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# Study motivation – complexity in social interactions and didactics.

Upper secondary school teachers' and students' views on students' motivation to study.

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## Background: Upper secondary school reform in Sweden year 2011 - to increase throughput

- In order to increase the number of student who successfully complete upper secondary school, Sweden reformed its upper secondary school system in year 2011.
- Despite the new system the throughput is unchanged. Every fourth student interrupts his upper secondary studies.
- The main explanation is a lack of study motivation among students. 53 percent of the upper secondary school students reported low study motivation.

# Aim and research questions

- The aim of the study is to describe and analyze what determines student motivation or lack of motivation to study and differences between four study programs.
- Research questions:
  - a) What determines upper secondary school students' motivation/lack of motivation to study?
  - b) What are teachers' and students' perceptions on how to increase students' study motivation in upper secondary school and reasons/explanations for low study motivation?
  - c) To what extent is motivation related to the conditions for the implementation of the course/didactical approaches?
  - d) Are there significant differences between four study program concerning learning and teaching strategies which has impact on students' study motivation?

# Emperical standpoints 1(2)

## *Sample*

- Four different study programmes (theoretical, vocational and individual) selected: Social Science, Social Care, Individual Choice and Vehicles and Transport programmes.
- The programmes were selected in order to get
  - ❖ variation in what is theoretically versus practical oriented programs,
  - ❖ ensuring a reasonable distribution between boys and girls,
  - ❖ representing a possible variation in pupils with regard to learning strategies and
  - ❖ representing student groups with different challenges in learning.

# Emperical standpoints 2(2)

- Case study (one middle-sized municipality in northern Sweden).

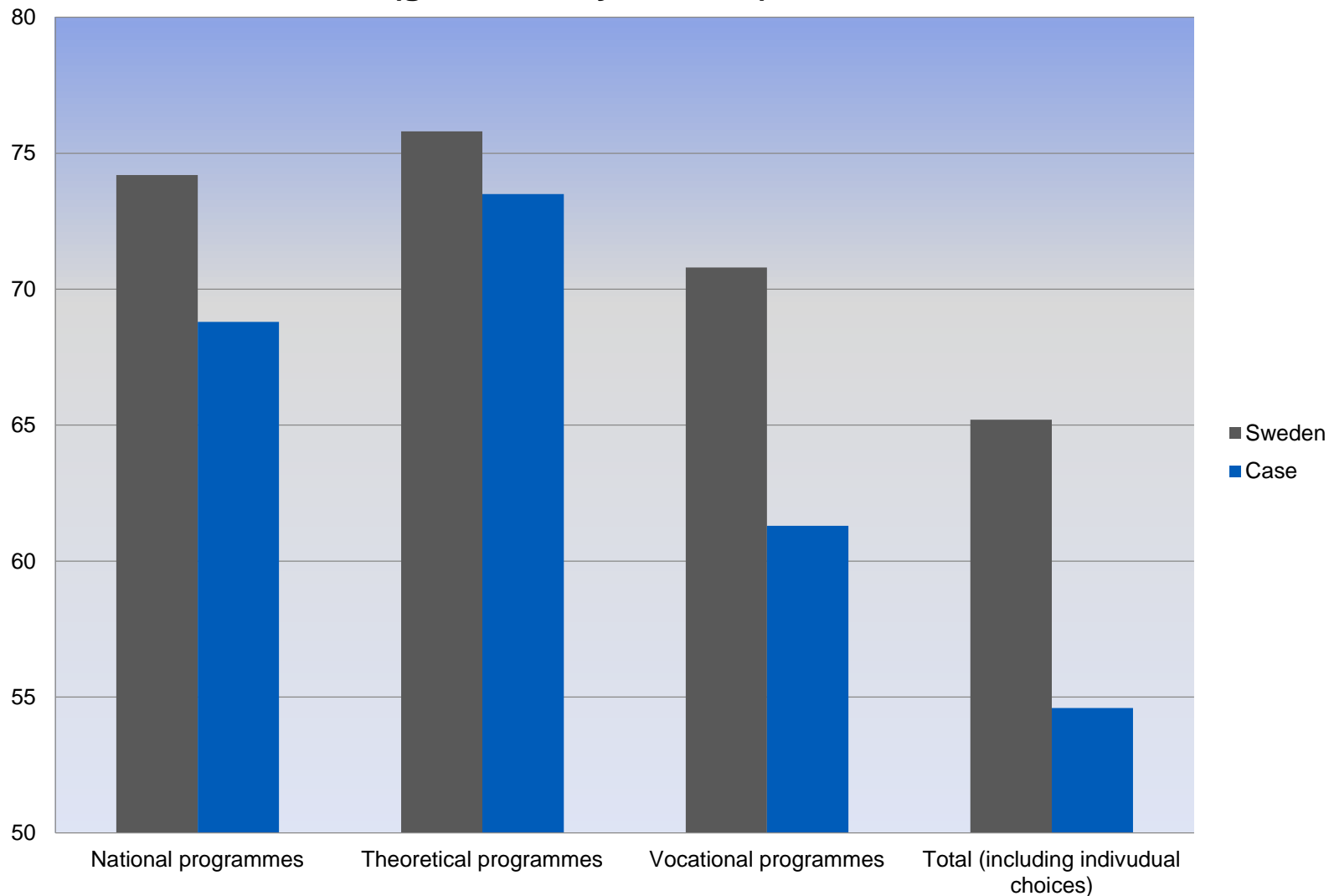
## *Data collection method*

- Semi-structured interviews (20 teachers and 12 students).
- Web-survey (students, n=207).

## • *Analysis method*

- Quantitative analysis of web-based questionnaire. Descriptive statistics. Significance testing.
- Interviews analyzed by hybrid content analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006)

## The case: Percentage of degrees awarded after three years (graduation year 2016)



# Theoretical approach

- Motivation is usually defined as an internal state that arouses, directs and maintains behavior. (Woolfolk, 2016).
- Research often highlights internal factors (Wery & Thomson, 2013).
- A broader perspective is needed (Blomberg, 2016; Hugo, 2011; Håkansson & Sundberg, 2012)
- Motivation is more about transaction than interaction (Perry, Turner & Meyer, 2006)
- Students´ learning strategies and teachers´ teaching strategies affects study motivation (Boström & Bostedt, 2020)
- ***Motivation is by us not only understood as an individual aspect, but also as negotiating meaning in social interaction.***

## Theory; reasons for lack of study motivation

**Internal motivation** – individual factors.

**External motivation**- school and classroom situation.

”Even if we imagine that motivation depends on the individual, that it is a psychological factor, science shows something else: Motivation originates in dynamic relationships between people, it is contextual and changeable rather than generalizable and stable, and is also related to psychological experiences such as emotions”. (Håkansson, Sundberg 2012, 146-147)





# Swedish research on students' study motivation

- International research on student motivation is extensive, but not as prominent in the Swedish educational context (Giota, 2013).
- The most important factors for improving students' motivation are;
  - a) the supportive interaction between teacher and student and
  - b) access to student health (The Union for Swedish Students & The Teachers' National Association, 2014).

# Strong link ....

Strong links between motivation and a) communicated expectations b) clear feedback on results, c) interaction between teacher and pupil and between students, d) positive climate and e) teacher leadership (Perry, Turner & Meyer, 2006).

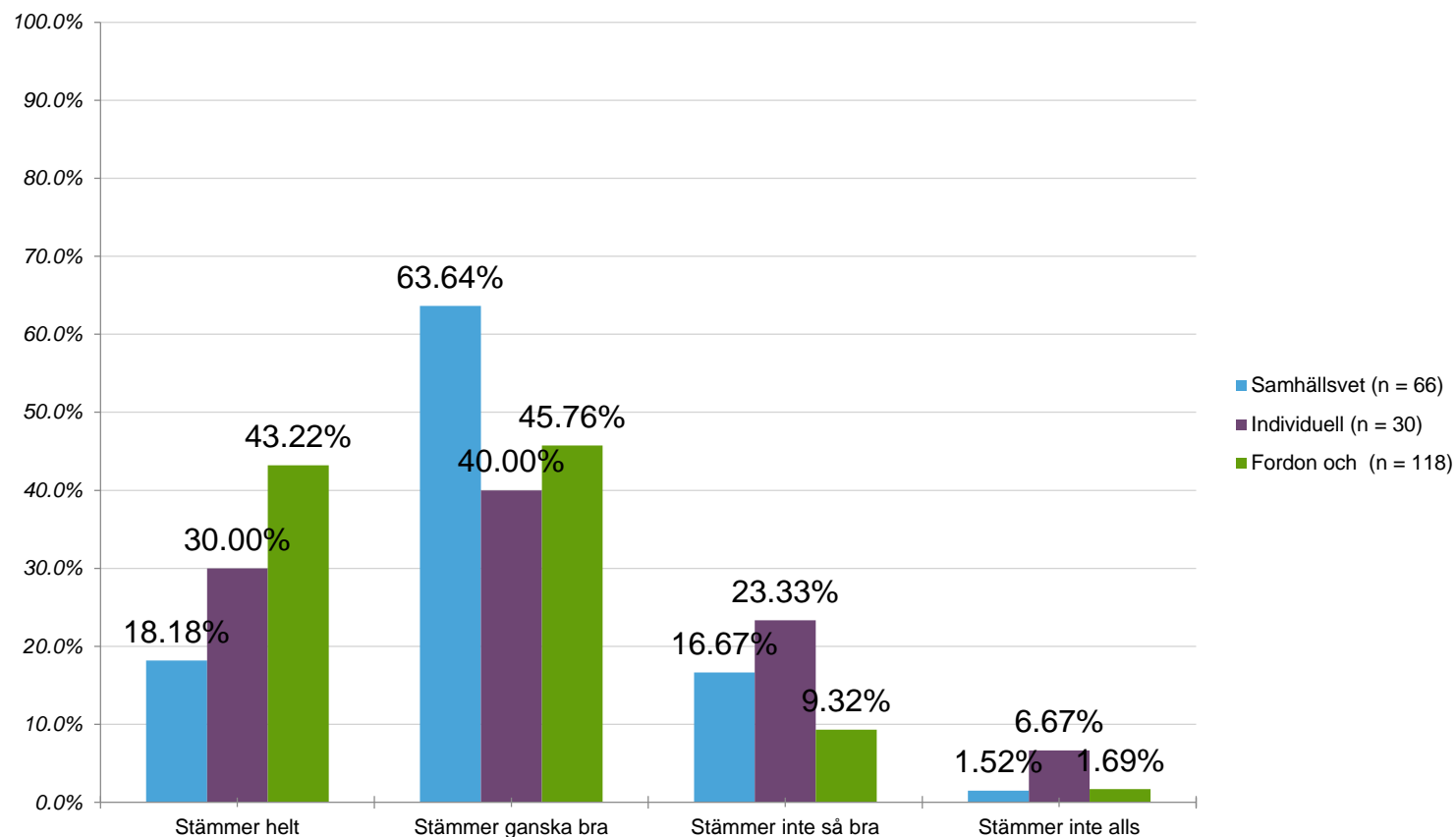


# Results 1(3)

- Well-being and safety in the learning environment are important for student's study motivation.
- The class / group / comrades constitute a motivation-creating context for the students.
- Good learning environments are also emphasized as important.
- The teachers emphasized the importance of adaptations and that smaller groups in the learning environment are important for study motivation.
- The students emphasized the external learning environment, the physical space, as important for study motivation.
- The teachers highlighted the importance of a well thought out and balanced parenting support.

# Examples from the empirical material

## My school is a place where I learn a lot



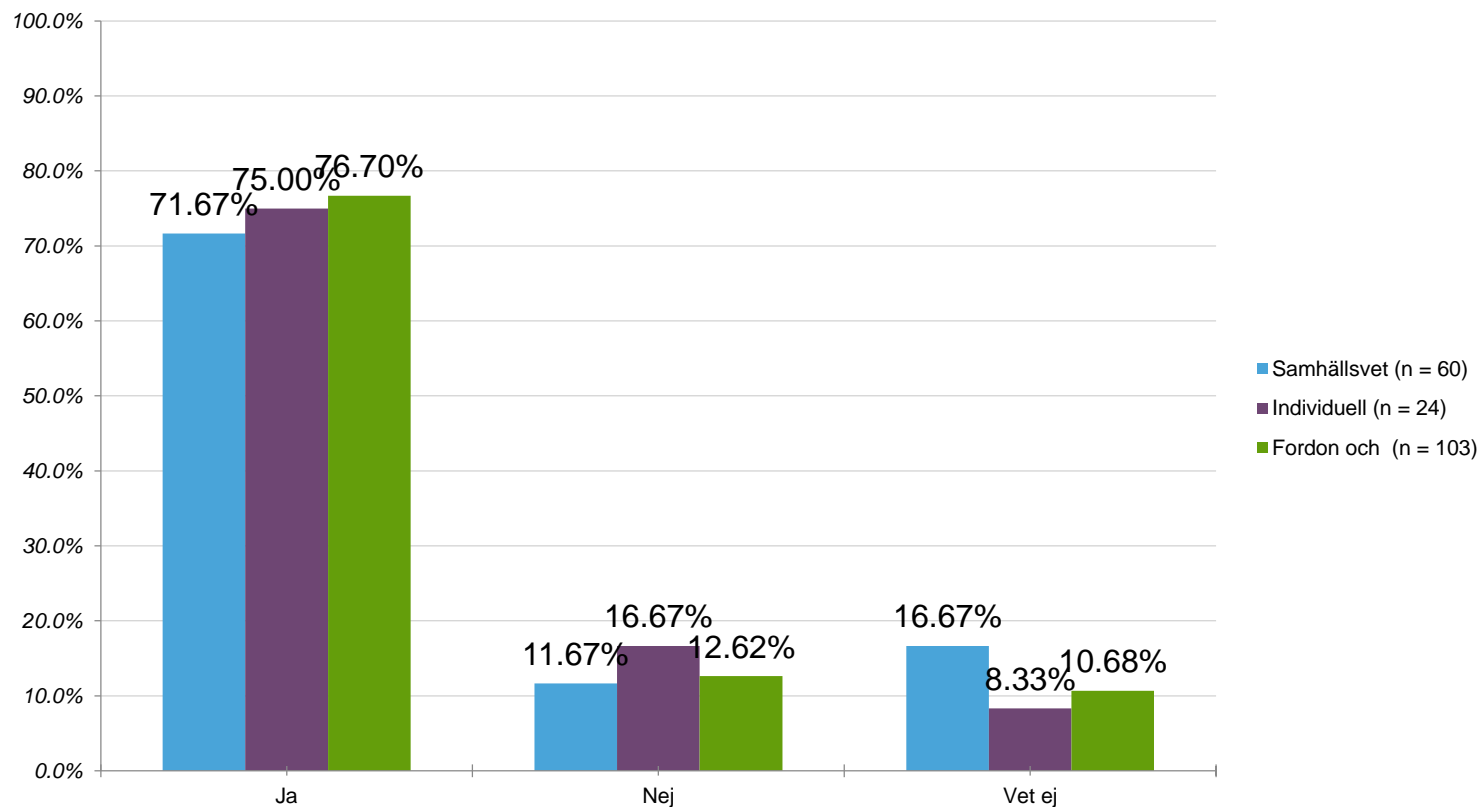
## Results 2 (3)

Both groups, students and teachers, emphasize the teachers' importance for study motivation. Learning takes place

- a) through collaboration with a teacher,
- b) by listening to teachers and peers and by more of learning-by-doing,
- c) through a structure for the learning given by the teachers and
- d) by the teachers having a planning and well-thought-out didactics for teaching and learning processes characterized by a variation in teaching methods.

## Examples from the empirical material

### When it is difficult I learn best together with a teacher



# Significant differences / learning strategies

LEARNING STRATEGIES	STATISTICS
<b>Structure;</b> Highly structure vs own structure	$p = 0,007^{**}$
<b>Perceptual preferences</b> Visual text Visual pictures Auditory, Learning-by-doing, Hands-on learning	$p = 0,020^*$
<b>Sociological preferences</b> Group, Alone, Teacher	$p = 0,365$
<b>Variation</b> Different vs similar ways	$p = 0,003^{***}$
<b>External motivation</b>	$P = 0,184$
<b>Whole vs parts</b>	$P = 0,404$

# Significant differences / teaching strategies

TEACHING STRATEGIES	STATISTICS
<b><i>Didactic methods</i></b> Problem based learning Text book learning Project oriented learning	p = 0,000 ***
<b><i>Constellation</i></b> Individual learning Small group	p = 0,003 ***
<b><i>Learning Media</i></b> Good textbooks Digital learning media Good exercises	p = 0,001 ***



# Results 3(3)

Reasons for a *lack* of study motivation is found in factors such as

- a) learning environments,
- b) learning strategies,
- c) teaching planning,
- d) individual ambitions,
- e) home-school interaction,
- f) didactic choices
- g) life situation

# Conclusions

- The results indicate the validity of the interactive motivational perspective where both the student's own choice and responsibility for school work and learning (internal motivation factors) need to be linked to external motivation factors.
- There is an interaction between situation and person that precedes processes concerning the negotiation of meaning in the social interaction (transaction).
- Motivation can then be seen as a process integrated into a larger whole, impossible to separate from learning, individual differences, the nature of tasks or social context.
- There are significant differences in learning and teaching strategies between the four program, which indicates the importance of awareness for both teachers and students about the preferences of groups and individuals.

# Further research

- Differences between study programs
- Differences between students' and teachers' view on study motivation
- Gender differences??
- Longitudinal studies on study motivation
- Differences in teaching and learning strategies
- Didactical approaches supporting study motivation
- .....

**BEING MOTIVATED.....**



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