MASTER'S THESIS

3rd graders' experience of Life Skills in primary school

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Foreword

My interest in the topic arose through a personal interest in mental health and how we develop as humans. Through studying a bachelor in Outdoor Education and a master in Sports Science I have become more and more aware of how deeply intertwined the mind and body are. In addition, as children, we spend a lot of time in school, and therefore how we experience life here will inevitably affect our future lives. Through a renewed core curriculum in Norway, the schools now put more attention on developing the whole child. This, and the previous mentioned reflections, led me to explore children's experience of Life Skills in primary school.

I wish to thank my supervisors, Ellen Eimhjellen Blom and Hege Eikeland Tjomsland, deeply for all their help throughout the process of writing this master thesis. They have supported me from the beginning and showed a sincere interest in my choice of topic. Their contribution has guided me in choice of study design, what theoretical concepts to include, and most importantly, through the challenging process of analysing data across methods.

Further, I owe my deepest thank you to my family and friends who have supported and believed in me through the process. In particular, my English boyfriend who has broadened my vocabulary, giving me moral support and a 'kind' reminder to do the work when needed.

Sogndal, Maj 2019.

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Summary

The following master thesis will explore Norwegian 3rd graders' experience of Life Skills in primary school. Not much is currently known about pupils' experience of this, and the study, therefore, takes on a qualitative approach. The study demonstrates how an application of three different methods supports each other in carrying out a Thematic analysis. Participatory observation, focus group 'conversations' with the 18 pupils in groups of three, as well as one semi-structured interview with the homeroom teacher were conducted.

In the analysis of the findings four main themes were developed: 1) social dynamics, 2) predictability and expectations, 3) being seen and feeling valued, as well as 4) handling and expressing emotions. The themes will be discussed in relation to mental and physical health tendencies as seen in the Norwegian society, the theory of Interrelationships, and more established concepts such as Resilience, Coping, as well as Self-efficacy, and Self-regulation. The study indicates that pupils experience Life Skills through trustworthy interrelationships, in addition to visually show mastery through subjects involving physical activity and creating something. Life Skills will be referred to as 'Well-being and Life Skills' throughout the study to capture the Norwegian term *Livsmestring* in the best way possible. In connection, it should be mentioned that the collection of data was done during the outbreak of COVID-19.

Indhold

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Chapter 1. Introduction and research question

1.1 Introduction & research question

Several studies show that children and young people in Norway in general thrive at school (Bakken, 2018; Haug et al., 2020). Statistics show however, an increase in mental health problems among children and young people during the past 20 years (Bakken, 2018; Haug et al., 2020; Sletten & Bakken, 2016). This has particularly been seen in symptoms of anxiety and depression (Bakken, 2018, p. 80) and self-reported mental health problems (Haug et al., 2020). The same trend can be seen internationally, and recent studies also point to a further increase due to the Covid-19 outbreak (Racine et al., 2020). More young people in Norway also report feeling lonely, and 15-20 % struggle with sleep deprivation and feeling worried (Bakken, 2018). The development has been connected to an increase in school related stress symptoms (Haug et al., 2020). Further, studies show that young people have become more sedative and do not meet the Norwegian Directorate of Health's recommendations for 60 minutes of daily physical activity (Steene-Johannessen et al., 2019). These trends has led to the Norwegian government focusing on developing and implementing school based initiative to prevent mental and physical health problems (Folkehelseinstituttet, 2018; Meld. St. 28, 2015-2016, p. 15).

From 2020, the interdisciplinary topic «Public Health and Life Skills» has been included in the Norwegian school curriculum (LK20) for primary and secondary education (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). *Life Skills* has been described as a mean to help prevent mental illnesses and strengthen the individual pupil (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016).

This study aims to investigate 8-year-olds experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills' in schools. The age group has been chosen due to several reasons, First, there is a dearth of previous research on this age group and second, young people report experiencing mental health problems. Therefore, it can be advantageous in a public health perspective to develop health promoting initiatives to target younger children as a preventive measure. This study therefore set out to fill a knowledge gap since not much previous research exists from this age group. The study aims to give voice to the pupils and attempt to bring their experience to the surface. More specifically, the following research question will be explored:

How do Norwegian 3rd graders experience Life Skills in school?

This master thesis is part of a local research project in Sogndal and Luster municipality which aims to develop a curriculum to improve Life Skills in preschools and schools (Sogndal og Luster, 2019).

1.3 Structure and clarification of concepts

This study is divided into three parts. The first section presents relevant theory. The theory includes a presentation of Health and Life Skills as an interdisciplinary topic in the Norwegian primary and secondary schools, the researcher's choice to focus on 'Well-being and Life Skills', earlier research, a presentation of the public debate that has played out after the topic was introduced as part of LK20, and a conceptual framework. The second section presents the study's methodology. Results and discussion are presented in the third section as part of a research paper including background, methods, as well as a cover letter and the author guidelines for the chosen journal. The research paper summarizes the theory, methodology, and presents the findings and a final discussion of these in relation to the conceptual framework.

Livsmestring (ie. Well- being and Life Skills): The Norwegian term *Livsmestring* will be referred to as 'Well-being and Life Skills' throughout in an attempt to capture the Norwegian term's full meaning.

Chapter 2. Expanded theory

This chapter presents the development that led to the integration of the interdisciplinary topic 'Health and Life Skills' in LK20. Further, a presentation of the public debate that followed in the media afterwards is presented, and finally the conceptual framework used in the analysis and discussion of the findings will be presented.

2.1 Health and Life Skills as an interdisciplinary topic in Norwegian primary and secondary schools

From the school year 2020/21 a renewed National Curriculum "Kunnskapsløftet 2020" (LK20) was implemented for the 10-year compulsory school and first year of highschool (Vg1) in Norway (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020b). Three interdisciplinary topics focusing on current and future challenges of the Norwegian society are described in the core curriculum of LK20. These are 'Health and Life Skills', 'Democracy and Citizenship' and 'Sustainable development' (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). The topics "are based on prevailing societal challenges which demand engagement and effort from individuals and local communities, nationally and globally." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a, p. 13). The Ludvigsen Council first introduced the three interdisciplinary topics in a report examining the current curriculum against competences supposedly required in the future (NOU, 2015, p. 12). Considering the increasingly more individualized tendency in society and the increased access to information, the council perceived young people's competence in making responsible life choices as important for their future (NOU, 2015, p. 50). In addition, Samdal, Wold, Harris, and Torsheim (2017) argue in *Stress og mestring* that tendencies such as globalisation and modernisation increase the individuals challenges and opportunities, which further add more pressure on the individual when making life choices (p. 42). The tendencies is underlined by research showing an increase in health problems for young people such as overweight, mental health problem, feeling lonely, a high level of experienced stress, a decreasing number meeting the recommendations of 60 minutes of daily physical activity and less than half following the national guidelines for daily intake of fruit and vegetables (Bakken, 2018, pp. 2,5,63; Haug et al., 2020, pp. 25,51; Steene-Johannessen et al., 2019, p. 41; Sund, Rangul, & Krokstad, 2019, p. 10). The aforementioned trend provides important information about young people's life, but no explanation as to why this development is seen. However, at the same time it is important to underscore that the general tendency is that Norwegian pupils thrive at school (Haug et al., 2020, pp. 55-56), but the research above still indicate that there is a need for public health

promoting initiatives in the school setting. Public health initiatives should be, and often are, based on current health challenges (Folkehelseloven, 2011). The interdisciplinary topic Health and Life Skills can be seen as an public health initiative addressing the increased mental health problems in children and young adults (Departementene, 2017, p. 44). Especially through the core curriculum emphasising that the: «… topic shall help the pupils learn to deal with success and failure, and personal and practical challenges in the best possible way.» (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). The topic thereby becomes a way to try and meet the current societal challenges in society.

Also, the Education Act fore Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act) §1-1 states that*:* «The pupils and apprentices must develop knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can master their lives and can take part in working life and society. They must have the opportunity to be creative, committed and inquisitive.» (The Education Act, 2019). Schools responsibility is therefore not only to give pupils academic skills, but also to help them develop as human beings with self-knowledge, empathy, sense of responsibility and power of judgement (Samnøy, Norman, & Tjomsland, 2021) with apprentices as role models. NOU (2015) suggests that learning takes place in the interaction between cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. This supports the notion that an environment experienced as safe and built on strong interrelations is essential for the pupils' academic, social and emotional education (NOU, 2015, p. 20). Additionally, a meta-analysis of 82 school-based, universal social and emotional learning interventions studies show that developing social-emotional skills has a positive effect on academic skills (Holte et al., 2019; Taylor, Durlak, Oberle, & Weissberg, 2017). This underlines the importance of focusing not only on developing the individual pupils' academic knowledge, but also his or her social-emotional skills.

In this study a deliberate choice was made to explore 'Well-being and Life Skills' and not 'Health and Life Skills' as a whole because 'Health' and 'Life Skills' have been used as synonyms in the public debate and 'Life Skills' seems to be the preferred use when referring to the interdisciplinary topic (Departementene, 2017; Madsen, 2020; Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016). Even the white paper from the Ministry of Education and Research (Meld. St. 28, 2015-2016) and LK20 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a) do not differentiate between the two. Further, the interdisciplinary topic 'Health and Life Skills' touches on aspects such as physical health, lifestyle habits, sexuality and gender, drug abuse, media use, consumption and personal economy, in addition to perspectives related to mental well-being in relation to others (i.e.

interrelationships) and the ability to deal with feelings, emotions, and relationships (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). This study explores the last.

2.2 Earlier research on 'Well-being and Life Skills'

'Well-being and Life Skills' as a concept is relatively new within the Norwegian schools. Google Trends shows an increase in number of searches the last few years performed on 'Livsmestring', the Norwegian term for well-being, since the first search in 2009. In August 2020, it had a peak of 100 searches while 'Folkehelse og Livsmestring' had a peak in February 2021 of 30 searches. This indicates an increasingly interest in the cross curricular topic in the public. Adding to this, is also an increase in research articles about 'Well-being and Life Skills'.
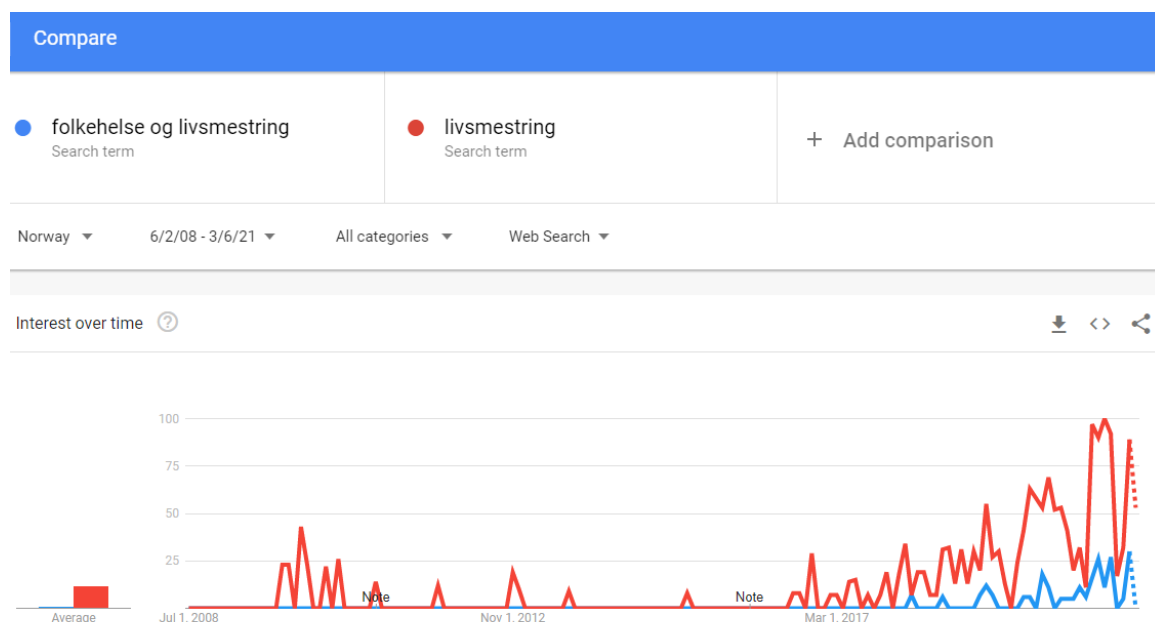
A literature search on the 24th of February 2021 in Google Scholar and Oria on the Norwegian term *Livsmestring* gave respectively 1970 and 187 results. When using the search engine *Dimensions,* 214 publications showed and an expansive increase from 39 publications in 2019 to 103 publications in 2020. To ensure hits relevant for this study only, an advanced search in the Teacher Reference Center-database was carried out. Additionally, peer-reviewed articles were added as criteria. A search on the term *Life Skills* gave 612 hits, whereas 144 had Life Skills in the title. Most of the research that has been undertaken, however are Norwegian Master and Bachelor theses conducted within the last four years. This research mostly explored what factors that related to developing 'Well-being and Life Skills' and the teachers'

perspectives upon it. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no research publication exists about children's experience with 'Well-being and Life Skills' in a Norwegian school setting.

A report by *Landsrådet for Norges barne- og ungdomsorganisasjoner* (LNU) examined 'Well-being and Life Skills' amongst 12–13-year-olds (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016). The LNU-report explored challenges adolescent meet in their day-to-day life (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016). Furthermore, the LNU-report underlined adolescent's need for safe conversations about 'Well-being and Life Skills' (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016, p. 56). It is worth noting that this report is not scientifically based but focused on collecting ideas through talking with two-hundred adolescent, the leaders of twenty-one children- and young adults organisations and driving forces in the field. The LNU-report recommended that 'Well-being and Life Skills' should be implemented through ordinary subjects in school, an increased structure of daily-school life, new prospects in 'Well-being and Life Skills', and play (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016, pp. 7-8). However, a challenge is that 'Well-being and Life Skills' are perceived by teachers as vague, with little guidance on how to put it into practice (Mælan, Tjomsland, Samdal, & Thurston, 2019). Therefore, the concept needs further unpacking to find the best possible way to implement it as a structural developing strategy in schools. A gap of knowledge this study may contribute to fill through the explorations of children's experiences.

2.3 Public debate about 'Well-being and Life Skills'

Since the government introduced 'Health and Life Skills' as an interdisciplinary topic, a public debate has played out. A debate that has been questioning how to implement the topic in addition to the appropriateness of putting yet another responsibility on the school. A debate through newspaper articles (Halvorsen, 2018a, 2018b, 2020; Hesselberg & Halvosern, 2019; Holte et al., 2019; Norman & Tjomsland, 2018; Reite, 2019), podcasts (Lomsdalen, 2019; NTNU, 2019; Smevoll, 2020; UiS, 2020) as well as books (Madsen, 2020; Samnøy et al., 2021; Tjomsland, Viig, & Resaland, 2021).

Halvorsen (2018b) described a general wish amongst the public to educate children and young people in mental health. Halvorsen argue that mental health should be valued equally as physical health. Further, the article emphasises that mental health is a crucial building block for a good life. Interrelations between teacher and pupils are in addition essential, since trustworthy interrelations are the foundation for the pupils' psychosocial development (Halvorsen, 2018a).

In 2020, Ole Jacob Madsen published the book *Livsmestring på timplanen – Rett medisin for elevane?*. Madsen questions whether implementing the interdisciplinary topic into the curriculum enhance the societal tendency of putting pressure on the individual child and young person to master their own life, rather than addressing the root of the problem, the school system itself. Further, Madsen (2020) critique the LNU-report for suggesting a 'claimed causal relationship' between mental health problems and adolescent's lack of skills in mastering their own life. It is further argued that an unquestioned understanding of the challenges children and young people face has manifested (Halvorsen, 2020; Madsen, 2020, p. 16). According to (Madsen, 2020), there are two ways to handling a challenge; either change the requirements of the situation or equip the individual with resources to handle them. Instead, attention ought to be paid to develop teachers' competence in developing their interrelationship skills and competence in igniting a spark in the pupils (Halvorsen, 2020). Norman and Tjomsland (2018) argue that education in 'Well-being and Life Skills' should start by exploring what life is like, rather than how we wish life would be. Turning a blind eye to young people's struggle can lead to more loneliness, fear, taboos, and escalating mental health challenges (Norman & Tjomsland, 2018). Another critic is of NRK's series for children called *Livsmestring*. Reite (2019) argues that the series encourage children and young people to understand that the solution to 'bad thoughts' is positive thinking, 'stopping' to worry and not overthink. It only makes them even more responsible for their own happiness and progress. Reite (2019) argues that they do not need any more burdens and draws in WHO's definition of health to emphasise that society is responsible for good mental health. Not the individual itself. As an alternative, it should be made clear for the children that everyone will have bad experiences (Reite, 2019). Further, Holte et al. (2019) argues that it is not enough to implement 'Health and Life Skills' as an interdisciplinary topic in the curriculum. It should be a subject in itself (Lomsdalen, 2019). According to Holte et al. (2019) our emotions have great impact on our 'Well-being and Life Skills' and determine how we relate to others and navigate in the world, which is necessary life knowledge for children and adolescent (Holte et al., 2019). LK20, does according to him, however, merely mention this connection (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). According to Holte et al. (2019), the core curriculum fails to take any measures to strengthen the pupils' mental health.

2.4 Conceptual framework

The empirical findings in this study will be discussed in connection to a conceptual framework. First *health* and *well-being* will be defined, followed by *interrelationships* as described by

Spurkeland (2011). Further, the LNU-report (2016) suggest a connection between 'Well-being and Life Skills' and *self-efficacy* (Bandura, 1977). In addition, the theoretical concepts *resilience*, *coping* and *self-regulation* will be presented.

2.4.1 Health & Well-being

World Health Organization (WHO, 1948) defines health as «a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.». Hjort (2018), on the other hand, defines good health as the ability and capacity to cope and adapt to life's challenges and everyday demands. These definitions describe health in two different ways while also covering the same areas. Thereby health is understood as a subjective phenomenon that can be interpreted differently depending on the individual. WHO refers to well-being as a state of positive physical and mental health (WHO, 1946). The Norwegian Directorate of Health primarily looks upon well-being as the subjective experiences of quality of life and objective measures such as living conditions (Helsedirektoratet, 2015, p. 80). Further, a body of literature reflects Well-being as emerging in community through an interplay between inner subjective experiences and outer context of life (Bronfenbenner, 1977, 1986; Prilleltensky, 2005; Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2007). Bronfenbenner (1977, 1986) presents a model, where well-being is shaped by the dependent relationship between the different contexts the individual is a part of. Another model by Prilleltensky (2005; Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2007) reflects that for a Well-being strategy to be successful, it should be consistent across four levels. These are: Sites (ie. the individual, interrelationships or collectives characterised by Well-being), Signs (objective measures of well-being), Sources (individual, interrelationships, or collective determinants for well-being) and Strategies (ie. interventions to increase well-being) (Prilleltensky, 2005). These two models reflect a complex understanding of well-being and clarifies the process and context in which well-being arise. Well-being thereby becomes something we *do* both as individuals and as a collective (Helsedirektoratet, 2015, pp. 71-80, 81).

This can be seen in relation to research reflecting that schools are viewed as one of the best settings for health promotion and education, including addressing mental health problems and developing well-being (Grieg, MacKay, Roffey, & Williams, 2016). Additionally, a global trend towards a neo-liberal instrumental view of education, which emphasises academic performance in an increasingly narrow range of subjects, is seen (Thurston & Green, 2021, p. 48). The question then becomes if the schools have ground to create circumstances for both

well-being and academic achievements. Thurston and Green (2021) suggest that there may not be a distinction between them. They are independent and the product of relational and dynamic processes in the sense of learning to be human. Thereby, well-being has significant implications for all that schools do (Thurston & Green, 2021, p. 49). Studies further report that psychological well-being is associated with academic success (Simovska, Nordin, & Madsen, 2016), and teachers see well-being as integral to their everyday teaching (Ekornes, Hauge, & Lund, 2012). Although a systematic review on psychological well-being and academic achievement among school-aged children shows inconsistent results, it still reports positive associations. These are seen in cross-sectional studies when using teacher ratings in addition to self-report, focused on relational aspects of well-being and younger children (Amhold, Danmeyer, Carter, & Niclasen, 2020). Well-being thus becomes an integral part of everyday school life and seems to have significance for developing academic skills.

When it comes to factors determining school well-being, Løhre, Lydersen, and Vatten (2010) suggest that factors relevant to lessons are more important than factors related to recess. The pupil-teacher relationship may be of particular importance, especially for boys. The study further suggests that the teacher's role, and a learning environment without harassment is essential to promote school well-being (Løhre et al., 2010).

2.4.3 Physical activity and children

A large body of research shows that physical activity is essential for children in both developing academic skills, promoting health and well-being (Bakken, 2018; Haug et al., 2020). Studies report that participation in physical activity is positively related to academic performance in children (Singh, Uithdewilligen, Twisk, van Mechelen, & Chinapaw, 2012) and have a positive effect on both physical and mental health (Biddle, Ciacciono, Thomas, & Vergeer, 2019). One study by Wehner, Nielsen, Krølner, and Tjørnhøj-Thomsen (2020) points to movement as a way for pupils to balance two existential modes: one of activity and tenseness in the form of self-forgetfulness and the body demanding attention in different ways and an occasion for being social, and one of break and stillness in the form of movement as a break from everyday obligations and withdrawing from the social worlds (Wehner et al., 2020). From an existential-phenomenological perspective, the body is the anchorage of existence in the world (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012). There are two ways of experiencing the body: One is the lived subjective body and the other is the physical objective body and to view the body as an object, there must be a viewer (subject). From this standpoint, the body plays an epistemological role since it is

through experiences and expressions that we gain new knowledge (Wehner et al., 2020). These findings can be related to theorizes such as affect (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010; Spinoza, 2011) and 'dwelling' (Ingold, 2000). Ingold (2000) describes humans as 'dwellers', which suggests that children's thoughts, movements, identity, and culture emerge from their interaction and relationship with their environment and, thereby, become intertwined with it (Sanderud, 2018). Further, Spinoza's (2011) and Seigworth and Gregg's (2010) examination of affect and affections creates an understanding of children's movement and how they are drawn to move. A central point from their perspective is that affect in many ways is «synonymous with force» which can «serve us to drive us toward movement, thought, and extension. » (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 54).

2.4.4 Interrelationships

Competence in interrelationships is skills, abilities, knowledge, and values that establish, develop, maintain and repair relations between humans (Spurkeland, 2011, p. 63). Schools have teacher-pupil interactions at their core, and Spurkeland (2011) argues that trustworthy interrelations are fundamental for effective learning (p. 64). Interrelationship competence is a tool to build strong connections between dependent actors like teacher-pupil. The more dependent the relations are the more essential well-functioning relationships become. Increasing the quality of these connections means that both actors can experience more effective communication and mutual understanding (Spurkeland, 2011, pp. 64-65). The perspective on human life, a general interest for humans, and a particular interest for the individual are the basis for developing competence in interrelations (Spurkeland, 2011, p. 68). One of the main points in interrelationship is that the teacher has to obtain insight and understanding of the individual pupil (Spurkeland, 2011, p. 69). It ensures that each pupil feels valued and that their qualities get discovered even though their skills may not be of academic relevance (Lomsdalen, 2021; Spurkeland, 2011, pp. 69, 74). Further, Spurkeland has expressed competence in interrelationships equals 'Well-being and Life Skills' with interrelations, motivation, and coping as the starting point (Lomsdalen, 2021). Studies underline how good pupil-teacher relations support pupils mental health (Mælan et al., 2019). Mælan et al. (2019) argues that the «[…] teacher-pupil relations can be viewed as mediating emotional, social and academic support and development at an individual, as well as a classroom level.». It emphasises the importance of developing good interrelationship skills in connection to 'Well-being and Life Skills'. In particular, an Australian study by Anderson and Graham (2016) shows that an environment that generates a feeling of belonging and being connected to school

are related to the pupils well-being. Further, Taylor et al. (2017) showed that postintervention social-emotional skill development was the strongest predictor for well-being. Goswami (2011) investigated the positive and negative qualities of social relationships and their association with children's subjective well-being. The study suggests that children's relationship with family, positive aspects of friendships, and neighbourhood adults increase their well-being, while negative aspects of friendships, the experience of being bullied, and treated unfairly by adults decrease their well-being (Goswami, 2011). It helps to bring light upon which type of social relationship affects children's subjective well-being.

2.4.5 Resilience

Resilience is the individual's ability to protect oneself against negative consequences of stressors (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012). Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) emphasises that «A substantial body of evidence suggests that resilience is required in response to different adversities, ranging from ongoing daily hassles to major life events […].». Additional research indicates that numerous psychological factors as a cheerful personality, motivation, confidence, focus, and perceived social support help protect from the potential negative consequences of stressors (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012). Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) lastly argue that «governments should provide community-based opportunities that give individuals access to both environmental and personal resources that develop their resilience in meaningful ways.». Masten and Barnes (2018) suggest three basic strategies for intervention: reduce or mitigate risk; boost assets or reduce barriers to promotive factors for child health and development; and nurture, mobilize, or restore as needed the fundamental and powerful adaptive systems that generate capacity for resilience over the life course. What is described as the 4th wave of resilience science shows that professionals, parents, and teachers play an essential leadership role in nurturing systems that support healthy development and generate capacity for resilience (Masten & Barnes, 2018). The school thereby becomes a central place to develop resilience in children through being an arena where children spend the majority of their time.

2.4.6 Coping

Stress is one of the mental health problems developing in modern society (Kalia, 2002). Statistics show that especially young girls feels more under pressure now than earlier (Bakken, 2018, p. 74; Haug et al., 2020, p. 52). It can further be seen that schools are starting to focus on developing coping skills to teach the pupils to master own life and cope with stress (Glorvigen, 2018). The Norwegian term 'Livsmestring' translates to management of or coping

with life when using the dictionary Ordnett.no. This suggests a strong connection between coping and 'Well-being and Life Skills'. Coping is defined as «the thoughts and behaviours used to manage the internal and external demands of situations that are appraised as stressful» (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). People respond differently to stressful situations according to their ability to cope. Coping as a theory and concept can help to explain who thrives under stress and who does not and further develop effective interventions to help people handle both acute and chronic stress (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Research shows that coping strategies are mediators between goal orientation and school achievement (Brdar, Rijavec, & Loncaric, 2006). Brdar et al. (2006) suggest that learning coping strategies can be an important mechanism for the positive effects of goal orientation on pupils' performance. Furthermore, a productive coping style is positively related to student-reported sense of well-being and school connectedness (Frydenberg, Care, Freeman, & Chan, 2009). Additionally, a group intervention to increase coping skills and resilience in young people suggests a decrease in difficulties with behaviour and emotions for children after intervention (Allen et al., 2015).

2.4.7 Self-efficacy and self-regulation

Self-efficacy is a theory build upon numerous psychological processes that affect the levels and strength of one's own ability to believe in oneself (Bandura, 1977). Self-regulation relates to self-efficacy through encompassing the same mechanism, which plays a central role in the exercise of personal agency by its strong impact on thought, affect, motivation, and action (Bandura, 1991). Self-regulation operates through three principal subfunctions. These are self-monitoring of one's behaviour, its determinants, and its effect; judgment of one's behaviour concerning personal standards and environmental circumstances; and affective self-reaction (Bandura, 1991). Bandura (1991) argues that believing in one's ability to reach goals in the future motivates oneself to act accordingly.

The importance of these theoretical concepts is underlined by research showing an association between teacher support, scholastic competence and school, satisfaction, general self-efficacy and students' life satisfaction (Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009). Further, learning and thriving mutual strengthen the pupils' self-regulated initiative and engagement in the learning process (Danielsen, 2012). Self-regulation is additionally highlighted as vital for both the pupils' academic learning and the ability to handle and control their actions, emotions, and thoughts (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007; Mischel & Ayduk, 2004). Self-regulation and the ability

to act reliable and responsible affects pupils academic learning and later how they handle work

and own life (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004; NOU, 2014).

Chapter 3. Expanded method

The following section will present the study design and methods applied; Firstly, a short description of qualitative research followed by more specifics related to qualitative research with/on children. Secondly, a presentation of observation and interview as methods moving into participatory observation, focus group conversations and semi-structured interviews, the application thereof, and ethics surrounding research. Lastly, Thematic Analysis (TA) which was used to analyse the data will be described.

3.1 Qualitative research

When conducting research, the researcher must evaluate worldviews and scientific paradigms creating the research foundation through a set of philosophical and metatheoretical assumptions concerning ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (knowledge), and methodology (the principles inspiring and governing scientific research, as well as the research method) (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008). Qualitative research views reality as a multiple, socially, and psychologically constructed phenomenon, where the knower and the known are connected (Gelo et al., 2008). The aim is to understand the behaviour and culture of humans from "their" point-of-view (Bryman, 1988, p. 46) as usually done by comprehending a smaller number of participants' perspectives, experiences, and understandings (Gelo et al., 2008). Qualitative research is mainly inductive, and data driven. A qualitative research design was chosen for the current study since it aimed to explore children's *experience* of 'Well-being and Life Skills' and was of inductive and explorative character. Further, not much prior research on this topic exists. A qualitative design was thus a useful way to gain insight about the topic.

3.1.1 Research on/with children

Children and adults live in two different socially constructed worlds (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Therefore it was necessary to find a methodology that made it possible for the researcher to gain access to children's places, events, and experiences that might otherwise be inaccessible (Sanderud, 2018). Sanderud (2018) makes use of two premises when researching children's perspectives. One is that children think and act as competent inhabitants of the world, and the other is that research on children fundamentally is the same as research on adults but requires methodical adjustments to meet the voice of the children (Sanderud, 2018). Furthermore, the children ought to be included as active participants and experts in their practices during the research process (Clark & Moss, 2011, p. 6) and viewed as «co-producers of knowledge rather than 'containers' of data'» (Sanderud, 2018). To successfully communicate, the researcher

should aim to enter the children's «culture of communication», and strive to level out the power balance by assuming the role of a «critical friend» rather than a controlling expert (Sanderud, 2018). The study attempted this through participatory observation before carrying out any conversations. It aimed to include the pupils in the research process and adapt the method to the pupils and how they communicated. Established methods before carrying out the research were participatory observation and a semi-structured interview with the teacher. A further choice of method was originally letting the pupils take pictures of objects they related to 'Well-being and Life Skills', but it was changed doing the participatory observation. Instead, the decision of having focus-group conversations with the pupils was done to give voice to the pupils and as an attempt to explore the research question from the pupils' worldview. This also meant that a new letter of consent was done after the research was conducted to inform about changes.

3.2 Participants

The study was conducted in a 3rd grade in a primary school in Vestland county. The class consisted of 18 pupils aged 8-9 with one special-need pupil. A teacher and an teacher assistant were present at all times. In addition to sending out letters of consent, the teacher had informed both pupils and their guardians about the study and the presence of the researcher. Further, the homeroom teacher participated in the study through both a semi-structured interview and the participatory observation. It helped to gain insight into the pupils' world of understanding and what words to choose when conducting conversations with them. The assistant changed from day to day. Privacy was reassured through no mentioning of names, or situations making it possible to identify.

3.3 Selection and application of methods for collecting data

Methods selected to examine the research question were participatory observation, focus-group conversations, and a semi-structured interview. The use of several methods was inspired by the Mosaic Approach (Clark & Moss, 2011) and based on the research question's explorative and inductive nature. The researcher was present in the class from Monday to Friday a week in autumn 2020. The first three days were used on participatory observation while the last two days focused on focus-group conversations. The semi-structured interview was done at the end of Friday. Through being present in the classroom and actively integrating with the pupils and teachers, the researcher became a part of the research process itself (Clark & Moss, 2011, p. 37). Due to changes in the methods used, two separate "letters of consent" were handed out.

The decision to have focus group conversations with the pupils was not done before collecting data. Consequently, a new letter of consent was handed out afterwards to get guardians' consent to use the recording of the conversations.

3.3.1 Participatory observation

Qualitative research study behaviour in natural settings. Within this lies the fundamental assumption that behaviour is best understood in its natural setting (Gelo et al., 2008). Observation is a method carried out in a natural context to enhance a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation (Gelo et al., 2008). Underlined by the understanding of 'perception of being perceived', observation is always participatory, since participation in interaction is intertwined with a mutual experience of being perceived (Keiding, 2011). Participatory observation also makes it possible for the researcher to have 'mutual experiences' with children (Sanderud, 2018). It can be a relevant tool when doing research in a school setting, as it helps to understand how the school environment influence the pupils. The researcher should further aim to participate in others' activities through embodied engagement and use all senses actively to understand and generate knowledge (Ingold, 2011, p. 145). A limitation of this method is that all humans are inseparable from their social and physical surroundings (Sanderud, 2018). Therefore, to formulate analytic reflections of own observations, the researcher must try to keep a hermeneutic distance (Sanderud, 2018).

This understanding is mainly grounded in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, which describes how understanding ourselves and others occurs through interaction with our surrounding environment and others (Merleau-Ponty, 2012). However, it only gives an adult's perspective on pupils' lives. Therefore this method needs to be seen in conjunction with several sources of information (Clark & Moss, 2011, p. 18). Yet, participatory observation contributes to building a relationship between the researcher and the pupils. As a result, it was perceived to have the potential to lead to deeper and more trustworthy conversations and was therefore chosen as a method in this study.

The participatory observation was carried out in line with Sanderud (2018) and Ingold (2011) reflections mentioned above. The researcher was placed in the back of the classroom. Observations-notes was carried out through an observation template divided into 'description of situation observed' and 'temporary analysis' (see appendix 3).

3.3.2 Focus group conversations

Data was further collected through focus groups consisting of the pupils. These were quite unformal compared to a structured interview and therefore referred to as focus group 'conversations'. When interviewing children, Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) underscore that a skewed power relation exists (p. 175). Therefore, it is important that a researcher do not strive to be associated with a teacher as the children may think that there only is one answer to the question (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Further, the questions should be adapted to the children and the interview should be done in what occurs to them as a natural setting (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Sanderud, 2018). Three days of participatory observation were carried out before any conversations with the pupils took place. This contributed to establishing a more trustworthy relationship between the researcher and the pupils and diminishing the skewed power relation. Furthermore, it helped the researcher gain insight into the pupils' view upon 'Well-being and Life Skills' and if their experience correlated with the findings collected through observations and the semi-structured interview. As Clark and Moss (2011) emphasise children should be included as active participants and experts in their practices, when researching a concept that involves them. They should be seen as co-producers of knowledge rather than 'containers' of data (Sommer, Samuelsson, & Hundeide, 2010).

Different reflections expressed by Clark and Moss (2011, pp. 19-20) were taken into consideration when applying the method. One it that when interviewing children, it is essential to choose settings carefully. In this study, this was taken care of through cooperation with the teacher. A smaller room close to the pupils' classroom was chosen and was therefore familiar to them. It also made the transition from one group to the next very easy. Further, it is important to be flexible and sensitive (Clark & Moss, 2011). This was obtained through groups of three pupils per group, which made it easy to establish a connection with each pupil. Both the ones that were eager to speak and the quieter ones. Having fellow pupils to talk with and discuss the questions with meant that they were not alone. All of them had someone they were familiar with, which may have contributed to them feeling safer and creating the setting for a more unformal conversation instead of a one-on-one interview. Furthermore, this gave them a possibility to take their time and reflect upon the questions (Clark & Moss, 2011, p. 20). When asked questions some did not respond immediately, but other pupils often stepped in and responded, while the others reflected. This emphasised, that some children are more open to responding to questions than others (Clark & Moss, 2011). Further, the pupils' weekly schedule was brought along. One was printed out for each group. Before leaving the classroom, the

pupils were told to bring a colour pencil of their choice. Then, when asking questions like: «What is your favourite subject?», «What do you find difficult?», «Where is your favourite area to spend recess?» etc. they could put a ring around subjects on the weekly schedule. This gave them something to relate to and focus on. Further, it removed the focus point from the questions to the task of putting a ring around something instead. A semi-structured interview guide (see appendix 4) was used but the focus group conversations was kept flexible to go in any direction that felt most natural for each focus-group. The conversations were carried out as six focus group conversations with the pupils in groups of three.

3.3.3 Semi-structured interview as a method

Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) state that the purpose of a qualitative research interview is to shed light on the informants' perspectives and understandings of a concept as they experience it (p. 20). Different types of interviews exist. In this study a Semi-structured Interview was used to gain insight into the homeroom teacher's perspective on 'Well-being and Life Skills'. The semi structured interview is characterized by open questions that indirectly contribute to highlighting and understanding the subject's interpretation of a given concept (Flick, 2002, pp. 80-85; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, pp. 156-157).

The semi-structured interview was the last data collection method conducted carried out by the end of the last day. This made it possible to ask questions to situations observed during the week. Further, the participatory observation helped in making a semi structured interview-guide (see appendix 5) through revealing topics of interest for further exploration. An approach that Clark and Moss (2011) also mention as essential (p. 35). It brought to light the teacher's subjective view and interpretation of how the pupils experience 'Well-being and Life Skills'. It further illustrated how the teacher's role affected the pupils' experience and understanding of the concept. Besides the semi-structured interview, conversation, and questions with the teacher during the participatory also took place. This helped to obtain information about the pupils and the teachers understanding of how the pupils experienced 'Well-being and Life Skills' both during class and recess.

3.4 Thematic analysis

A Thematic Analysis (TA) was conducted. TA is a qualitative method characterised by its flexibility. The objective is to identify, analyse and report patterns/themes within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Further, Braun and Clarke (2019) preferably use the term *reflexive* TA to capture how the key in their approach is the researcher´s role in knowledge production. Thus, the researcher generates the analysis through reflections and methodological background. Additionally, TA approached analysis as a «recursive process, where movement is back and forth as needed throughout the phases.» (Braun & Clarke, 2008). It means that the analysing-process is a constant dance between the entire data set and the analysis. Since this study is of an explorative character, it did not hold any clear hypothesis. Therefore, reflexive TA appeared a suitable method for analysing the data. Further, TA is an accessible method to researchers with little or no experience with qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006), while summarizing key-features of a large body of data. The method therefore seemed highly relevant for the research question in this study.

TA is independent of theory and epistemology and can therefore be applied across theoretical and epistemological approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes are identified either in an inductive 'bottom up' way or in a theoretical 'top down' way (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since not much previous research on this topic exists, the study applied a 'bottom up' analysis. This method allows for a more open and exploratory approach. It does not mean that the researcher is free of theoretical and epistemological commitment (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, this study also holds a conceptual framework that helped to understand the analysis of the data. Deciding on what concepts to include was done both during and after the analysis. In contrast, a theoretical analysis would be driven more by the researcher's theoretical interest in the area and a more specific research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Another part of the flexibility of the TA is that it allows the researcher to determine themes and prevalence (Braun & Clarke, 2006) generated from coding and analysing the entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Since TA is qualitative, the significance of a theme is more dependent on whether it captures something important about the research question than how many times it occurs (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For this study, the themes were established across the methods used. Hence, they consist of both data from the participatory observation, the semi-structured interview, and the focus group conversations. This reflects numerous instances of the same code throughout the data set showing consistency. Further, the analysis took a semantic approach, since it aimed to identify the explicit themes of the entire data set. This process involves a progression from

the description, where the data have been organized to show patterns, to interpretation, where the patterns and their broader meanings and implications are attempted theorized (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The opposite would be a latent thematic analysis, where the development of themes involves interpretation, which in return promotes theorization (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Moreover, TA can be conducted within a realist and a constructionist paradigm. The realist approach assumes that what is expressed, is a direct reflection of the individual's experiences and meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1995). In contrast, the constructive approach assumes that meaning and experience are produced and reproduced by society and what is expressed by the individual is a result thereof (Burr, 1995). This approach seeks to theorize the sociocultural contexts and social constructions inhering within the individual (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study epistemology is somewhat in-between, as the pupils' and homeroom teacher's expression reflect the individual's opinion to some extent. It can also be interpreted as a result of their socio-cultural context. Additionally, the current study strived to make a rich thematic description and reflect the entire dataset through seeking to establish themes across all methods utilized. A rich thematic description strives to describe the entire data-set, so the reader gets a sense of the essential themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is a valuable method when investigating under-researched areas and is, therefore, the chosen approach in this study. A more detailed account relates more to a specific question or area of interest within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Finally, qualitative research involves a series of questions. Therefore Braun and Clarke (2006) point out a need for a clear relationship between them. First, there is the overall research question. In this study, the research question is of a broad and exploratory character. Second, data have been collected through interviews and focus group conversations, containing questions participants have responded to, and finally, questions guide the coding and analysis of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There is a need for a relationship between these questions, and it is often more desirable to have a disjuncture between them (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.4.1 Steps of a thematic analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) divide TA into six steps. Each step follows the previous. The analysis involves a constant moving back and forth between the entire data set, the coded extracts of the data, and the analysis itself (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It can therefore be necessary to go a couple of steps back before moving on to the next. Underneath is a short description of each stage and how they were applied in the current study (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 87-93):

1. *Getting familiarized with the data* through transcribing data, reading and re-reading the entire data set and noting down initial ideas, thoughts, interesting aspects, and potential themes and codes. For this study stage 1 was characterised of initial analysis through observation table, returning to data collected by the end of each day and transcribing interviews.

2. *Generating initial codes.* A code is an interesting feature of the data and the smallest data unit that can express a sudden aspect (like a word or a sentence). Coding involves organising the data into categories relevant to the research question. Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that the analysis starts already here since the researcher will decide what is of interest for the research question. In this study, coding of the data collected was first done for each method used. The coding was then revisited through the look of the initial themes, as table 1 shows.

3. *Searching for themes* involves examining the relations between the codes followed by dividing them into potential themes and sub-themes and gathering all data relevant for each theme. Initial themes for this study were first found through three mind-maps: One for each method.

4. *Reviewing themes* by checking if they relate to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic map of the analysis. This step involves two levels. Level one reviews the coded extracts and consider if all collected extracts for each theme form a coherent pattern. Level two involves a similar process but concerns the entire data set, where the validity of the individual themes is considered in connection to the entire dataset. Stage 4 involved reviewing the coding. The initial mind-maps contributed to approach the coding once again to search for themes. New mind-maps for the initial themes were then created. It helped to consider if coded extras for each theme formed a coherent pattern and move extras around to form sub-themes.

5. *Defining and naming themes.* This step helps to generate clear definitions and names for each theme through an ongoing analysis that works to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story of the analysis. As table 1 shows, the coding and reviewing were done several times before the final naming of the themes. Stage 5 consisted of creating new mind-maps and a story of the analysis to further advance that themes and sub-themes were coherent.

6. *Producing the report* involves the final opportunity for analysis. At this stage, a selection of vivid or compelling extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts,

relating the analysis back to the research question and literature, and producing a scholarly report of the analysis, takes place. As described, this stage involved writing the master thesis and the research article. It helped to choose examples from the data collected that seem to have the most relevance and stood out. Reflecting on the general coding and going through the process once again further enhanced the coherence of the research question and themes generated.

In line with this step-to-step guide, the observations, the semi-structured interview, and focus group conversations were read and re-read several times to find themes and sub-themes. Since the dataset was small it was manually organised and examined. For a larger amount of data, it could be relevant to use a text analysing program (e.g., NVivo). The entire process of this study is summarised in Figure 1. As shown, it started with the collection of data. When the analysing process started, initial coding and themes were form out from each method. Further analysis was then centred around the initial themes. It created an analysis that did not differ between methods but instead focused on themes established across all methods. Table 1 shows themes and sub-themes found across all applied methods. Because of the different methods used, the study can be characterized as a mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2011). A method developed for doing research, especially when working with younger children within a classroom. The idea is to collect data through a wide range of means, whereafter it is the researchers task to put the individual pieces together to form one big mosaic picture (Clark & Moss, 2011).
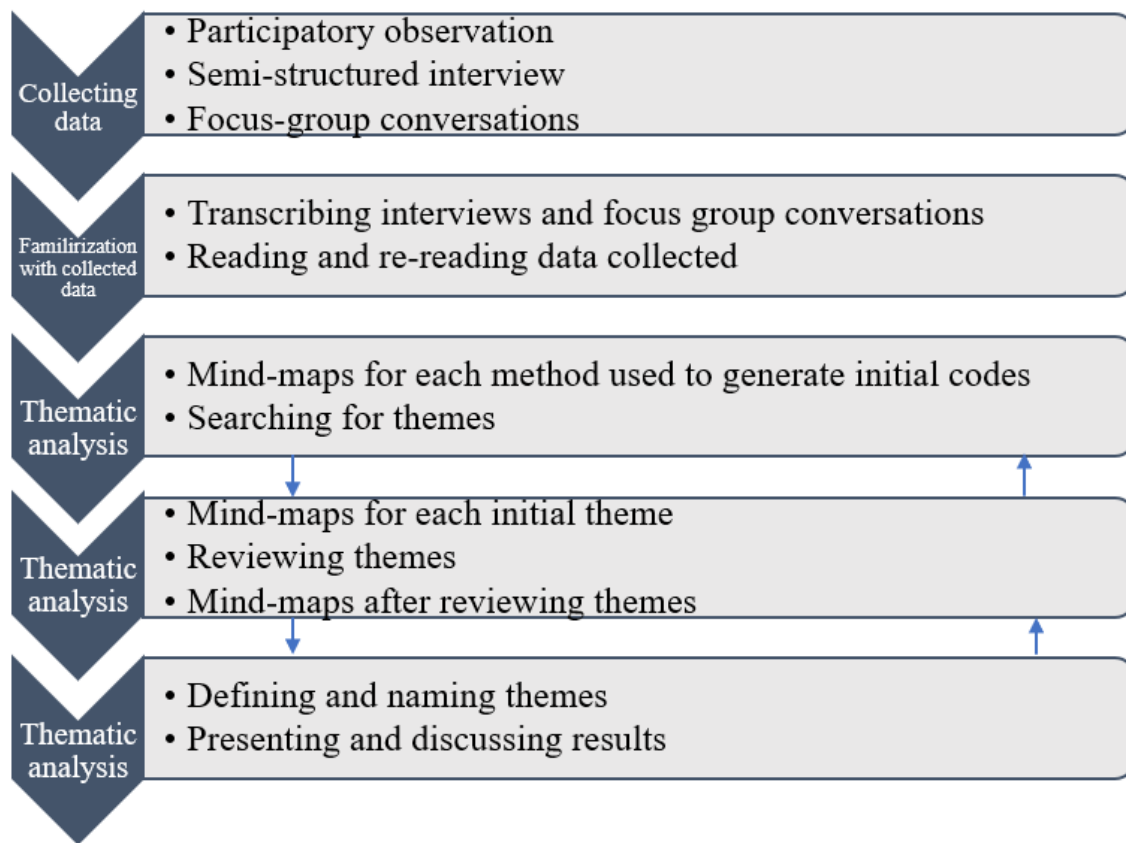
Figure 1: The process of the study

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes			
Social dynamics	*Expectations, stability & structure*	*Being seen and feeling valued*	*Handling and expressing emotions*
Interrelationship skills strengthen the individual	Responsible for structure, predictability, stability, and unity	Feeling appreciated and experiencing mastery	Process thoughts and emotions
Learning how to handle and solve conflicts	Awareness of the individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses	Being followed up	Learn how to handle and express emotions, criticism, variation, and frustrations
Developing the whole child	Express to the pupils they expect something from them	Individual table placement	Ability to adjust

3.5 Methodical challenges and limitations

When carrying out qualitative research and collecting empirical data, it is essential to obtain as much objectivity as possible. According to Bryman (1988) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), this can be hard to achieve. Therefore, it becomes even more important to be aware of own preconceptions and role when collecting data and doing the analysis. The researcher must consequently be critical of oneself. Further, he/she must be open to finding data that may not support preconceptions of the answer to the research question. This was particularly relevant during the participatory observation.

When carrying out qualitative research it is essential to consider the study's trustworthiness (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to parallel the quantitative assessment criteria of validity and reliability. Credibility is reached when readers can recognize the experience described (Nowell et al., 2017). In the current study this was especially attempted through data collection triangulation (ie. the use of three different methods). Transferability refers to generalisation, which concerns case-to-case transfer in qualitative research (Nowell et al., 2017). In the current study, thick descriptions were used so others who wish to transfer the findings can judge the transferability to their site. Furthermore, confirmability must be considered. This is done through establishing that the researcher's interpretations and findings are derived from the data collected (Nowell et al., 2017). A figure and a table (see p. 26-27) were to provide insight into how conclusions and interpretations was made, as well as reasoning behind theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices. It is further important to create a clear audit trail so that another researcher can follow the decision trail (Nowell et al., 2017). In the current study, the already mentioned figure and table in addition to describing the process behind the choice of methods aids in this manner. Additionally, raw data such as transcriptions and field notes have been stored. Lastly, researchers and encourage to reflect and be self-critical of both their internal and external dialogue (Nowell et al., 2017). In the current study it was attempted through describing the researchers position in the field, discussion and reviewing the themes with the supervisors, and keeping note of all reflections and reasoning behind choices done throughout the process of the study. Furthermore, the use of several methods, thick descriptions, the process of coding and analysing the data collected, as well as reviewing the themes several times contributed to a systematic and transparent process. In return, this gives a possibility to reflect on the analysis and interpretations.

Since the study contains what would be characterised as a smaller amount of data, it conditions the generalisation. Hence, it can be argued that the perspectives and findings is limited to the participants in this study. At the same time, the aim of the study was to explore pupils *experience* with 'Well-being and Life Skills'. When researching a concept Zahavi (2005) argues that in order to understand a phenomenon, it is not possible to ignore the experience of the person who lives the phenomenon (p. 19). Therefore, it is always dependent on the language and specific setting it was created in (Daher, Carré, Jaramillo, Olivares, & Tomicic, 2017). It is reasonable to take on a holistic approach where both mind and body is used as a tool. This is done through methods as participatory observation. Furthermore, it becomes an important consideration for further research on this subject.

The study was carried out during autumn 2020 after the outburst of Covid19. This meant that the class always had to be separated from all the other pupils in the school. The 3rd grade participating in this study had their own wardrobe, bathrooms, and playground area. The area changed every day. Further, the pupils had to wash their hands when they arrived in the morning and used hand sanitizer when they walked out of the classroom and before eating.

3.5.1 The researcher's preconception and position in the field

In addition to studying for a master's in Sports Science, I have a bachelor's degree in Outdoor Education. My bachelor thesis examined how nature can prevent, treat, and affect stress. On the basis thereof, I have a preconception of the value of good mental health, and physical activity. It is vital that my previous experiences and position in the field do not influence my analyses of the pupil's opinions to the furthest extend possible. Therefore, it is vital to stay open minded. I must also be aware of how my presence as a researcher and unknown adult might have influenced the pupils. However, observing how the pupils handle a change in their familiar environment can help show how they deal with variation and new situations.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Since the focus group conversations involved 8-year-old children, it was necessary to give age-adapted information to the children as well as to their guardians concerning the research and the consequences it may have, participation being voluntary, and being able to leave the project at any given moment (NESH, 2016, p. 20). Children's participation in research is a cooperation between competent consent, the children's ability to consent on behalf of themselves, and the guardian's recognition that participation in a study can be highly valuable (NESH, 2016, p. 20). Informed consent was collected through one letter to the guardians and a separate age-adapted letter to the pupils (see appendix 3). The use of three days participatory observation prior to focus group conversations suggested that the children would feel safe enough around the researcher to express themselves. It was also inevitable that it would affect their everyday life. The homeroom teacher informed both pupils and guardians about the researcher's presence. Further, the researcher was informed how the class was used to having different adults coming in and out of the classroom. Both in the shape of substitutes, assistants, and internships. On arrival the first day the pupils did not pay the researcher must attention. Some pupils even approach the researcher asking for help with practical tasks. As a researcher, it is important to be aware thereof and critically assess the ethical and scientific challenges this may cause (Forskningsetiskekomiteer, 2010, p. 17).

It is also important to be aware of different ethical issues of matter when conducting research on children. Children and young people are key contributors when studying their life and living conditions (Backe-Hansen, 2009). In addition to different types of adaptations appropriate for individual circumstances, it can be necessary to age adapt the method and the content. Keeping this in mind, Backe-Hansen (2009) points out that the relation between children's competence and vulnerability is essential for ethical issues of matter. In this study, the research was conducted at the school. It was therefore taken into consideration, that going to school is mandatory while participating in research is voluntary (NSD, 2018, 1. oktober). Consequently, the letter of consent needed not to pressure anyone to participate. Additionally, the children must be considered a vulnerable group. When participating in a study, they can demand, and require, extra protection (NESH, 2016, punkt 14). When conduction research on 'Well-being and Life Skills' challenging situations can be observed and talked about with the children. A trustful relationship between the researcher and the children can also occur, which may lead to the children expressing matters of vulnerable details (Backe-Hansen, 2009). Since this study

was of inductive character, it was unknown what information the empirical data would bring to light. Another matter of issue is that the informant's confidentiality must be considered (Backe-Hansen, 2009).

Before carrying out the study it was assess by the Norwegian Center of Research (NSD) with reference number 483026 (see appendix 7) and approved. During the participatory observation, the researcher decided to do a change of methods used, since it was discovered that focus group conversations would capture the voice to the pupils better than letting them take pictures. This method had been considered beforehand as well, but not express in the application to NSD. Consequently, NSD had to be informed and approve the change before the data collected could be interpreted and used in the study. Further, a second letter of consent (See appendix 2) were handed out to get consent for using recordings of the conversations. This meant that the guardians and pupils got a chance to reconsider participation in the study. However, this did challenge the internal validity of the study. Recordings without consent is very problematic and not ethical research. The researcher learned a lot from this process and recognise the consequences it could have had. It was further emphasised that all participants could withdraw their consent at any given time. All data were threated confidentially and kept password-protected on the researchers' computer.

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Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen
Master in Sports Science
2021

Chapter 4. Research paper

Cover letter for *Pastoral Care in Education*
Mai 20th, 2021

To whom it may concern,

We wish to submit an original research article entitled *A qualitative study of Norwegian 3rd graders' experience of Life Skills in Primary School* for consideration by Pastoral Care in Education. We confirm that this work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

In this paper, we report how 3rd graders' experience of Life Skills in Primary School is influenced by social dynamics, predictability, and structure, being seen and feeling valued, as well as handling and expressing emotions. Given that not much research exists about Norwegian pupils' experience with Life Skills, we believe that the findings presented in this paper will add knowledge to this gap in literature. Thus, these findings will allow your readers to gain insight into pupils' experience of Life Skills in an educational setting.

We judge the manuscript to be relevant to readers of *Pastoral Care in Education* and is firmly in line with the journals aims and scope.
We have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Please address all correspondence concerning this manuscript to Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen at 161023@hvl.stud.no.

Thank you for your consideration of this manuscript.

Sincerely,

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A qualitative study of Norwegian 3rd graders' experience of Life Skills in Primary School

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A qualitative study of Norwgian 3rd graders experience with Life Skills in primary school

'Health and Life Skills' has been included in the Norwegian school curriculum for primary and secondary education to promote health and strengthen the individual pupil. However, there is a lack of knowledge about Norwegian pupils' experience with Life Skills in a school setting. This study explored Norwegian 3rd graders' experience with Life Skills in school. Five days participatory observation of the pupils during both recess and classes, focus group 'conversations' with 18 pupils, aged 8-9 years old, as well as one semi-structured interview with the homeroom teacher were conducted. A thematic analysis was applied, and four main themes were developed. The study demonstrates how an application of different methods supports each other through a Thematic analysis. In the analysis of the findings four main themes were developed: 1) social dynamics, 2) predictability and expectations, 3) being seen and feeling valued, as well as 4) handling and expressing emotions. The study indicates that pupils experience Life Skills through trustworthy interrelationships, in addition to visually show mastery through subjects involving physical activity and creating something. This suggests that putting more attention on developing interrelationship skills and including more practical work in class could increase pupils experience of Life Skills.

Keywords: Children; Well-being; Life Skills; Pupil; School

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Introduction

World Health Organization (WHO, 1948) defines health as «a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.». Hjort (2018), on the other hand, defines health as the ability and capacity to cope and adapt to life's challenges and everyday demands. Health can therefore be understood as a subjective phenomenon that can be interpreted differently depending on the individual. WHO refers to well-being as a state of positive physical and mental health (WHO, 1946). Schools are viewed as one of the best settings for health promotion and education, including addressing mental health problems and developing well-being (Grieg et al., 2016). Studies report that psychological well-being is associated with academic success (Amhold et al., 2020; Simovska et al., 2016), that teachers see well-being as integral to their everyday teaching (Ekornes et al., 2012), and that the teacher's role and pupils' experience of a safe learning environment is essential to promote school well-being (Løhre et al., 2010). Well-being thus becomes an integral part of everyday school life and seems to have significance for the development of young people's academic skills. At the same time, tendencies such as globalisation and modernisation increase challenges at the same time as adding more pressure on the individual (Samdal et al., 2017, p. 42). These tendencies are underlined by research showing an increase in health problems for young people such as overweight, mental health problem, feeling lonely, a high level of experienced stress, a decreasing number meeting the recommendations about daily 60 minutes of physical activity and less than half following the national guidelines for daily intake of fruit and vegetables (Bakken, 2018, pp. 2,5,63; Haug et al., 2020, pp. 25,51; Steene-Johannessen et al., 2019, p. 41; Sund et al., 2019, p. 10).The aforementioned gives important information about young people's life. The general tendency, however, is that Norwegian pupils thrive at school (Haug et al., 2020, pp. 55-56), but as the research above indicates, there is still a need for promoting both mental and physical health. Public health

initiatives should be, and often is, based on the current health challenges (Folkehelseloven, 2011).

The interdisciplinary topic 'Health and Life Skills' [Norwgian: *Folkehelse og Livsmestring*] can be seen as such an initiative (Departementene, 2017, p. 44). During the school year 2020/21 the renewed National Curriculum "Kunnskapsløftet 2020" (LK20) is being implemented (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020b). Three interdisciplinary topics focusing on current and future challenges of the Norwegian society are described in LK20. These are 'Health and Life Skills', 'Democracy and Citizenship' and 'Sustainable development' (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). These were first introduced in a report examining the current curriculum against competences supposedly required in the Norwegian society in the future (NOU, 2015, p. 12). The council saw competence in making responsible life choices as important on the basis of an increased individualization tendency in society and an increased access to information, (NOU, 2015, p. 50). 'Health and Life Skills' is described as a curriculum topic that shall cover themes such as physical health, lifestyle habits, sexuality and gender, drug abuse, media use, consumption and personal economy (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). Further, the topic encompasses perspectives related to mental well-being in relation to others (i.e. interrelationships) and the ability to deal with feelings, emotions, and relationships (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a). This study explores the last through social dynamics, the ability to deal with feelings and emotions as well as being seen and feeling valued through relation to others. The Norwegian Directorate of Health primarily looks upon well-being as the subjective experiences of quality of life and objective measures such as living conditions (Helsedirektoratet, 2015, p. 80). Further, a body of literature reflects Well-being as emerging in community through an interplay between inner subjective experiences and outer context of life (Bronfenbenner, 1977, 1986; Prilleltensky, 2005; Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2007).These two models reflect a complex understanding of well-being and clarifies the

process and context in which well-being arise. Well-being thereby becomes something we *do* both as individuals and as a collective (Helsedirektoratet, 2015, pp. 71-80, 81). The Norwegian term *Livsmestring* will be translated to 'Well-being and Life Skills' throughout to the article to try capture the Norwegian term's full meaning, since it also captures the understanding of well-being as expressed above.

'Well-being and Life Skills' as a concept is relatively new within the Norwegian schools and has been described as a possible method to strengthen young peoples' mental health. It was introduced in schools due to an increase in mental health problems amongst young people (Bakken, 2018, p. 80; Sund et al., 2019, p. 10), and higher demands from society today to master one's life (Folkehelseinstituttet, 2018; NOU, 2015, p. 50; Samdal et al., 2017, p. 42). It has been argued that mental health ought to be valued equally to physical health and that teacher and pupil relations are essential to developing 'Well-being and Life Skills' (Halvorsen, 2018a, 2018b; Holte, 2019; Holte et al., 2019). Furthermore, including 'Well-being and Life Skills' in the curriculum might put even more pressure on the individual through exploring how we wish life should be, rather than what life is really like (Madsen, 2020; Norman & Tjomsland, 2018; Reite, 2019). Earlier research on the topis has investigated 12th-13th year old's experience of Health and Life Skills in schools (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016). The report was conducted as a project where young people and youth organisations contributed with inputs on what is perceived as challenging and how to implement Health and Life Skills in schools (Prebensen & Hegstad, 2016, p. 2). As research, the report holds several methodological limitations and should only be seen as mere implications. Another study has investigated pupils' perception of how teachers' everyday practices support their mental health (Mælan et al., 2019). To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no research exists about Norwegian pupils' experience with 'Well-being and Life Skills' in the school setting. Hence,

the study aims to add knowledge to this gap in the literature. More specifically, the following research question was asked: How does Norwegian 3rd graders experience Life Skills in school?

Materials and Methods

Schools and informants

To gain insight into how a Norwegian 3rd grad experience 'Well-being and Life Skills' in schools, a qualitative approach was applied. This age group was chosen because no previous research on 3rd graders experiences with 'Well-being and Life Skills' in Norwegian schools has been conducted on this age group. The study was conducted at a small public school from a municipality in a rural environment in western Norway. The school was recruited through a researching project aiming to develop a curriculum for 'Well-being and Life Skills' targeted at the public schools. The third grad at school consisting of 18 pupils aged 8-9 with one special-need pupil participated in the study together with the homeroom teacher.

Data gathering procedures

For gathering of data, the preferred methods used was participating observation, one semi-structured interview with the homeroom teacher in 3rd grade and focus-group conversations with the pupils. The use of several methods was inspired by the Mosaic Approach (Clark & Moss, 2011). A method developed for doing research within a classroom, especially when working with younger children (Clark & Moss, 2011). The researcher was present in the classroom from Monday to Friday during a week in October. The first three days were spent observing, while the last two days were spent conducting six focus group conversations with the pupils in groups of three. These are referred to as focus group 'conversations' due to being very unformal compared to an interview. The semi-structured interview was carried out at the end of Friday. The homeroom teacher participated in the study through a semi-structured interview and the participatory observation. It helped to gain insight into the teacher's

perspective on the pupils' experience with 'Well-being and Life Skills' in school. The study was carried out during autumn 2020 after the outburst of Covid19.

Children should be included as active participants since they are the experts of their own experience (Clark & Moss, 2011, p. 6) and viewed as «co-producers of knowledge rather than 'containers' of data'» (Sanderud, 2018). In the current study, the participatory observation helped to gain insight into the pupils' view upon 'Well-being and Life Skills' and if their view lined up with the data collected through observations and the semi-structured interview. Furthermore, it established a more trustworthy relationship between the researcher and the pupils prior to the focus group conversations. The focus group conversations were conducted to give voice to the pupils as an attempt to explore the research question from the pupils' standpoint. Further, the study aimed to include the pupils in the research process and adapt the method to the pupils and how they communicated. As an example, this was done through asking questions like "What is your favorite subject?", "What do you find difficult?" etc, instead of asking directly "how do you experience 'Well-being and Life Skills'?". A semi-structured interview guide was used but the conversation was kept flexible to go in any direction that felt most natural for each focus-group. The semi-structured interview was the last method to be applied. It brought to light the teacher's subjective view and interpretation of 'Well-being and Life Skills'. It further illustrated how the teacher's role affected the pupils' experience and understanding of the concept. Besides carrying out a semi-structured interview, general conversation and questions during the participatory observation was also done.

Data analysis

A Thematic Analysis (TA) was conducted. It is independent of theory and epistemology and can therefore be applied across theoretical and epistemological approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2019) preferably use the term *reflexive* TA to capture how the key in

their approach is the researcher´s role in knowledge production. Additionally, TA approached

analysis as a «recursive process, where movement is back and forth as needed throughout the

phases.» (Braun & Clarke, 2008). It means that the analysing-process is a constant dance

between the entire data set and the analysis. The observations, focus-group conversations and

the semi-structured interview were read and re-read several times to find themes and sub-

themes. Since the dataset was small it was manually organised and examined. The entire

process of the study is summarised in figure 1. When the analysing process started, initial

coding and themes were formed out from each method. Further analysis was then centred

around the initial themes. It created an analysis that did not differ between methods but instead

focused on themes established across all methods.

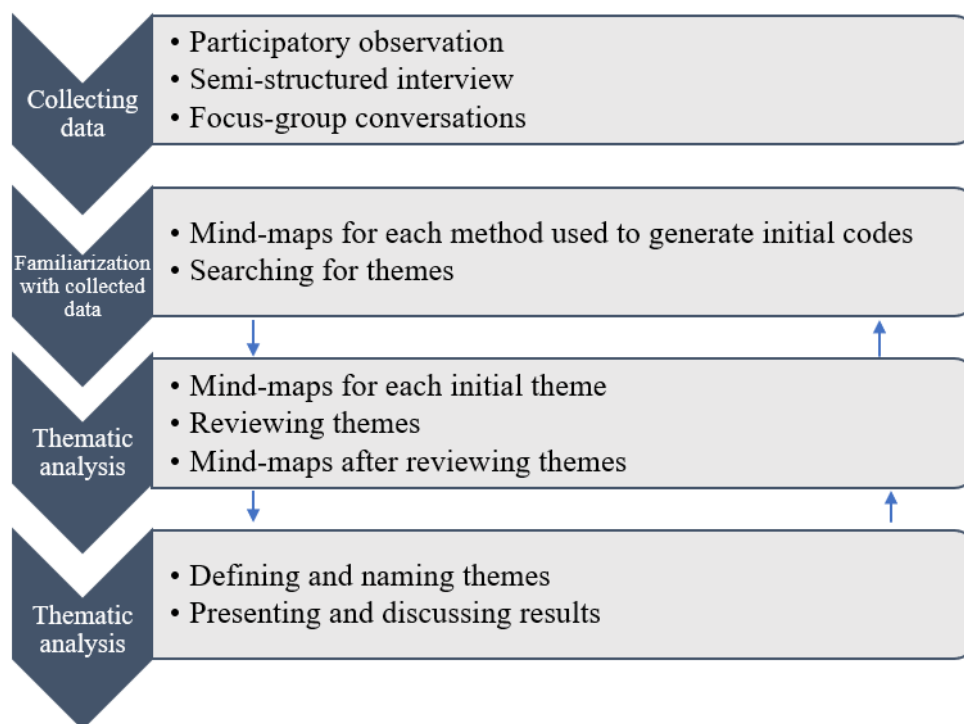*Figure 2 The entire proces of the study*

Ethical Approval

The study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research (NSD). Written consent for

participation was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Due to changes of

methods used a new letter of consent was send out after ended data collected. All participants

handed in their consent. Participants, guardians, and the homeroom teacher were informed

that participation was voluntary, that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time,

and that their names and the school would be anonymised. All data were threated

confidentially and kept password-protected on the researchers' computer.

Findings

Four main themes were developed that relate to how the pupils experienced 'Well-being and

Life Skills' in school. Table 1 below captures themes and underlying sub-themes found across

all methods applied. These themes consist of several sub-themes that emerged through research

done in a natural setting and the pupils' natural environment across all methods used. Themes

and sub-themes, therefore, have an intertwined relationship with no clear boundaries.

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes			
Social dynamics	*Predictability and expectations*	*Being seen and feeling valued*	*Handling and expressing emotions*
Interrelationship skills strengthen the individual	Responsible for structure, predictability, stability, and unity	Feeling appreciated and experiencing mastery	Process thoughts and emotions
Learning how to handle and solve conflicts	Awareness of the individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses	Being followed up	Learn how to handle and express emotions, criticism, variation, and frustrations
Developing the whole child	Express to the pupils they expect something from them	Individual table placement	Ability to adjust

Social dynamics

The first main theme reflects how social dynamics understood as interrelations and

interpersonal competence contributes to the pupils' experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills'.

Both through learning how to handle conflicts, but also through experiencing safe and good

relations with their teachers, a good school climate and having friends. It consists of the sub-

themes 1) Interrelationships, 2) Learning how to handle and solve conflicts, and 3) Developing the whole child.

Interrelationships were emphasized through the pupils' relationship with the teachers. This was exemplified through the pupils expressing their concerns to the homeroom teacher. One being that a pupil told the homeroom teacher about another pupil sitting alone in the forest when the class went on their usual Friday trip. Another example was a conflict that arose during recess (ie. about making teams when playing basket) and were voiced by the pupils in the beginning of the following class. These examples demonstrated how there seemed to be a safe school climate that allowed for open communication between the pupils and the teachers. One pupil also expressed how he appreciated having their homeroom teacher. Interrelationships also seemed to be of importance for the pupils. When asked to put a ring around their favourite subject one pupil picked another pupil's name instead and expressed: 'I didn't know what to choose, but I like X!'. The pupils showed that they cared about each other's well-being and were considerate of one another. Both through inviting each other to play, rarely expressing negative comments toward each other, and accepting the individual differences between one another, which shows skills in interrelationships through the pupils relating to each other. It was also expressed through an awareness of individual differences in what the pupils found difficult. Further, the pupils invited the researcher to participate in games during recess as well as expressing concerns and conflicts. This showed an open and positive attitude towards people from the outside coming into the classroom.

The second sub-theme was how the pupils learned to handle and solve conflicts. A subject called "Klassens time" (ie. class devoted to discussion on current issues of matter) enabled the pupils to express conflicts or challenges that concerned them. One pupil expressed how she wished that the other pupils would stop saying that she had a boyfriend. 'Klassens time'

was both a way to solve conflicts together in class, but it was also an opportunity to give the pupils tools to handle and solve conflicts on their own: 'They must handle it and get a bit of responsibility. It is accountability. I can't always be there to make sure no conflicts will arise, right?' (Homeroom Teacher). This occurred through the teacher not being the one with the solution but asking the class what the solution to a conflict could be. It was also exemplified through the situation in the forest as mentioned above. The homeroom teacher asked the fellow pupil what the solution could be to which he answered that they could play together. As mentioned above, the pupils also told the teacher if a conflict between the pupils did arise. Others expressed that they would step away from the situation. One boy uttered how he did not like to play basket and the conflicts it created. Therefore, he did not participate. Additionally, two pupils referred to a difficult situation with a third pupil in the following way:

> [Talks about situation with other pupil]. Y is nice, but a bit negative sometimes. I think Y gets a bit, unfair… And then Y wants to decide everything we do. And then suddenly Y doesn´t want to do anything! One time we were outside, and Y was a bit difficult. And then Y wanted to go home. And then Y didn´t want to do anything because we went inside. But maybe we just have to ask Y if Y wants to be with us? (Pupil X)

This showed that the pupils had an awareness of that conflicts should be resolved, and that a way to resolve them was by inviting each other in, instead of ruling anyone out. It further showed that the pupils could come up with solutions without having to involve any teachers in the process.

The last sub-theme that emerged was developing the whole child. Expressed by the homeroom teacher interpersonal competence and the social dynamics was more important now than earlier and seemed to dominate in the school:

> Focus has changed from being on the subjects to being on the social dynamic and 'personal' education of the pupils. The challenges in school are not in the subjects but in the social dynamics. That is where conflicts and problems arise. (Homeroom teacher)

The homeroom teacher's conscious use of different strategies such as a 'Birthday heart', 'Sociogram' and the subject 'Klassens time' was a good example in this regard. A 'Birthday heart' was a heart, that was given to the birthday pupil. The teacher asked all the other pupils to say something nice about the pupil and then she wrote it down on the heart. The pupils expressed compliments such as 'nice', 'a good friend', 'fun' and 'clever'. Following, a 'Sociogram' was a way for the teacher to make sure that each pupil had someone he or she liked to play with, and someone that liked to play with him or her. It was done through the homeroom teacher having a one-by-one conversation with each pupil about how he or she thrived in class. It further emphasized that a school climate with good interrelationships seemed to be of importance.

Predictability and expectations

The second theme relates to the teacher's role in developing pupils' 'Well-being and Life Skills'. It consists of two sub-themes reflecting 1) the teachers' responsibility for structure, stability, and unity, and 2) the importance of the pupils' expectations.

Different strategies like structure and stability seemed to promote the pupils experiencing of 'Well-being and Life Skills'. The homeroom teacher gave the pupils a schedule each week. It was the guardians' responsibility to go through it together with the pupils Sunday

before the week started. Moreover, each day always started in the same manner. Each pupil was greeted by the teacher before going into the classroom and finding their seats. One pupil also stood at the board and went through what day it was, the date, the season and what the weather was like. Further, the teacher went through what subjects the pupils were going to have. The homeroom teacher highlighted her responsibility in creating structure and stability for the pupils in this manner:

> They know that I know. I keep an eye on them and follow their development, right? I've had them for three years. It is so important with this safety and knowledge of what they need, right? Stability is so important. I think that is the task we have as a teacher. They thrive so so much more then. (Homeroom teacher)

Furthermore, the Homeroom teacher expressed, that she as a teacher needed to control and help create a united school climate: 'You are the one holding the pupils together in a way. As the homeroom teacher you must have control!'. It emphasised the importance of the teacher's responsibility to create structure, predictability, stability, unity, and to be in control of the class. It further became clear that there were differences in the dynamics between the pupils and their homeroom teacher and the pupils and the substitute teachers. The pupils exhibited more concentrated and calm behaviour when the homeroom teacher was present. The class used a special 'clap', where the teacher clapped twice, and the pupils responded with three claps. This was used when too much noise or disturbance occurred or at the beginning of a class. After the 'clap' the pupils became quiet and gave their attention to the teacher. During a class with a substitute teacher, a lot of noise occurred. One of the pupils attempted the 'clap', but without any result since the substitute teacher did not have any knowledge thereof. It underlined the

homeroom teacher's role in facilitating a good learning environment through being familiar with the pupils and highlighted the need for stability and predictability.

The second sub-theme reflects the importance of the pupils experiencing expectations. In this context, the homeroom teacher expressed that since the pupils were in 3rd grad, she had certain expectations of them. The pupils and the homeroom teacher also sat goals together for the class. The current goal was to have order and be fast when changing in the wardrobe. Experiencing expectations was also reflected through the pupil's homework and how this was followed up in class afterwards. The homeroom teacher expressed it was important to be aware that not all the pupils were followed up in the same manner at home:

> We know who can handle it, and who doesn´t get the help they need from home. It is a bit of a dilemma for me as a teacher. It is not fun when a pupil comes to tell you that they haven´t done their homework. It does something to them.

Therefore, the homeroom teacher had different expectations for different pupils so that each pupil experienced mastery rather than failure.

Being seen and feeling valued

The third theme reflects the importance of the pupils' being seen and feeling valued and how the pupils seem to experience 'Well-being and Life Skills' through this. It is reflected trough three sub-themes. These are 1) the teacher's awareness of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses, 2) being followed-up, and 3) experiencing mastery (ie. handling a challenge), and the pure joy of activity and creation.

The awareness of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses was reflected through the homeroom teacher expressing a recognition of what each pupil mastered and giving feedback in accordance thereof. Additionally, the homeroom teacher voiced that knowing each

pupil helped her recognize when the pupils were performing their best, when they could do better, or even when a bad performance was grounded in being lazy or a lack of motivation. The homeroom teacher expressed, that they must help the pupils as teachers: 'They need help, guidance, and support to learn how to handle their life.' (Homeroom teacher). This emphasised the importance of the teacher's role and responsibility for knowing the individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses both concerning school, social skills, and the situation at home. The homeroom teacher expressed concerns about the risk of falling sick over a longer period, because a substitute teacher would not have the same knowledge about the pupils, because it, according to the homeroom teacher, takes a lot of time to develop such strong relations. The homeroom teacher also argued that her long experience as a teacher, with all her practical knowledge, was valuable in this regard.

The second sub-theme relates to the pupils' experience of being followed-up. The homeroom teacher expressed how they as teachers try to accommodate this through different initiatives like the 'birthday heart', feedback after the individual pupils' abilities, as well as individually adapted homework, and individual table placement. The individual table placement due to COVID-19 made it easier for the teacher to see and talk with the pupils one-to-one. The teacher expressed that: 'It is so important for them [ie. the pupils] to be seen and get attention. They think about it so much.' (Homeroom teacher). As an example, one pupil showed how he mastered the splits during a focus group conversation. He also asked a lot of questions about the researcher's presence and was eager to be seen.

The last two sub-themes were experiencing mastery, and the pure joy of activity and creation. It was exemplified through the pupils being eager to show if they mastered something. Further, many of the pupils pointed out subjects that were characterized by movement and 'hands-on' activities as favourite subjects. Mainly two subjects were chosen. One was Physical

Education (PE) and the other was Arts & Crafts. Several also appreciated Math which was described using words like 'exciting' and 'fun'. While some pupils expressed math as being one of their favourite subjects, other pupils disagreed and described it as 'difficult'. It reflects how mastering something can contribute to creating a positive relation to a subject, and when not subjectively experiencing to master, it becomes a subject characterized as difficult. One pupil expressed how: 'It was better in 1st and 2nd grade. Now we just sit and read and write. It is a bit much. It is difficult. I like better to play and write.'. This may reflect that the pupil seemed to mainly experience mastery through activity and creation. Further, the subject PE was described as 'fun'. When asked 'why?' many expressed that it was because they were able to 'run around and move'. One pupil expressed that: 'It is nice to move. I don't like sitting too much.'. Another expressed how he could: '[…] jump around and act like a mad pig!'. Arts & Craft was also a favourite subject for several of the pupils because they were able to 'make things'. One pupil expressed: 'like to make things and stuff like that. I do it a lot at home as well.' and another said: 'I think we should have Arts & Crafts as homework. That could have been fun.'. These statements showed that the pupils seemed to find joy in subjects that gave the pupils a possibility to visually show mastery; PE through the physical activities and Arts & Crafts through creating drawings, paintings, a poster, etc.

Handling and expressing emotions

The fourth theme reflects how the pupils through handling and expressing emotions experience 'Well-being and Life Skills'. Sub-themes are 1) learning how to handle and express emotions, 2) processing thoughts and emotions, and 3) ability to adjust.

First sub-theme emerged through the homeroom teacher voicing that they tried to teach the pupils to handle and express their emotions. One example was an assignment given to the pupils where they had to write a story about one time, they felt angry. An assignment that

taught the pupils to express and understand their own emotions. The 'Birthday-heart' also contributed to this trough learning to express and embrace feedback. The homeroom teacher expressed that through knowing the pupils very well, she was able to access how the pupils felt (ie. if they were having a good or a bad day) and thereby help to handle their emotions. The table placement contributed to giving insight into each pupil's emotional state of being. They were placed one and one at separate tables:

> There is a lot of reflection behind (ie. table placement and seating), so everyone has a possibility to settle in and create concentration. They have so much going on in their heads, worries about what is going on at home or isn´t happening at home. There is so many things, so it helps to create a good overview. (Homeroom teacher)

The homeroom teacher hoped that it would contribute to see each pupil and help them handle emotions and frustrations to further better their concentration.

The second sub-theme reflects how the pupils processed thoughts and emotions. It was amongst other exemplified by a pupil who was standing alone during recess. Given the COVID-19 restrictions the pupils were limited to a specific area during recess. This recess was on a grass pitch, where mainly soccer was played. The pupil voiced that she often was sitting alone on a bench and was looking forward to the last class of the day, where they were going on their regular Friday-trip: 'Good thing we are going to Trollskogen, then there is something everyone likes.'. The same pupil was standing in the background during a class called FYSAK (ie. a subject that contributes to more physical activity in school), where the pupils were outside playing human 'Stratego'. The previous mentioned examples regarding the pupil standing alone in the forest and the pupil removing himself from the 'basket conflict' are also relevant. These examples showed that when the pupils experienced challenges, they processed emotions and thoughts by removing themselves from the situation. Further, the pupils showed an

understanding of that everyone can experience adversity and that it differs what they find difficult. When asking about things they found difficult one pupil expressed that: '…everyone experiences something difficult occasionally!'. Additionally, several pupils expressed that they did not find anything difficult and liked to attend school. Others also expressed that they did find more joy in being at school than at home during the first wave of Covid19.

The ability to adjust is the last sub-theme. It was reflected through how the pupils reacted to the presence of a researcher. The homeroom teacher expressed that it seemed as if I became a part of the class: 'They did not resist your presence. I felt like you were a part of us. They seemed open. I think that is good.'. Further, some of the pupils informed me when they witnessed a conflict between other pupils and when another was hurt. It showed that the pupils adjusted to the change of another adult in their environment and related to me as a trustworthy adult on the same level as their normal teachers. The pupils also seemed open minded and curious in the focus group conversations and were all quite talkative. Additionally, the pupils were able to adjust to new initiatives and restrictions because of the Covid-19 outbreak such as washing hands upon arrival, using hand sanitizer when walking out of the classroom and before eating, using one wardrobe and toilet only, and changing the playground area each day. The homeroom teacher said that the pupils had adjusted quickly to the new routines.

Discussion

The Norwegian national curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a) describes how 'Well-being and Life Skills' shall help pupils deal with success and failure in the best possible way. The findings in this study suggest that this is done through interrelationships, stability, structure and expectations, the pupils' experience of being seen and feeling valued, as well as their ability to handle and express emotions.

A strong relationship between teacher-pupil seems to be of importance. Earlier research and theories suggest that trustworthy interrelationships enable 'Well-being and Life Skills' (Mælan et al., 2019; Spurkeland, 2011, p. 64; Taylor et al., 2017). In return, it conducts competence in interrelationships and is fundamental for effective learning. This was seen through how the pupils learned to handle and solve conflicts. 'Klassens time' allowed talking about and resolving controversies. It further taught the pupils that they were able to solve them on their own. The teacher gave the pupils the responsibility by asking them for solutions. This enhanced the pupils' interrelationship skills through feeling accountable for their social dynamics. This is also supported by the Norwegian Act relating to Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act) §1-1 which states that: «The pupils and apprentices must develop knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can master their lives and can take part in working life and society.» (The Education Act, 2019). Schools responsibility is not only to give pupils academics skills, but also to help pupils to develop as humans with self-knowledge, empathy, sense of responsibility and power of judgement (Samnøy et al., 2021). Additionally, the individual table placement seemed to affect the pupils' experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills', because it made it possible for the teacher to have one-to-one interactions with the pupils. Creating a safe environment that allows for open communication between the pupils and the teachers supported the pupil's experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills'. Despite accountability measures and teaching for tests, this finding suggests that a strong focus on social dynamics is essential in schools today rather than directly developing academic skills. Instead, trustworthy interrelationships that support the pupils' experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills' may be the facilitator for promoting academic skills. This has also been suggested by a study reporting that psychological well-being is associated with academic success (Simovska et al., 2016). The societal tendencies mean that school can become a vital arena for supporting and developing the whole child. Additionally, one study underlines the

importance of not only focusing on developing the individual pupils' academic knowledge, but also their social-emotional skills (Taylor et al., 2017). Research also reflects that, when having a strong focus on emotional skill development, schools are one of the best settings for improving well-being (Grieg et al., 2016) at the same time as being a strong predictor for well-being (Taylor et al., 2017). Educating pupils about 'Well-being and Life Skills' may help develop their well-being in a positive direction. Studies further report that teachers see well-being as integral to their everyday teaching (Ekornes et al., 2012).

The pupils seemed to have a positive school climate, where they accepted and showed understanding of individual differences. The pupils showed that they understood that what is experienced as difficulties differs amongst the pupils. This perception seemed to support an awareness that experiencing adversity is normal. An acknowledgment that also seemed to be a way to cope with adversity. Coping is defined as «the thoughts and behaviours used to manage the internal and external demands of situations that are appraised as stressful» (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Further, earlier research shows that a productive coping style is positively related to student-reported sense of well-being and school connectedness (Frydenberg et al., 2009). Coping with adversity may therefore enhance the pupils' sense of well-being, school connectedness and has a positive effect on their academic skills (Brdar et al., 2006; Frydenberg et al., 2009). As an example, it seemed to help the pupils to cope with the researcher's presence.

The findings in this study emphasise the vital role interrelationships play in experiencing 'Well-being and Life Skills'. As earlier studies emphasise, good pupil-teacher relations support pupils mental health (Mælan et al., 2019) through trustworthy interrelations being fundamental for effective learning (Spurkeland, 2011, p. 64). This is however not to say that there should not be a focus on developing the individual child, keeping with the findings suggesting that being familiar with the individual pupil and seeing their strengths

and weaknesses supports their experiencing of 'Well-being and Life Skills'. This is also supported by Spurkeland's theory about interrelationships, which underscore that one of the main points is that the teacher has to obtain insight and understanding of the individual pupil (Spurkeland, 2011, p. 69). Spurkeland (2011) argues that each pupil needs to feel valued and his or her qualities discovered even if their skills may not be of academic relevance (Spurkeland, 2011, pp. 69, 74). Further, research indicates that numerous psychological factors such as a cheerful personality, motivation, confidence, focus, and perceived social support help protect the individual from the potential negative consequences of stressors (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012).

The findings also suggest that a school climate characterized by stability, structure and clear expectations by facilitates pupil's 'Well-being and Life Skills'. However, the classroom climate and the class dynamics seemed to change when the class had a substitute teacher, which shows how different interrelationships affect the social dynamics. This suggests that settings characterised by stability, structure, and expectations are more likely to happen when there is a good and trustworthy relationship between the pupils and the teachers. Further, the findings suggest that an experienced teacher has more competence in understanding and gaining knowledge about each pupil. This arises a question about newly educated teachers and their ability to give the pupils the same tools as a more experienced teacher. In contrast, a study reports no evidence of lower teaching quality for beginning teachers (0-3 years' of experience), when comparing to two groups of more experienced teachers (3-5 years' of experience and +5 years of experience), but rather a decline for teachers with 4-5 years' of experience (Graham, White, Cologon, & Pianta, 2020). Further, the study shows no difference in the level of Emotional support between all three groups (Graham et al., 2020).

The homeroom teacher had different expectations for the pupils based on an understanding of their differing prerequisites. In line with Spurkeland (2011, pp. 69,74), the homeroom teacher emphasised how the being attentive to the pupil's need both academically and on a more personal level helped them feel seen. This is in line with earlier research pointing towards an association between teacher support and self-efficacy (Danielsen et al., 2009). The teacher further expressed responsibility for creating unity. This relates to earlier research suggesting that a thriving environment generating a feeling of belonging and being connected affects the pupils' well-being and strengthens their self-regulated initiative (Anderson & Graham, 2016). On the basis thereof, it can be argued that a feeling of unity in return supports the experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills'. The pupils seemed to find pure joy and mastery in subjects that gave them a possibility to visually show mastery, for example through physical activity or through creating something. This is supported by earlier research emphasising that physical activity is essential for children, both in developing academic skills (Singh et al., 2012), promoting both physical and mental health and well-being (Bakken, 2018; Biddle et al., 2019; Haug et al., 2020), and how children naturally are drawn to move (Ingold, 2000; Seigworth & Gregg, 2010; Spinoza, 2011). From an existential-phenomenological perspective, the body is the anchorage of existence in the world (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012). The body plays an epistemological role since it is through experiences and expressions that we gain new knowledge (Wehner et al., 2020). Children's thoughts, movements, identity, and culture emerge from their interaction and relationship with their environment through being 'dwellers' (Ingold, 2000). The findings support this by reflecting the pupils' pure joy for activity. Further, Spinoza's (2011) and Seigworth and Gregg's (2010) examination of affect and affections creates an understanding of children's movement and how they are drawn to move. From it, they further seemed to gain a feeling of mastery, which in return can be seen as an experience of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

Bandura (1991) argues that believing in one's ability to reach goals in the future motivates oneself to act accordingly. This was reflected through feedback from the teachers, own perception of mastery, and an experience of being seen by the teacher. Several of the pupils expressed positivity towards subjects that made it possible for them to experience mastery through activity and creation. These findings together with earlier research suggest that focusing on movement and creation in school can help the pupils experience 'Well-being and Life Skills', as well as embracing the role that the body play in gaining knowledge. Further, a definition of health by Peter Hjort becomes applicable. Hjort (2018) defines good health as the ability and capacity to cope and adapt to life's challenges and everyday demands (p. 41). Thereby Health, 'Well-being and Life Skills' become intertwined and can be understood as a holistic approach to health.

The findings emphasised that focusing on teaching and helping the pupils process thoughts and emotions can facilitate 'Well-being and Life Skills'. The homeroom teacher hoped that the individual table placement made it easier to see each pupil and help them handle their emotions and frustrations to better their concentration. This is further supported by research showing an association between teacher support, scholastic competence and school, satisfaction, general self-efficacy and students' life satisfaction (Danielsen et al., 2009). It further reflects a way to shape the pupils' resilience and strengthen their ability to handle adversity. Further, initiatives like the 'Birthday heart', 'Klassens time', and the individual table placement supported the pupils in handling and expressing emotions. The 'Birthday heart' taught the pupils to express positive comments towards each other. 'Klassens time' supported them in expressing emotions, frustrations and talk about themes that concerned them. Further, the pupils showed an ability to adjust to changes in their environment. It reflected both resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013), the ability to cope with change, and self-regulation (Bandura, 1991). Self-regulation is additionally highlighted as vital for both the pupils'

academic learning and the ability to handle and control their actions, emotions, and thoughts (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007; Mischel & Ayduk, 2004). Self-regulation and the ability to act reliable and responsible can additionally affect the pupils academic learning and later how they handle work and own life (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004; NOU, 2014).

The study was carried out after the outbreak of Covid19. It meant that the pupils had gotten used to new restrictions as part of their everyday school life. The homeroom teacher expressed that it in some ways had contributed positively to the pupils' experience of unity since it meant they had to figure out how to all play together in the same recess areas. This was at the same time one of the challenging aspects since it meant they could not remove themselves if they needed a 'break'. On the other hand, it can be argued that this forced the pupils to handle adversity and solve controversies. It further enhanced their ability to adjust.

Implications and conclusions

This study contributes to filling in a knowledge gap on how Norwegian 3rd graders experience 'Well-being and Life Skills' at school. The findings suggest that 'Well-being and Life Skills' is experienced through strong and trustworthy interrelationships between the homeroom teacher and the pupils, as well as between the pupils themselves in addition to a classroom climate experienced as safe. Furthermore, the findings call attention to the teachers' role in facilitating stability, structure, and expectations to create structures that enhance the possibility for experiencing 'Well-being and Life Skills'. It further highlights the importance of pupils experiencing being seen and feeling valued. The pupils expressed great joy in subjects that involved physical activity or the making of things. It implies that where possible these qualities should be amplified when wanting to strengthen their 'Well-being and Life Skills'. Lastly learning how to handle and express emotions affected the pupils' experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills'. When the homeroom teacher first helped them to

handle adversity it seemed likely that the pupils learned to solve controversies on their own

later.

These aspects create an awareness of what to consider when a teacher wants to

improve their pupils 'Well-being and Life Skills'. However, earlier criticism of the

interdisciplinary topic stresses that it may cause an enhanced spotlight on the individual's

ability to master own life (Madsen, 2020; Norman & Tjomsland, 2018). When considering

these tendencies (ie. globalisation and modernisation putting more pressure on the individual,

as well as increased mental health problems) (Bakken, 2018; Haug et al., 2020; Samdal et al.,

2017), it can be argued that the focus should be on strengthening the individual as part of a

community instead of focusing on what the individual itself can do (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013).

Strengths and limitations

The qualitative nature of the study gave insight into how Norwegian 3rd graders experience

'Well-being and Life Skills' in school. However, some limitations should be noted. First of

all, the findings cannot be generalised since this a qualitative study. The study was carried out

in a rural environment in a small municipality in Norway. This implies that if the same study

was conducted in an urban environment the findings may have developed in another

direction. The core curriculum does, though, affect all schools equally in Norway. Further,

the use of several methods may affect the consistency of the findings and can be difficult to

replicate. On the other hand, it seemed to strengthen the pupils' voice through findings from

each method used supporting each other and bringing the pupils' experience of 'Well-being

and Life Skills' to the surface. Using focus group conversations is in addition a strength

through contributing to a more familiar context through being together with two classmates,

which in return can support a more open conversation. Furthermore, the conversations were

not restricted to a strict interview guide, which allowed for more open conversations and the

pupils to elaborate on what they found important. The strength, of the use of different methods, also came to light through participatory observation, which seemed to create a trustworthy relationship and relaxed atmosphere between the pupils and the researcher. A limitation may be that the homeroom teacher and participants were familiar with the topic of research in advance. This might have influenced how the 3rd graders and the homeroom teacher spoke about 'Well-being and Life Skills' that week compared to any other week of the year.

The research on 'Well-being and Life Skills' in Norwegian school settings is limited and needs further investigation of both younger and older pupils, as well as teachers' experience before further implications can be made. Further research could explore the same research question in both urban and rural environments. More qualitative research could explore how the experience of 'Well-being and Life Skills' can be improved, together with what affects it negatively. When a larger body of qualitative research has been established, quantitative measures, such as self-reported questionnaires, can be explored to gain a larger data sample before developing and implementing different strategies to improve Norwegian pupils 'Well-being and Life Skills'.

Author contributors

All authors designed the study. TFH performed the data collection. TFH analyzed the data. TFH wrote the manuscript draft. All authors discussed the interpretation of the results and read and approved the final manuscript.

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Master in Sports Science
2021

Chapter 5. Guidelines for Pastoral Care in Education (2020)

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Appendices

Appendix 1: First letter of consent for guardians

Kjære foreldre/føresette for barn i 3. klasse på Hafslo barne- og ungdomsskule skole haust 2020

Deltaking i forskingsprosjektet

«Livsmeistring i skulekvardagen»

Vi lurer på om det er greit at barnet ditt deltek i eit forskningsprosjekt i regi av Høgskulen på Vestlandet. Målet med prosjektet er å få kunnskap om kva som gir livsmeistring for barn i skulekvardagen. I dette skrivet får du informasjon om måla for prosjektet og kva deltaking vil innebere for din son/dotter.

Formål med forskingsprosjektet

Høgskulen på Vestlandet ynskjer å undersøke barn sine erfaringar med og forståing av livsmeistring i samband med at «folkehelse og livsmeistring» er inkludert som eit av tre tverrfaglege tema i den nye læreplanen for grunnskulen. Forskingsprosjektet er ein del av eit større samarbeidsprosjekt i Luster- og Sogndal kommune. Målet er å utvikle eit systematisk og heilskapleg løp for livsmestring i barnehage og skole i samarbeid med føresette for å gi barn og unge i Luster og Sogndal kompetanse, dugleik og verktøy til å kunne utvikle ei god og robust psykisk helse. Vi inviterer derfor barnet ditt til å delta i dette prosjektet på skulen hausten 2020.

Kven er ansvarleg for forskingsprosjektet?

Høgskulen på Vestlandet er ansvarleg for prosjektet. Prosjektet vert utført av masterstudent ved idrettsvitskap i Sogndal med høgskulelektor Ellen Eimhjellen Blom og førsteamanuensis Hege Eikeland Tjomsland, fakultet for lærarutdanning, kultur og idrett, som rettleiarar. Marte Kvisterø Krogstadmo er prosjektleiar for samarbeidsprosjektet i Luster- og Sogndal kommunar.

Kva vil det innebere å delta i forskingsprosjektet for barnet ditt?

«Livsmeistring» er eit nytt og vidt omgrep, og det kan være vanskeleg å sette ord på kva som gir livsmeistring for borna. For å få fram borna sine synspunkt vil vi derfor bruke ulike metodar i datainnsamlinga. Masterstudent Tabitha vil vere til stades i klassen ei veke i september. Undervisninga vil gå som normalt og Tabitha skal berre observere og notere det som går føre seg og kanskje stille sonnen/dottera dykkas nokre spørsmål i løpet av skuledagen. Etter eit par dagar med observasjon vil elevane verte inviterte invitert til å ta bilete av positive og negative ting dei møter i skulekvardagen. Dersom billeta syner enkeltpersonar, vil dei verte sletta etter at prosjektet er avslutta, og dei vil heller ikkje verte publiserte nokon stad.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Undervisninga vil vere den same om barnet ditt er med i prosjektet eller ikkje. Om du vel at barnet ditt kan delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake utan å gje nokon grunn. Alle data som kan knytast til ditt barn vil då verte sletta. Det vil ikkje ha noko negative konsekvensar for sonnen/dottera dykkar.

Personvern – korleis oppbevara og brukar vi opplysningane vi får inn

Det kjem berre til å verte registrert kjønn og alder, og ikkje namn eller andre personopplysningar om barnet ditt. Vi vil berre nytte opplysningane til formåla vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandlar opplysningane konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Personar med tilgang til data ved Høgskulen på Vestlandet er:

- Masterstudent Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen

- Høgskulelektor Ellen Eimhjellen Blom

- Førsteamanuensis Hege Eikeland Tjomsland

For å sikre at ingen uvedkommande får tilgang til data som vert samla inn vil alle observasjonsnotatar og bilete verte oppbevart på ein passordbeskytta datamaskin.

Kva skjer med data når forskingsprosjektet er avslutta?

Bilete og notat vert anonymisert når prosjektet vert avslutta i juni 2021. Vi ynskjer mellombels å oppbevare data for moglege framtidige oppfølgingsstudium. Dette gjeld berre data som er anonymisert, og resultat og informasjon vil heller ikkje kunne bli ført tilbake til enkeltpersonar. Resultata frå prosjektet vert publisert som ein masteroppgåve ved Høgskulen på Vestlandet, som del av rapportar frå samarbeidsprosjektet i Luster og Sogndal og kan verte publisert i vitskapelege artiklar

Kva er rettane dine?

Om barnet ditt kan identifiserast i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i kva for personopplysningar som er registrert om barnet ditt, og å få utlevert ein kopi av opplysningane

- å få retta personopplysningar om barnet ditt.

- å få sletta personopplysningar om barnet ditt.

- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlinga av personopplysningar om barnet ditt.

Kva gir oss rett til å behandle opplysningar om barnet ditt?

Vi behandlar opplysningar om barnet ditt basert på samtykke frå deg. På oppdrag frå Høgskulen på Vestlandet har NSD – Norsk senter for forskingsdata AS vurdert at behandlinga av personopplysningar i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Kvar kan eg finne ut meir?

Om du har spørsmål til studien, eller ynskjer å nytte deg av rettane dine, ta kontakt med:

- Høgskulen på Vestlandet ved Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen (161023@stud.hvl.no / +45 26 18 25 08), Ellen Ejmhjellen Blom (ellen.eimhjellen.blom@hvl.no / 57 67 63 94) eller Hege Eikeland Tjomsland (hege.eikeland.tjomsland@hvl.no / 55 58 79 49).
- Vårt personvernombud: Trine Anniken Larsen (personvernombud@hvl.no / 55 58 76 82)
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS på e-post (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller på telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennleg helsing

Rettleiarar: Ellen Eimhjellen Blom & Hege Eikeland Tjomsland Student: Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen

Samtykke til deltaking i studien

Eg har lese informasjonsskrivet og godkjenner at barnet mitt tek del i studien

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(Signert av foreldre/føresette til prosjektdeltakar, dato)

Barnet sitt fornamn og etternamn: (Skriv tydeleg, helst med blokkbokstavar)

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Foreldre/føresette sitt forenamn og etternamn: (Skriv tydelig, helst med blokkbokstavar)

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Appendix 2: Second letter of consent for guardians

Kjære foreldre/føresette for barn i 3. klasse på XX skole haust 2020

Deltaking i forskingsprosjektet
«Livsmeistring i skulekvardagen»

Dette er et spørsmål til deg som å delta i et forskningsprosjekt i regi av Høgskulen på Vestlandet. Målet med prosjektet er å få kunnskap om kva som gir livsmeistring for barn i skulekvardagen. I dette skrivet får du informasjon om måla for prosjektet og kva deltaking vil innebere for deg.

Formål med forskingsprosjektet

Høgskulen på Vestlandet ynskjer å undersøke barn sine erfaringar med og forståing av livsmeistring i samband med at «folkehelse og livsmeistring» er inkludert som eit av tre tverrfaglege tema i den nye læreplanen for grunnskulen. Forskingsprosjektet er ein del av eit større samarbeidsprosjekt i Luster- og Sogndal kommune. Målet er å utvikle eit systematisk og heilskapleg løp for livsmestring i barnehage og skole i samarbeid med føresette for å gi barn og unge i Luster og Sogndal kompetanse, dugleik og verktøy til å kunne utvikle ei god og robust psykisk helse. Vi inviterer derfor barn i 3. klasse på XX skule til å delta i dette prosjektet på skulen hausten 2020.

Kven er ansvarleg for forskingsprosjektet?

Høgskulen på Vestlandet er ansvarleg for prosjektet. Prosjektet vert utført av masterstudent ved idrettsvitskap i Sogndal med høgskulelektor Ellen Eimhjellen Blom og førsteamanuensis Hege Eikeland Tjomsland, fakultet for lærarutdanning, kultur og idrett, som rettleiarar. Marte Kvisterø Krogstadmo er prosjektleiar for samarbeidsprosjektet i Luster- og Sogndal kommunar.

Kva vil det innebere å delta i forskingsprosjektet for deg som lærar?

«Livsmeistring» er eit nytt og vidt omgrep, og det kan være vanskeleg å sette ord på kva som gir livsmeistring for borna. For å få fram borna sine synspunkt vil vi derfor bruke ulike metodar i datainnsamlinga. Masterstudent Tabitha vil vere til stades i klassen ei veke i september. Undervisninga vil gå som normalt og Tabitha skal berre observere og notere det som går føre seg og kanskje stille deg nokre spørsmål i løpet av skuledagen. Etter eit par dagar med observasjon vil du bli invitert til ein samtale om livsmeistring i skulekvardagen.

Bakgrunn for nytt samtykke

Du blir nå i ettertid spurt om nytt samtykke. Bakgrunnen for dette er, at skriftleg samtykke for opptak av samtalen er nødvendig for å jobbe videre med disse data. Dette ble opptakt, for sener å bli transkribert. Lydopptaket blir slettet så furt transkriberinga er utført og ingen sensitive opplysningar vert skrevet ned eller publisert. Om du ikkje lenger ønskjer å deltake i prosjektet vil al data og lydopptak frå deg bli slettet.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Om du vel at delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake utan å gje nokon grunn. Alle data som kan knytast til deg vil då verte sletta. Det vil ikkje ha noko negative konsekvensar.

Personvern – korleis oppbevara og brukar vi opplysningane vi får inn

Det kjem berre til å verte registrert kjønn, og ikkje namn eller andre personopplysningar om deg. Vi vil berre nytte opplysningane til formåla vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandlar opplysningane konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Personar med tilgang til data ved Høgskulen på Vestlandet er:

- Masterstudent Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen
- Høgskulelektor Ellen Eimhjellen Blom
- Førsteamanuensis Hege Eikeland Tjomsland

For å sikre at ingen uvedkommande får tilgang til data som vert samla inn vil alle observasjonsnotatar og bilete verte oppbevart på ein passordbeskytta datamaskin.

Kva skjer med data når forskingsprosjektet er avslutta?

Uttalelser og notat vert anonymisert når prosjektet vert avslutta i juni 2021. Vi ynskjer mellombels å oppbevare data for moglege framtidige oppfølgingsstudium. Dette gjeld berre data som er anonymisert, og resultat og informasjon vil heller ikkje kunne bli ført tilbake til enkeltpersonar. Resultata frå prosjektet vert publisert som ein masteroppgåve ved Høgskulen på Vestlandet, som del av rapportar frå samarbeidsprosjektet i Luster og Sogndal og kan verte publisert i vitskapelege artiklar.

Kva er rettane dine?

Om du kan identifiserast i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i kva for personopplysningar som er registrert om deg, og å få utlevert ein kopi av opplysningane
- å få retta personopplysningar om deg.
- å få sletta personopplysningar om deg.
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlinga av personopplysningar om deg.

Kva gir oss rett til å behandle opplysningar om barnet ditt?

Vi behandlar opplysningar om deg basert på samtykket dit. På oppdrag frå Høgskulen på Vestlandet har NSD – Norsk senter for forskingsdata AS vurdert at behandlinga av personopplysningar i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Kvar kan eg finne ut meir?

Om du har spørsmål til studien, eller ynskjer å nytte deg av rettane dine, ta kontakt med:

- Høgskulen på Vestlandet ved Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen (161023@stud.hvl.no / +45 26 18 25 08), Ellen Ejmhjellen Blom (ellen.eimhjellen.blom@hvl.no / 57 67 63 94) eller Hege Eikeland Tjomsland (hege.eikeland.tjomsland@hvl.no / 55 58 79 49).

- Vårt personvernombud: Trine Anniken Larsen (personvernombud@hvl.no / 55 58 76 82)

- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS på e-post (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller på telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennleg helsing

Rettleiarar: Ellen Eimhjellen Blom & Hege Eikeland Tjomsland Student: Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen

Samtykke til deltaking i studien

Eg har lese informasjonsskrivet og godkjenner at tek del i studien

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(Signert av lærar, dato)

Appendix 3: Letter of consent for pupils

Til deg som går i 3.klasse på XX

I ei veke i september kjem eg til å besøke din klasse. Eg er nesten ferdig med å gå på skule, men før eg er heilt ferdig skal eg gjere eit spanande prosjekt. Eit prosjekt som eg er så heldig å få gjere saman med deg og dine klassekameratar! Eg skal prøve å finne ut meir om kva dykk som går i 3.klasse synst er fint, dumt, kjekt, kjedeleg, trist, morosamt og kult med å gå på skule.

Når eg er på besøk kjem eg til å bli med i timane og friminuttane dykkar. Eg skal skrive notat og kanskje stille deg nokre spørsmål. Til prosjektet treng eg di hjelp! Derfor håpar eg at du og dine klassekameratar vert med og tek nokre bilete mens de er på skulen.

Bileta og notata skal eg ta med meg til kontoret mitt etterpå. Eg er sikker på at eg kjem til å finne mykje spanande i det de lærde meg som eg kan bruke i prosjektet mitt! Ein viktig ting forresten, eg kjem til å skrive oppgåva mi på ein slik måte at ingen kan finne ut kven av dykk som har sagt akkurat kva, eller sjå kven som er på bileta.

Om du har lyst til å hjelpe meg med prosjektet mitt, så må du skrive namnet ditt på streken under.

Hilsen Tabitha – du kan kalde meg Teepee om namnet mitt er vanskeleg. Eg er nemleg frå Danmark. Der Legoland ligg.

JA! Eg vil vere med!

_____

Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen
Master in Sports Science
2021

Appendix 4: Observationsskema

'Ren' beskrivelse af situationen	Foreløbig fortolkning
1. … 2. … 3. … Etc.	1. ….. 2. ….. 3. ….. Etc.

Appendix 5: Focus-group conversations interview-guide

Spørgsmål:

Kan du fortelle meg om en gang du hadde det veldig fint/ bra på skolen?
- Hva var det med denne skoledagen/ denne timen som gjorde at du hadde det så fint på skolen?

Kan du fortelle meg om en gang du ikke hadde det noe bra på skolen?
- Hva var det med akkurat denne skoledagen / denne timen som gjorde at du ikke hadde det så fint på skolen denne dagen?
- De dagene du ikke har det fint/ godt på skolen, hva gjør du da? (forteller det til Hege/klassekammerater…?)

Sæt ring rundt fag – noet de likar og ikke likar.

Sæt ring rundt plass de likar å leike og ikke likar så godt.

Appendix 6: Semi-structured interview-guide

Temaer:

- *Mestringstro og mestringsoplevelser*: Elevernes subjektive vurdering af egne evner

- *Selvregulering*: Tackling af udfordrende situationer

- *Empowerment*: Elevernes mulighed for indflydelse på egen situation

- *Life skills:* Evnen til problemløsning, kreativ og kritisk tænkning, kommunikation, selvbevidsthed og empati, samt håndtere følelser og stress

- *Skoletrivsel*: Inkludering i det psykosociale miljø

- Rammer rundt eleverne: Det fysiske miljø, nøglepersoner som kontaktlærer, friminuttet, udformning af skolehverdagen

Spørgsmål:

Min tilstedeværelse: Indflydelse på miljøet i klassen?

Situationer observeret i løbet af ugen:

- Corona og denne sin indlydelse: Vanligt med så stor mængde individuel jobbing? Hvilken indflydelse ser du at corona har haft/ser du problematikker der kan opstå/opstår i efterkant?

- Baggrund for plassinddeling?

- Nævnt problematik i stor variation af nøglepersoner/vikarer. Kan du uddybe? Hvilken indflydelse har det på klassen som helhed og individer?

- Konflikter i friminuttet, fx basket-konflikt

Kan du gi noen beskrivelser av "livsmestring" fra skolehverdagen?

Hvordan forstår du begrebet livsmestring?

Dette er et nyt begrep i læreplanverket, har du noen refleksjoner rundt dette?

- Lærere har vel altid jobbet med livsmestring – å mestre livet, å danne eleverne til gangs mennesker osv. – så hvorfor dette nye fokus?

- Hvordan ser du det kan implementeres i skolen? Yderligere tiltag? Tiltag du allerede anvender? (fortalte meg fx om sociogram, STEAM, brakort, individuelle lesekort)

I en klasse med 18 elever, hvordan "skape" livsmestring for alle?

Er det "mulig" for en lærer å skape/legge til rette for livsmestring for 18 åtteåringe som er så ulike samtidig?

Har livsmestring som begreb allerede indflydelse på udformningen af skolehverdagen?

Appendix 7: Approval from the Norwegian Center of Research (NSD)

NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel

Livsmestring i skolehverdagen - 8 åringers erfaring med og forståelse av livsmestring i Sogndal og Luster kommune

Referansenummer

483026

Registrert

25.08.2020 av Ellen Eimhjellen Blom - Ellen.Eimhjellen.Blom@hvl.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Høgskulen på Vestlandet / Fakultet for lærerutdanning, kultur og idrett / Institutt for idrett, kosthald og naturfag

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Ellen Eimhjellen Blom, ellen.blom@hvl.no, tlf: 57676392

Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Kontaktinformasjon, student

Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen, 161023@stud.hvl.no, tlf: 4526182508

Prosjektperiode

07.09.2020 - 01.06.2021

Status

16.11.2020 – Vurdert

Vurderinger (2)

16.11.2020 - Vurdert

NSD har vurdert endringen registrert 12.11.2020.

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 16.11.2020. Behandlingen kan fortsette.

Det skal gjennomføres samtaler med elevene gjennom deltakende observasjon. Informasjonsskrivet er oppdatert mht. dette.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Mirza Hodzic
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

18.09.2020 - Vurdert
Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 18.09.2020, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og NSD. Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde: https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meld_endringer.html Du må vente på svar fra NSD før endringen gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 01.06.2021.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres,

og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake. Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:

- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), dataportabilitet (art. 20).

NSD vurderer at informasjonen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og eventuelt rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Tabitha Fodgaard Hansen
Master in Sports Science
2021

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Mirza Hodzic

Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)