

2014

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**[USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO
WIDEN YOUNG PEOPLE'S
PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL
WORK EDUCATION]**

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Summary

This report covers three related pieces of work:

- A descriptive map of literature on children's participation in services using social media
- A systematic review including a thematic synthesis on children's participation in civic life and professional education using social media
- A social media review with service user involvement

Descriptive maps provide an annotated overview of relevant research in a given area, while systematic reviews comprehensively summarise knowledge in a particular area.

In addition to academic studies, this project reviewed social media, e.g. social networks, blogs, video conferencing, used by users of personal services to share experiences and contribute to knowledge.

Study aim

The aim was to identify how social media use can widen young people's participation in social work education, and to create a database of resources available to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that supports and promotes the use of these sites. This study set out to identify social media resources currently being used by service users to share knowledge and experience. A review of published literature - examined to identify, appraise and synthesize the work that is being undertaken in this field - provides a foundation to understand how and in what ways social media is currently being used and suggest ways in which it might be used in the future.

Review question:

- How do interventions/services using new social and other digital media technologies promote children and young people's participation?

Sub-questions:

- How do such interventions/services conceptualise participation?
- What are the perceived facilitators and barriers of participation?
- What are the implications for engaging young service users in social work education?

Introduction

Better methods of involving children and young people in social work education are needed, to promote engagement in the community and ground professional education in the needs and perspectives of young service users. This promotes individual skills development, and healthier communities. Ideally, this ethos is established in practitioners during training (Boylan, Dalrymple, & Ing, 2000).

The importance of service user involvement in the education of social workers has been publically acknowledged (CCTESW, 1998; Department of Health, 2002; Duggan et al., 1997) (HPC 2012). Research evidences HEI's need to develop practices that recognise and encourage commitment (Levin, 2004), particularly in relation to young people whose voices are significantly underrepresented and who consequentially may face social exclusion.

Young people collaborating in the content of professional training programmes, sharing their knowledge and providing formative feedback promotes future practitioners' ability to work in partnership with young people (Molyneux & Irvine, 2004). Effective communication takes place in the comfort zone of the service user (Tyler, 2006). For young people this comfort zone is social media. 93% of young people in the UK go "online" (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010), most every day, with similar levels of using social network sites reflected across all income levels. Notably, young people are most likely to use social media as a method of expressing views and communicating (Gray & Jennings, 2008).

New digital technologies have the potential to enable increased young people's participation, but also widen diversity by facilitating involvement of those currently excluded by personal circumstances. Disabled service users have been among the first to adopt new technologies for improved service participation (Beresford, 2012).

Definition of key concepts

The concepts of inclusion, involvement, participation, engagement and empowerment are commonly employed in contexts relevant to the review. They are used interchangeably by some authors, while others suggest a conceptual hierarchy, making it difficult to formulate a definition of each concept that would have validity across different contexts. However, for the purpose of this review, we use the term participation as a key overarching concept which encompasses many of the defining aspects of related terms, such as engagement (establishing a relationship with a child or young person), empowerment (increasing children and young people's sense of efficacy), and inclusion (consideration of children and young people's voices). We understand participation to be any form of engagement or activity which involves an element of

communication between children or young people and adults in a public realm or service context. (We discuss below the nature of the service context as located at the intersection of public and private realms.)

In the context of service user involvement in particular, children and young people's participation is usually defined with regard to decisions or matters that affect them (e.g. Wright, Turner, Clay, & Mills, 2006). Sinclair (2004) outlines four dimensions that are relevant in examining any instance of children's participation: the level of active engagement involved and its appropriateness to the task; the focus of decisions (e.g. public vs. private or individual vs. collective), the mode of participation (e.g. one-off consultation), and the specific age group of the children involved, particularly since children occupy diverse social and cultural roles, and children of different ages may have very different developmental needs. For the purposes of this review, we have included children of all ages as well as young people up to the age of 24 (early adulthood), making the latter a very relevant consideration. The term 'children and young people' refers, in this review, to service users up to the age of 24, if not stated otherwise. It should be noted that a number of social work students are also under the age of 24.

Following Sinclair, and in contrast to some agencies which define participation in terms of an *equal* power relationship between children/young people and adults (e.g. Street & Herts, 2005), or incorporating measurable change (Ali & Davies, 2009), we adopt a broad definition of participation which accommodates different levels of engagement, from partnership to dialogue, consultation and even top-down pedagogic activities. This will enable us to critically examine the conceptualisations of participation, and additionally related concepts, used in diverse contexts.

It could be argued that participation is defined by the goal to exert influence or effect change. However, there may be participatory activities which do not have an explicit, formulated goal. While we do not consider measurable impact a necessary requirement for participation, we nevertheless believe an examination of the power dimension is essential to understanding participation. Here our focus is on the conditions required for effecting change. For example, Wright et al. (2006) include 'a culture of listening' in their definition of participation. This conceptualisation is grounded in the recognition that children and young people cannot effectively participate without adult support and responsiveness, and is consistent with the emphasis repeatedly placed by children and young people on being listened to (Cockburn, 2005; Harris, Wyn, & Younes, 2010; Smith, Lister, Middleton, & Cox, 2005).

Background/ literature review

Children and young people's participation in social care

Service user involvement in the delivery of health and social care has been gaining momentum over the last two decades, and has been mandatory in the context of professional training in health and social care already for the last ten years (Molyneux & Irvine, 2004). In broader terms, children and young people's participation draws impetus from various domains, including the legal, political and social (Sinclair, 2004). While the requirements for service user involvement in HEI provided social work programmes (Department of Health, 2002; The College of Social Work, 2012) do not specifically refer to younger service users, children's rights to be consulted regarding decisions that affect them is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Human Rights Act 1989 and the Children Acts 1989/2004 and has gained some legal and policy endorsement in the domains of educational, health and social care practice in the UK. For example, all local authorities in the UK now run councils for children and young people in care (CiCCs) (ANV, 2013), many of which have an online presence. Apart from the immediate practice setting, professional education is one arena where involvement of children and young people in the development of services can take place.

We should not overlook the fact that younger and older service users may have common concerns and experiences (Citizens as Trainers Group, Young Independent People Presenting Educational Entertainment, Rimmer, & Harwood, 2004). However, according to Fenton (2013), young people's involvement in regular service user forums may be limited due to developmental factors, such as heightened emotional vulnerability during the transition to adulthood. There may also be ethical and practical concerns that hinder children and young people's participation, such as considerations of vulnerability, the need to gain parental approval, or lack of access. Indeed, in one successful attempt at involving young care leavers in social work teaching (Tyler, 2006), the young people expressed themselves through voice recordings of letters they wrote for the occasion, rather than appearing in class. The perception that children and young people are difficult to engage as service users may partly reflect the effects of their social marginalisation, which calls for more efficient means of engagement (Franklin & Sloper, 2006).

The effectiveness of adult service user involvement in professional education has received attention in recent years (see e.g. Branfield, 2009; Khoo, McVicar, & Brandon, 2004; Morgan & Jones, 2009; Repper & Breeze, 2007; Robinson & Webber, 2012; Wood & Wilson-Barnett, 1999), but equivalent research focusing on or including children and young people's involvement is lacking, perhaps due to a lack of relevant participatory practices or a lack of actual involvement taking place for possibly the reasons given above. Positive outcomes may be conceptualised in terms of impact on individual (student) skills development, values and attitudes, often centring on interpersonal skills such as empathy (e.g. Khoo et al., 2004; Wood &

Wilson-Barnett, 1999). However, longer term impact of participation on organisational practices (Khoo et al., 2004), social work theorising (Beresford, 2000) , and service users themselves (Citizens as Trainers Group et al., 2004), merits further attention.

The main rationale behind involving children and young people in services appears from the literature to lie primarily with improving services on an ad hoc basis; structures for more systematic, representative and on-going involvement of young service users are not reported in the research literature.

Service user participation as civic engagement

Theoretical literature on service user involvement portrays service user participation as complex and linked to civic rights and empowerment. Similarly, policy documents may promote service user involvement as, partly, an exercise in civic participation (Street & Herts, 2005; Wright et al., 2006). On the ground, however, service user participation is not always considered in these terms. Peter Beresford, a leading authority on service user involvement in British social care, argues as follows:

While ideas of participation and user involvement connect with the disciplines and discourses of politics and political philosophy; of democracy and power; of citizenship rights and responsibilities, they often tend to be abstracted from these and treated in isolation as a technical rather than ideological matter. However participation and user involvement are far from value-free and neutral issues amenable to technical solutions. Instead they need to be understood in their historical, political, ideological, and cultural contexts.

(Beresford, 2012, pp. 21-22)

Involving service users in social work education and practice has many goals and they may differ for those involved. The principal goal may be to 'improve' services – but for each the notion of improvement may hold different meaning. Many service users emphasise the facilitation of more equal, democratic relationships between service users and service providers (Beresford et al., 2006; Citizens as Trainers Group et al., 2004) . While professional organisations may share this goal, it has been noted that some practitioners, including those involved in education may, for various personal and professional reasons, resist or feel ambivalent towards such ideals (Masters et al., 2002; Tregeagle & Darcy, 2008; Wood & Wilson-Barnett, 1999). For practitioners, improvement in service may be conceptualised as “cost effective”, targeted, timely, etc. Appropriate training can, arguably, render students more open and sensitive to the possibilities of genuine service user engagement and empowerment, a quality that may remain once they qualify (Boylan et al., 2000) potentially enabling future social work practitioner to be more able to work in partnership with service users.

The government policies underpinning children and young people's participation in the UK have been criticised for underplaying children and young people's civic rights in the present (Williams, 2004). Nevertheless, promoting active civic engagement is one of the goals articulated in the context of increasing children and young people's participation in social and health care practice. For example, a guide to children's participation addressed at mental health practitioners by YoungMinds (Street & Herts, 2005, p. 7) asserts that the benefits of participation include 'becoming more independent and prepared for further participation in civil society - that is, becoming empowered' - while a guide to involving young people through social media, directed at local authorities, focuses on 'engaging young people in democratic activity' (Ali & Davies, 2009, p. 1).

The concept of empowerment refers to increasing the power of groups marginalised by society, and presents another, related rationale for service user participation. Many young service users in the social care context, including children in care, young offenders, and children with disabilities, are arguably at risk of experiencing some degree and manner of social exclusion (Axford, 2008; Barnes & Morris, 2008). For example, while asylum-seeking children may be assessed as entitled to social services, their status as citizens may remain ambiguous (Watters, 2007). In addition, some young service users experience multiple disadvantages/discrimination, which may culminate in homelessness and exclusion from mainstream social institutions, including welfare and child protection services (Duckett & Smith, 2009; Quilgars, Johnsen, & Pleace, 2008). These are the hardest-to-reach children and young people, who may be most in need of engagement. However, according to Beresford (2012), participatory practices tend to reflect existing patterns of inequality and exclusion, by including the most self-assured and vocal individuals. This conclusion has also been drawn in research on children's participation in social care (Franklin & Sloper, 2006).

A paper written by two service users groups, one consisting of young people with experiences of the care system (Citizens as Trainers Group et al., 2004), draws attention to the ideological portrayal of citizenship as an 'earned' entitlement, and the fact that service users may be lacking the means perceived by wider society as the prerequisites of citizenship, including factors such as income, housing or a traditional family background. However, lack of these factors does not mean that members do not have the ability and motivation to improve their own and other citizens' lives, through contributing their knowledge and expertise in a public manner. In this view, service user participation has less to do with 'consumerist' concerns (of improving the services they receive), and is more rightly characterised as an expression and/or renegotiation of service users' civic status and identities. It is important also to note that while negative experiences of marginalisation may motivate service user participation, participation may also be rooted in positive experiences and aspirations, such as 'giving something back' to society.

Participation is likely to mean different things to service users and providers, as well as different groups of service users (Wright et al., 2006). One relevant consideration here is the positioning of young service users specifically in the context of social care. For example, a large number of such children and youth are children in care, i.e. being cared for, to a varying extent, within some degree of state intervention e.g. foster care, day care, residential care etc., resulting in close contact with professional child welfare services, or what has been termed 'corporate parenting'. While most children in modern welfare states enter the sphere of public services and institutions from a relatively early age (Cockburn, 2005), the relationship between private and civic identities may be even more intertwined for those children and young people who have spent at least some part of their lives formally in the care of the state or local authority. Consequently, the tasks that may be associated with their roles as young citizens, service users, or even 'consumers'/clients in the service sector may be intimately linked with developmental tasks, such as education and skills development, or exploring an adult identity. However, this may also act as a barrier to participation.

Correspondingly, public sector social workers are representatives of the state, an identity which needs to be accommodated within practitioners' professional, civic, and personal identities. In a mixed welfare economy where public services co-exist and compete with private services, consumerist ideologies may also influence the way in which both practitioners and service users define themselves (Beresford, 2012). Put simply, the consumer model of participation emphasises consumer feedback processes, largely initiated and controlled by the service provider, whereas the democratic model aims at a more equal distribution of power between service providers and service users (Beresford, 2002). Both models can be seen to have influenced the drive for service user participation in the UK.

As discussed above, social work is an area where a 'public' service intersects with what has traditionally been seen as the 'private' realm – that of the home and family – and in some case takes on some of the latter's functions, which can serve to stigmatise service users even further. The social work profession must consequently tread a fine line between respecting service users' right to privacy, protecting vulnerable service users from exploitation, and promoting the social inclusion of all service users. Perceptions around children as 'objects of concern' (Hall & al., 2010), and social care as an extension of the domestic realm - as expressed through the notion of corporate parenting - can potentially restrict younger service users' opportunities to participate by promoting a paternalistic rather than a collaborative relationship.

Arguing for children's participation in public life, Cockburn (2005) cites two principles deriving from feminist critique: "(a) no social institutions or practices should be excluded *a priori* as being the proper subject for public discussion and expression; and (b) no persons, actions, or aspects of a person's life should be forced into privacy" (Young, 1998, cited in Cockburn, 2005, p. 22). In other words, while an individual's right to

privacy is a given, children should not be prevented – if we are to take seriously their civic rights – from publicly discussing even sensitive matters such as domestic violence or sexual abuse, nor should any group of service users be excluded from public debate by way of their social attributes, such as age or gender.

A retreat into privacy may be instigated not only by force but also by more subtle mechanisms, such as a sense of shame or self-blame. Therefore, public participation is also likely to involve emotional processes, both on an individual and group level. Participation in social care practice or education can be argued to represent a semi-public mode of engagement, involving a relatively safe public space overseen by caring professionals. Nevertheless, from the perspective of civic engagement, limiting children and young people's participation to the 'service user' context can be considered problematic.

Conceptually, service user involvement in professional education straddles the civic and treatment/service contexts. The purpose of service user involvement in professional education is both to nurture well-functioning future practitioners and engaged service users/citizens. Hence, service user participation in professional education – whether based on individual or collective representation – has clear parallels to the civic context, where communication is relatively public and geared towards a collective, rather than a particular individual. Also, service users (like service providers) are not a uniform group, but represent many different voices and perspectives which can be brought together through democratic, participatory processes.

Finally, it should be noted that a proportion of social work students are also young people (under the age of 24), who are in the process of building their personal and professional identities, and may themselves be or have been service users or carers. One aim of service user involvement is perhaps to acknowledge and clarify the multidimensional nature of social work/service user relationships, exploring boundaries between such identities, in order to enable service users to experience themselves as 'experts', or social workers to put themselves in the shoes of a service user and appropriately utilise their 'personal' qualities alongside their professional skills. Social work education, conducted in an academic environment and with access to service user knowledge, could help trainees to critically examine role expectations in their social, political and cultural contexts.

Methodology

Summary

The original aim of the systematic review of the research literature was to summarise evidence from published research literature relating to the involvement of young service users in professional education using social media. The intention was to undertake a review, for which relevant data was sought across a range of academic disciplines and methodologies, including qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods studies. Since it was anticipated that the existing evidence base would be limited in scope, an exploratory search strategy was adopted, as described in more detail below. Congruent with a critical interpretive approach (Gough, Oliver, & Thomas, 2012), the review process was flexible, allowing for several iterations of the search strategy and review focus. This resulted in a descriptive map of the database (Phase 1), and a systematic review, which focuses on a subset of the studies included in the descriptive map (Phase 2). A thematic synthesis of data from the studies was conducted as part of the systematic review. A third element with service user involvement (Phase 3) centred on a review of relevant websites. A review of social media used by service users to share experience and communicate knowledge was undertaken to identify digital technologies with the potential to re-design ways of supporting young people's engagement with community service provision, challenging social exclusion and overcome barriers to participation. In this third element of the study, young people were involved in extracting data from identified forms of social media, appraising quality of both media and information contained and evaluating the relevance for professional education from the young person's perspective.

Descriptive mapping methods

Search strategy

The search strategy was developed and piloted by the research team with several iterations. (See appendix A for search terms used. Slight adaptations to the strategy were made according to the features of specific databases.) The final search included 10 databases (Australian Education Index, British Education Index, British Nursing Index, ERIC, IBSS, ASSIA, CINAHL, PsycInfo, Social Policy & Practice and Social Care Online).

In addition to the systematic search, a complementary hand search was conducted in Google Scholar based on relevant references identified in recent literature related to service user involvement. This search was restricted to records relevant to digital storytelling in professional education or in health and social care.

Another manual search was conducted to consider the representativeness of the studies coded in the descriptive map as related to civic participation (see below for details).

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Our initial inclusion criteria, and those that were applied to the parallel social media search, were that the study be:

- conducted from 2008 to present
- written in English
- related to professional education programmes i.e. those where the student will on qualifying provide a direct service to another individual
 - where the service is related to health and/or social care
- Describes use of social media/internet
- Related to communication between the potential recipients of the service provided (client, service user, patient, consumer, patient) and the service provider
 - where the potential service recipient is aged between 13 and 24
 - where the language used to communicate is English

Studies relating to business studies, advertising or the fashion industry were excluded. The age range selected was informed by a pilot search and the work of Waldman and Rafferty (2008). Care leavers in education or training are supported up to the age of 24, why we chose this as an upper age limit.

However, after piloting our initial inclusion criteria, they were broadened in scope as follows. Since only one study was found relating to a professional education programme, this criterion was omitted. Two major areas of research which did not fulfil all our initial inclusion criteria emerged from the search, one relating to treatment delivery, and the other to the engagement of young people as citizens. These were considered to have potential relevance for the review question and hence included in the first phase of the review. In addition, we included in the first phase studies which related to the participation of children and young people in an educational, health care, or social care setting.

In the context of mental health, health and social care, studies were only included where treatment delivery incorporated interactivity between service users and providers, and fully computerised treatment interventions were excluded. Studies relating to education were only included if they concerned engagement of children and young people as citizens, and/ or promoting a user-led mode of learning and communicating with potential for interactivity between different audiences. In the civic engagement category, the relevant 'service' was commonly provided by governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions, but also included participatory action research based in communities and facilitated by individuals.

Based on an overview of the studies, we amended the search strategy and removed the set minimum age for participants (previously with a lower limit of age 13), as long as the participants were actively engaged in communication via Internet or social media. The category of relevant technology was broadly conceived, since for example web conferencing and video technology could be implemented both in an offline and online environment.

Coding

The studies included in the map phase of the review were coded on the basis of the abstract according to the following emerging topic areas: professional education, mental health care, health care, social care, schools, civic engagement and technology (studies with a focus on technological aspects of a service or intervention). Studies with obtainable full text were further coded for type and purpose of technology. The coding process was conducted by one researcher and undertaken in Eppi reviewer-4 software. Two other researchers worked closely with this researcher to quality assure the processes. The results were compiled into tables using the same software.

Systematic review methods

Inclusion criteria

The aim of the systematic review was to produce a critical descriptive synthesis of the included research literature. For this part of the review stage, the records in each topic category, as identified in Phase 1, were screened by two team members, for relevance to the review questions.

Due to the small number and relatively low quality of relevant studies in the area of professional education, it was decided to additionally include studies from other topic categories in a more in-depth data synthesis. In addition to service user involvement in professional education, the topic category of civic engagement was chosen as a relevant category for inclusion, in particular because the themes of engagement and participation were most frequently and explicitly addressed by research in this category, as discussed in more detail below. This led to a modification of the review question addressed in the thematic synthesis.

Because civic engagement was not the original focus of the review, our search did not systematically cover all of the relevant literature in this field. However, having reviewed the articles and their references, and compared these to relevant but excluded literature identified through a manual search, we judged the selected articles to sufficiently represent major areas of research and theorising for the purpose of this review. The dataset thus represents an illustrative rather than comprehensive sample.

Only records with full text were considered for inclusion, and we only included empirical research papers in the systematic review. Any empirical design was considered eligible for inclusion.

Coding and data extraction

Included studies were coded in Eppi Reviewer-4 software (EPPI-Centre, 2008) for country, age group, research methods, study type and study purpose. Studies not meeting eligibility criteria were excluded. We developed a data extraction form to capture central features of included articles, including study context, theoretical framework, methodology, population characteristics and main findings and conclusions. The tool was adapted from the data extraction form developed by the Cochrane Collaboration (The Cochrane Collaboration, 2014) and the REPOSE guidelines on data extraction compiled by the EPPI-Centre (Newman & Elbourne, 2005). Data for each article was independently extracted by two researchers.

Quality appraisal

We developed a quality appraisal tool drawing on the work of key authors in this area (Harden, Oakley, & Oliver, 2001; Thomas et al., 2003). Our main criteria for the quality appraisal tool were ability to adequately assess qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods studies, and ability to capture the contribution of children and young people at various levels to the study as well as to the service/ intervention studied.

Study quality was assessed using 11 criteria related to general methodological and presentational concerns, as well as 9 criteria related to the potential involvement of children and young people (see Methods section). Figure 1 illustrates that children and young people's participation, where present, could occur in any of the three separate domains in the included studies: the intervention/ service examined, the evaluation of that intervention/ service, or the study itself. Specifically, we focused on whether the intervention and/ or the study enabled children and young people to express their views, which may be considered a minimum requirement for participation, and whether children and young people participated in the design and conduct of the study/ intervention.

All studies were independently assessed by two reviewers. Disagreements were resolved through further analysis and discussion. For each criteria, studies were given ratings of 'Yes', 'No', 'Unclear', 'Not applicable' or a combination of these where necessary.

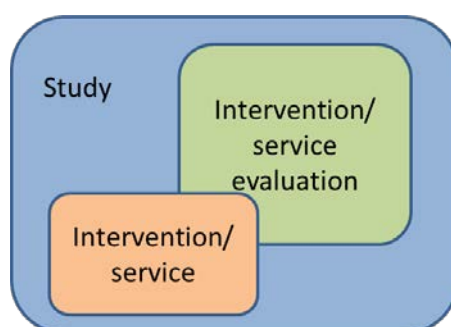


Figure 1: Participation domains

Additionally, we applied a Weight of Evidence assessment (Gough et al., 2012), which considers study quality in relation to methodological quality, methodological relevance, and topic relevance, resulting in a final judgement of overall weight of evidence (low, medium or high). Our appraisal of study relevance was guided by the framework developed for our data extraction and analysis (Box 1 below).

The results of the quality appraisal and weight of evidence assessment were compiled into a traffic light table (Appendix B) as well as being narratively summarised in the report.

Synthesis methods

In this part of the review, we were interested in comparing the conceptualisations of participation across the selected disciplines and settings with reference to their theoretical, ideological and empirical groundings. Our theoretical orientation was guided by the epistemological principles of critical realism, which views empirical reality as consisting of objective facts embedded in subjective perceptions and beliefs (Gough et al., 2012). Consistent with our theoretical position is the view that service user participation is a complex and interactive political process where power can be yielded in various ways by all involved parties (Beresford, 2012).

In response to the diversity of data involved in a multi-disciplinary and multi-method evidence base, the data synthesis was guided by a theoretically based framework incorporating a number of themes, as listed below, which were generated both by inductive and deductive means during the earlier stages of the review (see Box 1). Each included paper was systematically coded according to this framework. The coding was done independently by two study authors. For each area of interest, we noted down associated claims with reference to their sources and potential evidence-base. Relevant data included author statements, theoretical references and empirical data. Coding was compared and further identification and interpretation of themes generated through discussion of the coded data, supplemented by extracted study findings and author conclusions. In the synthesis, we summarise the data under the headings of: theoretical and ideological paradigms of digital participation, empirical conceptualisations, findings and author conclusions, followed by a thematic synthesis and discussion of the data. Study themes were also compiled into a table.

The synthesis is informed by Noblit & Hare's (1988) methodological work on 'meta-ethnography', in particular the aim of critically comparing concepts across various discursive contexts, highlighting their similarities and dissimilarities, in order to facilitate interpretive analysis and greater theoretical understanding. According to the principles of meta-ethnography, we also draw attention to methodological differences and weaknesses in our comparative analysis and discussion. The quality appraisal is complemented by separate summaries of study limitations within the thematic synthesis.

1. How does the study conceptualise participation/ engagement
 - definition (explicit/ implicit)
 - theoretical/ ideological underpinnings (explicit/ implicit)
 - empirical indicators
 - proposed goals
 - proposed benefits/ limitations with evidence (including benefits to different stakeholders)
 - proposed/ measured impact
2. Which factors are seen to promote participation/ engagement
3. Which factors are seen to hinder participation/ engagement
4. Other emerging theoretically relevant themes
5. Reviewer's comments & links to other studies

Box 1: Data extraction framework

Social media review methods

Database search

Systematic searching of online material is not new. The principles have been used for many years in business to enable companies to maximise their marketing potential (Ledford, 2009). The search for social media used methods employed in marketing to bring digital online material to the attention for potential customers, search engine optimisation (Jones, 2013) and identification of key search engines. Following a pilot search using Google, identified as the most popular search engine internationally¹²³⁴, a strategy was developed to identify the search engines most likely to find online material that was current and up-to-date. A number of websites provide statistics on search engine use, for example their popularity, relevance and geographical reach.

- <http://www.theseenginelist.com/>
- <http://searchengineland.com/library/stats/stats-popularity>
- <http://www.smartinsights.com/search-engine-optimisation-seo/multilingual-seo/search-engine-popularity-statistics/>
- http://theword.co.uk/info/search_engine_market.html

¹ http://netforbeginners.about.com/od/navigatingthenet/tp/top_10_search_engines_for_beginners.htm

² <https://www.reliablesoft.net/top-10-search-engines-in-the-world/>

³ <http://www.listofsearchengines.org/>

⁴ <https://www.reliablesoft.net/top-10-search-engines-in-the-world/>

These studies rate the most popular and effective search engines across the world. While there was some minor variation related to the use of local services, three search engines were repeatedly found to be rated in the top six. These search engines were selected to identify appropriate databases listing different forms of social media for review. To identify such databases terminology was clarified.

The language associated with social media is new and emerging. Different terms are at times used interchangeably to refer to the same forms of online digital communication. Even defining social media is contentious, with numerous different versions found⁵. For the purpose of this review the Merriam-Webster dictionary⁶ definition of social media is used. We consider social media to be all “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos).”

Whilst accepting this definition we acknowledge the relationship between “Social Media” and Social Networking Sites (SNS). While Social Media is at times considered to be a strategy and an outlet for broadcasting, SNS is viewed as a tool and a utility for connecting with others (Cohen, 2009).

Although, Cohen (2009) makes a distinction between the two, associated with the way they are used, as both involve forms of communication that could enable provide a voice to young people both terms were used for this review. Additional search terms considered appropriate were identified through the systematic review of literature, consideration of the websites previously mentioned, and through consultation with respected experts in the field.

To identify appropriate databases key search terms were used in each of the three search engines. These were: social media, social network, SNS, website, digital material, blog, list, database, sources, sites and resources. The search terms were used in each search engine using various combinations. In each case many pages of possible sources were given. In conducting any internet search “hits”, results, are provided according to relevance. Later pages may have limited, if any, relevance to the search aims. In the case of these particular searches each result on the page was reviewed until the result ceased to provide relevant information. In no case did this exceed the first page. Each resource listed by each database was subsequently reviewed and compared to the selection criteria. Any failing to match the inclusion criteria were excluded.

⁵ <http://heidicohen.com/social-media-definition/>

⁶ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social%20media>

Selection criteria

Inclusion criteria were developed based on those used for the original literature review but also revised and supplemented to include terms identified by that review and also by consulting the previously referred to online resources. The final inclusion criteria for social media were:

- Accessible and functioning at the time of review
- Content primarily in English (written or spoken)
- Where the content was providing the expressed views of a young person
- Where the young person was under the age of 25.
- Related to a health and/or social care service
- Where the information is provided through the use of social media/internet/SNS

Additionally, appropriate websites were identified through a manual search of references in the following key sources:

- <http://www.timdavies.org.uk/2008/04/04/7-cs-social-media-participation/>
- http://socialreporters.net/?page_id=587
- <http://www.practicalparticipation.co.uk/yes/start>

Key media social media platforms, e.g. facebook/youtube/twitter were searched via their search bar facility, using search terms derived from the inclusion criteria – young people, children, and service-user - without and including a hashtag, #.

Individual lists of potential resources matching the inclusion criteria were created for each database searched.

In May 2012 each of the websites/resources listed was reviewed by visiting the site and considering the content in relation to the inclusion criteria. Websites that did not meet these were excluded. As each site was reviewed note was made of any reference or link to any other potentially eligible resources replicating the technique of snowballing (Babbie, 2001) used when researching hard to locate material.

Recognising the transitory nature of social media the currency of sites included was checked twice over the duration of the project, in May 2013, and again in January 2014.

Duplicates were then removed to create one final combined list of sites/resources.

Screening and coding

Following the initial review of potential includes a closer and more detailed screening was conducted by two researchers. The same inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the systematic review were used for the screening of social media websites, with the minor adjustments described above to acknowledge the range of different formats; however, criteria were tightened as followed:

Inclusion

- Only where the views are given by young people themselves

Exclusion

- Not where the views were by adults purporting to give the views of young people
- Not where the views were “marketing” for a particular service i.e. the young person was describing a service from the perspective of the service.

This led to the creation of a final list for data extraction and evaluation. The data extraction form used in the systematic review was piloted with two young people and subsequently modified to ensure it was accessible and appropriate. The data extraction was independently conducted by two researchers and also by two young people working together supported by a researcher. Whilst support was offered this was purely practical and young people were free to examine the sites and extract information as they chose, providing their own appraisal of the sites, and providing descriptive coding as they felt appropriate. The coding was then compared and the final agreed results compiled into a table of characteristics.

Service user involvement

At the initial stages of the project the views of young people were sought through a local branch of Catch 22, a national charity which works with young people to promote their opportunities and well-being within their family and the wider community. Questionnaires were circulated to young people to ascertain their views on the proposed study. Flyers inviting young people to participate were subsequently circulated to young people via Catch 22. Repeated invitations were sent on several occasions and resulted in an invitation to attend the agency’s young people’s forum where the rationale and proposed approach were discussed. This extended process resulted in a delay in recruiting young people to the project.

As a consequence of this delay, the decision was made to separate the two research strands and complete the review of literature before moving on to the review of social media. This proved to be a wise decision as the findings of the literature review provided some insight into the reasons for the difficulties in recruiting young people to the project. These difficulties will be discussed in a later section of this report. Additionally some strategies for promoting involvement were identified. These strategies included asking young people

themselves, rather than adults working with young people, to approach their peers with a view to recruiting participants. Using this approach five young people expressed an interest in being involved however this number dropped with just one young person remaining with the project. A second young person subsequently joined the project when they learnt of the work being undertaken.

Extracting and appraising social media

Data was extracted from the identified resources by the two young people and also, separately, by a member of the research team. Information on the type of resource – blog, website, video etc - originators of the material, content, and relevance to the research question was collected. It was originally planned that the same form would be used by all to collect the information, however after piloting, a new form was developed based on categories based on the following website: <http://www.digizen.org/socialnetworking/evaluating-sns.aspx>. The rationale for this was to facilitate the involvement of the young people who had no previous experience of undertaking this kind of research. This simpler form enabled the young people to review and assess sites appropriately.

Overview of results

Service-user involvement

The initial plan was to run the two strands of the research, the review of literature and the review of social media, simultaneously. It was envisaged that inclusion in the project advisory group would have established young people as active research contributors, providing further qualitative feedback on the methods identified and perceptions of the applicability for widening access and participation.

While the response from young people at the early planning stage was positive, difficulties arose in coordinating continuing involvement. The circulation of flyers inviting young people to participate via Catch 22 resulted in no responses being received. The initial hypothesis was that establishing contact with young people was limited by the procedures and processes established by the by the agency to protect young people considered vulnerable and by the reluctance of practitioners to promote the project to young people due to concern over the potential impact on their wellbeing. One young person who participated in early stages of this study, a former care leaver now involved in using social media as a mechanism for promoting the views of other young people, suggested an alternative reason for the lack of response. This was that young people were fatigued by professions who proposed to “listen to them” or “give them a voice” as their views were seldom heard or acted on.

The agency’s young people’s forum was poorly attended, only three young people from the ten expected arrived. The young people present were very supportive of the project and expressed the view that more should be done to support professionals in general and social workers in particular to understand the perspectives of young people they worked with. All present clearly expressed the view that they needed to be listened to by social work students, and considered social media an appropriate mechanism for promoting this. Despite this no one attending felt able to participate at that time due to their personal circumstances.

Review results

The review consisted of two phases (Descriptive map and Systematic review) both based on a systematic search of academic studies, and a third phase based on a review of websites (described in a separate section below). The review process and the results of the search are outlined in the flowcharts below.

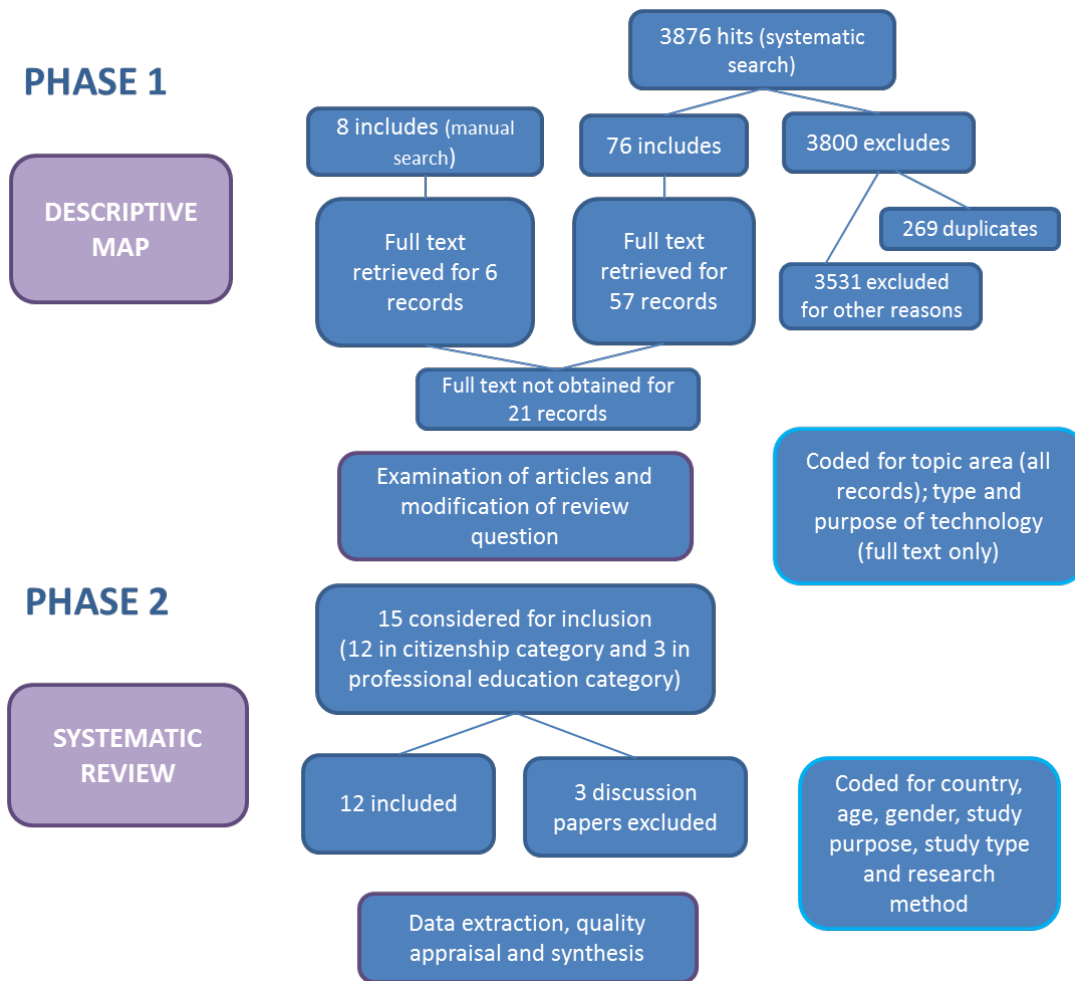


Figure 2: Flowchart of review phasing

Phase 1: Descriptive map

Search results and selection process

The systematic search resulted in a total of 3876 hits which included 269 duplicates excluded following import into in EPPI Reviewer 4.

After screening search items by title and abstract against our expanded inclusion and exclusion criteria, 3531 items were excluded (the majority not being relevant to the review topic) and 76 included in the review. These were coded for topic category as described below. Our systematic search did not identify any studies focusing on the involvement of young service users in professional education using social media or other digital technologies, other than a practice report describing the involvement of service users (people with learning disabilities and children) in student recruitment via teleconferencing (O'Boyle-Duggan, Grech, Kelly, Valentine, & Kelly, 2012). Although only one study appeared to address our original review question, all of the topic categories identified were considered to have some relevance to the review question.

We obtained full-text electronic copies for 57 records, with 19 being unavailable (including books, book chapters as well as some journal articles and theses). The sample includes both research and discussion papers. The full-text items were then further coded according to type and purpose of technology.

A supplementary manual search (see section on search strategy) yielded two includable results in the category of service user involvement in professional education (Fenton, 2013; Terry, 2012), as well as three studies involving adult (aged over 24) participants, eg (Christiansen, 2011; Hardy, 2007; Simpson, Reynolds, Light, & Attenborough, 2008). While considered in our discussion, it was beyond the scope of this review to include studies with adult samples. Four studies relevant to other topic categories were also included in the map. In total, a further six full-text empirical studies were included in the map, with a further two excluded for which full text was not available.

The results of the complementary manual search suggest that research in this area is not yet systematically included and/ or indexed across the major databases. A systematic search with further adjustments to our search terms could have resulted in a larger sample of included studies, but it was not possible to conduct a new search within the timeframe of this study.

Summary of included studies

In total, 84 studies were included in the mapping phase as meeting the expanded search criteria. All were coded for study category according to the title and abstract. Of these, full text was retrieved for 63 articles or dissertations. These were further coded for type and purpose of technology on reading the full text (see

Figure 1). The tables in the descriptive map present data based on the total sample of 63 full-text publications (unless stated otherwise).

Study characteristics

Study category

The breakdown of topic categories according to title and abstract information was as follows:

| Total included studies (n=84) | Count ⁷ |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Professional education | 3 |
| Mental health care | 30 |
| Health care | 15 |
| Social care | 12 |
| Schools | 3 |
| Technology | 6 |
| Civic engagement | 20 |
| Total | 89 |

Table 1: Topic categories

Studies related to mental health care were the most frequent (30), followed by studies related to civic engagement, eg political or community action (20). There were a similar number of studies relating to health and social care (15 and 12, respectively). Six studies focused on the technological aspects of an intervention. Three of the included studies were related to a school environment (one of them being a school counselling intervention). It should be noted that, as with therapeutic services, pedagogic interventions without a significant element of interactivity were not included in the review. As mentioned, only three studies, two of which were identified through a manual search, were conducted in the context of professional education, our original area of interest. One of these was a brief practice report while the other two were journal articles.

We were able to retrieve full-text electronic articles for 100% publications in the professional education category, 77% of records in the mental health care category, 93% of records in the health care category, 58% of records in the social care category, 67% of records in the schools category, 67% of records in the technology category, and 70% records in the civic engagement category.

⁷ A small number of studies have been coded into more than one category.

Type and purpose of technology

The numbers in the following tables apply to those articles for which full-text was obtained (n=63), which were further coded for type and purpose of technology.

The most common types of technologies described in the studies were discussion forums, social networking sites and e-mail (see Table 2 below). Some interventions/services have adopted multiple technologies.

| Code: Type of technology | Count |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Blog | 5 |
| Digital video | 10 |
| Discussion forum | 14 |
| E-mail | 10 |
| General ICT | 3 |
| Instant messaging | 7 |
| N/a | 8 |
| Not specified | 7 |
| Programming | 2 |
| Social network site | 11 |
| Twitter | 1 |
| Videoconferencing | 2 |
| Virtual world | 2 |
| Web application | 3 |
| Website | 7 |
| Wiki | 4 |

Table 2: Types of technologies

Based on a reading of the articles, we coded different aspects of engagement into the following, in some cases overlapping categories: service input, improved access, engagement (participation/relationship-building), and content creation. We also employed separate codes where the purpose of the service/intervention was treatment delivery or social support and preventive services. These categories are not mutually exclusive and easily blend into one another; coding decisions were made according to the implicit or explicit emphasis in the article.

A break-down of the data according to type of technology used and its intended purpose reveals an emphasis on certain technologies for specific purposes. For example, interventions/services with the goal of

providing social support and preventive services relied highly on discussion forums; treatment delivery was most frequently associated with the use of e-mail; and interventions/services coded as promoting increased engagement most commonly employed social networking sites, websites and digital video (see Table 3 below).

| Code | Increased engagement | Service input | Content creation | Improved access | Treatment delivery | Skills/competence | Social support/prevention |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Blog | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Digital video | 4 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Discussion forum | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 8 |
| E-mail | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| General ICT | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Instant messaging | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Not specified | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Programming | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Social network site | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Twitter | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Videoconferencing | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Virtual world | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Web application | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Website | 5 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Wiki | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 3: Type of technology according to purpose of technology

Within the parameters of our search criteria, increased engagement and treatment delivery using new digital technologies emerged as two major areas of study involving young service users (see Table 4 below). The first was most frequently associated with studies related to children and young people’s civic activities, and the second one to mental health care. In the area of mental health, a common study purpose was evaluation of innovative service delivery based on or incorporating the use of new communications technology.

While the disparate figures may partly reflect different research priorities and cultures, they also suggest that mental health care has the highest uptake of new digital technologies in the service sector, both for the purpose of (individualised) treatment delivery among children and young people, and for providing supportive and preventative services. E-mail was the most common medium for treatment delivery in the mental health domain.

| Code | Professional education | Mental health care | Health care | Social care | Schools | Technology | Civic engagement |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|---------|------------|------------------|
| Increased engagement | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Service input | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Content creation | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Improved access | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Treatment delivery | 0 | 15 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Skills/competence | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Social support/prevention | 0 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 4: Purpose of technology according to topic category

Discussion

The above data suggest that different service areas appear to have adopted new technologies for somewhat different goals. Of these, the goal of increased engagement is most directly related to the concept of participation. Engagement of children and young people through social media is formulated (directly or indirectly) as a specific goal particularly in the context of civic education, whereas the more concrete service contexts tend to emphasise more practical goals related to treatment delivery. However, participation is a broad and multifaceted concept with various formulation/meanings in different contexts and our coding categories reflect that.

For example, treatment delivery in mental health care usually involves an individual relationship between service user and provider, and engagement may be understood to be a necessary component of treatment.

The rationale behind introducing e-mail to a therapeutic service, for example, may be to offer an unobtrusive and flexible mode of communication to service users, thus increasing acceptability, service intake and user engagement (with the service). Engagement in care settings appears to be more readily conceptualised as a means to an end (i.e. specific service outcomes), and formulated through relatively concrete terms such as improved access or service uptake.

An emphasis on concrete outcomes in the service sectors may also reflect the nature of research in the context of evidence-based practice. The provision of mental health related peer support and preventative activities through social media, on the other hand, appear more evidently related to the notions of participation and inclusion. In contrast, in the context of civic activity, engagement may be conceptualised in relatively abstract terms and as an end in itself by provider agencies, although children and young people may themselves emphasise more instrumental or concrete goals for civic engagement (Gerodimos, 2012).

In the health care domain, study purposes included increased engagement, service input, treatment delivery, improved access, and social support and prevention, with a relatively even distribution of these aims. Some studies had a more generic/theoretical orientation which was of particular relevance to the review (Chalfen, Sherman, & Rich, 2010; Yu, Taverner, & Madden, 2011). All of the studies related to professional education (also included in phase 2 of the review) were conducted in the context of nursing studies. This is also true of equivalent studies conducted with adult populations.

The number of studies in the social care category was small. The majority of empirical interventions aimed at increasing young people's generic computing skills and competence, often as a means to increased self-esteem and interpersonal skills. Again, these qualities may be perceived to equip young people with the tools to participate in wider society, even where participation is not specifically articulated as an intervention goal.

The lack of studies focusing more explicitly on engagement of young people in social work practice and education supports the views expressed in Tregeagle & Darcy (2008). According to the authors, the use of ICT in British child welfare is dominated by managerial interests, and lagging behind practice innovations in other human services, including health and mental health care. This stands in contrast to the policy emphasis on child and youth participation in British social care (Street & Herts, 2005).

As argued by Sinclair (2004), children's participation in matters that concern them is a civic right with potential benefits in a range of domains. Based on an overview of the articles, the potential benefits of engagement through digital technology, as formulated in the included studies, include emotional catharsis, a sense of belonging, development of critical thinking and stress reduction. Only a minority of the studies mentioned increased participation or inclusion as an aim in its own right.

The studies further demonstrate that social media can facilitate both interactive and one-way communication in a variety of ways, to a variety of ends, while helping to protect boundaries and anonymity as required. However, the potential benefits of using social media technology are context-specific and need to be weighed against potential difficulties and even harmful effects. In this regard, the emerging literature, particularly the relatively large literature in the area of mental health and health care, includes some useful evaluations of innovations based on social media.

Phase 2: Systematic review

In this section, we present an overview of the studies selected for the systematic review, followed by a synthesis of the same studies. Study characteristics are summarised in Table 6 (pp 21-2).

Selection results

Of the 20 items coded as studies related to civic engagement in Phase 1, full text was retrieved for 12 records, including electronic text for three PhD theses. The eight excluded items were books or book chapters. Nine of the studies were based on research and thus included in the systematic review, while three were non-empirical discussion papers and excluded from the data analysis. Additionally, three full-text records were included in the category of service user involvement in professional education. Two were empirical studies while one was a case report.

Summary of studies: digital civic, political and community engagement

Among the nine included studies in the category of civic and political engagement, there were two quantitative, four qualitative and three mixed methods studies. Three of the studies were PhD theses, and six were published journal articles. Additional data was requested and received from one study author (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010).

Three studies were conducted in the UK (Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Ward, 2011), three in the US (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Burd, 2008; Jean-Charles, 2011), and one each in Australia (Vromen, 2011), Canada (Cucinelli, 2010), and Finland (Tuukkanen, Kankaanranta, & Wilska, 2013). One of the US-based studies also included parallel projects conducted in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Mexico and the Philippines, described and discussed in the thesis. Participants in the studies were between 10 and 24 years old, with the youngest study population comprising of children aged between 10 and 13 years (Tuukkanen et al., 2013).

The research methods used in the studies included surveys (2), content analysis (4), participatory action research (3), focus groups (2) and interviews (2). They involved the following types of digital technologies:

| Code: Type of technology | n |
|--------------------------|---|
| Social network site | 4 |
| Blog | 1 |
| Digital video | 3 |
| Discussion forum | 2 |
| Web application | 1 |
| Website | 4 |
| Wiki | 3 |

| | |
|---------|---|
| Twitter | 1 |
|---------|---|

Table 5: Type of technology examined in studies included in systematic review

The included studies can be separated into studies evaluating strategies used by civic websites to engage young audiences (Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011); studies exploring aspects of young people’s civic and political participation in the context of digital media environments (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Gerodimos, 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013), and studies implementing and evaluating a civic participation oriented participatory action research project employing digital technologies (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011). In the synthesis, we group the above studies into the separate categories of ‘Digital civic and political participation’ and ‘Community action and critical pedagogy’.

The studies examining digital civic participation represented a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches, enabling a comparative examination of ideologies of participation especially among mainstream civic organisations. Two of them also examine children and young people’s digital participation. According to our assessments, the included studies employed relatively robust research methods, and received ratings of medium to high in the assessment of overall weight of evidence. However, of the five studies examining civic websites, only one incorporated evaluation by children and young people. It should, however, be remembered that the studies do not represent a comprehensive sample of studies in this area of research.

All three PhD studies were based on participatory action research. In the quality assessment, they were assessed as being of medium to low quality, largely attributable to a lack of systematic data collection, analysis, and/ or unclear presentation of findings. Despite reportedly mixed rates of success, in our view, the strength of all three studies lies in a wealth of descriptive data on the process of engaging previously ‘disengaged’ youth in community action with the help of diverse and innovative digital technology projects. While they all involved participatory action projects with children and young people, only one of the studies directly invited participants to comment on their experience of the intervention, and two based their evaluation primarily on observations by the author and/ or other intervention collaborators.

| Topic area | First author, year | Country | Type of technology | Study type | Focus of study | Sampling strategy | Sample |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| Service user involvement | Fenton, 2013 | United Kingdom | Digital photo story | Qualitative case study | Evaluation of digital learning object | Convenience | 40 nursing students, age and gender not specified; 1 F service user aged 20 |
| Service user involvement | O'Boyle-Duggan, 2012 | United Kingdom | Digital video | Qualitative case example | Brief case report of innovation in SUI | SU sampling not specified. Students were recruits to nursing programme. | Children aged 3-17, n and gender not specified, service user status not specified |
| Service user involvement | Terry, 2012 | United Kingdom | Digital photo story, discussion forum | Qualitative case study | Evaluation of interactive SUI | Convenience | Approx. 30 students, age and gender not specified; 1 M service user aged 21-22 |
| Digital civic participation | Baumgartner, 2010 | United States | Websites (social networking, news websites) | Quantitative survey | Analysis of correlation between online social networking and political engagement | Convenience | 3577 undergraduate students from nationally representative sample (30% m, 70% f), aged 18-24 |
| Digital civic participation | Gerodimos, 2008 | United Kingdom | Websites (youth & issue websites) | Mixed methods content analysis | Examination of characteristics of youth and NGO organisations' websites | Hyperlinked Network Analysis and unspecified methods | 20 websites of local/global youth organisations with UK online presence |
| Digital civic participation | Gerodimos, 2012 | United Kingdom | Websites (civic organisations/ issue websites) | Mixed methods survey & user evaluation | Examination of young people's expectations for youth websites and comparison with actual user experience of selected websites. | Purposive/hyperlinked network analysis | 46 users (undergraduate media students in vocationally oriented university), age and gender not specified; 4 websites of global civic organisations |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--|---|--|--|------------------------|---|
| Digital civic participation | Tuukkanen, 2012 | Finland | Discussion forum (for national children's parliament) | Mixed methods content analysis | Analysis of topic areas in children's web postings in the context of upcoming elections for the Board of the Finnish Children's Parliament | Purposive | 566 online postings on 1 discussion forum, representing 61 children (42F, 19M) aged 10-13, all members of children's parliament |
| Digital civic participation | Vromen, 2011 | Australia | Websites (youth oriented civic websites) | Quantitative longitudinal content analysis | Longitudinal analysis of interactivity and citizenship norms of civic youth websites | Convenience/ purposive | 100 Australian civic websites |
| Digital civic participation | Ward, 2011 | United Kingdom | Websites (youth oriented civic/ issue websites) | Qualitative case studies | Examination of youth organisations' conceptualisations of young people as citizens, and whether these correspond to website features | Purposive/ convenience | 7 local/ global youth organisations with UK online presence; 5 individuals and 1 team involved in the web production of these organisations, age and gender not specified |
| Community action & critical pedagogy | Burd, 2007 | United States (also Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Mexico and the Philippines) | Various | Participatory action research | Discussion of a participatory action project | Convenience | Unclear (various samples of young people frequenting youth clubs at various locations) |
| Community action & critical pedagogy | Cucinelli, 2010 | Canada | Various | Participatory action research | Discussion of a participatory action project | Convenience | 12 young people from disadvantaged communities (7f, 5m), aged 14-27 |
| Community action & critical pedagogy | Jean-Charles, 2011 | United States | Digital video | Participatory action research | Discussion of a participatory action project | Convenience | 5 Haitian immigrant youths (m), aged 15-19, and the author, aged 33 |

| First author, year | Method of recruitment | Method of data collection | Method of data analysis | Author's key conclusions | Domain of children and young people's participation | Overall weight of evidence |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| Fenton, 2013 | Not specified | Questionnaire | Frequencies, thematic grouping | Digital learning objects can be an effective method of learning and teaching. | Intervention, intervention evaluation | H |
| O'Boyle-Duggan, 2012 | Not specified | N/a | N/a | Involvement of child service users in student recruitment is possible and potentially enriching. | Intervention | L |
| Terry, 2012 | Not specified | Not specified; online postings | Not specified | The digital story combined with online discussion enabled practitioners to develop empathy, insight and understanding. | Intervention, intervention evaluation | M |
| Baumgartner, 2010 | Via universities' undergraduate mailing lists | Online survey | Quantitative analysis | The potential for SN web sites to increase youth political engagement has not been realised. | Possible participation in some interventions; other (offline) arena | M |
| Gerodimos, 2008 | n/a | Structured coding sheet, case report | Features analysis | The majority of youth sites are lacking in purpose and content. NGO websites appeared potentially more empowering, but displayed a consumerist orientation. | Not assessed; possible participation in some interventions | H |
| Gerodimos, 2012 | Not specified | Survey, focus group | Quantitative analysis and thematic (qualitative) analysis | Young people may be motivated to participate as long as websites meet a number of requirements, eg highlight the benefits of action. NGO websites received positive evaluations by the young people. | Intervention evaluation | M |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| Tuukkanen, 2012 | Not specified | Existing online postings | Quantitative and thematic (qualitative) analysis | Children were able to express their opinions, note deficiencies and propose ideas for decisions and action. They emphasised both immediate issues (eg everyday interactions) and global issues. The school environment or home and family were not high on their agenda of issues that they sought to change, possibly due to a lack of participatory practices. | Intervention | M |
| Vromen, 2011 | n/a | Existing websites | Quantitative analysis using coding schedule | Majority of youth websites promote the 'dutiful' citizen type, while only a small if growing minority of websites adopt more empowering strategies. | Some interventions | H |
| Ward, 2011 | Via chosen organisations | Interviews, examination of websites | Qualitative coding | Youth websites demonstrate an emphasis on socialisation and broadcasting purposes. | Not assessed; possible participation in some interventions | M |
| Burd, 2007 | Via community centres & advertising in community | Not specified | Qualitative evaluative framework used | The two types of interventions facilitated participatory practices at different levels (organisational/ individual). It was possible to engage previously unengaged youth, but this required intensive adult support. | Intervention | M |
| Cucinelli, 2010 | Via community centre staff | Projects, interviews, survey, fieldnotes, video, photographs | Qualitative coding | Different types of intervention projects facilitated different levels of engagement. Youth learned to engage with social justice issues in an empowering manner. | Intervention | M |
| Jean-Charles, 2011 | Via community centre staff & advertising in community | Focus groups, video projects, community interviews | Qualitative coding | Participants developed increased critical awareness as a result of the intervention. | Intervention, intervention evaluation | L |

Table 6: Characteristics of included studies

Summary of studies: service user involvement in professional education

Three publications were included in the context of service user involvement in professional education, which was our main area of interest. All three were UK-based and described an intervention to involve young service users using digital media technologies in the context of nursing education. One of the publications is a brief practice report (O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012); one a more extensive discussion of an intervention (Terry, 2012), and one a case study involving formal evaluation of an intervention (Fenton, 2013). Digital video was used in all interventions, while one also employed an online discussion forum. The purpose of technology in these studies was coded as providing service input, in that they focused on service feedback from (current/ former) service users.

O'Boyle-Duggan et al. (2012) describe an intervention designed to include two groups of service users: people with learning disabilities (data from this population was excluded from this analysis, as their ages were not stated), and children aged 3-17. The article did not describe the child population in any detail, or why and how the children were recruited for participation. In this intervention, selected service users participated in student recruitment, through recording interview questions addressed to the recruits. They were not involved in the actual assessment or selection of the students. Fenton (2013) and Terry (2012) describe and discuss interventions to include a service user – a 20-year-old woman with experience of leukaemia and a 21/22-year old man with experience of spinal injury treatment, respectively – in classroom education by producing a digital photo story, complemented in the latter intervention by an online discussion forum.

While the studies in this category scored the highest in terms of relevance to the review question, the quality of the evidence in this category was low to medium. For example, none of the papers explained how participating service users were selected. Generally, these interventions were evaluated primarily through the eyes of the authoring professional, or participating nursing students, although some service user feedback was also reported. While promoting some degree of service user participation, the interventions were not informed by a clear theoretical framework. In sum, the articles included in this category describe important and interesting practice innovations in the context of service user involvement in professional education. However, and due to methodological limitations their conclusions should be treated with caution.

Quality appraisal

Below we provide a summary of the quality appraisal findings. Instances with a mixed result, unclear or not applicable status have not been included in the summary count below. Results of the quality appraisal are detailed in Appendix B.

All of the studies clearly described their aims and objectives (n=12), which were adequately achieved in 10 studies. Over half of the studies clearly described the context of the study (n=11); involved an intervention or service which allowed at least one child or young person to express their views (n=10); provided evidence of systematic data collection (n=9), employed an explicit theoretical framework (n=8), described interpretations and conclusions clearly deriving from the data (judged according to the primary data presented by authors) (n=8), and clearly described their method(s) of data analysis (n=8).

Only half of the studies included a clear description of study methodology (n=6); the recruitment and selection process (n=6), and/ or the study sample (n=6). Half of the studies also involved an intervention/ service in whose design and/ or conduct children and young people had participated.

Four studies reported on children and young people's views of an intervention/ service. Three studies employed data analysis methods that were grounded in children and young people's views (whether or not these adequately informed the conclusions), and an equal number of studies involved children and young people in the evaluation of an intervention/ service. Three studies clearly stated seeking ethical approval for child/ youth participants. Only two studies employed appropriate data collection methods that facilitated children and young people to express their views of an intervention/ service. Also, only two studies were judged to have a high level of generalizability. Finally, no study involved children and young people in the design or conduct of the study. The domains in which children and young people's participation occurred in each study are reported in Table 1.

Summary

Half of the studies evaluated interventions initiated and developed by the study authors (with some involvement of children and young people), and half examined pre-existing interventions. Studies of the former type were methodologically weaker than studies of the latter type. Overall, while some studies reported on children and young people's views, few employed robust data collection and/or analysis methods that were centred on children and young people's views (further, these views were usually restricted to only one of the three possible domains), and none involved children and young people in the design and conduct of the actual study. Children and young people's involvement in intervention design was also limited. These are somewhat surprising findings considering the fact that most of the study authors were critical of prescriptive, top-down intervention approaches. This is also a major methodological weakness affecting the included studies, as recognised by some study authors. Some methodological shortcomings appeared typical to the area and type of research, as discussed in more detail in the synthesis section.

Weight of Evidence appraisal

Three studies were judged to be of low overall methodological quality (Burd, 2008; Jean-Charles, 2011; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012), five of medium quality (Baumgartner and Morris, 2010; Cucinelli, 2010; Ward, 2011; Terry, 2012; Fenton, 2013), and four of high quality (Gerodimos, 2008; Vromen, 2011; Gerodimos, 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013).

Two studies were given a rating of low methodological relevance (Jean-Charles, 2011; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012), nine studies a rating of medium relevance (Burd, 2008; Gerodimos, 2008; SCIE, 2009; Baumgartner and Morris, 2010; Cucinelli, 2010; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011; Gerodimos, 2012; Terry, 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013), and one a rating of high relevance (Fenton, 2013). For topic relevance, one study was given a rating of low relevance (Jean-Charles, 2011), seven studies a rating of medium relevance (Burd, 2008; Baumgartner and Morris, 2010; Cucinelli, 2010; Ward, 2011; Gerodimos, 2012; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013), and four a rating of high relevance (Gerodimos, 2008; Vromen, 2011; Terry, 2012; Fenton, 2013).

For overall Weight of Evidence, three studies received a rating of high (Gerodimos, 2008; Vromen, 2011; Fenton, 2013); seven a rating of medium (Burd, 2008; Baumgartner and Morris, 2010; Cucinelli, 2010; Ward, 2011; Gerodimos, 2012; Terry, 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013), and three a rating of low. Although overall study quality for two studies was deemed low, due to the low number of studies none were excluded from the synthesis on quality grounds, because of their relevance to the review questions and utility of at least some of the data. The ratings are detailed in the traffic light table in Appendix B.

Thematic synthesis

The synthesis aimed at exploring the potential similarities and dissimilarities between service user participation and civic engagement of young people involving digital technologies in three different contexts. The relevant contexts examined in the review were those of conventional and non-conventional political action, critical pedagogy and community action, and professional education. Our aim was to investigate and compare relevant discourses and their ideological underpinnings in these contexts, as well as to examine their empirical implications, especially from the perspectives of young people themselves, where possible.

In the following section, we provide a narrative summary of each study in the three relevant study categories, with respect to three areas of interest: theoretical and ideological paradigms of digital participation, empirical conceptualisations, findings and author conclusions. Relevant themes and findings are summarised in Table 7 below (see also Table 6 for summaries of author conclusions). The sections conclude with a summary and discussion of all studies included in each category and a brief note on their limitations.

Digital civic and political participation

The six studies included in this category varied greatly in terms of their theoretical orientation, methodology, and research question. Only two studies considered children and young people's actual participation, while four studies examined technological conditions and prerequisites for young people's digital participation.

Theoretical and ideological paradigms of digital participation

Four studies (Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011) critically compared competing theoretical paradigms of young people's citizenship. The studies noted widespread concerns over young people's apparent lack of interest in politics, evidenced for example in low electoral turnout among young people. Within this ideological framework, the internet and social media are viewed as means to re-engage young people with politics, aiming at traditional forms of political engagement, such as voting, but also empirically vaguer notions such as 'treasuring democracy' (Gerodimos, 2008). However, the study authors place these concerns alongside competing paradigms of young people's political engagement, which focus on 'non-conventional' forms of political action, for example, collective action by interest groups (Ward, 2011). Such paradigms tend to depict young people as (ideally) empowered, autonomous and self-actualising civic participants. Within these paradigms, the Internet is commonly portrayed as a tool for young people's empowerment and an arena for democratic participation in itself, leading to the notion of 'e-citizenship' (Vromen, 2011).

One study (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010) addressed a similar issue of youth disengagement and the potential of digital media to engage young people with politics, more specifically in the context of 'uses and

gratification theory', which is concerned with the needs and motivations of divergent groups of media users. Its focus was on the preferences and characteristics of youth populations likely to engage with digital media, particularly the political behaviours of young social media users, as compared to those additionally following other types of media. Insofar as they enable users to actively avoid 'undesirable' (eg politically informative) content, social media were perceived as incompatible with the aims and prerequisites of democratic culture, as defined by the authors. In the authors' conceptualisation, democratic participation requires engagement with political perspectives that challenge one's views, while social media is more typically oriented towards entertainment and socialising activities among like-minded individuals.

Tuukkanen et al. (2013) drew on the sociology of childhood, explorations of the meaning of citizenship for younger children, and an ecological framework. The unique focus of these approaches is on children's agency, and how children themselves may define and experience their civic participation, in the context of their everyday lives and life worlds. The inductive perspective of their content analysis was enabled by a non-directive digital discussion forum where children were free to raise topics of interest to them.

Empirical conceptualisations

Four studies based on content analysis methods (Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011) did not directly assess children or young people's civic participation, but instead examined website features which may have facilitated participation, most commonly defined as interactivity and opportunities for making an impact. Other features included management of site users, citizenship orientation in relation to the type of civic learning goals promoted, and use of Web 2.0. One study (Ward, 2011) juxtaposed website features with web producers' views of young people as citizens (interview data), and another with young people's perceptions of motivators and de-motivators for engaging with websites (data from questionnaires and a focus group), as well as conducting a user evaluation of a preselected sample of issue websites (Gerodimos, 2012).

Unlike the above studies, Baumgartner and Morris (2010) focused on actual indicators of political participation among a nationally representative sample of undergraduates in the US through a survey. It examined the association of social media use (defined as use of Youtube and social networking sites), compared to traditional and cable media use, with predefined indicators of political participation, including the seeking of news representing competing points of view, knowledge of presidential candidates, and politically motivated online and offline behaviours, such as posting a message on a blog or contacting politicians/ media editors. Seeking and enjoying news representing diverse perspectives, as opposed to news confirming personal views, was considered a key distinction. The type and content of the social media used by participants were not examined in the study.

Digital civic/ political participation: 6 studies (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011)

| Theoretical/ ideological paradigm | Relevant studies | Empirical conceptualisation of participation | Relevant findings | Overall synthesis |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Means to counteract lack of political knowledge and interest | Gerodimos, 2008; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011 | Website features that facilitate participation (eg interactivity) | Socialisation into democratic values primary function of youth civic websites | Diverse conceptualisations of participation; ambivalent adult attitudes towards youth preferences; children and youth demonstrate some sense of efficacy with regard to national and global concerns |
| User motivation and behaviour | Gerodimos, 2012; Baumgartner & Morris, 2010 | User motivators and evaluation of websites; Indicators of political knowledge and civic behaviour & action | Efficacious and convenient participation valued by youth Social media use not associated with civic mindedness; online participation more likely than offline | |
| Expressions of children's agency and lifeworld | Tuukkanen et al., 2013 | Specific types of communication (eg proposals for action) | Global/ national concerns and solidarity among children | |

Community action and critical pedagogy: 3 studies (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011)

| Theoretical/ ideological paradigm | Relevant studies | Empirical conceptualisation of participation | Relevant findings | Overall synthesis |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Fostering critical awareness | Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011 | Level of engagement; expressions of critical awareness | Broad selection of structured projects accommodates different styles of participation; safe social spaces are necessary for participation | Youth participation is an evolving group-based process demanding a high level of resources irrespective of the availability of appropriate digital technologies |
| Developing empowered communities | Burd, 2008 | Participation process (individual/ organisational) | Participatory processes demand adult time, skill & commitment | |

Service user involvement: 3 studies (Fenton, 2013; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012; Terry, 2012)

| Theoretical/ ideological paradigm | Relevant studies | Empirical conceptualisation of participation | Relevant findings | Overall synthesis |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Professional guidelines; consumer/ service user empowerment | Fenton, 2013; O'Boyle et al. 2012; Terry, 2012 | Taking part; interaction; input into recruitment process | Participation of selected service users was facilitated by the technologies employed | These exploratory case studies emphasised emotional benefits such as empathy (students) and catharsis (service users) |

Table 7: Overview of themes and findings

The study by Tuukkanen et al. (2013) was conducted within the context of children's participation in a virtual children's parliament, and aimed at exploring the topics featuring in children's expressions of opinion/ deficiency or proposals for decision/ action, as opposed to purely descriptive comments, in a run-up to an election of board members. Thus, participation was defined as expressive communications of a particular type. The authors' second interest lay with the kind of topics raised in such communications. 'Offline' components of the children's participation were not examined in the study.

Findings

The vast majority of the websites examined in the relevant studies were established and run by adults. A finding that emerged from the empirically supported investigations in Gerodimos (2008), Vromen (2011) and Ward (2011) was an emphasis on broadcasting of information and 'socialisation' of children and young people into democratic values through one-directional, educative means, irrespective of organisation type (eg governmental/ non-governmental) (Gerodimos, 2008; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011), web producers' professed aims (Ward, 2011), funder, or whether or not the organisation involved young people in their website development (Vromen, 2011). According to these studies, the actual features of civic websites commonly limited young people's digital 'participation' to relatively passive learning activities. A smaller number of what the authors portrayed as more genuinely participatory websites, enabling co-production of content and interactivity, were also identified.

Only one of these studies (Gerodimos, 2012) involved service users (defined as politically unengaged young people) in evaluating a small number of issue-based websites by organisations such as the Fairtrade Foundation, and found that the youth were positively surprised by many aspects of the websites. The youth were also asked to identify motivators and preferences prior to the user evaluation. According to the author, the need for a sense of efficacy, or concrete, identifiable benefits of their participation, was repeatedly emphasised by the young people in the study. Another finding emerging from this study was a preference for emotionally appealing, socially popular and effort-minimising tools for digital participation, reinforced by what the author refers to as a sense of 'civic loneliness'. The selected websites appeared, according to the young people's feedback, to address these requirements.

The study findings in Baumgartner and Morris (2010) appear to offer support for the hypothesis that reliance on social media alone (as opposed to also using other types of media) is associated with more limited political knowledge and interest in political participation, as defined by the authors. For example, unlike some other types of media use, social media use was associated with enjoyment of

news that confirmed rather than challenged one's views, and was not associated with political participation by traditional means, such as voting.

The participants in Tuukkanen et al. (2013) represented children who were already engaging with a civic forum. According to the content analysis of children's self-initiated postings, the most frequently occurring topics within the categories most relevant to participation were related to children's well-being, relations with other people, and nature and animals. The children emphasised both immediate issues (e.g. everyday interactions and relations with other people), and national/global issues, while the school environment, hobbies or home and family were not commonly among the topics that the children wanted to influence.

Author conclusions

Ward (2011) emphasises the mixed attitudes organisations appear to have with regard to co-productive online interactivity, which is promoted by some organisations even while they ascribe strongly to the goal of socialisation. Although web producers viewed online interactivity as a positive development and goal to aspire to, they recognised that transparent opportunities for interaction were commonly missing from their websites. Instead, websites were according to the author's analysis dominated by one-directional informational and educational content, and to a lesser extent, interactive information-gathering and feedback tools. Few websites exhibited technical features such as blogs that allow users to create their own content. This study did not involve children or young people, and the question of whether co-productive interactivity actually supports new forms of participation is left open.

A conceptual theme arising from the author's analysis of both the websites and young people's responses in Gerodimos (2012) is the predominance of a 'consumerist' orientation to civic participation among unengaged young people. The author's concern over this echoes author misgivings about the risk of commercialisation raised in another study (Vromen, 2011) associated with the 'self-actualising' model of citizenship promoted by some websites, which are more likely to be led by young people according to the study. Although the above authors appeared to support a more participatory and youth-led orientation, another related concern raised by one author was whether the mode of issue and interest-based politics promoted by certain websites, and which appear 'closer to young people's interests, values and modes of engagement' (Gerodimos, 2012, p. 983), may in fact lead to a watering down of politics and serve as distractions from more 'serious' public matters. A broader theme characterising these studies, then, is ambivalence amongst adult commentators (whether researchers or web producers), over the aims and scope of digital

participation, and the associated implications for the funding, management and content of civic websites.

Baumgartner and Morris (2010) argue that Web 2.0 appears to hold no more potential than older forms of mass media in mobilising young citizens. However, they also note that the young people in general, and social media users in particular, were more likely to participate via the Internet (eg by signing a web petition) than equivalent offline activities (eg boycotting a product).

Tuukkanen et al. (2013) et al. speculate that the topics reflected the children's conceptions about matters appropriate for discussion in a public domain, as well as their conceptions of areas they could realistically influence, echoing the emphasis on efficacy in Gerodimos (2012). The authors conclude that it is the task of adults to translate children's 'everyday' concerns into political action in the public domain.

Summary and discussion

The conceptualisations of civic participation formulated and explored in this category of studies varied considerably. Four studies focused on the conceptualisation of young people's civic participation through an examination of website features and organisational discourses, highlighting competing paradigms that were found to not be directly associated with particular organisational features. These paradigms differed most of all in terms of their emphasis on socialisation into (future) democratic citizenship, versus self-actualising/empowering participation in the here and now. The authors noted with concern that the latter orientation was often tinged with consumerist or commercially oriented notions. Nevertheless, the authors in all four studies appeared to favour the latter paradigm and criticised the common lack of opportunities for co-productive content creation and interactivity on civic websites.

Two studies (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Tuukkanen et al., 2013) challenged the notion that digital participation can be defined in terms of interactive communication only. With reference to empirical data focusing on cognitive and behavioural outcomes, Baumgartner and Morris (2010) argued that social media (which is, arguably, defined by its interactivity) may in fact strengthen young people's socialisation into a *non-participatory* culture, which discourages civic-minded action and communication (such as seeking to engage with different points of view) beyond specific virtual forms of participation. Tuukkanen et al. (2013) defined participation in terms of specific *types* of communicative expression (eg proposals for action) occurring in the context of digital interaction.

Further, drawing on the communications of engaged participants in the context of a facilitating, non-directive, online environment, the authors suggested that children's participation, when it takes

place, is shaped by children's understandings of 'public' matters as well as their experiences of efficacy in the context of their everyday lives. The theme of efficacy also arose in another study examining young people's perceived motivators (Gerodimos, 2012). In both studies, youth engaged with matters of national and global interest. In contrast to organisational and academic discourses focusing on benefits in the area of 'democratic culture', young people in this study emphasised the need for more immediate and tangible benefits of their participation, closely related to effort-minimising practical means of achieving them.

Overall, the evidence from the studies raises questions over the potential of digital environments in promoting children and young people's civic participation. On one hand, the majority of websites appear to display features that limit children and young people's opportunities for involvement and interactive communication. On the other hand, some of the more youth-friendly websites with elements of interactivity show signs of an individualist, consumerist orientation, which may be incompatible with traditional notions of political participation. The evidence suggests that such websites may cater to children and young people's preferences, which is supported by the fact that such websites are more likely to have youth involvement. According to one study, youth who rely on social media are slightly less politically knowledgeable and engaged compared to those also following other forms of media, but all youth are more likely to take certain types of political actions online rather than offline. Apart from technical features and organisational discourses, the authors of one study speculated that broader external factors may limit children and young people's sense of civic efficacy or serve to exclude from public debate certain issues important to children, even among those young people who may be considered politically engaged.

Study limitations

All of the studies could be criticised for exploring children and young people's participation within a narrow framework, whether deriving from theoretical assumptions or the type of population or media examined. While all of the studies employed systematic methods of data collection and analysis, selection bias is apparent in several studies. Finally, as mentioned, over half of the studies did not assess children and young people's actual participation at all, even where opportunities for digital participation may have been present. None of the studies asked children or young people directly how they perceived their civic engagement, and motivating factors among engaged children or youth were not directly explored in any of the included studies.

Community action and critical pedagogy

Three broadly comparable studies (PhD theses) were included in this category. All three built on participatory action research projects aimed at engaging previously unengaged children or young

people in civic activities of various kinds with the help of diverse digital technologies. To achieve this aim, the projects facilitated real-world, group-based social activities such as games or discussions, alongside support and training in the use of digital technologies.

Theoretical and ideological paradigms of digital participation

Civic participation in these studies was not defined in terms of traditional political action but a broader range of behaviours and attitudes. One study was theoretically more oriented towards community action (Burd, 2008), while two placed more emphasis on fostering critical awareness (Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011). A common conceptual theme across the studies is the importance of rooting youth participation in the everyday life experiences, concerns, and personal identities of the participants. The goals of participation in these studies range from socialisation and solidarity (Burd, 2008) to insight and hope for change (Cucinelli, 2010) and promotion of resistance (Jean-Charles, 2011), among others.

Burd (2008) drew on theories of 'technology for social development', youth participation, and 'educative cities'. These conceptualise youth participation as an empowering process with benefits for both individuals and the community at large, and rooted in the unique needs of individuals and communities. The author used the term youth participation and civic engagement interchangeably, to describe 'the ability of individuals to become aware of and become actively and critically involved with matters that affect their lives' (Burd, 2008, p. 51).

Cucinelli (2010) refers to a broad range of theories drawing on various learning theories, including Freirean critical pedagogy, critical media studies, and cultural studies. She describes her approach as offering 'a conceptual framework in which youth use the current digital practices with which they are familiar to promote social justice issues that are relevant to their lives' (Cucinelli, 2010, p. 118).

Jean-Charles (2011) similarly drew on the methodologies of project-based learning, critical pedagogy and interpretive biography. He also built on the theoretical work of Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, which alternatively highlight the controlling and liberating potential of public spaces. His conceptualisation of participation focuses on the creation of a public space, where critical awareness can be developed through dialogue, story-telling, biographical reflection and 'creolisation', or a creative and dynamic process of exploration. The role of symbolical spaces for the collective exploration and experience of love, freedom, forgiveness, safety, belonging and self-care is also explored in the project. This conceptualisation emphasises the emotional and potentially restorative aspects of participation.

Empirical conceptualisations

Cucinelli (2010) describes the following dimensions of participative learning: recognition, conversing, sharing, engaging, exploring and reflecting. She also provides conceptual framework for examining and evaluating participation in her study. According to this framework, digital participation can occur at the level of 'plug', 'play', or 'praxis', involving progressive levels of active involvement. Burd (2008) does not offer a precise definition of participation, but he also used a broad framework for evaluating the various projects according to their impact on the individual, organisational and community level. Both above authors relied on direct (Cucinelli, 2010) or direct and indirect (Burd, 2008) observations of participant behaviours, attitudes, and emotions, as well as equivalent organisational and community variables in Burd (2008). In Burd (2008), attendance emerges as a proxy variable of participation, since it proved, for various reasons, challenging to engage both youth participants and organisational/ community stakeholders in the participation projects.

Jean-Charles (2011) does not provide a clear empirical framework for participation. However this was the only study in this category to include user evaluation surveys, which focused on self-reported changes in participant views and attitudes on the topics of interest, as well as a one-year follow-up of study participants. Some critical learning goals appear to have been determined by the author (for example, displaying a critical attitude towards surveillance technology). The themes of interest for the data analysis in this study, were, reportedly, identity, power, and paradoxical technology, associated with the themes of promise and forgiveness, and confession through the act of public speaking in order to 'end violence against the self and community' (Jean-Charles, 2011, p. 141).

Findings

All three PhD theses offer a detailed description of the processes of implementing their project(s). Burd (2008) and Cucinelli (2010) contain much data on the successes and difficulties encountered in the context of individual sub-projects, which are numerous in both. The analysis in Jean-Charles (2011) took the form of biographically oriented case-studies drawing on various project activities, e.g. round-table discussions, as well as general author observations. Primary research data in the form of focus group and interview transcripts are included with the thesis, and inform the conclusions presented here for this study.

Themes arising from the process analysis in Burd (2008) centred on the many difficulties and obstacles encountered when trying to implement projects, grouped into various community action projects and projects centred around a purpose-designed digital community communication tool. These included difficulties with recruitment, participant retention, gaining parental consent,

technical development of appropriate digital tools, finding appropriate time slots, identifying a suitable age group, and training and retention of group facilitators. A lack of organisational and stakeholder commitment was evident, as well a lack of appropriate technological resources in some of the low and middle income countries where some of the projects were also piloted. Although the projects were premised on the notion of participatory development, it proved in many cases difficult to sustain the young people's interest in project development, or achieve agreement with them on project aims. Sometimes group dynamics reportedly interfered with the smooth running of projects, and at other times the technologies available proved too complex, resource-intensive, or inappropriate for the task.

The author notes that, paradoxically, a great amount of adult guidance and support (often in short supply) was required for projects to achieve their participatory potential. In other cases, adult facilitators were reported to have shown insufficient commitment to project principles, eg by dismissing topics chosen by the young people. Even successful projects appeared unsustainable due to a lack of resources or organisational commitment and adult buy-in. For example, according to the author, representatives of the city did not demonstrate genuine interest in the projects beyond tokenistic gestures.

However, some positive achievements were also described, especially relating to the first wave of projects which were framed as community action projects. Young participants who did engage with projects were reported to have appeared to enjoy them and demonstrated their involvement through various activities, mainly taking the form of campaigning for various issues (e.g. children's rights, keeping streets clean). They appeared motivated by the participatory approach and by seeing previous examples of successful projects created by children. Topics freely chosen by children and youth could surprise the adult facilitators, such as the choice of child abuse as a topic of community action in two separate projects on children's rights. Due to technological challenges, digital technologies played a very limited role in these projects. A second wave of projects was more clearly centred on developing a novel system of mobile and digital communication to facilitate community participation but, despite considerable technical investment, these projects never managed to take off in the way intended by the author.

The projects reported in Cucinelli (2010) utilised existing digital technologies that were freely available on the web. Their focus was more on self-expression and 'promotion' of certain issues, and only one project involved action in the local community (organised around an inter-generational theme). The participants were free to choose which of the projects they wished to engage with. The presence of choice appeared successful since each participant responded differently to each project.

Both successes and failures, as assessed by the study author according to the young people's perceived level of engagement in each project ('play'/ 'plug'/ 'praxis'), are described. For example, the participants successfully entered a digital video into a competition run by UNICEF. The intergenerational community interview project also appeared particularly successful. Other successes were more personal and less obvious. Young people's participation appeared to be shaped by personal backgrounds, interests, and identities as much as by group dynamics and processes.

One finding of the study was the fact that the young people were inclined to employ digital technologies in public projections of their identities, which may be rooted in certain subcultures. Online and offline expressions of social roles and cultural identities, with a strong emphasis on physical appearance, as well as the reactions they may elicit both in wider society and among peers, was an enduring theme both in the participatory discussions and the digital projects. According to the author, facilitated, group-based discussions and dialogue created the trust necessary for some of the youth to publicly reveal more hidden aspects of their personalities and interests online and offline. The topics with which the young people in this study engaged the most were related to minority identities, self-expression, and the desire for recognition. Although some of the topics for exploration were evidently chosen by the participants themselves, suggesting their relevance to the young people involved, others seem to have been defined by the author.

A similar theme, chosen by the author, is echoed in Jean-Charles (2011), where minority ethnic identities and the oppression and control of minority ethnicities were explicit areas of exploration. A theme deriving from the primary data included in the study is the desire of the study participants to identify and blend with the majority (American) culture, partly through the use of new media technologies, while also expressing attachment to their country of origin (Haiti). In this sense, digital technologies appear to have offered them a way to re-shape their cultural identities and attain cultural 'fluency' and a sense of belonging despite limited language skills. According to the author, the participants preferred to communicate in Creole and initially appeared hesitant to conduct community interviews using English. However, their experiences of the community action project turned out to be positive, as related in a subsequent roundtable discussion (transcript included in thesis).

Another theme of the study was surveillance technology, to which the participants initially have a largely positive attitude. In interviews, they frequently contrasted the perceived law and order of American society with the social chaos they had experienced in Haiti. However, through the project the author partially claimed to have succeeded in instilling in the participants a more ambivalent and critical attitude towards surveillance technology through discussions and probing.

As the author notes, the participants expressed pride in the video they produced as part of the project. However, their collective thoughts on the subject were more mixed than some individual responses (highlighted by the author), as suggested by this data excerpt:

'Alex [author]: Do you think grown-ups in your community will take it [media production] seriously?
Lucien: We are the youth. Of course, they have to take seriously.
Jacques: Well, you can't just do a video. You need the community to back you up and take action. Action means to do something. It is the execution of a plan.
Charles: Grown-up mentality is not to care about what the youth has to say.
David: Those grown-ups are still in the past. Our time and their time are two different things.'

(Jean-Charles, 2011, p. 234)

This passage suggests conflicting views among young people on the efficacy of their participation, in terms of adult buy-in.

In the one year follow-up, the author found that one of the participants had applied his skills into videotaping high school football games and posting them on Youtube, two participants displayed a continued interest in community issues and volunteering, while two participants primarily used technology for social networking or connecting with Haitian issues.

Author conclusions

According to Burd (2008), the two types of interventions (community action using digital technologies/ digital community communication) facilitated participatory practices at different levels, the former enhancing young people's capacities for participation, while the latter mostly benefitted youth organisations in facilitating their community outreach. In both types of projects, engagement of previously unengaged youth required intensive and consistent adult support throughout the process. In contrast, Cucinelli (2010) highlighted the fact that different types of digital projects elicited different levels of engagement in different individuals. The conclusions in Jean-Charles (2011) centred on the need to create spaces for immigrant youth which associate (digital) technology with safety and empowerment, rather than control or negative stereotypes. The author also highlighted the potentially facilitating effect of media technology on young people's engagement with their local communities, arguing that their use of video camera may have acted as a useful 'intermediary' or source of power and authority in young people's interactions with community members.

Summary and discussion

All the three studies included in this category shared comparable research aims and methodologies, but varied slightly in their conceptualisations of youth participation, with one study emphasising

community action and empowerment, and two emphasising critical awareness in the context of social marginalisation, as well as emotional aspects such as love and hope. These definitions included aspects that did not easily translate into measurable empirical indicators. All of the studies conceptualised young people's participation as a reflective, interactive process rooted in group interaction and activities facilitated by an adult.

While all three studies adopted participatory methods, two (Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011) in particular appear quite heavily guided by the authors' ideological frameworks which defined the type of pedagogical input involved in the intervention. In one study (Burd, 2008), there was an attempt to involve young people in the design of projects, with varying levels of success. In the other two, participation was limited to choice of digital project or content creation though within a broad framework defined by the authors. However, all studies involved opportunities for relatively unstructured group-based discussion and dialogue, which appeared to be an essential component of project success according to author reports – although the discussions in one study (Burd, 2008) were found to equally end up in disagreement or other tensions, based on first hand and second hand observations reported by the author.

The data suggest that a degree of structuring and a high degree of expert adult facilitation was in fact necessary for projects to take off. On the other hand, some choice was also welcomed by participants and allowed participants to engage with project of personal relevance. Areas that children and young people chose to engage with ranged from child abuse to identity politics. The action most commonly involved raising awareness or campaigning for certain issues. Having a choice with respect to the technologies used was also an important aspect in two studies, since participants varied in their needs and IT skills. Overall, the studies highlight the 'messiness' of youth participation in action, as well as the extent of human and time resources required to implement such projects.

Study limitations

The studies included in this category reflect the relatively unstructured and open-ended nature of participatory action research, which presents challenges to the methodical collection and interpretation of data. The risk of author bias appeared relatively high for all the studies. The interventions recruited different types of groups, from heterogeneous to ethnically and gender-wise homogeneous groups, limiting their comparability. Finally, only one study (Jean-Charles, 2011) included any attempt to involve young people in the intervention evaluation.

Service user participation in professional education

Three papers of varying quality were included in this category, which was of primary relevance to the original review question. Two are studies presenting a case of service user participation in nursing education involving one service user. The third included publication is a brief report of children's involvement in the recruitment of children's nurses. All three employed digital technologies to achieve their aims.

Theoretical and ideological paradigms of digital participation

The three interventions were primarily framed by policy guidance on service user involvement, and were not informed by the concept of civic participation. Fenton (2013) refers to guidelines by RCPCH (Royal College of Paediatrics and Health Care) and Health Watch England, which both appear to be located within a consumer rights paradigm. The author also emphasises the overriding principle of protection of children and vulnerable adults with regard to any participation initiative. The authors explore the benefits of user involvement in an educational context most extensively in terms of the 'skills' it elicits in students (e.g. sensitivity, compassion). Service users are simply considered to typically 'enjoy' the experience. However, it is recognised that in future practice, practitioners are required to listen to and give appropriate consideration to children and young people's views.

The aim of the intervention in O'Boyle-Duggan, Grech, Kelly, Valentine, and Kelly (2012) was to reach out to groups that are commonly excluded from service user involvement, including children and people with learning disabilities. The authors refer to SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) guidelines for involving service users, but acknowledge the paucity of guidelines applicable in relation to the participation of children. For this reason, their intervention was also informed by NCB (National Children's Bureau) guidelines for conducting research with children.

Terry (2012) refers to NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) guidelines and subsequent policy developments and recommendations applying to the NHS. The intervention also drew more broadly on the research literature on service user involvement. The potential benefits of service user involvement are framed in terms of student learning, e.g. developing greater understanding, and benefits to the service user in, for example, increased self-esteem and optimism. Similarly to the above intervention, it also responded, through the adoption of digital technology, to the finding that certain practical requirements, such as the requirement to appear in class, may lead to a lack of representativeness among involved service users. Somewhat paradoxically though, the category of service user sought is described, paraphrasing another author, as 'interested, articulate service users who can step back from their experience(s) and engage in a non-distressing or harmful manner (both

for themselves and students)' (Terry, 2012, p. 162). This approach echoes the above theme of protection.

Empirical conceptualisations

Since the studies were not framed by the discourse on civic participation, user involvement in these studies simply consisted of 'taking part' where, without the appropriate technology, user involvement could not have taken place. However, in one study, the technology was believed to engender a more empowering form of user involvement.

The intervention in Fenton (2013) consisted of a young service user contributing towards a digital photo story where she answered questions about her experiences in cancer care formulated by a previous cohort of nurse students. The service user appears to have been chosen in part because of a relevant and instructive case history. The intervention in Terry (2012) was similar, but one of its aims was to provide a more empowering mean of digital service user involvement, by providing not only a digital account (photo story) of the service user's experiences of care, but also an interactive online forum where students and service user could freely exchange their thoughts on these. The service user appears to have been chosen on the basis of his case history as well as his disposition.

O'Boyle-Duggan et al. (2012) aimed at involving children in the recruitment of children's nurses. They adopted a relatively child-led approach, e.g. they guided parents to help their children formulate their own questions in their own words to student candidates, on digital recordings later played to students. Students responses were rated by interviewers and thus children's involvement (indirectly) contributed to student selection. The report does not contain descriptive details of the child participants.

With participation taking different forms in each study, two papers focused on the benefits of service user participation, especially among student learners. For example, Fenton (2013) surveyed whether the students felt they had gained insight into a young person's perspective on health care through their use of the digital learning objective. Evaluation of the service user's experience was informal. The evaluation of the intervention in Terry (2012) built inductively but not methodically on the author's own observations of the online interaction between students and service user, of classroom discussions with the students, as well as of the service user's written comments on his experience of the intervention. Interactivity was considered a key aspect of participation in this study. O'Boyle-Duggan et al. (2012) do not report on participants' experiences of the intervention.

Findings

Service users in all three interventions participated by contributing to the contents of the intervention, e.g. formulating questions or responding to questions, or telling their story through their own words and images. The service user in Terry (2012) was given the most freedom in shaping the content of his personal account, and in interacting with the students, although the use of his favoured music was prevented by copyright issues. O'Boyle-Duggan et al. (2012) present a case example, rather than research. They provide examples of questions formulated by the children participating in the intervention, proving that children as young as 3 years old can be involved as 'service users', given appropriate technology, guidance and adult support.

The students in Terry (2012) and Fenton (2013) appeared to find the interventions valuable and instructive. For example, student comments suggest the digital presentations and/ or interactions with the service user elicited an empathic response in the students. The service users in both interventions highlighted certain failures in their care – which in the case of (Terry, 2012) involved quite serious failings compared in the paper to those found later in Stafford Hospital – which were then explored by the students online and offline, although the paper provides limited information on how topics were further explored in the classroom.

The virtual environment in Terry (2012) facilitated interactive reflection over three weeks and at the participants' own pace, allowing for a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of the service user's experiences to evolve through discussions. However, the intervention involved two cohorts of students, the more senior of whom apparently engaged less frequently in the discussions, as pointed out by the service user. The service user interpreted this as evidence of the older students' resigned attitude ('this is just what happens in hospitals and there isn't much that can be done'), while the author/ educator interpreted this as evidence of greater workloads leading to students having less time to engage with the intervention. The potentially challenging and instructive piece of feedback by the service user was thus dismissed as a misinterpretation. Whatever the real reason for the lack of student disengagement, this comment highlights the service user's emphasis on a sense of efficacy as a potential motivator for participation.

Reportedly, the service user in Fenton (2013) found the experience enjoyable and cathartic. In Terry (2012), as mentioned above, the service user had misgivings about the engagement of older students. However, he also reports his experience of the intervention to have been helpful in order to think through his experiences in care, and hoped his involvement could help prevent failures in care in the future.

Author conclusions

The authors concluded that digital interventions can be efficient as learning and teaching tools (Fenton, 2013); that involvement of child service users in student recruitment is possible and potentially enriching to students (O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012), and that online discussions with a service users can help practitioners develop their empathy, insight and understanding (Terry, 2012) .

Summary and discussion

Professional guidelines on service user involvement were the starting point for the interventions in this category. These appear situated in the ideological paradigms of safeguarding, consumer rights, and, to a lesser extent, empowerment of service users. In involving children and young people, all three interventions reached out to a potentially marginalised group of service users, although in two interventions only one individual was involved. The selection and recruitment process was not detailed in any of the three studies. Two of the interventions were designed to overcome practical barriers to service user involvement, but lacked an element of interactivity, since the service users could either only pose questions, or only respond to questions, without having to/ having the opportunity to meet the other party.

The studies included in this category did not engage at depth with questions of power or citizenship, in contrast with the more theoretical literature on service user involvement. While technologically innovative, the interventions could nonetheless be considered traditional in that they enabled a single service user to describe their experience of care – or what has more critically been described as 'doing the "life story" slot' (SCIE, 2009, p. 2), but with a relatively narrow focus on a particular treatment experience. However, the intervention in described by (Terry, 2012), in particular, clearly went further than this. This intervention was designed to be more empowering to the service user by enabling interaction over a length of time, while protecting anonymity and overcoming restrictions of time and space.

However, questions can be raised over the study's coupling of empowerment with a certain type of service user. In particular, the definition of the ideal service user participant in Terry (2012) as someone who can reflect on their experiences 'without anger or bitterness' (an assertion contested by an exchange in the online conversation between student and service user) appears paradoxical because it is not clear whether such a type best represents either service users in general, or underrepresented service users in particular. It is also unclear how such individuals may be identified and recruited. In addition, where such individuals are distinguished by their confidence and optimism, the proposed benefits of their involvement to the service user may be relatively small.

A more profound ethical issue concerns the value placed on a 'mature' attitude in this study, in juxtaposition to the unprofessional treatment reportedly witnessed by the service user in response to complaints made by family members of another patient during his time in care and deterred him from raising his own complaints. It is not clear whether these reports triggered anything beyond the empathic response displayed by some students during the online discussions. It could be argued that empathy alone may not constitute an adequate response to service user participation in the context of future professional practice. Yet, evaluation in two studies centred on student learning defined exclusively in terms of increased understanding, insight or empathy. Similarly, the data suggest that critical feedback by the service user was 'smoothed over', rather than used to prompt critical evaluation of relevant student attitudes and practices.

The limited evaluations of the service users' perspectives suggested predominantly positive experiences, despite some mixed data. The emphasis of these appeared to be on emotional catharsis, increased clarity, satisfaction over making a contribution, and enjoyment.

Overall, the findings referred to above testify to the potential of service user participation in professional education, but also raise questions over its proposed goals, both from the perspective of service users or students. The role of the educator also remained largely overlooked in the papers included in this category.

Study limitations

The papers included in this category were of mixed quality, and employed few methods of systematic data collection or analysis. The risk of author and selection bias was high for all three studies. Also, description of study participants and recruitment strategies was inadequate in all studies. Only one study (Terry, 2012) adequately involved the service user in evaluation of the intervention.

Overall synthesis

The synthesis explored potential similarities and dissimilarities between service-user participation and civic engagement of young people using digital technologies. The contexts examined were those of political action (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Fenton, 2013; Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011), critical pedagogy and community action (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011), and professional education (Fenton, 2013; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012; Terry, 2012). Our aim was to investigate and compare relevant discourses and their ideological underpinnings, as well as to examine their empirical implications, especially where possible, from the perspectives of young people themselves. Analysis of the studies across the various service-user groups revealed

diverse and multifaceted conceptualisations of young people's participation. The following section briefly summarises findings according to three broad emerging themes. Individual study themes and findings are detailed in Table 3.

Socialisation. Socialisation appeared to be, implicitly or explicitly, an important goal guiding initiatives to improve young people's participation, although the objectives of socialisation vary according to the intervention. Educators include both governmental and issue-based civic organisations (Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011), and in the critical pedagogy model, adult facilitators (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011). In the professional education context, the emphasis was on socialising students into the culture of service-user involvement and/or client-centred practice through some service user input (Fenton, 2013; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012; Terry, 2012). Proposed learning goals ranged from improved knowledge to cognitive and social skills, with an emphasis on emotional qualities such as empathy and insight.

Digital technologies appear within this paradigm as particularly effective learning and teaching tools. However, their supposed universal appeal to young people was contested (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Gerodimos, 2012; Jean-Charles, 2011). Different digital technologies appeared to attract different users and uses. Young people's familiarity with technologies may enable them effectively to avoid messages deemed uninteresting or irrelevant, or to adopt them for their own purposes, perhaps in order to pursue their real interests, or as a resistance tactic. However, among the professional student populations examined, digital learning objects and tools appeared generally well accepted.

Public spaces. A second theme is the goal of creating public spaces. These were most commonly defined as spaces – both physical and symbolic – enabling interactivity, dialogue, sharing and mutual reflection (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011; Terry, 2012; Ward, 2011). Digital technologies were conceptualised as means to create or facilitate such spaces. Virtual environments were examined for features which promoted or hindered interactivity, while one study further emphasised opportunities for dialogue based on competing, rather than similar perspectives (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010).

Varying prioritisations of online vs. offline spaces also emerged. One study found that young people are most likely to take political action online (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010). Participatory action research studies however portrayed real-world public spaces as a necessary condition for civic participation. Studies on service-user participation determined that educators needed to support service-users extensively with technological know-how and resources alongside general task

guidance in the real world. The reported goals and benefits of communication occurring in such public spaces varied but included a sense of belonging and freedom, emotional catharsis, mutual respect and understanding, and engaging in democratic debate. These were considered valuable in themselves (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Fenton, 2013; O'Boyle-Duggan et al., 2012; Terry, 2012; Tuukkanen et al., 2013), or, alternatively, instrumental in fostering civic action (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Gerodimos, 2008, 2012; Vromen, 2011; Ward, 2011).

Finally, the studies offered different perspectives on what topics can and should be explored in public spaces. In the cases examined, these were rarely freely determined by the young people involved (however, see (Tuukkanen et al., 2013)). Conversely, several authors argued that young people's preferences and perspectives reflect broader social values and practices (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Cucinelli, 2010; Gerodimos, 2012; Jean-Charles, 2011; Tuukkanen et al., 2013; Vromen, 2011). Young people are already socialised into predominant cultures, including consumerism and popular culture which also rely heavily on digital technologies. Young people from varied social and cultural contexts raised topics such as global solidarity, environmental awareness, discrimination and child abuse (Burd, 2008; Tuukkanen et al., 2013). An orientation shared by the more directive interventions was an emphasis on young people's marginalisation, vulnerability, or oppression, often associated with another aspect of identity, such as ethnicity or gender. Young people expressed a desire to project positive images of themselves as members of particular social groups.

Action and efficacy. A third theme arising particularly from some young people's responses is that of 'efficacy', i.e. a sense of empowerment through the achievement of concrete change beyond the immediate, digitally-mediated context (Gerodimos, 2012; Jean-Charles, 2011; Tuukkanen et al., 2013). However, the studies provided remarkably few examples of this. In contrast, as above, one study suggested that young people were more likely to take civic action online than offline (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010).

Despite their limitations, online environments can engage some young people, in particular by appealing to users' emotions, promoting a sense of efficacy combined with convenience, and communicating a sense of social consensus (Cucinelli, 2010; Gerodimos, 2012) features considered consumerist by some authors (Gerodimos, 2012; Vromen, 2011). Collective efficacy in the real world seemed difficult to achieve in the few projects that attempted to promote community action, despite some very positive examples (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010). The given reasons for this included a lack of sustained commitment by young people, lack of consensus over the aims and means of action, and lack of adult guidance and sustained commitment.

Interestingly, young people also seemed willing to participate in activities with no immediate benefits. Positive examples included initiatives where young people used digital tools to promote awareness about topics relevant to them (e.g. child abuse and children's rights), interacting with unknown community members, and exploring their personal and social identities in an online environment (Burd, 2008; Cucinelli, 2010; Jean-Charles, 2011). Service-users in two studies mentioned enjoyment and emotional catharsis (Fenton, 2013; Terry, 2012), despite mixed evaluations of intervention efficacy in the only study explicitly addressing the issue (Terry, 2012).

Discussion

Our synthesis included too few studies in the area of young people's participation in professional education to enable robust conclusions in this area of practice. However, within the small sample, some notable similarities and differences emerged in comparison to studies in the area of civic engagement.

Participant characteristics

As service user interventions seemed more focused on the learning needs of students than the potential benefits for service users, it appears that a certain type of articulate and resilient service user (typically only one individual) was sought for participation, although one intervention successfully recruited children as young as three. In the latter study, parents were coached in methods for helping their children participate in the intervention, indicating the family as a potential facilitator of, rather than obstacle to, child-centred practice. Moreover, digital technology clearly played a facilitating part in the process by enabling young people to express their views about the type of service received and/or the quality of interaction with those providing services, or intending to do so in the future.

According to several of the included studies, fostering participation among 'unengaged' children and young people places heavy demands on adult time and personal resources. For this reason also, participatory interventions may be tempted to recruit a narrow range of service users. While this may be justified in the context of limited resources, the ensuing benefits for both participants and student learning are limited. One potential limitation of the included service user studies is that they all involved participants who could be described as 'survivors' (youth who had successfully undergone a treatment period). The communication styles of survivors may differ considerably from those in the midst of ongoing difficulties, i.e. the majority of service users encountered in social work practice. Although their retrospective accounts may be very relevant, their 'voice' may thus not be representative of service users in general.

Intervention characteristics

In the interventions examined, participants were given varying degrees of freedom to 'set the agenda' for discussion. In some cases, it was difficult to distinguish children and young people's own priorities from the way that the tasks were framed by adults. With some groups of young people, a level of structuring was also considered necessary by the adult facilitators. Two of the service user interventions we included allowed service users a relatively high level of freedom regarding content, with positive results from a student learning perspective documented in one study.

Allowing participants to set their own agenda in participatory interventions may highlight issues that are more relevant for young people. For example, solidarity and concern for children's well-being both locally and world-wide emerged as a relevant topic in one such intervention in the area of civic participation, which contrasts with the focus on the individual in the interventions involving service users. According to some included studies, young people appear to generally lack experiences of collective power and peer support in the context of civic engagement. Digital technologies offer opportunities for young people to express and develop their social identities.

The collective/group aspect emphasised by studies in the area of civic participation was absent from the interventions involving service users (which however involved groups of students, unavoidably creating a power imbalance). In other studies, the group element perhaps appeared particularly important for previously unengaged young people. The group may increase motivation, engender debate, and allow individuals to contribute in their own style. On the other hand, exploration of individual differences digitally and offline in a safe, facilitated group environment may also contribute to empowerment. However, group dynamics require competent handling by adult facilitators. None of the included studies however examined online group interaction.

Only one of the service user interventions aimed at creating a dynamic 'public space' where digital interaction could take place over time, although this intervention only involved one service user. The dynamic nature of the online discussions appeared to achieve a level of participation that was apparently absent from many civic websites, due to their lack of genuinely interactive features. One benefit of interactivity to the service user may be the immediate evidence of impact made, in the current case, on student learners. A risk lies with a potential lack of adequate student engagement, which may impact on the service user negatively.

The level of technological resources appeared less influential than the level of human resources available to support young people's participation in the various projects described. However, the availability of task-appropriate, easy-to-use and sustainable technological tools was also important. Digital photo-stories created by a service user were promoted as a time and cost effective learning

tool, but this may prevent the development of service user involvement as a regular and evolving feature or professional training. The sustainability of the online discussion forum used in the more interactive intervention was not explored.

Intervention focus

The emphasis on socialisation in the context of young people's civic participation requires that we look critically at the current drive towards service user involvement in personal services and professional education. While one case report concerned the involvement of children in the recruitment of paediatric nurses, thus involving a degree of power-sharing, the other two (more well-documented) examples of children and young people's involvement in health care education appeared primarily to promote service user self-expression and self-presentation. The narratives produced through personal text and images of the service user 'experience' were conceptually linked to developing student empathy and insight.

The emphasis on individual narrative and emotion may be part of a broader cultural trend highlighted in some of the studies we reviewed in our synthesis. For example, young people in an included study identified emotionally appealing stories as a motivator for civic participation. Websites which did contain such stories and images were characterised by some study authors as 'consumerist', because of their marketing-style approach. The potential downside of this may, arguably, be a tendency to ignore causes/cases which do not possess similar emotional appeal, or which present views contrary to the aims/ambitions of the organisation.

While digital technologies may be used to create less threatening environments for communication, social work students should not be socialised into expecting only certain types of expression/narrative by certain service users. For example, Chase (2009) describes how young asylum-seekers may actively seek to resist what they often perceive as pressure by social care professionals and other adults to disclose personal feelings and experiences, especially those related to painful aspects of their lives. Unlike professionals, some of the youth did not view self-disclosure as meaningful or beneficial within the constraints of their life situation.

Intervention impact

Participatory interventions appear to have various benefits/impacts (including potential negative impacts) which may be hard to measure or document. The relationship between expressive communication and potential action and other practical outcomes for the young people involved however needs to be given careful consideration, given the emphasis children and young people appear to place on efficacy. The role of adult buy-in has also been a theme consistently highlighted in the above discussions. Issues around student/educator responses were only touched upon in the

studies conducted in the context of professional education. Important questions are raised over the kind of skills and knowledge that students need to learn to be effective practitioners. Recent reports (Narey 2014, Croisdale-Appleby, 2014) have emphasised the safeguarding role of social work, and consequentially perceive a need for student social workers to develop a sound understanding of the needs of children and young people. Clearly this will be enhanced by enabling students to learn about and from young people as part of their pre-registration training. Educators can direct students to literature and theory, however all theory needs to be understood in and applied to contemporary context. While some student social workers may be familiar with the life worlds of young people today including forms of communication, style – language used and vocabulary – and methods – text, social media, mobile phone apps, for others developing these skills and knowledge will be essential. Without this students will have limited insight into the world of young people and will struggle to empathise. This may lead students to impose their own values, fears and aspirations onto those they work with.

Although the development of skills and knowledge of theory relating to the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of young people is important, of equal, if not greater importance is understanding of the wider social welfare needs of children and young people. If those charged with developing and providing services lack insight into social needs, facilitating factors, and barriers encountered by young people then welfare provision will be service led, not needs led. Involvement of young people in education therefore needs to have a clear rationale that is built around the short and long term benefits to children and young people not on the learning needs of students.

Conclusion

It seems important that interventions aiming at involving young service users address a diversity of service user participants and involve diverse forms of participation, as well as genuine opportunities for interactive communication based on children and young people's own needs and preferences. This may be achieved by adopting specific technological tools (e.g. blogs, online discussion forums) which potentially enable more extensive and sustained service user involvement; by utilising groups, and by allowing participants ownership/choice over the technologies used, the type of content produced, and the aims and preferred outputs of the intervention (e.g. learning goals).

The potential biases and shortcomings of face-to-face communication between service providers and service users can be reproduced in online forms of communication, as demonstrated by some of the data included in our synthesis. Ideally, however, digital technologies expand the range of children and young people's participation, and provide complementary, more empowering public spaces and channels for expression which may lead to social change. On the other hand, they may

empower service providers to access service user perspectives and experiences. Where the main interest lies with learning from service user voices, professionals could, for example, utilise already existing resources created by children and young people, of which we give examples in the following section.

Phase 3: Web Review

Search results

Three Search engines (Google, Yahoo & Bing) were selected for identification of appropriate social media databases. For two search engines, Bing and Yahoo, the results received were identical. For the other, Google, while one database was common, three others were found. In total six databases (ECRM, VANDELAY, Wikipedia, Prelovac, Social Media Websites, and Traffikd) were identified providing lists of specific social media sites and websites that contained a social media element e.g. a SNS. All identified lists were included for review. This resulted in 1990 social media sites being considered for further review and application of the inclusion criteria (duplicates included).

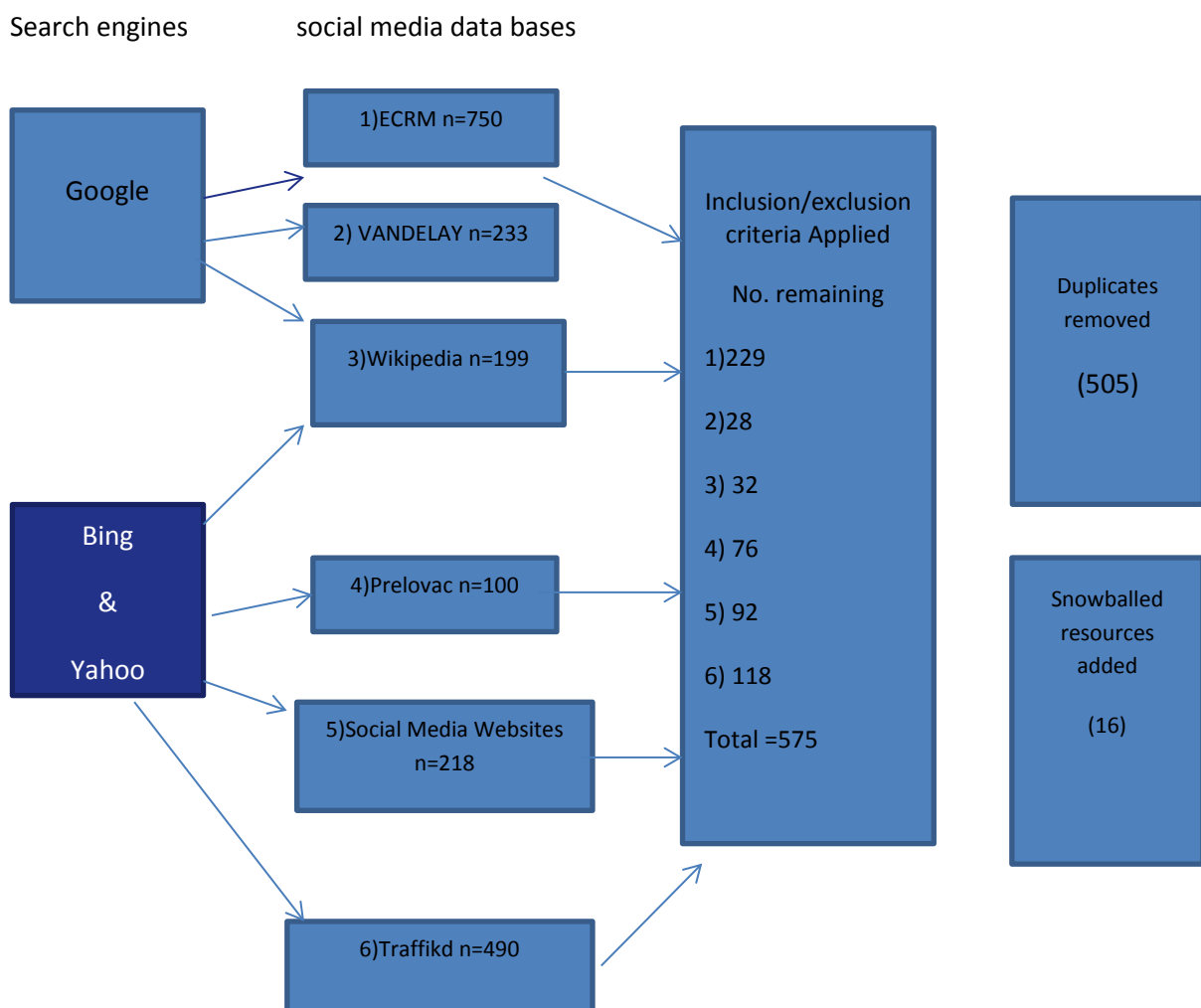


Figure 3: Flowchart of database and website selection

In May 2012 each of the websites/resources listed was reviewed by visiting the site and considering the content in relation to the inclusion criteria. Websites that did not meet these were excluded. For each of the databases reviewed. Subsequently any duplicates i.e. resources that appeared on more than one list, were removed and sites found by snowballing added. The results of the search at each stage are shown in figure 3.

In revisiting the sites in May 2013 and January 2014 checks were made to ensure that firstly, the site still existed and was accessible, and secondly, that the content continued to meet the inclusion criteria. At both times no sites were removed due to failing to meet inclusion criteria however on each occasion a number of sites were removed as hyperlinks no longer functioned, because the site no longer existed or because the site had been acquired by and subsumed into another site. Generic sites, eg Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, were excluded as although search functions existed, it became evident that there was no mechanism for systematic and focused searching, in accordance with the search terms. This resulting in 56 sites being removed. Whilst the generic sites were removed a number of resources contained on these sites, found through the focused search strategy described in the method, were included.

In January 2014 two further sites, set up and run by young people themselves, were excluded. The first (Lukespeaks.com) was excluded as the young person had closed the site, the second (the puppetproject.net), a young person offering training, as the young person had changed the content from an open resource making it only accessible to those buying in training. One site (Voice against violence) was maintained in the list of included sites as, although it stated it would no longer be updated and maintained, previously uploaded information and associated digital resources remained accessible and in accordance with inclusion criteria. In reviewing these sites and applying the tightened inclusion/exclusion criteria 16 were excluded on various grounds, including information being primarily marketing of a service and lack of evidence that views expressed were authentic i.e. originating from young people. 12 websites were included in the review.

Characteristics of included websites

Characteristics of included websites are summarised in Table 8 below.

| Website | Web address | Developer | Funding | Organisation Purpose | Type of participatory digital & social media | Purpose of digital media | Evidence of interactive participation | Topic examples | Target audience |
|-------------------------|---|--|---------------------|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| AskEnquire | http://www.enquire.org.uk/yp/ | Children in Scotland | Government | Support | Blogs, digital videos, podcasts | Represent children's voices, general information | No | Experiences of young mothers, care-leavers, refugees | Children and young people |
| Cafcass | http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/default.aspx | Cafcass (Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) | Government | Representing best interest of children in court, support | Digital videos | Inform about service | No | Case examples of service users | Families and children |
| Drive Forward | http://www.driveforwardfoundation.com/ | Drive Forward Foundation | Private donations | Support care-leavers access employment | Blog, Youtube, Facebook, Twitter | Promote organisation | No | Experience of involvement | Care leavers (aged 17-25), funders |
| Everychild | www.everychild.org.uk | Everychild Charity | Private donations | International charity working to stop children growing up alone | Digital videos Personal stories Facebook, Twitter | Represent children's voices | No | Personal stories | Generic |
| Families Outside | http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/ | Families Outside | Government, private | Support & information | Digital videos, Facebook, Twitter | Represent children's voices | No | Visiting an imprisoned family member | Families, professionals |
| Fixers | http://www.fixers.org.uk/ | Public Service Broadcasting Trust | Big Lottery Fund | Participation, social action, support | Digital videos, blogs, Facebook, Twitter | Represent children's voices | No | Homelessness, domestic abuse, physical health (unlimited) | Generic |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------------------|---|--|---|-----|---|--|
| Living a careless life | http://livingcarelesslife.wordpress.com/ | Individual | Private | Participation, support, self-expression | Blog | Represent care-leaver's voice | Yes | Experiences around being in care, advocacy work, relevant policy developments | Peers, professionals |
| Own two feet | http://owntwofeet.wordpress.com/ | Who Cares Trust | Private donations | Participation, support | Blog | Represent care-leaver's voice | Yes | Experiences around being in care & advocacy work | Peers, stakeholders |
| Time to change | http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/youngpeople | Mind, Rethink mental illness | Government, private | Raising awareness | Blogs, digital videos | Raise awareness of mental health, combat stigma | Yes | Depression, eating disorders, young carers | Peers, general public |
| Voices Against Violence | http://www.voiceagainstviolence.org.uk/ | Children in Scotland, group of experts-by-experience | Government | Support, information (organisation is no longer active) | Blogs, digital videos, posters | Raise awareness of domestic violence | No | Domestic violence | Families, peers, professionals |
| Voypic (Voice of Young People in Care) | http://www.voypic.org/resources/youtube-channel | Voice of Young People in Care | Private donations | Participation, support | Digital videos, e-consultation, CASI (e-survey via organisation), Twitter, link to e-library | Represent children's voices, inform about service | No | Experiences of being in care | Peers, families, professionals |
| Your space | http://www.yourspacewestsussex.co.uk/default.aspx | Not specified/ West Sussex Children's Council | Not specified | Participation, information | Blogs, digital videos, podcasts, Facebook | Represent children's views, inform & collect feedback | Yes | Local services, participation in local council | Children & young people, practitioners |

Table 8: Overview of included websites

Findings and discussion

This study arose from a belief that there was a wealth of available digital material that expressed the views of young people, and that this could be used by social work educators providing a voice for young people in developing the knowledge and skills of future social work practitioners. Whilst some excellent material was found this was significantly less than anticipated. This was for a number of reasons which resonated with the findings of the first phase of this study, the systematic review of literature.

Ownership

Two good examples of informative social media produced by young people themselves, identified early in the study, were excluded in the final stages as the young people had restricted access such that it was only available when “bought” as part of a specific training package. This illustrates the desire of young people for ownership of their voice and control over what is being said on their behalf and about them.

A large number of what, on initial consideration, appeared to be relevant material was later excluded as the views expressed, whilst purporting to be those of young people were in fact those of adults writing as though they were a young people. In some cases ideas and comments were presenting as though the adult was speaking on behalf of an individual young person in others as though speaking for young people, for example, www.teenagewhisper.co.uk. In general however there is no evidence that these views are genuine, or that they do in fact represent the views of young people. These sites were maintained and managed by adults associated with a particular service.

This finding reflects that of the literature review in that it was difficult to distinguish children and young people’s own views and priorities from those of adults, with the subjects explored, the method of communication and framing of the task determined by adults who held power through the ability to access financial and practical resources. As adults held power over the mechanism for digital communication, they were also responsible for recruiting young people to specific projects and determining which young people had access to the method of communication. Conversely this also means that adults determined who was excluded.

A limited number of sites (5) were found that, whilst managed and coordinated by adults/organisations, ensured that young people both initiated and retained control of the content. All but two of these were funded by private donations. Of the remaining two, one Fixers (www.fixers.org.uk), a project by the Public Service Broadcasting Trust was funded by the National Lottery, the other Voice Against Violence, a short term government funded project whilst providing a useful resource and included as still available was no longer maintained and updated as the project had ended. This raised a key issue in terms of using social media to give young people a voice, that of sustainability.

Sustainability

Throughout the life time of this project a number of potentially valuable resources have ceased to exist or, where the websites are still accessible, relevant material has become restricted. Where websites have ceased to exist, this may be for a number of reasons: young people may lack the financial resources to maintain the project, their interest in the subject may change or, more likely, their personal circumstances may change such that they do not have the time needed as other demands become a greater priority. This leads us to suggest that one of the greatest challenges to ensuring the voice of young people is heard and continues to be heard is a mechanism for ensuring the sustainability of websites and other forms of social media once the resource is established. The success of Fixers, now with 15,000 young people involved, is that the project provides a supportive framework of open and continuing recruitment without stipulating the focus or subject content. It therefore facilitates young people rather than directs towards a particular form of civic action or socialises towards a preferred/desired behaviour. This leads us to propose a need for those involved in social work education to have a joint and coordinated strategy that facilitates and supports young people's involvement as opposed to discrete individual institution based developments.

Service user participation

The issue of how to establish and maintain contact with young people was found to be an issue not just in relation to the sustainability of social media resources but also in ensuring that young people were involved in this project. Although initial interest was positive, very few young people responded to flyers or engaged in meetings arranged in partnership with Catch 22 to establish a working group. Our early proposition on the reason for this, that contact with young people was being restricted by adults/organisations working with them has neither been substantiated nor refuted. Young people who did become involved with the project, reflecting on their own experience, support this hypothesis but also considered young people to have become fatigued by repeated requests for involvement which, without any evidence that expressed views have had an impact, are perceived as patronising.

While one young person became actively involved through these meetings the second young person had no connection. Involvement in the project was self-initiated having learnt about it from other young people. For this young person the ability to be heard was limited by the ways in which service providers defined and categorised need. Falling between services restricted access to forums, service-user groups and other mechanisms established by service providers. They not only had no voice but, in their own words, "felt invisible". As a consequence the young person described lacking confidence and feeling reluctant to speak out in unfamiliar situations. For this project to ensure that young people were able to contribute meant that time had to be taken to create a supporting, facilitating relationship based on trust, where they felt valued and respected as equal participants. However having established this relationship not only did the young people involved play a key role in evaluating material found, but they also found a voice of their own.

Together young people involved in this project used social media to express their views on the role of young people in social work education and the part that social media could play. They created a Prezi, (Using social Media to give young people a voice)⁸, reflecting on their involvement in the project, presented this as a national Social Work education conference (Joint Social Work Education Conference - JSWEC - 2014), and participated in a nationally and internationally circulated podcast⁹. A key aim of this project to disseminate the resources found as widely as possible. The database created was made available to all those attending the JSWEC 2014 conference but also, to maximise impact, was also presented using social media in a googlesite¹⁰ circulated via Twitter.

⁸ https://prezi.com/ob-e_sb1jujp/using-social-media-to-give-young-people-a-voice/

⁹ <http://socialworldpodcast.com/040-jsweconference-part-6/>

¹⁰ <https://sites.google.com/site/yp2sws/>

Conclusion

A key finding of this research, as raised by young people involved in this study, is the need for consideration of the ways in which group membership is constructed and established, both in terms of involvement in social work education in general, and in providing mechanisms that support the use of social media to facilitate this. Boundaries associated with group membership can both include and exclude. As identified in the literature review, approaches to promoting participation of young people are focused around two dimensions, civic action and socialisation. Similar dimensions exist in the provision of welfare services, reflected in the aims and mission statements, with threshold and eligibility criteria determining which service young people can, or cannot access. The mechanisms involved in the provision of services, eligibility criteria, welfare checklists and state/voluntary sector provision determine group formation and consequently can result in some young people being located outside public interest, placed in a position of enforced privacy and silenced. In this project whilst seeking to identify current social media resources that enable young people to have a voice in social work education we have explored underlying interrelated issues which can be summarised as associated with four key concepts, ownership, interactivity, goals, and outputs (see figure 4).

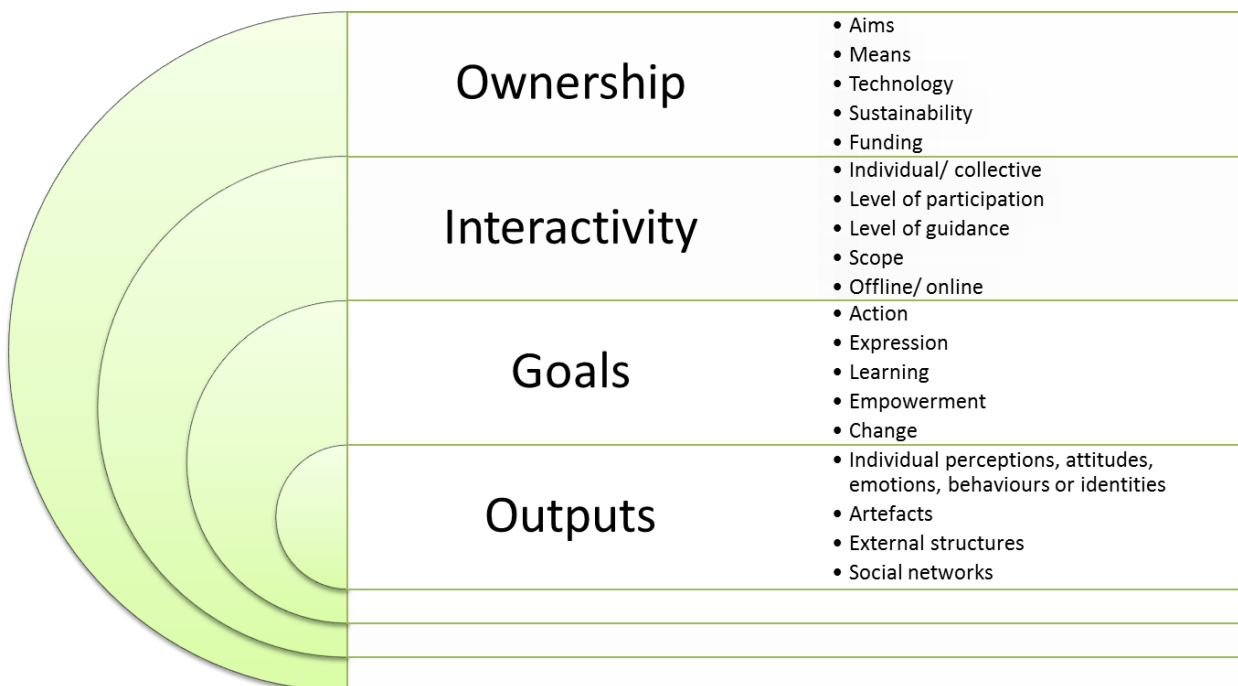


Figure 4: Aspects of young people's participation

The role of social media in widening young people’s participation in social work education

Despite the current barriers identified in this review social media we found that social media could play a significant role in widening young people’s involvement. Use of social media was not an “easy option” but requires consideration of the mechanisms used, funding options, potential impact and both implicit and explicit aims. Factors that inform the design and evaluation of digital participation are illustrated in figure 5.

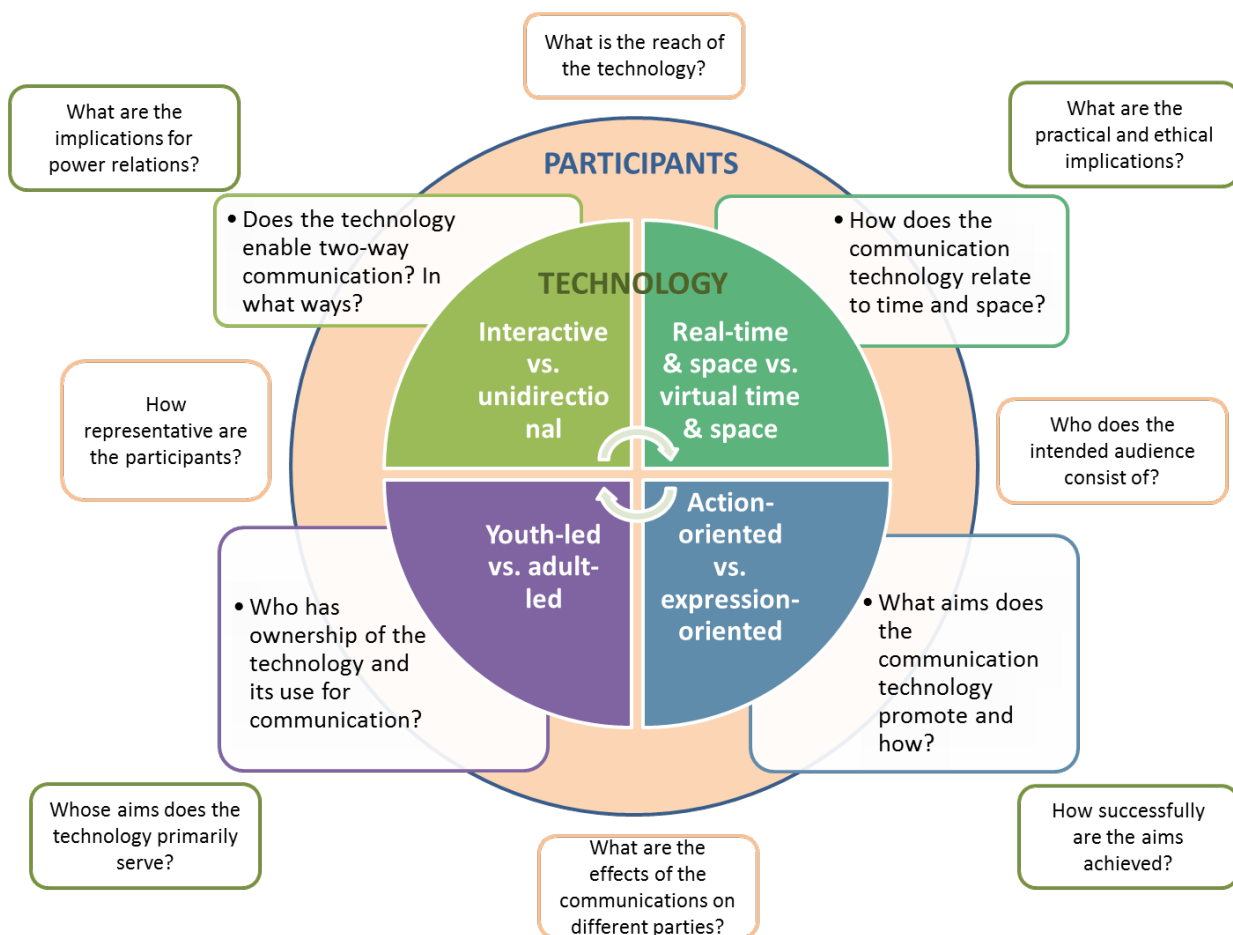


Figure 5: Design/evaluation matrix for digital participation interventions

Recommendations for the future

Having systematically reviewed relevant literature, social media resources at the time of writing and the involvement of young people in this project we conclude by making the following recommendations for future action:

- Development of a joint, cross-institution, strategy for involving young people in social work education

- Identify ongoing, i.e. not time-limited funding, that will provide access to appropriate digital mechanisms (website domains etc.)
- Establish a supportive relationship with young people which facilitates participation whilst ensuring ownership remains with the young people.
- Identify methods of providing membership to young people who fall outside established welfare services i.e. those who do not fit conventional service led eligibility criteria
- Provide developmental support i.e. assist new members in developing skills held by more established members i.e. promote succession planning
- Identify and create mechanisms that promote sustainability and ensure a continuing voice.

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Appendix A: Search terms

PsycInfo (Ovid)

1. exp Social Media/
2. exp Social Media/ or "social media".mp.
3. online social network.mp. or exp Online Social Networks/
4. exp Internet/ or exp Websites/ or web.mp.
5. exp Computer Mediated Communication/ or exp Computer Applications/ or exp Information Technology/ or cyber.mp.
6. podcast.mp.
7. exp Digital Video/ or youtube.mp.
8. twitter.mp.
9. tweet.mp.
10. facebook.mp.
11. microblog.mp.
12. "digital media".mp.
13. new media.mp.
14. "information technology".mp. or exp Information Technology/
15. e-learning.mp.
16. microblog.mp.
17. exp Online Therapy/ or online.mp.
18. community.mp. or exp Communities/
19. exp Empowerment/ or participat#.mp.
20. blended learning.mp.
21. exp Citizenship/ or exp Democracy/ or civic.mp.
22. involvement.mp. or exp Involvement/
23. 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13 or 14 or 15 or 16 or 17
24. exp Child Care/ or exp Child Welfare/ or exp Child Guidance/ or child.mp.
25. children.mp.
26. adolescent.mp.
27. youth.mp.
28. "young adult".mp.
29. 24 or 25 or 26 or 27 or 28
30. exp Client Attitudes/ or exp Mental Health Services/ or "service user".mp.
31. client.mp. or exp Clients/
32. exp Patients/ or patient.mp.
33. consumer.mp. or exp Consumer Behavior/
34. 18 or 19 or 20 or 21 or 22 or 30 or 31 or 32 or 33
35. 23 and 29 and 34
36. 35 and 2008:2013.(sa_year).

ASSIA, IBSS, AEI, BEI, BNI, ERIC (PROQUEST)

((("service user" OR client OR patient OR consumer) AND ("young people" OR children OR youth OR child OR "young adult" OR adolescent OR teen OR teenager) AND ("social media" OR "social platform" OR "web 2.0" OR online OR web OR digital OR video OR podcast OR youtube OR twitter OR tweet OR facebook OR social network OR blog OR microblog OR "computer mediated" OR "computer assisted" OR "digital media" OR "new media" OR "information technology" OR e-learning OR participatory OR blended OR civic OR community OR "civil society" NOT beauty NOT cosmetic NOT market* NOT commerc* NOT business NOT advert*)) AND pd(20080101-20131231)

Appendix B: Quality appraisal traffic light table

| Study ID | Fenton, 2013 | O'Boyle-Duggan, 2012 | Terry, 2012 | | Baumgartner, 2010 | Gerodimos, 2008 | Gerodimos, 2012 | Tuukkanen, 2012 | Vromen, 2011 | Ward, 2013 | | Burd, 2007 | Cucinelli, 2010 | Jean-Charles, 2011 |
|---|--|----------------------|-------------|--|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|--|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Explicit theoretical framework? | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Aims and objectives of study clearly stated? | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Aims and objectives of the study achieved | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | Y/N | ● |
| Sample clearly described (service users/ other participants) | Y/ N | ● | ● | | ● | ● | Y/N | Y/N | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Recruitment/ selection process clearly described? (Service users / other participants) | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Clear description of the context of the study | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Generalizability of findings (high/ medium/ low) | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Clear description of the study methodology | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Systematic data collection | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Clear description of the methods employed for data analysis | Y/ N | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Interpretations and conclusions clearly derived from the data | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Study involved intervention/ service enabling children/ young people to express their views | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Children/ young people's views of the intervention reported | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Appropriate data collection methods used to help children/ young people to express their views of the intervention | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Appropriate methods used to ensure data analysis was grounded in the views of children/ young people | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Children/ young people participated in the design and conduct of the study | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Children/ young people participated in the design and conduct of the intervention | ● | ● | ● | | Y/N | ● | ● | ● | Y/N | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Children/ young people participated in the intervention evaluation | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Ethical approval sought for the participation of children/ young people | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | Y/? | ● | ● |
| Ethical approval sought for the participation of other participants (e.g. students) | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Weight of Evidence (WoE) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A = The trustworthiness of the results judged by the quality of the study within the accepted norms for undertaking the particular type of research design used in the study (methodological quality) (high/medium/low) | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| B = The appropriateness of the use of that study design for addressing the systematic review's research question (methodological relevance) | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| C = The relevance of focus of the research for answering the review question. (topic relevance) | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| D = Judgement of overall weight of evidence (WoE) based on the assessments made for each of the criteria A-C. | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Code: Green= Yes/ high = ; Red = No/ low; Yellow = Unclear/ medium; Black = N/A | Mixed scores refer to differences between individual study components. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |