

# Motivation, Commitment and Psychological Ownership among Student Team Entrepreneurs

Research Comparing Proakatemia Tampere and UWE TE Bristol

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## TIIVISTELMÄ

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Motivaatio, sitoutuminen ja psykologinen omistajuudentunne opiskelijatiimiyrittäjillä

Tutkimuksen vertailukohteina Proakatemia Tampere ja UWE TE Bristol

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Opinnäytetyö käsitteli motivaatiota, sitoutumista ja psykologista omistajuudentunnetta opiskelijatiimiyrittäjillä sekä niihin liittyviä tekijöitä käyttämällä kahta korkeakoulua tutkimuskohteena ja vertailemalla näitä. Tutkimuksen ja vertailun kohteena ovat Proakatemia Tampere sekä University of The West of England Bristol.

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli tutkia eroja ja yhtäläisyyksiä näiden kahden yksikön välillä ja selvittää eroavatko ne toisistaan (ja jos, niin miksi) motivaation, sitoutumisen ja psykologisen omistajuudentunteen näkökulmista sekä mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat eroihin.

Tutkimuksen aineisto koostui teoriaosuudesta, teemahaastatteluista ja opiskelijakyselyistä. Teoreettinen osuus käsitteli pedagogista metodologiaa, motivaatiota, sitoutumista ja psykologista omistajuudentunnetta. Tutkimuksen teemahaastattelut toteutettiin keväällä 2019 ja niihin osallistui 12 tiimivalmentajaa. Opiskelijakyselyt toteutettiin kesän 2019 aikana ja niihin osallistui 74 opiskelijaa.

Tulosten mukaan motivaatio, sitoutuminen ja omistajuudentunne olivat vahvoja teemoja tiimiyrittäjyydessä. Niiden syntyyn vaikuttavat eniten yhteinen tavoite, johon opiskelijatiimiyrittäjät haluavat sitoutua sekä yhdessä tekeminen. Tämän kaltaisen yhteisen, tavoitteellisen toiminnan pohjalta tiimiyrittäjät alkavat kokea tiimiä omakseen, jolloin voidaan puhua omistajuudentunteen syntymisestä.

Opiskelijatiimiyrittäjien taloudellinen sitouttaminen tiimiyritykseen on tulosten mukaan tärkeä tekijä sitoutumisen ja omistajuudentunteen syntymisessä. Yhteisten, innostavien tavoitteiden asettaminen taas on suurimmassa roolissa motivaation syntymisessä. Vapautta omissa opinnoissa arvostetaan, mutta sen tuoma vastuu halutaan jakaa kollektiivisesti muiden opiskelijatiimiyrittäjien kanssa.

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Asiasanat: opiskelijat, tiimi, yrittäjät, motivaatio, sitoutuminen, psykologinen omistajuudentunne

## **ABSTRACT**

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu  
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This thesis dealt with motivation, commitment and psychological ownership among team entrepreneurs and the factors that were related to those. It was implemented in two university units applying Tiimiakatemia pedagogical methodology: Proakatemia in Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Finland and University of The West of England Team Entrepreneurship Bristol, UK.

The purpose of the thesis was to study the similarities and the differences between the two units and to find out if these two differ (and if so, how) from each other regarding motivation, commitment and psychological ownership and what are the factors related to those differences.

The thesis consisted of a theoretical part, theme interviews and student surveys. The theoretical part dealt with the pedagogical methodology, motivation, commitment and psychological ownership. The theme interviews were held in spring 2019 and 12 team coaches took part in them. The student surveys were implemented in summer 2019 and 74 students took part in them.

According to the results, motivation, commitment and psychological ownership were relevant factors in student team entrepreneurship. The most crucial thing in creating those was a common goal that the student team entrepreneurs wanted to commit to and operate together. This kind of shared, common operating creates psychological ownership among the team entrepreneurs as they start to feel the team their own.

The results also show that financial commitment towards the team company, in particular, is an important factor in creating commitment and psychological ownership. Setting shared, inspiring goals on the other hand, is the most important factor in creating motivation. Freedom is appreciated in these studies, but the responsibility that follows from it, students want to share with other team entrepreneurs.

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Key words: students, team, entrepreneurs, motivation, commitment, psychological ownership

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION .....	6
1.1	Background .....	6
1.2	Purpose .....	6
1.3	Thesis outline .....	7
2	PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH .....	8
2.1	A team .....	8
2.2	Student-centred learning .....	8
2.3	Tiimiakatemia methodology .....	9
2.4	Proakatemia methodology .....	10
2.5	UWE Team Entrepreneurship methodology .....	11
2.6	Comparison between Proakatemia and UWE TE .....	12
3	MOTIVATION, COMMITMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP .....	14
3.1	Motivation .....	14
3.2	Commitment .....	17
3.3	Psychological ownership .....	19
3.4	Summary .....	20
4	RESEARCH APPROACH .....	22
4.1	Coach interviews .....	22
4.1.1	Research design .....	22
4.1.2	Data collection .....	23
4.1.3	Analysis .....	24
4.2	Student surveys .....	24
4.2.1	Research design .....	25
4.2.2	Data collection .....	25
4.2.3	Analysis .....	26
5	RESULTS .....	27
5.1	Coach interviews UWE TE .....	27
5.2	Coach interviews Proakatemia .....	31
5.2.1	Coach interviews summary .....	35
5.3	Student surveys .....	36
6	DISCUSSION .....	45
6.1	Conclusions .....	45
6.2	Validity and reliability .....	47
6.3	Implications .....	49
	SOURCES .....	51

APPENDICES .....	54
Appendix 1. Student survey .....	54
Appendix 2. Relative distributions of the student surveys .....	55

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Tiimiakatemia is a unit of the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, Finland, which specializes in marketing and entrepreneurship. The operations started in 1993 and since 2001 Tiimiakatemia has been an independent unit of the Degree Programme in Business Administration at the Jyväskylä UAS. The studies in Tiimiakatemia begin by forming teams and each team establishes a business. The team stays together throughout the studies and implements various types of projects for outside customers. Students' gain new experiences and skills by working in various projects and learning in the team with the help of coaches by whom the work is tutored. Nowadays Tiimiakatemia is a trademark and new Team Academies are being founded around the world. Motivation, commitment and psychological ownership are among the key topics when discussing about these studies.

## 1.2 Purpose

Proakatemia in Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Finland (*Proakatemia*) and University of The West of England Team Entrepreneurship Bristol, UK (*UWE TE*) are both applying the pedagogical methodology of Tiimiakatemia, although Proakatemia is an independent unit developed in Tampere UAS, not a Tiimiakatemia as such and UWE TE also has some procedures that vary from Tiimiakatemia.

The purpose of the thesis was to study similarities and differences between the two units and find out if these two differ (and if so, how) from each other regarding motivation, commitment and psychological ownership and what are the factors related to those differences. The results can be applied to further develop the two units. In general level, other similar kind of units could benefit from the results as well.

In this thesis, the term unit is used when discussing the two subjects in a general level, whereas “program” or “course” is used in the research analysis when discussing deeper about the study contents of Proakatemia and UWE TE.

### **1.3 Thesis outline**

The thesis applied both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Qualitative method was used when interviewing the coaches in both Tampere and Bristol. Eleven coaches in total took part in the interviews. Quantitative research method was used for the students by collecting data with a questionnaire in both Tampere and Bristol. The number of students who took part in the surveys was 74. Both coaches and students were chosen for the study to get in-depth information. The students and their experiences give first-hand information from the student point of view, whereas coaches are experts of the whole team learning process.

In the following chapters, first Tiimiakatemia methodology and the two units are described (Chapter 2). This is followed by the description of the three key topics of motivation, commitment and psychological ownership (Chapter 3). In the chapter 4 the research approach is presented, followed by the results (Chapter 5) and conclusions (Chapter 6).

## **2 PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH**

This chapter introduces the two units under study in this thesis, their methodology and history. It also introduces the pedagogical methodology of Tiimiakatemia, which is the base of both these units.

First, the topics of a team and student-centred learning are introduced as those are the mainstay of the studies.

### **2.1 A team**

“A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable” (Katzenbach and Smith 1993). At Tiimiakatemia, a team consists of a group of students whose common purpose is learning and developing their professional skills, who set common learning goals, and who support and help each other on their journey towards these goals. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 117.)

At Tiimiakatemia, teams agree on certain rules and so the individual members learn to take control of their own learning, within the team. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 117.)

### **2.2 Student-centred learning (SCL)**

Over the past years, the concept of SCL has made its way into the policy discourse on higher education. SCL is not limited to a certain methodology, it is rather a change of mindset and culture in the institution. The base of student-centred learning is to empower individual learners, implement new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum which is more focused on the learner. (Todorovski, Nordal, Isoski 2015.)

Self-directiveness is a needed skill in today's work life, yet traditional educational system does not rely on that. The students do not have a lot of freedom when choosing the subjects or their working methods. This kind of teaching does not create future workers who are ready to adapt, think in creative ways and be self-directive. Breaking down the traditional learning structures is the only way to learn new competencies. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 16.)

### 2.3 Tiimiakatemia methodology

The concepts of a team and student-centred learning are utilized in Tiimiakatemia methodology. Tiimiakatemia's founder, Mr. Johannes Partanen is responsible for the overall pedagogical development of Tiimiakatemia. The learning method of Tiimiakatemia has been developed since 1993 and several theories have been utilized in the development work. The head coach of Tiimiakatemia, Johannes Partanen, has adopted several ideas and processed them into a model which he calls Brain-industrial model. The model explains the principles of Tiimiakatemia way of doing and learning things.

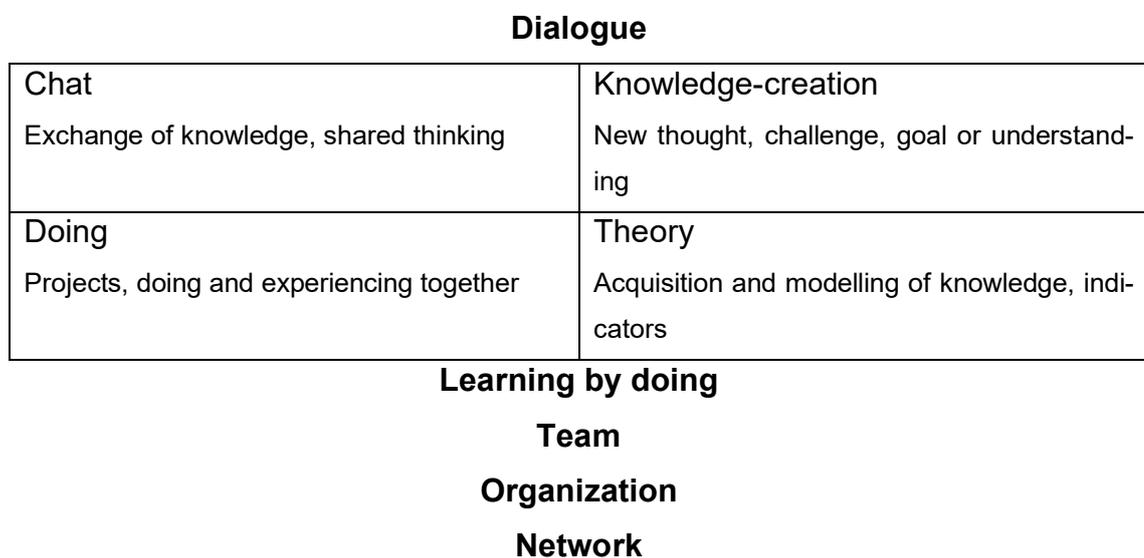


FIGURE 1. Structure of Brain-industrial Model (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 34)

- The “chat” box that refers to the sharing of ideas of the team members, their problems, exchange of experiences, talks about their projects and various discussions – including their feelings.

- The “knowledge creation” box that refers to the experiences of the students and their learning results. They are reflected on, evaluated and formulated and therefore new knowledge is created.
- The “theory” box that refers to the explicit knowledge which is provided from reading books, articles, research reports etc.
- The “do” box that refers to the learning coming from the implementation of real- life projects and experiences and the ability to transfer this knowledge. (Belet 2013.)

In Tiimiakatemia the students form teams at the beginning of their studies, establish team companies, run those throughout the studies and learn by doing so. Tiimiakatemia lists five values to support their ideology: freedom, experiences, action, learning through projects and team. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 21.)

Tiimiakatemia methodology is used in this thesis as a theory base insofar as it applies to both units observed in the research.

## **2.4 Proakatemia methodology**

Proakatemia is an entrepreneurship and team leadership unit, operating as a part of Tampere University of Applied Sciences. It was founded in 1999. Proakatemia studies are based on Tiimiakatemia model which originates from Tiimiakatemia Jyväskylä.

Proakatemia’s main goal is to promote entrepreneurship. At the beginning of the studies, students establish team companies, just like in Tiimiakatemia. They run these companies, usually co-operatives, throughout their studies creating projects for real customers. Besides the projects, Proakatemia students are required to take part in seminars that are relevant to their businesses, read books and write essays as well as take part in teams’ training sessions twice a week. These training sessions are created and ran by the students themselves. It is said that almost nothing is obligatory in Proakatemia and if something is not working, it is likely to be changed soon. (Saraketo 2017.)

The main goal being promoting entrepreneurship in Proakatemia the focus is on the business. Saraketo says in her article that in Proakatemia, the aim is to create sustainable businesses with increasing turnovers. (Saraketo 2017.) The students evaluate their projects and turnovers and their turnovers are also shared to the whole community once a month in a joint seminar called Projektori.

The academic part of the studies besides the essays is a final thesis at the end of the studies. This process does not differ from other fields of studies at Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

Feedback is mentioned as a crucial part of the learning at Proakatemia. The team entrepreneurs are said to be eager to collect feedback – from each other, the coach and their customers. The ability to give and receive feedback in a valuable way is stated to be an important skill in life and therefore this is a big focus in Proakatemia. (Saraketo 2017.)

## **2.5 UWE Team Entrepreneurship methodology**

UWE Team Entrepreneurship is a part of Tiimiakatemia learning network and therefore the base is Tiimiakatemia methodology. (Business, Entrepreneurship 2019.) UWE Team Entrepreneurship unit was founded in 2013.

At UWE TE the students form their team companies at the beginning of their studies as well as in Proakatemia. However, these team companies are not legally registered which is different from Proakatemia. The students run projects for real customers, but the financial responsibility and commitment is not required by the team company.

The students have training sessions twice a week and those are planned and ran by the team entrepreneurs. Each team will have their own team coach to support the process. Besides the project work and team learning sessions, the students have quite a lot of academic work in their studies compared to Proakatemia. At UWE TE there are no exams, as there's none in Proakatemia either, but the students have assignments to complete. The amount of independent work such as

individual assignments at UWE TE can rise as high as 63% of the study content. (Business, Entrepreneurship, 2019.) However, in these studies the team plays a role as well. A lot of the learning happens within the team by doing projects, running training sessions and giving and receiving feedback.

When promoting these studies, it is stated in each one that they require commitment and the ability to take responsibility for one's own learning.

## **2.6 Comparison between Prokatemia and UWE TE**

In the chart below there are gathered some main similarities and differences between the two units and the study contents of those. The main differences are bolded in the table.

TABLE 1. Similarities and differences between Proakatemia and UWE TE.

<b>Proakatemia</b>	<b>UWE Team Entrepreneurship</b>
founded in 1999	founded in 2013
Team companies <b>are legally registered</b>	Team companies <b>not legally registered</b>
Academic work (essays) <b>~24%</b>	Academic work is up to <b>63%</b>
<b>Highly business focused</b> (numbers are being followed and evaluated)	<b>Slightly less business focused</b> (numbers not followed or evaluated)
Training sessions with the team twice a week	Training sessions with the team twice a week
Each team has a team coach to support the process	Each team has a team coach to support the process
based <b>outside the university campus</b> area	based <b>inside the university campus</b>
Dialogue is a big part of the learning	Dialogue is a big part of the learning
Based on Tiimiakatemia methodology	Based on Tiimiakatemia methodology
Assessment through feedback (team members, coach, customers), <b>no marks</b>	Assessment through feedback (team members, coach) and <b>marking</b> (by coaches and module leaders)

The main differences that can be seen from this table are that Proakatemia seems to be more business focused: team entrepreneurs' turnover numbers are visible; the unit is based outside campus among other real companies and the team companies are legally registered. In UWE TE, on the other hand, the academic focus is much bigger and team entrepreneurs are evaluated by their coaches and teachers and they are given marks from their academic assignments.

### **3 MOTIVATION, COMMITMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP**

These three concepts: motivation, commitment and psychological ownership are related to the studies of team entrepreneurship and therefore discussed in this thesis. The concepts are described in this chapter. It also discusses the connection between these three concepts and why they are relevant themes for the team entrepreneurs.

#### **3.1 Motivation**

Motivation is highly attached to learning and therefore it is a key element in these programs. Interest towards the subject as well as meaningfulness and the benefit gained from the subject, create a base for motivation. People can be motivated in different ways: some of them feel motivated by the topic or task itself and some gain motivation when they have a chance to win others. (Burman 2019.)

In Salmela-Aro's article the concept of motivation in learning is defined as the feeling of capability, meaningfulness and operating. She points out the importance of various abilities such as setting clear and motivating goals, working together with others despite the different opinions, finding and utilizing new possibilities and recognizing different solutions for various challenges. (Salmela-Aro 2018.)

Määttä discusses about how people's thoughts and manners combine as action. It explains motivation through typical ways of approaching and operating which can be defined as a social-cognitive approach towards personalities and learning. In this approach the discussion focuses on how people set goals, define what they want and make sure they will achieve those. The role of emotions is a part of this as it affects people's ways of coping with challenges that arise in their lives. (Määttä 2018, 51-52.) The ways of approaching and operating can be demonstrated by the following (Table 2).

TABLE 2. Ways to approach and operate (applied from Salmela-Aro 2018, 51)

Approach	Expectations	Action	Outcome	Interpretation
Optimism	Success	Feeling of control, focusing on the task	Success	Self-supporting cause explanations
Defensive pessimism	Pondering through different options, likely to succeed	Focusing on the task	Success	Realistic cause explanations
Self-damaging	Likely to fail	Active procrastination	Likely to fail	Self-supporting cause explanations to certain extent
Learned inability	Failure	Passivism	Failure	Self-blaming cause explanations
Failing	Failure	Both active and passive procrastination	Failure	Self-blaming cause explanations

The process starts from the approach: how a person sees himself; what is his self-image and level of confidence. These usually define the expectations that a person sets for himself when coming across with a challenge. The expectations made are usually based on earlier experiences in similar situations and those create emotions. Next step is to create plans and goals based on those predictions which then lead into the next step (action). When a person feels capable of completing a challenge, the goals and plans are usually aiming for finding a solution. This creates action. However, if the person feels like he is not capable of completing a challenge, he may focus on avoiding the challenge and acting in a way by which he can explain his failure. The outcome is connected to the expectations and the action part follows from those. The process ends by a person interpreting why he did succeed or fail in the challenge. Researches have shown that usually when people succeed, they see that it is because of them, but if they fail it is usually explained by other factors. (Salmela-Aro 2018, 51-52.) When working in a team, each member's individual approaches should be discussed and taken into consideration as well, in order to the team to function properly.

Motivation in team work is not only one's responsibility, but the whole team's responsibility. As it is said in Salmela-Aro's book (2018) it is crucial that the team members do not only aim to achieve their own goals, but the goals that have been set as a team. If not, communal operation and learning are not really given a chance to happen. Team members can aim to keep up the motivation in situations where it seems like some of them are starting to lose focus. Team's common, shared motivation can be discussed once the team has a reason to operate. This means a common goal that everyone feels committed to and wants to achieve. (Salmela-Aro 2018, 52.) In today's work life people want to have responsibility, but they do not want to carry that alone. Responsibility is a huge factor in creating meaningfulness and it needs to be shared with a team. (Piha & Poussa 2012, 32-33.)

Ryan and Deci introduce the self-determination theory which is connected to intrinsic motivation. In this theory there are three needs that are crucial for one's self-motivation: needs for autonomy, needs for relatedness and needs for competence. Intrinsic motivation makes one to explore, extend and exercise their capacities and learn. (Ryan & Deci 2000.) Autonomy is seen as the freedom to decide what to do so that the will comes from within rather than from an external source. Relatedness means the need to be in contact with other people: show and feel that we care. Competence means the feeling of capability to complete tasks, cope with challenges and accomplish things. These are also highly attached to psychological ownership. (Burman 2019).

Unarguably, intrinsic motivation is desirable among the team entrepreneurs. The conditions are favourable for that to happen as the three needs are aimed to be covered in both Proakatemia and UWE TE. The students learn new competences and recognize the existing ones through their team members, coaches and customers. The need for relatedness is being created by the team: it is the learning and experimenting platform as well as something to be responsible for and accountable to. The students are in the centre of the studies and with all the freedom they have, the need for autonomy should be covered.

Try and error kind of thinking has become more popular over the past years as the working life has become very hectic and people are assumed to find a solution to a problem as it arises. This mindset along with action, experimenting and creativity have huge roles as factors in creating motivation and the will to learn. When one faces a challenging situation where there is a possibility to learn, it seems to be tempting and the learning itself can start by taking action. After all, we do not need much information before the action part can start – learning will follow from that. (Salakari 2009, 17-18). This goes aligned with the methodology used in Proakatemia and UWE TE.

Both UWE TE and Proakatemia offer a lot of freedom to the students. It is up to the students to decide a major part of their schedules during a normal week. This requires a high level of self-control and self-directiveness, both of which can be attached to motivation. As it is mentioned, one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are taking initiative. To offer students the appropriate level of freedom is a challenge in today's school life, yet inevitable in order to prepare them for the reality of work life. (Trilling & Fadel 2009.) Taking initiative requires motivation in order to develop into action. One of Tiimiakatemia's aims is to prepare students for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 124.)

### **3.2 Commitment**

In Tiimiakatemia learning is seen as an individual development process. The students are responsible for their own learning. "As the responsibility for one's learning is passed on to the student, he will grow into a responsible and dependable future professional." (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 137.) When students' learning process basically depends on their own level of commitment, it is likely that students find the motivation within themselves or they do not find this type of studying to be the right path for them. Studying at Tiimiakatemia is said to require a high level of self-control and self-directiveness. In the beginning the student's abilities to study this way vary a lot. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 117.)

When the teams have been formed in Tiimiakatemia, the next step is to create rules for the team. This is something that everyone needs to commit to. Realizing

what it means to commit to be a team member in Tiimiakatemia, is described as an important yet extremely hard process. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 66.) The process is said to be sort of an entrance exam to Tiimiakatemia for students to figure out if this kind of learning environment suits them. Teams develop during their journey, but it is said that the actual work starts when each of the team members commit to the team. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 66.)

In Lencioni's book (2017) there are five dysfunctions that a team may have. Third of those is lack of commitment. Lack of commitment is explained as a combination of two things: a desire of consensus and a need for certainty. (Buckley 2018.) In team work, neither of those is the aim. Although the decisions are made and conversations held in teams, those are not aiming to reach consensus. However, the possibility to voice an opinion and the feeling that it is heard, seem to be important for commitment. (Buckley 2018.) In fact, this seems to be the creating factor of commitment: the ability to defy a lack of consensus. (Lencioni 2017.) Dialogue is a highly used tool in Proakatemia and UWE TE. Most of the knowledge is being gained through dialogue as team members share their projects, ideas and experiences. These are also the places for team members to ask for opinions and help from each other. In this sense, the possibility to voice an opinion is put into practice and that way the level of commitment can be higher.

In team work, the team's benefit should always conquer individual's benefit. If the individual's personal goals are placed higher than the team's, it is likely that the team member has a low level of commitment towards the team. (Bullwinkle 2018.) Common goals are the key in motivation and when the goals are something that the team members feel inspired to achieve, they are also a key factor in commitment.

The factors that create commitment in team work are shared vision, definition of roles and responsibilities and promotion of group identity. Trust is the single most important thing in commitment and therefore lack of trust is also the prime reason for lack of commitment. (Bullwinkle 2018.) Building trust is said to be the base of the Proakatemia studies. This trust is shown to the students and the team by their peers, coaches and customers – all of which help the students to be more involved, learn and feel safe. (Nevalainen 2017.)

### 3.3 Psychological ownership

Psychological ownership is the feeling of the possession of a target – this may be a person, an object, concept or an organization. People will invest in the target of ownership to express who they are and to what they want to belong in. (Pickford, Joy & Roll 2016.) Psychological ownership answers to a question of “How much do I feel like the target is mine?”. There are three moods connected to psychological ownership: affection, identity and control over space. Affection is the authority or action towards a desired outcome. Identity means the definition of self and how to bring that forth to others. Control over space is the feeling of being comfortable in a space or in a task. (Burman 2019.)

Psychological ownership can be experienced in both personal and collective level – as a group. That way it doesn't only answer to what is seen as “mine”, but what is seen as “ours”. A collective sense of things that are “ours” can be developed in a group of people who perceive themselves as “us”. (Verkuyten & Martinovic 2017.) Ownership brings something extra in comparison to “What do we own?”. It is a powerful justification for actions and for the team's existence. Things such as collective self-esteem, belongingness, meaningfulness, empowerment and positive distinctiveness can be provided by ownership. What we consider to be “ours” can be an important aspect of how we understand and perceive ourselves. (Verkuyten & Martinovic 2017.) A collective ownership can be targeted into different physical subjects as well as non-physical subjects that are defined as “ours”. Those can be for example shared ideas. (Burman 2019.)

Psychological ownership can be associated with positive behavioural and psychological consequences such as greater commitment, greater accountability and greater job satisfaction when studying it on an organizational level. Other outcomes were for example personal risk-taking and caring and protecting behaviours towards the target of ownership. (Olickers 2013.) The positive consequences of psychological ownership can be categorized into two dimensions: enhancing responsibility and increasing value. (Wang et.al. 2006.) Psychological ownership and motivation are attached to each other as stated when observing

the self-determination theory. The theory discusses one's own feeling of their actions, capability and belongingness to the community that feels theirs. (Burman 2019.)

These consequences are aligned with Tiimiakatemia's ideology. One of the guiding ideas of Tiimiakatemia is to find people who are enthusiastic about their thoughts. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 55.) Psychological ownership creates better commitment and belongingness and through those the feeling of the target becoming "ours" can arise. A feeling of belongingness is stated to be an important factor in team work as it increases motivation, loyalty and effort. (Denny 2006, 24.)

### **3.4 Summary**

The three concepts have strong connections to each other. It seems to be that motivation is the base of everything as it starts the process of actions. When a certain stage of intrinsic motivation is created through meaningfulness, competence, autonomy, action and relatedness, it leads into greater commitment. Commitment is built from the motivational factors such as common goals, shared vision and a group identity. The combination of motivation and commitment can then lead into psychological ownership which can in a sense, be described as the highest level of commitment. This is a stage where there is a strong justification for the team's existence and actions. The connections are demonstrated in the following figure (figure 2).



FIGURE 2. Connections between motivation, commitment and psychological ownership

## **4 RESEARCH APPROACH**

### **4.1 Coach interviews**

The coach interviews were held by using qualitative research methods. The general framework for qualitative research is that it seeks to explore phenomena and therefore the instruments use is more flexible. In qualitative research common methods to use are for example in-depth interviews, focus groups and participant observation. (Mack et.al. 2005.) A qualitative research doesn't require large number of respondents.

In this case, a qualitative research is the most useful way of getting in-depth information and to point out individual's experiences of this relatively new phenomena of team learning and coaching as a part of it. In these interviews the focus is on student's motivation, commitment and psychological ownership from the coaches' point of view. The aim was to interview all the team coaches in both Proakatemia Tampere and UWE TE, Bristol.

Interviews are a great way to gather data because of their flexibility. The interviewer can choose what to ask, in which order, repeat the questions, correct misunderstandings and have a real conversation with the interviewee. Interviews also give the interviewer a freedom to choose whom to interview – who has experience and knowledge about the phenomena on hand. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 73-74.)

#### **4.1.1 Research design**

In this research the interviewing method was theme interviews. The phenomena covered motivation, commitment and psychological ownership in team entrepreneurs. The coaches are the experts and have experience of the phenomena by observing and coaching the team entrepreneurs throughout their studies.

All the coaches answered to 10 questions (table 3). With these questions the aim was to point out things that may increase or decrease students' motivation, commitment and psychological ownership, as well as research coaches' influence around these topics. The same questions were used both in Proakatemia and UWE TE.

TABLE 3. The questions used in theme interviews for the coaches.

What are the main advantages in this course?
What are the main difficulties / weaknesses in this course?
As a coach, how much do you think you can influence on students' motivation?
How important do you think the team is for one's motivation?
In what ways do freedom and student-centred learning appear in this course?
How would you define a team in this course?
What is the main purpose of the course?
Based on your experience, what are the main reasons to apply for this course?
How would you define academic work in this course?
What is your main goal as a coach?

#### 4.1.2 Data collection

The interviews were designed to be held as group interviews for all the coaches in each unit at once. In Proakatemia this was the case and seven coaches participated in the group interview. The length of the interview was 30 minutes.

In UWE TE the interviews were held individually due to scheduling. Five coaches in total were interviewed. The length per interview was 20-30 minutes.

### **4.1.3 Analysis**

In Proakatemia the group interview was held during the coaches' monthly meeting. It was facilitated by the interviewer and notes were taken to list the main points. The results are discussed anonymously and no connections to the interviewees can be made. The interview was not transcribed word for word, however it was made sure that the meanings didn't change from how it was originally stated.

At UWE TE the interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants. Each interview was held separately and recorded so that the main points could be listed afterwards. None of the interviews were transcribed word for word. Instead, those were transcribed by using selective transcript in which information that was irrelevant to the goals, was omitted. (Azevedo et.al. 2017.) However, it was made sure that the meaning didn't change from how it was originally stated.

When analysing the results, the aim was to gather all the relevant matters and analyse those from two aspects: in comparison between the two units and by reflecting those to the theory used in this thesis. Especially the matters that came up repeatedly, were brought up in the results.

## **4.2 Student surveys**

In quantitative research the data can be gathered from existing statistics or gathered by the researcher himself. Based on the purpose of the research, the target group and data collection method will be chosen. (Heikkilä 2008, 18.) Quantitative research methods are used when the aim is to reach a larger number of respondents.

Questionnaire is a common example of a quantitative research method. A systematic questionnaire is called a survey. This method is typically used when there are a lot of respondents. The data is being collected by using a research form.

(Heikkilä 2008, 19.) This was chosen to be the method in this research, because the aim was to reach as many students as possible from both units. In addition, an online survey was considered the most efficient way of reaching students from the two units.

#### **4.2.1 Research design**

The questionnaires were designed to match students from both units so apart from the language the questions were alike. There was a total of 19 questions in the questionnaires, all of them were designed to be mandatory to avoid a lack of responses. The questionnaires were anonymous. Questions were designed to give answers to topics of motivation, commitment and psychological ownership among the team entrepreneurs. All the questions were answered by using a five-point scale, number 5 being the highest. The description of the scale points varied based on the question on hand. The students were also asked their gender and level of studies.

#### **4.2.2 Data collection**

An online survey was created as the target groups were in two different countries. The students were sent a link through which they could fill in the questionnaire. It was informed in various channels such as Facebook, email, Slack and by the coaches. Regardless, the amount of responses remained relatively low. The total number of participants was 48 from Proakatemia and 26 from UWE TE. There are ~160 students in Proakatemia and ~150 in UWE TE. The response rate was ~30% in Proakatemia and ~17% in UWE TE.

The gender split varied between Proakatemia and UWE TE. In Proakatemia 73 % of the participants were female and 27 % male. In UWE TE 81 % of the participants were male and 19 % female. Students from all level of studies participated in the research.

What level / year are you at in yo...

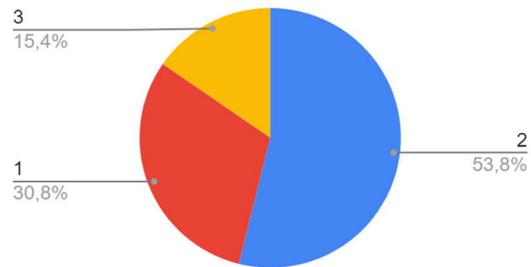


FIGURE 3. Participants' level of studies at UWE TE

Minkä vuoden opiskelija olet?

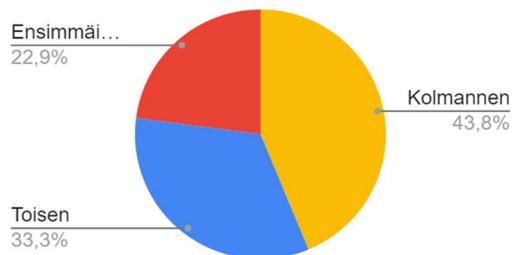


FIGURE 4. Participants' level of studies at Proakatemia

### 4.2.3 Analysis

The results were analysed by using the average of each response and comparing those between the two units. The relative distributions can be found as an appendix at the end of this thesis.

## 5 RESULTS

### 5.1 Coach interviews UWE TE

#### **Main advantages in the program**

When asking the main advantages of the program, there were a few themes that came up repeatedly. Freedom, problem solving skills and a student-centred learning methodology were mentioned more than once. Students have the possibility to gain experience at the same time as they study, which was brought up to be a good thing for the future work life. “Evidence show that there’s value in this kind of learning and people are more employable 2-3 years after graduating on average”. Such things as critical self-reflection skills, feedback from the peers and the coach and allowing people to find their own passions and doing that by action, were mentioned in this part as well.

#### **Main difficulties in the program**

Freedom was mentioned as an advantage as well as a difficulty in the coach interviews. In this context it was discussed using expressions such as “lack of frame” and “lack of structure”. One of the coaches described the situation as following: “Lack of structure can cause confusion which allows TE’s to hide and it takes time for them to realize that they’re in charge of their own destiny and they are able to develop themselves”. There is a connection between freedom and motivation, and it seems like it is hard to use that freedom correctly before knowing where to aim that motivation. “Lack of structure creates an environment for people to explore – they can get lost in that exploration – they can either choose to turn off and not engage or they know what they want to do and have freedom to do it”. This emphasises that in these types of studies there’s a possibility not to engage and it often happens if the students do not know what to do. It seems like freedom has both positive and negative impacts depending on whether the students know where to focus their energy.

Besides these, there were some factors mentioned as weaknesses or difficulties. The funding system in the UK requires the students to be accepted to the course based on their academic numbers and due to this there’s impacts of which lack

of gender equality was mentioned. In the UK, majority of the team entrepreneurs are male. In Tiimiakatemia methodology, it is mentioned that the aim is to reach gender equality.

In UWE TE, the students are based in the campus area. This was brought up as a possible downside and explained by the fact that the team entrepreneurs are more likely to see themselves as students rather than entrepreneurs based on their location. On the other hand, it was said that being based on the campus area also creates an environment in which the students can explore and try out their business ideas.

### **Coach's influence on student's motivation**

In this question the responses varied quite a lot. Some of the coaches felt like they have a strong impact on student's motivation and some of them felt like they have very little to none impact on student's motivation. The importance of creating a relationship with the team entrepreneurs came up more than once. "Coaches have an opportunity to create motivation through engagement and coaching.". Feedback, listening and rewarding for achievements were also mentioned as tools that may increase motivation. The coaches also felt that it is important to find out why the students may lack motivation and to make sure they know that help is available if they need it. However, it was also said that the motivation had to come from the student's side, and it is hard to build engagement – this being the situation in the UK in general, regardless of the field of study.

### **Importance of the team for one's motivation**

"If you are not trying or achieving anything the team should ask why and challenge". This sentence represents the accountability that team entrepreneurs are supposed to have towards the team.

The importance of individuals came up in this question. Term "core group" was used to describe a group of individuals within the team that have a high level of engagement and who will create that engagement for others as well. On the other hand, it was also said that there will always be individuals with very little to none engagement: "However, there will always be the outliers that have nothing to do with how the team behaves".

### **Freedom and student-centred learning in this program**

Freedom was already discussed in the first two questions and similar answers were brought up in this one. The elements to describe freedom and student-centred learning were that students lead the training sessions, define team strategies, do the projects they want, define individual goals and learn from each other through dialogue. It was also mentioned again that freedom also has downsides such as difficulties to know how to use that freedom and need for more structure and clear expectations. “Students are given tools, but it is up to them what they will do with those.” “This course is all about student-centred learning from structure to execution, there are some boundaries but inside those students have a lot of freedom”.

### **Definition of a team in this program**

When defining a team, the importance of goals was mentioned in almost every interview. As Richard Denny writes in his book *Motivate to Win*, it is impossible to be motivated without a specific goal. There’s also a connection to coach’s role – it is impossible to coach a team which has no goals or objectives. (Denny 2006.) In the interviews the team was defined as following: “A group of people who by working with each other generate more value both for themselves and for other people that they are working with.” “A supportive environment with awareness and expectations of those individuals within the team of what they can expect and how they can work with others.”. Things such as a common goal and a purpose for existing arose in the interviews.

Although the answers were relatively aligned, there were things mentioned to lack among UWE team entrepreneurs. It is common to work individually on the projects so working together was mentioned as a missing element. It was said that doing things together involves totally different learning from working on your own such as deeper relationships and the possibility to set more ambitious goals.

### **Purpose of the program**

When discussing the purpose of this program, there were certain themes that arose repeatedly: to create learning opportunities, an environment in which students can gain experiences, to create individuals who take initiative and therefore are ready to face the future work life and to develop self-management skills. These topics are clearly attached to Tiimiakatemia's goals. In Tiimiakatemia it is important to build competencies required in working life, for example the confidence and ability to learn, openness to new experiences, capability to make independent decisions, flexibility and capability to learn from others. (Leinonen et.al. 2004, 16.)

### **Why people apply for this program**

The fact that this type of studying is different, was brought up in this conversation. It is often seen as a new possibility and an alternative to traditional teaching models. Practical reasons such as no exams, experimental learning and no lectures were brought up as motivators to apply for this course. Other factors such as possibility to run projects, find out what to do in the future and a desire to become an entrepreneur also occurred around this question. It was also mentioned that in many ways this course in fact requires more work and engagement than the traditional ones, due to the combination of assignments and projects. The course was also described as a good place to learn how to communicate, learn patience, grow and to become independent in thinking and decision making.

### **Academic work in the program**

In UWE TE the amount of assignments is higher than in Proakatemia Tampere. The students are constantly balancing between academic work and project work. In the interviews it came up that students find it hard to focus on those two simultaneously: "They may feel stuck doing the assignments and they focus on them and projects are on hold". Some of the coaches seem to think that assignments support the project work, whereas some coaches see no link between those two. The assignments were described as beneficial for the TE's to learn how to write in different styles, engage to do research and to build critical skills on the sources, author and towards what they are reading.

### **Main goals as a coach**

In this part some of the coaches focused on the team in their answers, whereas some focused on the individuals. Following things were discussed: helping people to achieve their goals, understand each other, making the team as strong as possible and to be present and identify the needs of the team. Also, the coach's role in facilitating team dynamics in order to help them discuss and develop was brought up. One of the coaches described it as follows: "Through building a relationship with individuals, the team company, I create a space within the training sessions specifically, in which they feel safe enough to be themselves".

## **5.2 Coach interviews Proakatemia**

### **Main advantages in the program**

The themes that came up around this question among Proakatemia's coaches were innovativeness, sense of community, a possibility to influence, continuous learning, utilization of all resources (students), team work, trust and freedom. It was mentioned that the ability to solve problems tends to be much higher in a team compared to individuals. Among the coaches it became clear how important they see the fact that in Proakatemia students are the ones responsible for the community and its development: "the feeling of ownership creates a certain attitude towards cooperation". In the conversation the coaches emphasized that in Proakatemia, the values are visible in a daily basis and the teams also learn to live by them.

### **Main difficulties in the program**

When discussing the difficulties, the word reflection came across multiple times. It was mentioned in a sense that the speed of actions is often so high, that it does not leave time for reflection. Reflection, however, is seen as a crucial part of development, and as something that requires more attention. Another topic was an "endogamy" in a sense that people tend to stay in Proakatemia and create a "bubble" which contains only the people's points of views who are inside the premises. This would best be handled by having more contact in to the outside world. They also mentioned that it would be beneficial to have students from various fields of studies to join Proakatemia. One of the coaches also brought up a

concept of “the pain of letting go” and described it as: “We develop something new all the time, but we are not able to let go of anything old as we do”.

### **Coach’s influence on student’s motivation**

The coaches were quite unanimous around this question and felt like they have a strong influence on student’s motivation. Following ways to impact came up in the conversation: the choice of words, showing an example, showing interest towards the team members, ideas and actions, honesty, both positive and constructive feedback and the importance of building trust between the coach and the team. It was also mentioned that it is allowable to utilize your personality when coaching in order to find the most suitable way to do that. One way to influence student’s motivation was to have development discussions with individual team members.

### **Importance of the team for one’s motivation**

The importance of the team for one’s motivation was undebatable in this conversation. Every coach saw that as a crucial part of the process, one of them described it as: “Important yet painful process”. It seems that they feel like the team helps individuals to address their motivation. As a challenge in the beginning one of the coaches mentioned that individuals observe others’ motivation when they could address that attention towards their own motivation. To build motivation and commitment they brought up questions that each team member must weigh: “How will I present myself as a team member?” and “What will I bring in to the discussions?”.

### **Freedom and student-centred learning in this program**

These topics were described to be the base of everything: students are involved in every step of the way – from choosing the coaches and hosting guests to the board of Proakatemia. “There’s not a thing where students would not be involved”.

Freedom seems to be a big topic in Proakatemia and it creates similar outcomes as in UWE TE – depending on the student’s situation it is either powerful or confusing. It was also mentioned that individually students may have less freedom than in traditional studies, because the decisions are made mostly as a team. It

was discussed that sometimes freedom appeals as lack of focus due to various options. Especially in the beginning it seems to be that students feel a bit lost with the freedom, until they figure out where to go with that.

### **Definition of a team in this program**

Teams in Proakatemia create their own values and ways of operating. Those are not similar within each team, but they will need to be aligned with the community. The coaches in Proakatemia described a team as: “a learning group of people, who are dependable for each other’s work” as well as “a platform for learning and an enabler”. With the support of the team, bigger experiments become possible.

### **Purpose of the program**

When asking the purpose of the course, the responses varied. Everyone seemed to agree that the purpose is to prepare work life ready individuals to be a part of the society. However, some stated that the number one priority is to increase entrepreneurship and even feel like the system has failed if that doesn’t apply. Some coaches took a bit more relaxed approach and mentioned that creating as good employees as possible for the future work life is the purpose of the course. Other mentions were “building a cooperation muscle” as one of the coaches said and growing individuals to be a beneficial part of the society.

### **Why people apply for this program**

The coaches seemed to agree with this question and the outcome is that people apply for this course because they are interested in entrepreneurship, learning by doing, learning in a team and the learning methods. Things such as no lectures and no exams were also mentioned in the conversation. In Proakatemia the gender split is quite equal – a rough split is somewhere around 55-60% male and 40-45% female.

### **Academic work in the program**

In the end of these studies students have a thesis to write as their last academic work. This seems to be the biggest part of the academic work in Proakatemia. To support that, students write essays throughout their studies in order to learn how to read, reflect and write. However, it was mentioned that students' research abilities are relatively weak. This often occurs when starting the thesis process, but it develops during the process. In Proakatemia the knowledge will mostly be gathered during and for actions.

In the conversation it became clear that other abilities are valued over academic skills. Themes mentioned around this were practical skills over academic knowledge, how to take initiative, sociality and getting along with the team. It is mentioned that academic approach has never been the aim in Proakatemia. It is said that sometimes the attitude towards academics is negative among the students. This may cause a lot of own opinions and thoughts in the essays rather than theory knowledge, as one of the coaches figured.

### **Main goals as a coach**

The coaches agreed on some themes around this question, for example they want to develop good, well-functioning individuals who are ready for future work life. One coach mentioned the goal to be to develop "individuals who are capable of becoming entrepreneurs or to move forward to responsible roles in work life". They want individuals to trust their capabilities, find their places and be able to operate things well. Themes that were also mentioned were working in a team rather than individually, courage, perseverance, the ability to "bounce back", resilience and the courage to fail. One of the coaches described entrepreneurship as following: "entrepreneurship is an attitude which is the opposite of cynical depression and apathy".

### 5.3 Coach interviews summary

There are some things that differ from each other between the two units. Based on the interview results, Proakatemia seems to emphasise entrepreneurship and it is seen in the way the students see themselves as well as how the coaches see them. In UWE TE the entrepreneurial thinking is not that strong as the team is mostly described as a learning platform and students' freedom to explore themselves by taking part in projects that are mostly individual ones, was brought up. The main points are gathered below.

TABLE 4. Summary of Proakatemia and UWE TE coaches' interviews' main points

Proakatemia	UWE TE
located in a business area -> students see themselves mostly as entrepreneurs	located in the campus area -> students see themselves mostly as students
academic skills are not practiced much	high level of academic skills
a strong community -> team entrepreneurs are engaged in everything	team is a learning platform
lack of reflection -> "staying in an own bubble"	project work / academic work could be combined better
lack of direction -> possibility for students not to engage	lack of direction -> possibility for students not to engage
students work on projects in teams	it is common to work independently on projects
Proakatemia creates entrepreneurs and leaders	based on results, UWE TE graduates are very employable after graduation

#### **5.4 Student surveys**

The results are shown as the average per question per unit (table 5) and those will be compared to one another. All the questions were answered by using a five-point scale. The description of the scale points varied based on the question in hand, but the number 5 always referred to the positive or high end of the scale, e.g. to a very high extent, very important. Some of the answers are also brought up using percentages when there was notable spread among the answers. The survey questions can be seen at the end of this thesis in appendix 1 and the relative distributions in appendix 2.

TABLE 5. Comparing Proakatemia and UWE TE

Question	Proakatemia (average)	UWE (average)
Do you prefer working individually or in a team? (5= in a team)	3,9	3,3
To what extent do you feel like you are accountable for your actions to the other team members?	4,2	3,6
How would you describe the level of support in your team?	3,8	3,6
To what extent do you feel like you have a clear role in your team?	3,7	3,2
To what extent do you feel ownership towards your team, does it feel like it's yours?	4,1	3,4
To what extent does your team have a common purpose?	3,4	3,0
To what extent do you feel comfortable of expressing yourself in your team?	4,1	4,0
To what extent do you think having a real company with real money involved would increase your commitment towards the team?	4,3	4,3
To what extent does the coach affect your motivation?	3,5	3,6
How likely would you see yourself being an entrepreneur after you graduate?	4,3	4,0
To what extent do you feel like the team has an impact to your motivation?	4,6	3,5
To what extent do you feel like you have freedom to make your own choices when it comes to learning?	4,5	3,8
To what extent do you feel like you are responsible for your own learning?	4,9	4,4
To what extent do you feel like it is easy for you to take initiative?	4,2	3,9
To what extent do you see the training sessions valuable for your learning?	4,0	2,8
How important do you see feedback for your own development?	4,8	4,3
To what extent do you feel like academic work and projects are combined and support each other?	4,0	2,8
To what extent would you say you have inner motivation when it comes to learning in this course?	4,6	3,8
How would you describe your level of commitment towards the programme?	4,5	4,1

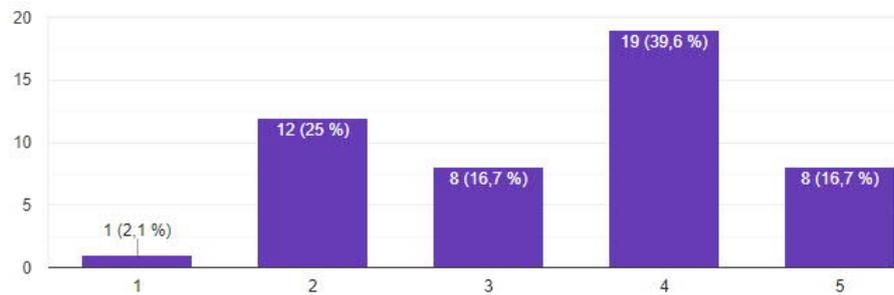
There seems to be some differences between the two units and generally the numbers of Proakatemia seem to be a bit higher in almost every question. In most of the questions the difference is not much, but there are some topics that seem to differ more. The questions about accountability towards the team and the feeling of psychological ownership seem to be quite a lot higher in Proakatemia. Also, the team's impact on one's motivation is seen higher among Proakatemia students. In UWE TE the projects are mainly done individually which may cause the difference in this matter. The results also show that in UWE TE the students prefer working individually more than in Proakatemia. The training sessions are seen more valuable in Proakatemia than in UWE TE. This could be connected to the fact that team does not seem to be as highly valued in UWE TE as in Proakatemia and the training sessions are meant to support the team's development. On the other hand, the level of commitment towards the program itself and capability to take initiative seem to be quite alike.

Important things in building motivation are autonomy, common purpose, meaningfulness, relatedness, capability and responsibility. The students in both units seem to feel like they have freedom when it comes to learning: in Proakatemia almost everyone (over 90 %) answered the level of freedom being to a high or very high extent and in UWE TE almost 70 % of the answers were to a high or very high extent. This indicates that the autonomy part in creating motivation, occurs.

One of the most crucial parts of team work is to have a common purpose. When students were asked whether they have one, the averages were Proakatemia 3,4 and UWE TE 3,0. Based on these numbers it seems like the teams' common purpose is not too clear in either of the units. However, the level of commitment towards the team is relatively high in both, which may indicate that the team itself is seen as the common purpose. The difference between these numbers may indicate that in Proakatemia, as the team companies are legally registered, those will more likely create a feeling of a common purpose. It is mentionable that in Proakatemia 27,1% of the answers were 1 or 2 whereas in UWE TE the percentage of the two lowest options was 46,1%. The relative distributions can be seen below.

### 6. Missä määrin koet, että tiimillänne on yhteinen tarkoitus/tavoite?

48 vastausta



### 6. To what extent does your team have a common purpose?

26 vastausta

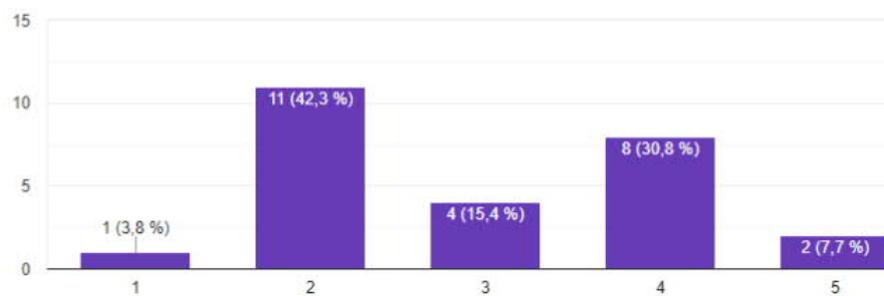


FIGURE 5. Relative distributions regarding the teams' common purpose

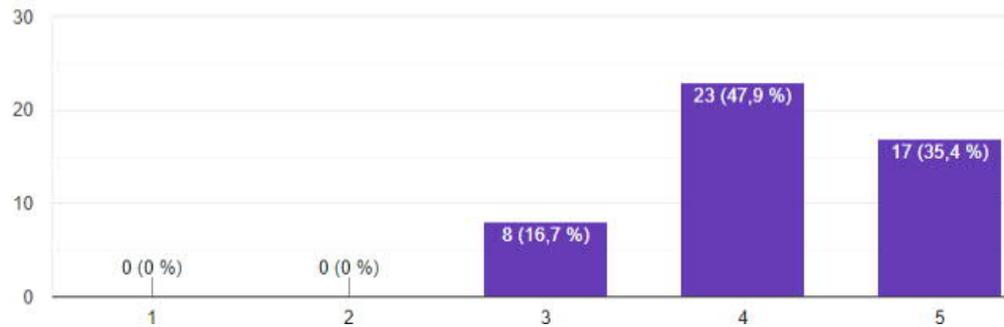
Relatedness and meaningfulness coming from the team cannot be fully covered if the team does not have a strong justification for its existence. The lack of common purpose makes it hard for the other factors such as definition of roles, team's effect on one's motivation and relatedness to occur. Therefore, in UWE TE these features must come from something else rather than the team, perhaps from the individual himself. This could be supported by the results where UWE TE students seem to have a high level of intrinsic motivation (3,8) as well as a high level of commitment towards the program itself (4,1). Also, it seems to be quite easy for the UWE TE students to take initiative (average 3,9) which indicates that they do feel a high level of capability which is a factor in creating motivation. These factors are all seen in Proakatemia answers as well, the average on the level of intrinsic motivation is 4,6 and the level of commitment towards the program 4,5. It seems to be quite easy for Proakatemia students to take initiative as well, the

average being 4,2. In addition to these, the team itself seems to be a huge motivational factor in Proakatemia as the average was 4,6 and over 93 % stated it to have a high or very high effect on their motivation. In UWE TE the same number was around 57 %, the average being 3,5.

As stated in the theory part of this thesis, responsibility creates meaningfulness, but it wants to be shared within the team. This means that the team members should feel accountable for their actions towards the team as the responsibility is shared. When observing this from the results it seems like in Proakatemia students feel more accountable towards the team than in UWE TE. The average numbers are Proakatemia 4,2 and UWE TE 3,6, but the spread among the answers is quite high. In Proakatemia over 80 % feel like they are very highly or highly accountable for their actions whereas in UWE TE the number is a little bit over 60 %. However, over 19 % of the UWE TE students feel like they are accountable towards the team to a low extent whereas in Proakatemia none of the answers were below option 3.

## 2. Missä määrin tunnet olevasi vastuussa muille tiimin jäsenille tekemisistäsi?

48 vastausta



## 2. To what extent do you feel like you are accountable for your actions to the other team members?

26 vastausta

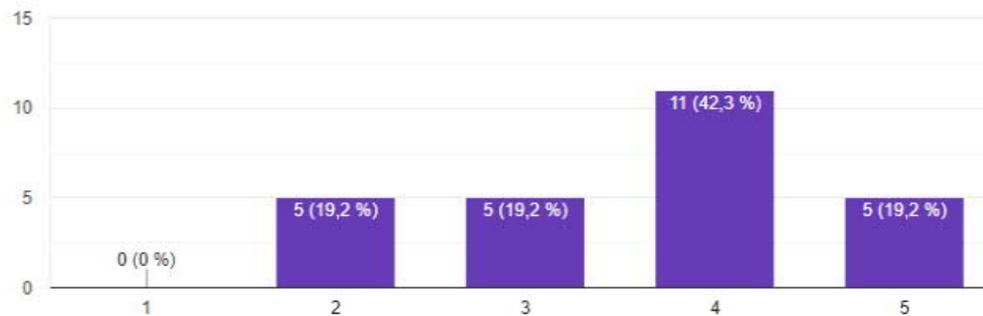


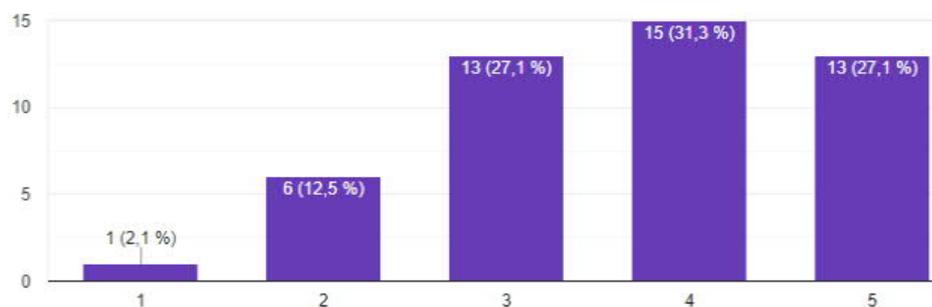
FIGURE 6. Relative distributions regarding accountability towards the team

Definition of roles is one of the key factors in building commitment. The students were asked to what extent do they feel like they have a clear role in their team. There was a lot of spread among the answers in both units.

#### 4. Missä määrin koet, että sinulla on selkeä rooli tiimissäsi?



48 vastausta



#### 4. To what extent do you feel like you have a clear role in your team?



26 vastausta

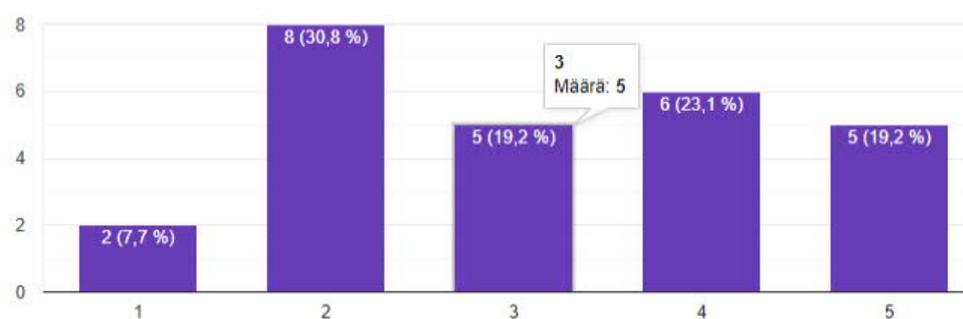


FIGURE 7. Relative distributions regarding roles in a team

The difference between the two units can be seen in the two lowest options. In Proakatemia only ~15 % answered that they have a clear role in the team to a low or very low extent whereas in UWE TE the percentage in these two answers is over 38 %. This may have a connection to the fact that in Proakatemia students mostly work in teams and have a clear reason to exist and operate together as they establish legally registered companies. In UWE TE the reason for team's existence is not as obvious and the students prefer to work more individually. In fact, ~10 % of the Proakatemia students answered that they prefer working individually whereas over 23 % of the UWE TE student answered similarly.

The third aspect of the research was psychological ownership. This is a stage where people feel strong belongingness and have a great level of commitment. In order to have psychological ownership, it needs to have a target in which to belong. In this context it is the team. When the students were asked to what extent they feel ownership towards the team, the averages were Proakatemia 4,1

and UWE TE 3,4. There was some spread among the answers, the most notable is that in UWE TE over 15 % of the students answered that they feel psychological ownership towards the team to a low extent whereas in Proakatemia only ~6 % of the answers were below option 3 and as high as ~39 % of the answers were “to a very high extent”.

One of the biggest differences is on the academic work and projects, when thinking about how those support each other. In this it is important to take into consideration that the academic work between these two units is quite different. In Proakatemia the academic work is mostly book essays and alternative courses whereas in UWE TE there are more individual assignments which are marked by the coaches/teachers. Based on the results, it seems like in Proakatemia the academic part of the studies is seen as a supportive element for the project work. In UWE TE the results show that the academic work and projects are not supporting each other as well as they could as the average number of the answers is 2,8. In UWE TE, 50 % of the answers said that the academic work and projects are combined and support each other to a low or very low extent. This may indicate that in Proakatemia the type of academic work is more suitable and/or better built-in for these studies. The data gathered from UWE TEcoaches' interviews also support this theory as it came up that the students seem to focus on one or the other even though the aim is to combine these two elements to support each other.

Students in both Proakatemia and UWE TE seem to respect the base of the programs: freedom, student-centred learning and feedback. They take responsibility for their own learning and appreciate feedback as a tool for their own development. Themes such as psychological safety and supportiveness in the team are quite alike in these two units. The students feel like they can express themselves freely (Proakatemia 4,1 and UWE TE 4,0) and the teams seem to be supportive elements for one's development. Coaches support the process as well in both programs and they seem to impact on the students' motivation on a certain level. It is notable that in Proakatemia the team seems to have a strong impact on one's motivation (4,6) whereas the impact of the coach is lower (3,5). In UWE the impact of the team (3,5) and the coach (3,6) are more congruent.

One of the major differences between Proakatemia and UWE TE is the legal state of the team companies. In Proakatemia the team companies are legally registered whereas in UWE TE they are not. In question number 8 the students from UWE were asked to what extent did they feel like having a real company with real money involved would increase their commitment towards the team. The average of the answers was 4,3 which indicates that having a legally registered team company would increase the level of commitment majorly. In Proakatemia the students were asked the same question. However, based on their current situation the question was formed to what extent did they feel like having a real company with real money involved increases their level of commitment towards the team. The average was the same as in UWE TE, 4,3. Based on the results it could be figured that legally registered team companies increase the level of commitment towards the team. It is notable that in UWE TE, where the teams are not legally registered as of now, 57,7 % felt like it would increase their level of commitment to a very high extent.

## 6 DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Conclusions

The purpose of the thesis was to study similarities and differences between the two units and find out if these two differ (and if so, how) from each other regarding motivation, commitment and psychological ownership and what are the factors related to those differences. The results can be applied to further develop the two units and other similar kind of units could benefit from the results as well.

Based on the research there are a few main points that differ between the two programs. First and probably the biggest one is the fact that the team companies are legally registered in Proakatemia which seems to increase the level of commitment as well as the psychological ownership. Commitment towards the team as well as the whole community can be seen in the questionnaire results and from the coaches' interviews. There is not a single thing in Proakatemia in which the students would not be involved. When talking about Proakatemia, a lot of "us", "we" and "ours" can be spotted in the discussion which indicates a high level of psychological ownership. A strong feeling of "ours" can lead to the will to improve the target of ownership and increase commitment. (Verkuyten & Martinovic 2017.)

In UWE TE results these matters were not seen as powerfully. The students work on projects mostly individually and they do not have any legal responsibilities towards the team. This may be connected to a fact that they do not feel as strongly about the team or the community. However, the UWE TE students also seem to respect the program and have a fair level of psychological ownership towards it – yet not necessarily towards the team itself. In both programs it became clear that the team is the learning platform and a base for everything so the ownership and commitment should be targeted on that. However, the individual goals should not be left out as they are not antithetical to team performance. In fact, if those are harnessed to team's common goals, they become a source of collective strength. (Katzenbach & Smith 2015, 8.) Notable is nevertheless, that the common purpose of the team still needs to be defined as it gives the team a

reason to exist. The lack of common purpose combined with the fact that the team entrepreneurs mostly work individually, makes it hard to find a purpose for the team itself.

The second difference between the two programs is how the students see themselves. These results are most likely a consequence of the matter discussed above. In UWE TE the students' physical location is in the campus area. Although this creates both positive and negative consequences as found out from the interviews, it causes a major difference in the students' mindsets. In UWE TE the students see themselves firstly as students which can be considered to give them a certain mindset. This mindset is also encouraged by all the individual academic work that the students are expected to complete. The combination of these two can be connected to lower motivation in a way that the students need to figure out on which to focus on: projects or academic work. The location being in the campus area also gives them a possibility to complete the projects in a safe environment inside the campus, which decreases the amount of connection between the real companies outside. When these matters are added to the lack of legal responsibility, it is presumable that the students see themselves as students.

In comparison to Proakatemia, the students seem to identify themselves firstly as entrepreneurs, team entrepreneurs to be exact. The physical location of the unit is outside the university campus, surrounded by other real companies. This fact itself can be a major factor affecting the students' mindsets. On top of that, the students establish legally registered team companies in the beginning of their studies which immediately affects positively on the matters discussed in this thesis: motivation, commitment and psychological ownership. It gives the students a common purpose and at the same time it switches the mindset from being a student who is responsible for their behalf to a team entrepreneur who is responsible for the team's behalf as well.

A lack of motivation and commitment could be found out in the results of UWE TE as it came up several times that some individuals do not engage and frankly do not have anything to do with the team's success. In comparison, the Proakatemia results show that this kind of behaviour would not be accepted within the

team. It seems like the mutual responsibility which is being created by the common purpose of a real company prevents this sort of action from happening. As the team entrepreneurs become mutually and financially responsible for their actions, there is no room for lack of engagement. Students who do not engage would most likely be a part of the 10% that drop out from Proakatemia. Those are the individuals who realise that these studies are not for them and who would slow down both their own development as well as the team's.

One of the biggest differences is the amount and concept of academic work. In UWE TE the academic work means individual assignments, team assignments and a final dissertation. In Proakatemia it means individual essays, group essays, optional studies and a final thesis. In UWE TE the academic work is marked whereas in Proakatemia the only thing marked is the final thesis. Based on the research it seems like in UWE TE the students are academically more developed than in Proakatemia. They will learn how to write academically, find reliable sources and to be critical. These abilities seem to be the ones that Proakatemia students struggle the most. However, based on the results it seems like there is not a great connection between the academic work and projects in UWE TE as it came up several times that those could be better combined. In Proakatemia the results show that the academic work supports the projects, so the students do not have to decide which part to concentrate on.

Freedom, which is a huge factor in these studies, is being fulfilled when the students can make choices themselves. Deadlines, directives and pressured evaluations decrease intrinsic motivation whereas choice and opportunity for self-direction increase intrinsic motivation as they allow people the feeling of autonomy. (Ryan & Deci 2000.) Seems like both programs would benefit if there was a way to complete the academic work with the following elements: freedom, academic writing and utility of the project work.

## **6.2 Validity and reliability**

In a quantitative research validity is defined as the extent to which a concept is accurately measured. Reliability is the term that defines to what extent the results

remain consistent if measured repeatedly in the same situation. (Heale & Twycross 2015.) In a qualitative research on the other hand, the terms validity and reliability are criticized, because of the nature of the research. There are different forms of evaluation criteria for qualitative research. In general, research needs to be trustworthy and should demonstrate both rigor and relevance. Trustworthiness represents the validity of research, rigor represents the process of arriving at the results and relevance represents the relevance of the results. (Mandal 2018, 591.)

In the quantitative part of the research (student surveys), the number of respondents remained relatively low, which decreases the external validity of the results. However, the three parts of a valid measurement were applied in the sampling: homogeneity, convergence and theory evidence. (Heale & Twycross 2015.) The questions and the alternatives were same for each respondent and had been planned to measure the three main topics: motivation, commitment and psychological ownership. The target group was all the students from each program so the sampling was congruent. The research is supported by the theory evidence throughout the result analysing.

The reliability of the research is relatively high. The results can be expected to stay consistent if the research was made again. However, the number of respondents would have a strong impact on the results. The aim was to reach ~150 students from each unit and the actual amount was only 74 in total. Even though there was turnover rate among the respondents, a higher number of respondents would have given a more reliable base for the results. Further research should be made to increase the number of respondents and to research the reasons behind the answers more in-depth. This could mean theme interviews for the students to reach deeper understanding on the phenomenon.

In the qualitative research (coaches' interviews) the evaluation is harder. The interviews were held to research a phenomenon from the coaches' point of views. The respondents were chosen based on their position as experts of team learning process. In the research almost all the coaches from each program were reached, which increases the trustworthiness. All the questions were same to each and all

the respondents had the same conditions to be interviewed. However, the Proaktemia coaches were interviewed as a group whereas the UWE TE coaches were interviewed separately. This may cause differences in the depth of the interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed so the original content of the discussions remained constant.

### 6.3 Implications

Based on the research results and the theory there are matters that seem to be connected to each other and therefore could be considered in the future of the units. The results found in this study are beneficial for each program for their future development and consideration of the current state as well as to other similar programs. The main points are presented below.

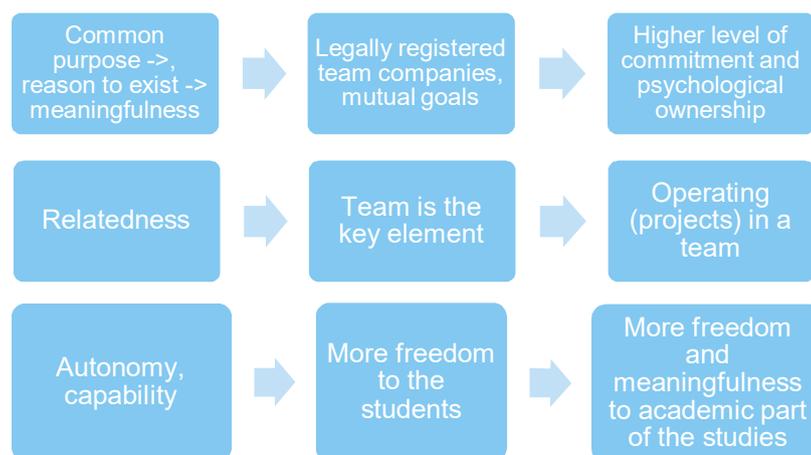


FIGURE 8. The main matters and propositions based on the results

Common purpose seems to be the single most crucial thing in team work. It gives the team a reason for their existence, through which it creates meaningfulness and affects positively to commitment, motivation and psychological ownership. In this context, the legally registered team companies would provide that purpose. For the purpose to be meaningful, people need to be engaged in goal setting in order to gain mutual commitment and motivation in reaching those goals. This is the part when the terms “us”, “we” and “ours” start to come in as a sign of psychological ownership.

The academic part of the studies should be well combined with the project work. Autonomy and the feeling of capability create motivation and those could be reached by giving the students more freedom regarding the academic work.

Relatedness is one of the key factors in motivation. It can be reached when there is something to belong in, which in this case is the team. In order to reach the feeling of relatedness and for the team to be the key element, the students should be operating in teams rather than individually.

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## APPENDICES

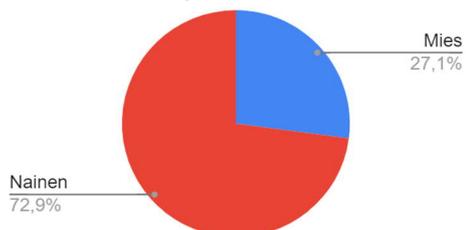
### Appendix 1. Student survey

The scale in every question is 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

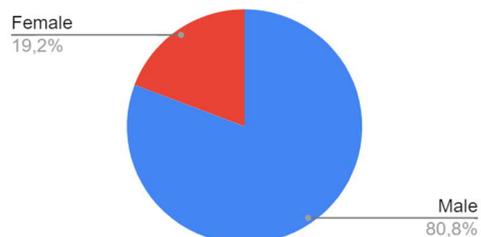
1. Do you prefer working individually or in a team? (1= individually, 5= in a team)
2. To what extent do you feel like you are accountable for your actions to the other team members?
3. How would you describe the level of support in your team?
4. To what extent do you feel like you have a clear role in your team?
5. To what extent do you feel ownership towards your team, does it feel like it's yours?
6. To what extent does your team have a common purpose?
7. To what extent do you feel comfortable of expressing yourself in your team?
8. To what extent do you think having a real company with real money involved would increase your commitment towards the team?
9. To what extent does the coach affect your motivation?
10. To what extent do you feel like you have freedom to make your own choices when it comes to learning?
11. To what extent do you feel like you are responsible for your own learning?
12. To what extent do you feel like it is easy for you to take initiative?
13. To what extent do you see the training sessions valuable for your learning?
14. How important do you see feedback for your own development?
15. To what extent do you feel like academic work and projects are combined and support each other?
16. To what extent would you say you have inner motivation when it comes to learning in this course?
17. How would you describe your level of commitment towards the programme?

## Appendix 2. Relative distributions of the student surveys

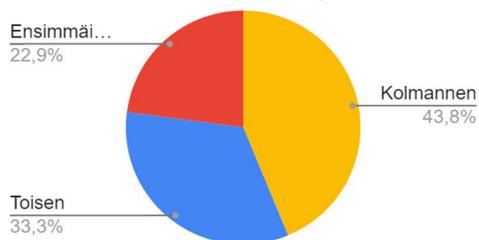
Määrä: Sukupuolesi



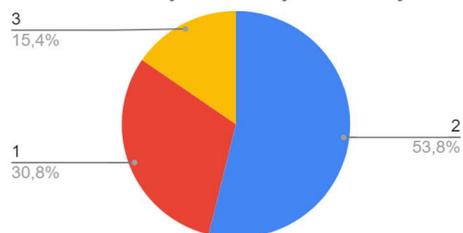
Määrä: What is your gender?



Minkä vuoden opiskelija olet?



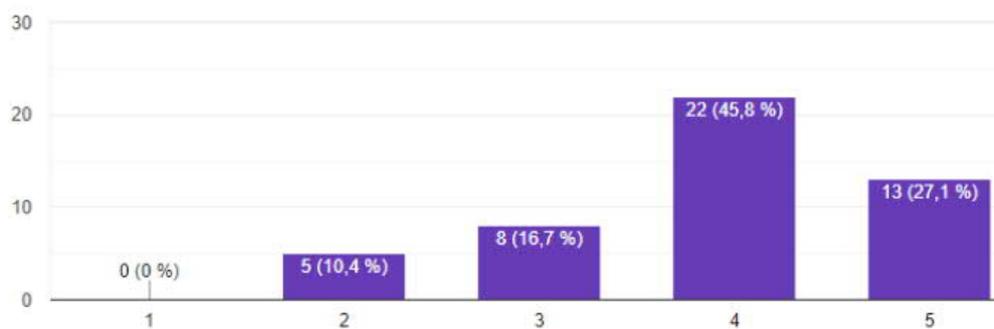
What level / year are you at in yo...



## 1. Työskenteletkö mieluummin tiimissä vai yksin?



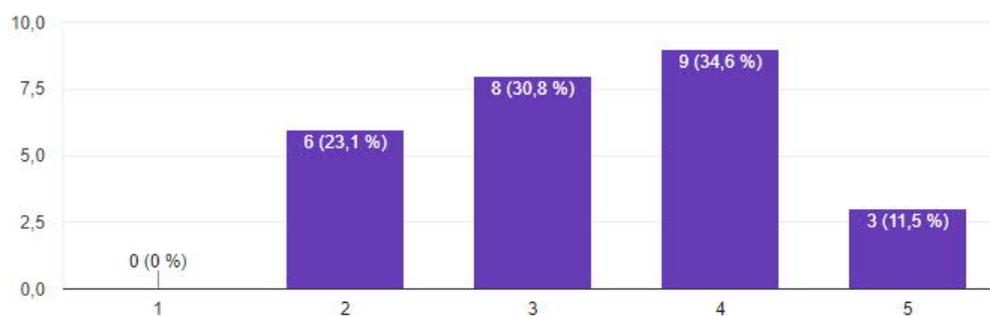
48 vastausta



## 1. Do you prefer working individually or in a team?



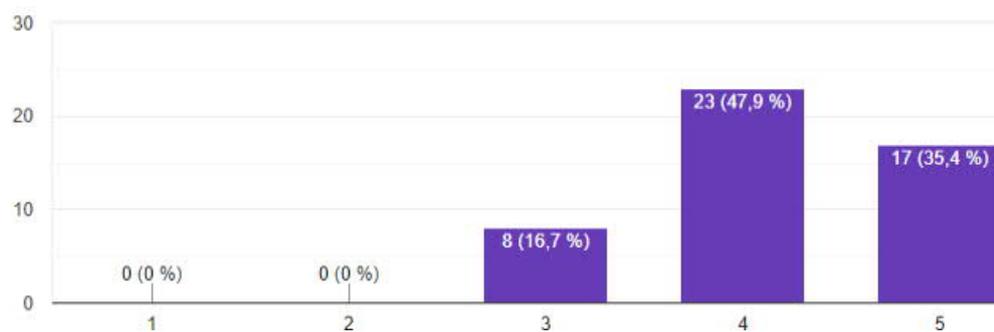
26 vastausta



## 2. Missä määrin tunnet olevasi vastuussa muille tiimin jäsenille tekemisistäsi?



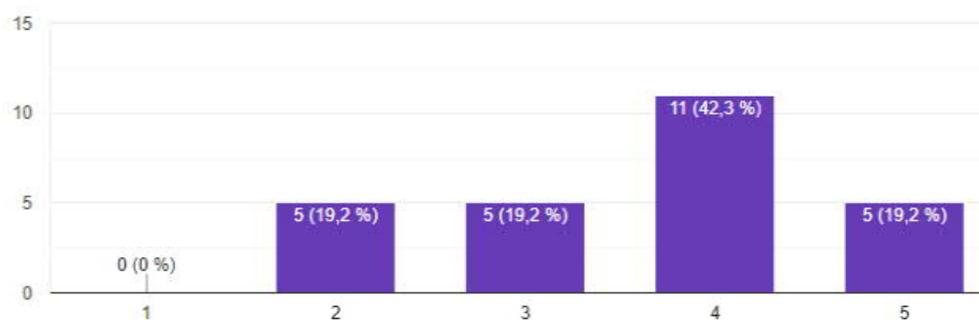
48 vastausta



## 2. To what extent do you feel like you are accountable for your actions to the other team members?

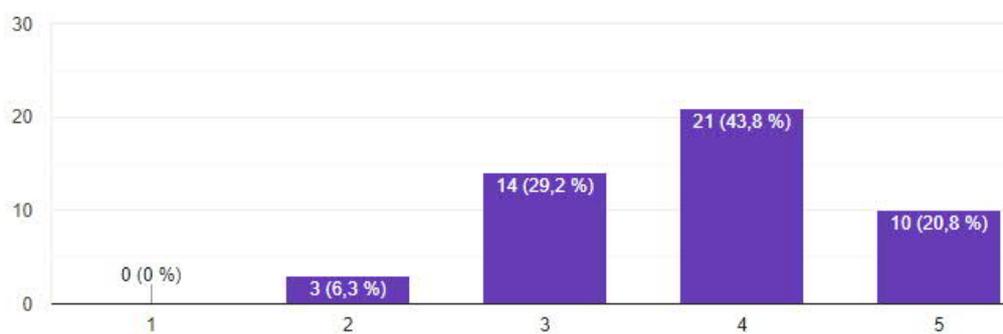


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### 3. Miten kuvailisit tuen määrää tiimissäsi?

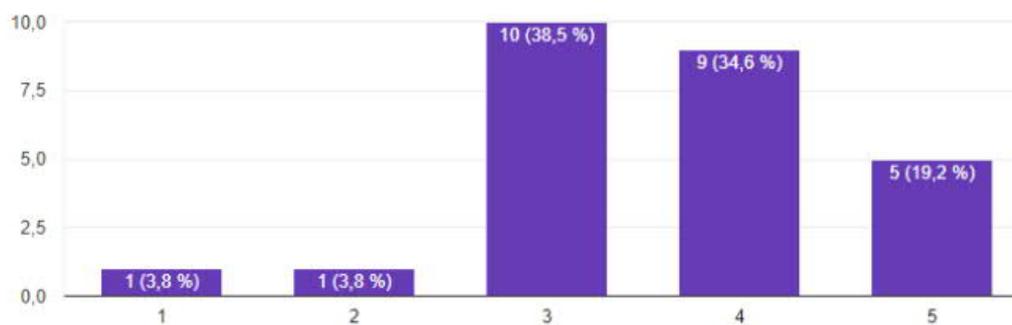
48 vastausta



### 3. How would you describe the level of support in your team?



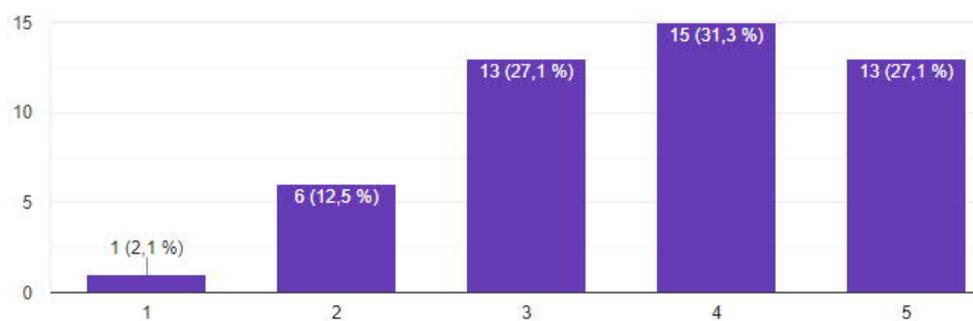
26 vastausta



#### 4. Missä määrin koet, että sinulla on selkeä rooli tiimissäsi?



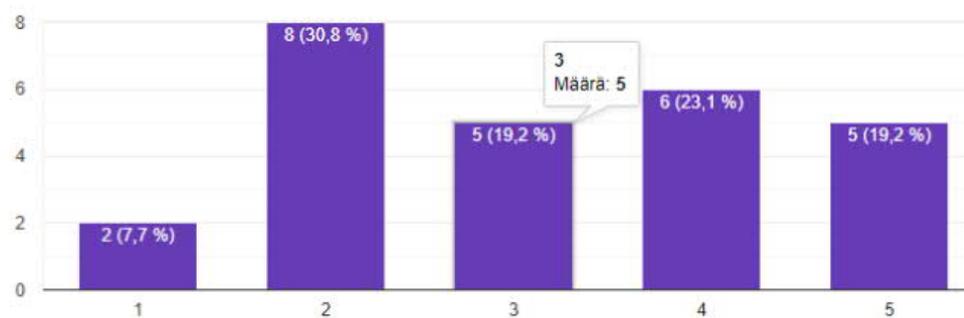
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#### 4. To what extent do you feel like you have a clear role in your team?

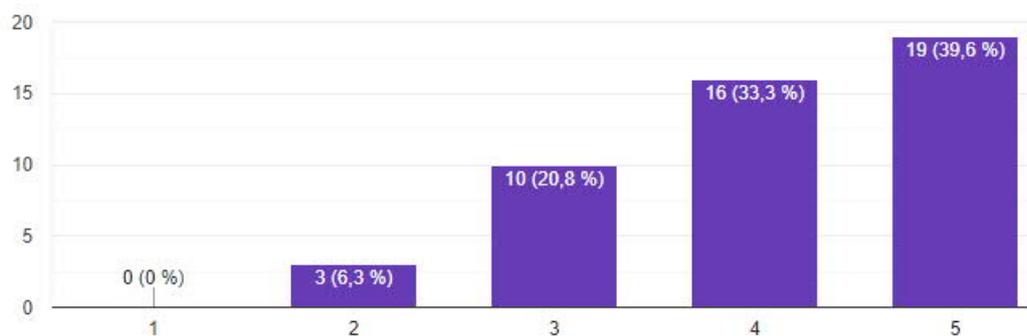


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### 5. Missä määrin koet omistajuudentunnetta tiimiäsi kohtaan, tuntuuko se omaltasi?

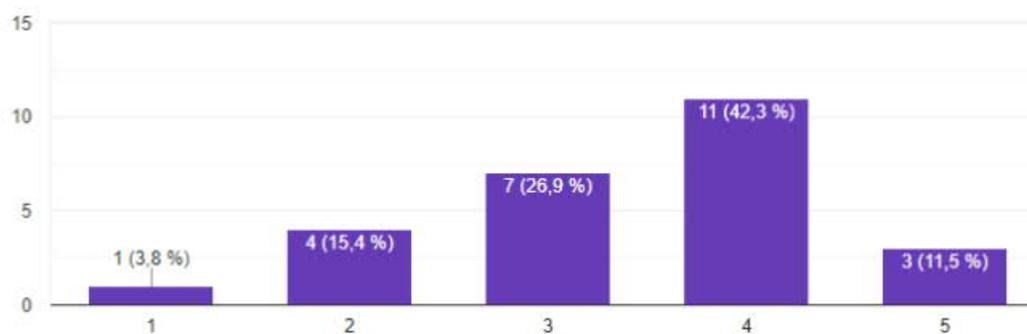
48 vastausta



### 5. To what extent do you feel ownership towards the team, does it feel like it's yours?



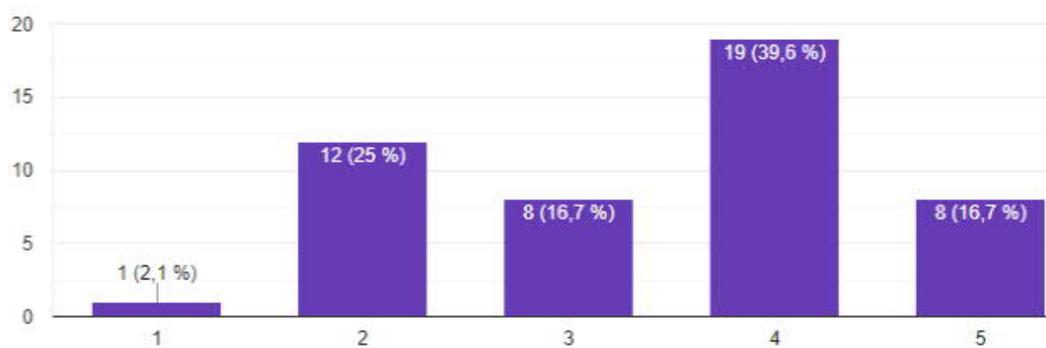
26 vastausta



## 6. Missä määrin koet, että tiimillänne on yhteinen tarkoitus/tavoite?



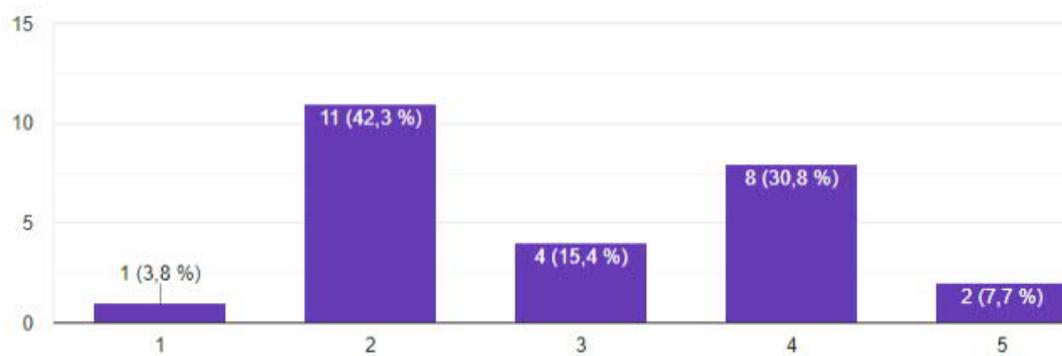
48 vastausta



## 6. To what extent does your team have a common purpose?

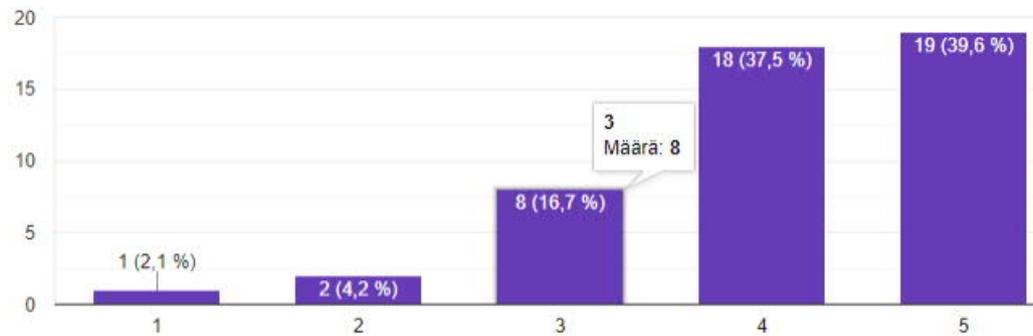


26 vastausta



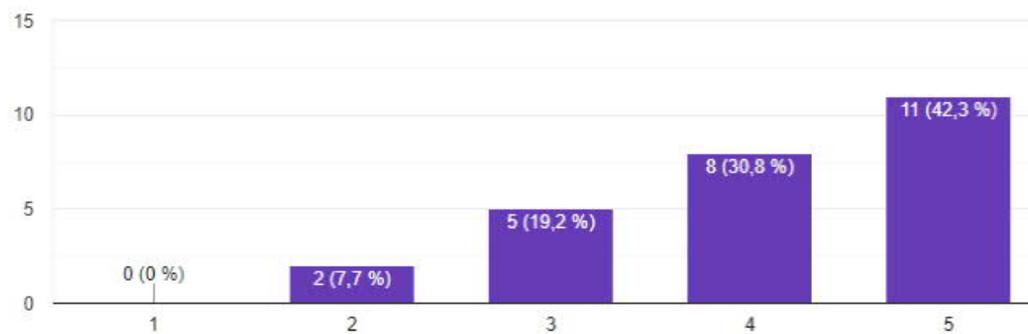
## 7. Missä määrin koet, että on turvallista ilmaista itseäsi ja näkemyksiäsi tiimissäsi?

48 vastausta



## 7. To what extent do you feel comfortable of expressing yourself in your team?

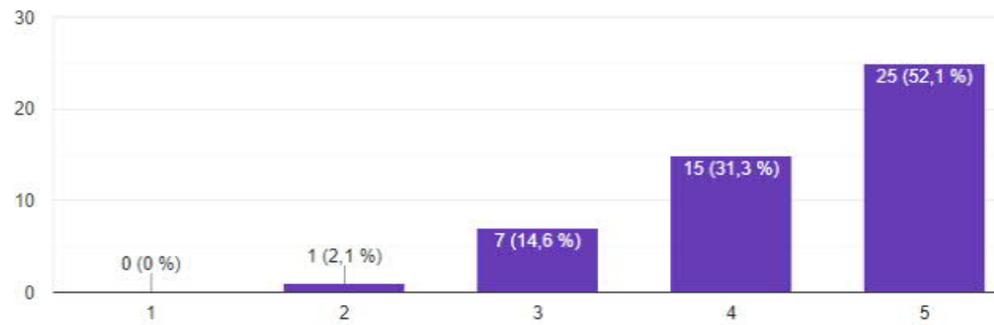
26 vastausta



### 8. Missä määrin koet, että oikea yritys ja rahaliikenne lisää sitoutumistasi tiimiisi?



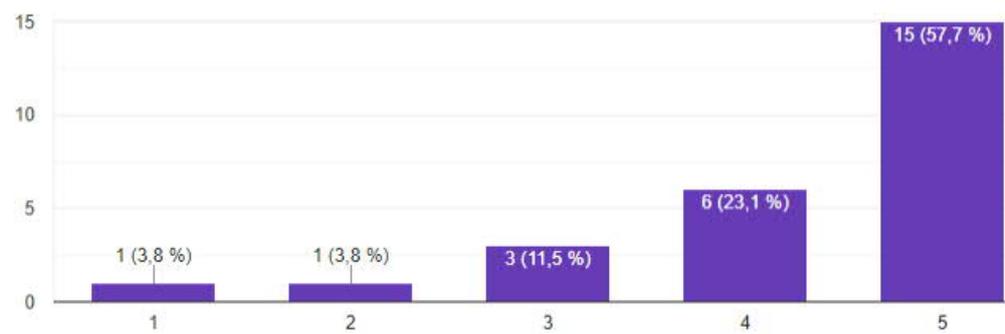
48 vastausta



### 8. To what extent do you think having a real company with real money involved would increase your commitment toward the team?

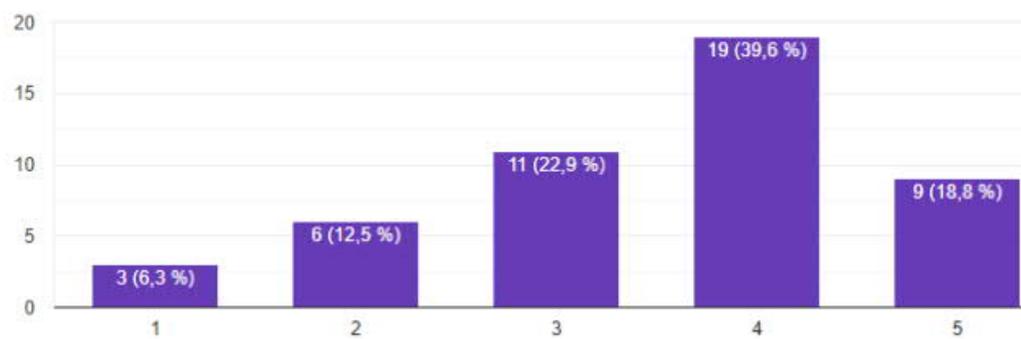


26 vastausta



## 9. Missä määrin koet valmentajan vaikuttavan motivaatioosi?

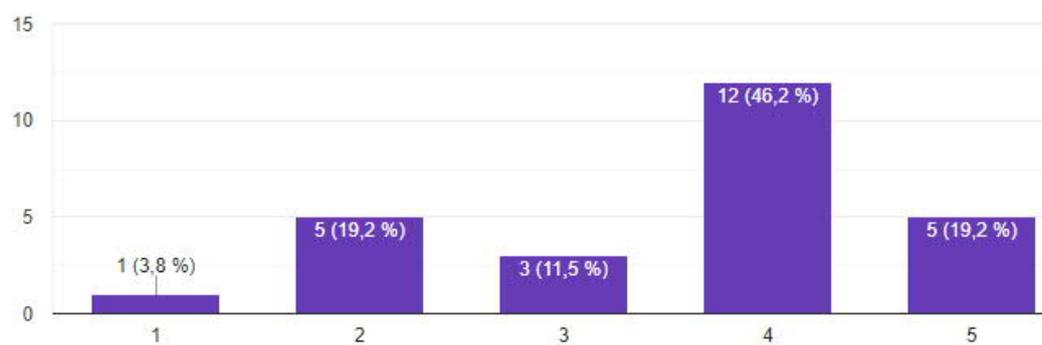
48 vastausta



## 9. To what extent does the coach affect your motivation?

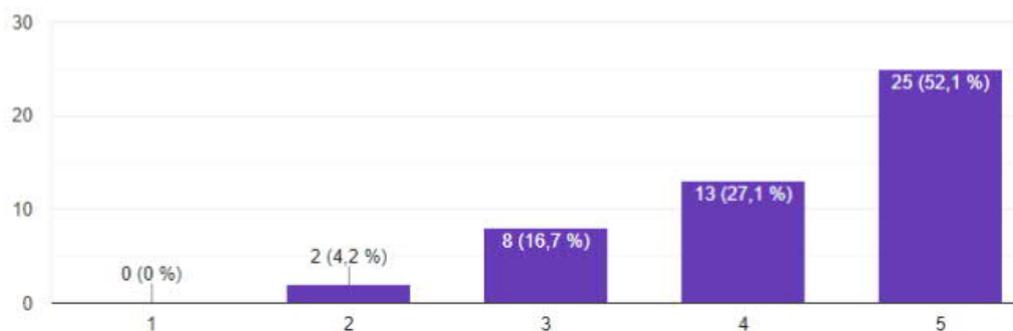


26 vastausta



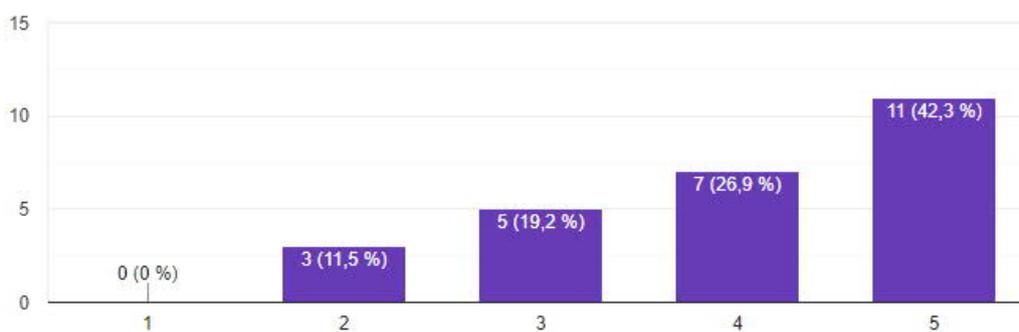
## 10. Kuinka todennäköisesti näkisit itsesi yrittäjänä valmistumisen jälkeen?

48 vastausta



## 10. How likely would you see yourself being an entrepreneur after you graduate?

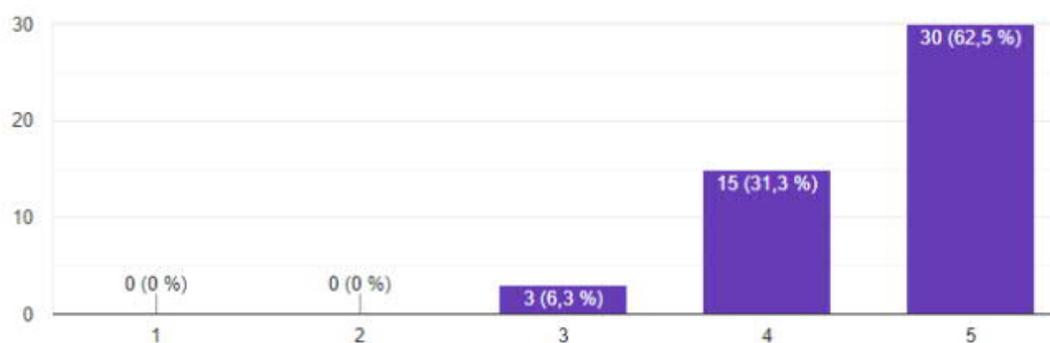
26 vastausta



### 11. Missä määrin koet tiimin vaikuttavan motivaatioosi?



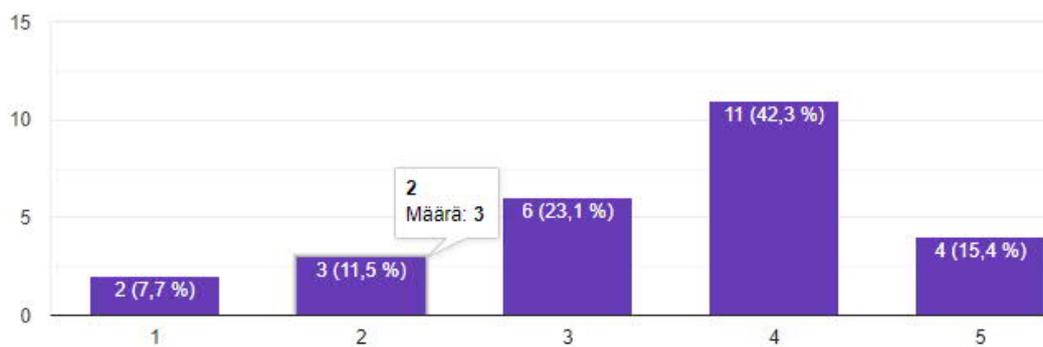
48 vastausta



### 11. To what extent do you feel like the team has an impact to your motivation?



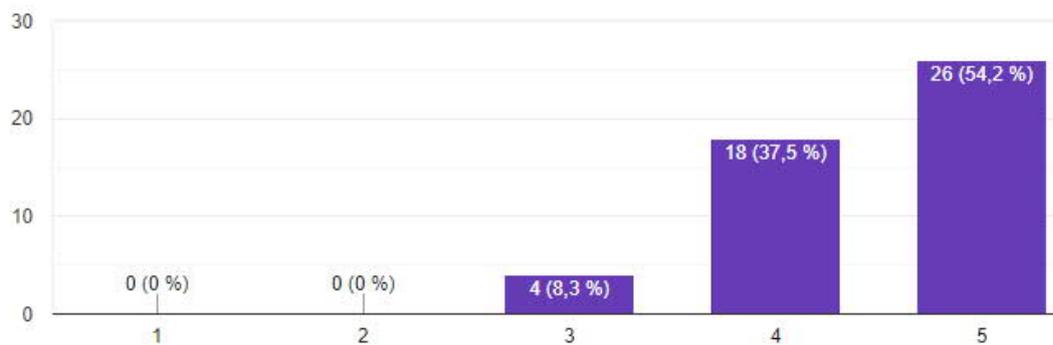
26 vastausta



## 12. Missä määrin koet, että sinulla on vapaus tehdä valintoja oppimisesi suhteen?



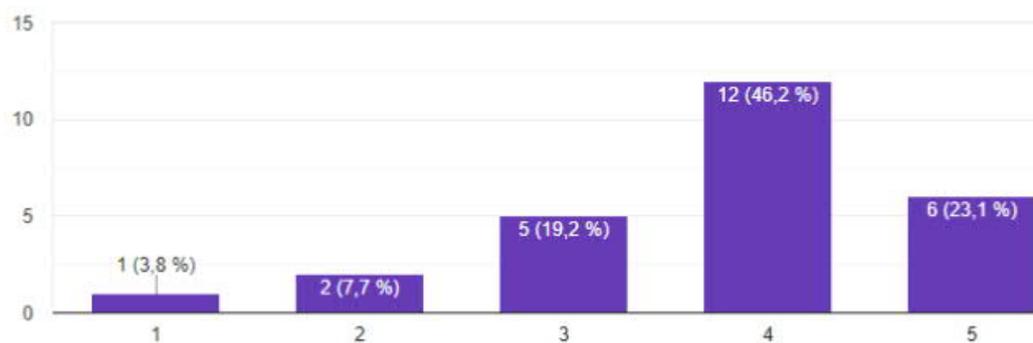
48 vastausta



## 12. To what extent do you feel like you have the freedom to make your own choices when it comes to learning?



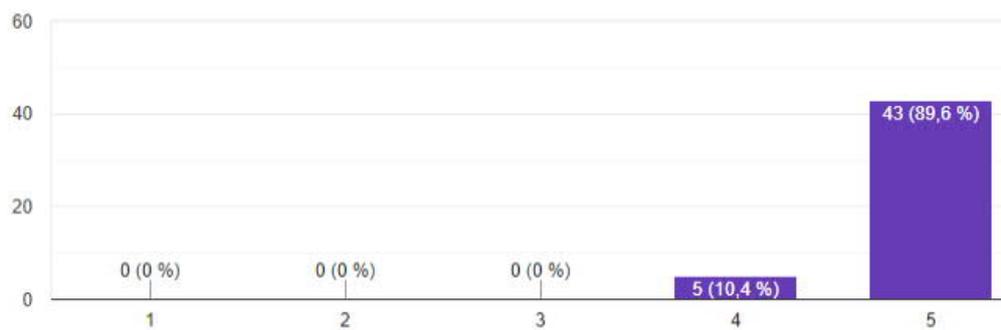
26 vastausta



### 13. Missä määrin koet olevasi itse vastuussa omasta oppimisestasi?



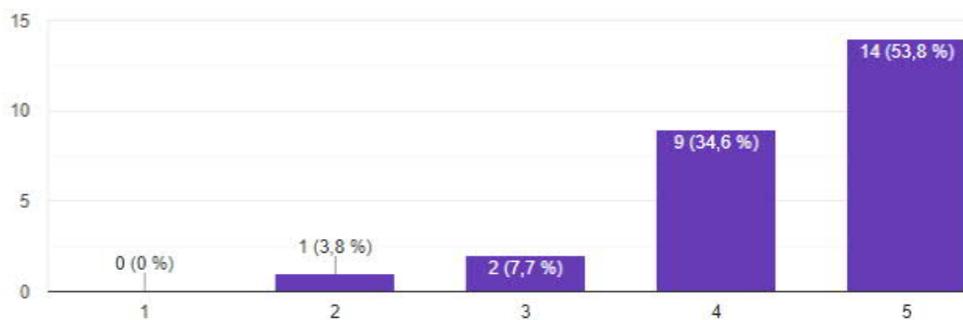
48 vastausta



### 13. To what extent do you feel like you are responsible for your own learning?

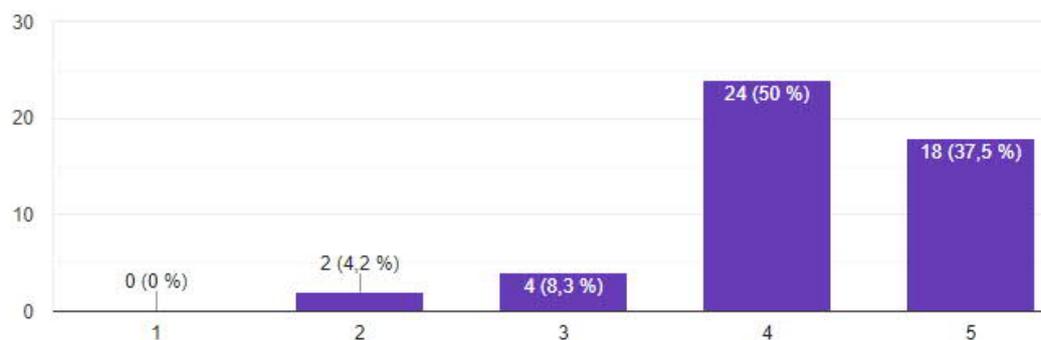


26 vastausta



#### 14. Missä määrin koet, että sinulle on helppoa toimia oma-aloitteisesti?

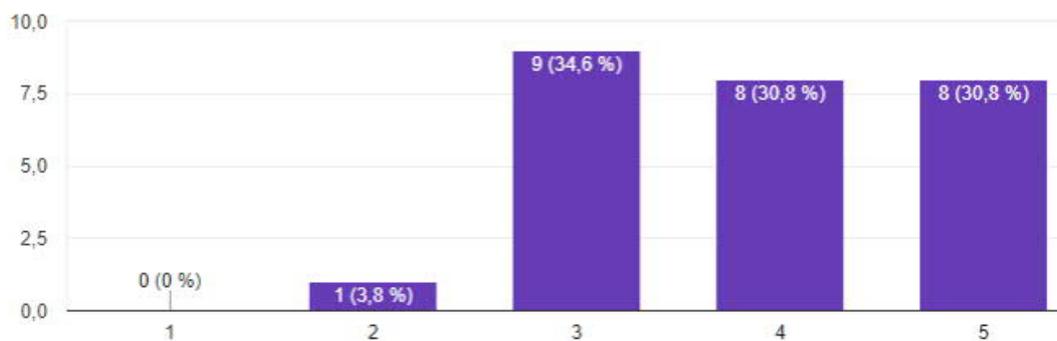
48 vastausta



#### 14. To what extent do you feel that it is easy for you to take initiative?



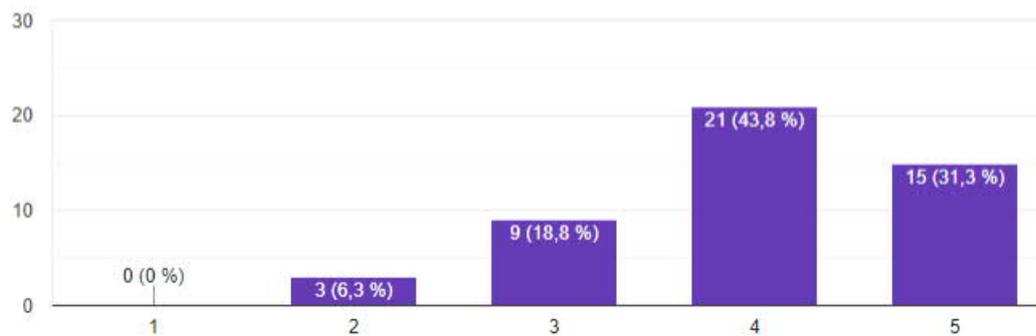
26 vastausta



### 15. Kuinka hyödyllisinä näet pajat oppimisesi kannalta?



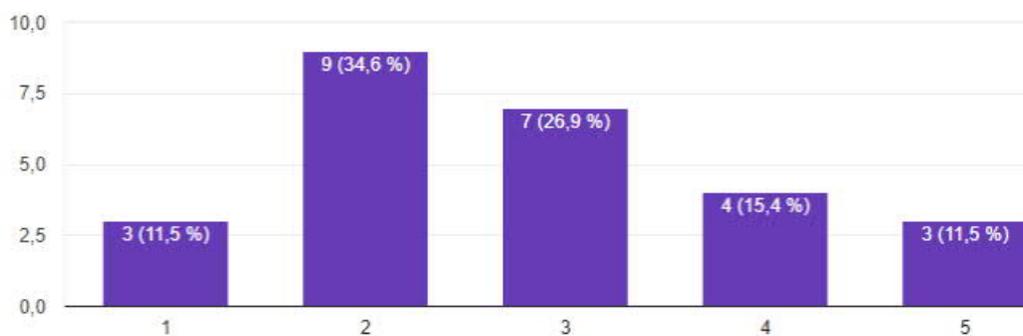
48 vastausta



### 15. To what extent do you see the training sessions valuable for your learning?



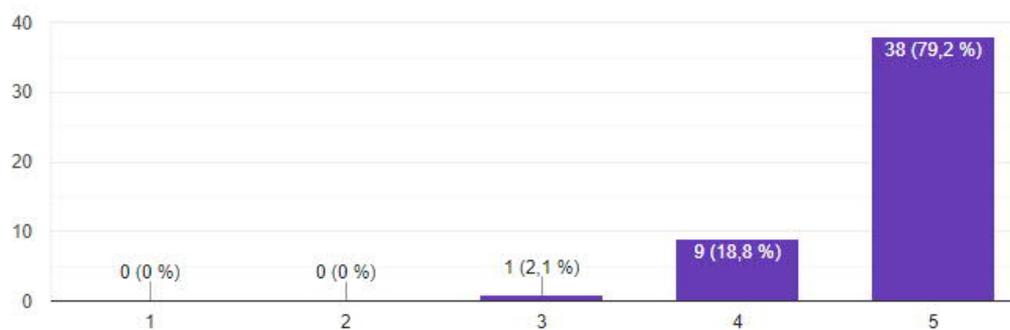
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### 16. Kuinka kuvailisit palautteen merkitystä oman kehityksesi kannalta?



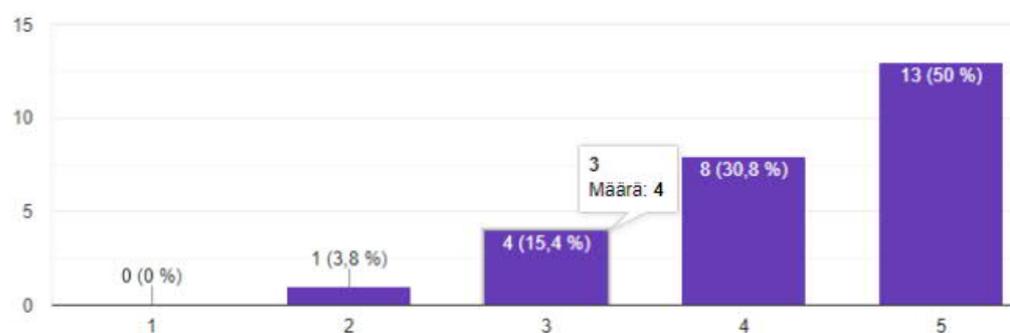
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### 16. How important do you see feedback in your own development?



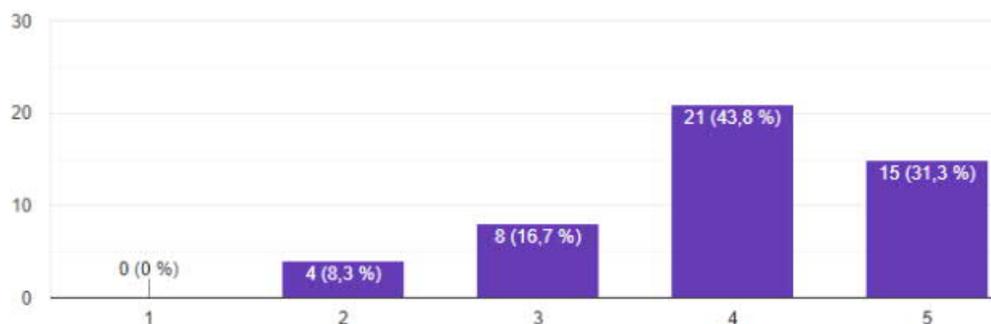
26 vastausta



17. Missä määrin koet, että akateeminen työ (kirjaesseeet, valinnaiset kurssit ym.) tukevat projektityöskentelyä?

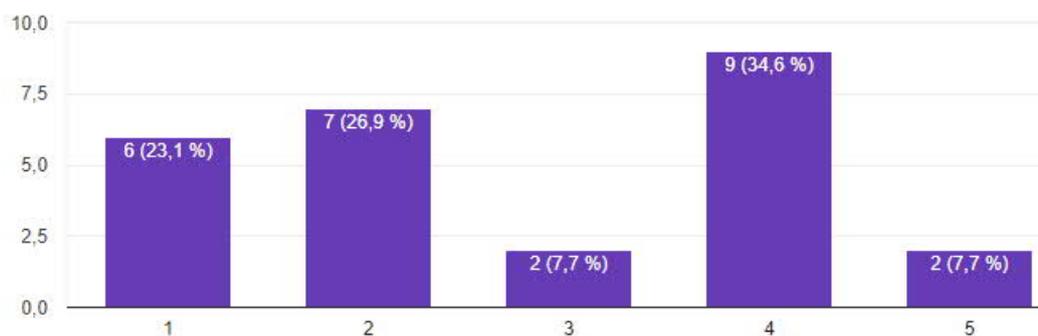


48 vastausta



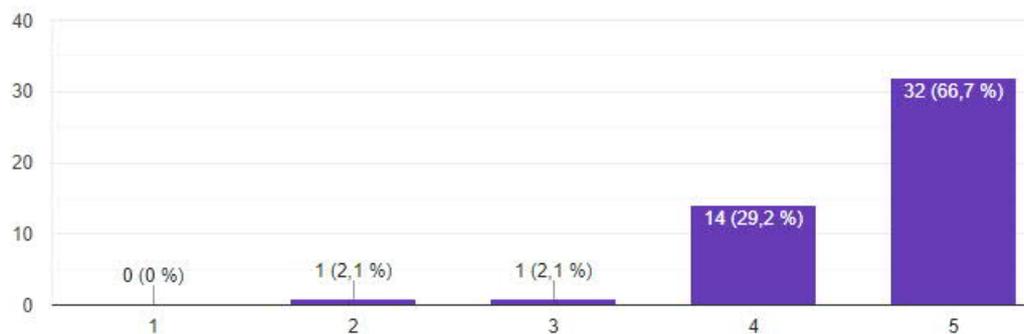
17. To what extent do you feel like academic work and projects are combined and support each other?

26 vastausta



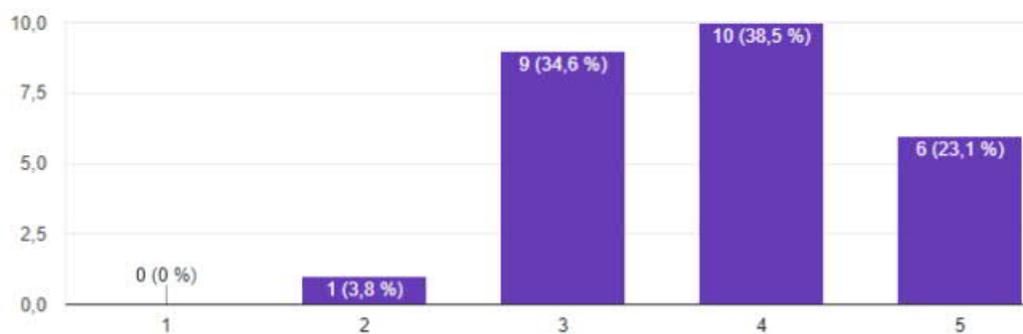
18. Missä määrin koet, että sinulla on sisäinen motivaatio oppimista kohtaan tässä koulutusohjelmassa? 

48 vastausta



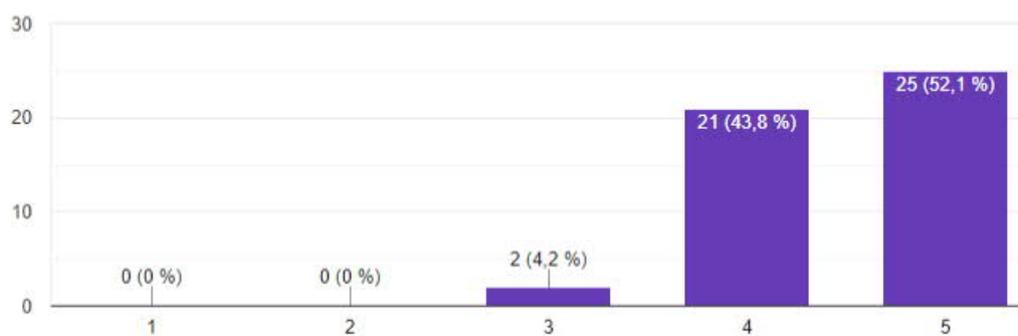
18. To what extent would you say that you have inner motivation when it comes to learning in this course? 

26 vastausta



### 19. Miten kuvailisit sitoutumisesi astetta tähän koulutusohjelmaan?

48 vastausta



### 19. How would you describe your level of commitment toward the TE programme?



26 vastausta

