

Unga ryttares rätt till delaktighet

En villkorad rättighet?

av

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Akademisk avhandling

Avhandling för doktorsexamen i idrottsvetenskap
vid Gymnastik- och idrottshögskolan,
som enligt beslut av rektor kommer försvaras offentligt
fredagen den 23 maj 2025 klockan 13:15,
i Aulan, vid Gymnastik- och idrottshögskolan, GIH, Stockholm.

Opponent: Professor Susanna Hedenborg
Malmö universitet

Waerner, Thérèse: Unga ryttares rätt till delaktighet: En villkorad rättighet?
Avhandlingsserie för Gymnastik- och idrottshögskolan Nr 37 (2025)

Abstract:

The overall aim of this thesis is to analyse the conditions for young equestrians (aged 15-17) to exercise their right to have a voice. The thesis is grounded in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The article states that 'every child has the right to express their views in all matters affecting them, and to have their views given due weight' (UNCRC, 1989).

Equestrianism is one of the largest youth sports in Sweden in terms of the number of participants. The Swedish Equestrian Federation states that the federation works to include young equestrians so that their voices are heard. Moreover, equestrian sport is known for developing young people in leadership and responsibility. However, despite this, there is anecdotal evidence from the #MeToo movement (#visparkarbaku) that reveals a culture in which young equestrians are silenced and vulnerable.

Taking a sociocultural perspective, the study examines the conditions for young equestrians to have a voice, and how they want to be involved. It further examines how social and political participation is shaped by norms and hierarchies. A combination of methods has been applied to address these objectives, including a widespread online survey and ethnographic fieldwork that was conducted at two Swedish riding schools.

The findings identify a culture where young equestrians appear content within their sporting context while simultaneously adapting to hierarchical structures. The thesis underscores the importance of creating an inclusive culture in which young equestrians feel respected. This, in turn, may contribute to a safer and more engaged sporting context. The study also emphasizes the role of riding instructors in facilitating participation, suggesting that conscious efforts to engage young people in dialogue can enhance their sense of inclusion. Additionally, the horse is identified as a part of creating meaningful participation, contributing both to social and political participation. This thesis empirically contributes to the understanding of youth participation in sport, especially offering insights for enhancing the involvement of young equestrians.

Language: Swedish text with a summary in English
ISBN: 978-91-988127-8-7
<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:gih:diva-8662>

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