



Gilberto Rufino de Oliveira Neto
Empathy as a social change factor through youth participation

Bachelor's Thesis
Intercultural Teacher Education, Degree Programme in Teaching and Education
2018

University of Oulu

Faculty of Education

Empathy as a social change factor through youth participation

(Gilberto Rufino de Oliveira Neto)

Bachelor's Thesis, 32 pages, 0 appendices

November, 2018

Abstract

This Bachelor's thesis is a theoretical work based on an integrative literature review which explores empathy as determining factor for youth participation towards social change, bringing together an interdisciplinary understanding of empathy as a phenomenon and introduces the definition for youth participation. This thesis combines literature from authors such as Roman Krznaric, Barry Checkoway, M. Alex Wagaman, etc. that discuss the role of empathy and youth participation for social change from historical, educational, evolutionary and psychological standpoints, among others. After thorough review and discussions which combine research on empathy and youth participation together, examples are examined considering real events which illustrate all that has been brought up in terms of the role of empathy as social change factor through youth participation. Finally, the thesis analyses the essential role empathy has on altruistic behavior and finds an important element for engagement that youth experiences when participating: psychological empowerment. Considering youth as important agents of social change, empathic capacity development is a key to impact positively the society as well as the young people themselves. The aim of this thesis is to raise awareness on the importance of developing the empathy capacity in a more in-depth and in a wider diversity of contexts.

Key words: Empathy, Social Change, Empathy Education, Youth Participation, Youth Engagement, Psychological Empowerment

Acknowledgements

There is an endless list of people who deserve my gratitude. However, because the list is almost literally endless, there are two of them I need to mention:

First and foremost, I would like to thank **Janis Anthony** for enabling me to pursue this education. Only because of the scholarship provided by the Anthony Charitable Foundation can I now present this Bachelor's Thesis and degree in Intercultural Teacher Education. In exchange, I commit to not only contribute with my professional life to the betterment of human development, but also to enable two other people to pursue their education, as promised to Janis when we met.

Secondly, special thanks to **Hosana Celeste Oliveira**, who supervised my work in this Bachelor's thesis. She taught me how to do quality research, how to develop my topic, how to present a work with excellence. Besides being my supervisor, she has been one of the greatest influences both academically, and personally. By being, first of all, her friend, I could learn humility, character and the importance of research to develop societies. Her work as a researcher has inspired me to an extent I feel honored to have had her as my supervisor.

To all those who come across this thesis looking for means to utilise empathy to engage youth because you also believe in this potential, I hope it can be useful and that it can be helpful for your work.

Proudly,

Gilberto Rufino de Oliveira Neto

Summary

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Empathy: definitions and concepts.....	8
2.1. Affective Empathy.....	8
2.2. Cognitive Empathy.....	10
2.3. Empathy as an Appropriate Response.....	11
3. Youth Participation - definition, the problematic, the context.....	12
4. Empathy and Youth Participation for Social Change.....	15
4.1. Youth and Social Change.....	15
4.2. Empathy and Youth Participation.....	17
4.3. Empathy, Youth Participation and Social Change.....	19
4.4. Examples of Empathy-Induced Youth Participation for Social Change.....	21
4.4.1. The Ocean Cleanup.....	21
4.4.2. Liter of Light.....	22
4.4.3. Nice Leng'ete.....	24
5. Challenges and limitations.....	26
6. Conclusions.....	27
7. References.....	29

1. Introduction

The desire to explore youth participation came naturally after 11 years of working with young people, whose age ranged from children to adults over 25. It all started when I got a job teaching English in a language institute in Manaus, my hometown, in the North of Brazil. The four years spent doing the job were marked by me being constantly responsible for groups which were not so fond of learning. Groups other teachers did not want to teach, groups that had potential, but did not use it most of the times. I had the role of engaging them and spark their desire for learning. Therefore, in every semester when we got a new group, turning a group of students into a lively experience of learning together became my short-term goal.

As life changed and new opportunities unfolded, I saw myself abroad, working in different volunteer projects in over 6 countries: teaching English in Krasnodar, Russia; working as a teacher assistant in a local primary school in Ljubljana, Slovenia; volunteer in a clinic for children with certain disabilities in Belgrade and work with high schoolers in Oulu, Finland, doing drama method to improve their empathy and global awareness. With this journey I had the chance to encounter many challenges and opportunities to broaden my understanding of diversity, global citizenship and active participation towards the world around us.

After the journey of traveling the world to work and volunteer temporarily ended, I moved to Oulu so I could pursue a degree in Intercultural Teacher Education at the University of Oulu. At the same time, I volunteered in the local committee of AIESEC¹ for my two first years. After that, I moved to Helsinki to take a full-time position in the national office of AIESEC in Finland for two years: one year as the national responsible for volunteer projects in Finland, where we would welcome international volunteers to develop their leadership skills as they contributed to community development projects in Finland. The second year I held the position of president of the organisation.

Besides all the challenges and nuances that came with the experience, one issue in specific caught my attention: how to engage more and more people to participate in our activities, to develop themselves, to go volunteer abroad. I had the constant feeling that people had all the opportunities, but did not do enough not only to explore their own potential, but to impact their

¹ AIESEC is a non-for-profit youth-run organisation which works towards peace and fulfillment of humankind's potential by developing leadership in young people from 18 to 30 years old. For more information check aiesec.org.

surroundings. The frustration that this encompassed took me back to all my previous experiences all the way to trying to understand what I want to be doing in the future as a professional.

Since then, empathy has been a core element I have been using in my work with young people. That is why the questions that intrigued me towards the end of my term as president of AIESEC in Finland, are very much the same that inspired me to start the research for this thesis. Among the questions that intrigued me the most were the following:

- What stops young people from participating more actively
- What the role of empathy in social change is
- What we can do as leaders of NGOs, as teachers (...) to genuinely engage young people

As someone who wants to be a human development specialist, empathy has shown itself as an essential element to empower young people. While working with international volunteers coming to Finland to work in schools with children, in reception centres with asylum seekers or in nursing homes with lonely elderly, I felt that an essential step was that the volunteers made the exercise of empathy constantly as they made daily decisions on what they would do at their volunteer service.

Having that in mind and having to prepare workshops and trainings for those volunteers, I came across Roman Krznaric's *You are, therefore I am: How Empathy Education Can Create Social Change* (2003). Roman Krznaric is a social philosopher and writer. He is also the founder of the empathy museum and was also a founding faculty member of The School of Life. He is a Research Fellow of the Long Now Foundation in San Francisco, and a research associate at the Design Against Crime Research Centre at Central Saint Martin's college of art and design in London.² In this thesis, Krznaric is the reference used to understand and build the premises that 1. Empathy can be learned and developed 2. There are different ways we experience empathy and 3. Empathy ignites actions and/ or behavior change. The author builds the three premises on mass empathic movements throughout history, education initiatives and a strong interdisciplinary approach towards empathy.

In addition to Krznaric's work, this thesis will bring Frans de Waal (2010) and explore empathy from an evolutionary standpoint. Based on de Wall, we are able to understand the role empathy

² All information about Roman Krznaric retried on November 7th, 2018 from his official website: <https://www.romankrznaric.com/about>

plays for the survival of our species, looking at how a variety of living being had to evolve so to identify, imitate and take perspectives. Furthermore, this thesis is founded on the work of Jakob Håkanson (2003), who brings empathy as a phenomenon under psychology's spectacles and a long series of initiatives and approaches to empathy-induced actions by a variety of authors such as M. Alex Wagaman (2011), C. Daniel Batson (2008) and, to explore youth participation, Barry Checkoway (1998), Brian Christens & Tom Dolan (2011), among others.

For this thesis, based on its theoretical background and my experience, I depart from a belief in the importance of young people taking an active role in building the society they live in. Also in the importance of diversity, representation and inclusion. That engagement ought to be genuine, not manipulated. And finally, in the importance of the "hands on" approach for social change, guided by the two questions below, this thesis' research questions:

- What is the role of empathy in youth participation?
- How can empathy contribute for social change through engaging young people?

The desired outcome for this thesis is, firstly, awareness on the importance of developing our capacity to empathise with others in a more in-depth way and in a wider diversity of contexts. Secondly, gather a basic compilation of research on empathy and youth participation so that teachers, NGO leaders, youth themselves and other youth workers have references and resources in order to promote youth participation as a catalyst for social change.

This Bachelor's thesis starts with an interdisciplinary literature review on empathy as a phenomenon which is both innate and pre-wired to our brains (de Waal, 2010) as voluntary, cognitive skill (Decety et Chaminade, 2003) which can ignite other centered behavior. In the third chapter, youth participation is defined as a specific term utilised in social work. The chapter also addresses what has been presented so far in regards to the theme. The following chapter provides a discussion in which we bring the concepts of youth participation and social change together, followed by how empathy connects with youth participation and, finally, how the three main concepts relate. The fourth chapter ends with three case students which enable us to illustrate the theoretical background in practice. The fifth chapter reveals the main challenges and limitations that took place in the making of this research and concludes in the sixth chapter with the thesis' main considerations regarding the role of empathy towards social change through youth participation.

2. Empathy: Definitions and Concepts

Throughout the numerous reading materials regarding empathy, one important differentiation that often came up was separating *empathy* from *sympathy*. Differently from our object of study, sympathy refers to “an emotional response which is not shared” (Krznaric, 2008, p.10), as when looking at an anguished baby crying and the response feeling is, for example, pity.

In terms of empathy definition we will depart from the facts that 1. We are analysing mostly empathy between humans; 2. It has had many different approaches and definitions³, this study will be focusing on more contemporary researches and definitions in order to understand empathy’s role in youth engagement towards social change.

Håkanson’s (2003, p.7) most basic definition for empathy consists in “an awareness, an understanding, a knowing of another’s state, condition or consciousness”. In order to look deeper into that, we can divide empathy in three types, as did Krznaric (2008, p.10,11): (1) *affective empathy*; (2) *cognitive empathy* and (3) *empathy as an appropriate response*.

Affective Empathy

Although empathy is mostly presented as voluntary, requiring role-taking and a higher cognition capacity⁴, De Waal (2010, p.76) observed how the state of other people awakens within us hidden memories of similar states that we have experienced - an automatic reactivation of neural circuits, performed by the *mirror neurons*, which are neurons that are activated when an action is performed or when the same action is observed, allowing a shared representation of actions (Kaplan et Lacoboni, 2006, p.175). *Affective empathy* is a shared emotional response, where we feel what the other is feeling – or what we imagine that to feel like: feeling sad when the other is sad, happy when the other is happy, and so on. The discovery of the mirror neurons also means that empathy is not exclusive to humans, nor is it only a higher order thinking kind of brain activity.

³ Håkanson (2003) offers an extensive historical summary on the research of empathy in his work *Exploring the Phenomenon of Empathy*.

⁴ To understand empathy as voluntary, perspective-taking check *Cognitive Empathy* p. 10

“This is precisely where empathy and sympathy or start - not in the higher regions of imagination, or the ability to consciously reconstruct how we would feel if we were in someone else’s situation. It began much simpler: with the synchronization of bodies: Running when others run, laughing when others laugh, crying when others cry or yawning when others yawn” - De Waal (2010, p.50)

Now, the idea here is not that because we are able to empathise involuntarily, that we automatically empathise with everyone and in every situation. Decety & Chaminade (2003, p. 590) bring up identification as a precondition for empathy: we are innately more inclined to empathise with those who share more similarities with us⁵: cultural background, ethnic features, age, job, and especially if they are closer to us, like a significant other, family, friend and so on. As we will understand more when addressing *cognitive empathy*, empathy does not limit itself to an involuntary response. We do have the capacity to control as well as/or inhibit responses when done consciously:

“the ability to control and inhibit responses is not our only weapon against rampant empathy. We also regulate it at its very source by means of selective attention and identification. If you don’t want to be aroused by an image, just don’t look at it. And even though we identify easily with others, we don’t do so automatically. For example, we have a hard time identifying with people whom we see as different or belonging to another group. We find it easier to identify with those like us” (DeWaal, 2010, p.77).

Therefore, we have the capacity to, as Walker (2013, p.61) describes, “think our way out” of certain empathic responses - such as by impeding them through some value judgements, for example. This means that we do have an innate capacity to feel empathy which takes place when our mirror neurons are triggered by certain events - usually events we can recall from a similar past experience, and/ or events with other people we can identify with, and even though it is an automatic response, we are able to control, to some extent, how we respond to it.

⁵ De Waal (2010) and Decety & Chaminade (2003) fundamentally disagree on whether this is a distinctive characteristic of human beings. This thesis will not get in depth with the subject but for further reading please refer to the aforementioned references.

Cognitive Empathy

Cognitive empathy consists of imagining another being's perspective (Kaplan et Lacoboni, 2006, p. 178), a mental exercise, or as Rogers (1975, p.4) iterates: empathy is a process, it is the ability to represent one's own thoughts or someone else's thoughts are intimately tied together (Decety et Chaminade, 2003, p.591). *Cognitive empathy* comprises the ability to see the other as a subject, not an object: it means that one acknowledges the other's first-person perspective, that we build a sense of similarity of identity when recognising the other and, in most cases, cognitive empathy contains at least a minimum degree of care to the other's welfare (Håkanson, 2003, p.28).

On the other hand, as much as perspective-taking as a skill in its own is a neutral capacity, big crimes against humanity rely greatly on this ability, but with lack of empathy. For instance, when thinking of torture objects and techniques, we can observe all the cognitive capacity of perspective-taking used to understand others' needs, weaknesses and wants, but the emotional, caring factors, which are essential for positive other-centered behavior, are not there (DeWaal, 2010, p.189).

One complex and highly important skill for social interactions is the identification and understanding of intention, as stated by Kaplan and Lacoboni (2006, p.175, 176): it can be seen in simpler tasks, like grabbing a bar of chocolate, and we understand the intention the person has to either eat it - or else, depending on the context. A uniformed person with the supermarket logo inside the supermarket itself would most likely have a chocolate in their hands for other reasons, like stacking them, returning them to their original place, etc. In terms of human interactions, this ability to understand intention can be seen, for example, when there is a misunderstanding in conversations that ends with both parties hurt - failure in conveying the message they intended due to the manner they spoke, for example, which led the statement to be interpreted in a different way. The issue could have been solved by at least one of the parties attempting to understand that, although the manner the message was delivered was not appropriate, they did not intend to say it in a hurtful way. The other, however, could understand that regardless of their intention, their message was hurtful.

Finally, one important fact to keep in mind is that *cognitive empathy* is a skill that can be learned and improved throughout the entire lifespan. Furthermore, with its conductivity across the brain

network, one can also develop other emotional skills and cognitive capacities, such as communication, decision-making skills, complexity, integration, social functioning within the world, among others (VanCleave, 2006, p.372, 373; 2008, Grünh, Rebucal, Diehl, Lumley, & Labouvie-Vief, 2008, p.753).

Empathy as an Appropriate Response

“Those who bring in this third definition often emphasise that if you have shared the emotions of someone, or gained an understanding of their perspective, yet take no action as a result, then you have not fully experienced empathy. In a sense, it hasn’t really touched you. Empathy, by this definition, needs to make a difference. It has to inspire moral action of some form.” (Krznic, 2008, p.11)

Empathic response is an impulse to action that aims at alleviating the need of the other (Walker, 2013, p.55). De Waal (2010, p.104) in his evolutionary perspective in understanding other-centered behaviors, paid close attention to what is defined in his book as the *social scratch*: he observed a group of chimpanzees in line grooming and scratching one another’s back, which aroused new thoughts: scratching oneself is good and it feels good, one can receive relief. But what about scratching another, as it presents no direct benefit to the scratcher?

Batson (2008, p.9), in his article *Empathy-Induced Altruistic Motivation*, brings up what he calls the *empathy-altruism hypothesis*, which claims that the empathic concern felt towards a person in need produces altruistic motivation⁶ to relieve that need. Moreover, other forms of prosocial behavior take also other factors of empathy-induced motivation for action: *Collectivism*, which means motivation to benefit a particular group as a whole, as opposed to one’s own welfare or the welfare of specific others who are benefited. Another motivation is called *Principlism*, or upholding moral principles, seeking for justice. Here the concern shown for others appears to be prompted by duty to principle (Batson, 2008, p.18,19).

A debate sparked in almost all the literature that compose this chapter: is other-centered behavior truly altruistic or does it have egoistic motivations? Batson & Al (1981, p.290) present the altruistic action as the intermediate means to the end goal, as opposed to the end goal itself. For instance, if one was to save another person from a situation of danger, their end goal was to

⁶ *Altruism* defined as according to the author: “a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another’s welfare. Altruism is juxtaposed to *egoism*, a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing one’s own welfare.” (Batson, 2008, p.3)

avoid the unpleasant emotion they would feel if they had not helped - e.g. shame or guilt. Another factor which may affect the response is when the opportunity to help occurs in a moment where the helper has been through a mood-enhancing event, or phase which led them to a negative emotional state. Hence, the helping the other situation would function to relieve one's own negative state (Dovidio, Allen, & Schroeder, 1990, p. 249).

De Wall (2010, p.73), on the other hand, looks at it from a win-win standpoint: he states that one has always the opportunity to simply walk away. However, in the end, whether those empathy-induced actions were self-oriented or not, it not only benefits the one in need, but also benefits the helper.

To conclude, the chapter affirms that empathy can spark a response in the form of prosocial action. With this focus, chapter 4 will address the relation between Empathy as an appropriate response and youth participation towards social change.

3. Youth Participation - Definition, the problematic, the context

In finding literature regarding youth participation, one will eventually come across Barry Checkoway - professor of social work and urban planning at the University of Michigan. Checkoway has done extensive work on youth participation, empowerment and engagement for community development. In one of Checkoway's and his colleagues' most recent works (Checkoway, B. & Gutierrez, L., 2006, p.1) they define youth participation as "a process of involving young people in the institutions and decisions that affect their lives", and among these there are local, national or even international initiatives such as environmental issues, educational reform, social justice, etc.

Checkoway (1998, p.768) also drives attention to how activities that engage young people are conducted. He iterates that we ought to take into account that in order to for it to work it needs to cause some effect, change or outcome. Keeping such concern in mind, stakeholders could ensure the social change aspect of the initiative as well as the youth development of those taking part of it. In addition to that, community agencies or other enablers can benefit from youth participation by attracting new sources of information, new ideas for service delivery as well as support for implementation (p.770).

"Youth participation is about the real influence of young people in institutions and decisions, not about their passive presence as human subjects or service recipients. Although participation studies often assess activities in terms of their scope—such as their number, frequency, and duration—quality

is their most significant measure. Just because a number of young people attend a number of meetings and speak a number of times, is no measure of their effect. Quality participation shows some effect on outcomes, including its effect on community change.” (Checkoway, B. & Gutierrez, L., 2006, p.2)

Another perspective brought up in (Checkoway, 1998, p.766) was the view of *youth as resources*, meaning they are an investment for community development as well as it is their right to participate. As an example of commitment to this view, we can observe the following excerpt from 2009’s Development Cooperation Report by the European Commission:

“Ensure full participation [italics added] of youth in society, by increasing youth participation in the civic life of local communities and in representative democracy, by supporting youth organisations as well as various forms of ‘learning to participate,’ by encouraging participation of non-organised young people and by providing quality information services.” (European Commission, 2009, p. 8)

But what is being said about youth participation at the moment? Livingstone (2007, p.166) raises the issue of youth civil disengagement and cynicism towards politics. Cammaerts et al (2013, p. 646), on the other hand, openly oppose that idea. They propose the idea that the cause for these negative attitudes towards democracy and participation may not be reducible to apathy, but it may be a beginning of a legitimate opposition, since a wide range of young people do not see themselves represented or find themselves trusting political systems. At the same time, the idea that youth participation tends to happen more in settings where they can see the direct impact of their involvement - as opposed to depending on third parties to do so.

“Unlike voting, engagement in voluntary activities seems to be negatively correlated with age, because it concerns 28.6% of those younger than 18 years old, 26.2% of those aged 18 to 21, 24.5% of those aged 22 to 25, and only 22.7% of those aged 26 to 30 years.” (Cammaerts, Bruter, Banaji, Harrison, & Anstead, 2013, p.658)

Other correlations that could be found there was that of social class - disadvantaged young people tend to engage less as their primary worries go towards meeting more basic needs - and that of occupation - youth tend to be more engage before they get a permanent job. (Cammaerts et al., 2013)

There are five types of participation youth can get engaged, according to Checkoway (1998, p. 788):

1. *Youth Action Groups* (p.783) and 2. *Citizen action Groups* (p.786): both in which young people take initiative and organize themselves on their own accord to act upon social change, the main difference between them being the means which they choose to take action: youth action

they organise it themselves and deliver it - like mass mobilisations, public advocacy or awareness-raising projects. In citizen action, young people do so by building citizen organisations and using their awareness of power relations - e.g. “tenants organize and threaten a rent strike. Consumers pressure public officials to inspect sanitary violations in a food store. Residents challenge industrialists with evidence on environmental hazards in a low income neighborhood” (p.786);

3. *Youth Development Agencies* (p.772): promotes the positive development of young people and their skills, as opposed to initiatives that only overcome their problems; one example of youth development agencies is the project called *Harmonicanto*, from Cantagalo, a small town near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: The project aims to integrate the community by bringing the children and their families together by providing school support as well as performing arts classes, focused on music education⁷.

4. *Neighborhood Development Programs* (p.776): people implement community development programs and initiatives of their own at the neighborhood level with the aim to contribute to the neighborhood; The *Kizuna Project*⁸ can be a great example of neighborhood development program: it was organised by the Japanese-descendants community in Los Piletones, small neighborhood of a town called Villa Soldati, in Argentina. The initiative aimed at integrating the Japanese and the local communities together by spreading Japanese values through a long clean-up of the entire neighborhood.

5. *Neighborhood-Based Youth Initiatives* (p.780): emphasize youth participation and neighborhood development in the same single program. One example of how this kind of initiative could work is *Service-Learning*, which consists in “a teaching and learning strategy where students explore a phenomenon and then plan and implement a meaningful service-project to address issues related to the topic” (Izadi, 2017, p.24). The long-term goal of applying service-learning in the school environment is service-orientation, the understanding that one may give value contribution to their community as well as see themselves as part of the common good. This happens at the same time as they contribute to their community and learn school subjects according to their curriculum (id. p.32).

⁷ More information can be found on the official *Harmonicanto* website (in Portuguese only): <http://www.harmonicanto.org.br/quem-somos/>

⁸ More information can be found in the nikkei community website through which the project got disclosed (in Spanish only): <https://alternativanikkei.com.ar/proyecto-kizuna/>

To summarise, youth participation is a powerful resource for community development and consists of young people taking an active role in decisions and actions that impact them personally and their environment. They do so by organising groups for social and/ or political actions, advocating their interests, volunteering, voting, and so on. There is not a strategy which, alone, encompasses all possible approaches to participation. (Checkoway. & Gutierrez, 2006, p.2)

4. Empathy and Youth Participation for social change

The purpose of this bachelor's thesis is to understand the role of empathy in youth participation towards social change. Having understood empathy and its different concepts and definitions and then looked into the phenomena of youth participation, this is how we will build the bridges in this chapter: Firstly, we will see how youth participation in itself can cause social change. Secondly, we will explore how empathy itself can ignite youth participation. In the third part we will connect both and answer to the main question. Finally, we will take a look of a series of events that demonstrate empathy-induced youth participation towards social change.

Youth and Social Change

Earlier we have discussed how the perspective of seeing young people as resources, instead of problems has enabled numerous initiatives that have engaged young people to contribute to community development (Checkoway & Gutiérrez, 2006, p.2). Finn (2001, p.69) also raises awareness about how adolescence is too often depicted as pathology, fed by the popular belief that characteristics of adolescence are a predictable and universal stage of human development, or even seen solely as a period of waiting. Waiting until the crisis and personality shaping have been formed and then start adult life (Carrano, 2012, p.84).

Such stereotype serves what Finn (p.69) calls the *adolescent pathology industry*, which provides services from the part of the social workers to “troubled” youth, reinforcing their role as passive recipient, instead of empowering them as agents of change (Checkoway & Gutiérrez, 2006, p. 3). However, what we are seeking to understand in this chapter is how youth can impact social change and explore the reasons why this should be done in larger scale.

First point to consider, is that young people experience their neighborhood, city and communities directly. Their experience and perspective can be an opportunity not only to identify the main issues in their surroundings, but also to bring direct suggestions and even to work on them - as for most cases, leaders and politicians who work on this agenda have little awareness of what the needs and priorities really are, while at the same time, most of the violations of children's right worldwide relate to their living conditions (Barlett, 2002, p. 3, 8). This highlights great importance in blurring the idea of "qualified participation" - decision making from the part of the civil and economically emancipated, the educated, mostly rich white men - and, as a consequence, increase the narrative of participation of those groups who end up being marginalised (Carrano, 2012, p.87).

Youth participation can start, on a more grass root level, intercultural dialogue and peaceful community living in diversity. Christens & Dolan (2011, p. 543) affirm how engaging young people in community organising demonstrates social change in a new perspective: that of promoting social change by effectively living those intergenerational, multicultural and interfaith collaboration for greater goals. In their book *A handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*, Percy-Smith & Thomas (2012, p.360) suggest the importance of local approaches - not only informal approaches, but systematic formal approaches as well. This way, youth participation would create stronger linkage with bigger-scale political structures in regional, national or international levels. The book presents a series of evidence that initiatives which start locally are more prone to being sustainable, plus facilitating a stronger sense of ownership and resource building within the community. Moreover, youth participation can be seen as a multilevel intervention: the scope of the social change affects both the broader community and the participants themselves by developing their leadership skills and exercising their political power (Christens & Dolan, 2011, p. 543).

Finally, social change takes place as youth gain space to be represented and legitimacy from politics, educators, organisations and youth themselves. Besides voting and partaking in local community development projects, young people have been bringing impact to society by artistic expressions, in ecologically friendly decisions and in the care for diversity and for the value in social pluralism (Boghossian & Minayo, 2009, p. 421). Moreover, participation is also a right and brings together a question of what kind of democracy we seek for in a globally

interconnected and “technologised” contemporary world (Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2009, p.364).

Empathy and Youth Participation

Although few of us actually use our full empathic potential, the ability to empathise is in 98% of humans (Krznicaric 2015 p.3). With this, *cognitive empathy* increases also empathic concern, direct cause of care for others’ well-being and altruistically motivated efforts (Håkanson, 2003, p.24).

However, recent studies, like Krznicaric (2014, p.15) and Livingstone (2007, p. 164), have shown an apparent decline on collective empathic behaviors correlating both with the decrease of face to face interactions as well as the increase of media consumption - social networks such as Instagram and Facebook causing narcissistic tendencies and other online entertainment causing youth to spend more time alone, interacting mainly via digital platforms. Another concern is “greater emphasis on self-centered intrinsic values, such as financial success (a 2006 US study showed 81% of 18-25 year olds said getting rich was their most important life goal)” (Krznicaric, 2015, p. 9). Intrinsic values are essential to spark moral behavior in youth. Empathy bridges the gap between moral principles and the care for the other(s)’s well being. That means that without empathy, one’s moral values would most likely not contain this aspect of other-centered care (Håkanson, 2003, p.25).

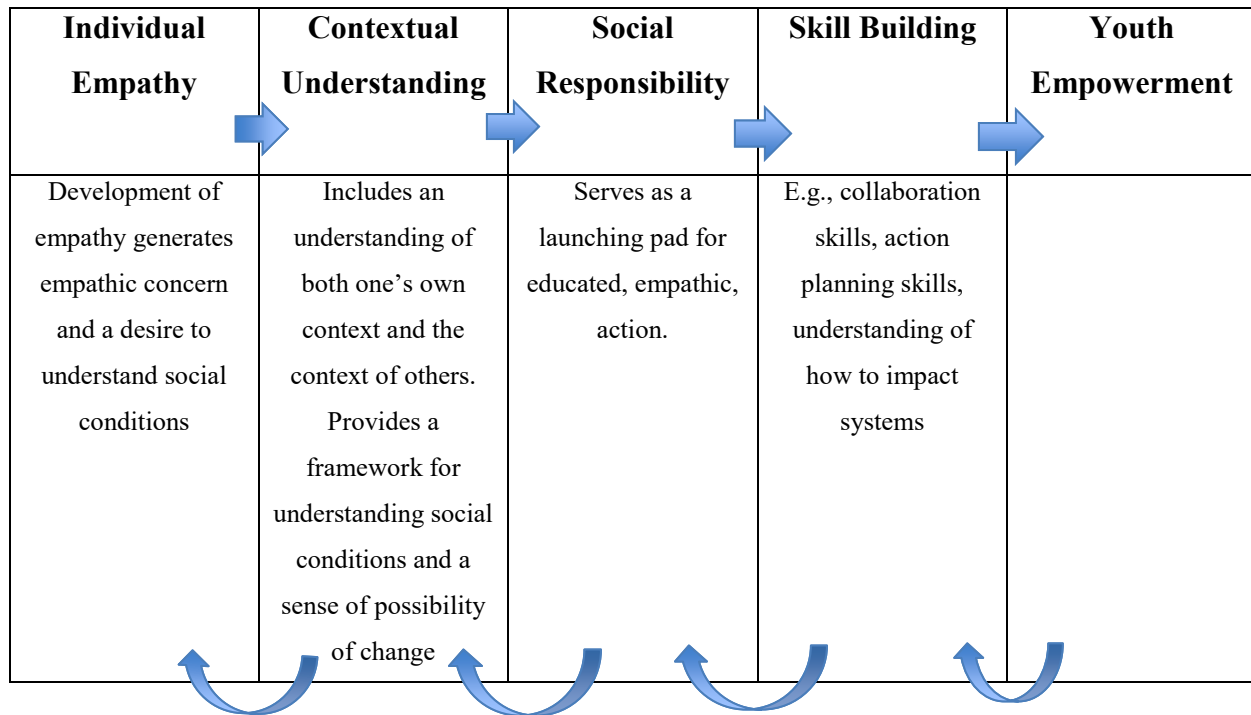
In order to complement other-centered values, Zimmerman et al. (1992 , p.708) proposes the concept of *psychological empowerment*. Psychological empowerment stands for control over one’s life and critical understanding of their environment - it develops one’s self-perception, self-efficacy, motivation to take control as well as how one believes they can influence their surroundings or the things they care about. For Wagaman (2011, p.278), when empathy is present and there is contextual understanding, that can lead to a higher sense of self-awareness in relation to the outside world, an increased perception of one’s ability to impact the world and, ultimately, empowerment.

Wagaman (2011), social worker and researcher at the Arizona State University, points out in her article *Social Empathy as a Framework for Adolescent Empowerment* (p.286) a series of indicators that suggest how empathy is essential in developing prosocial behavior in adolescents.

For example, there is a positive correlation between empathy and the willingness of a young person to step in and defend a peer who is a victim of bullying, assurance that interactions in their surroundings are positive and, another powerful indicator is that empathy-induced youth engagement can be effective in hindering childhood trauma:

“Evidence suggests that empathy may serve a reparative function for young people whose biological development has been negatively impacted by experiences in childhood, such as child abuse and neglect (Perry, 2002). Childhood trauma may hinder the development of empathy. By increasing empathy through activities that enhance affective response, such as mirroring or emotion identification and reflection, some of the long-term ripple effects of negative childhood experiences may be minimized. With this evidence, and empathy as the foundation of adolescent empowerment, any young person has the potential to achieve empowerment.” (Wagaman, 2011, p.287)

Therefore, as suggested by Christens & Dolan (2011, p. 543), youth participation is not only good for the community or receiver, but it is also good for the doer - a multilevel intervention. The figure below represents the social empathy model (Wagaman, 2011, p.285) and it demonstrates how empathy can lead to youth empowerment and, consequently, to youth participation:



The figure above represents the empowerment framework components, based on the social empathy model. The original figure in Wagaman’s article (2011, p.285)

The figure above shows youth empowerment as a positive outcome of a scaffolded process with starts with empathy as its foundation. It can be used by teachers, researchers, social workers and other youth workers as an assessment and evaluation tool (p. 285 - 287). If we were to match the figure above and Krznaric's (2015) notion of *empathy-community circle*, we would see a big circle of empathic development and youth participation: empathy levels across diversity of social class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and so forth (...) can be greatly developed as a result of community action, building wider and stronger community engagement (p.23). "With this evidence, and empathy as the foundation of adolescent empowerment, any young person has the potential to achieve empowerment" (Wagaman, 2011, p.287).

Empathy, Youth Participation and Social Change

As we have understood so far, empathy is an in-built capacity to almost every human being (Krznaric, 2015, p.3). Another aspect limited to hominoid brain are the *Von Economo Cells* (VEN cells)⁹. VEN cells allow a quick and intuitive reaction on emotionally charged situations. Its main functions have not yet been proved; however, after examining a number of patients who had damaged the brain area where VEN cells are found, in all of them it was noticed a breakdown of social functioning: loss of empathy, self-awareness, perspective-taking abilities (DeWaal, 2010, p.126).

Another point discussed in the previous chapter is the importance of exercising cognitive empathy and how that enhances prosocial behavior (Batson, 2008, p.18). Bringing it to the praxis of engaging young to participate, Wagaman (2011, p.289) affirms that empathy combined with contextual understanding ignite in youth a sense of responsibility towards positive social change, and that, by contributing, they are strongly susceptible to experience a strong feeling of empowerment and commitment for social responsibility¹⁰.

"Given the evidence that has been collected, we can say in evolutionary terms empathy was selected because it greatly enhanced the chances of group survival. Although empathy is interpretive and thus prone to mistakes, it nonetheless yielded enough results to make it complementary to reproductive success, otherwise we would not understand it to be a universal

⁹ DeWaal (2010, p.126) does mention that neuroscientists have found them in some cetaceans and elephants as well.

¹⁰ Skill building is necessary in order to genuinely contribute more and better, as well as for self-development. Check Figure 1 on page 19 for reference.

phenomenon. Empathy is the product of a universal imperative, a prosocial impulse that has allowed us to survive as a group species. Prior to any cultural suggestion, it signals to us as individuals, at the corporeal level, that we ought to come to the aid of the other in order to alleviate her suffering” (Walker, 2013, p.67).

There is a popular belief that European youth is becoming more and more apathetic towards political participation. However, in Cammaerts et al.’s (2014, p.662) article *The myth of youth apathy*, they have gathered data that suggest the very opposite: young Europeans are engaged and are prone to taking social responsibility¹¹. The phenomenon does not indicate that they are apathetic. What is happening instead is that youth is highly critical of politicians and political parties. They are rather bored and unhappy towards political systems and are no longer fond of the idea of outsourcing this responsibilities to those they do not trust, hence they are taking actions which they can see the impact directly.

To contextualise youth participation, empathy and social change, Batson (2008, p.17) points out how empathy-induced altruism has also been found to improve attitudes towards stigmatised outgroups: certain racial groups, people with AIDS, the homeless and even towards murderers and drug dealers. In schools, empathy-based training has been used to improve and increase mutual care among students - given the importance emotions play side by side with perspective-taking abilities (De Waal, 2010, p. 109) - and even increase cooperation in potentially competitive settings. Empathy has consistently been used for conflict resolution, and defence of laws and policies that consider the well-being of the collective and thus, this work of empathy and rights make way to social justice, and attempt to universalise moral concern. Moreover, although empathy may be often seen as a ‘soft skill’, the outcome of mass empathic reaction can culminate in radical forms of attempt to induce social change: from political advocacy to protests and mass demonstrations, from non-violent resistance to even violent acts (Krznaric, 2015, p.12).

Finally, if we are to connect the three main elements of this research: empathy, social change and youth participation, we can affirm that empathy is a protagonist element in caring and prosocial behavior. By engaging in participation, not only do young people incorporate new skills and experience, but also experience psychological empowerment as they contribute to their community, and therefore, work towards social change.

¹¹ Cammaerts et al.’s (2014, p.662) research also points out difference in participation according to social class. For instance, educated but unemployed young people often show the most willingness to volunteer.

Examples of Empathy-Induced Youth Participation for Social Change

One of my main driving forces as an educator is the anticipation to see the things my students are able to do once they feel engaged and decide to contribute to something they care about. In this section, we will look into three examples of empathy-induced initiatives started by young people all across the world in order to understand the theory discussed in this thesis, in practice.

1. The Ocean Cleanup project¹²:

“For society to progress, we should not only move forward but also clean up after ourselves” (Boyan Slat, Ocean Cleanup, 2018)

Meet Boyan Slat, Dutch inventor, entrepreneur and Aerospace Engineering student drop-out, but mostly known as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ocean Cleanup. Boyan was 16 years old when he went on vacation to Greece expecting a beach holiday and came across more plastic bags than fish. As he returned home and resumed his high school, the whole idea that the seas and oceans needed to be cleaned up did not leave his mind.

Boyan designed the world’s first ocean cleanup system: it consists of a floating barrier almost 2,000 foot long which will use the ocean currents to navigate into the Pacific towards the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The goal is to reduce the amount of plastic there by half by 2025. The project has gotten tens of sponsor, suppliers and academic partners from all over the world¹³ and has already started its journey.

Krznicaric (2015, p. 27-28) presents the challenging concepts of empathy across time and empathy across space: empathising with people from future generations and/ or empathising with people who live far from us, since we have already understood that the innate processes of empathy tend to happen more naturally with not only those who are closer to us, but especially with those who are more similar to us. That means that empathy across time and space are more complex *cognitive empathy*, but that can be possible as well, as can be taught - e.g. the Iroquois maxim, who consider the impact of their decisions up until the seventh next generation (idem p. 29). In

¹² <https://www.theoceancleanup.com/> (Accessed on 22.10.2018).

¹³ To check the partners that power The Ocean Cleanup check the following link: <https://www.theoceancleanup.com/partners/> (Accessed on 22.10.2018)

addition to that, we can use empathy to appreciate and preserve the environment and our symbiotic relationship with nature (id. p. 31), as did Boyan and his ambition to clean up the ocean as well as raise awareness on the main issues with plastic production, consumption and impact to the planet.

Wilson, Mcdougall & Willmore (2001, p.341) highlight on how essential community response to waste management initiatives is. Since it is in the homes of citizens themselves that most of the implementation will happen, waste management cannot be limited to removing waste from the streets or selected garbage collection, but decision-making that involves the community themselves. This whole-scale participation avoids not only a top-down approach to waste management decision, but also decisions being made predominantly by the civil and economically emancipated (Carrano, 2012, p.87). Participation in community initiatives is not only a right, but a responsibility and opportunity for long-term sustainable action once youth also has voice to partake in it (Percy-Smith and Thomas, 2009, p.364,).

2. The *Liter of Light*¹⁴

“How many times in my life have I felt unconditionally useful?” This is the question which 23 year-old law student, Vitor Betola, asked himself while his volunteer exchange in Kenya. The thoughts came after a genuine act of appreciation from a teacher in Kibera, largest slum area in Nairobi.

Vitor decided to take a few weeks off from work to go to Kenya teach English and Mathematics in a small community near Nairobi. Once he and other fellow volunteers reached, they realised a new problem: schools were completely dark, and they did not have access to electricity. They could barely see anything, but that was the space they had to have classes. Unsettled with the situation, Vitor and the other volunteers doing the project with him went online in search for a solution and found the *liter of light project*. The project consists of attaching a bottle filled with water and bleach to a piece of Galvanised steel and attaching it to the roof. The bottle produces 12 to 16 hours of light every day. The solution is cheap, last between 2 to 3 years and does not need any extra maintenance.

¹⁴ <https://www.litrodeluz.com/> (Accessed on 22.10.2018) in English you can also check <https://www.world-habitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Liter-of-Light-Lighting-homes-and-lives-one-bottle-at-a-time.pdf> (Accessed on 22.10.2018)

Throughout the weeks, they had reach 12 schools, 140 bottles and impacted about 3 thousand students. The success of the project brought them to other townships, including Kibera, where he heard from that one teacher the appreciation that caused his epiphany. She said to him “Son, this is the first time in 4 years that I can read and correct exams inside my classroom. Thank you, thank you, thank you”¹⁵.

The second epiphany came from a talk to his father a few days before going back home. In attempt to comfort Vitor and ease his adaptation back home, he said “Do not worry, the men are a reflection of the environment. You’ll get used to your regular life in no time” - the fear of becoming comfortable and content in his privileged corner made him uneasy, and upon return to Brazil, his home country, Vitor and another young lady who had known about the project before started the *Liter of Light Brazil*. Just in 2017, the project impacted 7 thousand people across the 5 regions of the country. The *Liter of Light* is a perfect example of neighborhood development program: a youth-engaging iniative that aims at contributing to the neighborhood (Checkoway, 1998, p. 788), but which increased its proportions.

Vitor’s story illustrates what Wagaman (2011, p.285) demonstrated with the social empathy model. He empathised with the students and teachers he met, seeked for further understanding, had to learn how to make the solutions and attach them to the roofs and, once the work started taking place, it provided him with a feeling of empowerment. Secondly, it also illustrates how another means which empathy can take place more naturally, is by recognising the subjectivity of the other (Håkanson, 2003, p.28), which is why Krznaric (2015, p.27) brings the question “how to give people a human face and individuality” in order to address the challenge of empathy across space. Vitor’s way of doing this was to go all the way to Kenya and work together with both locals and other volunteers. Being a volunteer was good for him, he felt empowered, and his work created impact and social change.

¹⁵ According to Vitor himself in the Ted Talk entitled “How often have you felt really useful?": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzaT7uijAis> (Accessed on 22.10.2018)

3. *Nice Leng'ete*

Despite the tradition, it was seeing her friends bleed to death, have painful pregnancies and still be called cowards for crying, that made Nice Leng'ete attempt to escape from the Maasai rite of passage - a celebration that symbolises the transformation from girls into women. Why? Because it includes female genital mutilation. Her clitoris would be cut as she would be held down by stronger, older women.

She and her sister tried to flee. Both got caught and beaten up. Her sister could not manage to escape again, and had to go through the process. Nice was 8 years old when she first stood up for her grandfather, trying to bargain year after year, even threatening to escape and never come back. Her grandfather, who was her guardian, for fear of losing her as well as for recognising her determination, left her alone. "When she wants to go, she will tell us". But it was not an easy process: although her grandfather was an elder of the community, and could not be overruled, the community ostracised her. She was seen as a bad example and parents would not let other children play with her.

On the other hand, at the same time she grew up being excluded, she also had to see her friends being picked to get married at the age of 12, and got to be the first in her village to reach high school. Younger girls admired her uniform, and she took the opportunity to show them a girl could be happy with their own choices, and those were opportunities that came because she refused to get cut. It was a matter of time until young girls started showing up at her place after running away from the ceremony, which enraged some members of the village, so Nice needed to hide. To challenge the status quo - women were not allowed to address the elders of the village, and they had all the decision making power.

Nice insisted for years to attempt for a dialogue, to try and negotiate with them. They went from refusing completely, to allowing her to talk to only the younger ones. "At least it's three. Last time it was zero", she would think. Things really started to change when the elders allowed her to attend a workshop about adolescent and sexual health run by Amref, a Kenyan health organization¹⁶. In this training she realised how important it was that young people get informed, and started mobilising the community with education about physical health and medical conditions: she had to first make sure they listen to her, so she started with HIV prevention,

¹⁶ For more information on Amref visit the official website on <https://amref.org/> (Accessed on 22.10.2018)

health effects on teen pregnancy, early marriage and so on, until she could finally get to the cut subject. Nice Leng'ete took four years of awareness raising and campaigning to convince the elder that female genital cutting was bad for the community, and took the initiative village by village - considering that different villages have different reasons why they justify the cutting - all the way until the elders council in Mount Kilimanjaro, highest seat of Maasai power. Her main argument was explaining that everyone would be healthier and wealthier by excluding the cutting from the rite of passage.

"It's just the cut that's wrong," she said. "All the other things — the blessings, putting on the traditional clothes, dancing, all that — that's beautiful. But whatever is harmful, whatever brings pain, whatever takes away the dreams of our girls — let's just do away with that." (Nice Leng'ete, New York Times, 2018)¹⁷

The villages adopted what Nice calls an *alternative rite of passage*, which includes days of learning about sexual health - where they deconstruct generations of rumors about their bodies - and a ceremony that includes singing and dancing for hundreds or even a thousand people at times.

What Nice Leng'ete did illustrates clearly the positions of Percy-Smith & Thomas (2012, p. 360) when they present the importance of bringing local approach: that informally approaching the local community is important, but it can be even more efficient to systematically approach the formal bodies - as she did when consistently going to the elders. This would create stronger linkage with bigger scale political structures in regional, national or international level - in her case, the elders in Mount Kilimanjaro. Nice's story also contributes as another evidence for how initiatives which start locally are more prone to being sustainable. In seven years, Nice helped 15,000 girls avoid the cutting ritual.

As we know, identification is a precondition for empathy (Decety & Chaminade, 2003, p. 590). Nice was looking at people with same gender, ethnicity, similar age and dreams, some in her family with whom she had stronger connection - like her sister, so it is undeniable that there were strong elements for her to experience affective empathy. However, in addition to that, the different behavior in which she kept encouraged to strive for eradicating female genital cutting can be explained by the pro-social behaviors explored in Batson's (2008, p. 18,19) *empathy-altruism hypothesis*: Nice was moved both by motivation to benefit the group as a whole -

¹⁷ Whole article can be found on the link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/13/world/africa/female-genital-mutilation-kenya.html> (Accessed on 23.10.2018)

collectivism - as well as she was driven by the desire to seek for justice and keep her moral principles - *principalism*.

5. Challenges and limitations

In order to have a more thorough understanding of empathy as a phenomena, an interdisciplinary approach was needed. In this Bachelor's thesis, empathy was explored inside the scope of evolutionary biology, sociology, neuroscience, psychology and social work, mostly. Reading and writing this thesis has been an eye-opening experience, but I need to iterate my limitations as someone who has had academic and professional background in education and linguistics only.

Inside the field of empathy research, Krznaric (2008, p.6,7) presents as main limitations the following: limited vision and limited scope. Limited vision because there is little emphasis on empathy as a large-scale social change factor - hence my desire to use this thesis as an opportunity to explore the topic - empathy is still mostly studied to be developed as an individual skill to help manage one's emotions and personal growth. When it is utilised as object of research to impact social change, it tends to be seen as potential to impact the local community, but not yet has been explored in terms of global-basis change - across time and space, with strangers, with those who we have not much in common - hence the limited scope.

In addition to that, my experience has been limited to Brazil (my home country), the United States and some European countries. Most of the researchers, perspectives and universities cited in this thesis are also all from Brazilian, the United States American or European Universities, which may also have biased and limited observations and theories. This could be recognised as an issue as we are trying to explain the relationship between empathy and youth engagement as a human phenomenon, but have collected dialoguing perspectives from a similar environment only. This issue could be particularly noticed when I realised that many of the causes for youth engagement do not seem to apply for the Finnish context - e.g. the way the articles used in this thesis described distrust in politics and also choice for means of participation that differ from delegating to public institutions.

Finally, one more consideration I would like to iterate here is that many other behaviors could be explained under the scope of *empathy-induced altruistic behavior*, such as changing the diet, regulating personal consumption, donating, etc. However, some would yet to be debated whether

they would fall under youth participation. Therefore, I decided to look into very specific behaviors in order to keep the focus of the research.

6. Conclusion

One of the most remarkable statements I read while building this Bachelor's thesis, was the following statement by Frans DeWaal (2010, p.200,201, 202):

“In effect, society depends on a second invisible hand, one that reaches out to others. The feeling that one human being cannot be indifferent to another. (...) The firmest support for the common good comes from enlightened self-interest: the realisation that we're all better together (...) (Not only by) sacrificing time and money to relieve the plight of others, but also of pushing a political agenda that recognizes everyone's dignity, Such an agenda helps not merely those who need it most, but also the larger whole”

Empathy is and has been an essential element for the preservation of our species. This pushed me to explore a transdisciplinary and practical understanding on empathy so that those who reach this research can find more awareness and tools to also contribute for positive social change. By defining empathy as a phenomenon, we could see that it takes place differently: *affective empathy* and *cognitive empathy*. By experiencing and developing both skills, we are prone to respond to the environment with prosocial, other-centered behaviors. Empathy is an essential element in caring and prosocial behavior.

Youth participation stands for young people taking an active role in matters and decisions that impact them, and it can be a powerful resource for community development and, consequentially, for social change.

The psychological empowerment of youth caused by the opportunity to participate is the powerful factor that links empathy with youth participation. Participation as a result of empathy-induced altruism can be not only a contribution towards social change, but also be beneficial to the engaged young person. Whether you are a youth worker, teacher, NGO participant, or even a young person yourself, this work means that cognitive empathy development is highly effective in fostering prosocial behaviors and attitudes. This means that by looking at young people as a resource, and giving them the space and opportunity to develop their skills and understanding, will allow them in the end to give meaningful contributions to the community, as well as experience a degree of empowerment. In a nutshell, it does good, as well as it is good for youth.

For those interested in taking the idea forward, one can look further into empathy education (Krznaric, 2008), service learning (Izadi, 2017) and other further studies to understand how to develop cognitive empathy in young people (Krznaric, 2015; Wagaman, 2011) and bringing to youth the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives (Checkoway, 1998).

As a continuation of this work, it is necessary to further understand societies with high trust in institutionalised public bodies (e.g. Finland) and their empathic capacity: how does this affect their youth participation and engagement? Also, I would like to understand how the Freire-based approach affect empathy capacities development in youth and how that affects how youth participate in their community. Finally, the topic can also be continued with a bigger focus on the effects of psychological empowerment in participation for social change.

References

- Bartlett, S. (2002). Building Better Cities with Children and Youth. *Environment and Urbanization*, 14(2), 3-10. doi:10.1177/095624780201400201
- Batson, C. D. (2008). Empathy-induced altruistic motivation. *Prosocial Motives, Emotions, and Behavior: The Better Angels of Our Nature.*, 15-34. doi:10.1037/12061-001
- Batson, C. D., & Al, E. (1981). Is empathic emotion a source of altruistic motivation? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 40(2), 290-302. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.40.2.290
- Boghossian, C. O., & Minayo, M. D. (2009). Revisão Sistemática Sobre Juventude e Participação nos Últimos 10 anos. *Saúde E Sociedade, São Paulo*, 18(3), 411-423. Retrieved October 22, 2018.
- Cammaerts, B., Bruter, M., Banaji, S., Harrison, S., & Anstead, N. (2013). The Myth of Youth Apathy. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 58(5), 645-664. doi:10.1177/0002764213515992
- Carrano, P. (2012). A participação social e política de jovens no Brasil: considerações sobre estudos recentes. *O Social em Questão*, v. 27, p. 83-99.
- Checkoway, B. (1998). Involving young people in neighborhood development. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 20(9-10), 765-795. doi:10.1016/s0190-7409(98)00044-9
- Checkoway, B. & Gutierrez, L. (2006): *Youth Participation and Community Change*, Journal of Community Practice, 14:1-2, 1-9 doi:10.1300/J125v14n01_01
- Cooper, B. (2011). *Empathy in education: Engagement, values and achievement*. London: Bloomsbury.

Christens, B. D., & Dolan, T. (2010). Interweaving Youth Development, Community Development, and Social Change Through Youth Organizing. *Youth & Society*, 43(2), 528-548. doi:10.1177/0044118x10383647

De Waal, Frans. (2010). *The Age of Empathy: Nature's Lessons for a Kinder Society*. Toronto: Emblem Editions.

Decety, J., & Chaminade, T. (2003). When the self represents the other: A new cognitive neuroscience view on psychological identification. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 12(4), 577-596. doi:10.1016/s1053-8100(03)00076-x

Dovidio, J. F., Allen, J. L., & Schroeder, D. A. (1990). Specificity of empathy-induced helping: Evidence for altruistic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(2), 249-260. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.59.2.249

European Commission. (2009). *Development Co-operation Report 2009 Development Co-operation Report*. doi:10.1787/dcr-2009-graph32-en

Finn, J. L. (2001). Text and Turbulence. *Childhood*, 8(2), 167-191. doi:10.1177/0907568201008002003

Giachino, M. L. (n.d.). Proyecto Kizuna: Jornadas solidarias con la participación de jóvenes nikkei. Retrieved October 20, 2018, from <https://alternativanikkei.com.ar/proyecto-kizuna/>

Grühn, D., Rebucal, K., Diehl, M., Lumley, M., & Labouvie-Vief, G. (2008). Empathy across the adult lifespan: Longitudinal and experience-sampling findings. *Emotion*, 8(6), 753-765. doi:10.1037/a0014123

Harmonicanto (2016). *Quem Somos*. Retrieved October 20, 2018, from <http://www.harmonicanto.org.br/quem-somos/>

Håkanson, Jakob. (2003). *Exploring the Phenomenon of Empathy*. Department of Psychology, University of Stockholm. Sweden.

Izadi, L. (2017). *A Hopeful Pedagogy: Critical Service-Learning in a Finnish Primary School Classroom*. Department of Education, University of Oulu. Finland.

Kaplan, J. T., & Iacoboni, M. (2006). *Getting a grip on other minds: Mirror neurons, intention understanding, and cognitive empathy*. *Social Neuroscience*, 1 (3-4), 175-183.
doi:10.1080/17470910600985605

Krznaric, R. (2015). The Empathy Effect: How Empathy Drives Common Values, Social Justice and Environmental Action. *R Friends of the Earth's Big Ideas*, 2-43. Retrieved October 22, 2018.

Krznaric, R. (2008). *You are, therefore I am: How Empathy Education Can Create Social Change*. OXFAM Education and Youth research Report: July.

Livingstone, S. (2007). The Challenge of Engaging Youth Online. *European Journal of Communication*, 22(2), 165-184. doi:10.1177/0267323107076768

Moore, J. (2018, January 13). She Ran From the Cut, and Helped Thousands of Other Girls Escape, Too. Retrieved October 24, 2018, from
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/13/world/africa/female-genital-mutilation-kenya.html>

Ocean Cleanup. (n.d.). The Ocean Cleanup. Retrieved October 23, 2018, from
<https://www.theoceancleanup.com/>

Percy-Smith, B., & Thomas, N. (2012). *A handbook of children and young people's participation: Perspectives from theory and practice*. London: Routledge.

Rogers, C. R. (1975), 'Empathic: an unappreciated way of being'. *The Counselling Psychologist*, 5, (2), 2.

Vancleave, D. S. (2017). Contributions of Neuroscience to a New Empathy Epistemology: Implications for Developmental Training. *Advances in Social Work, 17*(2), 369.
doi:10.18060/21087

Wagaman, A. (2011) Social Empathy as a Framework for Adolescent Empowerment, *Journal of Social Service Research, 37*:3, 278-293, DOI: 10.1080/01488376.2011.564045

Walker, Hart J., "A Mile In My Shoes: A Prolegomenon for an Empathic Sociology" (2013).
Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository. 1292. <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/1292>

Wilson, E., Mcdougall, F., & Willmore, J. (2001). Euro-trash: Searching Europe for a more sustainable approach to waste management. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling, 31*(4), 327-346. doi:10.1016/s0921-3449(00)00089-6

Zimmerman, M. A., Israel, B. A., Schulz, A., & Checkoway, B. (1992). Further explorations in empowerment theory: An empirical analysis of psychological empowerment. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 20*(6), 707-727. doi:10.1007/bf01312604