NIFU

Nordic Institute for Studies in
Innovation, Research and Education

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Knowledge content and employability in professional programmes

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Research questions

- Focus of this paper: Utilisation of knowledge

- How do utilisation of knowledge vary according to background variables, level and field of study?
- **Is there any effect of work values**
- How may utilisation of knowledge be related to the balance between practical, theoretical and research-based knowledge?

Data: NIFU Graduate survey

- Graduated spring 2008
- Survey period: January – April 2011
- Adresses obtained from Statistics Norway
- .. Which also sent information to the sampled graduates
- Survey was conducted electronically

Coverage: graduates for professional study programmes:

- Master level:
  - Law
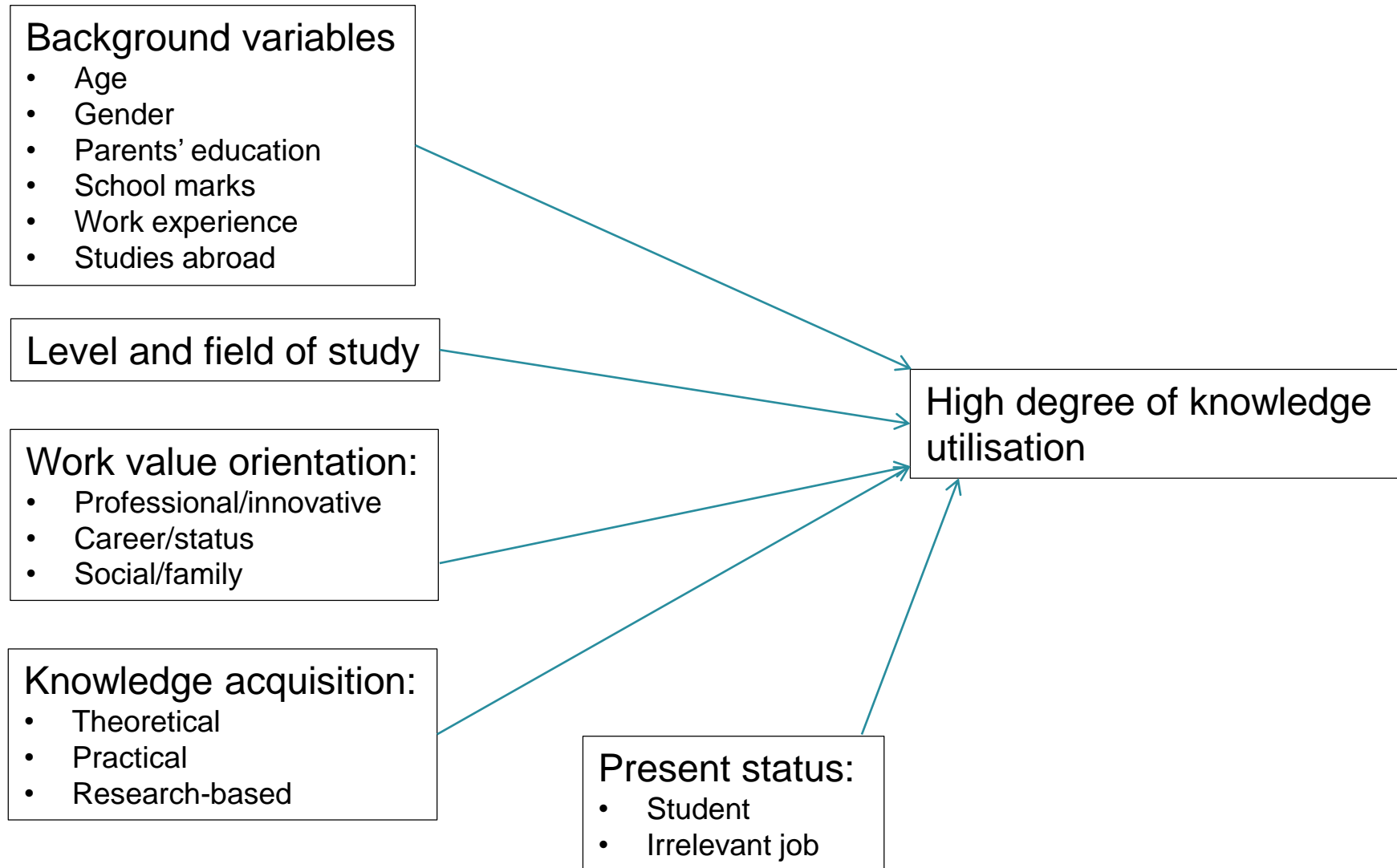 - Engineering
  - Business administration
- Undergraduate level:
  - Engineering
  - Business administration
  - Teaching
  - Pree-school teaching
  - Nursing
  - Social work
  - Child welfare

Sample and respons rates

Population	10755
Gross sample	7276
No. of respondents	3104
Respons rate	42,7

Analytical model

Background variables
- Age
- Gender
- Parents' education
- School marks
- Work experience
- Studies abroad

Level and field of study

Work value orientation:
- Professional/innovative
- Career/status
- Social/family

Knowledge acquisition:
- Theoretical
- Practical
- Research-based

Present status:
- Student
- Irrelevant job

High degree of knowledge utilisation

Findings

Oveview of the method

- Logistic regression
- Two models:
  - 1. Including only bakground variables and study programme
  - 2. Including also work vaues and knowledge acquisition

- Present status
- Status as student or in irrelevant job: Used only as control variables

Results from logistic regression analysis

Effects of background variables:

Variable:	Model 1	Model 2
Gender (female =1)		**- -**
Age2	**+**	
Relevant work experience	**+++**	**+**
Additional education	**++**	
Good school marks		**++**

No effect of:
- Parents' education
- Studies abroad

Sign 0,1 level: - or +
Sign 0,05 level: - - or ++
Sign 0,01 level: - - - or +++

Results from the regression analysis
Level and field of study (reference category: teaching)

Variable:	Model 1	Model 2
Master level:		
• Law		-
• Business adm.	- - -	- - -
• Engineering	- - -	- - -
Bachelor level		
• Pre-scool teaching	+	
• Business adm.	- - -	- - -
• Engineering	- - -	- - -
• Nursing		
• Social work	- - -	- - -
• Child welfare	- -	- - -

Work values & knowledge acquisition

Work values, orientations	Model 2
Professional/innovative	**+++**
Career/status	
Social/family	

Knowledge acquisition	Model 2
Theoretical	**+++**
Practical	**+++**
Research based	

Discussion: effects on knowledge utilisation

- Background variables:
  - Gender
  - Good school marks and
  - Previous relevant work experience
- Study programme:
  - Lowest utilisation at master level
  - Lower in «hard» than in «soft» fields
  - Most important: Degree of professionalisation
- Professional/innovative work values
- Knowledge acquisition:
  - Positive effects of theoretical and practical
  - No effect of research based knowledge

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