)sazee

Looking into how effective web-based youth centers are in promoting equality and participation using E-House as a case study

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

**Bachelor of Social Services** 

Degree Program in Social Services

Thesis

11th September 2015



Author	Nancy Osazee
Title	Looking into how effective web-based youth centers are in supporting equality and participation using E-House as a case study
Number of Pages	51 pages + 1 appendix
Date	11.09.2015
Degree	Bachelor of Social Services
Degree Programme	Degree Programme in Social Services
Instructors	Terhi Salokannel-Stenberg, Senior Lecturer
	Mai Salmenkangas, Senior Lecturer

In recent years, the number of services offering web-based youth work in Finland has increased. The goal of this thesis was to find out if youth work done online met one of the main goal of the Finnish youth work which is to support and promote equality and active citizenship (participation). As it is virtually impossible to look into all web-based youth centers in Finland, this thesis was made as a case study focusing only on one web-based youth house (E-House).

The study was made as a qualitative study. Data was collected through an online questionnaire promoted by E-House and as a result, 11 people replied to the questionnaire. Questionnaire questions composed of both open ended and multiple choice questions. The main reasons for this was due to the studies target group (13-19) and setting (online).

Data collected showed factors such as freedom of self-expression, acceptance and fair treatment, experience of service, involvement, input and contribution, and staff involvement to influencing how equality and participation are experienced and supported in E-House.

In conclusion, gotten result showed that E-House which is a web-based youth center does meet the main goal of the Finnish youth work which is to promote and support equality and active citizenship (participation).

	Equality, active citizenship, participation, youth work, webbased youth work, E-House, ladder of participation	



Tekijä	Nancy Osazee
Otsikko	Looking into how effective web-based youth centers are in supporting equality and participation using E-House as a case study
Sivumäärä	51 sivua + 1 liite
Päivämäärä	11.09 2015
Tutkinto	Sosionomi (AMK)
Tutkinto-ohjelma	Sosiaalialan koulutusohjelma
Ohjaajat	Terhi Salokannel-Stenberg, Senior Lecturer Mai Salmenkangas, Senior Lecturer

Viime vuosina, verkossa pohjautuva nuorisokeskuksen määrä on noussut Suomessa. Opinnäytetyön tarkoitus oli selvittää jos verkossa tehty nuorisotyö täyttää yksi tarkeimmistä nuorisotyön kriteereistä, mikä on sekä tukea että edistää tasa-arvoa ja aktiivista kansalaisuutta (osallisuutta). Koska on käytännössä mahdotonta tutkia kaikki verkossa pohjautuvia nuorisokeskuksia, opinnäytetyö oli tehty tapaustutkimuksena jossa keskittymiskohde oli E-Talo.

Tutkimuksen aineisto oli koottu verkkokyselyn avulla yhdessä E-Talon kanssa. Kokonaisuudessa 11 ihmistä osallistui kyselyyn. Kyselyn kysymykset koostuivat sekä avoimista että monivalinnaisista kysymyksistä.

Saatujen tietojen osoitti että ilmiötä kuten: itseilmaisu, hyväksyminen ja oikeudenmukainen kohtelu, kokemus palvelusta, ja henkilöstön osallistuminen vaikuttavat miten tasa-arvoa ja osallistumista koetaan E-Talossa.

Tapaustutkimus todisti että E-Talo, joka on verkko pohjautuva nuorisokeskus täyttää suomen nuorisotyön pääkriteerit, mikä on sekä edistää että tukea tasa-arvoa ja aktiivista kansalaisuutta (osallisuutta).

Avainsanat	Tasa-arvo, kansalaisten osallistuminen, osallistuminen,
	nuorisotyö, verkko nuorisotyö, E-talo, osallisuuden tikapuut



# **Table of contents**

1. Introduction	1
2. Some organizations providing web-based youth services in Finland	1
2.1 E-House	1
2.2 The Finnish Family Shelter	3
2.3 Netari	4
3. Context of Study	4
3.1 Youth and problem facing todays youth	5
3.2 Youth work	6
3.3 Web-based youth work	8
3.4 Possibilities and challenges facing Web-based youth work	9
3.5 Future of web-based youth work in Finland	11
3.6 Legislation and policies supporting youth work	11
4. Equality and Youth work	14
4.1 Equality	14
4.2 Formal versus substantive equality in youth work	16
4.3 Can equality really be achieved?	18
4.4 Importance of promoting equality	19
5. Understanding participation	21
5.1 Participation	21

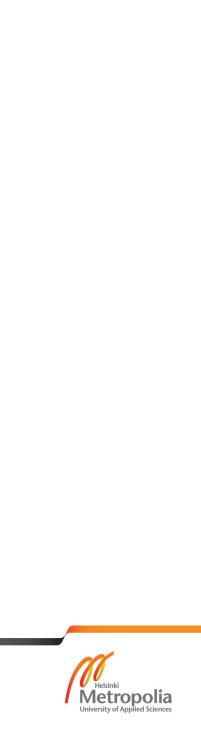


5.2 Participation as an element of active citizenship	22
5.3 Youth participation	24
5.4 Importance of youth participation	25
5.5 Youth participation through ladder of participation	26
6. Thesis implementation	30
6.1 Methodology	30
6.2 Forming study questions	31
6.3 target group	32
6.4 Analyzing the data	33
7. Study findings	33
7.1 Basic information	34
7.2 Factors influencing equality	35
7.2.1 Self-expression	35
7.2.2 Acceptance and fair treatment	36
7.3 Factors influencing participation	38
7.3.1 Experience of service	38
7.3.2 Involvement	40
7.3.3 Input and contribution	41
7.3.3 Staff initiative	42
8. Conclusion	43



,	8.1 Equality in a web-based setting	44
8	8.2 Promoting participation in a web-based setting	45
8	8.3 Suggestion for E-House	47
9. Dis	scussion	48
9.	.1 Reliability of study	48
9	.2 Ethical background of study	49
9.	.3 Recommendations for further studies	49
Ackn	owledgments	50
Refer	rences	
Appe	endix	





#### 1 Introduction

This thesis will be looking at how effective web-based youth centers are in supporting one of the main aims of the Finnish youth work which is equality and participation. This topic was chosen as in recent years, the amount of young people turning to web-based youth centers in Finland has increased (Verke, 2014). Though the exact number of young people patronizing the services of web-based youth centers in Finland is impossible to get, it is believed that thousands of young people in Finland visits the website of various web-based youth centers monthly (Verke, 2014). In other to get a clear picture of how effectively equality and participation are promoted in web-based youth centers, an online questionnaire was made in collaboration with E-House . E-House is a web-based youth center that was lunched in 2013 as a project by Kalliola youth.

The study is qualitative in nature and was conducted though a questionnaire as previously mentioned. Each questionnaire question was carefully structured to focus and highlight personal experiences, expectations and assumptions on web-based youth centers. The target age group for this thesis were people between the ages of 13 and 19 and in total, 11 participants participated in this study.

### 2 Organizations providing web-based youth services in Finland

In this session, the working life partner for this thesis will be introduced along side with two other web-based services offering support to young people in Finland.

#### 2.1 E-House

As previously stated, this thesis will be made in collaboration with E-House. E-House is a web-based youth center that was launched in January 2014 as part of a development project scheduled to run from 2013 to 2016 by Kalliola Settlement youth assassination. Kalliola Settlement is a non-governmental organization that provides civic and



voluntary activities, substance misuse care, child welfare and youth work related services around Helsinki metropolitan area (Kalliola settlement nd.).

E-house which is a project by Kalliola is intended for all 10-28 years old people living in Finland. According to an interview made with one of E-Houses supervisor, 55 percent of E-Houses service user live in Helsinki (Tero, 28.5.2015). The values E-House base their services on include; equality, respect for individual rights, approval of diversity, confidence in humanity and community's ability to solve own problems.

The house is divided into three groups; the girls house, the boys house and the rainbow room. Each group or house have been designed to tackle issues, stereotypes, questions, obstacles and possibilities facing those who relate to the group. Furthermore, though it might sound like each house have been designed based on gender and family types, E-House does not restrict service user from accessing any of its services. What this mean in a nutshell is that, girls are allowed to access the Boys house, and vice versa. The rainbow room is also not just for rainbow families but for everyone who can identify with it, anyone who is curious about own sexuality, or simply someone who is eager to learn more about sexual diversity (E-House, 2015). The rainbow room just like E-House and all other groups in E-House is opened for everyone living in Finland. You are welcome just the way you are is the slogan of E-House.

One of the most sought out service of E-House is the question and answer column. The column was designed as a low threshold service where young people can ask about issues bothering them. The column is divided into two sessions; one for boys and the other for girls and E-Houses workers are the only ones replying to the questions. Based on observation, questions are left on the column by E-Houses service users almost on a daily basis.

E-House also offers its users the opportunity to have a one on one chat with a worker every Wednesdays from 6PM to 8PM. In this chat session, the service user is free to discuss about any and everything bothering him or her. E-Houses chat is divided into two categories which are the one on one chat like previously disclosed and the theme



chat. The theme chat is available on Tuesdays from 5 to 7PM. The theme chat gives users the opportunity to ask what ever it is they have to ask related to sexuality. All conversations carried out in both chat sessions are confidential and will not be shared with a third party (E-house).

Lupakysyä, permission to ask is one of the most recent campaign by E-House. The aim of the campaign is to support participation amongst young people, especially young boys and men. The campaign also aims at supporting individual growth while respecting the privacy of its participants. In the past, E-house have lunched several projects and campaigns that aims at promoting participation and the activation of young people (E-House).

In January 2014, which was the first operational month of E-House, there were 698 unique visitors to E-House. As of April 2015, the amount of visitors had increased to 2852. This indicates that there is demand for E-House.

# 2.2 The Finnish Family Shelter

The Finnish Family Shelter (Nettiturvakoti) is an online based safe house for every and anybody living within the boundaries of Finland who is in need of help and or want someone to talk to. The Finnish family shelter is the online based network for The Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter (Ensi-ja turvakotien liitto) which is a nationwide civic and child welfare organization that focuses on helping children and families in difficulty.

The online Shelter has an average of 2000-4000 visits monthly making it one of the most sauteed online based welfare service provider in Finland. The online shelter also run an online chat group for everyone living withing Finland who feels the need of sharing personal story/stories as a means of inspiring others, trying to raise awareness about certain domestic issue/s and or someone genuinely trying to get help with their present life situation.



The Finnish Family Shelter's online chat opportunity is divided into three groups; The general forum; a support network designed for peer support and sharing own story and experiences. the bilateral chat session; for those who want to have a one on one chat discussion with a professional from The Finnish Family Shelter. and the group chat (Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter nd.).

#### 2.3 Netari

Netari is the largest and most used online based youth center in Finland (Netari, 2014). It was established in 2004 and gets an estimate of about 34,000 website visit annually. One of the main aim of Netari is to create a low thresh hold service where young people can spend their free time, make new friends, communicate freely to youth workers, and volunteers who are also professionals/ students in the field of social works.

Netari also provide its service users with the opportunity to be as active as they would be in a physical youth center.

### 3 Context of study

In this chapter, youth and youth work will be looked into. Furthermore, this chapter will be focusing on introducing web-based youth work as a form of youth work, some of the possibilities it offers and some of the challenges surrounding it.

Lastly, this chapter will also be looking at some legislation that aims at promoting youth work, participation among youths and equality in all stage of life.



### 3.1 Youth and problems facing todays youth

According to The United Nations, youth can be best defined and understood as a period of transition from childhood to an independent adulthood. For statistical purpose, a youth is defined as a person between the ages of 15 and 24 (UNESCO; 2014). The United Nations also noted and acknowledged that its definition may vary from that of some member states.

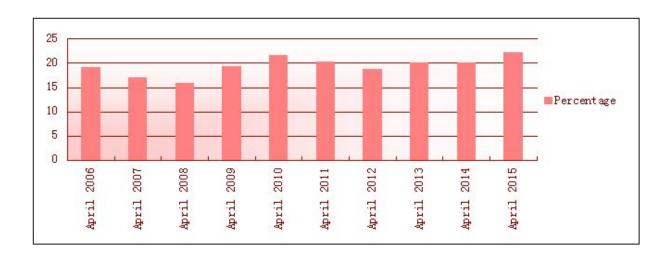
The National Youth Development Policy made in 1997 in Malaysia defined youth as a person between the ages of 15 and 40 (Youthpolicy, 2014). In Finland, the term "Youth" refers to a person between the ages of 11 and 29 (Youth Law 72/2006 2). Furthermore, the term has been broken down into three separate categories. Early adolescent: which is a person between the ages of 11 and 14, Middle adolescence; someone between the ages of 15 and 18 and the late adolescence category which ranges from ages 19 to 25 (Nuoruusika, 2013).

Though the definition of youth varies from place to place, problems facing todays' youths seems to a universal one. Some of these problems include unemployment and developing own identity.

According to Angela Merkel in an interview with the Guardian newspaper, youth unemployment is the most pressing problem facing Europe today (Cannolly, K. 2013). Within the European Union, unemployment within youths is larger than in other age groups. (eurostat, 2015) An estimate made by the European Union commission in 2007 placed the unemployment rate of people below the age of 24 at 15.4 percent, in 2015 the rate has increased to 20.9 percent (eurostat 2015).



Figure 1.0 Showing the unemployment rate of under 25s in Finland from April 2007 to April 2015 April



As can be easily seen in the chart, as of April 2015, unemployment rate of those under 25 in Finland (22.3 present) is slightly higher than the average of the European Union which (20.9 present). April 2008 seems to have been a good month for youths in Finland as its unemployment rate was less than 16 percent which is the lowest youth unemployment has been in a decade. It is important to note here about how the unemployment rate is calculated. Let us use April 2015 as an example. As previously mentioned as of April 2015, 22.3 percent of Finnish youth was unemployed. What this means in a nutshell is that 22.3 percent of youth who should be at work were unemployed. Just about 47 percent of this age group belong in the workforce as a lot of under 25s are students (Berner A. 2014).

### 3.2 Youth work

What we know today as youth work is said to have started out as Sunday Schools in the late eighteenth century (smith, M.K 2013). The aim back then was to provide education for children and young people who by virtue of poverty could not access other forms of education. These practices were entirely run by volunteers (Smith, 2013). Today the aim of youth work in western societies is different and more versatile due to



improved standard of living, the needs of young people today and the diversity of the time we live in (Verke, 2014).

Though a universal definition of youth work is yet to be agreed upon, there are several definitions of youth work that can be argued to fit a global perspective and standard. Davies and Batsleer (2010) defined youth work as a carefully thought and organized way of working with young people by human beings. Jeffs defined youth work as experienced practitioners being able to work with young people and helping them make sense of their experiences (Jeffs 2010).

In Finland youth work is defined according to the Finnish Youth Act which states that youth work should aim at promoting, equality, adolescents active citizenship on their own time as well as adolescents social empowerment (Nuorisolaki 72/2006). Youth work in Finland also aims at supporting growth, independence and communication between generations (Nieminen 2008:22).

In Finland, there are two main types of youth work; the outreach youth work and the preventive youth work (minedu, 2011.). The Finnish outreach youth work is aimed at people below the age of 29 without work or study place and in need of support in finding available public services. By reaching out to these people for example by mobile youth work or street work, the risk of social exclusion can be reduced (minedu, 2011.) The Finnish preventive youth work also aims at reducing exclusion while promoting inclusion (Nuoroperi, nd.) The main difference between the Finnish outreach and preventive you work is that the preventive youth work is less mobile, focuses more on younger age groups and on social issues like drugs and substance misuse (Nuoroperi, nd).

As previously stated, youth work today is a lot different from what it used to represent and difficult to pin down to one accurate definition. Even with that, the core value around youth work seems to have stayed the same. Provide opportunity to those who would otherwise be left behind (National Youth Agency, 2014).



### 3.3 Web-based youth work

The history of online youth work stems from the late 1980s (Vesikansa 1991). Though the concept of web-based youth work in the field of youth work is yet to be defined due to its constant envolvenment, web-based youth work has been described as dialogical youth work (Joensuu 2005). Caven-Pöysä, (2007) described web-based youth work with the terms; virtual youth work and virtual interaction services. The term web-based youth work which is now commonly used by professionals in Finland was first used to describe youth work done online by Passanen (Pasanen 2008). For the purpose of sticking to the commonly used term, web-based youth work will be the term used to describe youth work done online in this thesis.

Todays youths are active users of the internet unlike the generation of their parents and or their parents parent. Todays youth grew up surrounded by technology and are more aware about the possibilities and opportunities the online world has to offer than other generations (Joensuu, M. 2011). In other to reach the youths in a setting that is close to them, youth work has to recognize digital culture as a vital source of cultural and social capital of a growing young person (Verke, 2010)

The youth department of the City of Helsinki has named Web-based youth work as one of five core processes of youth work. With the first core process being social youth work; second core process being promotion of participation and community youth education; third process being administrative and support services, fourth process representing youth professional services and the fifth core process been about Web-based youth work as previously mentioned. The values of Web-based youth work can either be based on the values of the organization producing the activities, the Universal Declaration of Human rights, The Convention of the Rights of the Child, the city of youth work, a religious background or a political ideology (The youth department of Helsinki, 2009). The role of a youth workers in web-based youth work is slightly different from those working in face to face settings as in online interaction, body language or facial expressions cannot be analyzed (Nieminen, J. 2007,57.)

Nieminen described the key functions of Web-based youth work as socialization,



individualization, compensation and resourcing and allocation (Nieminen 2007a).

Figure 2.0 Defining Nieminens key functions of web- based youth work

Term	Definition
Socialization	Bridging the gap between a young person and his/her society and surrounding community
● Individualization	Supporting the growth of a young person into an independent individual who is aware of own needs and goals.
<ul> <li>Compensation</li> </ul>	Addressing factors threatening equality and non- discrimination; supporting those young people who are in the weakest position
Resourcing and allocation	Trying to influence resources allocated towards youth; Training young people to influence decisions concerning them which is also known as democratic citizenship.

As can be easily seen, the underlining factors of web-based youth work is highly similar to that of youth work itself. Though a set definition is yet to be set, youth work is always youth work regardless of the environment, medium or methods used (Sinisalo & Timonen, 2012, p.19).

### 3.4 Possibilities and challenges facing web-based youth work

There are obviously several reasons why young people use web-based youth centers. One of the most common reason for this according to the questionnaire carried out was easy access, anonymity, the opportunity to freely express oneself without seeing the other persons facial expressions and freedom to discuss issues that order-wise would be difficult to talk about. This phenomenon according to Suler is known as



online dis-inhibition (Suler, 2004a; Suler, 2004b). According to Tanis, when talking about dis-inhibition in an online setting, it is essential to note that this can either have a positive or a negative effect. Negative effect of dis-inhibition in an online setting can occur as a result of someone revealing too much too soon which may later result to regret, anxiety or even withdrawal from the group (Tanis & Postmes, 2007). On the positive side, Tanis also stressed on the need of being honest in such a setting as it is the only way to get help, find solution or get useful feedback about ones situation (Tanis & Postmes, 2007).

Web-based youth centers also provide opportunity for kids and youngsters living in neighborhoods with no youth centers the medium to communicate with adults in the field of youth work (Kovanen T. 2015). Kovanen also added that web-based youth centers have also been a useful additional tool to providing services especially for those young people with mobile disabilities and those who do not like going to youth centers. As promoting equality is one of the core aim of youth work, web-based youth centers can thus be seen as tool for reaching this goal (Kovanen T. 2015).

According to the Finnish National Development Center for online youth work (Verke), supporting and encouraging participation in web-based youth centers is just as important as it is in physical ones. Online, youth participation are encouraged through several mediums such as:

<u>Theme chats:</u> by researching then creating several themes young people will most likely be interested in, young people nationwide can be brought together under one "cyber-roof". In addition to having face to face chat, youth work often also focuses on activities such as playing sports. As this is not possible in a web-setting, it is important to find other mediums to pull, entertain, boost morals and make service users keep coming back (Verke, 2014).

Question and answer columns: This is another important tool lots of web-based youth centers are using to foster participation (Verke, 2014). Online centers such as the Finnish Family Shelter and E-House have a unique low threshold question and answer



forum that allows young people to ask questions about anything they want to learn more about or about anything bothering them. These questions can be asked at any given time and youth workers do the best they can to give a timely reply (Kovanen T. 2015). Lack of restriction of topic according to The Finnish National Development Center for online youth work, is a magnet for participation as service users know they can ask anything at any given time and will be getting a timely response (verke, 2014)

With the spotlight on youth workers in web-based youth centers, a lot has to be taken into account in other to limit the challenges these youth workers are facing. Some of the challenges web-based youth work and web-based youth workers according to the Mannerhemin League for Child Welfare are facing are funding, youth workers capability and ability to work online, organizing crisis chats in cases of sudden and tragic situations, technical problems and imperfection of the Finnish Law System (Mannerhemin League for Child Welfare,Nd.)

### 3.5 Future of web-based youth work in Finland

Web-based youth work in Finland seems to have come to stay. According to Suvi Tuominen who is one of the developers of web-based youth centers in Finland, web-based youth work in Finland still have a long way to go. The ultimate goal is to develop web-based youth work to a state where it is no longer a separate form of youth work but a natural part of youth work (Tuominen S. 2014). In other to reach this goal according to Tuominen, the concept of web-based youth work and web-based youth work as part of youth education still have to be looked into. The Finnish national development center for online youth work also shares the same goal with Tuominen when it comes to the future of web-based youth services in Finland (Verke, 2015)

# 3.6 Legislation and policies supporting Youth Work

The Finnish constitution Act, chapter 2 (2011), The Finnish Youth Act (2006), Child Welfare Act (2007), The Finnish Equality Act, are some of the major legislation governing youth work in Finland. Other important policies and legislation include, The



United Nations convention of the Rights of the child (UNCRC or CRC) and the The White paper on Youth by the European Union Commission will be looked into in this chapter.

According to chapter two section one of The Finnish Constitutional Act, Everyone is equal before the law... Children should be treated equally and as individuals and they should be allowed to influence matters pertaining to themselves according to their development (The Finnish Constitutional Act1999).

The Finnish Youth Act (formally known as The Finnish Youth Work and Policy) which has been enforced since the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2006. The act aims at supporting the growth of a young person and his/her Independence, close the gap between generations, promote active citizenship and social reinforcement in youth people. The Act also defines a young person as a person below the age of twenty nine (The Finnish Youth Act, 2006). The Finnish Youth Act and youth work is governed by the Finnish ministry of education and states that young people must be given the opportunity to take part in the handling of matters that concerns youth work and youth policy. (Minedu, nd.).

The Finnish Child Welfare Act aims at ensuring every child's right to safe developmental environment, balanced and diverse development and to special protection. Preventative child protection, promotion of well-being of children and young people are other aims of the legislation (The Finnish Child Welfare act, 2007) The Finnish welfare law and other legislation mentioned above are the core legislation in which the practice of youth work in Finland is based upon. ref missing

In 1989, governments around the world came together to sign the United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child. The treaty is commonly abbreviated as CRC or UNCRC. The main aims of the treaty was to define the meaning of a child, promote the rights of children, to ensure that children grow up in a peaceful environment, to ensure every child is free, is treated equally in the society and that no child is robbed of their dignity (Unicef. Nd.). The treaty defines a child as a person below the age of



eighteen. According to the treaty, all state parties must respect the rights of a child and take appropriate measures in ensuring no child is discriminated against due to his/her or his/her parents or legal custodians race, color, sex, language, religion, political view, disability, property, national, ethnic or social origin. The treaty also condemns punishment based on similar status. (OHCHR, 2015). The United Nations Convention On The Rights Of A Child was signed by Finland on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 1990 (United Nations Treaty Collections, 2015).

<u>The UNCRC</u> or the CRC has been signed by 191 out of 194 countries, territories and states of the world. USA, South Sudan and Somalia are the three remaining countries to do so. All governments who have acknowledged this treaty are expected to make sure that every child is entitled to all the rights outlined in the treaty (except in areas whose government has requested specific reservation) (together, nd).

In November 2001, the European Commission adopted the so called White Paper "A New Impetus for European Youth". The objective of the white paper is to build a new framework for cooperation among various actors in the field of youth work in other to better the opportunity of young people in getting involved in the making of decisions that concern them. (Europa, 2011).

The involvement of young people in decision making on youth related topic as previously stated has also been reinforced in Finland through the Finnish Youth Act and several campaigns and directions (Minedu.nd.). From January 2015, youth work in the city of Helsinki got a new direction called Ruuti. The aim of Ruuti is to make the city of Helsinki a better place for young people. In other to reach this goal, the city of Helsinki collaborated with young people around Helsinki in reinforcing five separate elements that were proven vital in reaching this goal. These elements were:

- 1. Promoting communality; Involving youth work in bond building of young people to the community they live in.
- Promoting youth empowerment and responsibility; Young people having a say in all youth work related issues and changes.



- 3. Promoting cooperation between services; All government owned and third sector youth centers working together to create better experience and services.
- 4. Combating inequality; Youth work staying as universal as it has always been; All youths are welcomed just the way they are and
- 5. The city providing an up to date service and comprehensive knowledge (Ruuti, 2013).

# 4 Equality and youth work

The focus of this chapter will mainly be on reviewing one of the literature this thesis will be based on which is equality.

Equality was chosen as one of the literature for this thesis as according to the Finnish youth act, one of the main aim of youth work is to support equality. Furthermore, this chapter will be focusing on some important legislation and policies from the United Nations, European Union and Finland that emphasizes on equality in all stages of life.

### 4.1 Equality

A modification of the 2004 Finnish equality act (Yhdenvertaisuuslaki) came into force on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The act aims at promoting quality, preventing discrimination and at enhancing the rights of those who have been or are victims of discrimination (The Finnish Equality Act, 2014).

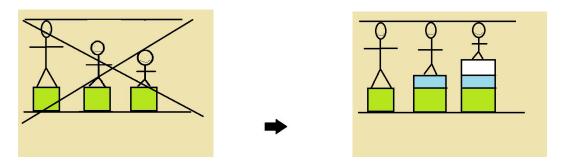
In 2014 the European Commission lunched the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program which is scheduled to last till 2020. The objective of the program is to contribute to areas where further development in equality and the rights of persons are involved (European commission, 2014). So in a nutshell what is equality?



According to Oxford dictionary of language matters, equality comes from a Latin word aequalis which means being the same in quantity, size, degree and value (Oxford dictionary:Language matters). Barker defined equality as equal right for all and the abolition of all special rights and privileges (Barker): Raphael on the other hand defined equality as equal satisfaction of basic human needs (D.D Raphael,). With these definitions, it is easy to see that equality is not the easiest word or concept to define. Furthermore, the predicate equality usually generate one question: equal in what respect? Thus, equality can be viewed as a descriptive relation between two or multiple objects, persons or qualities.

Another rather popular way equality has been described is that equality is not all about treating people the same way but about treating people in such a way that the outcome for each person will be the same (NYCI, nd.)

Figurre 3.0, showing how NYCI sees and defines equality



In other to further explain the concept of equality and show how diverse and complicated equality is, two principles on equality (formal and substantive equality) will be introduced in the next chapter.



### 4.2 Formal versus substantive equality in youth work

This chapter will be focusing on comparing formal equality to substantive equality. Also, both perspectives will be look into in relation to youth and youth work.

Comparing formal equality to substantive equality in terms of which is better is far from a walk in the park as both ensures possibilities and produce undeniable amount of consequences.

So what is formal equality? In a nutshell, formal equality refers to creating equal amount of opportunity for all, which means everyone been governed by same principles and regulations (Fourie C, Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer I. 2015, p.147). While this might sound ideal, the fact that we are all not born the same and into similar family situation are not taken into account. For example, while treating all young people the same way in a youth center is advised, it is also important to note that not all young persons who are visiting a youth center are visiting for the same reason. In other to cater for the needs of all young people using youth centers, people have to be treated differently based on their needs, potentials and general well-being (Kovanen T. 2015)

Substantive equality on the other hand recognizes that policies and practices enforced to suit everyone may appear to be non-discriminatory but may not address specific needs of certain groups of people (Equal opportunity commission, nd.) In other words, substantive equality aims at eliminating systematic inequality in other for people to reach their full potential. For example by acknowledging that not all healthy13 years old boys have the same needs, so in other to guarantee similar outcome for all, some 13 years old healthy boys have to be treated differently. Thus substantive equality has also been called equality of outcome (Cooray M. 1996).

Formal equality on the other hand focuses more on equal opportunity. Milton and rose Friedman (1980) explained equality of opportunity (formal equality) as a concept that should not be taken literally. They defined equality of opportunity as obstacle free path to realization of own ambition based on nothing else but own abilities (Milton and rose



F. 1980). In a job situation, this can easily be summarized as not taking age, sex, race, religion or any other form of physical differences into account when making employment decisions rather, focusing on the best possible person for the job. In 2010 the Finnish Public employment and business service (Te-palvelu) lunched an employment voucher card called the Senssi Card. The Card aims at increasing the opportunity of unemployed youths in gaining employment. From the equality of opportunity perspective, this will be a dscriminative program as it is based on extra help for certain people. From the equality of outcome perspective (substantive equality), this can be seen as providing extra needed help for those who need it in order to create and ensure fair opportunity of success for all. We can accept the outcome of a competitive process as fair only when the participants have equality in basic capabilities; the fact that no one is allowed to have a head start does not make the race fair if some contestants have only one leg (Chang H. 2010).

Even with above mentioned difference, both formal and substantive equality do share one common factors; they are both perspectives of equality. As previously mentioned, despite the different ways equality has been defined, the underlined concept is and has always been to remind us of our common humanity despite our differences (Fourie C, Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer I. 2015).

Based on examples given in this thesis, though substantive perspectives on equality can be seen as more generous and applicable towards youth work, it is important to note that the translations of these concepts are not set stones. A popular phrase from Aristotle "treat like case as like" is one popular way formal equality has been explained. In terms of youth work, this can be explained as treating all those using the services of youth centers the same way. As mentioned earlier, not all youths going to youth centers go for similar reasons. From a substantive equality stand point, when necessary, people should be treated differently in other to enable similar outcome. From a formal equality stand point, this is wrong as this endorses better treatment and more attention for some and lesser treatment and attention for others.



### 4.3 Can equality really be achieved?

Equality in this thesis has been and will continue to be viewed from a vague perspective as the term is not the easiest to break down. Instead of looking into different forms of equality such as gender or LGBT rights, equality in this thesis will be continually looked at as a concept that aims at ensuring equal outcome for all.

Can equality really be reached is a question that came up far too many times during the process of writing this thesis. Whilst some sociologists believe equality to be an abstract utopia concept, others see equality to be an achievable phenomenon. According to Fourie C, Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer, arriving at decisions that will satisfy everybody is not an easy task as people naturally have different interests. Egalitarianism, a trend that favors equality believes in the possibility of a society where people are treated equally and have access to equal opportunity (Fourie C, Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer I. 2015, p.25). The egalitarian view of equality according to Alexandra Boot is impossible. In 2011, Alexander Boot wrote an article for the daily mail about equality. According to Boot, equality is a destructive myth that can only be achieved in heaven. Boot described an equal society to be dangerous as it leads to downgrading of citizens. Children who grew up surrounded with books according to Boot will naturally have a greater opportunity to develop more intellectually than their counterpart who grew up around crushed beer can (Boot A, 2011). Trying to level the field in this situation requires taking some books from the fortunate children and passing it to the less fortunate ones. This according to Boot is a blow to equality as it pushes those at a higher level down to a lower level (Boot A, 2011).

Greg Mankiw, a professor from Harvard also believe an equal society to be a myth. Different from Boot, Mankiw do believe in assisting those in need but sees equality for all as fiction, a phenomenon that can never be achieved. According to Mankiw, we are not all equal from birth, while some are more beautiful, healthy, others are not (Mankiw G,) Thus it is impossible to create a society where all becomes equal without having to purposefully disfigure those who are beautiful or weaken the health of healthy people. Just like Boot Mankiw suggests trying to create an equal society is not only impossible but will also lead to the downgrading of those who are doing better.



The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better is a book by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett that defends equal society. According to Wilkinson and Pickett, inequality endorses mistrust, increased anxiety and illness. For each of eleven different health and social problems: physical and mental health, drug abuse, education, imprisonment, obesity, social mobility, trust and community life, violence, teenage pregnancies, and child well.being, outcomes are significantly worse in more unequal countries and societies. Thus an equal society is what we must aim for as in the long run, it benefits all. (Wilkinson R. and Pickett K, 2009 pp. 31-40)

Within the last decade, achieving an equal society has become the target for lots of modern societies like Finland. The Finnish equality act is one method Finland is using to prevent and combat both Boots and Mankiws take of equality as a myth. The act does not only aim at fostering equality and combat discrimination and inequality but also at enhancing and upgrading practices (such as youth centers and schools) that aims at promoting equality (The Finnish Equality Act, 2014). Though the Finnish equality act has been existing for over a decade and aims at preventing inequality, inequality still exist in Finland today. According to the research made in 2014 by Save the Children on bullying and discrimination, just one third of school aged pupils have not experienced bullying or discrimination at school (Save The Children, 2014).

Combating inequality is without a doubt a difficult task, ensuring an equal society too many is even a more daunting and an impossible task. So why do some societies aim for equality? The next chapter will be focusing on answering that question.

### 4.4 Importance of promoting equality

As one of the main aims of youth work is to promote equality, this chapter will be focusing on finding out some of the core reasons why promoting equality is of the essence.

As hinted by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, mental health and illnesses are linked to inequality (Wilkinson R. and Pickett K, 2009 p. 65). Thus equality is needed in other



to have a healthy and well-functioning society. As not every member of the society can afford own medical care cost, it is important to have a system where people are taken good care of despite of their financial or health situation. This according to Wilkinson and Pickett help create a society people want to be a part of. When people feel they are a part of the society and will be taken care of in times of need, their anxiety and frustration level will be lessen which will eventually have an impact on the general wellbeing of the community, society or country. With this Wilkinson and Pickett see equality as being vital in promoting inclusion, trust for governmental bodies, health issues, and reducing barriers between people of different backgrounds.

In the long run, an equal society will even be much more economical than an unequal one as people living in equal society will experience better health thus having a longer working career (Wilkinson R. and Pickett K, 2009 pp.217-225).

As good health is just as important for youths as it is for adults, healthy transition from the adolescent years to adulthood has always been of importance to the Finnish institute of health and welfare. According to the Finnish institute of health and welfare, the wellbeing of a child is not only important to his or mental health, physical appearance or performance in school but also to his or her future as what we go through as children do not systematically disappear when we become adults (The Finnish institute of health and welfare, 2015).

Promoting equality has also been said to promote justice, peace, and combat discrimination. As mentioned several times already, the main point of equality and of equal society is that gender, race, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity has nothing to do with how people will be treated. Meaning everyone is treated the same way before the law. Thus equality lessens tension between identity groups. When people believe the system or society is not biased against or for them, the odd of lashing out or taking out ones frustration on a different group is lessen. This also applies to youth and youth work. It is important for youths to know that they are important to the society and will not be discriminated against based on their age or presumed slighter knowledge of how the world works. This is believed to lessen tension and bridge the gap between generations (Save the Children, 2014).



Tough not everyone stepping into youth centers are there for same reasons, it is important for a youth worker to show that people will be treated equally and no one is discriminated against. Not only is this mandatory based on The Finnish Youth and Constitutional Act, this shows young people that no matter how different they or others are, everyone is guided by the same rule, no one has the right to violate the rights of others; not even adults, and that people are the same despite preferences, what they might believe in look like. This can also help in reducing prejudices. When people with different ethnic-, religious background, sexual orientation, political view, gender are in contact with each other, the odd of learning something new about a different or different groups increases. This also transpires into how people see and relate to others outside youth centers (Kovanen T. 2015).

Thus equality in the society is vital in promoting human right, inclusion, participation, general well-being, peace, and justice.

# 5 Understanding Participation

This chapter will be focusing on introducing the second literature this thesis will be based on which is participation. Participation will also be looked at in this chapter through Harts ladder of participation.

The reason behind choosing participation as one of the literature of this thesis is based on The Finnish Youth act which guides the Finnish youth work. The act (The Finnish Youth Act) states promoting active citizenship as one of the core aim of youth work.

#### 5.1 Participation

Participation which is one of the two key theory of this thesis can be defined or explained in several ways. Oxford dictionary simply defined participation as taken part in something (Oxford dictionaries, 2014). In Finland, the understanding and definition of



the term participation is a lot more complex and deeper that of the Oxford Dictionary. The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare defined participation as the opportunity to be involved in dealing with matters that concerns growth and development of oneself and that of the community. (The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, nd.). Horelli, Haikkola & Sotkasiira furthermore explained participation to be a social function that enables interaction between several actors. (Horelli, Haikkola & Sotkasiira 2008)

The term participation is a complex one that can be viewed from different perspectives and applied in different settings. For example: political participation, participation in the work place, participation in elderly homes and so on. For the purpose of this thesis, youth participation will be the only setting and form of participation looked into.

### 5.2 Participation as an element of active citizenship

This chapter was written and added to this thesis material as one of the main aims of the Finnish Youth Act is to promote active citizenship. The aim of this chapter is to open up the term "Active Citizenship", explain some of the ways it has been defined, what it stands for and then look into how active citizenship can be achieved, promoted and sustained.

Newman Janet and Evelin Tonkens (2011) defined an active citizen as a person who is no longer in need or depended of the welfare state and is willing to take a full part in the remaking of the society. (Newman J & Tonkens E., 2011. P.9). According to the training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work, active citizenship is about having the right, means and opportunity and support to contribute in building the society (The training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work nd.) . From its definition, active citizenship can be seen as citizens taking initiatives that aims at making the society a better place to live in. As active citizenship is one of the core aims of the Finnish Youth Act which guides youth work, the coming paragraph will be focusing on giving examples on what active citizenship in youth work refers to, how it can be achieved, promoted and sustained.



Active citizenship in youth work in Finland does not only refers to being apart of decision making process but also the possibility of being actively involved in the society. According to the city of Oulu, active citizenship is a stepping stone towards both individual and societal growth and development (The City Of Oulu, nd.). The city of Kajaani viewed active citizenship of young people as being important to growth and the development of own identity (The city of Kajaani, 2007)

Active citizenship according to the training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work can be promoted and achieved through several means;

For example by:

- -Encouraging young people to represent themselves
- -Encouraging young people to be publicly visible
- -Policy makers, youth workers or NGOs reaching out to as many young people as possible, not only through organized youth work for by for example through street outreach work
- Policy makers, youth workers or NGOs taken gender awareness and specific gender interest into account
- -Fighting against exclusion
- -Promoting dialogue
- -Allowing young people to make mistakes

So how can youths active citizenship be sustained? It should be obvious that getting people to do something is one thing; getting them to continue doing it or passing it on to others is a different ball game. On a report after a community based project, Okiira Peter stated transparency, involvement of beneficiaries, recognition of diversity, reflection, skills and flexibility as the best practice for sustaining participation (Okiira, P. 2000 p.25). Flexibility, coping skills, staff participation, openness and respect are core elements needed for sustaining participation (Simon N, chapter 11) Thus sustaining active citizenship is seen to be best obtained through the activeness of the project organizers.



From previous paragraphs, a conclusion can also be drawn that in other to foster the sustainability of active citizenship, a lot of attention has to be paid to participating citizens as they are vital informants to the general public about the happenings and quality of the project or organization. Openness, inclusion of all parties involved and knowledge about the needs of the community were other elements according to Okiira needed for the sustainability of participation (Okiira, P. 2000 p.25).

Over the years, active citizenship as a form of participation has also been openly criticized. The idea behind citizenship is not all it seem. It is a method used to discipline rather than to liberate and empower citizens. For example, participation as a right and a form of empowerment may be transformed into participation as a duty in the service of policy aims (Cruickshank 1990). Newman J & Tonkens (2011) Policymakers try to sometimes activate as many citizens as possible in order to manage tensions emerging from the transformation of welfare states (Newman J & Tonkens E., 2011 p.11).

### 5.3 Youth participation

Mary K. Chelton in her book The Nations Top Programs defined youth participation as a form of provision of information needed in other to understand and master self in relation to others (Mary K. Chelton) This definition in the writers opinion cannot be anymore clearer that youth participation is not only for the betterment of the youth but for the society at large.

The united Nations also had similar views on youth participation. According to the United Nations, youth participation is a fundamental right. Participation does not only help foster own development but also that of the community (United Nations, nd.)

In Finland, youth work and youth relate issues is governed by the youth Act. In 2005 an amendment was made to the youth act. This amendment was enforced in January 2006. In this amendment, youth participation on matters that concerns them was highly highlighted. According to chapter 3 section 8 of the act, young people must be given the opportunity to participate in local and regional youth work and in the deliberation of



their policies. In addition, the act stated that young people must be consulted in matters affecting them (The Youth Act, 2006).

Though the idea of youth participation in decisions concerning them sounds empowering, the idea has been questioned and criticized almost as much as it has been defended. Horelli, Heikkila & Sotkasiira (2008) though it sounds idealistic for children and young people to be heard in matters that concern them, very few have the resources and skill to participate in these issues (Horelli, Heikkila & Sotkasiira 2008:217). What Heikkila and Sotkasiira were trying to explain here is the danger associated with adults, parents and or officials passing on their responsibilities to children who may not be aware of the long term effect of the decision they are making or a part of. On the other hand, a report made by Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter (Ensi-ja Turvakotien liitto) described youth participation in issues concerning them to be important as it teaches young people that their experiences, opinions and ideas are valued and will be listened to. This according to The Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter will also help in boosting a young persons self-esteem and presumption of self-worth (Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter, 2008 p.15-16).

### 5.4 Importance of youth participation

Though the importance of youth participation have already been looked briefly looked into in previous paragraphs and chapters, this chapter will be focusing on given more examples and explanations on the importance of youth participation.

As previously mentioned, youth participation is not only important for the purpose of individual growth and maintaining own well-being but also for the community in which the young person lives in. Youth as they say are the leaders of tomorrow "Teach him the way to go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it". Though that sentence was directly taken from the bible, Proverb 22:6 (Prov, 22:6) to be precised, what that sentence mean is that we are products of our society. Who we are today has a lot to do with how we were brought up.



From a non-religious stand point, youth participation should be encouraged as it is a source for competent citizenship (Moses 2001). Youth participation brings young people together; enables empowerment through accomplishment of task or purpose of gathering... Youth participation builds sense of power and the feeling of belonging and importance in the community (Delgado & Staples, 2008). Youth participation can help in combating youth stigmatization (Foster, J. 2001). Above listed reasons on why youth participation should be encouraged was collected from several sources. With that, all sources seems to have drawn similar pictures and came to similar conclusion on the importance of youth participation as an opportunity for self-expression, sharing own views, reducing the feeling of exclusion thus promoting individual and communal well-being and spirit. With this is important to note that not all good intentions lead to positive outcome.

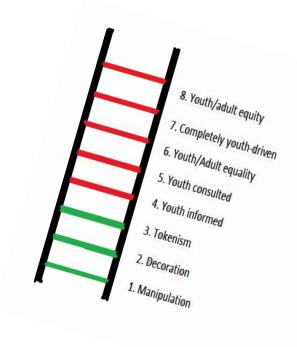
This chapter hoped to have explained the idea behind youth participation in the simplest way possible. Concerns especially in decision making was introduced in other to show a wild perspective of the term and the striking opinions and views surrounding it.

### 5.5 Youth Participation through Ladder of citizen participation

As mentioned in chapters above, youth participation is a lot more than being heard politically but also in civil, social and everyday activities. Thus youth participation occurs when all parties involved feel included, are a part of decision making and implementing processes. One of the most common approach to conceptualizing youth participation came from Roger Heart (Fletcher A. 2014). Heart's explanation of youth participation also known as Hearts ladder of participation came from Sherry Arntein's typology of citizens participation whereby participation is divided into eight categories; with each category placed above the other. The higher the category, the more participatory the concept. Heart's ladder of participation was initially designed for UNICEF as a tool for measuring different models of youth involvement and participation in projects.



Figure 4.0 Roger Heart's ladder of youth participation



According to heart, the ladder can also be used by project organizers to reflect on their practice in terms on how inclusive it is and how much it enhances youth participation. In the lowest three steps on the ladder of participation according to Hart, represents none participator forms of participation. In the coming paragraphs, each step of the ladder will be explained in relation to youth participation.

- 1. Manipulation: Refers to situations where adults force young people into attending or being a part of functions without regards for the young persons or peoples interest (Fletcher A. 2011, chapter 6) For example: Awareness campaigns,
- 2. Decoration: Refers to adults using youths to decorate their activities. For example by using young people to promote events with the aim of either getting positive or negative response from the audience (Fletcher A. 2011, chapter 6).



3. Tokenism: this according to Heart refers to portraying youth participation for example in a project, while in reality, the young people involved have no say in what is going on (Hart R. 1997 P.78)

The higher 5 steps in the ladder according to Heart, are more involving, promotes and focuses more on actual participation.

- 4. Youth Informed: this refers to youths being able to impact adult driven decisions or activities (Fletcher A. 2011, chapter 6). For example an adult project leader coming up with an idea for an activity and youth being able to have a say on when and how this activity is implemented
- 5. Youth consulted: During the early planing stage of an activity, event or even project, young people are consulted using different means of communication. Their answers are taken into account during the decision making process (Pötsönen U. 2013). For example when thinking about new activities or games for a youth center, the opinion on the youths using the services are asked on what kind of activities or games they are interested in. Based on given reply, decisions are made.
- 6. Adult/Youth equality: This is a 50/50 split in which young people are treated as equal partners in authority, obligation and in commitment. This according to Fletcher will be an empowering phenomena for the youths involved and also help in building youth/adult relationship (Fletcher A. 2011, chapter 6).
- 7. Completely youth driven: Adults taking passive roles in youth related activities or decisions, this according to heart is true participation as decisions are made by youths though projects might be adult lead (Hart 1997). This according to Fletcher should be encouraged as youths are given the opportunity to see the impact of their actions. Moreover, this helps youth gain an understanding of the potential and consequences of their actions on themselves, others and the community at large (Fletcher A. 2011).



8. Youth/adult equity: Adults creating structures that supports differences and enables supportive learning environment for young people. (Fletcher A. 2011, chapter 6). This form of participation, young people are in-charge of implementing campaigns or projects ran by adults (Pötsönen U. 2013).

The aim of previous paragraphs is to explain different levels and forms of youth participation. Hearts notion of the highest five levels of his ladder of participation being the most effective way of promoting youth participation have not gone without criticism. According to McCarty & McCarty, the seventh level in Hearts ladder (Completely youth driven) is the best form of enabling youth participation as youths are completely in charge in terms of making own decision with adults taking the back sit (McCarty & McCarty, 2007). Others see the seventh level as being what campaigns and projects aiming to promote youth participation should aim for as this is the level that ensures the highest level of empowerment (Fletcher A. 2011, chapter 6).

Hart's ladder of participation is an intended tool for showing different types and forms of youth participation. With this tool, professionals can learn about the best way to carry out projects intended to enhance and encourage youth participation. Also, with the help of feedback form young people, professionals can get information on what young people perceive as being the most suitable for getting their voice/es heard. By placing gotten feedback against Hart's ladder of youth participation, professionals can see how young people prefer to be worked with.

This chapter hoped to have discussed the literature of thesis from a wild perspective and give background knowledge to why the specific social pedagogical concepts were chosen as the literature for this thesis. As stated in the introduction paragraph, the aim of youth work is the overall reason for the chosen literature.



# 6 Thesis implementation

This chapter will be focusing on the background information behind this thesis.

# 6.1 Methodology

This thesis was made as a case study using a qualitative method of research to analyze gotten data.

A qualitative research according to Welman aims at understanding social aspect of life with the focus on peoples experiences and opinions. (Welman, C. 2006). A case study on the other hand according to Tuomi & Sarajärvi refers to either trying to understand or explain a phenomena (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2006, 27-32). A case study was chosen as the data collection method and qualitative research as data analyzing method for this thesis as the main aim of this thesis as mentioned several times before is to explore young peoples experience of web-based youth centers. As explained by Welman and Tuomi & Sarajärvi both qualitative research and case studies focuses on peoples experiences and in trying to explore and understand them.

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted" (Albert Einstein). Albert Einsteins previously sited sentence can be read and explained in more one one way. From a quantitative research point of view, the sentence can be viewed as taken into account that peoples experiences and opinions differs. A qualitative research can produce two different result when conducted with the same client group in a different setting. This thesis was made for this reason as a case study. In other to get a full and wilder picture or perspective on how effective web based youth centers in general are in promoting equality and participation, more web-based youth centers have to be looked into and researched.



### 6.2 Formulating study questions

This was one of the most difficult part of the thesis for two main reasons:

A)The initial idea of the thesis had to be changed in other to ensure a more focused and better quality thesis.

B) Research on web-based youth centers showed that not all web-based youth centers shared the same focus.

The process began with a discussion with several professors in the university. Each gave insights on how to conduct a thesis research, whom they felt would be the best possible working life partner and how to go about finding more options. At first, finding the right working life partner in the field of web-based youth work seemed rather overwhelming as the number of organization offering related service was a lot more than previously assumed.

Right from the get go, it was clear that this thesis will be made as a case study as it is virtually impossible to look into all web-based youth centers. In Finland, web-based youth work is treated just as the physical ones. According to the Finnish National Development Center for Online youth work, the aim of the Finnish web-based youth work is not to be a separate form of youth work but a natural part of youth work (Verke, 2014). Though finding statistics on the amount of young people using web-based youth houses proved to be impossible due to the vast amount of web-based youth centers in Finland, an estimate was given by E-House on the amount of young people using their service.

According to the estimate given by E-house: in January 2014 which was their first month of operation, there was a total of 698 visits to their website. As of March 2015, the amount of visits had increased to 3488 which is a 20 percent in growth. These estimates and research done on the topic helped build the thesis questions which are:

- 1. How is E-House promoting participation as a form of active citizenship?
- 2. How do their service user view their experience from a participatory stand point?



### 3. How is equality promoted?

The questions were furthermore broken into segments and a total of 15 questions were made. These questions can be found in appendix one. The questions were made in form of a questionnaire alongside with E-House. It was published online with a unique link and promoted by E-House.

The objective of the thesis was explained in the front page of the questionnaire. Also, participants were assured of anonymity and that no personal data or traceable characteristics will be used in this thesis.

# 6.3 Target group

Since this thesis is based around youth work and all youths (13-29) are allowed in youth centers - the aim was to target only people between the ages of 13 and 19. The main reason for the target age group was to limit the age gap between questionnaire participants as this was believed to create a more cohesive result. The second criterion for participating in this questionnaire was that all participants would have to be active users of E-House: this would ensure that participants are familiar with the practice of E-House thus providing more reliable information.

In other to get as many willing, quality participants as possible, an online questionnaire was made and published online in collaboration with E-House. Other than online questionnaire being the only reasonable option for collecting data in this thesis, creating online questionnaire also gave insights to how working online feels and the importance of paying attention to each question in other to pass across intended intention as there is no possibility of clarifying any question should any participant be puzzled.

In total, 11 users of E-House responded to the questionnaire and almost every participant had answered to every question asked in the questionnaire. The



questionnaire was published on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 and was available till the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 2015. The very first response came just in few days after the questionnaire was published and the ages of respondents varied from 13 to 22. Feedback from participants above the age of 19 were not taken into account due to the target age of this thesis. Nine of the eleven participants were female meaning only two male answered to the questionnaire.

# 6.4 Analyzing the data

The data analysis began by looking into eligible participants (participants between 13-29). Answers from participants above the targeted age (2) were deleted as there were no use for them. The fact that two people above the age of 19 answered to the questionnaire gave the impression that the targeted age for eligibility was not clear enough.

As can be seen in the appendix, questions for the questionnaire were all written in Finnish thus reply gotten were all in Finnish. Reply gotten had to be translated into English in other to make the process of analyzing it easier. All gotten reply were carefully translated to English in other not to misinterpret, add own thought or exclude any part of the gotten data. After all answers had been translated, they were coded using systematic codes. Systematic coding refers to going through text in other to identify all emerging them or themes.(David & Sutton 2011: 346). In total, 7 different categories of data were found and each was coded with a unique color code in other to make the data analyzing process as clear as possible.

# 7 Study Findings

This chapter will be focused on presenting found results from the online questionnaire made. As mentioned in the data analysis chapter, data collected were categorized into 7 different categories (basic information, experience of service, involvement, self-expression, equality, and suggestion for E-House). Each categories were furthermore



separated into four themes (Basic information, themes supporting equality, themes supporting participation and suggestion for E-House). Each team will be presented in this chapter.

The terms Participant 1, participant 2, participant 3... will be used in this thesis to refer to participants who answered to the questionnaire.

#### 7.1 Basic information

In an interview conduct with E-House, it was disclosed that females were more active users of E-House than males. The questionnaire carried out also came out with the same finding. Out of a total of 11 participants, 9 were females. Most participants were 15 to 18 years old. When asked about how they found out about e-House, Internet search engine and social media were the top sources participants said to have directed and then to the virtual door step of E-House. Of all 11 participants, just 2 said they were also active users of other youth houses (both physical and web-based ones).

According to participant 2, the main reason for her using web-based youth center is because there is no youth center close to where she leaves. This lead to refereeing back to The future of web-based youth centers chapter where Tuominen Suvi argued web-based youth centers to be more important than previously presumed.

According to the questionnaire, most participants were long term and were frequent users of E-House.

The main aim behind the basic information section was to get to know questionnaire participants as much as possible in other to get useful background information concerning their knowledge and experience of youth centers. This was seen to be useful as it would help identify those who were more or less familiaire with youth work practices. Will the experience of those who are still active members of physical youth centers differ from those mainly using web-based youth centers? This was something



thought to be an interesting additional finding.

### 7.2 Factors influencing equality

This chapter will be focused on introducing and analyzing data found on how equality is experienced in E- House by E-houses service users. Furthermore, this chapter will be looking at how equality is experienced in E-House through elements identified to influence experience of equality. Identified factors in the data that is believed to affect how equality is perceived in E-House by its service users include: Self-expression, acceptance and fair treatment. Each factor will be opened up in coming chapters.

### 7.2.1 Self-expression

When asked about how easy or difficult it was for participants to be themselves online, most participants felt it is a lot easier to stay true to oneself online than in physical youth centers. According to **participant 5**, "you do not have to worry about how you look online. I like it here because we are encouraged to be ourselves".

When it comes to how freely service users are given the opportunity to be themselves, **Participant 2** also seemed to share same opinion with **participant 5**. According to **participant 2**, "the best thing about E-house is that people are not treated differently even when they are obviously different from others". **Participant 2** also revealed to be an active member of Netari which is one of the most visited web-based youth center in Finland. According to her, low threshold and freedom is the main reason for her being an active user of web-based youth centers. **Participant 2** furthermore disclosed that, since she started using E-House and Netari , she is much more open about her sexuality and do not feel the need to beg people to accept her for who she is.

In other to get more information on how much or how well self-expression is supported, participants we asked if they have ever asked any question or given developmental suggestions since they have been using E-House. The second aim behind the question



was to find out how active or passive E-Houses service users were. This was also believed to give information on how service users see or view their opportunity of being able to be a part of what E-House represents. While most participants disclosed been able to ask questions freely, very few participants seemed to have been interested in being a part of decision making process in E-House.

All in all participants felt that they do not have to assume a different persona when in the virtual world of E-house.

**Participant 1** "Online I can be anybody I want but I do not feel I have to be somebody else here because there is no need for it. Also, it it makes no sense to pretend to be somebody else when you are trying to get help online because nobody can see you anyways.

Participant 4 "Online it is easy to ask anything because nobody knows who you are"

**Participant 5** "People are supportive and nobody has judged or written any hate comment to me so far"

### 7.2.2 Acceptance and fair treatment

As one of the most crucial element of equality is acceptance, acknowledging and celebrating diversity instead of shying from it, questions related to how E-House supports diversity were asked. One of the questions asked was "How is difference in opinion or in viewpoint supported?" From the get go, it became obvious that this question should have been a lot more refined and perhaps broken down into smaller segments. Out of 11 people who responded to the questionnaire, just 7 people answered to the question. In general, this was the least answered question. One of the reason to the poor response is believed to be due to how the question was poorly



arranged.

Despite the low rate of reply and interest in the question, all reply gotten from participants were positive ones.

Participant 3"You can get your answer from the front page of E-House. You can also read through the question and answer column. People are accepted just the way they are here, I guess that is why most of us like it here. You do not even have to identify yourself as a boy or a girl. It is enough you are not a robot"

Participant 5 "I feel more comfortable with the one on one chat. As you might have noticed by now, I am a problem child and I have a lot to talk about. I have gotten lots of support here and I also got information on how to reach other services "

**Participant 9** "Nobody knows anybody here so there is no need to pretend to be someone else. Each time I have left a question or have had a one on one chat, I have gotten a useful reply. No body have judged my lifestyle here".

**Participant 11** "Here you can talk freely. All my questions have been answered and I did not feel angry at myself afterwards"

Gotten reply suggests that people feel that they can ask about any and everything bothering them without been discriminated against or meant to feel like a fool for asking.

One participant also mentioned that she has gotten a lot of confidence since she became an active user of web-based youth centers - participant 2. Apart from E-House, Participants 2 as mentioned earlier also patronizes the services of Netari.

When asked about how difficult or easy it is to ask questions online, almost all participants felt that they could ask anything online but just as physical youth centers,



some amount of courage, push or incentive was disclosed to be needed in other to make the final decision of talking or in this case writing to an adult.

In other words, though most participants felt that they could share their story or ask about any or everything bothering them online, they also revealed that asking questions online is not as easy as it might sound even when aware that own identity is safe.

**Participant 4** "It is easy to be here, I know that I can ask anything but asking something is not always easy especially when you do not know how to ask"

**Participant 9** "I like coming here because I can talk about anything even difficult topics".

# 7.3 Factors influencing participation

This chapter will be focusing on introducing and analyzing data found in the questionnaire that are related to how participation is perceived by E-Houses service users. Also, this chapter will be looking at participation through Hart's ladder of participation.

### 7.3.1 Experience of service

Just as the heading hinted, this chapter will be focused on showing how E-House users experience services offered by E-house.

When asked about how they feel about the question and answer column (which is a huge part of what E-House does. Re-read working life partner for refreshment of information), the reply gotten from participants was a unanimous one. All participants who revealed that they have asked a question felt that their questions were replied to



excellently and in a timely manner. Most participants also saw the question and answer column to be a useful addition to E-House as it gives service users the opportunity to ask freely about issues bothering them. Another reason most participant felt the question and answer column to be a useful one was that as the column is an open one, it gives service user the opportunity to read and learn from the experience of others (All questions asked and answer given in the question and answer column can be seen by anyone accessing the question and answer column of E-House).

Participants also revealed not been able to see who they are conversing with as a positive thing.

Participant 1 "Online, you can ask things you would not dear ask in person".

Participant 3 "When you are afraid or bothered by something embarrassing, it much easier to ask anonymously online. Also, I know am going to get good and useful answer"

**Participant 11** "Online, I do not have to wait for my turn, I can ask any question when I want to and I do not have to worry about anybody listening to my conversation"

When asked about how E-House or web-based youth centers in general differ from traditional youth centers, this is what some participants had to say.

Participant 5 "online I can be more open because people here come from all over Finland and not just from one location. Here it is a lot easier to talk about personal things and with adults. Online youth centers are good especially when your closest youth center will not accept you"

One participant revealed to have stopped going to the youth center closest to her because it was usually too crowded- **Participant 7** 



In general, all participants seemed to have been happy with the services offered by E-house. The only complain gotten was from a 13 years old boy who wished E-House would also have online games. More suggestions from participants to E-House will be discussed more in a later chapter.

One other thing participants seemed to have been happy with was the vast information available on E-Houses website.

**Participant 7** "Because E-House has lots of information related to the adolescent years and puberty, I do not have to turn to suomi24 for answers" (Suomi 24 is the most popular online forum in Finland)

Participant 9 "I like coming here because I always find something new"

#### 7.3.2 Involvement

As mentioned in earlier chapter, most participants did not feel the need to be a part of E-Houses decision making process. This chapter will be focused on given some reasons to why participants did not feel the need to be more involved.

Question 13 of the questionnaire was focused on finding out participants interests in suggesting discussion topic or activities for E-House. Out of 11 participant, only 1 participant stated to have suggested a discussion topic for E-House. Most of the reasons revealed by participants for this was that they had nothing to add to existing service and that they have not had the time to think of something. The most repeated reply given by participants reinforced Horelli, Heikkila & Sotkasiira fear that though it sounds idealistic for children and young people to be heard in matters that concern them, in reality very few have the resources and skill to participate in these issues (Horelli, Heikkila & Sotkasiira 2008:217).



Apart from not being active with the modeling of E-house, participants seemed to be otherwise involved in other aspects and with other services E-House has to provide. As established earlier, participants felt they can be themselves; felt that they are not being discriminated against; and that they are being heard. Not trying to jump into conclusion but it seemed that participants are satisfied with the service provided by E-House and see no need for major changes.

### 7.3.3 Input and contribution

This chapter will be focusing on analyzing how participant view their role and the role of E-Houses service providers (staffs).

Apart from getting reply to own questions, many participants also believed to be assisting and learning from others in similar situation with their questions.

**Participant 11** "I come here every now and then just to read what others are asking. I feel like I can ask anything too and other people can benefit from the reply I get as everything is public and anonymous"

"I like the question and answer column because it is public. We can all learn from each other's problems." - Participant 5

Question about how participants felt about the quality of service gotten from E-House provided a unanimous answer from questionnaire participants. All participants who answered to the question felt like the staff of E-house were there for them. Participants also seemed to believe that they can freely ask any question and get further help should any be needed.

Participant 5 "questions are answered on time and one on one chat with staff is



also easy to get. You just have to be aware of the different schedules of staffs"

#### 7.3.4 Staff initiative

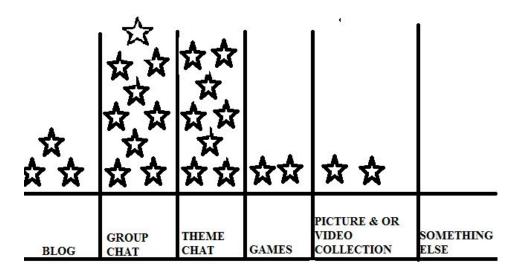
During the questionnaire making process, members of staffs of E-House showed an interest in finding out what questionnaire participant would like to see added to the service of E-House. As a result, a new question (question 14) was added to the questionnaire which included activities suggested by E-House. Participants were given the opportunity to choose from 5 new activities (blog, group chat, theme chat, picture and video collection, and games) and were furthermore given the opportunity to be creative as they were told that they could also suggest something not included in the option given.

The response gotten from this question was a mile away from question 13 where participants revealed to have been satisfied with the service of E-House just the way it was. Every questionnaire participant had answered to this question with group and theme chat taken the lead. Participants were given the opportunity to choose more than one option and almost every participant chose either group or theme chat as one of their multiple options. The only two male participants were the only people to have chosen the game option. With that it is most likely safe to say that had more males participated in the questionnaire, the amount of participants suggesting games to E-House would have been a lot more. Of all 11 participant, not even 1 participant suggested something that was not suggested by E-House.

What this question showed is the power of staff initiative. According to McCarty & McCarty, the seventh level in Hart's ladder of participation (completely youth-driven) is the best way to support youths participation as it is completely youth driven with adults taking a passive role (McCarty & McCarty, 2007). This questionnaire proved otherwise. Based on the result gotten from question 13 and 14, Youth consulted which is the fifth level of Harts ladder of participation seemed to have been the best and most effective way of getting youth more involved in decision making process. Without staffs initiative, it would have been somewhat difficult to get the direction E-Houses service users



would want E-House to move towards.



### 8 Conclusions

Findings from this study have shown that web-based youth settings are indeed capable of achieving the goals of The Finnish youth work which is promoting equality and creating an atmosphere that encourages and fosters active citizenship (participation). The study findings also showed that the role of staff is vital in reaching these goals.

The coming chapters will be focused on two themes:

- 1. Presenting conclusion drawn based on study findings and
- 2. Connecting findings to the theory of equality and participation as presented in this thesis.



### 8.1 Equality in a web-based setting

As introduced in the formal versus substantive equality chapter of this thesis (see formal versus substantive equality in youth work, 4.1.2), equality of outcome seems to be a more generous approach towards equality and what youth work should aim for. Substantive equality or equality of outcome as explained before aims at enabling similar results for all despite obvious similarities or differences people may have. As found in the study, equality of outcome was one of the factors pulling young people towards E-House. Thus the practice of E-House in term of equality leans more towards substantive equality. This conclusion was drawn based on results gotten from questionnaire findings.

In terms of equality and E-House, E-house was found to be a productive medium of promoting equality online. Based on the participants of this study, their experience as a service user matched with the principles of E-House which is that people are allowed just the way they are and that no one is turned down based on own belief, sexual orientation, gender or mental health for that matter. These principles also complies with the Finnish Equality act which forbids discrimination of individuals or group of people based on origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics (The Finnish Equality Act, 2014). As introduced above, the principles of E-House does not only seem to align with The Finnish Equality act but also focuses on individuality while trying to promote a fellow feeling. An example of how E-House focuses on individuality without disregarding others can be seen in the acceptance and fair treatment chapter where questionnaire participants revealed the service of E-House to be a just one as E-House encourages diversity, openness, and give unbiased answers while focusing on one person/question at a time (replying to questions service user ask in the simplest way possible so both the service user and other people reading the reply understands how best to deal with the situation in question).

Whilst ensuring similar outcome for some is a myth that should not be attempted as cannot be reached (see can equality really be achieved chapter), others like E-House



see things from a distinct perspective. This conclusion was drawn based on the findings of this study. Based on study findings, E-Houses service users believed that they will be accepted just the way they are and treated in a way that enables their individual needs met.

The study also showed that equality can be promoted in web-based youth centers just as effectively as in traditional physical youth centers. This could be why the aim of The Finnish National development Center For Online Youth Work is eventually to transform web-based youth centers into a form of youth work rather than a supportive measure of practicing youth work which is what web-based youth centers are mostly used for today (The Finnish National development Center For Online Youth Work, 2014).

In general, promoting equality in a web-based youth setting was found to be a possibility. However, how service users see themselves in the services or services offered has a lot to do with how equality is perceived.

# 8.2 Promoting participation in a web-based setting

As explained in section 4.2 in this thesis, empowering youths with the knowledge and information needed to be a part of decision making process is one of the main aim of active citizenship (participation). This study showed that participation might not be the easiest to support online as services are usually already structured. As this thesis was made as a case study with the target group being existing users of E-House, how the current structure of E-House came about was impossible to find out in this study. Furthermore, questions regarding the foundation of E-House were not included in the questionnaire questions as this would have changed the direction and aim behind this study.

Based on the findings of this study, two main factors were found to foster active citizenship (participation) in E-House:



- 1. The quality of service
- 2. Staff initiative

The quality of services was disclosed by questionnaire participants as one of the main reasons for patronizing the services of E-House. Previously made conclusion was drawn from the findings of this study. Though every section of the study finding showed E-Houses service users to be satisfied with the quality of service gotten from E-house, this paragraph will be paying a closer look to the input and contribution chapter of this thesis where questionnaire participants revealed been active in the question and answer column of E-House due to the timely-, well written-, non-nonjudgmental responses from members of staff and the hope of being able to assist others in similar situation. This from the perspective of active citizenship is a strong pass as active citizenship in youth work in Finland does not only refer to being a part of decision making process but also the possibility of being actively involved in the society. Allianssi a national service and lobbying organization for youth work in Finland noted young people learning to work together as a member of the society as one way of promoting active citizenship (Allianssi 2008, p.9).

Staff initiative and their active role in innovation and coordinating of activities were also found to be key sources in motivating and trying to find out the interest of youths using E-House.

As briefly introduced in the staff initiative section of this study, in comparison to the seventh level of Harts ladder of participation (completely youth-driven) where youth participation was argued to be best experienced, Youth consulted which is the fifth level of Harts ladder of participation seemed to have been the best and the most effective way of getting service users more involved in the decision making process in E-House. Had staffs in this study not made the effort to take the first step towards putting its service users in a situation where they had to make a decision, the possibility of finding out the interests of service users in this study would have been next to zero.

In conclusion, the promotion of participation in a web-based youth center was found to



be a rather challenging one. In other to successfully promote participation in a webbased setting, a lot of creativity, ingenuity and patience was found to be needed. Furthermore, paying a lot of attention to the needs and wants of service users was found to make a difference in how service users see and perhaps understand their possibility to make a change or impact the quality or type of service they are getting.

A secondary finding showed web-based youth centers to be valuable source of obtaining needed guild-line and information by youths. Also found in the study was that interest in web-based youth centers amongst youth is high as majority of questionnaire participants found E-House through internet search engine.

# 8.3 Suggestion for E-House

The study showed that E-Houses service users are satisfied with the quality of service they are getting. The study furthermore showed that E-Houses service users are not necessarily aware of all the opportunities available to them. This became clear as questionnaire participants did not have much to say about what they would see added to the service of E-House but when given options to choose from in a later question, every participant had an opinion on what service should be added to the service of E-House. In other to find out the needs of your service users, and also to know what your service users think of your existing service/s, organization of random questionnaire or a feedback survey time to time or couple of times a year is suggested. This is believed to help activate your service users and remind them of their power to structure or shape the services and direction of E-House.

In the survey made, most participants had revealed not to be aware of the permission to ask campaign (Lupakysyä kampanja). The suggestion here would be notifying your service users of coming programs before lunching them. This might help create more awareness about your coming programs, so by the time the programs are lunched, your service users are already aware about the programs, its lunch date and what the program is all about.



### 9 Discussion

The Objective of this thesis was to look into how effective web-based youth centers are in supporting equality and participation using E-House as a case study. Given the number of questionnaire participants and their varying length and experience of web-based youth centers, I can say a rich sample of data was collected.

However, the results of this study cannot be generalized or used in connection with all web-based youth centers as this thesis was made as a case study and all participants of this thesis were service users of one particular web-based youth center (apart from one participant who is also a member of another web-based youth center). In other words, this thesis does not describe the experience of all web-based youth center users and thus should not be looked at as such.

# 9.1 Reliability of study

As this is a case study based on peoples experience, in other to get a wilder perspective on how the concepts of equality and participation are promoted or experienced in a web-based youth center setting, a more tangible research is needed.

According to an interview conducted with one of the supervisions of E-House, there is usually a lot more traffic to E-Houses website during the school semester than in the summer time .As data for this thesis was collected during the summer and for a short period of time, (31 days: June 18<sup>th</sup>- July 18<sup>TH</sup>), there is a possibility that a different time frame and longer questionnaire duration would have provided a more detailed answer.

While analyzing questionnaire data, it because clear that majority of the questionnaire questions were mostly focused on issues related to participation. As this was not the intention of the thesis, the possible impact this had or did not have on the overall outcome of this thesis was difficult to measure.



Also, as can be seen in the appendix, majority of the questions asked were not open ended questions. This was due to instructions gotten from E-House. An open ended questions were believed to scare people off from participating. This notion was later proven to be true as some of the open ended questions in the questionnaire were left unanswered by questionnaire participants. Furthermore, all questions and answers regarding this questionnaire were all in Finnish. Though each question and answer were carefully translated, the risk of misinterpretation and or miss translation of both questionnaire questions and answers cannot be completely ruled out.

Though further research on the topic is needed for a wilder perspective and a deeper understanding of web-based youth centers and how they support equality and participation, data collected regarding the experience of service users in this thesis had be carefully analyzed and the recommendations made to E-House is guided by the study findings.

# 9.2 Ethical background of study

As the main and only aim of the study was to find out how web-based service users experienced equality and participation in web-based youth centers, not asking questions that will end up providing too personal details was important. Also, as no physical interaction with service users was possible due to the nature of the study topic, making each questions as clear as possible was of a great essence.

Just as promised, all questionnaire materials were destroyed shorty after they had been analyzed.

# 9.3 Recommendations for further studies

Based on the findings on this thesis, two types of further study on the topic can be done. The first study in my opinion could be done on finding out necessary tools and measures needed for the promotion of equality in a web-based youth center.



A further study could also be done on finding out how participation is encouraged in a web-based setting. The follow up research could show if young people are indeed learning participation skills from web-based youth centers. The follow up research can also show youth involvement, opinion and interest in taking part in matters that concern them or in politics.

The main reason for the suggestion of two further researches is solely based on the vast and diverse nature of both concepts (equality and participation) used in this thesis. In other to get a well-rounded information on equality, participation and web-based youth centers, each concept (equality and participation) have to be individually looked into in relation to web-based youth center.

# **Acknowledgments**

A special thanks to E-House, all questionnaire participants, Tero Rapo, Katri Peräaho, my supervisors, friends and family. Without you completing this thesis would not have been possible.





### References:

Allianssi. (2008) *Nuorisotyöllä on merkitystä*: Opas kuntavaikuttajille ja nuorisyöntekijöille nuorisotyön yhteiskunnallisesta merkityksestä. [Online] Available from: http://www.alli.fi/binary/file/-/id/665/fid/832/. Accessed 10th September 2015.

Batsleer, J. and Davies, B. (2010) what is youth work? Exeter: Learning Matters.

Berner Anna-Sofia (2014) *Nuorisotyöttömyys on kuviteltua pienempi ongelma. Helsingin Sanomat.* [Online] 30<sup>th</sup> March 2014, Available from: http://www.hs.fi/sunnuntai/a1396070606619.

[Accessed 14th June 2015].

Boot A, (2011) The destructive myth of equality -*The DailyMail*. [Online] Available from: <a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2079543/The-destructive-myth-equality.html">http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2079543/The-destructive-myth-equality.html</a>. [Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015]

Cannolly, K. (2013) Angela Merkel: youth unemployment is most pressing problem facing Europe. The Guardian. [Online] 2<sup>nd</sup> July. Available from <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/02/angela-merkel-youth-unemployment-europe">http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/02/angela-merkel-youth-unemployment-europe</a>. [Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> July 2015]

Cavén-Pöysä, Outi & Sihvonen, Ella & Söderholm, Timo (2007) Virtuaaliset vuorovaikutuspalvelut – esitutkimus työn muutoksesta nuorten palveluissa. Esitutkimusraportti (Virtual interaction services – preliminary study on the changes in work related to youth services. Report). Finnish Work Environment Fund. Lappeenranta University of Technology, Technology Business Research Center.

Chang, H. (2010) We lost sight of fairness in the false promise of wealth. *The Guardian* [Online] 30<sup>th</sup> August 2010. Available



from:http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/aug/30/fairness-inequality-free-market-growth. [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Cooray, M. (1996) The Australian Achievement: from Bondage To Freedom. Sydney:LJM Cooray, Faculty of Law, University Of Sydney

Davies, B. and Batsleer, J. R. (2010). *What is youth work?* Exeter: Learning Matters. A helpful exploration of the nature of youth work

Delgado &Staples (2008) Youth lead community organizing. Oxford University Press, New your

E-House (2014) Welcome to E-House. Available from: <a href="http://www.e-talo.fi/">http://www.e-talo.fi/</a>
[Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Equal opportunity commission (nd.) *Substantive equality in services.* [Online] Available from: . <a href="http://www.eoc.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/substantive-equality/3-screening-new-policies-preventing-systemic-discrimination-in-new-and-revised-policies8d154f5bde9f62fcb668ff0000be6566.pdf">http://www.eoc.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/substantive-equality/3-screening-new-policies-preventing-systemic-discrimination-in-new-and-revised-policies8d154f5bde9f62fcb668ff0000be6566.pdf</a> [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Eurostat (2015) *Unemployment Statistics*. [Online]

Available from: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment statistics">http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment statistics</a>. [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

Europa (2011) White Paper on Youth. [Online] Available from: <a href="http://europa.eu/legislation\_summaries/education\_training\_youth/youth/c11055\_en.htm">http://europa.eu/legislation\_summaries/education\_training\_youth/youth/c11055\_en.htm</a>. [Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015].



European commission, Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, 2014.

Available from <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index\_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index\_en.htm</a>. [Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter. (nd) [Online] Available from: <a href="https://www.turvakoti.net/site/?lan=1&mode=tiedotteet&laji=1&tiedote\_id=84">https://www.turvakoti.net/site/?lan=1&mode=tiedotteet&laji=1&tiedote\_id=84</a>. [Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Federation of mother and Child Homes and Shelter. (2008) *Mitä mieltä: Mitä mieltä!* Lasten osallisuus lastensuojelun kehittämisessä (pp.15-16)

Fletcher A (2011) *The freechild project youth voice toolbox*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Fourie C,Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer I. (ed.) (2015) Social Equality - *On what it means to be equal*. Oxford University Press, New York

Foster, J. (2001) 'Framing youth participation in the twenty-first century' or 'missing the wood for the trees'. In: J. Foster and K. Naidoo (eds.), *Young people at the centre:* participation and social change, 1st ed. London: Common wealth secretariat, pp.3-14.

Fourie C, Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer I. (2015) *Social Equality: On What it Means to Be Equals.* Oxford University Press

Fourie C, Schuppert F & Wallimann-Helmer I. (2015) Social Equality: On What it Means

to Be Equals. Oxford University Press, p.25



Hart, R. (1997) Children's participation, the theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.

Horelli, L., Haikkola, L, Sotkasiira, T. (2008) Osallistuminen Nuorisotyön lähestymistapana. In Hoikkala, T. Sell, A. (eds.) Nuorisotyötä on tehtävä. Menetelmien perustat, rajat ja mahdollisuudet. Helsinki, Hakapaino Oy'

HS Nuorisotyöttömyys on kuviteltua pienempi ongelma, 30.03.2014. Internet document. Read 28.5.2015 http://www.hs.fi/sunnuntai/a1396070606619

Jeffs, T. and Smith, M. K. (eds.) (2010) *Youth work practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Published in the BASW Social Work series, this books explores different facets of practice like working with individuals, working with groups, conversation and so on.

Joensuu, M. (2011) Nuoret verkossa toimijoina. In Merikivi, J., Timonen, P., Tuuttila, L. (eds.) Sähköä ilmassa. Näkökulmia verkkoperustaiseen nuorisotyöhön. Nuorisotutkimusverkosto/Nuorisotutkimuseura. Humanistinen ammattikorkeakoulu, Helsingin kaupungin Nuorisoasiankeskus. //www.sahkoailmassa.fi/sahkoa\_ilmassa\_PDF.pdf> [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

Kalliola settlement. (nd) *Kalliola settlement in brief* [Online] Available from: <a href="http://www.kalliola.fi/in-english/">http://www.kalliola.fi/in-english/</a>> [Accessed 1st September 2015].

Kate C. (2013) Angela Merkel: Youth Unemployment is most pressing problen facing Europe. *The Guardian*. [Online] 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2013. Available from <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/02/angela-merkel-youth-unemployment-europe">http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/02/angela-merkel-youth-unemployment-europe</a>. [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015].



Kovanen T. (2015) Web-based youth work and equality Interviewed by Nancy Osazee, Bachelors Thesis, Metropolia University Of Applied Sciences 28.5.2015

Mannerhemin League of Child welfare (nd,) Online Youth Work In Finland. [Online]

Available from:

http://www.mediakasvatus.fi/files/u4/Online\_youthwork.pdf [Accessed 13th June 2015].

Mary K. Chelton, Excellence in Library Services to Young Adults: The Nations Top programs, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Chicago:ALA,1997

Milton, and Rose, F. (1980) Free to Choose: A personal Statement. Mariner Books

Minedu (2011) *Nuorisolain muutos: monialainen yhteistyö, etsivä nuorisotyö ja varhainen puuttuminen.* [Online] Available from: : <a href="http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/vireilla\_nuoriso/arkisto/nuorisolaki/?lang=fi.">http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/vireilla\_nuoriso/arkisto/nuorisolaki/?lang=fi.</a> [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Minedu (nd.) Youth act. [Online] Available from:

http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Nuoriso/lait\_ja\_saeaedoekset/Youth\_act\_ Nuorisolaki\_amend\_2010\_en.pdf. [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Moses, R. P. (2001). Radical equations: Math literacy and civil rights. Boston: Beacon Press

National Youth Agency (nd.) About National Youth agency. [Online]

Available from: <a href="http://www.nya.org.uk/about-us/">http://www.nya.org.uk/about-us/</a>. [Accessed 15th June 2015].



Netari. (2015) *Verkkonuorisotalo on auki joka viikko!* Available from <a href="http://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/nuorisotoiminta/tekemista-ja-tukea-verkossa/netari/">http://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/nuorisotoiminta/tekemista-ja-tukea-verkossa/netari/</a>. [Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Newman, Janet, and Tonkens, Evelien, eds. Participation, Responsibility and Choice: Summoning the Active Citizen in Western European Welfare States. Amsterdam, NLD: Amsterdam, 2011. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 10 July 2015.

Nieminen, Juha (2007) "Puuttuva lenkki – Nuorisokasvatus tieteen kentässä, kasvatuksen teoriassa ja nuorisotyön kehyksenä" (The missing link: youth education in the academic field, education theory and as a framework for youth work). In Nivala, E. & Saastamoinen M. (eds.). Nuorisokasvatuksen teoria – perusteita ja puheenvuoroja (Youth education theory – principles and arguments).

Nieminen, J. (2007) Vastavoiman hahmo –Nuorisotyön yleiset tehtävät, oppimisympäristöt ja eetos. In Hoikkala, T. Sell, A. (eds.) Nuorisotyötä on tehtävä. Menetelmien perustat, rajat ja mahdollisuudet. Helsinki, Hakapaino Oy

Nuoroperi (nd.) Sanastoa: Ennaltaehkäisevä nuorisotyö. [Online]

Available from: <a href="http://www.nuoperi.fi/sanasto2.php?id=4">http://www.nuoperi.fi/sanasto2.php?id=4</a>. [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

NYCI (nd.) What is equality? [Online] Available from: <a href="http://www.intercultural.ie/content/what-equality">http://www.intercultural.ie/content/what-equality</a>. [Accessed 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

OHCHR (2015) *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.* [Online] Available from: http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx. [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Okiira P. Sustaining participation: What are the challenges? (2000, P.25) [Online]



Available from: <a href="http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G01909.pdf">http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G01909.pdf</a> [Accessed 136<sup>h</sup> July 2015]

Oxford dictionary, equality

http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/equal

Pasanen, Hannes (2008) Verkkonuorisotyötä on tehtävä (Online youth work must be done). Bachelor's thesis. HUMAK University of Applied Sciences, Lohja Unit.

Pötsönen U. (2013) Ladder of participation – a tool for evaluating young people's involvement to library services, actions and plans. Finnish Library Association Youth library workgroup, Finland

Rae Douglas W. (1981) Equalities. USA: Harvard University Press.

Ruuti (2013) What is Ruuti? [Online] Available at:http://ruuti.munstadi.fi/mika-on-ruuti/. [Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Save The Children (2014) Vähemmistöihin kuuluvat nuoret kokevat kiusaamista ja syrjintää koulussa- myös fyysistä väkivaltaa. Available from:

http://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/ajankohtaista/uutiset/?x22896=1660250. [Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> July2015]

SImon N. (2010) *The participatory museum.* Museum 2.0; First Edition (US) First Printing edition (March 2, 2010)

Smith, M. K. (2013) 'What is youth work? Exploring the history, theory and practice of youth work', the encyclopedia of informal education. [Online] Available from:



www.infed.org/mobi/what-is-youth-work-exploring-the-history-theory-and-practice-of-work-with-young-people/. [Accessed 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Suler, J. R. (2004a). The online disinhibition effect. Cyber Psychology and Behavior, 7, 321–326.

Suler, J. R. (2004b). The psychology of text relationships. In R. Kraus, J. Zack, & G. Stricker (Eds.), online counseling: A handbook for mental health professionals (pp. 19–50). San Diego, CA: Elsevier.

Tanis, M., & Postmes, T. (2007). Two faces of anonymity: Paradoxical effects of cues to identity in CMC.

Tero R. (2015) How E-House supports equality and participation Interviewed by Nancy Osazee, Bachelors Thesis, Metropolia University Of Applied Sciences 28.5.2015

The city of Oulu (nd.) osallisuus ja vaikuttaminen. [Online] Available from:

<a href="http://www.ouka.fi/oulu/nuoret/osallisuus-ja-vaikuttaminen">http://www.ouka.fi/oulu/nuoret/osallisuus-ja-vaikuttaminen</a> [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015]

The city of Kajaani (2007), osallisuuden menetelmien työkalupakki Kajaani kaupungin nuorisotyöhön ja perusopetuksen. [Online] Available from: file:///C:/Users/Nancy/Downloads/Osallisuuden menetelmien tyokalupakki1.pdf
[Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015]

The Finnish Public employment and business service (2010). *Palkkaa nuori, joila on Senssi-kortti.* [Online] Available from:

http://www.tepalvelut.fi/te/fi/tyonantajalle/loyda\_tyontekija/tukea\_rekrytointiin/sanssikort ti/index.html. [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015]



The Finnish Family Shelter (2015) Apua, tietoa ja tukea perhe-ja lähisuhdeväkivaltaan. Available from :https://www.turvakoti.net/site/?lan=1. [Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

The Finnish Child Welfare Act (2007) Helsinki. Available from: http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/2007/en20070417.pdf Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

The Finnish Constitution Act (2011) Chapter 2, Helsinki. Available from: <a href="https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf">https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf</a>. [Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

The Finnish Equality Act 2014, Chapter 1-4, Helsinki. Available from: <a href="https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2014/20141325">https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2014/20141325</a>. [Accessed 11th June 2015]

The Finnish national institute for Health and Welfare, Nuoret: Mihin tulee kiinnittää huoiota (2015) Online] Available from: <a href="https://www.thl.fi/fi/web/hyvinvointi-ja-terveyserot/eriarvoisuus/elamankulku/nuoret">https://www.thl.fi/fi/web/hyvinvointi-ja-terveyserot/eriarvoisuus/elamankulku/nuoret</a> [Accessed 20<sup>h</sup> July 2015]

The Finnish Youth Act 2006, Chapter 2, Helsinki. Available from: https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2006/20060072. [Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

The training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work: Youth Participation and active citizenship (nd.) [Online] Available from:

http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/1667911/2.4.pdf/64ce8034-440c-4ebc-b325-2fe3be0190f5 [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015]

The Youth Department of City of Helsinki (2009) Helsingin nuorisoasiainkeskuksen monikulttuurisuusohjelma 2009 - 2012 (The Programme for Multiculturalism in The Youth Department of City of Helsinki 2009–2012).



Together (n.d.) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. [Online] Available from:

http://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/about-childrens-rights/un-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child/. [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

Tuomi J. & Sarajärvi A. (2006) Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi. Jyväskylä: Gummerrus.

Tuominen S. (2011) Tulevaisuuden tavoite: Verkkonuorisotyötä ei enää ole. [Online] Available from: <a href="http://www.verke.org/ajankohtaista/viikon-nakokulma/item/425-tulevaisuuden-tavoite-verkkonuorisotyota-ei-enaa-ole">http://www.verke.org/ajankohtaista/viikon-nakokulma/item/425-tulevaisuuden-tavoite-verkkonuorisotyota-ei-enaa-ole</a> [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

Unesco.org (2014) *Youth - Definition:* United Nations Educational, Scientific and CulturalOrganization. [Online] Available from: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/. [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

Unicef.org [Online] UNICEF. *Convention on the rights of the child.* Available from: <a href="http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights-to-Participation.pdf">http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights-to-Participation.pdf</a>. [Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

United nations. (nd.) Youth participation. Available from:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-participation.pdf.

[Accessed 11<sup>th</sup> August 2015].

United nations treaty collections (2015) Chapter IV *Human Rights*.[Online]

Available from:

https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg\_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en. [Accessed 11th June 2015].



Vesikansa, Siiri (1991) *Nuorisotiedotus. Kansalaiskasvatuksen Keskuksen vuosikirja 1991 (Youth information. Civic Education Centre Yearbook 1991).* Helsinki: Civic Education Centre.

Verke, (2015) The National Development Center For Online youth Work. [Online] Available from: <a href="http://www.verke.org/ajankohtaista/viikon-nakokulma/item/477-vinkkeja-viihtyisyytta-ja-vuorovaikutusta-nuorten-osallisuus-anonyymeissa-verkkoyhteisoissa">http://www.verke.org/ajankohtaista/viikon-nakokulma/item/477-vinkkeja-viihtyisyytta-ja-vuorovaikutusta-nuorten-osallisuus-anonyymeissa-verkkoyhteisoissa</a> [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015].

Verke, (2015) Tulevisuuden tavoite: Verkkonuorisotyötä ei enää ole. [Online] Available from: <a href="http://www.verke.org/ajankohtaista/viikon-nakokulma/item/425-tulevaisuuden-tavoite-verkkonuorisotyota-ei-enaa-ole">http://www.verke.org/ajankohtaista/viikon-nakokulma/item/425-tulevaisuuden-tavoite-verkkonuorisotyota-ei-enaa-ole</a>. [Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

Welman C., Kruger F. And Mitchell, B. (2006) Research Methodology. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson R. and Pickett K. (2009) The Spirit Level: *Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*. Bloomsbury Press

Youthpolicy (2014) Definition of youth. [Online]

Available from: <a href="http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/malaysia/">http://www.youthpolicy.org/factsheets/country/malaysia/</a>. [Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015]

### **Questionnaire Introduction**



Hei! Olen Nancy Osazee ja opiskelen sosionomiksi Metropolian Ammattikorkeakoulussa. Teen opinnäytetyötä, joka käsittelee online nuorisokeskuksen

tehokuutta tukea tasa-arvoa ja osallistuutta.

Vastaamalla kysymyksiin, autat kehittämään verkkonuorisyötä entistä paremmaksi ja

luomaan paremman kokemuksen niin nuorille kuin E-Talollekin.

Vastaukset annetaan nimettöminä ja niistä saatuja tietoja käytetään opinnäytetyöni

tutkimuksessa.

Kaikki vastaukset ovat yhtä arvokkaita ja merkityksellisiä. Kysymyksiin voit vastata

omin sanoin.

Kiitos vastauksestasi ja aurinkoista kesää!:)

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Nancy Osazee/Metropolian Ammattikorkeakoulu

### Questionnaire questions

1. lkä? - Age?

2. Sukupuoli? - Gender?

tyttö / nainen - girl/woman



	poika / mies - boy/man
	jokin muu, mikä? - If something else, what?
	en halua määritellä - I do not want to specify
3.	Kuinka sait tietää e-Talosta? - How did you find out about E-House?
	ystävä tai tuttu kertoi palvelusta - through friends
	nuorisotalolta - through other youth houses
	sosiaalisen median kautta - through social media
	koulusta / opettajaltani - through school or teachers at school
	internetin hakukoneen kautta - through search engine
	julisteesta tai flaijerista - through posters or fliers
	jotain muuta kautta, mistä? - if through something else, what?
	Kuinka kauan olet käyttänyt e-Talon tarjoamia palveluja? - How long have you been using the service ffered by E-House?
	löysin palvelun lähiaikoina - <i>I just heard about E-House</i>
	n. kuukauden <i>- for about a month</i>



n	nuutaman kuukauden - for couple of months
r	n. Vuoden - <i>for about a year</i>
У	rli vuoden - for more than a year
5. K	äytkö alueesi nuorisotalolla? - Do you also use your neighborhood's youth center?
E	en käy lainkaan nuorisotalolla - <i>I do not go to youth houses</i>
k	äyn silloin tällöin - e <i>very now and then</i>
k	äyn vähintään kerran kuukaudessa - <i>once a month</i>
k	räyn vähintään kerran viikossa - <i>at least once a week</i>
k	täyn lähes päivittäin - <i>almost everyday</i>
s	siellä missä asun, ei ole nuorisotaloa lähellä - there is no youth house next to me
6. K	úinka usein käyt E-Talolla - <i>How often do you visit E-Hous</i> e?
	Kuinka verkossa toimiva nuorten palvelu eroaa mielestäsi perinteisestä nuorisotalosta? Kuvaile omin oin In your opinion, how do web-based youth houses differ from traditional youth houses.
	Mitä mieltä olet e-Talon kysymys & vastaus palstasta? - What do you think about the question and wer section of E-House?
S	siitä on ollut minulle paljon hyötyä - <i>it has been useful to m</i> e



en koe saaneeni apua - I have not gotten much help from it
muita ajatuksia - other thoughts
9. Kuinka hyvin kysymyksiin on mielestäsi palstalla vastattu? How well do you feel questions are being answered?
erinomaisesti - <i>perfectly</i>
hyvin - well
tyydyttävästi - <i>satisfactory</i>
välttävästi - <i>passably</i>
huonosti - <i>poorly</i>
muita ajatuksia - <i>other thoughts</i>
10. Oletko koskaan jättänyt kysymys ja vastauksen palstalle kysymyksiä? Have you ever left a question in the question and answer section
Jos et, miksi? - if no, why not?
olen lähettänyt kysymyksen - I have asked a question?
en ole lähettänyt kysymyksiä, mutta olen saanut tukea ajatuksilleni muiden
Kysymyksistä - I have not asked any question but have gotten support from other peoples questions



en ole lähettänyt kysymyksiä, enkä ole saanut tukea ajatuksilleni myöskään muiden kysymyksistä - *I have not asked any question and also have not gotten any support from other peoples questions* 

muita ajatuksia - other thoughts

- 11. Onko mielestäsi erilaista kysyä mieltä askarruttavista asioista työntekijältä nuorisotalolla kuin verkkopalvelussa? Jos koet että on, kuvaile millä tavalla? *Difference between asking questions from webbased youth workers and physical ones?*
- 12. Kuinka eri arvoisuutta/erimielisyyttä tuetaan? How is difference in opinion or in view point are supported?
- 13. Monilla nuorisotaloilla nuorilla on mahdollisuus ehdottaa toimintaan ideoita ja vaikuttaa asioihin. Oletko sinä yrittänyt ehdottaa mitään keskustelunaihetta tai toimintaa e-Talolle? In some youth houses, youth suggest activities they would be interested in, have you tried, suggesting any topic for discussion on E-House?

olen ehdottanut keskustelunaihetta tai toimintoa e-Talolle. Jos olet, niin mitä? I have suggested topics or activites for E-House, What did you suggest?

en ole ehdottanut - I have not suggested anything for E-House

muita ajatuksia - other thoughts

14. Mitä muuta e-Talon sivuilla voisi mielestäsi olla? - What else do you feel E-House should consider having?

nuorten tekemiä blogikirjoituksia - blogs

nuorten omia kuvia ja videoita – esimerkiksi instagram e-Talon seinällä - pictures and videos of E-House users



ryhmächatteja - <i>group chat</i>
chatteja erilaisista teemoista - <i>theme chat</i>
pelejä - <i>games</i>
jotain muuta, mitä? - any other suggestion?
15. Oletko tietoinen E-Talon lupakysyä kampanjasta? - Are you aware of the permission to ask campaign from E-House?
Jos haluat osallistua leffalippujen arvontaan, jätä yhteystietosi
1. Nimi
2. Osoite

