

Miska Halén

Experiences of Hobbies among the Youth

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<p>Tämä on laadullinen opinnäytetyö, joka kertoo kuinka nuoret ikävällillä yhdeksäntoista ja kaksikymmentäseitsemän kokevat harrastamisen tai harrastamisen lopettamisen, sekä syitä näihin tapahtumiin. Myös mitä nuoret hakevat harrastamiselta yleisesti. Opinnäytetyössä näitä syitä käydään läpi teoreettisessa kontekstissa.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset heijastetaan Richard M. Ryanin ja Edward L. Decin itseohjautuvuus-teoriaan, joka uskoo ihmisen omaavan halua kehittää oman itsensä tunnetta. Tämä teoria keskittyy tarkastelemaan, kuinka kolme psykologista perustarvetta toteutuvat ihmisissä. Nämä perustarpeet ovat: yhteisöllisyys, kyvykkyys ja omaehtoisuus.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on tarjota nuorten parissa työskenteleville sosiaalialan ammattilaisille syvempää teoreettisesti tuettua ymmärrystä millaisia kokemuksia nuoret harrastamisesta saavat. Vahvimpina kokemuksina esiintyivät vapaus valita mieleinen harrastus, kehittyä siinä ja harrastaa kannustavassa seurassa.</p> <p>Tämä opinnäytetyö on tuotettu Helsingin kaupungin Nuorisotoimelle. Nuorisotoimi ylläpitää viittäkymmentäyhtä nuorisotaloa Helsingin kaupungin sisällä. Näillä taloilla käyvät nuoret saavat työntekijöiden yhteistyöllä suunnitella ja toteuttaa erinäisiä aktiviteetteja. Yhdeksänkymmentä prosenttia haastatelluista nuorista tavoitettiin Arabian nuorisotalolla ja loput kymmenen prosenttia sen ulkopuolella.</p>	
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<p>This qualitative thesis studies how young people between the ages nineteen to twenty seven have experienced having or quitting particular hobbies. In addition, the study looks at the reasons for having or quitting a hobby, and what the young people are looking for in hobbies in general.</p> <p>The results have been viewed from the self-determination theory's point of view. The self-determination theory is created by Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci. It is based on the idea that all people have an innate need to evolve their sense of self. Furthermore it focuses on how the three basic psychological needs of human beings are implemented. These needs are: relatedness, competence and autonomy.</p> <p>What the thesis aims at is to provide professionals of social services working among the youth a deeper theoretically supported understanding on how essential experiences the youth receive from their hobbies. The most essential experiences were the freedom to choose a suitable hobby, to develop their skills and to perform it among supporting peers.</p> <p>This is a qualitative thesis produced for the youth department of the city of Helsinki. The youth department runs fifty-one youth houses within the city of Helsinki. The young people going to these houses are given the chance to affect the activity there by planning and implementing activities with the workers. Ninety percent of the participants for the research were reached at the Arabia youth house in Helsinki. The remaining ten were reached outside the youth house.</p>	
Keywords	experiences, hobbies, youth, self-determination theory

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1 Introduction

This research was done for the Youth Department of the city of Helsinki. The aim was to give the Youth Department more in-depth understanding on how essential hobbies are and what type of psychological factors are behind them. This thesis will have a thorough look on how hobbies support the three basic psychological needs of human beings. These needs are relatedness, competence and autonomy.

The order of this thesis is the following. First and foremost the main theory is presented and explained. This will be accompanied by the opening of key concepts used within this thesis. Next the working life partner will be introduced followed by the implementation process. This was a qualitative study conducted in an interview-like manner. Next we will analyse the most essential parts of the interviews in the light of the before mentioned psychological basic needs. In the conclusion section we will link the interview results to the theory and examine the participants' experiences in the light of the self-determination theory. The thesis will be ended with a discussion on the whole process.

2 Main Theory

2.1 Self-determination Theory

The theoretical frame work used is the Self-Determination Theory by Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci. (2002). Reason for choosing this particular theory is that it was experienced as giving the most in-depth view on why people are motivated to do anything in their free time. What makes a person to consistently carry on an activity that can be considered difficult and frustrating at first? The theory explains three basic psychological needs and how they affect a person as they keep doing what they wish to do.

This theory is based on the belief that people of different kinds have an internal need to evolve their own sense of self. This evolution is seen as a set of reciprocal relationships among other human beings. In other words as the development of social interaction among individuals and groups of people. The possible outcomes in the human psyche

from different interactions can either be constructive or destructive for the individuals. (Ryan & Deci 2002 pp. 5-6.)

Ryan & Deci carry on about their theory and how the three basic psychological needs are vital in it. These are the need for competence, relatedness and autonomy. Rapheal & Varghese point out how by fulfilling one's psychological needs the correlates with robust personal growth and overall happiness (Rapheal & Varghese 2015 p.780).

The need for competence hints towards the feeling of adequacy among the interactions of different social environments and the possibility to implement the different capacities a person would withhold. In practice this refers to finding new challenges that suit the capabilities and to being able to keep up the particular capabilities and to improve them through different activities. Competence is not a skill per se but more of the confident feeling of being able to do something. (Ryan & Deci A 2002 p.7.) Miller & Gramzow cite White (1959) on competence as being able to influence the surrounding environment and to realize certain events within it (Miller & Gramzow 2016 p.2). Teixeira, Carraca, Markland, Silva & Ryan add that feelings of competence differ whether the performance has been successful or not and also what sort of feedback has been received from peers or professionals (Teixeira, Carraca, Markland, Silva & Ryan 2012 p.3).

The term relatedness is defined as a feeling of being linked to other people as well as considering and being considered by other individuals. Experiencing inclusion towards individuals and different groups of people. This need mirrors the integrative habit of human beings such as being accepted by the ones you interact with. In addition, relatedness is not connected to the receiving of a certain fallout or status but to a psychological sense of feeling unity and security among others. (Ryan & Deci 2002 p.7.) Katariina Löfblom talks in her article about relatedness among the youth how the experience of relatedness comes from the idea of a community that brings feelings of relatedness to its members. Feelings of relatedness are built with different ways. The relatedness of a family is different than the relatedness of a group of hobbyists. For example among the youth relatedness as a feeling can be created by rebellious activity against the grown-up society. Moments that are experienced together strengthen the limits of the community while they produce experiences of similarity in a particular matter. These shared moments shape up both the members and the community. The feeling of relatedness is

born when the participants collectively interpret the situation as meaningful to them. (Löfblom 2016 pp.8-14.)

The last need autonomy is seen as being able to express their true self through their actions nevertheless the catalysts for the actions were from outside sources, the actors get a sense of initiative and value. (Deci & Ryan 2002 p.8.) Aarresola (2013) writes in Harinen & Rannikko (2013) how autonomous activity is self-driven, spontaneous and unsupervised. What is considered essential is not the form of activity but the social context where the activity happens. In other words, a context where decisions are being made by the young person. (Harinen & Rannikko 2013 p.58.)

Also what the authors hold vital within this topic is motivation and more closely extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Deci & Ryan (2000) define motivation as a feeling that encourages one to pursue a certain end. Motivation can be seen as a rather subjective term and it appears in different volumes among different people.

Extrinsic motivation on the other hand relates to performing a particular activity that will end up in a concrete reward. Let us use an example from school life. A student may only be motivated to study a certain subject due to the fact that he or she will receive a good grade from it, possibly the parents might even offer a monetary reward as well.

When the motivation is seen as intrinsic the person is performing the activity only on behalf of the innate positive feelings and satisfaction the particular activity creates. It could be discussed as natural motivation that encourages one to widen their repertoire of skills and capabilities. (Deci & Ryan 2000. pp.54-67.)

Within the theme of hobbies it is interesting to also examine whether the young people have been intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to perform them.

2.2 Hobbies

The grounds for the use of this particular theory is that it supports the reasons why people in general have and continue to perform different hobbies. As Steven M. Gelber (1999) gives out a few premises for them, they happen during your free time. They are leisure, not work. These activities are performed due to one's free will, they are voluntary. And last they produce feelings of amusement and enjoyment. (Gelber 1999 p.7.)

2.3 Alternative Activities

Another type of hobbies discussed are the so called alternative activities. According to Harinen, Liikanen, Rannikko & Torvinen (2015) some people consider their free time activities as something else than sports. When contemplating alternative activities one must often consider to what is this particular activity an alternative for? Alternative exercises have already stabilized themselves among the sport sciences as a well-known concept which emphasizes lifestyle choices, joy, experimentalism and expression. From this viewpoint alternative activities aim to offer either ideologically or practically alternatives for the values, competitiveness of the mainstream sports. (Harinen, Liikanen, Rannikko & Torvinen 2015 p.6.) Heikkilä also cites Itkonen on how the alternative activities challenge the traditional way of seeing, doing and understanding sports (Heikkilä 2015). From the Self-Determination Theory's point of view one could think that the alternative sports have the possibility to increase the competence of the participant. As the requirements for the sport are lower among the alternative sports than in more competitive sports one could have more experiences of success thus increasing the relative competence of an individual.

Harinen & Torvinen (2015) also discuss a common way of characterizing alternative activities as less formal and not so hierarchical in relation to other more traditional sport related activities (Harinen & Torvinen 2015 p.48). Rannikko & Liikanen also add how senses, listening experiences and the actual feel of the activity are considered highly essential within alternative activities (Rannikko & Liikanen 2015).

Rannikko, Harinen, Liikanen, Ronkainen & Kuninkaanniemi emphasize how alternative activities should not be seen as opposites of the more conventional sport- and exercise cultures but as one sector that challenges some parts of the conventional sports and surrenders itself to some parts. Alternative activities also include the flexibility of the teacher-student relationship: all participants of alternative activities can be each other's teachers, developers of the activity and creators of new tricks. (Rannikko, Harinen, Liikanen, Ronkainen & Kuninkaanniemi 2013 pp.7-11.)

2.4 Youth as a phase of life

As the thesis concentrates to the life phase of the youth now we will see how the before mentioned time period could be defined. Nurmiranta, Leppämäki & Horppu (2009) define youth as a phase of life the following way. It can be seen as a transformation period from childhood into adulthood. This phase contains remarkable physical and mental changes. The ideas about youth differ from culture to culture, for example western cultures outline the individual's independence and their pursuit to cut loose from their parents. In some more primitive cultures youth as a phase of life does not really exist, but the child is attached to adulthood through different rites. (Nurmiranta, Leppämäki & Horppu 2009 p.72.) In this thesis the youth are being looked at from a more western point of view. Nurmiranta et al (2009) carry on analysing youth in three different parts. Early adolescence is seen between ages 11 to 14, middle adolescence from ages 15-18 and late adolescence from 19-22/25 years of age. (Nurmiranta et al 2009 p.72.) In other sources Aalberg & Siimes (2007) talk about adolescence as a period between ages 12-22. They consider it the time of possibilities, the second possibility of personality construction or the second phase of individualization. The interaction between the young and the environment is also seen as essential. What they hold as a goal of adolescence is a self-claimed autonomy. (Aalberg & Siimes 2007 p.67.)

There are profound psychosocial developments during the early adolescence period, such as rebelling against parents or other authorities and the development of friendships among peers. The latter is seen highly important in the light of the adolescents' social and mental development. Friends are sought after not only for company but for proximity, understanding and advice. (Nurmiranta et al 2009 p.87.) This can be seen as a reference to the psychological basic need of relatedness. Naturally there are several other physical developments but these are not seen as vital within this thesis to be further discussed.

The Finnish ministry of culture and education have conducted a report on hobbies and their importance to the youth. This report explains how hobbies are a central part of the life of children and the youth. Their importance increases as they provide social interaction, self-expression and innovative activity. Hobbies combine treasuring of friend relationships, self-development, finding one's strengths, interaction with adults and the possibility to choose how to use one's free time in the most meaningful way. They also add how hobbies can be seen as a preventative measure to prevent exclusion and help the ones who have already been excluded. (Ministry of Culture and Education 2017.)

Beckett & Taylor go through Erikson's Stages of psychosocial development in their book *Human Growth and Development*. The stages essential within this thesis are for adolescence when the young person seeks a consistent and meaningful private and future work-related identity. Erikson spoke of this phase as when identity clashes with role confusion. The positive outcome that is being sought from this phase is that the person would see themselves as a persistent and unified person. The other essential stage is the young adulthood where intimacy will collapse with isolation. The person is looking for relationships that ought to be consistent and in-depth. A favourable outcome of this would be the competence of feeling love and being able to commit to other people. (Beckett & Taylor 2016.)

Fredricks, Corinne, Alfeld-Liro, Hruda, Eccles, Purdue & Ryan (2002) discuss the youth contemplating emotions such as pressure from competitions and discouragement at times when competition success has not been at the most high level. And as quite a heavy ground the interviewed people in their research have experienced mental burdens from not being able to fulfil other interests along their time consuming hobbies. The lack of time was experienced as a high factor in the development of stressful emotions. Another high factor in being interested in their long time hobby was whether the values matched those of their own. This was seen as a key role in whether the young people were interested in carrying on with the particular hobby. (Fredricks et al, 2002. p.85)

So in the context of the basic psychological needs one could see that as the competition gets too demanding and the skills of the participants are not responding to the required needs, the competence of the person is not experienced to be enough.

2.5 Experiences

As this thesis is contemplating the experiences of the youth among hobbies let us take a look on what do we mean when we talk about experiences. Koivisto, Kukkola, Latomaa & Sandelin (2014) explain experiences as a mental theme, we experience because we have a mind. They offer us the possibility to form understandings and perspectives on different subjects. Another way of defining them is a collection of different meanings which are, to some extent possible to share with others. What is considered noteworthy is that they are always experienced by someone, there is a certainty for mental subjective. (Koivisto, Kukkola, Latomaa & Sandelin 2014 pp. 14-15.)

Löfblom discusses young people's experiences about a musical hobby the following way. Performances of one's own band are considered as a great experience where feelings of excitement, joy of making something together, feeling of accomplishment and rowdiness are combined. (Löfblom 2016 p.13.)

The experiences of others will always remain unreachable. This means that we are only able to experience our experiences as our very own. Although, it is possible to compare our own experiences to the ones of others. This takes us to the relation between experiencing and understanding. We can pursue to understand others' experiences, interpret the individual historical, social and societal circumstances to mention a few. The interpretation and understanding will always remain vague and endless to some extent. Although the limits and possibilities of experience examination are problematic and complex, they are held vital. (Koivisto et al 2014 pp.15-16.)

This is considered essential within this thesis. There will be an analysis on what the adolescents subjectively experience. And what is looked for are both possible and negative experiences.

2.6 Freetime

Finnish researcher Päivi Berg (2015) explains about different forms of free time as she makes the distinction between casual free time and serious free time. According to her casual free time can be seen as immediately rewarding, short termed and pleasant activity that does not require any particular practice. This type of free time can easily become habitual although the immediate need for it can vanish. Serious free time on the other hand could be considered as volunteer based amateur, hobby or career oriented activity which requires active self-development and acquisition of skills. The latter type of free time is seen as long term in which aims and goals are set. With serious free time the participant experiences receives cultural and social capital and the hobby is an important part of social identity. Serious free time that is practiced among other people consists of social rewards such as interacting with others, making friends and belonging in certain groups. (Berg 2015 p.31.)

Määttä & Tolonen discuss how free time in-principle means freedom, own time, activities that have been independently chosen and being able to refresh oneself. (Määttä & Tolonen 2011.)

Berg (2015) goes on about the reasons for quitting a long term hobby among adolescents within the age range of 11-17 and refers to a research conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) that considered reasons such as other friends had also quit the activity, interest in other themes and seeing the activity as too competitive. In the latter case the interviewees have experienced that their own skills have not been enough as the demands have risen. She also cites Liimakka (2013) who mentions that kids between ages 16-17 have partially contemplated quitting due to the fact that they had not enough time to spend among their friends. (Berg 2015. p.31) Here we have some more examples how the basic needs of competence and relatedness play an essential role among the hobbies of the youth.

In her bachelor thesis Saara Ahola (2010) goes through some reasons why adolescents between the ages 12-18 have quit their hobbies. Even though the parents' support and participation is often a positive subject, too active part taking can be experienced as pressuring and demanding. Some adolescents have felt as if they would be doing the sport "on behalf of their parents". What Ahola stresses in her thesis is that feeling good about the hobby in itself and growing into a sporty lifestyle should be considered as the main point. (Ahola 2010 p.9.) This can be interpreted as a possible lack of autonomy among the adolescents' lives.

Tiirikainen & Konu (2013) also mention factors that lead to quitting a certain activity among children and adolescents. These include lack of interest; the activity does not provide pleasure anymore; lack of prowess; lack of motivation; bad coaching; lack of free time; experiences of fatigue; lack of emotional support; increase in competitiveness; experiences in stress and forgetting the children's perspective on the subject. All in all the meanings that the children and adolescents wish from their hobbies are lacking which leads to quitting. (Tiirikainen & Konu 2013 p.34.)

The specialist doctor Raisa Cacciatore from the Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliitto) points out in a newspaper article by Katariina Malmberg (2017) how quitting a long term hobby is quite usual among adolescents between ages 13-17. This period of life is a time of self-discovery for the adolescent according to Cacciatore. She carries on how teenagers' world view starts to shape at this point, school requires plenty of time and energy and for example dating is starting to interest many youngsters. Other aspects

for quitting that Cacciatore points out are possible rebellion towards the parents or even features of depression. Therefore she stresses the parents to stay aware of any sudden changes in the behavior of the teenager, such as loss of appetite, anxiety or decline in school grades. (Malmberg 2017.)

2.7 Drop-out phenomena

A term noteworthy within the topic of this thesis is the drop-out phenomena. Aira, Kannas, Tynjälä, Villberg & Kokko (2013) the drop-out as quitting a hobby in general (Aira, Kannas, Tynjälä, Villberg & Kokko 2013 p.13). Aira et al (2013) also add reasons affecting the physical activity of adolescents. Lack of time, puberty, long distances between home and school are seen as lowering exercise activity. On the other hand, as increasing reasons for physical activity they mention high motivation, positive body image, easy access to the facilities and a history among physical activities. All in all according to Aira et al (2013), physical activity is seen decreasing less sharply among adolescents who are taking part in activities organized by associations. (Aira et al 2013 p.7.) Ahola carries on citing Lämsä (2009) and Mäenpää (2009) on the drop-out phenomena among the youth and how this does not always refer to letting go of exercise completely. In some cases it can be considered as changing to another sport, team or quitting organized activities in general. (Ahola 2010 p.17.)

3 Implementation of the Bachelors Thesis

3.1 City of Helsinki Youth Department

Reasons for this thesis were to give the workers of the youth department an insight on the experiences of hobbies among the youth that would be supported in a theoretical manner. A person working among the youth might have noticed how people of all ages enjoy different hobbies and other activities but what would be the more in-depth factors within humans that make us have and consistently perform several hobbies? After reading this thesis the workers would have an understanding on the self-determination theory and the three basic psychological needs it with-holds that people have a tendency to pursue and enrich.

The city of Helsinki has a youth department to whom this thesis was produced. In collaboration with the youth they produce cultural services and enable different forms of hobbies. In addition they aim to enhance the societal participation of the youth and provide support and counselling. Their core target group consists of young people within the age range of ten to eighteen year olds. Staff members add up to over four hundred personnel over half of whom are youth workers. Youth work is being performed in various youth houses, other facilities and projects. The youth department is working under the Education and Cultural Affairs. (Helsingin Kaupunki A 2015.)

There are fifty-one youth houses scattered around the city of Helsinki. These provide activities and workshops such as sports, theatre, band rehearsing, skateboarding, dance and graffiti to mention a few. There are no obligations to participate in certain activities what so ever so the young people also have the possibility of just spending time with friends in a relaxed atmosphere. Most of the activities are planned in co-operation with the youth. (Helsingin Kaupunki B 2016.)

3.2 Participants

The participants for this thesis were ten young people of whom nine were contacted in the Arabia Youth House in Helsinki. One participant was reached outside of the Youth House. The ages of the interviewees were: 19, 18, 21, 21, 20, 20, 18, 20, 23, and 27. All of the interviewees were chosen randomly without any previous acquaintance. The interviews were conducted in a scientifically ethical manner that Harra & Valtonen (2017) define as respecting the self-determination of the interviewee. In other words the person takes part in the research without being forced and knows what the reason for the research is. The interviews were also performed by avoiding any physical, mental or social harm and by protecting the privacy of the interviewees. (Harra & Valtonen 2017.)

3.3 The Qualitative Method

This thesis was conducted in a qualitative manner with face to face interviews of young people within the age range of eighteen and twenty-seven. Eskola & Suoranta (2014) explain qualitative research as more of a text oriented research in relation to a quantitative one that is more related to numbers. In their book qualitative research is given the

term “soft method” and it can be considered less scientific than the quantitative one. On the other hand it can be seen giving more quality to the research than the quantitative. Examples of a qualitative research material are interviews, personal diaries and letters to mention a few. They carry on explaining how the research participants’ point of view can be reached quite well in field work and without manipulating the research situation. (Eskola & Suoranta 2014 p.13-16.)

What is also noteworthy in a qualitative study is the position of the researcher as they are to some extent expected to use their imagination. There is also a chance for a more free and flexible implementation. But it goes without saying that the researcher is obligated to elaborate these working methods to the reader in order for the actual work to be evaluated in general. (Eskola & Suoranta 2014 p.20)

Reasons for this type of research method was that it was considered to give the most descriptive view on the young people’s experiences. Research could have been performed in a quantitative manner for example by asking how many people have experienced feelings of autonomy within their hobbies. This type of interviewing would have mainly ended up in a statistical chart where answers are mainly how many answered “yes”, “no” or “I do not know”. In a quantitative research where a person is being interviewed and given the freedom to elaborate on their personal experiences in their own words, quantitative data was considered to give a more thorough analysis.

Mäkelä writes on qualitative study being essential when the presence of the sample is not important due to theoretical generalisation but so that we would be able to understand what is being described. Connections ought to be dealt in a way that gives insight on the subject itself. (Mäkelä 1990 p.42.)

3.4 Narrative

Another point held valuable when discussing a qualitative study is narrative. This is considered as one of the most typical ways of explaining one’s reality. Narration and logical thinking are both ways of structuring experiences. The world of humans is based on telling and listening to stories. Therefore narration refers to living and being. Eskola & Suoranta also cite Hänninen (1994) on how it is a profound form of understanding that cannot be escaped. When conducting an interview the point is in gathering stories and

the form of expressing oneself is narrative. An interview can be modified so that it will attract the attention to the interviewees' storytelling. Thus it is useful to ask the interviewees to tell something about their past or a particular event in their lives. Narrative can be seen as a general feature of a qualitative study that simultaneously explains something about the interviewer as it does about the interviewee. From this viewpoint a qualitative study is a plunge into the multifaceted realm of stories and narration. (Eskola & Suoranta 2014 p.22-24.)

The first interview was done using a set of previously selected questions and it was aimed to follow a structure of the interviewer. What was discovered during the interview was that by following a certain order of questions or interview themes, the interview process felt too formal and strict. The interviewee was about to explain something relevant to them that did not fit into the structure of the interview. For example a question led the interviewee to talk about their own relationship with their new hobby but the next question would have still been about their previous hobby. Therefore the structure of the interviews was changed to a narrative, where the interviewees were able to let their thoughts flow more without the constraints of a structured interview.

3.5 Interview

As mentioned earlier the experiences of others can only be compared to those of our own. Therefore interviewing the participants in a qualitative manner was chosen as the research method for this thesis. In order to keep the interviews as natural as possible they were held either in a youth house where the participants usually went to perform their hobbies and one was at the interviewees' home. The aim was to find out what sort of hobbies these people have or have had. Furthermore what they felt especially meaningful in their past or present hobbies. The criteria for the interviewees was only that they would have or had something to do that they would define as a hobby. What was also interesting was the fact that some young people said they perform a certain activity every now and then but did not count that particular activity as a hobby. This emphasised how hobbies in general can be quite subjective.

Preliminary interview questions for the interviews were thought of before the interviews. What was noticed during the interviews was that some of the questions were best to be

left out in some cases and some questions were modified during the interview. The interviews took more of a conversation based form due to which some of the questions were not seen as essential as others or it was noticed that by replacing some words with others would provide a more in-depth narration from the interviewee.

3.6 Analysing the Interviews

All of the interviews were recorded on a Dictaphone and were later on transcribed. In the end the transcripts consisted of twenty three pages of text. Once the transcripts were finished they were thoroughly analysed from different viewpoints of the main theory. Special attention in the analysis was paid to see how the three basic psychological needs; autonomy, competence and relatedness were present in the answers.

4 Results

Now we shall take a look on how the three basic psychological needs and the drop-out phenomena were shown in the interviews. The following section includes the most essential quotes from the interviews followed by a short analysis.

4.1 Relatedness

I had found the passion through friends, they had first played me the songs and I got interested about them and then I got interested with playing the guitar.

When you play in a band there's other people playing with you and that affects your own playing. And they can give out tips on what you should and should not play. It's like an interaction, it's also developing.

Well, for example you get to hang out with your friends and you always learn something new that you did not know before and you get to release some of your bad feelings for example being pissed off, like that.

In the quotes above the persons are explaining how learning to play music with other people has given him enthusiasm towards personal development in guitar playing.

Friends who are present as they play work as motivators, making the surroundings positive for development. The person in the second quote clearly feels adequate among peers and wishes to pursue new skills among them. Challenges that the person encounters are such that suit the skill level of the group.

Maybe sometimes someone has made a demo version but then others will participate and work on that.

Everyone will take part in that

Yeah, not one song is done by just a single person, everyone takes part in it.

As a song is created collectively, thus the environment is being shaped according to the skills of the participants.

There is something that I might do all by myself but with skateboarding there's no point of doing it alone. It's like such a huge part the whole community.

I have those friends that skate but usually it goes so that some friend calls and asks to go skate and then we go skate. But that's a bit rare. I have also some times when I go skate by myself and then there are other people there as well. Basically alone but you make friends there. You wish that there would be some people that you know. You are alone but at the same time together.

Skateboarding, which can be considered an alternative activity, has a different nature than more organized sports, where practice times are quite often scheduled before hand with certain people of your team. The person in the lower quote is telling how he goes skateboarding by himself, the activity is not planned so much beforehand as it would be with team sports. What is considered noteworthy is how the last sentence gives an idea that the person does not necessarily need to be good friends with the other skateboarders but only their presence gives a feeling of community.

And that has also been great when I have had periods when I have thought: "Have I learned anything in a while?" And then someone comes and tells me: "Wow, have you noticed how much you have progressed?" When you compare to your situation a year ago, then you get a nice extra kick that you haven't wasted time and money into training.

Here we can see how the interaction and feedback from peers plays a vital role in hobbies. The person practicing might not notice their own development or might be self-

critical towards it but the feedback from others can be seen as the factor that consolidates the actual progression.

4.2 Competence

Well, basically it brings content to my life and I enjoy progressing in those fields. So that you have basically chosen activities in your life among which you want to progress, you enjoy that you are developing, you enjoy doing them and you enjoy the learning process.

Well it's the thing that you get feelings of achievement, naturally you get to learn something that interests yourself, well there are ups and downs, but you learn to cope with it.

Here learning and progressing are described as content in one's life. This can be seen as a great motivator to do something. The lower quote explains how the person has learned to cope with the ups and downs of the hobby. This can be seen as the person finding confidence for their activity no matter if they do not succeed completely all the time. Apparently the feeling of confidence comes from the feelings of achievement.

Well, I can clearly say that if there were no goals then I would not have any hobbies either.

A hobby without goals seems equal to having no hobbies at all. Thus the person clearly needs to find a way to implement personal capacities to the chosen activity. Feelings of dissatisfaction come to the picture when capacities are not improved or given the chance to be used.

I need a certain goal-orientation that I have the energy to do anything. I get really bored really quickly if things don't happen from time to time. So, like there is also the thing that I want to progress, so that also kinda keeps the motivation going. And that has also been great when I have had periods when I have thought: "Have I learned anything in a while?" And then someone comes and tells me: "Wow, have

you noticed how much you have progressed?” When you compare to your situation a year ago, then you get a nice extra kick that you haven’t wasted time and money into training. So, eventually there is an internal thing of course that keeps you going, even though sometimes you have those downhill...

Here the interviewee also feels as they must have a challenge for their development in order to stay interested about their hobby.

Eventually you get the motivation, it’s exactly the little things that keep you going, like you learn a certain song that did not work out at all some time ago, and not you get it going in like five minutes. So it’s basically something that motivates you a lot and you get a great feeling out of it like: “I can definitely do something.”

Personal capacities have clearly been put to use and it has resulted in a positive outcome in the persons’ development.

As a musician it’s important that I notice in a certain point that I have progressed in some way. It like requires a certain longevity... I also have an extra kick to the drive, that it is so personal like, a life line, making music. It’s like you force yourself to progress, whip yourself to go further in what you’re doing.

Having longevity is noticed here as vital. Being able to develop requires certain will power that makes the person carry on with their hobby nevertheless the progress is demanding.

4.3 Autonomy

It’s pretty good and also that you meet new people. I wouldn’t have known these guys either, if I would not play the guitar and I have met so many through Frisbee golf. Also that you get to do what you like and you get to see your own progression and you start to feel good and you get motivated to carry on. Like that.

Here we can see how a person experiences the freedom of choosing a suitable hobby for him as essential.

Well, basically it brings content to my life and I enjoy progressing in those fields. So that you have basically chosen activities in your life among which you want to

progress, you enjoy that you are developing, you enjoy doing them and you enjoy the learning process.

Activities are apparently tailored according to the preferences of the young person. Progression happens in those fields where the intrinsic motivation is found.

To me like all those several hobbies, like they have supported me like: "Ok, if that's not your thing." They allowed me to find my own, like what is the one that really suits me.

Here the person is clearly satisfied about her parents giving the right to choose a particular hobby for her.

But like my dad didn't like that I wouldn't have a "teacher" teacher, he thought I would develop so much better if I would have a proper teacher. I myself was not so interested and didn't listen to my dad.

This quote can be interpreted including signs of a young person rebelling against their parents. Clearly the parent has tried to offer a way for the young person to learn something in a professional atmosphere but this has not been an appealing offer. Perhaps more important has been the autonomous choice to perform an activity than to learn it in more professional manner.

Like he totally asked me to give grounds for it and then I like told him honestly, after which there was never a reply like: "You're gonna keep doing this!" He never forced me to play anything if I didn't want to. But I couldn't quit during a season though.

Here a young person has been given the right to choose whether to stop or keep doing a hobby of their choice as long as they have given good grounds for their decision.

Never, in that sense I was lucky that I was never forced to do a certain hobby, and I know there are a lot of people who have been forced. And like if there is no personal motivation, I just don't understand how there is any possibility for a decent progress. The same thing like in school, you study subjects that you don't like and you do then just so that you can pass. Then you make more effort to the ones you truly like.

Well of course it's important that you wouldn't start doing it if someone else would decide for you. And there is no point in having a hobby if someone would force you to do it.

Here the person experiences the intrinsic motivation as something that keeps her doing what she is doing. If she would not feel an innate satisfaction in what she is doing there would clearly be a lot less motivation to perform. Clearly the initiative for doing comes from the young person themselves and activity would not be performed unless the person would have the possibility to choose.

Well, he didn't say anything special when I quit playing football, just told me something like: "Try to find something else to do."

I didn't have nothing to do, so then my parents had nothing to say what so ever. Maybe something like: "Just try to find something to do."

4.4 Drop-out phenomena

I bet dad was probably disappointed like, he couldn't fit in with that music playing hobby the same way he could with the baseball. Like we used to go like hit base balls to a net, like dad would pitch them to me. Then he always gave tips and something like that, that we had a sort of a common thing for a while. But he wasn't like mad either, that he took it quite well.

Above we can see an example of the drop-off phenomena. The person used to play baseball, a team sport that ended and was later changed to playing music. The hobby changed from a more structured team sport to something less formal but the person did not stop having a hobby completely.

To me like all those several hobbies, like they have supported me like: "Ok, if that's not your thing." They allowed me to find my own, like what is the one that really suits me.

In the quote the person has clearly dropped-out from a certain hobby but as we can interpret the parents have trusted that the young person finds a suitable hobby for them in another form.

Well, I was not able to move around that much and then the whole thing ended because I moved to Southern-Finland.

Above is an example of the drop-out phenomena from the interview which were due to the fact that the people had to move quite a distance to a new city and the old team was left behind.

5 Conclusion

Looking from the different viewpoints of the basic psychological needs, growth of self, motivation, early adolescence and the drop-out phenomena the following was discovered. And as this conclusion focuses on experiences of others let us keep in mind how according to Koivisto et al (2014) we can only experience our own experiences as our very own. We can try to understand the experiences of others, interpret the individual history, social and societal circumstances for example. But it is still important to remember how experience examination is considered vital nevertheless it can be complex and problematic. (Koivisto et al 2014 pp.15-16.)

The term relatedness was explained by Ryan & Deci as a feeling of being connected to other people around you. This included a feeling of considering, being considered by others and having experiences of inclusion individuals and several groups of people. It was also seen as being accepted by the ones you interact with. A psychological sense of feeling unity and security in the midst of other. (Ryan & Deci 2002 p.7.) Various forms of relatedness among the interviews can be seen as taking part in a hobby together. The clearest form of this was noticed among people with musical hobbies, especially in a band. The actual playing is done together, as a tightly knit group they all affect the atmosphere. Feelings of adequacy among social interactions were enhanced by the supportive atmosphere of peers. Clear feedback from others was experienced as something that gave the people motivation to carry on with the activity. In some activities the company of others was seen as something that would give the person more motivation for

performance. On the other hand one person clearly felt as it was only the presence of others that made a feeling of belonging. According to Beckett & Taylor (2016) feeling of love and being able to commit to other people would be something that is considered desirable in the life time of a young adult. /Beckett & Taylor 2016.)

The musical activities mentioned in the interviews can be considered as an alternative activities. According to Rannikko et al (2013) the student-teacher relationship is quite flexible in alternative activities. All participants can be each other's teachers. (Rannikko et al 2013 pp.7-11.) And as an interview quote mentioned there are situations when other band members give out tips on what to play and what not to play, thus strengthening the role of music as an alternative activity when a proper teacher is not around.

Löfblom (2016) added to relatedness how shared experiences among a group enhance the feeling of community as they simultaneously create feelings of similarity in a certain subject. Relatedness is created as the participants all experience the situations as meaningful. (Löfblom 2016 pp.8-14.) This can be found from quotes regarding musical hobbies. Playing music was referred to as an interaction, shared moments with the band members where the presence of all participants is crucial for the activity to be meaningful.

Ryan & Deci (2002) explain how competence refer to being able to perform in various social contexts and to have the ability to apply different capacities one would withhold. They add that competence might not just be a new learned skill but also confidence that a person has developed. (Ryan & Deci 2002 p.7.) In this viewpoint the interview results give an understanding that progressing in one's hobby gave content to people's lives. Some experienced how the ability to function in a certain social context such as a band gave them feelings of satisfaction.

A great factor in the area of competence was the importance of having goals as well. Similar to increasing one's skills is to distinct clear goals. Longevity was experienced as something that would be needed to be able to increase the level of skills, as the one's not having longevity would not be able to carry on a hobby through the most demanding phases. Progressing and learning new skills were seen as including disappointments from time to time. This is was not seen as a devastating factor but a process of developing confidence in life.

Factors that can be seen as representing autonomy are the following. Deci & Ryan summed up autonomy as having the possibility to express a person's true self through their actions. Sense of initiative and value is received even though the actions would come from outside sources. (Deci & Ryan 2002 p.8.) From the interviews we can make a conclusion that hobbies among young people can last longer if the people have the possibility to affect what they are doing and with who. Also as Aarresola (2013) wrote in Harinen & Rannikko (2013) having an activity which can be considered self-driven, spontaneous and unsupervised is considered to be autonomous. Aarresola adds how the type of activity is not considered as vital as is the social context in which it is happening. (Harinen & Rannikko 2013 p.58.) The activities mentioned in the interviews, such as playing music and skateboarding were seen to some extent unsupervised. Often band rehearsals or skate sessions were scheduled before hand but what was noticed more important were interactions among others during the activity. Clearly the context where the young person was able to decide what they would and with whom was seen as the core of the activity.

The self-determination theory interprets how different human relationships help a person's sense of self grow. In the eyes of the self-determination theory these relationships have to be mutual (Ryan & Deci 2002 pp. 5-6). Results from the interviews were seen to underline how the interaction between the participants turns the activity into a reciprocal craft in which we can interpret the development of one's self. A person interacts with other people and is able to reflect how their own behaviour affects the others and vice versa. Ryan & Deci carry on explaining how the different relationships can be either constructive or destructive to a person's psyche (Ryan & Deci 2002 pp.5-6). In the interviews for this thesis all the results from different interactions were seen to be positive. Reasons for this can be considered the fact that the people clearly knew each other and felt comfortable being among themselves. Behaviour of other was not felt off-putting but safe and friendly. And as Rapheal & Varghese mentioned earlier robust personal growth and general happiness have been noticed to increase as the psychological needs have been filled (Rapheal & Varghese 2015 p.780).

As Nurmiranta et al (2009) explained earlier, early adolescence withholds great psychosocial progress. One of these was the development of friendships. These newly formed relationships work as an excellent support for young people where they receive understanding, closeness and guidance. Also rebelling against parents. (Nurmiranta et al 2009

p.87.) What was noticed in the interviews was that especially the ones engaging in a band activity found decent comfort and support from other members. The support came in the form of suggesting new ideas and sharing skills and also by being there for each other in case of needing to ventilate some negative emotions. In one quote a person explained how she did not like that her parent would have made her to practice with a teacher of a more professional level. Some type of rebellion could be noticed from the young person's behaviour which underlined the willingness to perform a hobby in their own terms even if this would have led to learning something technically wrong.

Deci & Ryan (2000) described motivation earlier as a feeling that helps a person to keep up with attaining a certain outcome. Motivation is considered to be quite a relative topic and it occurs as different types in different people. They went on about dividing motivation to two different types, extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic being the one that drive a person to perform when an outer reward is promised. For example a monetary price. Intrinsic, on the other hand can be seen as something that makes you perform only due to the inner satisfaction one gets from the activity. (Deci & Ryan 2000. pp.54-67.) In the interviews motivation that came from within the person was seen as a high factor on whether the activity continued or not. Basically all participants of the research wanted have a hobby of some sort. Making friends and performing activities with friends was extremely vital and feedback from peers is seen as a good aid in motivation. Being able to expand their skill repertoire and create something collectively was experienced vital.

Pretty much all of the activities mentioned in the interviews were considered to happen during serious free time. As Berg (2015) defined it as volunteer based amateur or hobby oriented activity which requires active self-development and acquisition of skills (Berg 2015 p.31). The interviewees mentioned how they play with each other in an amateur level, there are no teachers around to make the activity more professional. Acquisition of skills was noticed as an important factor in their hobbies as well.

The presence of parents was not experienced as highly important as the presence of friends. But the fact that the parents felt satisfied that the young people had a hobby which gave them satisfaction and made them happy was considered important.

The drop-out phenomena seemed to be quite largely presented in the interviews. The drop-out was earlier defined as when a person quits a particular hobby completely (Aira

et al 2013 p.13). Quite many people had changed a hobby from one to another. Some had had several hobbies before finding a one that would suit them. Sometimes the hobbies had lasted a long time and quitting resulted in finding another activity that would be more suitable for the person. When the young people ended up as a part of the drop-out phenomena the support of parents seemed important as well. One person was quite sure her father was not satisfied of her quitting something that the father considered important, but having the freedom to change a hobby to a one that felt more satisfying was experiences as relieving to the young person.

To conclude, the young people in this thesis experienced their hobbies as fulfilling as long as they had an opportunity to influence what they would be doing. Setting different goals and learning new skills was experienced essential. Some had mentioned that without goals and progression there would have not been a point to keep up with their hobby.

Being able to interact with others in a supporting and positive atmosphere was experienced crucial. The supportive company of others gave a chance for letting out both positive and negative emotions. Knowing that the right type of company would also accept letting out these type of emotions and supportive feedback from peers was experienced to make the hobby more desirable. Sometimes it was only the presence of fellow hobbyists made the activity more fruitful, this also meant that the other hobbyists did not need to be acquaintances to the person.

Intrinsic motivation was seen to give influence the level of enthusiasm among the activity. If the motivation would have been extrinsic the people did not feel such keen interest in performing it and carrying on to develop their skills among it. Quitting a hobby was not seen as a negative feature. It was seen as more of a way to pursuit a more suitable hobby for themselves.

6 Discussion

The challenge for this thesis was to find the subjects for the interviews. The majority of the subjects were found through the Arabia youth house and they happened to be over eighteen years of age. The plan was originally to try and reach people under eighteen as well. As I went to the youth house to introduce myself to the underage users of the

youth house they did not show signs of enthusiasm. What I thought were the reasons for this was that I was not familiar face in the youth house. And as I explained them what the interview was for I believe most of them did not understand or care. Thinking more in-depth about approaching teen-age people for a research like this, it might be better to find participants from your work place or internship place. This way you would first have the chance of getting to know the people better and as you meet them day by day you start dropping little pieces of knowledge on what you would like to research and whether the people there would be interest in participating.

In the end as I was able to find participants for my research the ones who took part felt quite enthusiastic. Some of them felt as the interview part worked as a decent personal reflection platform for them. One girl told me how she had not thought about her long time hobbies that much, especially what made them so important to her. She elaborated how she had had her hobbies for so many years that they had started to feel self-explanatory to her. As I had asked reasons for the hobbies she told me it was the first time in years as she had actually spoken out and thought thoroughly why this particular hobby was so important.

As the theme was about the experiences of others and you are only able to understand the experiences of others through the words of others instead of fully experiencing them as your own. As a skateboarders I believe I was able to understand a little bit better how the person explaining about skateboarding experienced his hobby. But this is only my own interpretation.

Co-operation with the Youth department of the city of Helsinki started on my own initiative. I personally contacted them and pitched my idea of a thesis to them. As I explained to them that this thesis will be written in English I first had a doubt that they would not consider this as too useful. My doubt proved me wrong as I was replied that it would be useful for the staff of the Youth department to have a new study in a quite universal language. And considering this fact once again, the Helsinki metropolitan area is only becoming more and more international year by year. English is being considered as an important service language and the city of Espoo is even becoming the first trilingual city in Finland. I can only assume that other cities would follow after Espoo.

Ideas for further research could be how also people underage are experiencing hobbies. Then there would be a possibility to compare those to the ones´ already presented here. I have a doubt that kids under eighteen could also have similar ideas on the topic but this is only my personal thinking. Another thing that I came up with was after the youth workers of the city of Helsinki had read this thesis there could be research on how they have felt working afterwards. Has something changed in their behavior and ways of working or not.

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Appendix 1: Interview Themes:

- Different forms of hobbies
- Regularity / Irregularity of the hobbies
- Doing something alone
- Doing something with others
- Atmosphere
- Competition / Noncompetition
- Development
- Possibility to choose
- Defining hobbies
- Quitting a hobby
- Parents attitude
- Important factors in hobbies

