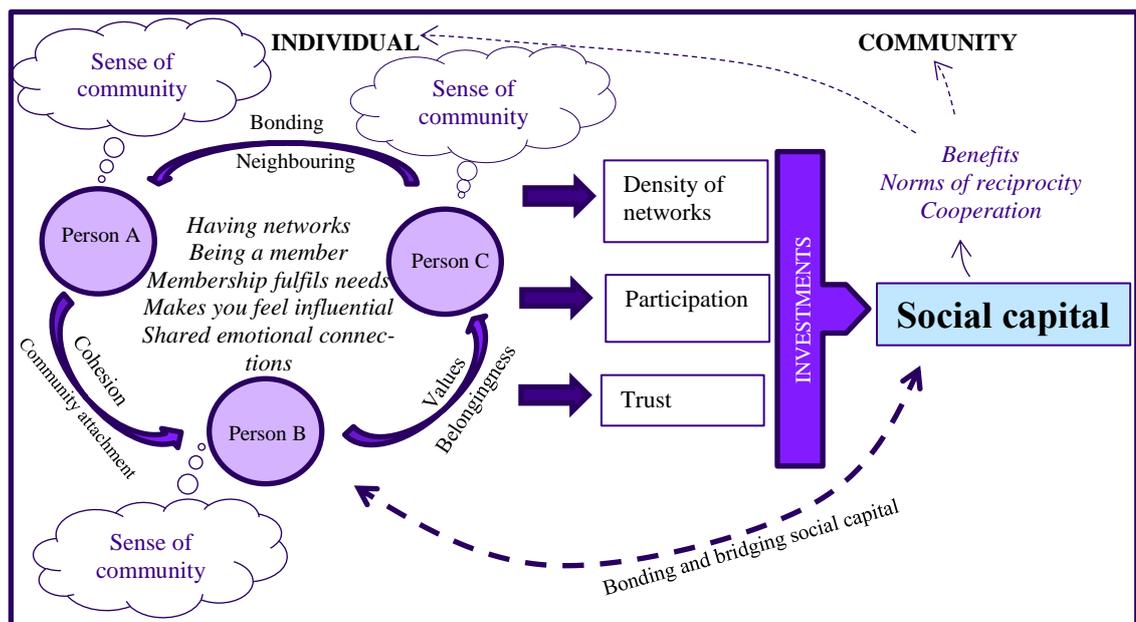


FIGURE 10. The relationship between sense of community and social capital. Following and combining the ideas of Sarason (1974), McMillan & Chavis (1986), Nowell & Boyd (2010), Neal & Neal (2014), Putnam (2000) and Putnam & Goss (2002).

The findings of this study suggest that sense of community is the feeling that generates visible action in the community, which eventually forms into social capital. Sense of community can be regarded as a tool, as McMillan and Chavis (1986, 20) suggest, which leads in to social capital and thereby towards cooperating, open and accepting community. This relationship of the concepts, based on this view, is demonstrated in figure 10.

Sense of community happens more in the individual-level (feelings) and reflects the individual's relationship with the surrounding social structure. Therefore, sense of community as a concept may be more easily approachable for an individual than social capital, although attributes used would be more adequate for social capital, as the results of this research indicate.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter conclusions regarding the research findings are presented, in the light of the research questions. After conclusions I offer some recommendations for future, based on the process, and finally offer some analysis of the process.

7.1 Conclusions: everyone is needed

The aim of this research was to locate existing positive elements and possible threats regarding the sense of community in Klaukkala. The purpose was to identify ways to improve the situation and enhance the sense of community. This was done by examining the positive and negative aspects of the community, and the actions needed in the community in making a change for the better. The existing sense of community and how to enhance it was analyzed based on the results. The results were also reflected with the principles of social capital. The research followed the principles of community-based participatory research and mixed methods. It based on the alarming development among the youth, however the whole community was featured in the research, as the situation of the youth effects the whole community and vice versa.

The research findings present an overview on the community, regarding the situation of youth, but also on what kind of impact the whole community has on the youth, and on how to go forward together. In the findings members of the community present various views, mostly convergent. The research found that possibilities for hobbies and participating in them, and the events sports clubs and the community center offer, are considered as positive aspects, alongside well-behaving youth and the new youth center. They can also be regarded as elements of existing of sense of community or effecting the sense of community in a positive manner.

Views on alarming development were more widespread, as variety of perspectives were expressed on the matter. Those findings can be regarded as threats to the sense of community. The findings show that negative atmosphere, which is affected also by social media and the attitude of adults, was regarded as an alarming phenomenon, alongside

vandalism, crimes and substance abuse of the youth. For the youth, also bullying, pressure on appearance, the atmosphere of fear among the youth, alienation, and the lack of support in school and homes caused worry. Concerns were expressed also about lack of active parenting and how parents shift the responsibility of raising children to the authorities, and how getting help for youth can sometimes take too long.

One important finding of the research is the disruption among the community, and how it effects the sense of community. The residents estimate the sense of community very differently, basing on their own experiences. The community members, who are connected in their neighbourhoods and in spare time for example via hobby, view the networks and possibilities for participating as a positive aspect. However, those who do not have networks and do not participate that much view also the chances for participation to be scarce in Klaukkala and regard it as a negative aspect. Schools play an important role in the lives of the youth and on their feelings towards the community as a whole. The results show, how these experiences reflect also on how community members perceive the sense of community.

The research has shown how the youth need and want more caring adults around them, in homes, schools and in spare-time – regardless of is it spent in some supervised hobby or outside in the streets. Disruption of the community is not fixed easily, building a better working community takes time. However, the community members are willing to make change happen and would want the situation to develop for the better. The results of this research support the idea that enhancing participation in different ways would increase sense of community. The community members do acknowledge this. Higher level of participation is needed and wanted from the youth, and adults can help in achieving it. As one of the respondents concluded, sense of community is something that cannot be forced, and the authorities cannot form it, it is up to the community members to form it. But local authorities and institutions could help in enhancing it, by offering platforms and opportunities for participating and building networks. The duty of the authorities is to take care of the public spaces and infrastructure, as their condition also effects the sense of community. Town could also channel funds to appropriate functions, for example training of teachers and activities of the youth work, which were asked by the community members in the results.

Although this research focused mainly on sense of community, the findings also have a bearing on social capital of the community. In general, it seems that the aspects community members associate with sense of community are also aspects of social capital, and even more so, as for example participation is regarded to be more of a characteristic of social capital. The findings of this research suggest that there is a connection between the two concepts. The findings indicate that there are neighbourhoods with different level of social capital to be found in Klaukkala. The findings show that adults, youth and families of the community are divided in groupings, which may have strong sense of community and bonding social capital within, but which do not interact much. Hence, there does not seem to be enough bridging social capital in the community. Taken together, these findings suggest that the existing social capital does not benefit the whole community, of which vandalism, crimes and substance abuse are symptoms. The following conclusion can be drawn from the research: sense of community is the feeling that generates visible action in the community, which eventually forms into social capital.

Although the research based on the concerns according the local youth, a significant finding of the research is how everyone is needed in changing the situation for the better and in enhancing the sense of community. This supports the presumption of the community meeting. While this research was carried out together with the community and the dataset is substantial, it is merely a scratch in the surface. However, it has shed light on the worries of authorities, from the perspective of the community and showed that community members share the concern. To stop the negative development, members of the community, especially the youth, must be heard. The research has given useful guidelines for the authorities and community members to consider, regarding the situation of Klaukkala. It has drawn a picture of multidimensional community, with positive aspects but also with significant challenges. Effective and sustainable actions should be taken by multiple actors, so the coming ages would grow up in a better functioning community and would not follow the same path as some of the youth before. The actual work for developing the community should start now, and this research indicates that there are possibilities for it in many levels.

7.2 Recommendations based on the process

The insights gained from this research may be of assistance when thinking of the future work to be done in the community. Based on the findings, the head of youth work wishes for the town council to grant funds for community development work done in Klaukkala. An employee could be hired to focus in working together with the community, to develop ways of participating and thereby help in enhancing sense of community. (Merja Winhjärvinen, personal connection October 10, 2018.) During this research we failed to get any youth to participate in the two community meetings, hence it would be important to focus on youth participation in the work that follows. Overall, a higher level of co-creation is needed in developing Klaukkala and the community within. There are clear suggestions in the findings from the community members to the municipality authorities, concerning infrastructure and funding of activities. Those suggestions should be taken into consideration, and community-based participatory research could continue in the community. The elements of asset-based community development could also be utilized.

Developing the community could start for example from the neighbourhoods. It could be beneficial to locate well-connected and low-connected neighbourhoods and work together with the residents by continuing CBPR. By building on the assets of those neighbourhoods and finding ways for the neighbourhoods to interact and perhaps share good practices with each other, bridging social capital and sense of community across neighbourhood borders could be formed. Another practical implication could be to focus on developing well-functioning policies and practicalities in more deep collaboration with the community, again by continuing CBPR. Focusing on participation of the youth is especially important, to get their views and hopes heard properly, as this research has shown.

One line of future research could also be to examine, what indeed is causing the disruption among the youth in Klaukkala. The research could be carried out together with the youth and their families. Is the disruption continuation to the Nurmijärvi-phenomenon that took place 10 – 15 years ago? Is the substantial inward movement causing lack in sense of community and social capital in Klaukkala, which then leads to alarming development, as this research has shown? This study could lay the groundwork for the research.

Greater efforts are needed to locate the different options for youth participation, outside the results of this research. The youth themselves are the ones to point them out. The possibility to participate should be the same for families and youth of different backgrounds. By developing policies, following ages would grow in the culture of collaborating and participating, and sense of community would increase.

The importance of participation is noticed in the EU as well. Finland is part of Co-creation of Service Innovation in Europe (CoSIE) -project, where 10 pilot projects are carried out in different EU-countries. The projects target customer groups which are difficult to reach with regular paths of participation. Turku University of Applied Sciences together with Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities are implementing a pilot project in Finland, where the aim is to add participation of youth by co-creation and find ways of preventing youth alienation, based on the views and experiences of the youth participating in the pilot. (Kuntaliitto.) Nurmijärvi is participating in an experiment refinery, conducted by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The results of this thesis are used as the basis for the experiment of Nurmijärvi. The experiment will focus on participation of the youth, piloting in Klaukkala. The personnel from the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities noticed that the experiment of Nurmijärvi has similarities with the CoSIE-project, and there could be a chance for cooperation on the experiment with the association (Merja Lång, personal communication October 10, 2018). It seems that the results of the research are proven to be beneficial, and the research valid, as was hoped.

7.3 Views on the process

As the research proceeded, I could see two different dimensions forming; the community-level, in which the results of the research will continue to be viewed and analyzed, and the level of the written thesis, in which the research data is utilized only partly. What started as thesis developed in to something wider in the community-scale and analysis and discussion will hopefully continue in the community. There is a high interest in the community and among the authorities to utilize the results of this research in practice, which is a positive sign and shows that the research was relevant and useful.

The contradiction between making the thesis and conducting a community-based participatory research was substantial, in my opinion. Getting the thesis done meant that the process needed to go forward quite rapidly and at times based heavily on my choices, despite the community input. At times this felt strange and wrong, as the principle of CBPR is that the process takes time, it can take steps back, and all the while it is done together with the community (Hacker 2013, 17). The process pushed in to a thesis was not an easy task, and it occasionally got me thinking, was this really a good choice for a thesis research and are my skills adequate. Overall CBPR in urban community done according to its principles, as I have tried, is not an easy task. The process, as this research shows, is complex and would need more time and focusing. Nevertheless, I see the interest of the community and the results of this research highly positive, and I do hope the work based on this research continues in the community. Hopefully it helps the local authorities in building co-creation and enhancing participation of the youth, and makes new approaches possible, for the better of the whole community.

For myself, this thesis process has been challenging, but in a positive way for the most part – offering insights and building experience and competence. I feel that my skills for community cooperation have improved and my understanding for the importance of participation has increased. I would like to express my appreciation for everybody who has been involved in the process, especially the members of the community in Klaukkala. Thanks to their input on so many levels, the findings of this research are as valid and distinctive as they are.

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APPENDIX 1: Questions for the qualitative research

These thematic questions, formed by Eriksson, Arnkil and Rautava (2006, 15) were used as the basis for qualitative data gathering:

1. Have you noticed any positive development in this area that should be supported right now, regarding the youth? Which and what kind of development?
2. Have you noticed any kind of alarming development on this area that should be intervened right now, regarding the youth? Which and what kind of development?
3. What should be done and what you could do?
- (4. What follows if it is being done? Who reacts and how?)

APPENDIX 2: Contents of the online-survey for youth

Translated from Finnish

This survey is part of a community-research of Klaukkala, conducted by the youth work of Nurmijärvi. We gather the views of the residents of different ages of Klaukkala, regarding the situation of Klaukkala, via group interviews and surveys. We wish to know, what is the residents' opinion on sense of community and the situation of youth in Klaukkala, and how could the sense of community and social capital be enhanced in the community, from the point of view of the residents. By taking part in this survey, you have produced important information for the research. The options of reply base on the contents of the first community meeting, and the questions are similar than those in the group interviews.

This survey is meant for from 13 to 19 years old residents of Klaukkala. Replying this survey takes approximately 5 minutes, and it is open for replies until the 22nd of August. If you leave your email, you take part in a lot for two tickets to the cinema. Emails are not gathered for any other reason.

Additional information: The methodology is community-based participatory research, and method used is mixed methods. Qualitative data is gathered via community development and focus group interviews for the multi-professional work group and youth. Quantitative data is gathered via 2 online-surveys, one for 13-19-year-olds and one for over 20-year-olds of Klaukkala. Online-surveys are carried out from the 15th to the 22nd of August 2018. The data gathered will be analysed in the second community meeting (4.9.), in which we wish residents of Klaukkala and of different age will take part in. No personal data is gathered. Research permit is agreed on with the youth work and school services of Nurmijärvi.

1. How old are you?

13-15

15-19

If you want to take part in the drawing lots for the cinema-tickets, leave your email here.

2. What kind of pleasing things have you noticed in Klaukkala lately? Choose max 5 most important.

The yards of schools have been renovated

Plenty of possibilities for hobbies

The amount of services has increased

New youth center

The activities and events of sport clubs

Contacting the authorities is easy

Alcohol consuming of the youth has decreased

Most of the youth are well-behaving

The services offered by the community center Monikko

The youth know how to use internet in various ways

Other, what

3. Which of the following worries you the most in Klaukkala and in how the youth behaves? Choose max 5 the most important

Pressure of appearance

The behavior in the social media

Loneliness

Alienation

School bullying

Parents are not interested in the matters of school

Positive attitude on illicit drugs

Parents have shifted the responsibility of raising their children to authorities

Disturbing moped driving

Snuff usage

Messing up of places

Vandalism, trashing places

Who cares-attitude of the youth

The youth are not held responsible enough

Ganging of the youth

Rootlessness

How youth spend time in public spaces (schools, daycare-centers etc.)
Other, what.

5. Choose, which ones you agree with

- Settling in to Klaukkala is easy
- Settling in to Klaukkala is difficult
- I know, which authority to ask for help, if necessary
- I know my neighbours and receive help from them, if needed
- I do not know my neighbours
- There are mutual events in my area of residence
- I help my neighbours, if needed

6. What actions are needed in Klaukkala, in your opinion? Choose max 5

- Trashcans to the areas and routes, where the youth go
- Participation of youth in developing the area
- Query event of the municipal manager
- Adults and/or professionals doing outreach youth work and going on foot where the youth spend their spare time
- Easily accessible, supervised hobbies
- Voluntary cleaning, involving the youth
- More neighbourhood sport sites
- Rewarding well-behaving youth
- Participatory budget for the youth, how to spend the common funds
- Making the settling in of new families to Klaukkala easier
- A collective event for the youth that moved to the area
- Active residential activities
- Local events for families and youth
- Peer support and networking of parents
- Networking of neighbourhoods
- Voluntary work among the youth and families
- Taking part in local associations
- Other, what

7. Which activities you would be willing to participate. Choose top 5 you prefer

- Query event of the municipal manager
- Adults and/or professionals doing outreach youth work and going on foot where the youth spend their spare time
- Easily accessible, supervised hobbies
- Voluntary cleaning, involving the youth
- Making the settling in of new families to Klaukkala easier
- A collective event for the youth that moved to the area
- Taking part in active residential activities
- Visiting local events
- Organizing local events
- Peer support and networking of parents
- Networking of neighbourhoods
- Voluntary work among the youth and families
- Sports club activities
- Local association activities
- None of the above
- Other, what

8. Is there enough sense of community to be found in Klaukkala? (Sense of community means for example knowing your neighbours, activities together, being able to influence in local matters, feeling of togetherness.)

Yes/No/I cannot say

How can you tell there is sense of community in Klaukkala, in your opinion?

How can you tell, there is lack in sense of community in Klaukkala, in your opinion?

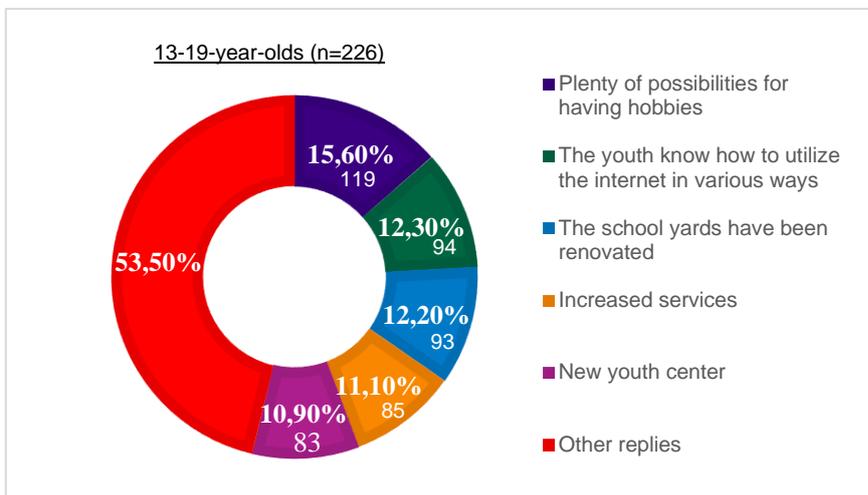
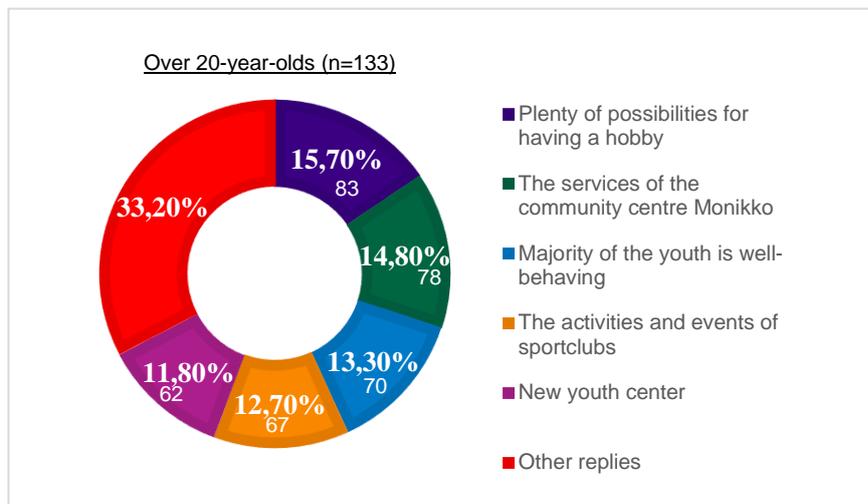
APPENDIX 3: Content analysis of the qualitative data

Intermediate- and head categories, and combining themes

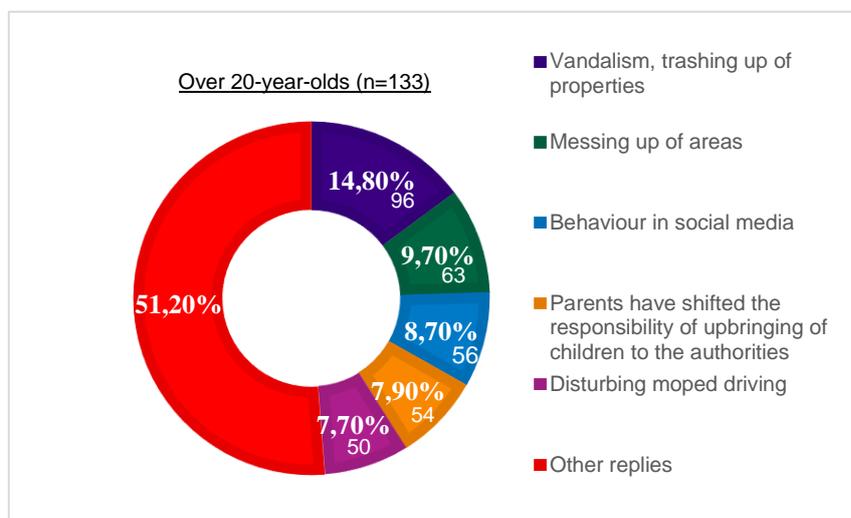
Intermediate category	Main category	Combining theme
<p>The importance of parents for the life of the youth and for the whole community</p> <p>The importance of hobbies and local activities for individuals and the whole community</p> <p>Residential areas, where neighbours are not connected and do not help each other</p> <p>Residential areas, where neighbours are connected and help each other</p>	<p>The significance of active parents and of local activity</p> <p>The level and significance of neighbour connectedness in residential areas</p>	<p>The level and significance of connectedness and local participation</p>
<p>The negative aspects of the community of Klaukkala</p> <p>Vandalism and crime</p> <p>Untidiness and inoperative infrastructure lowering the comfort for the community</p> <p>The role of adults in creating bad atmosphere</p> <p>The experience and views on sense of community</p> <p>Sense of community and lack of it in schools</p>	<p>The aspects that diminish experiencing sense of community</p> <p>The experiences of sense of community and how schools impact on it</p>	<p>The experiences regarding the level and significance of sense of community</p>
<p>Concern for the well-being of youth and their substance abuse</p> <p>The difficulties youth face when seeking help for loneliness and alienation</p> <p>The disruption and ganging among youth</p> <p>Threat of violence among the youth</p>	<p>The concerns for the well-being of youth and how they receive help</p> <p>The lack of connectedness and safety among the youth</p>	<p>The experiences regarding the situation of the youth, their participating and mutual connectedness</p>
<p>The wishes for authorities on developing their functions</p> <p>The need of leisure time spaces for youth</p> <p>The need for more adults in schools and in leisure time of youth</p> <p>The significance of school and teacher on the well-being of the youth and of the community</p> <p>The participation of youth on common matters and youth taking responsibility for them</p>	<p>The actions needed in improving the situation of the community</p> <p>The participation of youth on common matters and youth taking responsibility for them</p>	<p>The actions needed in improving the situation of the community</p>

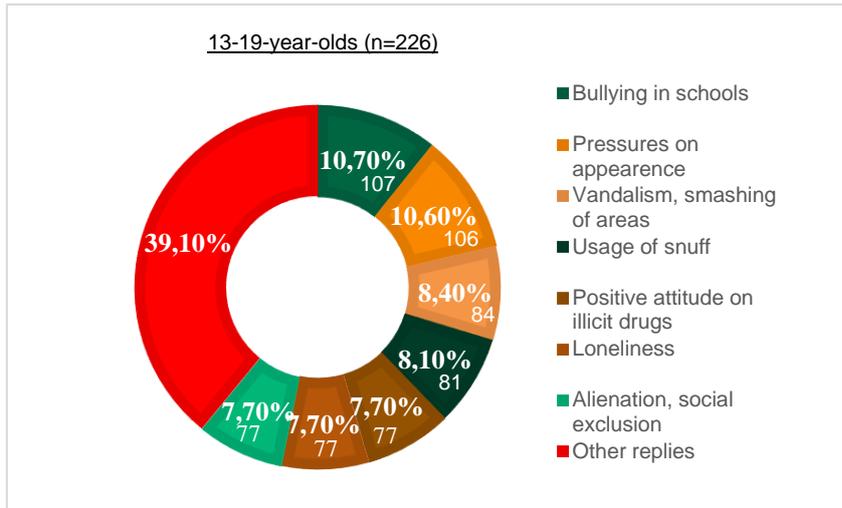
APPENDIX 4: Contents of the top 5 results of the online-survey

1. The positive aspects of Klaukkala, regarding the youth.

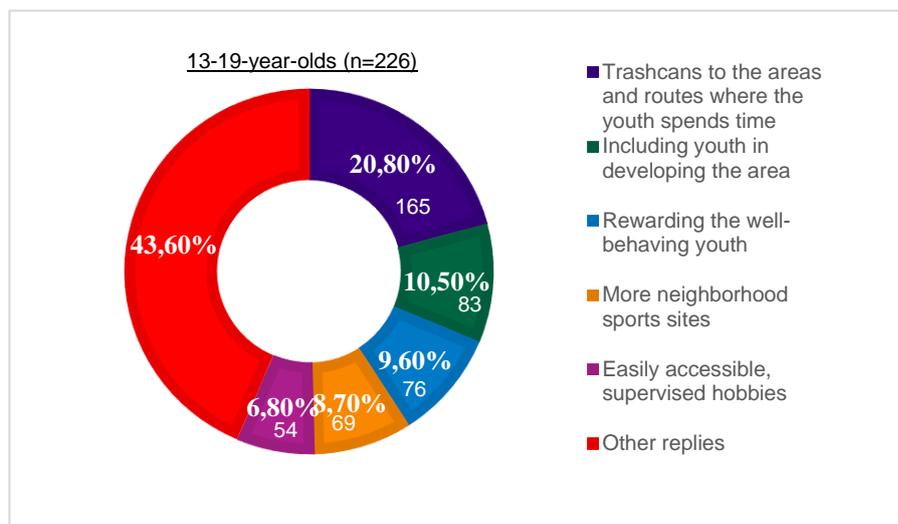
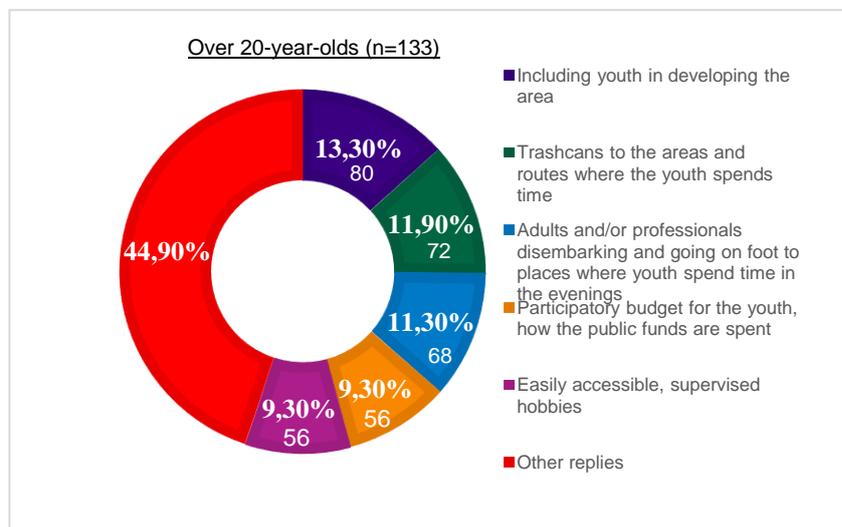


2. The alarming development of Klaukkala.





3. What actions would be needed



4. What would the residents be willing to do

