Teacher autonomy in Sweden and Finland
Investigating decision-making and control comparatively

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate and compare Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceived autonomy through a quantitative analysis of the empirical data from a survey conducted within the research project Teacher autonomy in Sweden, Finland, Ireland and Germany (Wermke & Salokangas, 2018). Within the project, the concept teacher autonomy is viewed as multidimensional and highly dependent upon national context, why an analytical device has been constructed in order to investigate teachers’ perceived autonomy comparatively. Based on conceptual research, the device comprises four domains of teachers’ work where autonomy can be exercised (educational, social, developmental and administrative), and three different levels of autonomy (classroom, school, profession). In this thesis, the analytical device is used to compare the perceived autonomy of the Swedish and Finnish teachers participating in the survey. The theoretical foundation of this thesis is Richard M Ingersoll’s research on power distribution in schools, and the construction of the survey is based upon his operationalization of teacher autonomy as teachers’ influence over important decisions that affect their work, and how teachers’ decisions are evaluated and controlled. The results indicate that both Swedish and Finnish teachers are autonomous when it comes to educational issues, but that Finnish teachers are more individually oriented and experience more control from parents, whereas Swedish teachers seem to make more decisions collegially and perceive themselves as more controlled by colleagues and the school management. Moreover, the answers from the respondents suggested that Finnish teachers have more influence over their continuous professional development, while Swedish teachers are responsible for administrative decisions to a higher extent. In order to interpret and discuss the results they are related to different characteristics of the respective national contexts.

Keywords: teacher autonomy, decision making, control, comparative, Sweden, Finland.
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1.0 Introduction

In recent decades, the Swedish school has undergone radical changes which have affected the working life of teachers. Simultaneously, the teacher profession and its autonomy has gained increased attention and been in the centre of a polarized debate, where some claim that teachers are too autonomous and call for more central control of teachers and schools in order to ensure school quality, while others argue that the school reforms have led to decreased autonomy and a de-professionalization of teachers (Carlgren, 2009; Stenlås, 2011). In the neighbouring country of Finland, the story is quite different due to its high performance in the PISA tests (Carlgren, 2009). Finnish teachers’ high status and their traditional teaching practices have been suggested as contributing factors to the PISA success, but also Finnish teachers’ high degree of autonomy, ensured by the absence of extensive control and surveillance systems has been highlighted in this regard (Simola, 2005). This is why this thesis has an interest in a comparative investigation of the phenomenon of teacher autonomy.

There is no doubt that teacher autonomy is an important factor when explaining good practice in schooling. Teachers’ perceived autonomy has been shown to be important for teachers’ commitment and work satisfaction, and extended teacher autonomy is linked to fewer disciplinary problems and reduced teacher turnover (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Ingersoll, 2003). A certain amount of flexibility and autonomy regarding the selection of teaching methods and educational content is necessary, it has been argued, since teaching is complex and highly built on interaction, and this is why we never can know exactly what the outcome of teaching is in terms of students’ learning (Hopmann, 2007). This flexibility is, according to Hopmann (ibid.), threatened by a narrow view of knowledge that might be the result of clearly defined knowledge goals and intense result control. On the other hand, while high levels of control and standardization in schools has negative effects on teacher autonomy, it may have positive effects on equivalence in education, and a certain amount of bureaucracy and steering is necessary to be able to organize education in a mass schooling system. Administration can thus be seen as a way to define the role of teachers and reduce the complexity of teachers’ work (Ingersoll, 2003; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017). This balance is and has been dealt with in different ways in different organizational, national and historical contexts.

The issue of teachers’ autonomy in different countries is a focus of the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) project Teacher autonomy in Sweden, Finland, Ireland and Germany (Wermke & Salokangas, 2018). In the project, teachers’ perceived autonomy in the different countries is examined and compared. Wermke & Salokangas stress the importance of relating the teachers’ perceptions to the different national contexts, which requires knowledge of contextual conditions that affect teachers’ work, such as differences in governance or socio-cultural structures and traditions. The framework of the project includes a view of teacher autonomy as multidimensional, drawing on conceptual work. The first distinction is made between different levels of teacher autonomy, claiming that autonomy can be exercised both by individual teachers and by teachers as a collective. Secondly, different domains of teachers’ work are separated, since the autonomy may differ between, for instance, pedagogical and administrative areas of teachers’ work.
This thesis is a comparative study, written as a part of the research project, and intends to investigate teacher autonomy in Sweden and Finland. It is a minor study within the described project. The view of autonomy therein is based on the definition outlined by Ballou (1998, p.105) as self-governance, or “the capacity of an agent to determine their own actions through independent decisions within a system of principles and laws within which they operate”. From this perspective, teacher autonomy is understood in terms of agency within a scope of action; something that is actively exercised, rather than passively received. Ingersoll’s (2003) theory of power in schools is a central key to further develop and operationalize this concept. According to Ingersoll, the power and autonomy of teachers are closely related to control and decision-making, concerning work-related issues. Accordingly, a fruitful way of investigating teachers’ autonomy is to ask teachers who has the power to decide about important issues and who evaluates and controls the outcomes of the decisions made. These questions were the basis of a survey of 1583 Finnish teachers and 708 Swedish teachers. The contribution of this thesis is the undertaking of quantitative analyses of the dataset derived from the survey. The analysis takes into account the project’s view of autonomy as a multidimensional phenomenon and draws on the core of the project’s theoretical framework.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this thesis is to compare Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceived autonomy vis-à-vis the different national contexts in the two countries.

This aim leads to the following research questions:

- Who, according to Swedish and Finnish teachers, holds power over the most important decisions in school?
- Who and what, according to Swedish and Finnish teachers, frames teachers’ decisions by control, regulations and knowledge?
- What differences and similarities in perceived autonomy exist between teachers in the two countries?
2.0 Background: Sweden and Finland as comparative cases

I argue that a Swedish-Finnish comparison is particularly interesting since the two neighbouring countries are close in many historical and cultural respects, which are reflected in education, but still display quite a few obvious differences regarding issues that might have an impact on teachers’ autonomy. From a perspective on autonomy as decision-making and control, I will in this section describe similarities and differences between Sweden and Finland that are relevant for a better understanding of these contextual factors. This includes the common roots of the Swedish and Finnish school systems and their different adaptations to the global decentralization wave of the 1990s that promoted local autonomy, but also control and evaluation of schools and results. Finally, different characteristics that relate to teachers’ influence on schooling in a broader perspective will be addressed.

2.1 Common roots: The Nordic Model

Finland and Sweden share many features regarding their respective modern K-12 school systems. In Sweden, the compulsory comprehensive school was introduced in 1962, while its Finnish equivalent was phased in during the 1970s (Telhaug, Mediås & Aasen, 2006; Simola, 1998). Their similarities can be viewed in the light of the Nordic way of constructing the welfare state in the aftermath of World War II, which can be referred to as the Nordic model, and aimed to rebuild and modernise society in the name of science, rationality, equality and democratic participation (Imsen, Blossing & Moos, 2017). The Nordic countries were culturally and linguistically similar, more secularized and less market-oriented than many other western countries, which were under greater influence of conservative or liberal philosophies (Telhaug, Mediås & Aasen, 2006). Education was considered an important part of the modern Nordic society and the state was viewed as responsible for education as a common good (Imsen, Blossing & Moos, 2017). Consequently, the Nordic countries developed extended comprehensive school systems with no streaming of students, and where all classes of society would meet. The main objectives of such schools were to educate future citizens with the purpose of increasing economic growth and to strive for a democratic socialisation of pupils and a reduction of social class differences. Schools in the Nordic countries were initially heavily managed by the state, and the amount of resources spent on education was high compared with other western countries (Telhaug, Mediås & Aasen, 2006).

2.2 Decentralization and local autonomy

In the 1990s, both Sweden and Finland carried out decentralization reforms that increased local autonomy and municipal responsibility for financial resources and the organization of schools (Carlgren, 2009; Simola, Rinne & Kivirauma, 2012; Simola et. al, 2009). In order to maintain control, the system of governance changed towards a model of managing by objectives and controlling the results instead of the process (Carlgren & Klette, 2008). Goal-orientation was already present in Finnish curricula prior to the decentralization, but the framework curriculum from 1994 put goals and assessment at the centre to a greater extent, encouraged pupil self-evaluation and provided schools with freedom to create their own local curricula (Simola, 1998;
Simola, 2002). However, Simola (1998) argues that the shift towards accountability and management by results was only a continuation on the path of management by objectives that had started in the 1970s. The new Swedish curriculum from the same year was similar to its Finnish equivalent in many ways, comprising general directional goals with goals to be achieved, but without descriptions of educational content. Decisions regarding these matters were delegated to teachers, which opened up to local and individual variation as long as certain levels of knowledge were attained. A new grading system also followed, which, unlike the previous norm-referenced system, was based on defined levels of knowledge. (Carlgren, 2009; Sundberg & Wahlström, 2012). Another Swedish school reform of the 1990s gave parents the right to choose schools on behalf of their children. This came with a new system, where families were provided with vouchers that financed the schools. All schools were included in this system, and a strong growth in the number of independent schools followed (Wermke, 2013). Free school choice is not present in Finland, however. Instead, students have to attend the nearest school (www.oph.fi).

2.3 Control and evaluation

In line with a growing critique of the Swedish school, arguing that the loose steering had brought lowered standards in education (Carlgren, 2009), the newly elected Swedish government in 2006 introduced several reforms and regulations with the purpose of ensuring school quality. In 2008, a school inspectorate was established with the intention of inspecting compliance with the school law. In 2009 came the introduction of more national tests, which made a more extensive state evaluation of results possible. This was followed by the implementation of a new curriculum in 2011 with a new 6-scaled grading system (Imsen, Blossing & Moos, 2017). This meant a more distinct pronunciation of knowledge and assessment. The more general and directional goals in the previous curriculum were replaced by knowledge requirements based on epistemic knowledge designed to meet the demands of working life and capable of being standardised, measured and compared. More detailed guidelines for assessment were also provided, together with general teaching recommendations in order to meet the knowledge requirements (Sundberg & Wahlström, 2012). In later years, international measurements gained strength in Swedish education policy. Sweden’s unsatisfactory PISA results stood in sharp contrast to the success of Finland, and the picture of Sweden as a system in crisis grew stronger. PISA is seen as a legitimate source of evidence of the low quality in Swedish schools according to Grek (2017), who argues that the recommendations from the OECD have become “the gold standard” of education research in Sweden. Finland has been an active participator in international evaluations since the early 1990s. Long before the PISA success, the Finnish school was influenced by OECD recommendations and has been described as the “model OECD pupil” (Simola et. al, 2009). Quality assurance and evaluation of schools (QAE) has been a vital element in Finnish education since the 1990s. However, it has mainly been a local concern. The only proper evaluation of results from state level, apart from upper secondary final exams, are sample-based evaluations implemented by the NBE (Simola et. al, 2009). Also, the primary purpose of the evaluations has been school development rather than school control (Simola et. al, 2013). The causes of this might to some degree be an unintended result of the radical decentralization process, which have led to an extended local autonomy. On the other hand, there is no school
inspection and no national testing in Finland, and according to Simola et. al (2009), there is a great belief in local decision-making and a general antipathy towards ranking lists.

2.4 Education reforms and the teaching profession

Carlgren (2009, p.640) depicts Swedish teachers as “consumers of research results”. The former elementary school teachers had been quite involved in school development and research, but with the introduction of the comprehensive school, bureaucrats and educational researchers took control of these matters. Wermke (2013) describes the belief in science and social engineering as a “rolling reform” in Swedish education policy of the 20th century and onwards, which may have filled teachers with insecurity and feelings of never getting past the novice stage. The Finnish teacher profession seems to have more influence on educational issues. Simola (1993) claims that the Finnish teachers’ union even holds a certain power of veto over Finnish school policy. The Swedish teachers’ unions, on the other hand, were according to Wermke (2013) weakened during the 1990s due to the decentralization process and the accompanying new local teacher contracts that introduced individual salaries. It has also been argued that Finnish teachers enjoy comparatively higher status and societal appreciation (Carlgren, 2009). Some reasons behind this are suggested by Simola (2005), who claims that an authoritarian and obedient mentality, and a conservative approach to teaching might be essential in understanding Finnish school culture and the role of Finnish teachers. Also, other sectors of the Finnish labour market seem to put value on teachers’ knowledge and competence. Selander, Wermke & Geijer (2013) reports that Finnish graduate teachers find employment rather easily within other occupational sectors. According to Carlgren (2009), Finland appears to be the only Nordic country where students are frequently attracted to teacher education. Although both Sweden and Finland incorporated teacher education within the universities at the approximately same time, Finland is quite unique in terms of the academic level of teacher education. Since 1979, teachers in both comprehensive and upper secondary school are qualified at the master’s level. This “scientification” of teacher education aimed to develop teachers as didactic thinkers, engaged in practice-based research (Simola, 1993; Simola 1998). A close connection to the profession is also evident with the presence of practice schools, where student teachers are introduced to the profession by experienced teachers and teacher educators (Selander, Wermke & Geijer, 2013). The Swedish case is somewhat different. Since 2011, Sweden has returned to a more traditional teacher education, with a stronger focus on academic subjects and a separation of student teachers by their different levels of future teaching. The previous reform of 2001 had brought several teacher education programmes together into one broad teacher education, where all student teachers, including future preschool teachers as well as upper secondary teachers would engage in a general field of studies. (Wermke, 2013; Lundahl et. al, 2010). Furthermore, the ties to the profession are perhaps not as apparent as in the Finnish case. Wermke (2013) argues that academics have now taken over Swedish teacher education at the expense of the more practical and methods-based education, provided by teacher educators at the former autonomous teacher colleges.

2.5 The background summarized

The Swedish and Finnish school systems and teaching professions do indeed display a number of similarities and differences, of which the most important will be further emphasized in this
summary. Both school systems have a history of being strictly regulated by a strong state, accentuating equality, rationality and citizenship. The educational contexts of both countries underwent extensive changes when an intense decentralization phase took place in the 1990s, resulting in local autonomy and central management by objectives. Furthermore, both Finland and Sweden were influenced by the emerging globalization of education in the 2000s, with the OECD as a new powerful actor. However, the reforms did affect the educational landscape of the two countries in different ways. In Sweden, the rapid decentralization and deregulation first led to a lot of freedom for individual teachers, which soon got exposed to criticism, resulting in a backlash with more extensive central control of school quality and results. This was not the case in Finland, where schools and teachers as a collective were supposed to develop local curricula, which perhaps regulated the work of individual teachers, who on the other hand have not been as evaluated and controlled as their Swedish counterparts. In comparison to the Finnish PISA success, the Swedish results were considered a disappointment, which might have been a reason for the intense evaluation and adaptation to a globalized standardization of education. Moreover, the heavy growth in the number of independent schools and increased school competition that developed in Sweden did not take place in Finland to the same extent. Regarding the Swedish and Finnish teaching professions, there are some important differences. Finnish teachers have stronger unions with greater influence on educational reforms. Also, it has been argued that Finnish teachers enjoy a higher status than Swedish teachers, partly because of a more highly considered teacher education, which comprises high academic levels and a closer connection to the teaching profession.
3.0 Previous research

This chapter includes both conceptual and empirical research on teacher autonomy. In particular, research offering theoretical perspectives on how to compare teacher autonomy and studies investigating teacher autonomy in Sweden or Finland were of interest while searching for literature. The searches were made on the databases ERIC, Google scholar and Swepub. The words teach* and autonomy and related words, such as scope of action and discretion, were included as part of the title or as keywords. The words concept, Sweden, Finland or Nordic were added respectively as included in the abstract. Also, the teacher autonomy research project was a source of inspiration in the search for literature. As editors of a special issue of the Nordic journal of studies in educational policy, the project leaders Wieland Wermke & Maija Salokangas (2015) aim to discuss different perspectives on the complex phenomenon of teacher autonomy. Both theoretical and empirical articles are included in the issue.

First, research concerning the concept of teacher autonomy is explored. Jamie Wilches’ (2007) and Gemma Parker’s (2015) research reviews are the starting point in an endeavour to gain a broader understanding of how teacher autonomy can be conceptualized. Wilches (2007) reviews both empirical and conceptual studies on teacher autonomy with the purpose of bringing clarification to the concept and examining different internal and external factors that affect teachers’ perceived autonomy in different areas of teachers’ work. Parker (2015) focuses on defining teacher autonomy by exploring different conceptualizations of the phenomenon and discussing teacher autonomy in relation to professionalism, accountability and teachers’ duration of experience within a British context. Two other articles by Wieland Wermke & Gabriella Höstfält (2014) and Magnus Frostenson (2015) are also presented to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Both articles aim to create a tool for measuring and comparing teacher autonomy by providing conceptualizations that reveal different levels within the profession at which autonomy can be exercised. Moreover, some aspects of Wermke’s & Salokangas’ (2015) understanding of the phenomenon are highlighted to nuance the other scholars’ conceptions.

Thereafter, research that deals with teacher autonomy in the national contexts of Sweden and/or Finland is discussed. Christina Mølstad (2015) investigates teacher autonomy in terms of the relation between curriculum design and the character of local curricular work in Norway and Finland. Ingrid Carlgren & Kirsti Klette (2008) examine the restructuring of the Nordic school systems and its impact on teachers’ working conditions and the meaning of being a teacher in the different countries. Ulf Lundström (2015) explores how New Public Management structures have affected Swedish teachers’ perceived autonomy and how this relates to changes in Swedish teachers’ professionalism. Lastly, Wieland Wermke & Eva Forsberg (2017) analyse how school reforms since the 1990s have affected Swedish teachers’ autonomy. Also, they present an alternative perspective on constraints of teacher autonomy as complexity reduction.

Finally, two other minor studies, conducted within the teacher autonomy research project, are presented. Both studies compare Swedish and Finnish teachers’ autonomy, but with the use of different methods. Lars Fredrik Andréasson’s (2017) ethnographic study tests an analytical device, developed within the project, to describe how two teachers in Finland and Sweden
exercise autonomy, whereas Susanna Yilmaz Ruhmen (2016) focuses on teacher autonomy with respect to the social aspects of their work, by performing content analyses of documents regulating teachers’ rights and responsibilities on both a national and a local level.

3.1 The concept of teacher autonomy

3.1.1 Understanding teacher autonomy

The first distinction made in this section, agreed upon by all literature discussed here, is that autonomy is a dynamic state; something that can be constrained or extended under influence of different factors (Wilches, 2007; Parker, 2015; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Frostenson, 2015; Wermke & Salokangas, 2015). Wilches and Parker state, though, that there are many different approaches to teacher autonomy and that the concept might have been used somewhat inconsistently in research. In their respective research reviews, both scholars aim to clarify the meaning of the concept and its relation to other concepts. Wilches argues that it is important to distinguish between responsibility and accountability. Responsibility as a part of the autonomy concept is, according to Wilches, about teachers’ rights to make the professional decisions needed to accomplish educational goals with respect to structural conditions and the needs of different stakeholders. This should not be confused with what he calls illusory autonomy; the act of holding teachers accountable for the handling of undesired responsibilities. Wilches also stresses that teacher autonomy and isolation are not the same. Instead, he argues that interdependence, responsibility and commitment are important elements in the autonomous behaviour of teachers. This, however, seems not to be a unanimous view among researchers. Some of the more prominent conceptualizations of teacher autonomy that are put forward in Parker’s research review express a range of different approaches towards teacher autonomy, which stretches from a view of the concept as freedom from governance to models where autonomy and collaboration are fully compatible. A considerable part of the research reviewed by Parker regards autonomy as one of the defining features of teacher professionalism; important for teachers’ job satisfaction, motivation and for attracting students to teacher education. Some studies also suggest that teacher autonomy increases efficiency. They argue that autonomous teachers with influence over the educational decisions they are urged to implement are more likely to succeed in solving school problems. Parker further stresses that individual teacher autonomy and school autonomy are two different phenomena, which also makes the relationship between teachers and school leaders an important part in examining teachers’ autonomy. Head teachers are the ones responsible for implementation of government policies but do also have the power to promote and encourage teachers’ autonomy. This distinction is also emphasized by Wermke & Salokangas (2015), who claim that the complex social nature of schools means that the autonomy of one actor operating within the system may affect the autonomy of others.

3.1.2 Internal and external factors’ impact on teacher autonomy

Parker (2015) emphasizes the difficulties of measuring teachers’ perceived autonomy since teachers may have different perceptions of the same working conditions. She also suggests that teachers have a personal responsibility for exercising their autonomy within the scope of action they actually have. From that perspective, Parker puts forward a view of autonomy as affected by both external factors and individual agency. This idea is clearly emphasized in the research.
reviewed by Wilches (2007), who identifies three different categories of approaches to the concept. The first group of studies examines teachers’ perceived autonomy linked to how school reform and the organization of schools may affect teachers’ sense of autonomy. Another body of research investigates how personal factors affect the degree of how teachers exercise their autonomy within an educational context. The third and last collection of studies underline the importance of self-directed professional development in strengthening teachers’ autonomy, increase teachers’ competence and improving attitudes towards teaching and learning. In summary, Wilches states that the concept of teacher autonomy needs to be analysed from both subjective and objective levels. The subjective analysis pays respect to teachers’ sense of autonomy, which can be constrained by limitations in teachers’ competence, job satisfaction, confidence, perceptions about teacher and student autonomy and attitudes towards teaching and learning. An objective analysis focuses on external factors. These include local issues such as teaching load, lack of time, salary, support from colleagues and administrators and power structures within the school organization, but also external constraints from a political level, where central control by standardized testing and other accountability processes affect teachers’ working conditions and inhibit teacher autonomy. From Wermke’s & Salokangas’ (2015) perspective, teacher autonomy is highly context dependent. Therefore, they claim that both local and nation-specific structures in terms of steering, traditions and relations between actors on different levels within the school system must be paid respect to when investigating and comparing teachers’ autonomy. Moreover, Wermke & Salokangas emphasize the need for further comparative research in order to gain a better understanding of the meaning of teacher autonomy in different national contexts.

3.1.3 Dimensions of teacher autonomy

Wilches (2007) reports that many researchers investigate autonomy from one perspective only, and claims that teacher autonomy needs to be explained from different angles. Since the constraining factors affect different areas of teachers’ work, teacher autonomy may be more constrained in some work tasks than in others. Therefore, Wilches calls attention to Friedman’s (1999) suggestion of four domains within teachers’ work where teachers exercise control. The teaching and assessment domain includes teachers’ control over decisions regarding choice of educational goals, content, methods and materials as well as social issues such as the procedures around student behaviour. Constraining factors in this domain might be teachers’ own professional competence, central curriculum policies and standardised testing. In the curriculum development domain, teachers’ implementations, interpretations and re-phrasings of the curriculum are investigated. Cultural traditions and teachers’ beliefs about teaching and learning are some of the factors that Wilches claims affect whether teachers participate in curriculum development or not. School functioning is the third domain. It comprises teachers’ decision-making in administrative tasks, such as budget planning, timetabling and class-composition. Decisions in this domain have, according to Wilches, been a rather exclusive matter for school administrators. The fourth and final domain concerns teachers’ professional development, and deals with teachers’ opportunities to engage in professional development, but also their opportunities to decide for themselves its educational content and when and where it takes place. Wilches reports that self-directed professional development enhances motivation and professional competence and may be
inhibited by teachers’ own interest and dedication, but also by lack of time or compulsion to participate in professional development chosen by the employer.

Wermke & Höstfält (2014) approach the issue of investigating and measuring teachers’ autonomy from another perspective. Instead of dividing the work of teachers into different domains, they divide the teaching profession into two different levels. The starting point is two main options for governmental curriculum evaluation, put forward by Hopmann (2003). Product evaluation is accomplished by clearly defining desired results in terms of pupils’ learning and appropriate instruments for measuring the outcomes. Alternatively, the state has the possibility of process evaluation by standardising schooling and educating a competent teaching profession, responsible for the evaluation of pupils with respect to the curricular goals. Learning results in such a system are not evaluated by the state, since the strong teaching profession legitimizes its mandate to handle these issues by a professional language of didactics. In an educational system with process evaluation, Wermke & Höstfält claims that the institutional autonomy of teachers as a profession is extended. The status and authority of the profession is, however, based on the constraining of individual teachers’ service autonomy by peer-control, grounded in a professional code of ethics and the use of didactics as a standardizing tool for instruction. When the product is evaluated by the state, the institutional autonomy is constrained, since other agents are in power over decisions regarding evaluation of pupils and what is adequate knowledge. The teaching profession is then held accountable rather than being responsible for schooling. At the same time, the service autonomy of the individual teacher is extended, since neither the state nor the teacher’s colleagues restrict the choice of educational content and teaching methods.

With the aim of understanding and describing what he regards as a loss of autonomy and a de-professionalization of Swedish teachers, Frostenson (2015) provides an alternative understanding of Wermke’s and Höstfält’s (2014) conception by dividing the service autonomy component into two separate levels, which describe teacher autonomy as exercised by individual teachers on one hand, and by groups of teacher colleagues, on the other. In Frostenson’s conceptualization, general professional autonomy deals with the authority of the teacher profession in issues around organizing the framing of teachers’ work, such as teacher education, entry requirements, curricula and the organization of the school system. At the level of collegial professional autonomy, teachers’ influence on organizational and pedagogical issues within the local context of teachers’ work are analysed. It is possible, according to Frostenson, to maintain a collegial autonomy at this level, even when the general autonomy of the teacher profession is diminished. This is, however, dependent on how the managerial autonomy of the local school management is used. Finally, individual autonomy refers to individual teachers’ decision-making in educational matters within the classroom context. Frostenson emphasizes that this does not mean complete freedom for teachers, but rather the teacher’s influence over evaluation systems, temporal and spatial working conditions and selection of educational content, methods and materials within given frames.

### 3.2 Teacher autonomy in Sweden and Finland

Much like Wermke & Höstfält (2014), Mølstad (2015) understands the different governmental approaches of process control or product control (Hopmann, 2003) as affecting working
conditions in schools and the autonomy of teachers. From such a perspective, Mølstad investigates how the central authorities in Norway and Finland exercise control over education, and to what extent the conditions for local curriculum work are promoted or prevented by curriculum design in the two countries. By interviewing policy-makers and analysing curricular documents, Mølstad found that both countries provide opportunities for local curriculum work with the main argument of adjusting the curriculum to local variations. Through a deeper examination, however, different constructions in the framing of local curriculum work in the two countries were revealed. Mølstad describes the Norwegian approach as focused on delivery of the curriculum. Detailed guidelines were provided to ensure a correct understanding of the curriculum, and thereby support its implementation. In the Finnish case, teachers were granted more flexibility in their local curriculum work, which was seen as a pedagogical tool. Since Finnish teachers are given the mandate to develop the curriculum, Mølstad considers that they are offered a larger space for didactic reasoning. Finally, Mølstad suggests that the Finnish PISA success might have contributed to Finnish teachers maintaining their autonomy, in contrast to Norwegian teachers, who, according to Mølstad, have experienced a loss of autonomy on account of the increased use of accountability tools to ensure school quality.

Another comparative study by Carlgren & Klette (2008), seeks to understand how the restructuring of the Nordic educational systems has affected teachers’ working conditions. The authors argue that a reconstruction in education also means a reconstruction of the teacher, and that the meaning of being a teacher as well as the expectations placed on teachers might differ between the Nordic countries. The study comprised teacher interviews with analyses of policy documents in order to make the national comparisons, of which similarities and differences between Sweden and Finland were of primary interest for this thesis. Carlgren’s & Klette’s study was carried out in 2008, and refers to earlier Swedish and Finnish curricula. With that in mind, their results showed that curricular documents in both Finland and Sweden place an emphasis on teachers as professional curriculum makers, provided with a large amount of flexibility and responsibility for creating a good learning environment. Small differences could be seen in Swedish curricula, focusing more on accountability, whereas Finnish teachers were seen as scientifically legitimized. Differences were more evident in the teacher interviews. 12 teachers from each country were interviewed in the study, and while all teachers described the major changes of the 1990s as increasing their workload and demands for collegial work, Swedish teachers also perceived themselves as being increasingly responsible for their students’ learning; a pressure the Finnish teachers did not seem to experience. Although Swedish teachers expressed an uncertainty concerning how to handle their new situation with a newfound scope of action accompanied with increased external demands, Carlgren & Klette view the Swedish teachers as the least resistant of all the Nordic teacher professions to the changes in working conditions. In comparison, the Finnish teachers did not seem, according to Carlgren & Klette, to perceive themselves as obligated to redefine their jobs and have remained fairly traditional in their teacher role, appearing to be less modern than their curricular documents.

Although more organizationally oriented and focused on Swedish teachers only, Lundström’s (2015) aim to investigate teachers’ perceived autonomy in relation to recent school reforms makes his article comparable to that of Carlgren & Klette (2008). Lundström’s analysis is based on interviews with 119 Swedish upper secondary teachers, conducted in three separate studies,
and mainly concentrates on the impact of New Public Management structures on teacher autonomy. The respondents viewed themselves as autonomous in theory, but at the same time they expressed that their workload had increased due to external demands to implement new tasks without being provided with sufficient resources from municipal politicians. Many teachers also described a new role as school advertisers and an extended pressure to “satisfy the customer” due to school competition. Furthermore, the emphasis on test results and grades as definitions of quality, along with increased evaluations and the standards-based curriculum were pointed out as narrowing the view of knowledge and constraining creativity by downgrading aesthetic subjects and restricting teachers’ possibilities to organize thematic days and field trips. Some teachers also perceived a connection between salary and attitudes towards policy implementation. Lundström argues that the teachers’ perceived working conditions are consequences of the emergence of New Public Management, which has moved Swedish teachers from a licensed autonomy, based on governmental trust, to a regulated autonomy, where demands for control and standards reduces teachers’ scope of action. This is also, according to Lundström, part of a movement from an occupational professionalism, characterized by competence, discretion and professional control of work, to an organizational professionalism, distinguished by accountability, managerialism and external control.

The final contribution in this sub-section is an article by Wermke & Forsberg (2017). They use the concept of institutional autonomy and service autonomy (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014) as an analytical device for describing changes in the Swedish teaching profession’s autonomy by a meta-analysis of literature on the subject. Wermke & Forsberg argue that the decentralization and deregulation reforms of the 1990s, with a movement towards product control and municipal responsibility for teachers’ employment, weakened the teacher unions and teachers’ influence on goal-setting and evaluation. Along with the strong marketization of the school system, which increased the number of stakeholders with an interest in schooling, this development diminished the institutional autonomy of the Swedish teaching profession. Simultaneously, the service autonomy of individual teachers, regarding choices of educational content and methods within the classroom context, was extended. A few years into the 2000s, Wermke & Forsberg identify another reform wave that aimed to reduce the uncontrolled complexity brought into the school system by the first wave of reforms, threatening school quality and equivalence in education. Increased evaluation became the governmental tool for gaining control and standardizing education. As a result, Wermke & Forsberg claim that the service autonomy also became constrained, leaving teachers in a more instrumental role as curriculum deliverers. This process of de-professionalization was facilitated, according to Wermke & Forsberg, by the weakening of the teacher profession’s institutional autonomy. In conclusion, Wermke & Forsberg suggest that teacher autonomy is always about control, since total freedom for teachers is impossible in a mass schooling system. Finland and Germany are given as examples of countries with extended institutional autonomy; a condition that entails restricted service autonomy by conservative teaching professions, controlling and reducing the complexity of individual teachers’ work.
3.3 Minor studies within the research project

Andréasson’s (2017) pilot study tests an analytical matrix developed within the teacher autonomy project, designed to analyse and compare teacher autonomy on different levels and in different domains of teachers’ work. Andréasson investigates how one teacher in Sweden and one teacher in Finland exercise autonomy through observations of the teachers’ actions in different situations, and follow-up interviews where the teachers’ own reflections were taken into account. The results indicated that teachers may lack or possess autonomy on different levels in different situations within the same domain; confirming that teacher autonomy is indeed a complex phenomenon. Also, the teachers described their autonomy as varying between their different subjects taught, since the curriculum directives were more specified in some subjects than in others. One difference found between the countries was that the Finnish teachers, engaged in local curriculum work, seemed to take more decisions at a collegial level, simultaneously reducing the autonomy of individual teachers. Andréasson relates this to Wermke’s & Forsberg’s (2017) idea of complexity reduction, suggesting that the collegial regulations also absorb risks for individual teachers. However, Andréasson stresses that this is a minor study with a small sample, and that further research is needed.

Yilmaz Ruhmen (2016) concentrates on social issues within teachers’ work and seeks to understand similarities and differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ rights and responsibilities regarding the social interaction between teachers and students. By analysing the school laws in both Sweden and Finland, and the rules of conduct at one school in each country, Yilmaz Ruhmen also aims to examine the connection between the national and local levels. The analysis showed that the Finnish national school law regulated the disciplinary actions taken by teachers towards students. Its Swedish equivalent, on the other hand, put more emphasis on students’ rights not to be offended by teachers, providing descriptions of how to report teachers. This information could not be found in the Finnish school law, which can be explained by the absence of a school inspectorate in Finland, where complaints instead must be reported to the local school administration. In neither the Swedish, nor the Finnish school included in the study, did teachers have much say in drawing up the rules of conduct. In the Finnish case, though, there was a much clearer connection to the national level, since all rules of conduct written by the municipality referred to the school law. In summary, the findings suggest that Finnish teachers’ actions in social matters might be more regulated, while the Swedish teachers are held more accountable.

3.4 The research summarized

Wermke & Salokangas (2015), Wilches (2007) and Parker (2015) all aim to gain a broader understanding of the concept teacher autonomy by exploring the different approaches and conceptualizations made by several other scholars. From these investigations they have come to some similar conclusions. First of all, they argue that the degree of teachers’ autonomy depends on different factors. These may be internal, such as teacher competence and motivation, but also external ones that deal with governance and control at political or organizational level (Wilches, 2007). Because teacher autonomy is context dependent, it is therefore important to take into account such local and nation-specific structures when comparing teachers’ autonomy (Wermke
Since schools are complex institutions with many different actors, school autonomy does not necessarily equate to the autonomy of individual teachers (Parker, 2015; Wermke & Salokangas, 2015). Scholars have thus provided conceptualizations that consider teacher autonomy as existing on different levels; by individual teachers in the classroom, and by groups of teachers at a local or national level. Such an understanding assumes that teachers may enjoy a higher degree of autonomy at one level at the expense of reduced autonomy on another (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Frostenson, 2015). Another dimension of the concept is presented by Wilches (2007), who argue that the different factors constraining teachers’ autonomy, affect different domains of teachers’ work, and that teachers may be more autonomous in some work tasks than in others.

Research on teacher autonomy in the Swedish and Finnish contexts have also been explored. Carlgren’s & Klette’s (2008) study of the influence of educational reforms on Nordic teachers’ working conditions, found that in spite of great similarities between the Swedish and Finnish curricula, there were major differences in practice. Swedish teachers experienced greater pressure to take responsibility for pupils’ learning, and were at the same time much more willing to adapt to reforms than their Finnish colleagues. Mølstad (2015) argues that Finnish teachers are more trusted than Norwegian teachers in the sense that they are given more flexibility in their work with local curriculum development. Swedish teachers, on the other hand, are according to Lundström (2015) not trusted by the government as much as before. Instead, their autonomy is now strongly regulated because of New Public Management structures, which have encouraged managerialism, standards and accountability. Wermke & Forsberg (2017) argue that the Swedish teaching profession lost a considerable part of their institutional autonomy and influence in connection with the decentralization wave of the 1990s. At the same time, the autonomy of individual teachers were extended. After the turn of the millennium, the increased control of school quality and results, together with other factors, has also led to a reduction in the autonomy of individual teachers. Contrary to this, Wermke & Forsberg (2017) assert the Finnish teacher profession, which they consider to be influential and to enjoy autonomy at an institutional level. However, it is also traditional and conservative, and regulates the autonomy of individual teachers. Wermke & Forsberg claim that autonomy is always controlled in some way, and that regulations can be viewed as an instrument for reducing the complexity of teachers’ work. Two other minor studies within the teacher autonomy project by Andréasson (2017) and Yilmaz Ruhmen (2016), have both also found this difference between Swedish and Finnish teachers, where Finnish teachers’ autonomy might be more regulated from central or collegial level, whereas Swedish teachers are more controlled and are held accountable.
4.0 Theory

4.1 Introduction

As this thesis is a part of the research project *Teacher autonomy in Sweden, Finland, Ireland and Germany*, it shares the project’s view of autonomy as context dependent, and also the understanding of teacher autonomy as a multidimensional phenomenon. Especially important for this thesis’ theoretical understanding of the concept is the work of Richard M. Ingersoll (1996; 2003). The American educational contextual background to Ingersoll’s theory is built on principles of decentralization and accountability for teachers, and has traditionally differed considerably from the Nordic school systems and their approach to the professionalization of teachers. Today, the Nordic countries have moved toward a more similar system of product control, Sweden more than Finland. (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017). Furthermore, Ingersoll’s perspective is organizational rather than national, and his research can thus be considered highly relevant to this study.

The work of Ingersoll (1996; 2003) is not a grand theory in itself, but rather a collection of middle scope theories explaining the field of teacher autonomy. The reason why Ingersoll has been chosen as the main source of theory is because he offers a holistic perspective, which covers all the important aspects of teacher autonomy which are of relevance to this thesis, in relation to the previous research described. As a professor of education and sociology, Ingersoll is interested in power distribution and conflict within the school organization. His research revolves around the amount of power and autonomy given to teachers and their relation to school functioning. Another area of importance is the teacher’s role within the school organization and how they are governed by steering and various control mechanisms. Ingersoll (1996; 2003) considers that power within an organization belongs to those who control the most important *decisions* that are to be made. Hence, teacher autonomy is viewed by Ingersoll (2003) as teachers’ control and influence over the key-decisions that affect the character, content, processes and evaluation of their daily work. In order to analyse teacher autonomy, one must therefore define which are the most important decisions that affect teachers’ work, but also determine which criteria should be used for evaluation and how one should examine who controls these decisions. In this section, Ingersoll’s theory on power distribution within schools and its implications for teachers will be described in detail. Lastly, Ingersoll’s ideas central to this thesis will be listed in order to create a theoretical framework for understanding, examining, comparing and analysing teacher autonomy.

4.2 Perspectives on bureaucracy in schools

From a perspective of organization theory, Ingersoll (2003) claims that every workplace faces similar challenges in how to define, supervise and reward the tasks undertaken by its employees in order to enhance performance and productivity. A certain amount of coordination and control is necessary to achieve organizational goals. Also important, though, is the consent and cooperation of the individual members of the organization. According to Ingersoll (2003), the problem of finding the proper degree of control and consent is a cornerstone in organization theory, and essential for avoiding demotivation, disorder and low performance. This balance can
also be described as the level of bureaucracy within the organization. Ingersoll (2003) puts forward Max Weber’s work as central in this field. Weber views bureaucracy as built on rationality, efficiency and hierarchy, characterized by standardization and control, but also as dependent on loyalty and cooperation. From this viewpoint, some organizations are better suited to bureaucracy than others. Schools are, according to Ingersoll (2003), the archetype of loosely coupled systems; complex organizations that on the one hand require bureaucracy in the shape of coordination and control, but on the other hand involve human relations and tasks which are not easily bureaucratized. In such a system, the need for bureaucracy conflicts with the employees’ need for flexibility and autonomy, which leads to a more intense tension between control and consent than in many other organizations.

Ingersoll (1996) reports that the question of how decentralized a school system ought to be seems to be subject to disagreement among both researchers and policymakers, resulting in two main conflicting standpoints. From the traditional view, schools are considered as needing to be more structured and coordinated in order to reach higher levels of achievement (Ingersoll, 1996). Desirable school reforms from this perspective often include competition, accountability and standards, and low quality teachers are considered as the reason of low student performance and sometimes even for economic and moral decline in society (Ingersoll, 2003). From an opposite viewpoint, it has been argued that schools are not decentralized enough. In this line of thought, teachers are becoming de-professionalized by working in factory-like schools, constraining their autonomy. Instead, a higher degree of teacher influence on important school decisions will, according to this view, increase job satisfaction and motivation among teachers, and lead to better school performance. From this perspective, the important issue of education should be left to teachers, since they are experts on the matter and closest to the process (Ingersoll, 1996; 2003). According to Ingersoll (1996), the meaning and purpose of decentralization and de-bureaucratization has also been an issue of confusion, where analysts have focused on different aspects. Teacher empowerment and individual teacher autonomy has been of interest for some, while others have been concerned with the power of the local school faculty or the influence of parents and other local stakeholders.

4.3 Teachers and decision-making

4.3.1 Teachers’ decisions in different areas and zones

As stated in the introduction to this section, Ingersoll (1996; 2003) understands teacher autonomy as the power over decision-making and control of the most important decisions that affect teachers’ work. Ingersoll (1996) claims that the effects of distribution of power and control varies, depending on which activities and issues are being controlled. That is why it is especially important to separate important and unimportant decisions in order to gain an appropriate understanding of power distribution. Less important decisions might be delegated, leading employees to believe they have real power, while key-decisions stays firmly controlled at a higher level within the organization. According to Ingersoll (2003), most theory on school organization considers schools as consisting of two separate zones. The schoolwide zone comprises mainly administrative activities, such as management, planning and resource allocation, while the classroom zone includes teaching and other educational activities. This understanding resembles to
The two conflicting perspectives on bureaucratization and decentralization described above, have both adopted this zone view, although they differ in terms of their opinions on which zone is the most important (Ingersoll, 2003). When advocates of the described traditional view of schools are asked about teachers’ autonomy and decision-making, they focus on the classroom zone, where teachers indeed have a considerable amount of power over decisions. Thus, their conclusion is that schools are decentralized. Representatives of the competing view, on the other hand, want to draw the attention to the schoolwide zone, arguing that the teacher faculty ought to have influence over decisions regarding school policy, budget and planning, issues where teacher input is very low. Consequently, they find schools to be overly bureaucratized.

Ingersoll (2003) separates the decisions within the classroom zone into two categories and thereby highlights administrative, instructional and social issues as the three main areas of teachers’ work where important decisions are made. By emphasizing the importance of social issues in teachers’ work, Ingersoll provides a complement to the domains of autonomy presented by Wilches (2007). In line with many other researchers, Ingersoll (2003) claims that teacher control is mostly found in instructional decisions within the classroom, such as selecting educational concepts and instructional methods. Choices of textbooks, the establishment of a local school curriculum and other decisions on a schoolwide level, though, are issues where teachers have little input. Administrative decisions about teachers’ schedules, class sizes, student tracking and resource allocation are, according to Ingersoll (2003), almost exclusively made on a managerial level, while teacher control over decisions regarding social issues is more varied. Control over student discipline within the classroom has traditionally been in the hands of the teachers, but teachers’ authority to expel students from the classroom, and their influence over behavioural rules on a schoolwide level is not as evident.

4.3.2 The impact of teacher control on school functioning

Ingersoll (1996) views teachers’ decision-making in schools as related to the degree of conflict between students, teachers and school administrators, and argue that the amount of power held by teachers has a positive effect on school functioning. Once again, turning to organization theory, Ingersoll (1996) reports that the working climate is often used as an indicator of the productivity and performance of an organization. In the school context, however, this has not been the case. Instead, there has been an almost exclusive focus on students’ results in standardised tests. Ingersoll (1996) argues that a positive school climate and a high degree of cooperation is important for school performance, but also an indicator of success in itself. From that viewpoint, Ingersoll (2003) is especially interested in the effects of teacher control on school climate. Firstly, Ingersoll reports that a higher degree of teacher control over social issues has shown to diminish problems of student misbehaviour. This effect overshadows the effect of other variables, such as school size or location, student population or school form, but is not evident when teachers instead gain more control over instructional issues. The same pattern can be seen in the connection between teachers controlling social issues and lower levels of conflict among teachers and between teachers and principals. Secondly, Ingersoll declares that higher levels of teacher control decrease the rate of teacher turnover, and once again, control over
decisions of social nature causes the greatest effects. The social area of teachers’ work is therefore highlighted as important by Ingersoll (1996), who claims that researchers investigating organizational control in schools have been too strongly focused on academic instruction, at the expense of the behavioural, social and normative activities, which from Ingersoll’s point of view deserves a higher status among scholars.

4.4 Teachers and control

4.4.1 Organizational steering and control of teachers’ work

Ingersoll (1996), reports that the organizational control systems in schools vary from highly bureaucratized to highly decentralized, depending on different factors such as the size of the schools, where larger schools seem to be more centralized. Also in Ingersoll’s (2003) own research, these differences have been demonstrated, along with differences between private and public schools, showing that the former group is far more decentralized than the latter (Ingersoll, 2003). However, since local school autonomy primarily equals principal autonomy, teachers at small private schools seemed to enjoy about the same levels of control as teachers at large public schools, suggesting that all schools were more or less centralized at the principal level. Similar to Parker (2015), Ingersoll (2003) therefore argues that high levels of autonomy at a local administrative level do not necessarily imply an extended autonomy of employees. Because of this, the teacher-principal relation becomes particularly important.

Instead of describing different internal and external factors constraining teachers’ autonomy (Wilches, 2007), Ingersoll (1996; 2003) focuses on control mechanisms. According to Ingersoll (2003), a control mechanism is needed to define the task expected to be carried out by employees and determine whether the result is satisfactory. Also, there need to be sanctions on those employees who have not performed the task accordingly. Teachers’ work is, according to Ingersoll (2003) regulated by a number of rules. Besides standardized local curricula and instructional policies, teachers are expected to enforce behavioural rules for students; often formulated with little teacher input. The most common way to supervise teachers is through class observations, usually conducted by the principal, who uses standardised checklists in order to assess the efficiency of the teacher’s practice (Ingersoll, 2003). Another method of evaluating teachers is using student performance as an indicator of teacher performance. In many cases, teachers have to keep records of their lesson plans and their students’ test results, and make them available for scrutiny. However, Ingersoll (2003) also claims that school administrators simultaneously lack the power to enforce the rules and put sanctions on teachers, which also implies that there are few means to reward good performance. Thus, other ways of steering teachers must be found.

Ingersoll (2003) points out that organizational control is not always visible. For example, the hierarchical structure of the organization in itself restricts the power and influence of those members who simply do not have access to the areas of work where important decisions are made. Moreover, rules, regulations and direct control might even be less effective than norms, expectations and other forms of subtle control in organizations. Hence, the absence of visible control mechanisms and formal standardization of working tasks may seem to be an indicator of
decentralisation and autonomy, although the power within the organization is highly centralized in reality. Ingersoll (2003) argues that a principal’s most effective way to achieve control is by appearing to have the power and capacity to sanction teachers. Also, teachers are from Ingersoll’s (2003) point of view dependent on their principals in a number of issues, especially in the key area of student socialization. Since teachers only have limited authority in the disciplining of students, they need their principals to take their side in conflicts with students in order not to appear weak and lose credibility. Taking this reasoning one step further, Ingersoll (2003) considers that loose regulations might make teachers vulnerable and that top-down regulations and bureaucratic control might not necessarily be frowned upon by the teaching faculty. Instead, regulations may in fact serve as a buffer zone, protecting teachers from accountability, conflicts with students and parental pressure, since they clarify where teachers’ responsibilities start and where they end. This reasoning harmonizes with Wermke’s & Forsberg’s (2017) idea that centralized steering and regulations reduce the complexity of teachers’ work.

4.4.2 Teachers’ role within the school organization

The complexity of teachers’ work is related to some characteristics of the teacher occupation that are unusual from an organisation theory perspective (Ingersoll, 2003). First off, the relation between teachers and students is special, since students cannot choose teachers and teachers cannot choose not to teach a particular student. Additionally, teachers’ clients are not only students and their parents. As tax-funded civil servants, teachers are also responsible for educating and socializing future citizens, which is why the entire society can be described as a client of teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). Also the organization of teachers’ work displays some rare traits. Ingersoll (2003) describes it by using the “egg-crate” model. Although performing similar work tasks and facing similar problems, teachers are isolated from one another in their different classrooms, and are centrally controlled. New teachers, especially, often find themselves in what Ingersoll describes as a “sink or swim” situation, inexperienced and isolated in their classrooms without much contact with the school administration or other teachers, but still responsible for their students’ learning. Ingersoll (2003) understands teacher culture as characterized by an ethos of responsibility and accountability, a result of the combination of isolation, a demanding workload and a high degree of altruism within the teaching workforce. This special kind of ethos is also, according to Ingersoll, visible in the way teachers and school administrators tend to view teacher professionalism as more related to attitudinal attributes like dedication, caring and engagement, than to structural characteristics of a professional as an autonomous and highly respected expert. This definition of the teacher role emphasizes the responsibility of the individual teacher rather than the organization to solve problems. This applies especially to the issue of maintaining discipline and order in the classroom (Ingersoll, 2003).

From another perspective on professionalism, Ingersoll (2003) argues that the distribution of control among groups in an organization is a key criterion in distinguishing professions from other occupations. Professional employees are regarded as experts within their specialized area of work and characterized by higher levels of self-governance, since control is considered to be properly placed in the hands of those with most knowledge of the matter. The control and autonomy enjoyed by professionals, both individually and as a collective, is relative in relation to other groups, such as managers and clients. Doctors, for example, have traditionally been viewed
as authorities in their relations with clients. Teachers are, according to Ingersoll (2003), subject to more collective input from the public, since they are not recognized as experts to the same extent. In a bureaucratic organization, the hierarchy is built upon a division of labour distributed in accordance with the complexity of different tasks (Ingersoll, 2003). Employees at every different step are considered to be trained and skilled enough to be given a certain amount of responsibility to carry out a specific task and a certain amount of control to get the task done. This balance between responsibility and control or autonomy may differ greatly between different kinds of work. Ingersoll (2003) considers that teachers typically are responsible for carrying out tasks, but lack enough control and power to do their job effectively. Such structures have also been found in a Swedish context by Lundström (2015), who showed that increased responsibilities without enough resources increased the workload on Swedish teachers. Ingersoll (2003) argues that teachers are often expected to enforce behavioural rules for students, formulated by others, but without powerful tools to sanction those students who misbehave. Furthermore, teachers in general do have considerable control over instructional activities within the classroom, but lack control over issues important for succeeding in this task, such as class sizes or imposed out-of-field teaching, causing teachers to turn to pre-made lesson plans or rely heavily on textbooks and standardized tests in order to save time and energy. Ingersoll (2013) describes this as *deskilling*: a transformation of complex work, carried out by professionals, to work that can be performed by low-skilled employees. The reason for doing this from a managerial point of view is that generalists are more easily replaced than experts, which in the school context, for example, reduces the threat of teacher turnover. On the other hand, Ingersoll emphasizes that a “teacher proof” curriculum is highly inflexible and face difficulties in the complex interactive work of individualizing instruction.

Despite Ingersoll’s (2003) illustrations of teachers as partly organized like factory workers, he describes the role of teachers as rather resembling that of foremen or supervisors; to neither decide about tasks, nor carry them out, but to be directly responsible for the workers below. This role of teachers “in the middle” applies to the position in between administrators and students, but also to a role in between parents and students. Stuck between sometimes contradictory demands, teachers’ responsibilities need, according to Ingersoll (2003), to be accompanied with enough resources and control to get the job done. Ingersoll (1996) claims that smaller amounts of power given by superordinates increases conflict with subordinates. A certain amount of power held by teachers regarding their most important working decisions are thus essential for accomplishing tasks and gaining respect from both directions. When this is not the case, teachers might have to turn to manipulative or authoritarian methods, resulting in tensions with students.

4.5 The use of Ingersoll’s ideas in this thesis

Ingersoll’s (1996; 2003) perspective comprises many aspects of how to understand, examine and analyse teacher autonomy that has also been put forward in similar ways by other scholars. Four main ideas are central for this thesis and create the basis for a theoretical framework:

- Schools consist of a classroom zone and a schoolwide zone where different kinds of decisions are made. Teachers’ autonomy in a local school context can thus be
exercised at different levels; individually in the classroom, and as a collective at the schoolwide level.

- Teachers’ work is exercised within different areas, which contain different kinds of decisions. The control exerted by teachers may differ between different areas of their work.

- Teachers’ autonomy is about their control over the key-decisions that affect their daily work. An increased responsibility for making unimportant decisions also increases teachers’ workload, especially if they are not provided the amount of control needed to accomplish the task. The issue of teacher autonomy is thus not about how many decisions teachers are responsible for making, but rather which decisions teachers control. A regulation of unimportant decisions should therefore not be viewed as a restriction on autonomy, but as a reduction of the complexity of teachers’ work.

- Schools can be described as loosely coupled systems, which are not easily controlled. On the one hand, schools need some bureaucratization in order to work properly, but on the other, some discretion and autonomy among employees is required because of the complex work that is done. Since control is not always visible, an investigation of teachers’ autonomy needs to be accompanied by an investigation of who controls teachers’ work and decisions, and which control mechanisms are used.
5.0 Method

This thesis aims to investigate Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceived autonomy and how it is controlled by performing analyses of data from a larger quantitative survey study within the teacher autonomy project. As I was not part of designing the survey or collecting the data myself, large parts of this chapter will be based on information from the researchers conducting the study, which means that many of the reasons given for different methodological and ethical choices will be secondary information. Since this thesis is so far the only one focused exclusively on the Finnish and Swedish samples within the data material collected through the survey, the reflections about generalization and the closer descriptions of the samples are solely my own. I have also chosen which parts of the questionnaire to focus on and carried out the analysis myself. Moreover, the literature for supporting the reasoning and for describing the statistical methods used has been chosen and studied by me. The method section has been constructed in relation to interviews with the project leader Wieland Wermke, the documentation of expert workshop meetings (see below, all meetings were recorded), and the documentation of data collection, including descriptive statistics; both of the teacher population addressed and the sample achieved in both countries. Finally, due to the complexity of issues in comparative research designs, I have decided to present all empirical issues of the project and their solutions as transparently and exhaustively as possible, although the decisions on the solutions are not mine.

5.1 A quantitative approach

In the larger study, Swedish, Finnish and German teachers’ perceived autonomy was of interest, and the main focus was on comparing teachers’ perceived autonomy in different national contexts, why it was considered necessary to gain knowledge about different national contextual conditions, and how teacher autonomy can be conceptualized (Wermke & Salokangas, 2018). While comparing these large populations, a lot of emphasis has been put on the ability to generalize the findings. Hence, teacher autonomy needed to be investigateable and comparable quantitatively. Quantitative methods are preferable when the researcher wants to estimate the frequency or distribution of clearly defined conditions and attitudes within the total population or identify different factors that influence an outcome. On the other hand, they lack opportunities to conduct deeper analyses, compared to qualitative methods, and are not the first choice when the researcher wants to develop a theory (Eliasson, 2010; Creswell, 2013).

In the study, the data was collected by conducting a web questionnaire survey. The purpose of using this method was to describe how common certain answers were within the different national teacher populations. Choosing questionnaires instead of interviews reduces costs. They also reduce the risk of the researcher affecting the respondents’ answers compared with interviews (Esaiasson et. al, 2007). Moreover, questionnaires are not as time-consuming and a larger number of respondents can be reached, unfortunately often at the price of a lower response rate (Eliasson, 2010). Since questionnaires often provide a limited number of options for answers, defined in beforehand by the researcher, possibilities of finding new answer categories and developing the concept are minimized. Esaiasson et. al (2007) also argues that one should be careful in making far-reaching conclusions regarding estimations of attitude levels within a population while using questionnaires. This is because the results may differ depending
on how the questions are formulated. Nevertheless, these questions can be very useful in comparisons between different groups or in studies of how opinions change over time. In summary, since the main objective of the teacher autonomy project is to compare teachers’ perceived autonomy in different countries, a quantitative approach in the form of a questionnaire fits well.

5.1.1 Validity and reliability issues in the survey construction

According to Esaiasson et al. (2007, p.63) there are three main ways of defining validity; 1) as conformity between theoretical definition and operational indicator; 2) as absence of systematic errors; and 3) that we measure what we claim we measure. Especially when operationalizing complex concepts, such as autonomy, Esaiasson et. al argue that problems with validity may arise, which is why these cases benefit from building on operationalizations previously used by established researchers. In this study, the operationalization of teacher autonomy is built on Ingersoll’s (1996; 2003) extensive research, where the concept is operationalized as decision-making and control. Besides Ingersoll’s contribution, other research in the field was also taken into account. The operationalization is further described in chapter 5.2.1. A high validity regarding the connection between the theory and the operationalization generates a high result validity, i.e. that we measure what we intend to measure, only if a high level of reliability is also attained (Esaiasson et. al, 2007). The reliability of a study tells us whether it can be repeated with the same results, and is highly dependent upon the extent to which the researcher has been careful and accurate while carrying out the data collection and processing the data material (Eliasson, 2010). A way to enhance the reliability of a study is measuring the most important variables in multiple ways, and hence reduce the risk of misunderstandings due to lack of quality in formulations of questions (ibid). How the questions are asked is crucial for designing a qualitative questionnaire, according to Esaiasson et. al (2007), since sometimes even a single word can affect the answers largely. In order to succeed in this task, they suggest that the researcher may test the questions, both on experts in the field and on individuals that belong to the intended group of respondents.

While designing the questionnaire, all these possible risks and possibilities were taken into account. The process of designing the questionnaire started with a literature study, where empirical instruments measuring teacher autonomy were explored and analysed in terms of their utility and suitability for the project. Some recognized instruments were thus not regarded as useful for measuring European teachers’ autonomy, due to national and cultural differences in the understanding of the concept. The literature review resulted in the analytical grid presented in the analysis section (Wermke & Salokangas, submitted). The concept was tested and further developed in a qualitative comparative study, pre the survey (during 2016). Roughly 100 teachers were interviewed individually or in groups, ca. two weeks was spent in schools in the countries observing the organization of schooling (Qualitative data has also been reported in Wermke, Olason Rick & Salokangas, submitted). In relation to and after the literature review, the research project was accompanied by an expert group with two to five teachers and teacher educators per country. The group met, in differing constellations at four expert workshops, each two days long. This study followed the recommendations of Broadfoot et al. (1993) on the conduct of cross-national studies, i.e. first of all linguistic and concept equivalence. Such cross-national expert
group meetings helped to address such requirements. In particular, the meeting of experts from the countries participating enabled ensuring equivalence in the operationalization. In order to sensitize the experts to cross-cultural comparisons, school visits as well as filmed instructional lessons and discussions of dilemmas (in vignettes) were included. All discussions were filmed or recorded. The meetings were organized in the following order: The experts firstly discussed (at workshop one, May 2016) the conditions of the teaching profession in relation to what are the most important decisions for the teaching profession to be made, who makes them, and how the decisions are made to be controlled (Ingersoll, 2003). At workshop two (March 2017), the participants discussed in detail the operationalization of the research questions in a questionnaire. In the first development step, all questions were formulated in English. After this workshop, the translated questionnaire versions were sent for testing and commenting to the experts involved. All questionnaires were distributed in the countries’ languages (in Finland: in Swedish and Finnish). In workshop three (November 2017) and in workshop four (March 2018), the questionnaire’s descriptive results and scales were discussed in order to test their plausibility, and issues that occurred during the data collection process. In the online questionnaire, teachers had the opportunity to comment on the questionnaire. These comments were also used to find problematic issues in the questionnaire ex post. All these steps aimed to make the questionnaire valid and reliable, and ensure comparability between countries.

In addition, an overview of the design of the questionnaire is provided in the next chapter, and the questionnaire in its entirety can be found in the appendix. While organizing the data, different scales and types were constructed so that the large number of variables was reduced and a richer understanding of different concepts was enabled than can be achieved by analyzing single items. These were carefully constructed, and in order to ensure reliability and validity, they were also tested with statistical methods, which will be further described in chapter 5.2.2.

5.2 Survey design and operationalization

5.2.1 The empirical understanding of autonomy

When investigating teachers’ perceived autonomy empirically, one cannot expect valuable results from simply asking teachers how autonomous they are, without clearly defining the concept and making it possible to measure and compare between teachers. The concept has to be operationalized in a way that takes into account that the same amount of autonomy might be experienced differently by different teachers, and that having a particular scope of action does not necessarily mean using it. In this thesis, the definition of autonomy is “the capacity of an agent to determine their own actions through independent decisions within a system of principles within which they operate” (Ballou, 1998), or in other words; autonomy is about the decisions teachers are allowed to make depending on capacities and rules. Based on the work of Ingersoll (1996; 2003), three main questions are formulated to operationalize and investigate teachers’ autonomy empirically in terms of decision-making, governance and control:

- What are the most important decisions to be made for the teaching profession?
- Who is allowed to make such decisions?
- Who or what frames teachers’ decisions and who controls that the decisions made are appropriate?
By using Ingersoll’s (1996; 2003) view of teacher autonomy as teachers’ decision-making and control over their daily working tasks, the complexity of the phenomenon is reduced and it becomes easier to create relevant variables that can be used to measure and compare teachers’ autonomy and cover all the research questions of this study (Eliasson, 2010). Another advantage of this operationalization is that the questions answered by the respondents are not about them as individuals. Although not being in the centre of this study, autonomy is related to issues of competence, and according to Hofer (2002), asking teachers about their practise in a formal way might cause them to describe the practice they consider most appropriate, which is avoided by asking about who makes the important decisions. Moreover, the complex relations in classrooms, schools and school systems that are related to the issue of teacher autonomy complicate the setting of comparative studies (Wermke & Salokangas 2015). A limitation within the comparative investigation of teacher autonomy to decision-making and control excludes other themes related to the concept in question, such as empowerment, the structure of teacher agency and also issues of teacher self-determination, as put forward by research on motivation.

5.2.2 An empirical device on teacher autonomy

Much research agrees that the complex and diverse work of teachers implies that teachers may be more autonomous in some areas of their work than in others, and that autonomy may differ between different levels within the profession. For instance, an individual teacher may possess a high degree of autonomy, while the autonomy of teachers as a profession is restricted. Following the same line of thought, the collegial autonomy at a particular school may be extended at the price of diminished individual autonomy. Within the teacher autonomy project Wermke & Salokangas (2018) present an analytical matrix based on other conceptualizations considering domains of teachers’ work (Wilches, 2007; Friedman, 1999; Ingersoll, 2003; Gewirtz & Cribb, 2007) and levels of autonomy (Ingersoll, 2003; Gewirtz & Cribb, 2007; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Frostenson, 2015).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Educational (Lesson planning, delivery and evaluation)</th>
<th>Social (Discipline policies, tracking, special needs)</th>
<th>Developmental (Formal professional development)</th>
<th>Administrative (Scheduling, timely and financial resources)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom (Relations to students and teaching content)</td>
<td>Who makes the decisions? (Individual teachers, teachers collectively, principal, actors outside school)</td>
<td>Who controls that the decisions are appropriate? (Parents, colleagues, principal, actors outside school)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School (Relations to principals, colleagues, parents)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analytical matrix consists of a vertical dimension with four domains. Planning, instruction and assessment are some of the duties regarding teaching and learning that are included in the educational domain. The second domain is social and contains the socialisation of students. A few
examples of teachers’ work that is placed in this domain are disciplining of students, student grouping and the treatment of students with special needs. In the developmental domain, teachers’ formal professional development is emphasised. Central issues in this domain are teachers’ influence and involvement in these matters. Finally, the administrative domain refers to teachers’ opportunities to make decisions regarding the use of resources, timetabling, teachers’ salaries and other administrative activities. The original matrix also contains three horizontal dimensions corresponding to three different levels of autonomy. The classroom-related dimension relates to the individual teacher’s scope of action within a classroom context. In the second, school-related dimension, the autonomy of teachers as a collective is highlighted in a local context. At this level, the school is viewed as a social arena with many actors who affect the autonomy of one another. The professional dimension refers to the autonomy of the teacher profession in relation to other actors on a macro level. In this dimension, teachers’ status, education and influence are related factors. In this study, though, only the first two levels regarding teachers in the classroom and the teaching staff at a particular school are included, since it was not considered appropriate to ask individual teachers about the autonomy of the entire teaching profession. Wermke & Salokangas (2018) stress that they by no means suggest that all research on teacher autonomy using this matrix must strictly use the whole package of dimensions and domains for analysis. Moreover, they point out that the cells in the matrix are fluid rather than static, but argue that this especially is why the matrix is helpful as a tool for analysing teachers’ autonomy and for showing how different domains and levels are related to each other. Even this analytical grid presents a complexity reduction regarding the empirical reality of the subjects of study: teachers in different countries. The approach of this survey study is strictly deductive. In other words, only one perspective on teacher work and autonomy is focused on, and represented by the earlier described grid. Through this grid we, literally, push out data. We gain more validity in the relation between the results of the study and the analytical understanding employed. However, this happens at the price of the exclusion of all information beyond, beside and beneath this grid, which must be examined with other research designs.

5.2.3 Structure of the questionnaire

Not only are the content and formulations of different questions crucial aspects of designing a questionnaire, but also the length of the questionnaire and the order of items are important factors for ensuring a proper understanding of the questions and for avoiding answers that are missing or not thought through due to a decreasing interest among the respondents (Esaiasson et. al, 2011). Thus, the questionnaire was divided into different sections in order to give a more systematic and orderly impression. These sections’ topics were; 1) job satisfaction as a possible dependent variable; 2) teachers’ perceptions of who makes important decisions that affect their work; 3) control of the decisions by asking for teachers’ perceptions of who controls whether the different decisions are appropriately made, consequences of the quality of teachers’ work, channels of information on colleagues’ work and the framework for teachers’ reflections on their decisions; 4) teachers’ attitudes towards governance; and 5) demographic background variables.

Literature on the subject and input from expert groups formed a knowledge base for choosing which school decisions should be considered important and appropriate for the questionnaire, and to ensure that all relevant alternatives existed in terms of different actors that may make
decisions or control them. The decisions were then divided into the four domains comprising educational and social matters as well as issues regarding teachers’ continuous professional development and administrative work. Some of the decisions fell into the classroom level category and some were classified as school level decisions. Since many actors might be involved when decisions are made in school, the respondents had the possibility to choose two alternatives.

Table 2. Decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Educational</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Administrational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Lesson content</td>
<td>• Contacting parents</td>
<td>• Pedagogical CPD</td>
<td>• Workroom for class preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Material used</td>
<td>• Sanction of students</td>
<td>• Pedagogical content knowledge CPD</td>
<td>• Scheduling of teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methods used</td>
<td>• Transferring students with special needs</td>
<td>• Subject knowledge CPD</td>
<td>• Substitute teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>End of term examination</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Experiment with new methods and technology</td>
<td>• Allocation of classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>• Dress code</td>
<td>• Time &amp; site for staff development</td>
<td>• Student admission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local curriculum</td>
<td>• Disciplinary code</td>
<td>• Introduction of new technology</td>
<td>• Appointments for leading positions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School identity</td>
<td>• Extra curricular activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Resources for school quality development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical classroom environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to illustrate this, figure 1 presents two captures from the questionnaire:

Table 3. Control of teachers work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational &amp; Developmental</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers follow the syllabi in their classes</td>
<td>• Teachers have appropriate relations to their students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers’ assessments are equivalent and fair</td>
<td>• Teachers enforce the schools’ rules of conduct in their classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers’ methods of instruction are effective</td>
<td>• Teachers have an appropriate learning climate in their classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students’ performances in standardised tests</td>
<td>• Teachers help students with special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students’ performances in bigger written tests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Ansvar i lärares arbete

Ange vilka som främst ansvarar för följande aspekter i lärares arbete (utbildningsfrågor, sociala frågor, kompetensutveckling och administration). Vi är medvetna om att många aktörer kan vara involverade när ett beslut i skolan fattas. Vi är dock intresserade av vilka du tycker har huvudansvaret för besluten som tas, därför ber vi dig att försöka inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ av de alternativen som finns angivna. Vänligen tänk på att bara diskussion är inte beslut.

Alternative:
Enskild lärare - Enskilda lärare (anthingen ansenlärare eller mentor)
Lärare & kollegor - Lärare tillsammans med andra lärare i samma anseslag eller arbetsslag
Lärare & andra - Lärare tillsammans med andra aktörer i skolans sammanhang (t.ex. föräldrarad, elevråd, skolledning)
Skolledning - Skolledning (inklusive rektor, biträdande rektor, studierektor)
Huvudman - Aktörer på regional nivå, t.ex. direktör, utbildningschef
Stat - Aktörer på nationell nivå, t.ex. Utbildningsstyrelsen, RUU (Karvi)

Fig 1. Captures from the questionnaire.

2.1. Utbildningsfrågor

Vänligen inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ eller vet ej/nej tillämpligt:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enskild lärare</th>
<th>Lärare &amp; kollegor</th>
<th>Lärare &amp; andra</th>
<th>Skolledning</th>
<th>Huvudman</th>
<th>Stat</th>
<th>Vet ej/nej tillämpligt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Planering av lektionernas innehåll</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Metoder som används i undervisningen</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Material som används i undervisningen</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the sections in the questionnaire aimed to broaden the understanding of how different types of visible and more subtle control of teachers’ work can take shape. They dealt with the extent to which the teachers use different channels to get information about their colleagues’ work, the most important frames for teachers’ reflections on their own actions and their estimates about positive and negative consequences of the quality of teachers’ work. Moreover, teachers’ job satisfaction was considered as a variable that might be affected by teachers’ perceived autonomy, which is why items regarding teachers’ attitudes towards their job and their perceived working conditions, both at their local workplace and as a teacher in the specific country, were included in the questionnaire. One factor that might have explanatory value for how teachers perceive autonomy and control is their attitudes toward governance. Hence, the questionnaire also contained items measuring the teacher respondents’ attitudes toward different ways of steering and control of the teacher profession and of individual teachers.

5.2.4 Data organization and aggregation

Aggregation of the nominal decision making and control variables. The statistical analysis tool SPSS was used to organize and analyse the data material. In order to facilitate the analysis and enable a clearer presentation of the results, the many decisions were summarized by building different decision-making types that indicate which actors the teachers perceive make the most decisions within the different domains and levels. The recoding of these
variables was done arithmetically by summarizing the teachers’ answers. If a teacher, for example, for the most part stated that individual teachers made the decisions within a specific domain at a specific level, the teacher was considered individually oriented with respect to that dimension. In the same way, teachers who mainly perceived the decisions to be made by teachers together with colleagues, by the school administration or by the state or municipality, were described as peer oriented, principal oriented or policy/administration oriented. By the same logic, control types were also built, summarizing the teachers’ perceptions of who ensures that their decisions are appropriately made. Since teachers’ influence and control have shown to be greatest in relation to instructional and social issues in the classroom context (Ingersoll, 2003), this part is focused on the educational and social domains. Also in this section of the questionnaire, the teachers were able to choose two actors that they perceived to control their decisions. The variables that were constructed then described whether the teachers perceived being mostly controlled by parents or students, colleagues, the school administration or by the state or municipality.

“Decision-making types” as a methodological strategy
Indeed, summarizing a number of items into types or scales is complexity reduction. Consequently, the presentation of the results is simplified at the price of loss of information (Gorard, 2001). That is why we must discuss the choice of scaling thoroughly. The high number of decision-making and control variables in the study at hand is of nominal variable nature (deciding/controlling: yes/no). Each decision consists of seven variables, meaning that each dimension (level * domain) comprises between 30 and 40 variables. The nominal nature of the variables excludes factor analyses as a complexity reduction strategy. There are now statistical strategies that can investigate latent relations between categorical variables. Such latent class analyses are very complex and include several interpretative steps that actually complicate the matter by each variable being added to the model. The high number of nominal variables in this study, resulting from its methodological design (actually in total over 200), would challenge such statistical analyses too much. At this stage of the study, such approaches cannot be seen as practical. The described arithmetical method of summarising the items has methodological consequences as well, even if we argue for the validity of the scales due to their theoretical embedding in the study’s analytical device. One consequence is that we assume all of the most important decisions to be made per dimension as equally important in relation to the decision-making and control perspective employed. The types are strictly quantitative and it can only be understood that a particular stakeholder has the most or least, less or more decision-making power. That means, they do not, apart factors, explain relations between the individual decisions. Due to the theoretical vantage point, manifested in the teacher autonomy device, we can however relate the 8 different dimensions to each other. In relation to Ingersoll (2003), this means that we only look at the most important decisions, but follow his idea of less or more importance, while comparing the results of the different dimensions. Such an approach, that only views decisions and control in terms of who owns which dimension, primarily differ from qualitative results on teacher autonomy (see Wermke, Rick & Salokangas, submitted). Instead it illuminates the perspective of teachers on the relation between them and other stakeholders in public education, and by doing so it also illuminates their scope of action. This would be the contribution of this study, and is the reason why it has been methodologically decided to only report the types without delving too much into the individual items in the analyses.
The Likert scale instruments

Besides the described nominal variables, the questionnaire also included sections with four-point Likert items. Some of these items measured the teachers’ attitudes towards different phenomena, whereas others asked them to evaluate statements about issues relevant to teachers’ autonomy. For the sake of complexity reduction in exploratory factor analyses, such variables have been treated as interval scale variables. The discussions concerning whether the Likert scale should be treated as ordinal or interval are endless. In their highly cited review on this topic, Jaccard & Wan (1996) conclude that for many statistical tests, a decision in favour of intervals does not seem to affect Type I and Type II errors, which are the failures we make when we reject the Null hypothesis, although the result is not significant (I), or accept it despite significance (II). The authors recommend five or seven point Likert scales, although this does not mean that other scales should be excluded from interval approaches. Likert himself did not consider the number of choices to be an important issue (Likert, 1932), stating only that if uneven alternatives are used, is it necessary to assign values in the middle to the undecided position. However, a decision to use uneven scales with an undecided alternative in the middle might have consequences for the validity and reliability of the scales. It has been discussed that the middle point might open the way to short-cut or low risk answers (Garland, 1991). Also, the number of even Likert point scales have been discussed, since without any doubt, the more alternatives we have, the more information we can collect, and the better we can meet the condition of normal distributions. Chang (1994) argued, however, validity is not affected by the number of scale points. The issue of selecting 4 versus 6 point scales may not be generally resolvable, but may rather depend on the empirical setting. 4 points is nevertheless the alternative with the lowest number of points, since it still enables normal distribution, which is important for most statistical operations.

The discussion above is important to present in order to discuss that there is no statistical agreement on the issue of which Likert scale to employ, and how to employ it. The usage relies on the empirical setting. In this research project, the decision has been made in relation to a) validity and b) empirical constraints. The 4 point Likert scale was chosen because: a) teachers were supposed to decide for either a negative attitude (1 total disagreement – 2 slight disagreement) or a positive one (3 slight agreement – 4 total agreement). There is no “undecided position”. Teachers could also decide to choose an “I don’t know” alternative. b) Due to the length of the questionnaire and the sensitive group of respondents, we decided to make the instruments as simple as possible. Scales with fewer alternatives are easier to answer (SCB, 2001).

Regarding the treatment of a 4 point Likert scale as interval, it was also argued within the project that, empirically, there are no substantial differences in international research. Moreover, such an approach has also been comparatively tested in publications by the project leader (Wermke, 2011 and Wermke, 2012). In addition, within the project an argument has been employed in interpretative social research; that research results must be presented in a plausible and understandable way for a potential audience (Erickson, 1986). Approaches such as the application of techniques for parametric variables for Likert point scales of different types have been shown to be empirically feasible, and unproblematic within many different research settings. This is also displayed by the publication practice of international journals using rigid peer review quality assurance. That is why techniques of complexity reduction (EFA) or descriptive values such as Means can and should be used if they make the results more communicable to a broader public.
In the case of the project, to teachers, policy makers and indeed researchers without a deeper statistical understanding.

After ensuring that the different Likert scale variables were normally distributed, exploratory factor analyses were used to build scales. Hair et. al (2006, p.104) describes the purpose of factor analyses as being “to define the underlying structure among the variables in the analysis”. The process of defining and grouping highly interrelated variables together in factors has the advantage of reducing the number of variables. Furthermore, a solid conceptual understanding of the analysed phenomenon will give the factors meaning. The different factors may thus represent concepts that a single measure cannot describe (Hair et al, 2006). Both of these purposes were important in the organization of the data set in this study. The most common criterion for the number of factors to extract is that only factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1 are extracted. This method is most reliable when the number of variables is between 20 and 50, which was sought as much as possible in the analyses (ibid). Also, the cumulative percentage of variance explained by successive factors was taken into account. In social sciences, the recommendation is to count 60% variance explanation as satisfactory, but a slightly lower amount might also be enough (ibid). Based on these criteria, factors were extracted from the different categories of variables. In total, 13 factors were extracted and an equal number of scale variables were constructed through recoding. The reliability of the scales was then tested with Cronbach’s alpha; a measure of internal consistency, which assesses the extent to which the different items in a scale measure the same construct. In exploratory research, a Cronbach’s value of 0.6 is a generally agreed upon lower limit (Hair et. al, 2006). This was followed by an interpretative phase, where the factors were subjected to scrutiny in terms of attempts to assign meaning to the patterns of factor loadings, and then labelled with appropriate names.

### Table 4. Factors with Likert items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach's value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Framing through professional steering documents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing through national curriculum tests</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing through knowledge from elsewhere (academic, unions, state)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0,71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing through expectations (of clients and superordinates)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the time for writing this thesis is limited, and in order to keep the number of pages down, I chose to concentrate on the scales I regarded as most important for my analysis. In the table above, the scales used for analysis in this thesis are presented. The choice of four scales measuring teachers’ frames for reflection on their decisions was partly based on their quality, but most of all on their relevancy for my research questions.

Finally, in the project it has been decided to pursue a conservative method of handling missing values. Besides deciding not to answer questions, teachers could choose to answer almost all questions with “not relevant/I do not know”. This is, on the one hand, important for the
survey’s validity. The teachers answer only when they feel confident to do so, in relation to their contextual situation (by country, school form, school etc.). For example, elementary school teachers for the early years might not have had experience with national curriculum tests; or many teachers might have decided to answer “I don’t know” regarding the question of whether teachers have higher status in other countries than in their own. On the other hand, such choices decrease both frustration and confusion with the respondents, who are not forced to guess or contemplate for too long. We cannot see any strong systematic patterns as to why teachers in certain cases have answered with “not relevant/I don’t know”. Several analyses of this kind of missing information will be done in the future. Until then, it has been decided to implement a listwise deletion of missing values. In this method, an entire record is excluded from analysis if any single value is missing. This produces a greater number of missing values in our scales. Due to the large overall size of the sample and in favour of validity, such a strategy is chosen in this thesis, even at the price of psychometric arguments such as the power and appropriateness of our scales.

5.3 Sample and generalization

The choices made regarding the issue of sampling are crucial for any empirical study (Gorard, 2001). If the researcher decides to use a sample, Gorard argues that it is important to carefully define the population and its characteristics in order to be able to compare the sample and thereby provide a basis for discussions about the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the researcher will have to estimate the needed sample size and choose methods for selection. This thesis focuses only on the Swedish and Finnish teachers within the greater sample in the survey. The different characteristics of the teacher populations within the two countries considered to be relevant for this study were included as background variables in the questionnaire and based upon the location of the school as rural or urban, school size, socio-economic factors among the student population, but also individual characteristics of the teachers, such as grade, gender, taught subjects, professional experience and employment in terms of whether the teacher is permanently employed and whether he or she works full time. A high variability among such factors increases the need for a large sample and powerful statistical tests. This applies especially in social sciences, where effect sizes are usually very small (Gorard, 2001). The demands on sample size will also, according to Gorard, increase with a higher number of sub-groups, since it makes the analysis more complex.

The examining of teachers’ autonomy is, as already established in the previous research and theory sections, a complex process, where many different factors need to be regarded as possibly affecting the results. Thus, the need for a large sample is considerable; a precondition with impact on the choices made in the process of data collection. In order to reach many teachers, the data was collected by contacting municipalities and teacher unions, who distributed the questionnaires to their teachers to be filled in between September and November in 2017. In Finland, the teacher unions OAJ and FSL served as distributors of the questionnaire. Moreover, the city of Helsinki was included in the sample, as well as the municipalities of Korsholm and Pedersöre, both located in the region of Ostrobothnia; a part of Finland with a Swedish speaking majority. In the Swedish case, the sample of schools and teachers consisted of three municipalities, chosen with respect to their geographic location. Two of them were the municipalities of Kiruna in the north of Sweden, and Nässjö in the south; both regarded as representing rural areas. The
municipality of Upplands-Bro represents the urban area of Stockholm. As a supplement, the Stockholm section of the teacher union Lärarförbundet also distributed the questionnaire among its members.

5.3.1 The Finnish and Swedish samples compared

In the following sections, the samples will be compared to each other and to the total population of Finnish and Swedish teachers. The effects on the results by different teacher characteristics in the samples will be accounted for in order to avoid incorrect conclusions about differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ autonomy.

### Table 5. Teacher characteristics within the Finnish and Swedish sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female teachers</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teachers</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 years of experience</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently employed</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working full time</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban school</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large school (400+ students)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Swedish sample was smaller, with 708 teachers participating in the study in comparison to the Finnish number of 1583. The gender distribution was roughly the same between the two samples, but regarding the issue of grade, Sweden differed from Finland with a larger number of primary school teachers. Another difference between the two countries was that more Swedish teachers categorized their school location as urban, which might also explain why the average school size was larger in the Swedish sample. Furthermore, the Finnish teachers seemed to be a little more experienced than the Swedish teachers and work in full time to a larger extent. Although not presented in table 3, the distribution of subjects taught by teachers was compared between the two samples, showing that the Finnish sample contained somewhat more language teachers, whereas teachers in mathematics/technology/science were more common in the Swedish case. Also, the socio-economic status of students’ families was compared, but did not display any substantial differences.

In summary, the typical teacher within the total sample can be described as a permanently employed woman, working full time with more than 5 years of professional experience, who is currently employed in a school with students of mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The typical Finnish teacher works in secondary education in a school with fewer than 400 students, outside of urban centres. The Swedish teachers were more evenly distributed, but with that in mind; the typical Swedish teacher within the sample is a primary school teacher, working in an urban school with more than 400 students.
5.3.2 The samples compared to the populations

The source I used to find statistics on the Swedish teacher population was Statistics Sweden (Statistiska centralbyråns), who are responsible for official statistics and other governmental statistics, and who offered a range of different characteristics of the Swedish teaching profession. In Finland, statistics on teachers were not as easily found, since Statistics Finland does not collect statistics on Finnish teachers for public use. However, some basic statistics were acquired from the Finnish national board of education. Also, some national statistics from the OECD were found and regarded as useful. After compiling the data, gender and grade were the two variables that were possible to use in a Swedish-Finnish comparison and considered as relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Primary education</th>
<th>Secondary education</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>1583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (2016)</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>19000</td>
<td>30000</td>
<td>49000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>58000</td>
<td>76000</td>
<td>134000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 6, the total number of teachers employed in primary or secondary education in Sweden and Finland is presented and related to the sample. There are some differences in the distribution of teachers in the sample compared to the population, but while conducting pre-analyses of the collected data, this variable was regarded as not having any considerable effect on the outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Primary education</th>
<th>Secondary education</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (2015)</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>70.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 7, the gender distribution with respect to the different teaching grades is related to the entire teaching population of Finland and Sweden in 2015, as reported by the OECD (Education at a glance). The sample of this study contains a larger share of women than the total population of teachers in the two countries. However, the gender variable did not have any substantial effect on the results, and nor did the other differences between the characteristics of the Swedish and Finnish samples, such as school size or location, seem to be distinguishing variables at this stage of the study.

5.3.3 Significance tests

As already stated, the method used was not random selection. By ensuring that teachers from both urban and rural areas were included in the sample, the selection took some characteristics of the population into account. To qualify as a stratified sample, however, the distribution of significant characteristics within the sample needed to resemble that of the entire population,
which is why the selection of this study can be described as a convenience sample. (Gorard, 2001). The use of a convenience sample removes the basis for conducting statistical tests on the collected data, but statistical relationships between the sample and the results may still be confirmed by conducting tests of significance (Wilkinson, 1999). In this thesis, T-tests will be used in order to compare Swedish and Finnish teachers groups’ means in the scale variables concerning teachers’ frames for their decisions. It is a parametric significance test, based on variance and sample size, and is used by researchers aiming to compare group means and estimate whether the differences apply to the whole population (David & Sutton, 2016). The T-test requires normally distributed interval variables (ibid). In our case, this was taken into account by considering the scale variables built on Likert scale items as interval data. The variables categorizing teachers as different decision-making types and control types are nominal, which is why Chi-square tests are better suited for testing the significance of eventual differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers in these cases. Such a test compares the values displayed in a cross-tabulation of two variables with the expected values if the variables were independent from one another, with respect to the size of the table (David & Sutton, 2016). High values of significance in the results of this thesis would then imply significance if the selection had been an independent random selection. By performing significance tests and describing the impact on the results by the background variables differing the most between Swedish and Finnish teachers and between the sample and the population, a discussion regarding estimations of generalization will be possible.

5.4 Ethical considerations

The Swedish Research Council emphasizes four main ethical principles for social sciences, which underline the importance of: 1) ensuring that all respondents have given their consent to participate; 2) informing the respondents about their roles within the study, the terms of their participation and their rights to withdraw at any given point of the study without any negative consequences; 3) paying respect to the respondents’ integrity by guaranteeing confidentiality throughout the entire research process; 4) using data material for research purposes only (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002). The study was conducted in accordance with these principles, and ethical implications were considered while designing the study as well as during the process of data collection and in the coding and storing of data. In order to make sure that the respondents are protected against physical, emotional and juridical harm, the researcher needs to be aware of what issues might be sensitive (David & Sutton, 2016). It is important to remember, though, that what is sensitive is decided by the respondents rather than by the researcher. This knowledge was gained through the validation of the questionnaire by a large group of teachers, as described earlier in this chapter. Regarding the informing of respondents, a covering letter was provided on the first page of the questionnaire with information directed to the respondents regarding the research project and that their answers would be treated confidentially. At the end of the questionnaire, they also had the opportunity to give comments and feedback. Participation in the study was voluntary and the respondents were anonymous, since no information about their names or the names of their schools was collected. Moreover, the respondents’ answers will be presented through group comparisons between Swedish and Finnish teachers, which makes it impossible to recognize the answers of a single respondent.
For my own part, though, the most relevant ethical concerns apart, from protecting the respondents’ integrity by storing data and presenting the results in accordance with the ethical principles, are my responsibilities toward the research community. By that I mean that my thesis must be free from plagiarism, falsifications and fabrications (David & Sutton, 2016). While entering the research project in such a late stage, as I did, much of the relevant previous research in the field and conceptualizations of the teacher autonomy concept, as well as the basis for a theoretical framework, were already available through the project. In order to maintain my independence and originality, and to avoid risk of plagiarism, I put a lot of effort in making my own interpretations and priorities of theories in the field. In particular, my focus on a quantitative comparison between Sweden and Finland is the key which makes this thesis different from other studies made within the project.
6.0 Results and analysis

Before presenting the results, I want to return to my research questions as a reminder of what is relevant to focus on in the analysis of the teachers’ answers, perceptions, statements and estimations of their autonomy in the survey.

- Who, according to Swedish and Finnish teachers, holds power over the most important decisions in school?
- Who and what, according to Swedish and Finnish teachers, frames teachers’ decisions by control, regulations and knowledge?
- What differences and similarities in perceived autonomy exist between teachers in the two countries?

The answers to these questions will be provided in this chapter by conducting bivariate analyses illustrated through diagrams, showing similarities and differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers. In addition, the results are interpreted, analysed and described in text. Ingersoll’s (1996; 2003) theory as well as some of the conceptual work by other researchers that has been dealt with in this thesis constitutes the theoretical framework, illustrated in the analytical matrix with four domains and two levels, creating eight different dimensions where autonomy can be exercised and controlled. In order to better understand the similarities and differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceived autonomy, some of the empirical studies of Finnish and Swedish teachers’ autonomy described earlier, as well as the nation-specific characteristics of the teacher professions and the educational landscapes, as described in the background section, will also be included and related to the results rather than serving as an analytical tool. The construction of this chapter is as follows: Firstly, teachers’ perceptions of who makes important decisions will be presented and analysed. Then, the control of teachers’ work is examined through teachers’ perceptions of who is controlling their decisions, followed by their statements and estimations about their most important frames for reflection on their decisions. The results from each of the two sections will be summarized to create a basis for the discussion chapter.

6.1 Teachers’ decision-making

Cross tabulations have been used to make comparisons between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ beliefs regarding who makes the most important decisions in each domain and level. The main findings in this section are illustrated through diagrams, made from the decision-making types, which were arithmetically constructed, as earlier described in the method chapter, and which show the share of teachers who perceive that the decisions within each domain and level are mostly made by individual teachers, teachers with colleagues, the school management or the municipality/state. Missing values will be accounted for together with the significance level of the results in each domain and level. A significance level of 95% was considered enough for rejecting the null hypothesis in these cases, and Chi-square tests of the cross tabulations, each with 3 degrees of freedom, have been used for calculation.
6.1.1 Decision-making in the educational domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1380</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 2. Important decisions made by whom in the Educational domain at classroom level

At the classroom level, the most important educational decisions concerned lesson content, teaching methods and teaching material as well as end of term examinations and assessment criteria. Even though some of these decisions might be more regulated in the national curricula than others, the overall result showed that educational classroom issues were perceived to be in the hands of teachers to an almost exclusive degree. Generally, few teachers in both contexts perceived the school management, politicians or officials at local or national level as having much decisional power over these issues; a finding in line with previous research in the field (e.g. Ingersoll, 2003). As shown in the table provided, Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceptions differed from each other significantly in this domain and at this level. The most obvious national difference was that a larger proportion of Finnish teachers perceived the decisions to be mostly made by individual teachers, whereas the Swedish teachers were more collegially oriented. One way of interpreting this difference is that the Finnish teacher role is more defined and regulated in advance by an extensive education with practice schools, which strengthens the uniformity of the profession and reduces the need for large-scale cooperation among colleagues in decision-making. (Selander, Wermke & Geijer, 2013; Simola, 1998). The tendency among Swedish teachers to make collegial decisions can simultaneously be seen in light of their allegedly more extensive adaption to the new working conditions after the decentralization process of the 1990s, where cooperation among colleagues became expected by teachers, but also may have served as a safety net for handling feelings of insecurity (Carlgren & Klette, 2008). Another interpretation of Swedish teachers’ higher degree of collegial decision-making is that it is a part of the Swedish tradition to
make important decisions in consensus (Wermke, 2013), which is why the results could be understood as a kind of Swedish mentality, where meetings are used to ensure that decisions are made in a cooperative way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1381</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>p = .200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 3. Important decisions made by whom in the Educational domain at school level

At the school level, the similarities between Swedish and Finnish teachers were considerably greater than the differences, which explains the comparatively lower level of significance, despite a slightly smaller number of missing values than at the classroom level. This level contained decisions about textbooks, local curriculum, school identity and physical classroom environment, and proved to be a field for collegial decisions by teachers, according to most teachers’ perceptions. Ingersoll’s (2003) research has found that these kinds of decisions have tended to be mainly controlled by actors other than teachers. However, this discrepancy might depend on the different national contexts in the Nordic and the US school systems, in which Ingersoll’s research took place.

The similarities between the countries in the educational domain were indeed more prominent than the differences. Most Swedish and Finnish teachers perceived their autonomy to be high at both levels, and the most interesting relationship for analysis is perhaps the one between individual teachers’ autonomy and collegial autonomy. It certainly seems that the teacher faculty is powerful regarding educational issues in both Swedish and Finnish schools, and whether such power at a school level consolidates or weakens individual teacher autonomy at a classroom level would be interesting to investigate further.
6.1.2 Decision-making in the social domain

### Table: Decision-making in the social domain at classroom level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1370</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 4](image.png)

**Figure 4.** Important decisions made by whom in the Social domain at classroom level

In the social domain, the classroom level comprised decisions that concerned contacting parents, sanctioning of students in case of severe misbehavior and transferring students to special needs educator. Compared to the educational domain, more teachers perceived the school management to be in power over decisions. The school management was also the actor who the largest share of teachers perceived as being in control over the most decisions. According to Ingersoll (2003), social issues are the case where teachers’ influence entails the most advantages for school functioning. Moreover, he argues, this domain is also the one where teachers dependency upon the school management is the highest, since teachers typically are responsible for keeping order in the classroom but do not have the power of sanctioning students. A high degree of power by the school management in these issues would then be viewed as a kind of subtle control mechanism. Regarding the comparison between the two countries, the similarities once again overshadowed the differences. For instance, an almost equal percentage of Swedish and Finnish teachers considered teachers with colleagues to be making the most social classroom-decisions, but otherwise there were some differences between the two countries that contributed to a sufficient level of significance. Finnish teachers were once again somewhat more individually oriented, while the school management was perceived to have influence over the decisions by more Swedish teachers. There was also a small difference where politicians and officials were slightly more involved in the decision-making according to more Finnish teachers.
At the school level, where the decisions concerned dress code, the school’s disciplinary code and extra curricular activities, the degree of teacher involvement was perceived to be high by more teachers than in the classroom context. This applied only to the perceived decision-making power of the teacher collective in this area. The number of teachers viewing decision-making as done by individual teachers was instead lower in comparison. Overall, Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceptions about the most influential actors regarding these decisions did not differ significantly from each other, although Finnish teachers were relatively more collegially oriented, whereas Swedish teachers perceived the school management to be somewhat more influential.

In summary, the school management was perceived by most teachers as the actor with power over many important decisions in the social domain, together with the teacher collective. The most obvious school management power seemed to be exercised at the classroom level. Teacher involvement in social decisions was primarily exercised by teachers as a collective, especially at the school level. The question is at which level teachers prefer to have influence over the decisions that are to be made? It could be argued that social work in the classroom is hard to separate from instructional work, since it is all intertwined. According to Ingersoll (2003), the individual autonomy of teachers at the classroom level would then indeed be more important for teachers’ well-being and for school functioning. On the other hand, decision-making also entails responsibility, and it could be argued that social decisions are accompanied with risks and potential conflict with students and parents. Another way of viewing this power distribution...
would thus be that if the school management takes on this responsibility, they absorb the risks for teachers, who can focus more on educational decisions.

6.1.3 Decision-making in the developmental domain

![Bar chart showing decision-making in the developmental domain](chart.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1325</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 6. Important decisions made by whom in the Developmental domain at classroom level

In the developmental domain, differences between the two countries at the classroom level were highly significant. The decisions were about different kinds of continuing professional development for teachers; pedagogical CPD, pedagogical content knowledge CPD and subject knowledge CPD were included, as well as decisions about experiments with new methods and technology. Among teachers in the Swedish sample, the school management was perceived by most of the teachers to be the actor most often deciding about these issues, while individual teachers had very little influence. In Finland, the distribution was more even, although the largest share of teachers also in this case attributed the most decision-making power to the school management. However, it should be noted that the principal in Finnish schools is a part of the pedagogical profession and is defined as a head teacher. This is not always the case in Sweden, where a teacher background is not required (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). Hence, decisions by the school management regarding teachers’ CPD are indeed made by teachers with pedagogical knowledge in the Finnish case; an important addition to the analysis. According to Ingersoll (2003), however, control and power can be less visible, and they do not have to comprise formal regulations and standardized work tasks. Teachers might therefore not perceive how the hierarchy of the school system is constructed, and that decisions about teachers CPD might originate from a much higher level than the results show.
Table 5. Missing cases and Pearson Chi-square

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>N 1107</td>
<td>Percent 69.9%</td>
<td>N 476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>N 512</td>
<td>Percent 72.3%</td>
<td>N 196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N 1619</td>
<td>Percent 70.7%</td>
<td>N 672</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 7. Important decisions made by whom in the Developmental domain at school level

At the school level, the perceived teacher influence diminished radically. Instead, actors outside school, but most of all; the school management, were perceived as the most powerful stakeholder by the teachers. The differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers were not as distinct as at the classroom level. It should be noted, though, that in this domain, the school level comprised only two decisions; time and site for staff development and the introduction of new technology.

Summarized, most teachers in both countries turned out to perceive themselves as less autonomous in the developmental domain than in educational and social issues. In comparison to the two former domains, differences between Sweden and Finland became more prominent in terms of the level of teacher involvement in decision-making. It certainly seems that Finnish teachers have considerably more influence over their own continuing professional development, which is highly interesting while discussing teacher professionalism in the two countries. Ingersoll (2003) argues that the view of teachers’ professionalism in the American context is based upon teachers’ attitudes rather than the traditional way of distinguishing a profession as an occupation of autonomous experts. It is possible that such a view resembles the educational landscape in Sweden to a higher degree than it does in Finland. Finnish teachers’ comparably higher status (Simola, 2005) and the societal appreciation of their knowledge (Selander, Wermke & Geijer, 2013) could perhaps be reasons why they are more trusted to judge which CPD is the most appropriate. The alleged de-professionalization of Swedish teachers put forward by many scholars (Frostenson, 2015; Lundström, 2015; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017), might then be taking
place in this domain, rather than in the educational one, since an occupation that is not in charge of its own CPD could hardly be classified as a profession in the traditional sense.

6.1.4 Decision-making in the administrative domain

The classroom decisions that were classified as administrative concerned the allocation of classrooms and teachers' workrooms for class preparation, but did also include scheduling of teachers and substitute teaching. At this level, teachers from both Sweden and Finland perceived their own scope of action as very limited, whereas the school management was considered by the vast majority of teachers in both Sweden and Finland as the most powerful actor in this area. This was no surprise, since researchers in the field have found that administrative decisions are the ones where teachers traditionally have the least input (eg. Ingersoll, 2003). The great similarities between the two countries explain the low significance value presented in the table above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1343</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 8. Important decisions made by whom in the Administrative domain at classroom level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1176</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1720</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
<td>571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig 9. Important decisions, made by whom, in the Administrational domain at school level**

The school level of the administrational domain contained decisions about *student admission, appointments for leading positions, resources for school quality development* and different *meetings*. Swedish teachers differed significantly from their Finnish colleagues at this level due to a much higher perceived collegial autonomy. According to many Swedish teachers, the teaching faculty had a considerable amount of influence in these matters. The greatest part of the Finnish teachers, on the other hand, perceived the school management and actors higher up in the school hierarchy to be in more exclusive command over the decisions, whereas the teacher involvement was regarded to be more modest. The school management was still the actor most teachers in both countries considered to be in control over the most decisions within the domain, though, and individual teachers had rarely any influence on these matters.

While summarizing the results from the administrational domain, this was first and foremost the area where the most teachers attributed decision-making power to the school management, but also the domain where the least teachers saw significant input from individual teachers. At the classroom level, Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceptions were very similar, but at the school level, significant differences could be seen. A much greater part of the Swedish teachers perceived themselves as a collective to be involved in these decisions, which makes this domain the only one where the degree of teacher involvement was perceived as higher in the Swedish case. Once again, the important question to be asked would be whether this kind of decision-making is desirable from a teacher perspective? According to Ingersoll (2003), unimportant decisions are often delegated in order to create a false sense of autonomy, while the really
important decisions are made without much teacher input. There are some nation-specific differences between the contexts of Swedish and Finnish teachers’ work that might be relevant to mention in this regard. In the wake of the decentralization of the school system in the 1990s, new local regulations and contracts for teachers involved new working conditions for Swedish teachers, such as the introduction of individual salaries and office hours where teachers’ physical presence at school, even outside of class-time, became scheduled. This was not the case in Finland. Such differences might affect the volume of administrative working tasks. It is possible that the situation where a teacher suddenly has to bargain for pay rises would entail a new relationship with the school management, where the need to prove value might lead to the teacher taking on more administrative duties. It is also possible that the required time spent at work makes it easier to assign administrative work tasks to teachers that cannot be made at home, which also would imply that Finnish teachers have more time for making individual educational decisions at home.

6.1.5 Teachers’ decision-making: Summary

When Finnish and Swedish teachers’ autonomy, in terms of their involvement in decision-making, was analysed, some interesting patterns emerged regarding comparisons between the domains and levels as well as between teachers from the two countries. In this section, the main results from the Swedish and Finnish samples will firstly be summarized, after which relevant similarities and differences are highlighted. This part has referred to research questions 1 and 3. (Who, according to Swedish and Finnish teachers, are in power over the most important decisions in school? What differences and similarities in perceived autonomy exists between teachers in the two countries?).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Educational</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Administrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom level</td>
<td>Teachers (collegially and individually)</td>
<td>School management Teachers (collegially and individually)</td>
<td>School management</td>
<td>School management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Teachers (collegially)</td>
<td>Teachers (collegially)</td>
<td>School management Municipality/State</td>
<td>School management Teachers (collegially)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Educational</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Administrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom level</td>
<td>Teachers (individually)</td>
<td>School management Teachers (collegially and individually)</td>
<td>School management Teachers (collegially and individually)</td>
<td>School management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level</td>
<td>Teachers (collegially)</td>
<td>Teachers (collegially)</td>
<td>School management Municipality/State</td>
<td>School management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Swedish teachers**

According to the Swedish teachers, the educational domain was “owned” by teachers. Roughly 50% of the Swedish respondents perceived individual teachers to be the most powerful actor at the classroom level, while an almost equally large part regarded the teacher faculty as making the most decisions. At the school level, the teacher collective was considered much more influential in comparison. In the social domain, the school management was regarded as more involved. This was especially evident at the classroom level, where about 50% of the Swedish teachers instead perceived the school management to be the most powerful actor. At the school level, the Swedish teachers were much more collegially oriented. In the developmental domain, teacher involvement was perceived as lower in comparison. This applied to both levels, but was more visible at the school level. The actor perceived to be in control over these decisions was the school management, but at the school level, politicians and officials were also considered more influential than teachers. Finally, the classroom level of the administrational domain was the area mostly perceived as owned by the school management. The number of teachers perceiving themselves to be the most influential in this kind of decision-making constituted a very small part. At the school level, however, the teaching faculty was perceived as being involved to a much higher degree.

**Finnish teachers**

Most of the Finnish teachers perceived themselves as individuals in command over the educational domain at the classroom level. The only other actor regarded as somewhat influential was the teacher collective. At the school level, the decisions were instead considered to be in the hands of the teacher faculty to the foremost part. Overall, teachers were perceived as being the unquestioned decision-makers within the educational domain. Regarding classroom decisions in the social domain, the school management was instead regarded as most powerful, whereas the teacher faculty was perceived as much more involved in social decisions at the school level. The perceptions of the most powerful actor in decision-making in the developmental domain were rather evenly distributed between all four actors at the classroom level. At the school level, the school management was perceived as mostly influential, whereas teachers’ involvement was regarded as much lower. Moreover, actors higher up in the school hierarchy got higher numbers at this level. The administrational domain was the one where the fewest teachers perceived teachers as individuals or as a collective to be influential. This domain was instead in the hands of the school management at both levels, although some teachers perceived municipal or governmental politicians and officials to be somewhat influential, also at the school level.

**Similarities and differences**

Overall, the similarities between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ autonomy outweigh the differences throughout the different domains and levels. Firstly, it can be stated that decisions within the educational domain were in the hands of teachers to a much higher extent than decisions in any other domain. At the classroom level, this autonomy was mainly exercised by individual teachers, whereas the teacher faculty was considered to be highly influential in educational decisions at a schoolwide level. The social domain was the one where the similarities between the teachers’ autonomy in the two countries were the most striking. In both countries,
fewer teachers perceived themselves to have influence at the classroom level than at the school level, where many more attributed teachers as a collective with decision-making power. This finding raised questions about which social decisions are the most desirable for teachers to make; as individuals in the classroom or as a faculty at school? In the developmental domain, teachers’ involvement in decision-making was perceived as lower than in the first two domains, especially at the schoolwide level. Instead, the school management was in charge, according to most of the teachers. This was also the domain where the largest number of teachers regarded other actors in terms of politicians or government officials as involved in the decisions, in comparison to other domains. However, it should be remembered that this is the teachers’ perceptions only, and it could very well be the case that decisions about teachers’ CPD originate at an even higher level. The classroom level of the administrative domain turned out to be the school management’s main decision-making area. Neither individual teachers, nor the teacher faculty had much say in these issues in either of the two countries.

Despite the similarities, differences in perceived autonomy between Swedish and Finnish teachers was found in three of the domains. According to the teachers’ perceptions, Finnish teachers were more autonomous as individuals at the classroom level of the educational domain, whereas the Swedish teachers’ autonomy could be described as more collegial. The more defined teacher role in Finland was highlighted as a possible explanation in this regard. However, individual autonomy does not necessarily have to be better than collegial autonomy. The importance of separating autonomy and isolation has been emphasized by Wilches (2007), who argues that collegiality is an important ingredient in the autonomy concept. Finnish teachers’ individual autonomy was also more evident in the developmental domain. The fact that the principal in the Finnish school system is a head teacher further strengthens the teacher input in these decisions about teachers’ own continuing professional development. Since Swedish teachers did not seem to be as influential in these matters, a discussion regarding teacher professionalism can take place, where the question is raised whether this domain is the one where Finnish teachers’ higher status and the alleged de-professionalization of Swedish teachers becomes visible? Another distinct difference between the two countries was that many more Swedish teachers saw teachers as involved in administrative decisions at the school level. This might be related to differences in working conditions between teachers from the two countries, where the scheduling of teachers and the individual salary system in Sweden might increase the amount of administrative working tasks and responsibilities, and thereby also the ability to make administrative decisions. A more restricted autonomy in the administrative domain might therefore reduce the complexity of teachers’ work, and could actually be advantageous for teachers.

### 6.2 Control of teachers’ decisions

In this section, the control of Swedish and Finnish teachers’ decisions is analysed by an examination of the teachers’ perceptions of who controls that their decisions are appropriately made. As in the analysis of teachers’ decision-making, the diagram is made from a cross tabulation where Swedish and Finnish teachers are compared with respect to the constructed nominal control-type variable, showing the share of teachers who perceive that decisions are mostly controlled by parents/students, colleagues, the school management or the municipality/state. Since the section
only consists of one diagram, I will also provide more specified descriptions in some cases in order to compare between the domains and gain a deeper understanding of the results. This part of the section examines how teachers’ decisions are controlled retrospectively. The second part aims to investigate teachers’ most important frames for reflection on their decisions, which could be seen as a kind of control in advance. Moreover, it examines the interval scale variables that measure estimates of levels of control, which makes comparisons between different control mechanisms and between the two countries easier. The results will be presented through bar diagrams comparing the means of the Swedish and Finnish teachers’ estimates, and following interpretations. The missing values will be accounted for, as well as the significance level for each bivariate analysis. In the case of the nominal control-type variable, this is done through a Chi-square test, whereas the significance of the differences in means between teachers in the different interval variables will be measured via T-tests. This section refers to research questions 2 and 3 (Who and what, according to Swedish and Finnish teachers, frames teachers’ decisions by control, regulations and knowledge? What differences and similarities in perceived autonomy exists between teachers in the two countries?).

6.2.1 Actors controlling teachers’ decisions

![Bar diagram showing control of teachers' work by whom](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Pearson Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1396</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 10. Control of teachers’ work by whom

The control-type variable was constructed from no fewer than 10 different variables, where the teachers reported who they perceived to control different decisions made by teachers. These kinds of control concerned whether the teacher follow the syllabi in class, teachers assessments are equivalent
and fair, teachers have an appropriate learning climate in their classrooms, teachers' methods of instruction are effective, teachers have appropriate relations to their students, teachers enforce the school's rules of conduct in their classes, teachers regularly attend CPD activities and whether teachers help students with special needs. Included was also the control of students' performances in bigger written tests and standardized tests. The results were, as shown in the diagram above, significantly different between teachers from the two countries. Educational decisions were also compared with social decisions. The pattern remained the same. Among the Swedish teachers, the school management was regarded as the main controlling actor, without competition. The Finnish teachers perceived more parental control, and less control from colleagues and the school management in comparison, while governmental control seemed weak among teachers from both countries. While looking more closely at the teachers' answers, the social domain was identified as being controlled by the school management according to more teachers from both Sweden and Finland. The relatively smaller number of teachers attributing control to the school management in the educational domain might, for example, be a result of teachers being more trusted as experts in educational issues, but it could also be a sign of control from actors higher up in the hierarchy. Control from central or local governmental instances was indeed seen by more teachers in the educational domain, although nevertheless by fewer teachers than for all the other three actors. This was more prominent among the answers from Swedish teachers, and especially regarding control of students' performances in national curriculum tests, control of fairness in teachers' assessment and to some extent that teachers follow the syllabi in their classes; issues that have been put under stricter control in Sweden during the last 10-15 years, according to many scholars (e.g. Wermke & Forsberg, 2017). Furthermore, the differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers in terms of control from parents were the largest in the educational domain. Parental control was perceived by a smaller number of Swedish teachers in this domain than in the others, while the domains did not result in a difference for the Finnish teachers' perceptions. As already mentioned, however, the pattern that can be seen in the diagram was more or less coherent throughout all aspects of teachers' work. A possible explanation as to why the Finnish teachers perceived more parental control than the Swedish teachers might once again be Finnish teachers' often mentioned higher status. According to Ingersoll (2003), professionals, as considered experts, are less controlled by superordinates and have the authority to make decisions which entail a more direct accountability in relation to their clients. The results can, from this perspective, imply a stronger “contract” between teachers and the civil society in Finland, whereas the school management works as a shield for teachers in Sweden to a higher degree, which also might entail more internal control of teachers. The higher degree of perceived collegial control among Swedish teachers might also simply be a sign of more cooperation between teachers. As shown in the last subchapter, Swedish teachers were overall more collegially oriented in their decision-making than the Finnish teachers, which perhaps is naturally accompanied by more collegial control. A weaker control by colleagues in the Finnish case would then mean that the Finnish teachers are more independent, but might also be more isolated. Ingersoll’s (2003) description of the “egg-crate model” illustrated how isolation could work as a mechanism controlling teachers, and from this point of view, a high degree of cooperation and mutual control among colleagues would be a sign of an extended collegial autonomy. It is also important to remember that the different actors were compared to each other, which does not provide a measure of how much control was experienced. It could, for instance, be that most Swedish teachers experience control from all actors, including from
parents, but that the control from colleagues and the school management was more significant. It could also be the other way around.

6.2.2 Framing of teachers’ decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1534</td>
<td>96,9%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>3,1%</td>
<td>3,23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>92,1%</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7,9%</td>
<td>3,49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>8,8%</td>
<td>2,75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>93,2%</td>
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<td>2,81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>81,0%</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>19,0%</td>
<td>2,64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>89,7%</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>10,3%</td>
<td>2,81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Valid cases</th>
<th>Missing cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>62,5%</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>37,5%</td>
<td>2,42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>74,2%</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>25,8%</td>
<td>2,88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 11. Teachers’ most important frames for reflection on their decisions
Swedish and Finnish teachers proved to have rather similar perceptions of their frames for making decisions. The mean score of Swedish and Finnish teachers’ estimates of their framing through expectations from clients or superordinates was about equal. The findings from the previous section indicated that more Finnish teachers experienced control from parents, while the school management control was experienced by more Swedish teachers. With this result as a supplement, the speculation about possible great differences between the two countries in the level of this kind of control is weakened. Instead, the idea of the school management absorbing the risks for teachers by taking over responsibilities is strengthened. It could therefore be argued that teachers are always controlled, and their decisions affected, by expectations from others, but that the controlling actor might differ between the school systems of different countries (and perhaps even between schools). This result can also be interpreted as contradictory to some of the previous research in the field, which claims that free school choice and the strong marketization of the Swedish school system have turned parents and students into “customers” that are to be satisfied (e.g. Lundström, 2015). At least, such an effect does not seem to make Swedish teachers dependent on expectations from parents and students in their decision-making to a higher degree than Finnish teachers, who are operating in a school system without these structures.

Some differences could also be found between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ most important frames for reflection on their decisions. The Swedish teachers stated that they found professional steering documents, such as the syllabi, the school law and the local curriculum somewhat more important while making important decisions than the Finnish teachers did. Professional steering documents were, however, considered to be the most important source for both Swedish and Finnish teachers’ framing of decisions. An even smaller difference, although also significant, was visible when comparing the teachers’ framing through external knowledge, by which we mean educational research and subject research, but also for example the teachers’ education or publications from the teacher unions or the national board of education. A higher Finnish score could perhaps have been expected due to the descriptions of Finnish teachers as didactic thinkers with a reputable education and strong unions, in contrast to Swedish teachers, whose work has been described as being subject to constant changes from political reforms (Simola, 1993, 1998; Carlgren, 2009). Finally, the greatest difference found between the Swedish and Finnish teachers in this section was regarding the extent to which national curriculum tests was stated as an important frame for their decisions. Swedish teachers’ estimates were higher, which was not surprising, since the use of NCTs is much more extensive in Sweden than in Finland. However, in Sweden national tests were also not considered to be substantially more important for teachers’ decision-making than external knowledge or expectations from others.

6.2.3 Control of teachers’ decisions: Summary

This section summarizes the main findings regarding the control of decisions that are made, or are to be made, by Swedish and Finnish teachers. Since the section consists of fewer diagrams, the summary is structured in a different way from the summary of teachers’ decision-making. The results are thus not summarized for each country but only through highlighting the main similarities and differences found between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceptions and estimates.
Finnish and Swedish teachers differed greatly regarding the actors perceived to control whether the teachers’ decisions are appropriately made. More Finnish teachers experienced an intense control from parents than Swedish teachers did, especially in educational issues. Swedish teachers, on the other hand, perceived the school management and colleagues to be controlling their work to a higher extent than the Finnish teachers did. Furthermore, the teachers from the two countries gave equal estimates about the level of how important clients or superordinates’ expectations are for their decision-making, which is why it could be argued that control is always present, but exercised by different actors. A more co-operative teacher tradition in Sweden and a stronger contract between Finnish teachers and the civil society in comparison to a tendency by the school management to take over responsibilities and accountabilities towards parents in the Swedish school system were put forward as possible explanations for these results.

The greatest difference between teachers from the two countries regarding the most important frames for their decisions was that the Swedish teachers considered national curriculum tests to be more important than the Finnish teachers did, which most likely can be explained by the fact that national tests have a much larger place in the Swedish school system than in the Finnish one. Otherwise the results indicated that Swedish and Finnish teachers are rather similar in their ways of framing their decisions by regulations, expectations or by consulting different sources of knowledge. For example, the most important frame for teachers’ decisions in both countries was professional steering documents, with Swedish teachers giving somewhat higher estimates. One interpretation of the results is thus that both Swedish and Finnish teachers are more regulated than controlled. In relation to the previous research, illuminating the marketization of the Swedish school system and the increasing use of evaluations and standards (e.g. Lundström, 2015), control and framing of teachers’ decisions by NCTs or by expectations of parents might have been expected to be greater in the Swedish case. In the same way, the Finnish teachers would perhaps be expected to rely more on their claimed high quality education (Simola, 1993; 1998).
7.0 Discussion

Among the findings presented in the result and analysis section, there are some that can be considered more relevant than others, and that, for example, betray interesting similarities or differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceived autonomy, or between the teachers’ perceived autonomy in different domains of their work:

- Teachers from both Sweden and Finland perceive themselves as autonomous when it comes to the most central area of their work; teaching.
- More Finnish teachers perceive themselves to be individually autonomous, whereas Swedish teachers experience more collegial autonomy.
- Finnish teachers perceive more control from parents than Swedish teachers, who instead are controlled by colleagues and the school management to a higher degree, according to their perceptions.
- The results also indicates that Finnish teachers have more influence over their own continuous professional development than Swedish teachers.
- Swedish teachers instead seem to make more administrative school decisions than Finnish teachers.

In this final chapter, I will discuss these results and illuminate different ways of interpreting the similarities and differences between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ perceived autonomy by relating the results to different concepts such as governmentality, teacher professionalism, complexity reduction and the relation between influence, responsibility and accountability. Finally, I will discuss how the study’s methodological choices and the operationalization of the concept teacher autonomy affect which conclusions are possible to draw from the empirical material, and thereby also discuss merits and limitations of this thesis.

7.1 Collegial autonomy: A powerful teacher faculty or a subtle control mechanism?

The first reflection made after analysing the autonomy of Swedish and Finnish teachers at this high abstraction level is that it does not seem to differ as much as indicated by much of the previous research in the field. For example, both Swedish and Finnish teachers perceived themselves to be autonomous regarding the core of their work; educational, and to some extent social issues. From this perspective, Swedish teachers’ autonomy regarding these issues might not have been so reduced after all. However, I want to emphasize that this should not be seen as contradictory, but rather as complementary to other research presenting different results with the use of different operationalizations and research methods. That said, similarities were also found in the teachers perceived control of their work. Neither Swedish nor Finnish teachers seemed to experience expectations from superordinates or control from the central government, for example in the shape of NCTs, as particularly intense. Instead, teachers from both countries framed their decisions mainly through professional steering documents, which can be interpreted as features of professionalism and a more regulated than controlled profession in both Sweden and Finland. The lack of perceived control in the Swedish case was particularly interesting, since it was an unexpected result. Especially the low degree of perceived control from parents was
surprising in the light of the actual changes in Swedish teachers’ working conditions and relations to parents over the past 25 years of marketization of the school system. Perhaps teachers do not perceive the risk of parents and students leaving for another school to be an immediate threat against them, but rather a school management concern? This would partly explain why Swedish teachers experienced more control from the school management compared to Finnish teachers.

The results can, however, be interpreted in a different way by focusing on the difference between Swedish and Finnish teachers’ autonomy in terms of whether it is mostly individual or collegial. I would even argue that a discussion about the meaning of the different levels of autonomy is of crucial importance for understanding the results. Finnish teachers were more individually autonomous, while Swedish teachers perceived collegial autonomy to a greater extent; a difference that could be seen in, for example, educational issues. The collegial orientation among Swedish teachers was also visible in their higher perceptions of collegial control. What does collegial autonomy then mean compared to individual autonomy? As already mentioned, collegial autonomy could be a sign of cooperation among teachers, where they share responsibilities with each other, which could work as a form of risk absorption and break the isolation that according to Ingersoll (2003) creates feelings of unsecurity among teachers. On the other hand, collegial decision-making could also be interpreted as a kind of subtle control of teachers’ work. By using Michel Foucault’s concept of governmentality, Ball et. al (2012) argue that control mechanisms used by the central government are not only meant to implement changes in the practice of schooling, but also to implement the underlying thoughts and opinions. According to Ball et. al, the importance of effectiveness and high and measurable results in a school system with output control is therefore implemented among the teachers, and results in “policy carriers” within the teacher profession, who in turn implement the curriculum among their colleagues. From this perspective, it could be argued that individual autonomy is more “real” than collegial autonomy. Regardless if Ball et. al are right or not, and without discussing whether such a control is positive or negative for school functioning, this perspective can serve as an alternative interpretation of collegial autonomy; that the regulation of individual teachers’ autonomy by their colleagues also could originate from central governance rather than from a strong teacher profession.

7.2 Important and unimportant decisions

It is not possible to draw any conclusions about whether the higher degree of collegial orientation among Swedish teachers is a sign of an imposed collegiality serving as a way of exercising control or whether it is the result of a strong belief in collegiality and cooperation among Swedish teachers and school leaders. What can be said, however, is that every collegial decision means one more meeting. One aspect of collegial decision-making is thus that it might increase teachers’ workload. It is crucial, though, to also take into account the importance of the decisions in the eyes of the teachers, according to Ingersoll (2003). From his point of view, decision-making (individually or collegially) is not always desirable for teachers. Decision-making that teachers consider unimportant, Ingersoll argues, is not related to influence and autonomy in its proper sense, but could rather result in a heavy workload for teachers. In the case of this study, the Finnish teachers perceived a very limited autonomy regarding administrative issues, whereas more Swedish teachers considered the teaching faculty to be responsible for the decision-making in this area. In the analysis section, Swedish educational reforms and organizational re-structuring
of teachers’ salaries and working hours was suggested as possible reasons for this. From Ingersoll’s point of view, the Finnish alternative might be preferable for teachers, since the opportunity to leave those decisions for other actors to make would reduce the complexity of the teachers’ work and free up time and energy that can be put on more important tasks. As concluded by Ingersoll, the complexity of schooling means a delicate balance of control and consent in order to organize the school system and ensure equivalence in education without regulating and controlling teachers’ work too much. Teachers need autonomy to be able to handle the complex and interactive work of teaching, which is impossible to organize in detail (see also Hopmann, 2003), but there could also be too much. This is why Ingersoll (2003) emphasizes the significance of sorting out which decisions are most important for teachers to make. It could be argued that they are the decisions most closely related to teachers’ main area of work, i.e. educational, social and CPD issues at the classroom level.

7.3 Teachers’ autonomy in relation to teacher professionalism and status

One way to increase our understanding of the distinction between important and unimportant decisions might be to discuss how we define autonomy in relation to responsibility. Wilches (2007) argues that undesired responsibilities are not autonomy in its proper meaning. Instead, he considers that autonomy is about teachers’ rights to make professional decisions within certain frames. From such a viewpoint, it could be argued that autonomous teachers need to have a say in how responsibilities are distributed. Responsibility as a part of teacher autonomy could then be viewed as a combination of influence and accountability, since making a decision entails responsibilities for handling the consequences (Ingersoll, 2003). The Swedish teachers in this study considered decisions to be made collegially and control to be exercised by colleagues and the school management to a higher extent than the Finnish teachers, among whom individual teacher decisions and control from clients were more frequently perceived. The cooperative orientation among Swedish teachers, and possibly also a transferring of accountability toward parents from teachers to the school management may protect teachers against risks, but could it perhaps also be interpreted as a sign of a profession that dares not be held individually accountable to its clients. Many scholars have agreed that Swedish teachers have gone through a de-professionalization over the past 30 years (e.g. Frostenson, 2015; Lundström, 2015; Stenlås, 2011; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017). The results of this study showed that Swedish and Finnish teachers’ autonomy was rather similar in the educational and social domains. Signs of the de-professionalized Swedish teacher could arguably be more easily found while analysing the results of the teachers’ autonomy regarding issues of their continuous professional development. This was the domain where Swedish and Finnish teachers differed the most, and the question is whether a profession that does not get to decide about its own CPD really could be called a profession in its proper sense. Carlgren (2009) points out that Finland is the only Nordic country where students are often attracted to teacher education and highlights Finnish teachers’ autonomy and high status as possible explanations. The higher status of Finnish teachers has been mentioned several times in this thesis. If this were shown to be inaccurate, the results of this study could instead very well bring about a discussion about, for instance, the possible advantages the Finnish teachers would gain by breaking their isolation and cooperating more in their decision-making. That is why I will include yet another diagram in this thesis, which shows the teachers’ perceptions of the status of the teacher profession within their countries. Like the other
interval scale variables, the teacher status variable was constructed through exploratory factor analysis and its quality was regarded as sufficient with a Cronbach’s value of 0.637. The individual items of the scale measured (inverted) the degree of agreement among the teachers to the statement that teachers are too heavily controlled in their country, whether they believe teachers’ judgements were more respected in the past, and whether they believe that teachers’ judgements are more respected in other countries.

As shown in the diagram, Swedish and Finnish teachers differed significantly in this area. Finnish teachers perceived their profession to hold a considerably higher status than the Swedish teachers did. If the orientation toward individual rather than collegial autonomy and the perceived greater influence over CPD issues among the Finnish teachers in this study are examples of factors that increase teachers’ status as educational experts, and that makes the teacher profession more attractive, one could ask whether the Swedish teacher profession would benefit from a more “Finnish” way of power distribution in the Swedish school system. And if that is the case, who are the ones that need to initiate change? It is hardly possible for an occupation to passively receive professionalism. More likely, the teacher profession would, for example, need to strive toward playing a greater part in the organization of teacher education and teachers’ CPD in order to gain credibility.
7.4 Merits and limitations

Firstly, it should be pointed out that the choice of a quantitative approach means that the significance of the results are high. The comparisons between Swedish and Finnish teachers are therefore possible to generalise to the teacher population, albeit with some limitations. The samples were large, but not randomised, and there were indeed some differences between the samples in comparison to the teacher populations of the two countries in terms of teachers’ gender and what grades they teach. At this stage of the study, however, these differences did not seem to affect the results. Another problem that arose was the large number of missing values in some of the analyses due to the choice of being conservative in the handling of missing values. Some areas were more affected by this than others, and it is indeed a problem that in some cases, more than 30% of the answers were missing, which might have affected the results. This may indicate that many respondents had trouble understanding some of the questions, that they did not know the answer or that they simply lost interest. Possible reasons will be analysed more thoroughly in later stages of the larger study. I will also argue that the validity of this study is high due to the theoretically founded and carefully constructed operationalization and analytical device. The operationalization of teachers’ autonomy as their power over important decisions might have contributed to a different result than would have been the case if the teachers were asked to estimate their autonomy as more related to, for example, freedom from governance. I argue, though, that the operationalization used most probably reduced problems that may occur while investigating perceived autonomy. As put forward by both Wilches (2007) and Parker (2015), teachers’ sense of autonomy might be affected by internal factors, and teachers might perceive similar working conditions in different ways. For instance, the image of Finnish teachers as more autonomous than Swedish teachers is widespread and could possibly cause teachers to believe that they are more or less autonomous simply because that is what they have been told. This is, as I see it, the main advantage with the operationalization used compared to other alternatives. The analytical device used has been helpful in nuancing the understanding of teachers’ autonomy. Since the teachers’ perceived autonomy differed greatly between the different domains, a discussion about in which areas of teachers’ work autonomy is most important became highly relevant, and would have been more difficult without the use of the device. The same applies to the important discussion about what individual autonomy compared to collegial autonomy might mean for teachers’ working conditions, and how Swedish and Finnish teachers’ orientation towards different levels of autonomy can be interpreted with respect to nation-specific characteristics of the respective school systems and teacher professions. That said, one limitation with both our operationalization and our analytical device is that our findings and conclusions should be seen in light of our theoretical perspective, and that we cannot claim that our results take all possible aspects of teacher autonomy into account, as mentioned in the method section. Other research designs may have better prerequisites for reaching a deeper understanding of the concept. Complementary qualitative research on Swedish and Finnish teachers’ autonomy is therefore welcome. As are critical views and opinions on my choices and interpretations made in this thesis.
8.0 References


Wermke, W., Olason Rick, S., & Salokangas, M. (submitted). Decision making and control. Teachers’ perceived autonomy in Germany and Sweden. Submitted to *Journal of Curriculum Studies*


Annex 1: The questionnaire.

Lärares professionella handlingsutrymme i Sverige, Tyskland, Irland och Finland

Graden av handlingsutrymme i lärares professionella arbete har identifierats som en viktig framgångsfaktor i olika skolsystem i västvärlden. Det har också visats ha inverkan på den grad av tillfredsställelse som lärare känner i sitt arbete. Hur stort handlingsutrymme lärare upplever sig ha i sitt yrke kan dock variera. Denna enkät behandlar framförallt olika beslut i lärares yrkesliv och lärarens kontroll över dessa beslut. Vissa saker föredrar lärare att bestämma själva, andra saker önskar de sig mer stöd med i beslutsprocessen. Studien som enkäten är en del i handlar om dessa upplevelser och önskemål, samt hur de påverkas av olika nationella och lokala ramfaktorer. **Syftet med enkäten är att möjliggöra en internationell jämförelse av lärare professionella handlingsutrymme i fyra länder: Sverige, Finland, Tyskland och Irland.**

Internationellt jämförande studier kartlägger hur lärare arbetar i olika kontexter under varierande villkor. Detta kan bidra till att påverka utbildningspolitik på ett nyanserat sätt och därmed förändra lärarens liv och arbete i en positivt riktning.

Enkäten har tagits fram av lärare och forskare i de deltagande länderna och omfattar viktiga delar av handlingsutrymme generellt, och beslutsprocesser specifikt. **Eftersom enkäten vill möjliggöra jämförelser med de andra länderna i studien kan det förekomma ett fåtal frågor som du upplever svårigheter att relatera till. Försök att besvara alla frågor så gott du kan, och använd annars svarsalternativet ”ej tillämpligt”**.

Dina svar är mycket värdefulla för att utveckla viktig kunskap om lärarens arbetssituation i Sverige.

**Enkäten tar ca. 15-25 minuter att besvara.** Enkäten är anonym och dina svar behandlas konfidentiellt.

Tack för din hjälp!

Wieland Wermke, Uppsala universitet

Jamshid Karami, Åbo Akademi, Uppsala universitet

Maija Salokangas, Trinity College, Dublin
1. Ditt jobb och din arbetsbelastning

1.1. Tillfredsställelse

Först och främst önskar vi förstå hur du upplever din egen arbetssituation som lärare, både på din specifika skola och som lärare i ditt land. Vi vill därför be dig värdera ett antal påståenden.

Vänligen värdera i vilken grad du instämmer med följande:

*Instämmer inte alls, Instämmer lite, Instämmer till stor del, Instämmer helt, Vet ej*

1. Jag tycker om mitt jobb.
2. Jag tycker om att undervisa
3. Om jag kunde få ett annat högre betalt arbete skulle jag genast lämna läraryrket.
4. Jag känner mycket entusiasm för mitt jobb
5. Lärarna på min skola tycker om att jobba här.
6. Jag gillar min skolas sätt att arbeta.
7. Jag funderar på att byta till en annan skola.
8. Jag tror att de flesta lärare i vårt land har en stark professionell yrkesstolthet.
10. De ständiga förändringarna i skolsystemet är utmattande för lärare.
11. Att vara lärare har hög status i Sverige.

1.2. Arbetsbelastning och yrkets utmaningar

Vänligen ange vilken grad du upplever att följande uppgifter i skolan är utmanande:

*Inte alls, Ganska lite, Mycket stor, Ganska stor, Ej tillämpligt*

1. Kontinuerlig formativ bedömning
2. Betygssättning i slutet av termin/kurser
3. Lektionsplanering
4. Handledning av elever/mentorskap
5. Kontakt med föräldrar

6. Klassundervisning

7. Att vikariera för frånvarande kollegor

8. Fortbildningsaktiviteter

9. Administrativa uppgifter (frånvaro, betygsrapportering, dokumentation, etc.)

10. Genomförande av nationella prov

11. Schemalagda möten med kollegor och/eller rektor

12. Rastvakt

2. Ansvar i lärare arbete

Ange vilka som främst ansvarar för följande aspekter i lärare arbete (utbildningsfrågor, sociala frågor, kompetensutveckling och administration). Vi är medvetna om att många aktörer kan vara involverade när ett beslut i skolan fattas. Vi är dock intesserade av vilka du tycker har huvudansvaret för besluten som tas, därför ber vi dig att försöka inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ av de alternativen som finns angivna. Vänligen tänk på att bara diskussion är inte beslut.

Alternativ

Enskild lärare - Enskilda lärare (antingen ämneslärare eller mentor)

Lärare & kollegor - Lärare tillsammans med andra lärare i samma ämneslag eller arbetslag

Lärare & andra - Lärare tillsammans med andra aktörer i skolans sammanhang (t.ex. föräldraråd, elevråd, skolledning)

Skolledning - Skolledning (inklusive rektor, biträdande rektor, studierektor)

Huvudman - Aktörer på regional nivå, t.ex. direktör, utbildningschef

Stat - Aktörer på nationell nivå, t.ex. Utbildningsstyrelsen, RUU (Karvi) Vet ej/ej tillämpligt

2.1. Utbildningsfrågor

Vänligen inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ eller vet ej/ej tillämpligt:

*Enskild lärare, Lärare & Kollegor, Lärare & andra, Skolledning, Huvudman, Stat, Vet ej/ej tillämplig*

1. Planering av lektionernas innehåll
2. Metoder som används i undervisningen
3. Material som används i undervisningen
4. Läroböcker som används i undervisningen
5. Betygsgrundande prov
6. Pedagogisk planering
7. Skolans pedagogiska inriktning
8. Fysisk klassesrummiljö
9. Tilldelning av klassrum
10. Bedömningskriterier för sina ämnen

2.2 Sociala frågor

Vänligen inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ eller vet ej/ej tillämpligt:

Enskild lärare, Lärare & Kollegor, Lärare & andra, Skolledning, Huvudman, Stat, Vet ej/ej tillämplig

1. Kontakta föräldrar i händelse av att en elev uppför sig olämpligt
2. Reglering gällande lämplig/olämplig klädsel i skolan (t.ex. keps)
3. Påljud för elever som bryter mot skolans ordningsregler
4. Tilldela professionell hjälp för elever med psykologiska eller specialpedagogiska behov
5. Ordningsregler i skolan
6. Organisering av aktiviteter utanför undervisningen (t.ex. klassresor)

2.3 Fortbildning och kompetensutveckling

Vänligen inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ eller vet ej/ej tillämpligt:

Enskild lärare, Lärare & Kollegor, Lärare & andra, Skolledning, Huvudman, Stat, Vet ej/ej tillämplig

1. Innehåll i obligatorisk fortbildning om pedagogiska frågor såsom specialundervisning, psykologiska frågor etc.
2. Innehåll i obligatorisk fortbildning och kompetensutvecklingsaktiviteter om ämnesdidaktiska frågor (så som undervisningsmetoder för olika ämnesinnehåll)
3. Innehåll i obligatorisk fortbildning om frågor om ämnesinnehåll (t.ex. matematik eller
4. Plats och tid för fortbildning.
5. Experiment med nya undervisningsmetoder och hjälpmedel.

2.4 Administration

Vänligen inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ eller vet ej/ej tillämpligt:

**Enskild lärare, Lärare & Kollegor, Lärare & andra, Skolledning, Huvudman, Stat, Vet ej/ej tillämplig**

2. Kriterier för antagning av elever.
4. Beslut om var och när jag måste vikariera - Vikarieundervisning.
5. Befordran av personer.
6. Resurser för kvalitetsutveckling inom skolan.
7. Antal möten.
8. Planering av mötesinnehåll på gemensamma läarma möten

3. Kvalitet, uppföljning och konsekvenser

Vem upplever du följer upp - förutom du själv - följande delar av arbetet? Vi är medvetna om att olika aktörer i varje led kan kontrollera ditt arbete som lärare. Vi är dock intresserade av vilken aktör du anser **följer upp vissa frågor mest**. Därför ber vi dig att inte kryssa mer än **max två alternativ**.

**Alternativ:**

**Föräldrar/elever:** Elever och/eller deras föräldrar

**Kollegor** - Kollegor i samma ämnes- eller arbetslag

**Skolledning** - Skolledning (inklusive rektor, biträdande rektor, studierektor)

**Huvudman** - Utbildningsledning i kommunen, eller privat huvudman

**Stat** - Skolverket, Skolinspektionen, utbildningsdepartementet

**Vet ej/ej tillämpligt**
3.1. Vem - förutom du själv - följer mestadels upp...?

Vänligen inte kryssa mer än max två alternativ eller "vet ej/ej tillämpligt":

Föräldrar/ elever, Kollegor, Skolledningen, Huvudman, Stat, Vet ej/ Ej tillämplig

1. Att lärare följer läroplanen/kursplanen i sin undervisning.
2. Att lärare har lämpliga elev-lärare-relationer.
3. Att lärares bedömning är likvärdig.
4. Att lärare har ett lämpligt arbetsklimat i klassrummet.
5. Elevresultaten i de nationella proven.
6. Elevernas resultat i större skriftliga prov (såsom slutprov/ämneprov).
7. Att lärare har effektiva undervisningsmetoder.
8. Att lärarna regelbundet deltar i fortskildningsaktiviteter.
9. Att lärare upprätthåller skolans ordningsregler i sina klassrum.
10. Att lärare fattar lämpliga beslut för att hjälpa elever med särskilda behov.

3.2. Hur får du reda på hur dina kollegor arbetar?

Aldrig på detta sätt, Sällan på detta sätt, Ibland på detta sätt, Huvudsakligen på detta sätt

1. Via team teaching eller klassrumssobservation hos mina kollegor.
2. Kommunikation med kollegor på arbetslagsmöte och ämnesmöte.
3. Via informella samtal i personalrummet.
4. Via mina elever.
5. Via mina elevers föräldrar.
6. Via kommunikation med skolledningen.

3.3. Positiva och negativa konsekvenser till följd av olika grader av kvalitet i undervisning/lärararbete

Vänligen värdera följande påståenden gällande ditt arbete:

Instämmer inte alls, instämmer lite, Instämmer till stor del, Instämmer helt
1. På min skola får man mycket positiv skriftlig och/eller verbal uppskattning om man är en bra lärare.
2. På min skola finns det många olika möjligheter att belönas för bra arbete (ny tjänst, lön, arbetsuppgifter).
3. På min skola är ”belöningen” för bra arbete att få mer arbete.
4. Om en kollega arbetar på ett olämpligt sätt, söker rektor en lösning för att hjälpa kollegan.
5. Om en kollega presterar underrättligt i sitt arbete, riskerar hon/han att bli avskedad.
6. Det är lättare att kommunicera med unga kolleger om hur de kan förbättra sitt arbete än med kollegor som har längre lärarerfarenhet.
8. Då kollegor inte ”fungerar” på ett lämpligt sätt, ökar min egen arbetsbelastning.
9. Det finns starka normer i skolan för hur man som lärare ska uppföra sig och hur man ska arbeta.
10. Om kollegor presterar undermåligt i sitt arbete, söker ämnesansvarig/arbetslagsledare lösningar för att hjälpa kollegan.
11. Om en kollega har problem, närmar sig övriga kollegor kollegan direkt och erbjuder hjälp.

3.4. När du fattar beslut i ditt arbete, och reflekterar över agerandets möjliga konsekvenser, vilka av följande faktorer påverkar dina beslut?

Vänligen värdera hur viktiga följande källor är för dig:

**Mycket viktig, Viktig, Viktig i viss mån, Inte alls viktig, Ej tillämplig**

1. Läroplanen/kursplaner
2. Skollagen
3. Skolans lokala läroplan/läsårsplan
4. Föräldrars förväntningar
5. Nationella prov (om de har använts)
6. Rektorns anvisningar
7. Kommunen/huvudmannens anvisningar
8. Din lärarutbildning
9. Pedagogisk forskning
10. Fackens publiceringar och fortbildningar
4. Lärarprofessionen och statlig styrning

Vänligen värdera följande påståenden:

*Instämmer inte alls, Instämmer lite, Instämmer till stor del, Instämmer helt, Vet ej*

1. Skolan skall styras centralt av staten, för att garantera lika möjligheter för alla.
2. Ett skolsystem bör vara decentraliserat, för att anpassa skolan till de lokala förhållandena i största möjliga mån.
3. Lärarlöner bör vara prestationbaserade.
4. Lärare behöver fler karriärmöjligheter.
5. Nationella prov borde vara obligatoriska.
6. Att konstruera bedömningsunderlag tillsammans med andra lärare är en bra metod för att säkra kvaliteten i undervisningen på en skola/i ett ämne
7. Att arbeta med jämförande prov (som t.ex. nationella prov) kan hjälpa att få syn på styrkor och svagheter i min undervisning.
8. Att arbeta med jämförande prov (som t.ex. nationella prov) hjälper mig att upptäcka elever med särskilda behov.
9. Statliga kompetensutvecklingscentra med erfarna lärare som konsulterar skulle öka kvaliteten i vårt lands skola.

5. Bakgrundsfrågor

Avslutningsvis vill vi be dig att besvara några frågor om din skola och dig själv.

1. För att kunna sammanställa skolor i samma område, vänligen uppge de *tre första* siffrorna i skolans postnummer här:

2. Vad är det ungefärliga antalet elever på din skola?
3. Hur många lärare arbetar på din skola?
- Färre än 30
- Mellan 30-50
- Mellan 50-100
- Fler än 100

4. Hur skulle du beskriva din skolas elevsammansättning?
- Elever från familjer med hög socioekonomisk status.
- Elever från familjer med låg socioekonomisk status.
- Elever både från familjer med lägre och högre socioekonomisk status.

5. I vilket geografiskt område är din skola?
- Övervägande landbyggsområde (elever måste delvis åka längre sträckor till sin närmaste skola)
- Stadsområde (flera skolor av samma typ i området)

6. Är du?
- Man
- Kvinna
- Vill ej svara

7. Hur länge har du arbetat som lärare?
- 1-5 år
- 6-15 år
- 16-25 år
- Mer än 25 år
8. Hur länge har du arbetat som lärare på din nuvarande skola?
   - Detta är mitt första år
   - 2-5 år
   - 6-10 år
   - 11-15 år
   - 16-20 år
   - Mer än 20 år

9. Vilket av följande ämnen är ditt första ämne/huvudämne
   - Språk
   - Samhällsorienterande ämnen
   - Matematik / naturorienterande / tekniska ämnen
   - Idrott och hälsa / Bild / Musik / Slöjd / Hemkunskap
   - Hemspråk
   - Annat

10. I vilka årskurser undervisar du mest?
    - 1-4
    - 4-6
    - 6-9
    - Gymnasiet

11. Är du klassförståndare / mentor till en klass?
    - Ja
    - Nej

12. Arbetar du...?
    - Heltid
    - Deltid
13. Har du...

- Tillsvidareanställning
- Visstidsanställning

14. När du utanför undervisning och möte arbetar i skolan, vart gör du det?

- På min kontorsplats
- I mitt klassrum
- I gemensamma utrymmen för alla lärare
- Jag arbetar hemma/på tåget etc.

15. Under förra läsåret, har du varit aktiv på följande sätt...

- har varit aktiv i fritidsföreningar
- har varit lärarledare
- har varit aktiv i en skolutvecklingsgrupp i din skola
- har varit aktiv i en grupp eller nätverk med skolfokus utanför skolan
- har varit aktiv som handledare för lärarstudenter

Om du har några synpunkter på enkäten, skriv dom gärna här:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
_________________________________

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

UPPSALA UNIVERSEIT