

“What is it all for?”: An Examination of Motivations Profiles within RUG Students

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Abstract

This research aimed to compare the views of students and educators in terms of what they wish higher education was like and currently is. Along with ascertaining the motivation profiles of students studying within RUG to compare with other factors. It was observed that students and educators generally shared an ideal view of higher education and universities. They were agreeable when it came to the reality of HE, but also discordant due to differing views. The reasons to study were also observed between students and educators, but students' views on what others should study for did not exactly match what they were actually studying for. When motivation profiles were examined within the context of year, major, purpose, self-efficacy and estimated GPA, they all followed the same trend as the majority of students within each category scored highly in self-exploration as a motivation, second highest being meeting expectations and lowest being to network.

Keywords: higher education, motivations profiles, students, educators, self-exploration, meeting expectations, networking, self-efficacy, purpose

“What is it all for?”: An Examination of Motivations Profiles within RUG Students

Higher education is a part of life that many students have to confront. Many students may choose to postpone it, but they eventually engage as a part of lifelong learning. Throughout the rest of this thesis, mentions of higher education will be abbreviated as “HE”. Students begin their university studies as a result of expectation or the desire to improve career prospects in a field of their choice. Students in the former camp may approach university with barely an inkling of what they want, wanting to explore their interests in a formal, educational context. Both views are something the reader may relate to.

Discerning students’ motivation for participating in HE is important in better understanding their mindset and how it plays into their drive to study. For many people, their choice of an undergraduate degree is the first big decision they will take that shapes the next step in their lifelong career.

What is “Purpose of HE”?

The purpose of HE is subjective depending on the lens it is observed through. The general definition of HE that will be used within this thesis is “The function a university serves from a given perspective”. This is because a university provides different benefits for different stakeholders. This thesis will focus more on the unique perspective of the student and their relationship with educators, because students stand to gain the most from university as a place of knowledge and human development with educators acting as role models whom pass on their

views and knowledge. Keeping the established definition for HE in mind, students have many different perspectives on it as well. Such perspectives can also tie into why students study in the first place and what motivates them to do so.

Differing views within different contexts have resulted in the development of several perspectives: Pragmatic philosophies such as Credentialism, Human Capital Theory and Resource Dependency theory focus on the idea that the University setting is responsible for shaping the student to fit a role within society that prepares them to support the economy by becoming a sought-out product in the job market. More socially-focused views such as Critical Pedagogy and Social Reproduction Theory posit that Universities serve to instill learners with a mindset that allows them to interact with the wider world and either shape it as socially conscious beings or keep a status quo. The Purpose of HE will be observed under the lens of these philosophies.

What is “Motivation to study”?

The “Motivation to Study” will be the focus of this thesis. It is defined as the mindset with which the student approaches their learning experience. With that said, motivation may entwine itself with the purpose of HE. Two studies observing students within six European countries and Central Asia, respectively, are observed to share the sentiment that university education is a good way to improve one’s career opportunities. But the students within the latter study take this to an extreme, pursuing diplomas to “complete” their degree (Jonbekova, 2019) while the European students are more relaxed, seeing HE as an avenue for self-improvement as well (Brooks et al., 2020).

Motivation may also affect study choices as a statistical analysis of the study year of 2022 conducted by Nuffic yields that the most popular study programmes within the Netherlands in universities of applied science were International Business and Design and the two most popular within research universities are Psychology and Economics and Business Economics. All of these subjects can be seen as practical for pursuing a vocation in different fields, but practicality alone does not account for less popular choices such as Social Work, Physiotherapy, Computer Science and Political Science. Despite their practicality, these study programs have less enrollments compared to other popular subjects, implying that there is precedent to motivation having a major role in academics.

Trends between students in different study programmes have also been examined as a study in the UK observed the difference in motivation between dental and medical students within Manchester University. The former being more driven by job security and status while the latter showed a preference for prosocial motivations and career opportunities, though this does not account for all dental and medical students (Crossley & Mubarik, n.d.). Studies related to student motivation have also shown that it plays into self-efficacy has predicted persistence in the face of academic challenge and general academic performance (Walker et al., 2006). Another study conducted by Busse and Walter (2013) on Foreign Language students found that students that were highly motivated to study at the beginning of the year grew to enjoy the subject less as their motivation declined as they reached the middle of the year. This dip in motivation had also been found to be related to a lack of confidence and low self-efficacy, so other factors contributed to the decline.

So far, it has also been shown that the motivation to study and a student's perceived purpose of learning in HE entwine, the latter having a significant impact on the former. Prior

studies have shown that personal purpose of study has a positive correlation with the motivation to learn. Promoting a purpose for learning that goes beyond the self had increased learning engagement, shown to have a positive correlation to GPA and encouraged deeper learning within students more than motivations that were self-oriented. Pervin (2001) had suggested two concepts that are relevant in examining motivation in this context: Multidetermination, which posits that complex activity involves interplay between multiple motives, and Equifinality, which states that the same end action is representative of different motivations at play. With these concepts in mind, Motivation will be observed based on profiles derived from factors based on the data collected. Taking inspiration from another study conducted on student motivation, in which four groups of mindsets that were commonly observed within a prior study consisting of first-year university students (Hudig et al., 2020).

What's Next?

This paper will follow up on previous research by focusing specifically on the motivation of university students, aiming to observe how motivations interact with other items within the survey to discern what it indicates. Data will be collected via a questionnaire regarding the purpose of HE sent out toward students of RUG. The results will be observed and categorized. A factor analysis will be conducted on the “Reasons To Study” results and motivational profiles will be constructed based on the resulting factors to compare with the other survey items.

Currently, there is very limited work regarding individual motivation of students and their purpose of studying within a university context. The data obtained from this observational study may help in better understanding the values and thoughts of students who attend particular study programmes in universities.

Methods

Subjects and Participants

The survey is aimed toward people that participated in higher education. Specifically, within RUG. Participants were separated into “Students” or “Educators” to reflect their roles. The Behavioural and Social Sciences Ethics Committee granted a fast-track permission to conduct the survey.

For students, The survey’s demographic is mostly female (Female = 135, Men = 35, Non-Binary = 2, Other = 1), nationalities were mostly Dutch and German. A majority of the subjects studied Psychology, with more people from the 1st and 3rd year of their program. The participants’ ages ranged from 19-37, with the majority being within 19-23 years old. Many of them had a self-reported GPA of 7-8.

For educators, the demographic was balanced between male and female, with an age range of 21-65 with no significant majority. Most educators were Dutch and German, holding the position of Assistant Professor and working within the Psychology faculty.

Word of the survey had been spread through Whatsapp groups and SONA as a call to student participation. Students were incentivized to participate via SONA points and the opportunity to opt-in for a lottery to win a 30 euro dinner voucher if they provide their email address. Educators were mainly approached through emails and given posters with a QR code during an event, they also had the option to participate in the lottery.

The final count of participants for the survey is 338, but only 174 students finished the survey. 6 students were removed as they had finished the survey between 335 and 405 seconds,

which was decided to not be long enough to do the survey seriously. 45 educators participated, but only 35 finished the survey.

Apparatus and Materials

The survey was constructed, conducted and the data was collected using Qualtrics as a tool of choice. Analysis was done using SPSS, with visualizations done using Python and SPSS. Credit due to fellow researcher Saran Akhbari for the visualizations.

The survey asked for the participants' diagnostic information such as age, gender and nationality. Students would be asked which program they participated in, their estimated GPA for the program, what year they were in, level of degree and their satisfaction with their experience in the course. Educators would be asked which faculty they were a part of and their job title.

Five theories on the purpose of higher education were used as a basis to construct 3 sets of 15 statements about what university "is" and what it "should be": Critical Pedagogy, Social Reproduction, Resource Dependency, Credentialism and Human Capital Theory. "Is" and "Should Be" were chosen as parameters because they showed what a participant of the survey thought about HE based on the theories with a good level of specificity.

We also collaboratively created a subscale of reasons for studying at university based on these theories, consisting of 9 statements rated on a 5-item Likert Scale from "Does not describe me" to "Describes me extremely well".

Two questionnaires were used in addition to measure purpose and self-efficacy: 3 statements from the Multidimensional Existential Meaning Scale, using a 5-point Likert Scale from "Strongly Disagree (--)" to "Strongly Agree (++)", and 10 statements from the General Self-Efficacy Scale with a 4-point Likert Scale from "Not At All True" to "Exactly True".

Procedure

Participants would be given the link to access the survey. Either through Whatsapp groups or being approached in-person. The first page detailed the survey's aims, how the data would be handled, a recommended format for taking the survey and the option to voluntarily participate in a lottery to win 5 30 euro dinner vouchers. After this, the participant would be asked to consent.

Next, the survey measures the participant's demographic information. Their role as either a student or an educator, age, gender, nationality, level of education and study program. Educators would be given alternate questions, asking what teaching program they participated in and their job titles.

Then, they would be asked about values they held based on why they went to university, they would be asked the same questions, but answer what values they would advise to their friends. Participants would then be asked to rate 3 statements of a personal sense of purpose in a Likert Scale format, from Strongly Disagree (--) to Strongly Agree (++)

Next, participants were asked to subjectively rate 15 statements related to 3 topics: The content of university education, the role of educators within universities and the role of universities within HE. Each statement is rated based on 2 5-item Likert Scales based on what the participant thought "Should" happen and "Is" happening, ranging from Strongly Disagree (--) to Strongly Agree (++)

The first set of statements are rated based on what universities should teach and what they do teach. The second set of statements are rated based on what educators should aim to do and what they already do. The third set of statements are rated based on what universities should aim to do and what they already do.

Afterward, students would be asked to estimate their GPA for the program, between 6 or lower to 9 or higher. Both groups would be asked to rate their satisfaction with their experience as a university student/educator before rating themselves in 10 statements based on self-efficacy on a 4-item Likert Scale ranging from “Not At All True” to “Exactly True” As a final question, an open question would be given for the participant to voice their own opinion about what universities should or should not do. The survey can be referred to within the appendix.

Results

Students and Teachers: How Different Are they?

Within this section of the analysis, a sample of 203 participants had been taken into account. 168 students and 35 teachers. The figures below, supplied by fellow group member Saran Akhbari, grouped the “Should” and “Is” statements for each facet of higher education that was shared between both parties: “Education”, “Students” and “University”. The mean scores have been taken for each item and organized in a comparative bar chart according to each question, the blue bars representing the mean scores for students, while the orange bars represent the mean scores for educators. These items have been tested for normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test and the Shapiro-Wilk Test, the analysis yielded that the survey results rejected the null hypothesis for both tests, so no normal distribution can be found. On the other hand, a Cronbach’s Alpha analysis yielded highly for the questionnaire in both groups (Student $\alpha = 0.826$, Educator $\alpha = 0.859$). A chi-square analysis also concluded with none of the questions having a p-value less than 0.05.

Figure 1 is a bar chart comparison of mean scores for all 45 statements with regards to the “Should” Likert Scale. Mean scores of student answers are highlighted in blue, orange for educators.

Both students and educators generally agreed on how things should be regarding university education, the university itself, and its students. There are only two statements in which views between students and educators were discordant. As students seem to want universities to prioritize making society more effective, with less focus on global rankings and vice versa for educators. Students seem to be much more aligned in their views than teachers, their mean scores experienced dips on “Instill Applicable Knowledge”, “Create a space where everyone can contribute”, “Instill factual knowledge upon students”, “Include realistic practical courses”, “Prepare for their career”, “Not impose a strong political direction” and “Prepare for jobs most needed in society”.

Figure 1

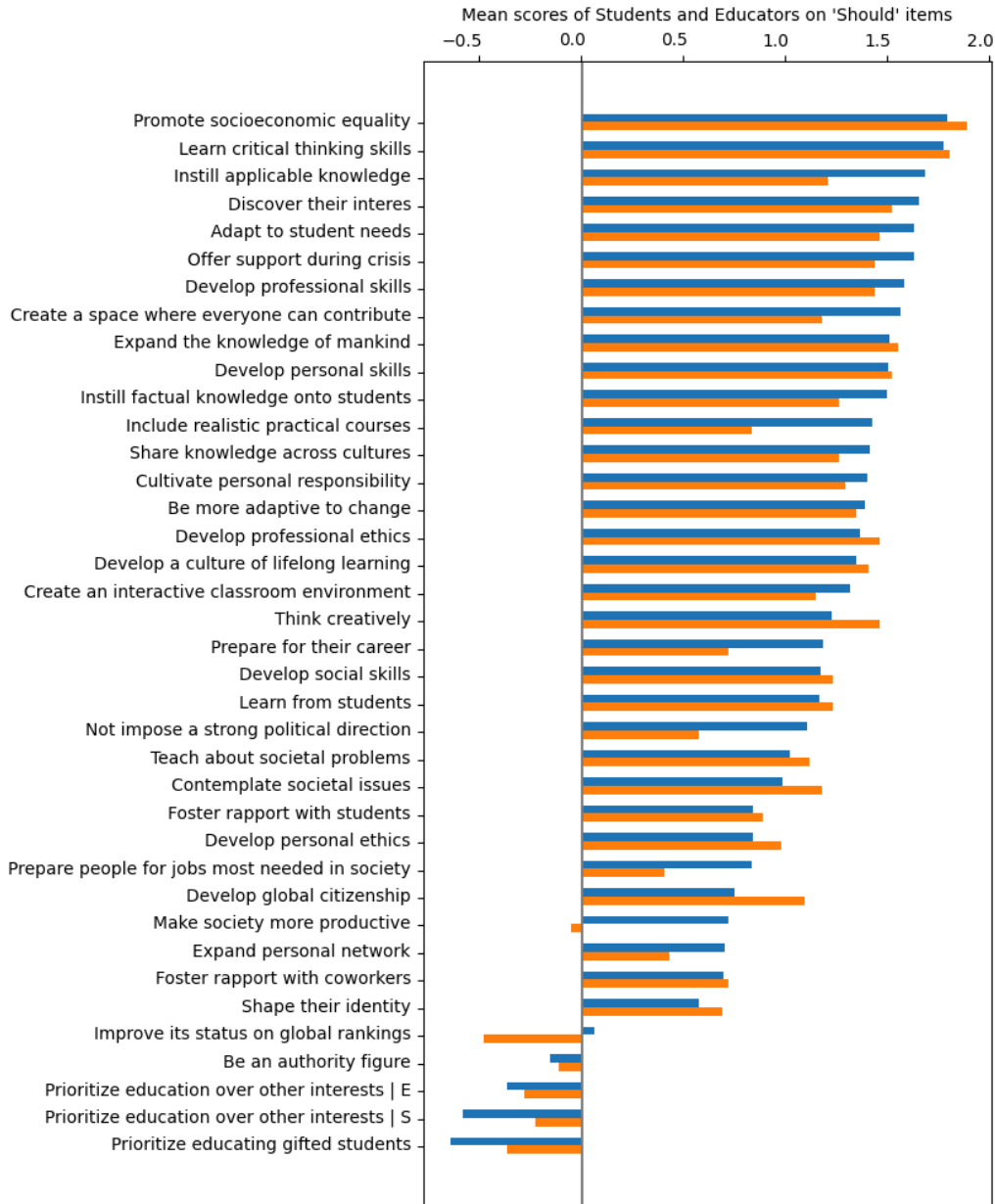


Figure 2 is a bar chart comparison of mean scores for all 45 statements with regards to the “Is” Likert Scale, this time, reflecting the perceived reality of university education, university

and students instead of what students and educators wished. Mean scores of students still in blue, mean scores of educators in orange.

Views between students and educators are generally much more discordant when addressing what the university is like from their perspectives. The views of students are still generally aligned while educators seem to disagree more on what the state of higher education in university is really like. Educators seem to believe that university does not adequately help students foster their personal skills, or provide a context in which to share knowledge between cultures. Interestingly, students do not believe that university helps them prepare for a career while educators believe that university prioritizes more gifted students.

Figure 2

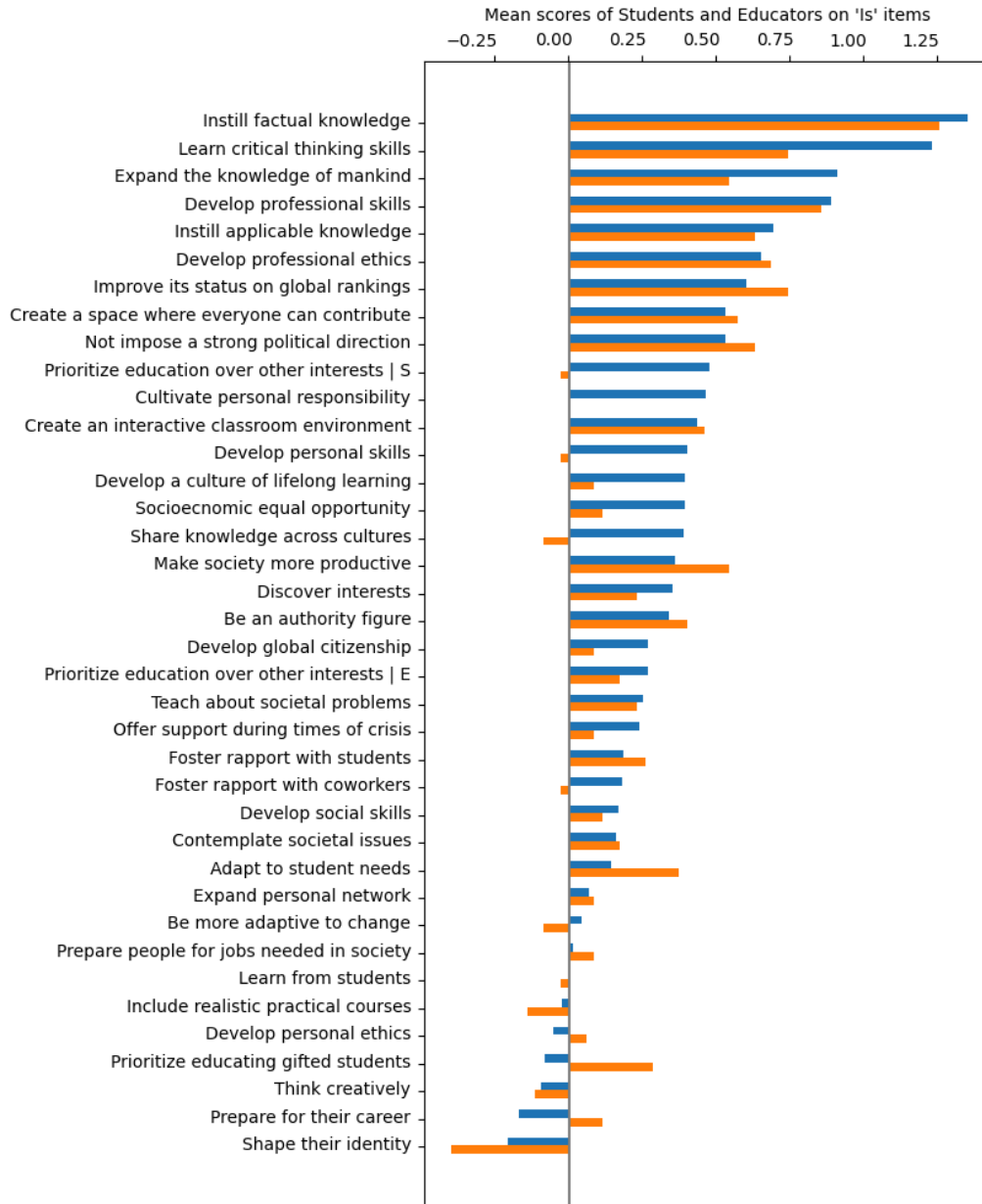
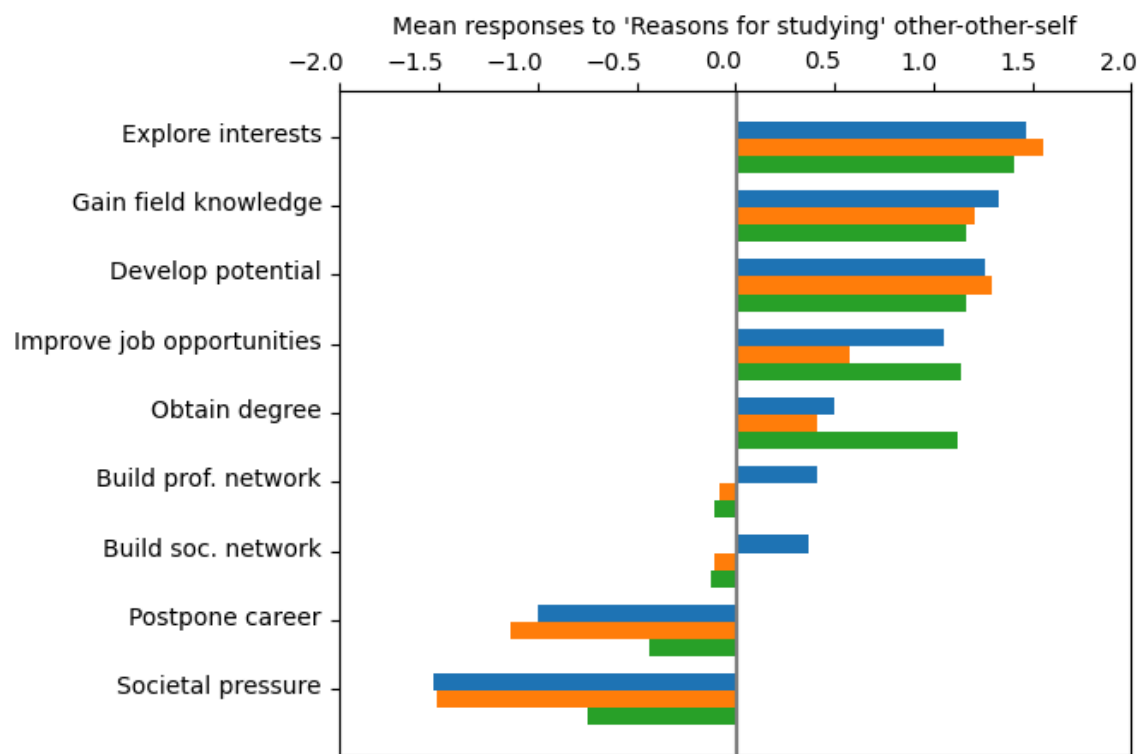


Figure 3 is a bar chart comparison of mean scores of reasons for studying that students and educators believe loved ones and friends should study for. Mean scores for students in blue, mean scores for educators in orange. While green represents what students themselves actually study for. Views between students and educators seem to be generally aligned aside from the two statements about building a social/professional network, with students believing that networking

is not what you should be studying for. Educators agree less with studying purely to improve job opportunities or obtain a degree. Students seem to share the sentiment with the latter, but most students do study for the sake of a degree. Students and educators also believe that others should not study due to societal pressure or to postpone their career, but mean scores on their own reasons to study indicate that some students do study due to both.

Figure 3

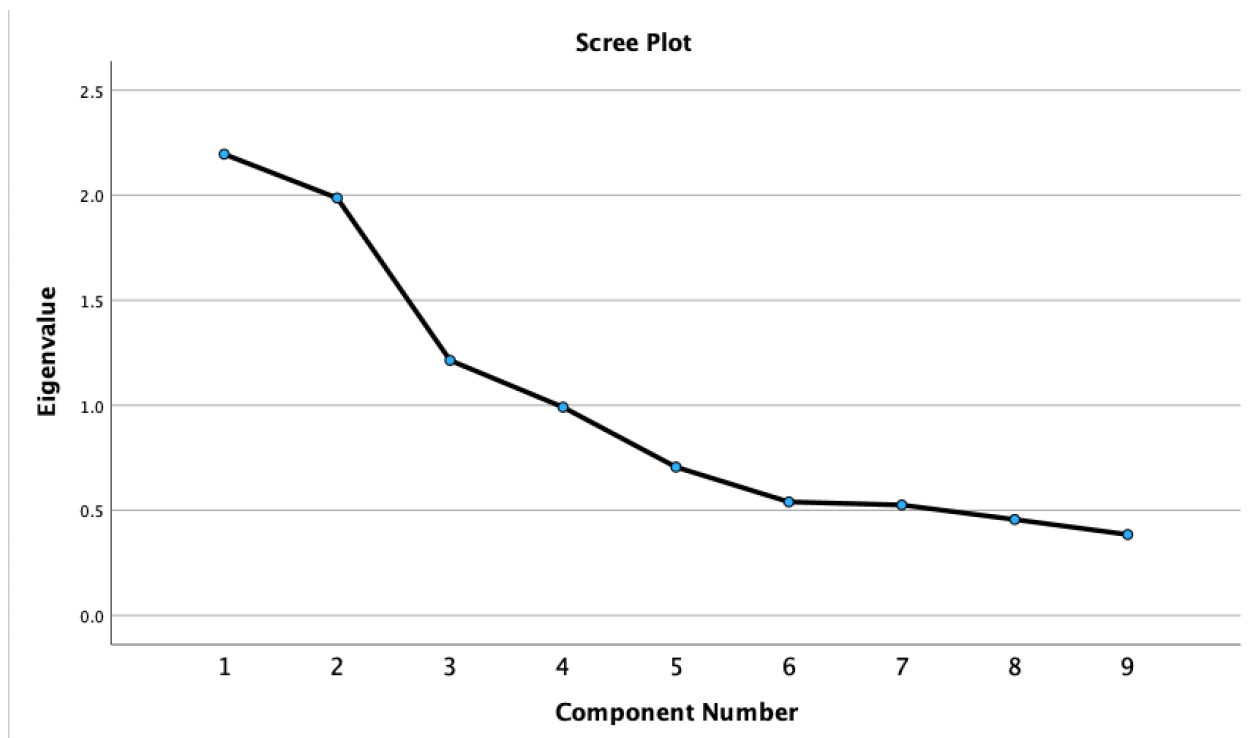


Exploratory Factor Analysis on Bachelor Students' Reasons to Study

This section of the data analysis will primarily focus on students. As they make up the majority of survey participants and they are the most relevant group when it comes to motivation to study. This makes up 168 cases within the dataset. The results for the RFSSelf statements were run through an exploratory factor analysis using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax

rotation. The KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to assess fit for factor analysis (KMO = 0.625, Sig. = < 0.001), the scree plot determined 3 components with Eigenvalues greater than 1 that explained 59.896% of the variance within the "RFSSelf" statements.

Figure 4



Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
RFSSelf1		.828	
RFSSelf2	.811		
RFSSelf3	-.480	.506	.255
RFSSelf4	-.449		.282
RFSSelf5			.877
RFSSelf6	.196	.266	.708
RFSSelf7	.685		.201
RFSSelf8	.753		.183
RFSSelf9		.844	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser

Normalization. ^a

^a Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

The factor loadings presented 3 components with high correlations to a selection of statements from RFSSelf. The largest loadings were taken for each factor and means for the RFSSelf statements were calculated based on which statements loaded highly on each factor. Based on the statements each component is related toward, Component 1 is dubbed Self-Exploration, Component 2 is Meeting Expectations and Component 3 is Networking. After reverse scoring Q4 due to the negative load, scores for each component were averaged from the RFSSelf results with accompanying descriptive statistics. Afterward, a variable was created that sorted each case based on which factor they scored highly on, which is used as the basis for comparison after this. Although, some were given the value 0, as they did not have a single highest factor score.

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SelfExp	4.1071	.65064	168
MeetExpec	3.6171	.73921	168
Network	2.8750	.92818	168

The statements were also tested for normality by taking the skewness value of each question and dividing it by its standard error value. As the results seem to be greater than 2 and less than -2, it can be concluded that there is no normal distribution to be found within “RFSSelf”. A Cronbach’s Alpha value was also calculated for Reasons for Study, yielding a low value. ($\alpha = 0.483$)

Skewness Divided By S.E of Skewness

RFSSelf1	RFSSelf2	RFSSelf3	RFSSelf4	RFSSelf5	RFSSelf6	RFSSelf7
-5.32	-7.58	1.54	2.89	-208.6	684.5	-5.94

Comparison of Highest Factor Score with Other Item Scores

From here, each student had been sorted by motivational profile depending on which factors they scored highest on. Each figure will be a clustered bar chart comparison of highest factor loading score in relation to other items. Some items were categorized as 0, as they did not have one highest factor score, but scored highly on 2 or all 3.

Figure 5 contains the bar chart comparison between highest factor score and a student’s study major. It’s a little difficult to see within the graph itself, but psychology ranks the highest count, with 67 psychology students having the highest factor score in Self-Exploration, 28 scoring highest on Meeting Expectations and 7 scoring highest on Networking. The second

highest count within majors, Pedagogy and Educational Sciences, also follows this trend, with 8 scoring highest on Self-Exploration and 2 scoring highest on Meet Expectations. The data itself is a bit cluttered due to multiple people having the same answer but typed differently. Labeling subjects that were not Psychology as “other” was considered, but in the end, it would have obscured the data too much.

Figure 5

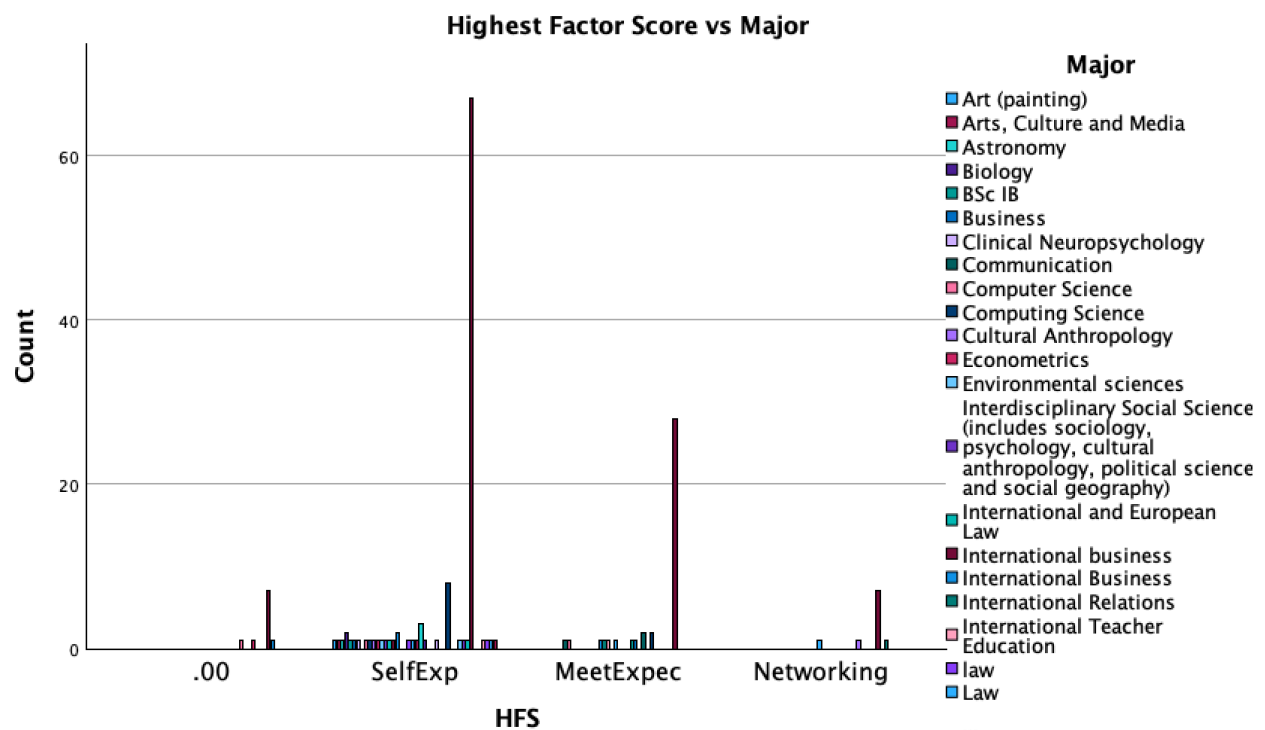


Figure 6 is the bar chart comparison of highest factor score when compared to which current academic year the student was attending. A majority of people currently attending all years had the highest scores in self-exploration (1st Year = 34, 2nd Year = 25, 3rd Year = 39, 4th Year = 9). Second highest count having the highest score in meeting expectations (1st Year = 14, 2nd Year = 5, 3rd Year = 15, 4th Year = 3). With a low minority rating highest in networking. (1st Year = 5, 2nd Year = 3, 3rd Year = 2). Those in the second year seem to have a harsher dip

as less people scored highest in meeting expectations in the second year compared to first and third.

Figure 6

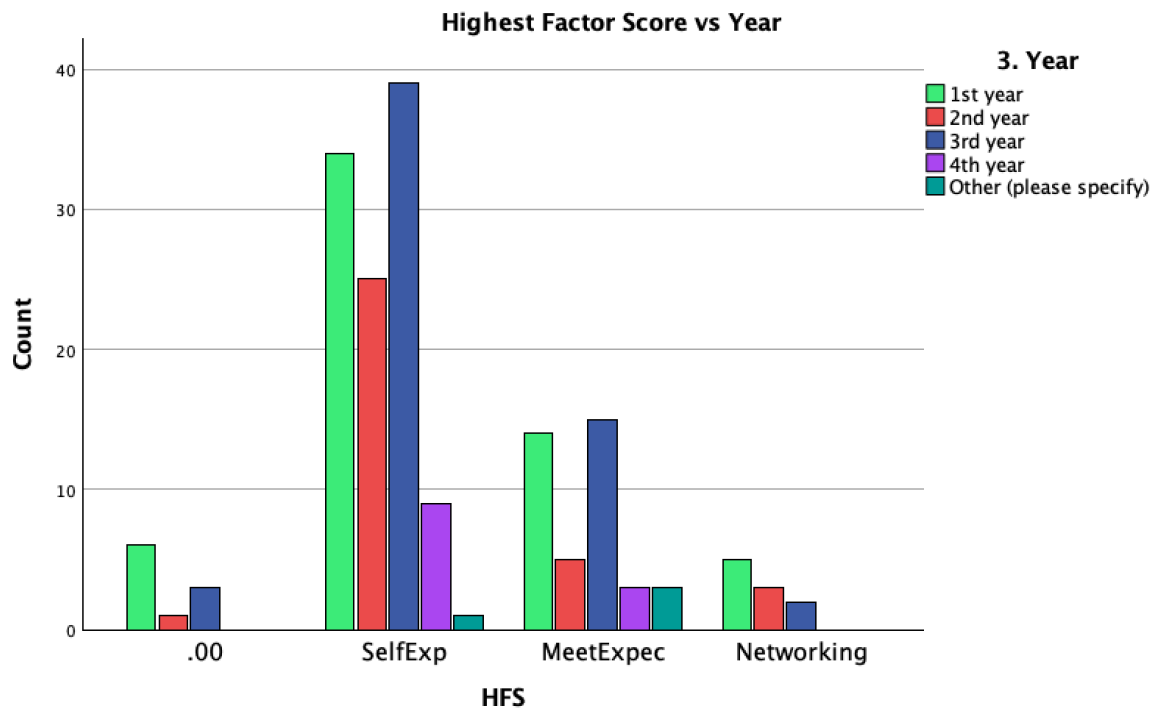


Figure 7 is the bar chart comparison of highest factor score against student nationality. Following a similar trend of graphs thus far, the Dutch and German majority of students had the highest scores in self-exploration (Dutch = 50, German = 31), second highest in meet expectations (Dutch = 22, German = 9) and lowest in networking (Dutch = 4, German = 1). Similarly to Majors, people tended to have overlapping answers but spelled differently, causing a large spread of data across the graph.

Figure 7

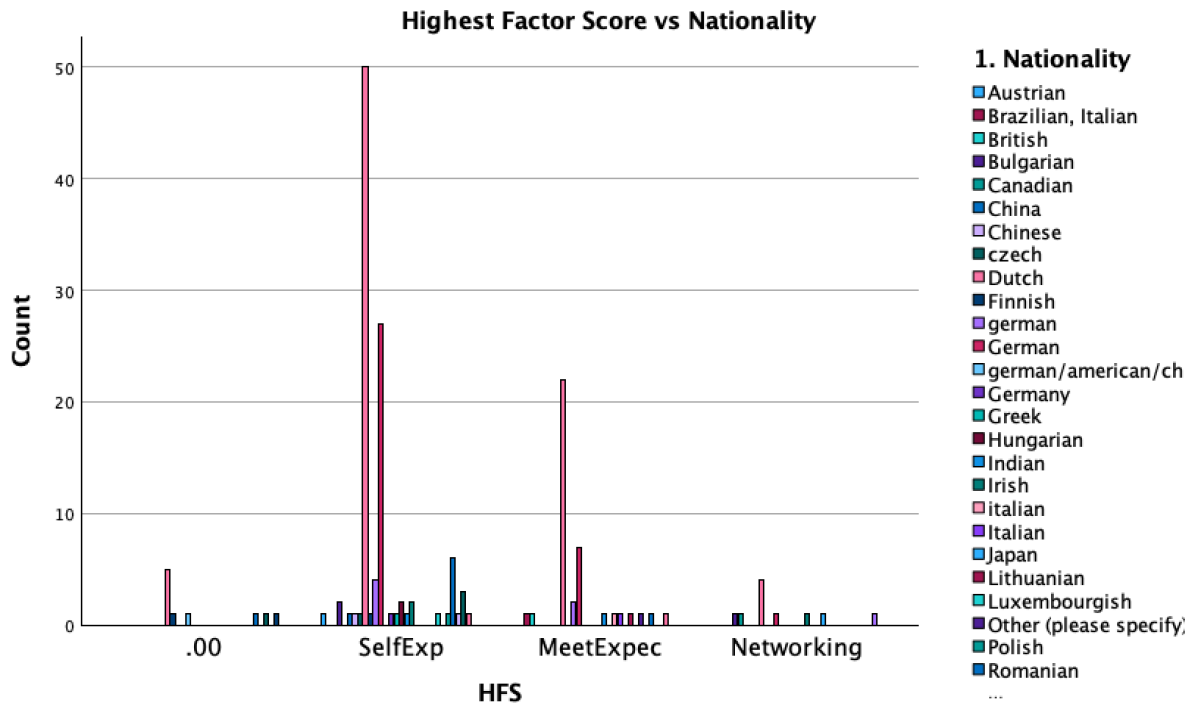


Figure 8 is the bar chart comparison of highest factor score against self-reported estimation of grade point average for a student’s current program. A majority of students had scored themselves as being around 7-8, scoring highest in self-exploration (7-8 = 54), second highest in meeting expectations (7-8 = 17) and lowest in networking (7-8 = 5). Those with an estimated GPA of 6-7 experienced a softer dip, as those with higher estimations rated much higher in self-exploration while more people within the 6-7 range scored highly on meeting expectations.

Figure 8

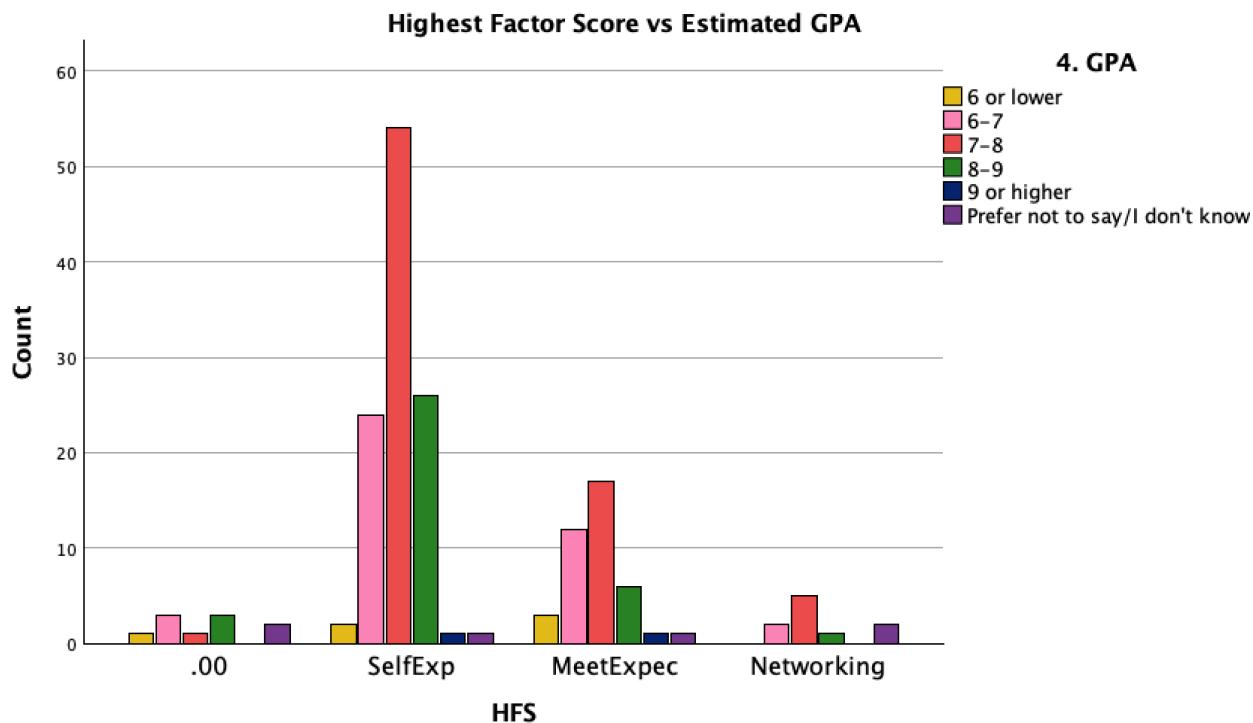


Figure 9 is the bar chart comparison between highest factor score and the mean scores of self-efficacy. These scores were rounded to the nearest integer for ease of visualization. As with Figure 5, the graph follows the same pattern, with the majority of 85 people with an average self-efficacy score of 3 scoring high on self-exploration, 31 scoring highest in meeting expectations and 8 scoring highest in Networking. Those with an average self-efficacy score of 4 also followed this trend: 21 scoring high on self-exploration, 5 on meeting expectations and 2 on networking. Those who scored themselves with an average of 2 on self-efficacy seem to break the pattern. With only 1 scoring high in self-exploration and 4 scoring high on meeting expectations.

The statements on general self-efficacy were also tested for normality by dividing the skewness score of each statement with its' standard error, with all of them staying within the

score range of -2 and 2, indicating that the scores are normally distributed. A Cronbach's Alpha analysis also shows that the answers have a high internal consistency. ($\alpha = 0.815$)

Figure 9

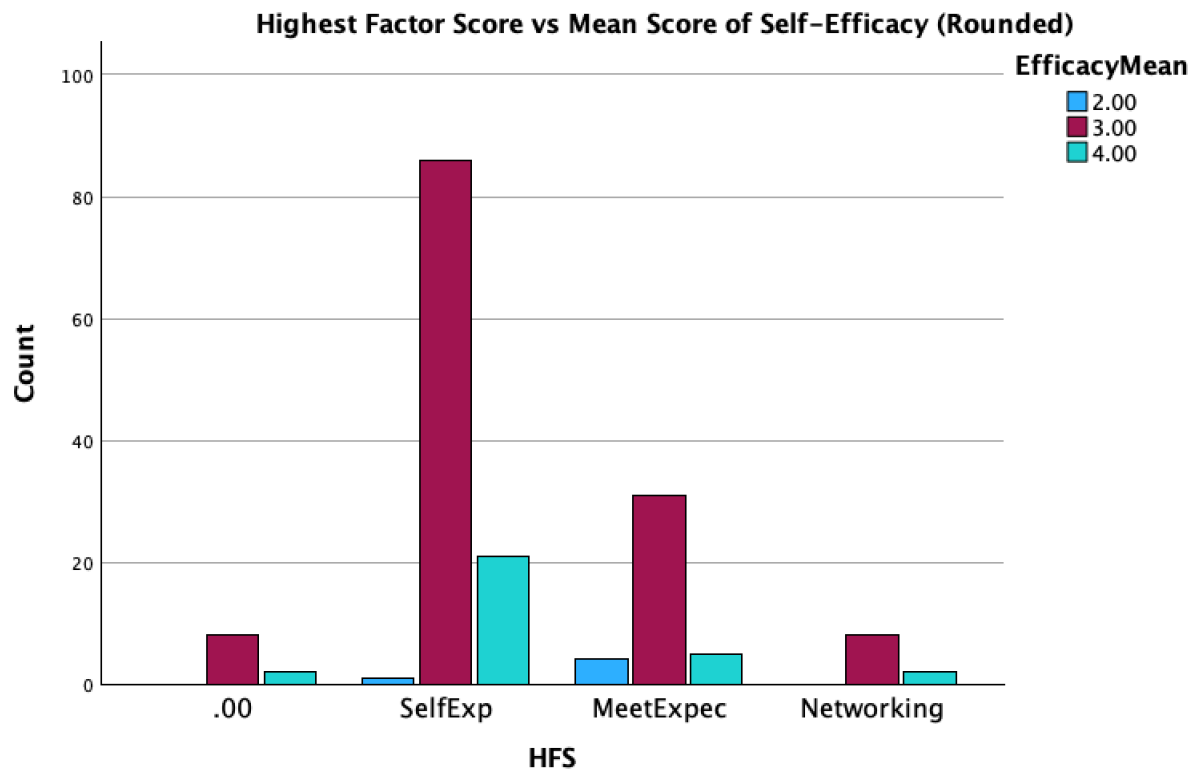
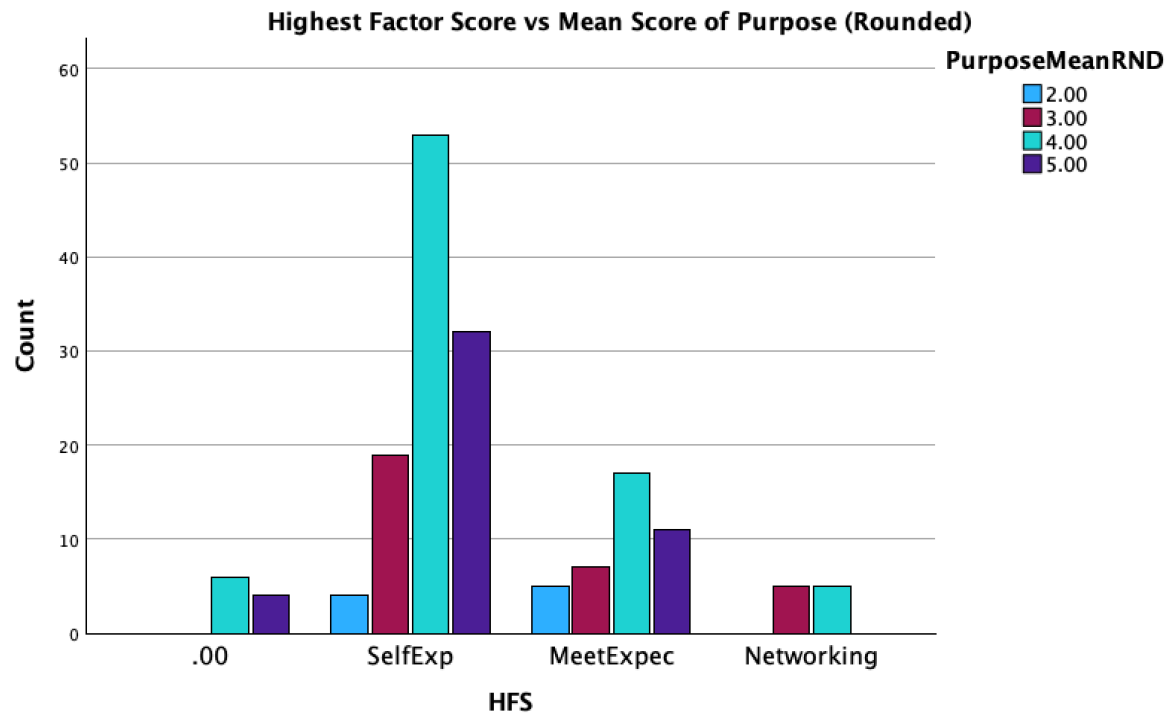


Figure 10 is the bar chart comparison of highest factor scores against mean score of purpose, rounded to the nearest integer for ease of visualization. Following a similar general trend to the other comparisons, the majority of students who rated themselves fairly high on purpose scored highest in self-exploration (4.00 = 53), second highest in meeting expectations (4.00 = 17) and lowest in networking (4.00 = 5). It can be observed that people who had an average low self-rating on purpose still had most students scoring highest in self-exploration, but also with a lower difference compared to people scoring highest in meeting expectations.

Figure 10



Discussion

Interpretations Of The Data

Comparisons between Students and Educators

Regarding views on the state of HE, students and educators seem to mostly agree on their ideal view of university education, universities and students themselves. Although educators seem to disagree among themselves consistently in contrast to students. Differing perspectives also contributed to discordant views over how both groups saw HE as it is, instead of what it could be. It may be inaccurate to say that this could be due to a generational gap, as the educator sample is highly specific toward educators working in RUG, so the low sample of educators compared to students could be the cause. An interesting observation is that the majority of people believe that the purpose of study shouldn't be to make social or professional connections, despite the fact that a minority of people scored highly on networking as a motivation to study. Then again, the average was negative, but a low negative. So there are conflicting views at play.

Motivational Profiles In Relation To Other Items

For the sake of this analysis, Self-Exploration refers to the desire to experiment in one's interests and explore what they would like to study. Meeting Expectations refers to the desire to fulfill societal pressures pushed upon oneself to obtain a degree and get a good job. Networking refers to studying for the purpose of meeting new people and making connections that may help in the future. Regardless of what was being compared, the majority of students had scored highest in Self-Exploration, second in Meeting Expectations and lowest in Networking. This could be due to bias in data toward Dutch and German students and Psychology students, as previous research did observe that European students considered HE to be explorative in addition

to improving job opportunities. When the highest factor score was compared by GPA and purpose, there was a lower difference between students who had scored highly on self-exploration and those who scored highly on meeting expectations. The mean scores of self-efficacy even broke the pattern with those who saw themselves as less self-efficient students, being more concerned with passing university and getting a degree. Although, due to the low sample of 168 students, it cannot be discerned whether this is consistent within those who saw themselves as less competent or confident. Prior research with Foreign Language students had observed that students self-reported as motivated to succeed despite finding less enjoyment in the subject during the middle of their year.

Issues With Survey Participation

For the survey, the total number of participants for the survey was 356, including 44 participants from SONA studies. The non-SONA survey would also give you a choice to join a raffle for a 30€ dinner coupon by providing an email address at the very end. Out of 356 responses, only 203 participants had been considered for data analysis, 43% of participants had dropped out of the survey due to its length. And within the sample that remained, 6 students had finished the survey between 335-403 seconds, which was collectively agreed to not be enough time to complete the survey seriously. In some of those cases, the answers to the survey leaned toward extreme positives and negatives.

Participation was also not sufficiently balanced to discern a true comparison between students and educators as only 35 educators participated in the study. And the small sample of participants themselves does not make this an appropriate representative sample of students within RUG or Bachelor students in general.

Issues With Survey and Data

As none of the self-made subscales followed a normal distribution, but were statistically significant, justifying the use of a parametric test would be difficult. To mitigate this issue, it was decided that the data would only be compared only through their means.

As we were unable to include the full MEMS scale and General Self-Efficacy scale into the survey due to concerns about length and participant dropout, the scores gleaned from this survey may not be accurate to the real questionnaires. The MEMS scale borrowed for use within the survey was also invalidated, as the original 15-item scale had a 7-point response scale, while we only included 5 for consistency with the other subscales.

Improvements To Be Made

A study that attempts to follow up on this one would be wise to take a sample of universities within Groningen and spread the survey around as this study was conducted with a convenience sample. An effort should also be made to involve more educators in the data collection process through spreading the word. The survey also needs to be improved, to make the statements on HE more open to parametric analysis and to be much shorter to mitigate participant dropout while providing accurate measurement. A suggestion would be to shorten the amount of statements for university education, the role of university and the role of students so more of the statements taken from other questionnaires could be added in.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey

Start of Block: Block 1

Q1 Dear participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey, which is part of our Bachelor thesis project.

Our aim is to understand how students and faculty members of the University perceive the purpose of university education. Our focus is on describing these perceptions among students and faculty members, how they may affect interactions between students and faculty along with how they display engagement with university education on a personal level. We will ask you for statements about different viewpoints regarding university education and its purpose.

All answers will be collected anonymously and will not be traceable to you as an individual.

Your responses will only be available to our research team. We do not expect this survey to have any negative impact on you, as all we are asking about will be a description of your thoughts towards education. However, we understand that we are currently all living in straining times and we would like you to be aware that you can quit this survey at any time you feel uncomfortable.

This will not have any negative consequences for you.

We strongly recommend the use of a laptop or computer for the most comfortable survey-taking experience.

At the end of this survey, you are asked if you want to participate in the lottery, where we will give away five €30 vouchers. Participation in this lottery is completely voluntary. Your contact information will be saved separately from your responses.

Lastly, if there are any questions about your data, our survey, withdrawing from the study or you have any complaints, you are free to send an email to our thesis supervisor: Dr. A. Sarampalis (a.sarampalis@rug.nl)

By agreeing below, you agree to having read this consent form and understood the general idea

of this research, to the collection and storage of your data, and that you have been informed of your rights.

Thank you for your time and care in completing this brief survey,

Saran Akhbari

Mats Benninghaus

Eva Brank

Daffa Alfikri Alamsyah

Paulien Kiewiet

Max van der Schoor

I consent (1)

I do not consent (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Q1 = I do not consent

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 4

Q2 What is your primary role in university education?

Educator (1)

Student (2)

End of Block: Block 4

Start of Block: Block 5

Q3 How old are you? (in years)

Q4 What gender do you identify as?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Non-binary (3)
- Other (please specify) (4) _____
- Prefer not to say (5)

Q5 What is your nationality?

- Dutch (1)
- Other (please specify) (2) _____

Display This Question: If Q2 = Student

Q6 Which level of education do you currently follow?

- Bachelor (1)
- Master (2)
- PhD (3)
- Already graduated from RUG (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____

Display This Question: If Q2 = Student

Q7 What program do you currently follow?

- Psychology (1)
- Sociology (2)
- Pedagogy and Educational Sciences (3)
- Other (please specify) (4) _____

Display This Question: If Q2 = Student

Q8 Which year of your study program are you currently in?

- 1st year (1)
- 2nd year (2)
- 3rd year (3)
- 4th year (4)
- Other (please specify) (5) _____

Display This Question: If Q2 = Educator

Q9 What program do you mainly teach in?

- Psychology (1)
- Sociology (2)

- o Pedagogy and Educational Sciences (3)
- o Other (please specify) (4) _____

Display This Question: If Q2 = Educator

Q10 What is your job title at your institution?

- o PhD Student (1)
- o Lecturer (2)
- o Assistant Professor (3)
- o Adjunct Professor (5)
- o Full Professor (6)
- o Other (please specify) (7) _____

End of Block: Block 5

Start of Block: Block 10

Display this Question: If Q2 = Student

Q11 Rate the following values based on your own reasons for studying at university.

I study to...

Does not describ e me (16)	Describes me slightly well (17)	Describes me moderately well (18)	Describes me very well (19)	Describes me extremely well (20)
--	--	--	--------------------------------	--

Obtain a degree (1)

Gain knowledge in my field
of choice (2)

Meet the expectations of
family and friends (3)

Postpone starting a
professional career (4)

Develop a social network (5)

Develop a professional
network (6)

Explore my interests (7)

Develop my potential as a
person (8)

Improve my job
opportunities (9)

End of Block: Block 10

Start of Block: Block 11

Does not
describe me
(11)

Describes me
slightly well
(12)

Describes me
moderately
well (13)

Describes me
very well (14)

Describes me
extremely well
(15)

Obtain a
degree (1)

Gain
knowledge in
ones field of
choice (2)

Meet the
expectations
of family and
friends (3)

Postpone
starting a
professional
career (4)

Develop a
social network
(5)

Develop a
professional
network (6)

Explore ones
interests (7)

Develop ones
potential as a
person (8)

Improve their
job
opportunities
(9)

Q12 Imagine a friend or loved one is at the age when they're considering going to University.

Rate the following values based on what you would advise your friend/loved one to study for.

I would advise my friend/loved one to study to...

Q13 For the next few items we will ask you to rate different statements on a 5-point scale. In all cases, (--) indicates completely disagree, while a (++) indicates completely agree. The midpoint (|) should be selected when your opinion is neutral or if you do not have an opinion at all.

o I understand (1)

End of Block: Block 5

Start of Block: Block 14

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
(--)(1)	(-)(2)	()(3)	(+)(4)	(++)(5)

I have certain
life goals that

compel me to
keep going (1)

I have
overarching
goals that
guide me in
my life (2)

I have goals in
life that are
very important
to me (3)

Q14 Firstly, we would like to ask three questions on your personal sense of purpose, in general

End of Block: Block 14

Start of Block: Block 16

University students **SHOULD** be
taught to

University students **ARE** taught to

-- (1) - (2) | (3) + (4) ++ (5) -- (1) - (2) | (3) + (4) ++ (5)

Be more
adaptive to a
changing
environment
(1)

Discover
their
interests (2)

Develop
personal
skills (e.g.,
self-awareness,
resilience,
independence)
(3)

Develop
social skills
(e.g.,
communication,
empathy)
(4)

Develop professional skills (e.g., teamwork, planning) (5)

Shape their identity (6)

Prepare for their career (e.g., make a LinkedIn profile, write professional emails) (7)

Learn critical thinking skills (8)

Expand personal network (9)

Develop personal ethics (10)

Contemplate societal issues (11)

Develop professional ethics (12)

Think creatively (13)

Cultivate a sense of personal responsibility (e.g., be proactive, accountable) (14)

Prioritize education over other interests (15)

University educators **SHOULD** aim to

University educators **DO** aim to

-- (1) - (2) | (3) + (4) ++ (5) -- (1) - (2) | (3) + (4) ++ (5)

Create a space where everyone's opinions are heard (1)

Create an interactive classroom environment (2)

Learn from students (3)

Instill factual knowledge and skills onto their students (4)

Instill applicable knowledge and skills onto their students (5)

Teach about societal problems (6)

Foster rapport with fellow university personnel (7)

Foster
rapports with
students (8)

Prioritize
education
over other
interests (9)

Be an
authority
figure (10)

Not impose a
strong
political
direction in
the
classroom
(11)

Q15 Next, we would like you to state to which degree you disagree or agree with the following statements.

You will see that every statement has two of these 5-point scales to answer: one is to indicate your beliefs on what the purpose of education should be, while the other is to rate how you believe that education currently is.

The following statements ask about the content of university education. Q16 The following statements ask about the **role of educators within the university**.

Rate to which degree you **disagree** or **agree** with these statements.

End of Block: Block 16

Start of Block: Block 17

Universities **SHOULD** aim to

Universities **DO** aim to

-- (1) - (2) | (3) + (4) ++ (5) -- (1) - (2) | (3) + (4) ++ (5)

Provide a studying environment in which students of various socioeconomic backgrounds can be successful (1)

Adapt to students' needs (e.g., physical and/or mental disabilities, sudden injury) (2)

Prepare people for jobs most needed in society (3)

Share knowledge across different cultural groups (4)

Prioritize educating gifted students (5)

Expand the knowledge of humankind (6)

Make society

more
productive
(7)

Develop
global
citizenship
through its
students (8)

Develop a
culture of
lifelong
learning (9)

Include
practical
courses that
resemble
real life in
education
programs
(10)

Improve its
status on
global
rankings
(11)

Offer
support to
students,
staff, etc., in
times of
crisis (12)

Q17 The following statements ask about the role of universities within higher education.

Rate to which degree you disagree or agree with these statements.

End of Block: Block 17

Start of Block: Block 18

Display This Question: If Q2 = Student

Q18 What do you estimate your Grade Average to be in your current program?

- 6 or lower (1)
- 6-7 (2)
- 7-8 (3)
- 8-9 (4)
- 9 or higher (5)
- Prefer not to say/I don't know (6)

Display This Question: If Q2 = Student

Extremely dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Extremely satisfied (5)
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Satisfaction
level (1)

Q19 Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience as a university student?

End of Block: Block 18

Start of Block: Block 19

Display This Question: If Q2 = Educator

Extremely dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Extremely satisfied (5)
-------------------------------	------------------------------	--	---------------------------	----------------------------

Satisfaction
level (1)

Q20 Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience as a university educator?

End of Block: Block 19**Start of Block: Block 20**

	1 Not at all true (1)	2 Hardly true (2)	3 Moderately true (3)	4 Exactly true (4)
I always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough (1)				
If someone opposes me, I can find means and ways to get what I want (2)				
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals (3)				
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events (4)				
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations (5)				
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort (6)				
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities (8)				

When I am
confronted with a
problem, I can
usually find
several solutions
(9)

If I am in a bind, I
can usually think
of something to
do (10)

No matter what
comes my way,
I'm usually able to
handle it (11)

Q21 Rate each statement on how well it reflects how you feel about yourself.

End of Block: Block 20

Start of Block: Block 21

Q22 Having answered all of these questions, do you have something to add that pertains to the purpose of university education (what it should or should not be, what is currently is or is not)?

End of Block: Block 21

Start of Block: Block 22

Q23 Thank you for your participation in our survey.

Please leave your email address here if you want to enter to win a €30 voucher. Participation is completely voluntary; your email address will not be connected to the rest of your responses.

- No, I would not like to participate (1)
- Yes, I would like to participate (fill in your email address below) (2)

End of Block: Block 22