

## Practice-based Research for Pupil Participation in Sweden's Art and Music Schools

This is a presentation of an ongoing practice-based research project in collaboration with a music school in Sweden. The research aim is to contribute to knowledge about pupil participation from the perspectives of teachers, leaders, and pupils in Sweden's Art and Music Schools. A further aim is to contribute to the development of practice-based research.

In the collaborating music school, a new initiative called KulturCrew has a goal to increase children's and adolescents' participation and influence in decision-making in cultural life. Children and adolescents learn to become event organisers by practicing: hosting, marketing, stage technology, planning, team building and participation. KulturCrew state that they contribute to reaching several articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In the initial research phase, the data consist of reflection notes from the researchers and reflection conversations with the partners from the music school. Despite the research focus being on pupil participation, the pupils' voices were not included in the first phase due to ethical considerations. As a consequence of such challenges, the method of photovoice has been added to the design. Photovoice contributes to a shift of power since the perspectives of the participants are enforced when they choose what to take photos of.

In the current phase of the project, the collaboration with the course leaders has been deepened with weekly digital meetings contributing to cycles of action and reflection.

The collaborative nature of the research project calls for specific ethical aspects to be considered. Confidentiality, for instance, applies to the pupils but not to the course leaders who are collaborating in the project.

Preliminary results problematise democracy and distribution of power since there might be a risk that an initiative such as KulturCrew can contribute to give more power to those pupils who already participate and decide in the municipality's cultural life. The theoretical analysis will draw on collaborative action research and policy theories. The results have potential to be relevant to other music educators and researchers, particularly to those interested in developing the connections between the fields of practice and research.

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