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Paths to independent schools

- A study of the development of independent schools and the effects of this process on users influence

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Indroduction

This research project takes its starting point in the theories of corporatism and pluralism. There has been a development in the understanding of the concept of corporatism. The contemporary understanding of Corporatism is that it is a theory explaining social action by long term consequences of associative action. This liberal understanding of the concept gives us a wider spectrum in understanding corporatism. Corporatism can also be understood as a form of social steering. Some social actors try to affect the development in the society. (Therborn, 1992, p. 25, 37)

This can be shown in the organisation of the welfare state in many Latin and Germanic countries of Europe. Trade unions and employers organizations are directly involved in social policy making, and in many countries also involved in the implementation of social policy, in the running of public insurance. In Belgium and Holland denominational organizations play a major role in running schools and hospitals.(Therborn, 1992, p. 38-39)

Alan Cawson gives us a description of how corporatism develops in a society. He argues that we sometimes can see that the political and the economic arenas as melting together with the two parallel processes is becoming one. This melting process involves a transformation from a diffuse market economy into an hierarchical structure mostly dominated by large corporations. This has also led to a shift from political representation based upon the individual in geographical areas to representation based upon corporate groups in functional areas. The state has thereby changed from a guarantor of the free market to a manager of the corporate state. (Cawson, 1982, p. 9)

Why these two different theoretical perspectives? Sweden has been viewed upon as a country with a high level of corporatist arrangements. Some researchers have reached to the conclusion that there has been a decline in these corporatist arrangements, but they also admits that the data on other levels of analysis than the national is very limited. (Hermansson, et al., 1997, p. 379). The Swedish democracy study, appointed by the government in 1997 concludes that corporatism in Sweden is not dead, but that there has been a slight decline in interest representation on the nation level. The study also states that interpretations of the data on local and regional levels indicate that corporatism still exist. Even thou the empirical evidence is weak the Swedish corporatist structured is considered gone. Stated in the article by

Hermansson et al. there is much work too be done for researchers at the local and regional level. The political development has led to heavily increased responsibility for the politicians on the local and region level. This could mean that the organized interests are placing their efforts to the other levels (Hermansson et.al., 1997, p. 379).

Many of the institutionalized representatives has been replaced by individual representatives. This means that the political parties have replaced many of the representatives from the institutionalized interests. The driving force behind this change is that the policy process of today is much more dependent upon specialisation than it was before. The development in the institutionalized representation is more of an adaptation rather than a withering away (Pestoff, 2003, s. 128 f.).

The development has been from a system of institutionalized representatives to a more pluralistic system. New forms of influence are used. Media is used in an attempt to change the public opinion and the usage of professional lobbying has also increased (Hermansson, et al., (1997, p. 379). This development is associated with the organizations at the national level. The local level is still an un explored field concerning this matter.

My research project could be seen as divided into two parts. The first part is to identify the differences in the political process that has lead to independent schools. The second part is to investigate if influence from the user is dependent on how the political process has been organized. An important question is does the way independent schools develop affect the citizens possibilities to practice influence?

Research object- The independent schools.

There have been an increasing number of independent schools in Sweden, due to a change in the legislation in the beginning of the 90s In 1990-91 about 0,9 per cent of all Swedish pupils were enrolled in independent Schools. In 2002-03 the number was 5,7 per cent (www.friskola.se, 2006 08) In 2005-06 is 8 per cent of the pupils in the comprehensive school enrolled in a independent school and 13 per cent of the pupils in the upper secondary school.(www. Skolverket.se, 2006 08) And the applications still increases.

Independent schools can be either owned by a cooperative, a trust, a company or by individuals. 52 percent of the independent schools are owned by a company, and 30 per sent by some form of cooperative. 14 per cent are owned by a trust (Fakta om friskolor, 2005, s. 5).
It is in the urban areas of Sweden that has the highest concentration of independent schools. The independent schools are not allowed to charge fees for instruction so the schools are financed by a voucher system.

The independent schools are supervised by the National Agency for Education, just like the public schools. The independent schools are free to organise their own programs and schedules. The performance and quality of its education are however evaluated against a nationally provided syllabus. This evaluation is done by inspections and nationally provided tests (www.friskola.se, 2006 08).

This short descriptions point at an interesting field for research. The application process for an independent school is that an application form needs to be sent to the National Agency for Education. The matter is then being referred to the local council, who can stop the application of the independent school if the consequences are negative for the local councils own schools. If the application is approved the independent school needs to negotiate the value of the voucher with the local school board. The local authorities have a rather big influence in the application process. The dual role of the local authorities is also interesting. They are the ones that the independent schools need to negotiate with in order to set the value on the voucher. The local authorities can however also stop the school. The research object contains a rather wide spectrum of different interests struggling for influence. This gives us a rather good starting point for studying local politics, especially with a pluralist and corporatist approach.

It is also interesting to study the political process of independent schools from a participation perspective. Politics concerning education is often a “hot topic”, we often, as citizens, demand a high level of influence over both educational politics and influence over the activities at the school. Efforts are often done to increase students and parents possibilities to influence. In many municipalities in Sweden special parent- and student advisory boards hev been developed. It is also, from a democratic point of view, important to study influence. This is because it could be seen as a democratic right to be able to influence daily life, especially since the channels in the representative institutions have difficulties in managing this form of influence.

Purpose of the study

The purpose with this study is to investigate ways in which independent schools develops. This with the starting point of the two theories of Pluralism and Corporatism. The second purpose is to see if the way the independent schools develop under has any influence on the users ability to influence.

By influence I mean the possibility for pupils and parents to influence the daily work at the school, to influence teachers and management at the school and to influence politicians. This will also give me the possibility to see on which level parents and students participate, if it is at the level of a single school, or, for example in school boards.

Theoretical framework

The liberal democracy and the interest groups

Organized interests and groups that try to influence the policy making is something that has a long history. In modern political theory the word *interest* is first identified by theorists like Machiavelli and Montesquieu. The essence of the concept should be seen as an opposite construction to the previous meaning which rather could be understood as *passions*. This early understanding refers to a more general meaning of the word without specifying it. One important aspect in the early development of the concept is that the industrialisation gave the word interest the meaning of including individuals, companies, and groups whose major interest is to influence the policy making. The French theorist Alexis de Tocqueville said that the existence of different interest indicates a vital civil society (Puhle, 2001, p. 7703). Today we understand the modern interest groups more like voluntary associations of individuals, companies and smaller associations which unite with a common interest and the effort to influence the policy process.

Interest groups could be of different kinds. H. J Puhle mentions in the article *History of Interest Group* eight different types of interest groups. These are; 1) professional associations

2) groups of business, commerce and industry, 3) labour unions, 4) agricultural organizations 5) single interest groups 6) ideological interest groups 7) public interest groups and 8) welfare associations. Which one of these different types of groups that could be of interest for me is maybe to early to say. As I see it now the welfare associations and the single interest groups are such kinds of interest groups that should be of relevance for me.

The non institutionalized interest groups have three main ways to influence the policy process. The first one is direct actions, the other form is specified or direct contacts with politicians or civil servants. The third way is indirect influence, which means creating public opinion (Hermansson et al., 1999, p. 12 f).

Pluralism

Pluralism as a political theory could be seen as a development of Joseph Schumpeter's theory of elite democracy. In Schumpeter's theory the citizen is isolated in a world full of struggles between competing elite groups. Pluralism contributed to this with more of a focus of what we could call middle groups. Middle groups could be neighbourhood associations, religious organizations, unions, business organizations and so on. The pluralist research showed that the competition between different interests in a democracy is much greater than what was shown in Schumpeter's theory. The advocates of pluralism also argued that the open structure of the western liberal democracy also led to a much more positive attitude among the citizens towards the public institutions. (Held, 1997, p. 247)

Power is a central theme in the pluralistic theory. Pluralism recognises that there could be different forms of inequality that affect the power balance in society. These inequalities could be differences in, among other things, education, health and income. These inequalities lead to a difference in influence between different groups. These differences in influence changes from case to case, though. This leads us to the pluralistic view of power. Pluralism sees power as non-hierarchic and based on competition. The power is a part of the bargaining between different groups and interests (Held, 1997, p. 251). The result of this is that pluralist sees political decisions as a result of this ongoing bargaining. The role of the state in this is to act like a neutral part. Pluralism, especially the classical one, sees multiple centers of power. The formation of policy in a pluralistic society is then the result of uncoordinated pressure on the government from different interests (Held, 1997, p. 252).

I shall now leave pluralism and move over to corporatism. I will begin this section with a short introduction of the theory which then leads to a description of the Swedish Model and the different forms of corporatism within that system.

Corporatism

Corporatism can bee seen as a system of representation where different interests gets a institutionalized admission to the policy process and the state gets, for example, low levels of conflicts in return. The corporatist systems often consist of a few actors that have a monopoly of the representation sanctioned by the state.

The well known corporatist researcher Phillippe Schmitter makes this definition:

”Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierachially ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support.” (Schmitter, 1975, p. 8)

I am going to focus on the more liberal form of corporatism, not the one, for example, associated with the fascist Italy. This more liberal form of corporatism often has added prefixes such as neo, liberal, social or societal. What remains of the older notion of the concept is the view that corporatism is a variant of coordinated capitalism in which interest organizations play an important role, mostly in the organization of economic activities. (Pakkarinen et.al., 1992, p. 1)

The Swedish Model

The Swedish Model is the description of the Swedish corporatist structure saying that the actors on the labor market are institutionalized in the policy process. That is the main understanding of the concept. I will in this section also describe different types of corporatism which is incorporated within the Swedish model.

A central theme in the Swedish model was that laymen sat in boards in many of the Swedish authorities. The reason for that was that the public opinion had mistrust against the public officials. All this happened in the beginning of the 20^{th} century. Why such a solution was accepted rests on a wish to incorporate knowledge, party representation and citizen judgment to the authorities (Öberg, -, p. 18). The two organizations that had almost totally dominated this form of representation was the National Labor Union (LO) and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise. These two organizations were supposed to represent some form of common interest in the public administration.

As I described earlier, there are three different types of corporatism incorporated within the Swedish Model. These are decision-making corporatism, administrative corporatism with focus on implementing political decisions and administrative corporatism with focus on the preparation of political decisions. I will now give a short description of each of these three types.

Administrative corporatism- with focus on the preparation of political decisions

The Swedish structure with small departments and free-standing offices has created a system of committees. Within these committees we find the structure of inquiries. The members of these inquiries were often representatives from special interests but from the 1970's and onwards there has been a change. This change has been from representatives of the special interests to representatives from the political parties. (Rothstein & Bergström, 1999, p. 28 f) The result is that from 1985 the public inquiries in Sweden are dominated by representatives from the political parties rather then representatives from special interests. (Hermnsson et al. ., 1999,p . 24)

Administrative corporatism- with focus on the implementation of political decisions

Implementation corporatism is the most common of the three different forms of corporatism. This is also the form that is the most closely associated with the Swedish Model. This form of corporatism is the one that implies that the organisations have representatives in the boards of the public authorities. As I mentioned earlier the representatives from "old" organisations has been replaced by representatives from the political parties. In 1992 the Swedish parliament took a decision to formally abolish the system with interest representation in public authorities. The representatives from the organizations and special interests were, however, given a role in some kinds of advisory boards and committees (Hermansson et al., p 41).

Decision-making corporatism

Decision-making corporatism is a form of corporatism connected with the institutions of the representative democracy. The key understanding of the concept is the close relationship between the political parties, the standing committees of the parliament and the special interests. Examples of this would be the Swedish Center party's strong connections with The Federation of the Swedish Farmers and the Social democrats close relationship with the National Labour Union. (Hermansson et al. 1999, p. 23)

The corporatist levels of analysis.

The corporatist theory can be divided into the three different levels of analysis. These are Macro-, Meso- and Micro- corporatism.

The level of corporatism that is the most commonly recognized as corporatism is Macro Corporatism. This form of corporatism is, as seen above, the one where a few dominating organizations got representatives in public offices.

In the middle of the 1980´s some corporatist researchers began to argue that corporatism not only existed on national level. They argued that under the national level there was a large amount of specialized interest organizations that was more sector oriented. This form of corporatism is the one called Meso-Corporatism. Corporatism on the Meso level is more of a sector oriented phenomena. This does not prevent the fact that these organizations can move beyond their own sector. Corporatism, therefore, is not only a societal phenomenon, it could be bound to different sectors. (Williamsson, 1989,s p 151 f.)

The third and the last level of corporatism is Micro corporatism. This could be actors on the local level that tries to influence the decision making. The problem with this form of corporatism is that it could be difficult to decide what actually corporatism is, since every negotiation and deal between different parties can't be classified as corporatism. The most common form of Micro corporatism lies in the early stage of the decision making process. (Cawson, 1985, p. 136)

A model of similarities and differences.

In this section I will present the model I have created for both the differences and the similarities between these two theories. This simple model I see as the starting point for the process of breaking down both theories into measurable units.

	Pluralism	**Corporatism**
State perspective	mediate	supportive
Perspective upon Organizations	Non-hierarchal	hierarchal
Contact frequency	varying	frequent
Number of Organizations	unlimited	few
Role in the political process	supportive implementation	preparation implementation decision
Monopoly organizations	no	yes
Creator of policy	yes	yes
System oriented	yes	yes
Sector oriented	no	yes
System perspective	competitive	consensus

The view of the state is one of the areas where we can find the biggest differences between pluralism and corporatism. Pluralism gives the states the role of a mediate part in the policy process while corporatism sees the state as a more supportive part in the process. The theories also have a different view of the relationship between different organisations. Pluralism sees the relationship between the organisations as non-hierarchal, which means that the theory does not give any organisation a superior role. In corporatism the relationship is the opposite. Here we can find a hierarchal relationship between the different organizations, which is why some organizations becomes institutionalized in the creation of policy.

When it comes to the frequency of contacts between the actors is varied within a pluralist system and that is dependent upon the actual political issue. In a corporatist system there is frequent contacts between the state and the organizations within this institutionalized process. In a corporatist system there is no natural rotation between the organizations as the one we could find within a more pluralist system. This leads us to the question where these two different systems often occur. Corporatism can be said to be more of a sector oriented system of interest representation. Within a corporatist system the structure is oligopoly, which means that in the policy process there are fewer organization with more political issues in the agenda than within a pluralist system. There we have the opposite relation with more organisations with fewer issues on their agenda.

As we could see there is a difference between these two theories in the number of organisations which participate in the policy process. Within a pluralist system there could exist a wide range of organizations with different resources and different special interests. This wide range of different organizations is one of the central characteristics of pluralism. Within a corporatist system there is only a few organisations that are involved in the policy process. This doesn't prevent there being a wide range of different organizations outside the corporatist structure. The difference is that these organizations have a very limited chance to influence the policy. The result of this is that some organisations have monopoly on access to influence the policy. This is not the case within an ideal pluralist system.

The different systems also give the organizations different roles in the police process. Within corporatism there is the forms described earlier, the two forms of administrative corporatism and decision-making corporatism. In a pluralist system the role of the organizations is more of implementation of different policy outcomes and as a supportive part in the policy process.

The second part of this research project is to investigate whether the different ways to independent schools affect citizens' possibilities to participate and influence their daily lives. This leads us to theories concerning influence and participation.

Citizenship and participation

The way we look upon the citizen's role in local politics has changed over the years. In his article *Medborgardeltagande, brukarinflytande och konsumentanpassing* (2000) Torgny Klasson develops different models with the starting point in the changing role of the citizen. In the first model, the citizen-participation model, the citizen is seen as the central actor. This means that the model sees the citizenship as something universal, that the citizen has a set of rights, but it also constitutes some obligations for the citizen (Klasson, 2000, p. 40).

The model also states that the citizen shall have an influence in political decisions both in the preparation of a political decision but also in the following phases, such as the decision-making process and the implementation of the decisions. This also leads to an education of the citizens in the democratic process and how it works. It also means that the politic becomes a common goal for the citizens (Klasson, 2000, p. 41).

The ability to protest is by a "voice" function. This is a personal, open and direct way to show discontent. The citizen is also assumed to take the common interest into account when it acts (Klasson, 2000, p. 42-43).

The second model presented by Klasson is the user-influence model. This models starts from the point of view that the users of public services has gone from a passive role to a active role. This means that the user of public services today could in a more effective way demand better services.

This model just includes those who are users of public services. The result of this is that the model does not encourage the users to take the common interest into account when they try to influence politics (Klasson, 2000, p. 44).

In this model the influence is only recognized for those who already have given right, the right to health care for example. The citizens influence in the policy process, so in this model it does not exist a universal right for the citizens. The citizen's involvement in politics is given legitimacy by their social rights rather then their political rights, which was the case in the previous model (Klasson, 2000, p. 45). A change in the law for the municipalities in 1988 gave the municipalities' possibilities to create institutions where the users of the services could make their demands heard to politicians and professionals (Klasson, 2000, p. 46).

The final model presented in Klasson's article is the consumer-adapting model. In this model the citizen is viewed upon as a consumer of welfare services. This means that the citizen participates and influences the politics by the freedom of choosing the alternative of welfare service. The model is also based on competition between the different service producers. This is because the more popular the service producer is, the more money it gets from the authorities (Klasson, 2000, p. 48).

The direct form of citizen influence in this model is constituted by the fact that if the user of the service is not satisfied the exit function is used and the user chooses another service producer. (Klasson, 2000, p. 49)

The three models could be summoned in this table:

Actor		Citizen		Users	Costumer
Character of Interest		Common interest		Group interest	Individual interest
Ground of legitimacy		Political rights		Social rights	Civil rights
principal of organisation		Territorial		Sectors	Market
Type of influence		Protest "Voice"		Protest "Voice"	Exit
Decision principal		Consesnus/Majoritan		Consensus	Costumer decision

(Modified from Klasson, 2000, p. 50)

Exit, voice and loyalty

As we seen in the previous part, exit and voice are two of the key elements in citizens' ability to become involved and practice influence. The *Exit option* is closely related to the economic way of thinking and acting. This means that when a member leaves the organization he is acting according to the exit option. If the member expresses his or her dissatisfaction to a subordinated or anyone in the management he or she is using the *voice option*. The voce option is categorized in relation to the political way of thinking (Hirschman, 1970, p. 4, 15).

Exit

The exit function rests upon the believe that competition is the best way to create efficient organizations. If the members of an organisation are not satisfied, they will leave the organization for another organization. This also means that the members of an organization need to be alert. Exit demands action from the members (Hirschman, 1970, p. 21-27).

Voice

Voice could be defined as an attempt to try to change from within rather than "escape", which what is constituted by exit. Hirschman describes voice as the basic portion and function of the political system (Hirschman, 1970, p. 30.). The starting point of voice is for example the decline in performance of an organisation or a firm. Like exit, voice demands active and alert members (Hirschman, 1970, p 31-32). A problem with the exit option is that once you have exited an organization you have lost the opportunity to use voice, but not vice versa. So in some cases exit can be seen as the final alternative when voice has failed (Hirschman, 1970, p. 37).

Loyalty

Hirschman means that the existence of the exit option can reduce the use of voice. The loyalty option is the middle way between the exit and the voice option (Hirschman, 1970, p. 77-78). The function of loyalty is holding exit at bay and activate the voice option. Another important aspect of loyalty is that it limits the tendency of the most quality conscious members to be the first to exit (Hirschman, 1970, p. 78-79).

Method

In the processes of selecting the best research approach it could be wise to consider some important aspects of my research. Am I as a researcher eager to explain the *general* of the phenomena or the *specific*? If we want to know more of the specific, the case study approach would be the best suitable otherwise, if we want to know more about the general the comparative approach would be the best suitable. I am more interested in explaining the general rather than the specific so for me the most suitable approach would then be the comparative approach. Another important aspect to consider is the role of the theory. Here we have two major roles we can give the theory in our research. The first one is a theory testing approach and the other one is a theory developing approach. I will be more detailed in my description of these two approaches in the next section of this paper.

The selection of the cases

The theory testing approach

I am going to use strategic selection of the cases and there are three major situations where a strategic selection of the cases is ideal. The first situation is where we only have a limited number of cases to study. The second situation is when the question we are interested in is of that nature that for example a statistical design would mean an enormous amount of resources to get the useful measurements of the phenomena we are interested in. The third situation is when we want to add to the analysis a survey of interesting cases (Essaiasson et al., 2004, p 110-111) This leads us down to the description of MSSD.

King, Keohane and Verba point out in their book *Designing Social Inquiry* (1994) the importance of accuracy in the selection of cases. The selection of the cases affects the outcome and the accountability and the strength in the results (King et al, 1994, p. 128). When it comes to the actual design of a theory testing approach there are two main strategies, those are Most similar systems design (MSSD) and Most different systems design (MDSD.

MSSD is build around the belief that systems as similar as possible with respect to as many features as possible constitutes the optimal selection of cases in a comparative approach Przeworski &Teune, 1970, p. 32). According to Przeworski and Teune this strategy reduces the number of "experimental" variables. The number of variables can still be big and unknown but MSSD as a strategy reduces them. The principal of MSSD is that the selection of the cases is made out of the independent variable by holding the other variables constant and establishing the value on the dependent variable (Esiasson et al., 2004, p. 112, Anckar, 2004, p. 4) This is not the only way to select the cases with MSSD, there is another possibility. If we only know the value on the dependent variable it is impossible to select the cases from the value on the independent variable. What is needed in this case is that we make sure that we have maximal variation on the dependent variable (King et al, 1994, p. 129, Esaiasson et al, 2004, p. 113).

The other strategy with a theory testing approach is MDSD. With this strategy we select systems as different as possible. The result with this selection strategy is that we strengthens the belief to the investigation variable (Essaiasson et al., 2004, p. 114)

The theory developing approach

When it comes to the selection of cases with a theory developing approach there are several different approaches. I will focus on two of them, Method of Agreement and Indirect Method of Difference. This is two methods developed by John Stuart Mill in the book *A system of logic*. The principal of selecting the cases with the method of agreement is that if you want to know why wars occur you need to study wars. The analytic task is then to find as many common factors as possible in all of the investigated cases. (Esaiasson et al.,2004, p. 126).

The problem with this method, as Mills also was aware of, is the lack of variation. This did that he argued for the second approach, Indirect Method of Difference. If we want to know why wars occur it is not enough to just study wars, we need also to study cases where wars haven't occurred. The problem with this approach is to find these negative cases where wars never broke out (Esaiasson et al., 2004, p 128-129). To summon this up I have created this model below on how to select the cases.

Theoretic strategy	**Choose the case on the**	**Design Strategy**
Theory developing approach	Dependent variable	Mills
Theory testing approach	Independent variable	MSSD/ MDSD

Fuzzy-set

When the cases are selected and the decision making process is going to be studied, I am going to use a fuzzy set approach. Since I am in the beginning of my research project, I have not yet been able to operationalize the theory, so the following part of this paper will just be a description of the fuzzy set approach.

The fuzzy set approach is especially useful when we as researchers are dealing with categories that are imprecise. (Ragin, 2000, p. 3) Fuzzy set as a technique offers an interpretive algebra, a language that can be seen as half-verbal-conceptual and half-mathematical-analytical. The fuzzy set approach has a great value for social scientist in it's potential for intensifying the dialog between ideas and evidence in social research. This dialog is the intensive interplay between theory and data analysis. This means that there exists an intensive back-and-forth movement between the use of data to improve theory and the use of theory to guide the researcher in the exploration of data. (Ragin, 2000, p 4)

A conventional set is dichotomous which means that an object is either in or out of the set. A fuzzy set on the other hand permits a membership in the interval between 0 and 1 which retain the states of full membership and full non-membership. It is, however, up to the researcher to specify the scores for the fuzzy membership. (Ragin, 2000, p 6) Ragin describes the back-and-forth movement between theory and data as a tailoring of fuzzy sets to theoretical concepts. (Ragin, 2000, p 7) Ragin also describes fuzzy set as a technique that combines both quantitative and qualitative assessments in a single instrument and that fuzzy set distinguish between objects that are more in versus those that are more out. This by using the crossover point 0,5. (Ragin, 2000, p. 8) Fussy set also makes it possible to operationalize multiple interpretations of a concept. For example, in political science it is often agued that democratic countries do not make war with other democratic countries. The problem with this is that countries vary in degree of democracy. The problem is therefore to know if a statement applies to all countries with at least some presence of democracy only to full-fledged democracies. By combining qualitative and quantitative assessments in one single instrument, fuzzy set makes it possible to address varied interpretations of social scientific concepts in an explicit manner (Ragin, 2000, p. 9)

The above section was some general aspects of the use of fuzzy set and how it can be motivated. The following section will concern matters more specific about fuzzy set.

As we have seen, by using fuzzy set instead of a dichotomous set it is possible to address two types of diversity, both the varying degree which cases can belong to sets and the idea of difference in kind (Ragin, 2000, p. 149) This means that diversity do not only exist in the different configurations of set membership that social phenomena exhibit but also in the degree to which they belong to such sets and configurations. For example, two countries can be described as both advanced industrial, capitalist democracies, as instances of sets, and the can also differ in the degree to which they belong to this intersection. The first aspect of differences in kind is captured by the notion of difference in kind and the many configurations of membership that arise from multiple distinctions. The second aspect of diversity is captured by the notion of degree of membership and is based on the idea that virtually all categorical distinctions in the social sciences also involve variation by degree. Difference in kind can be referred to as qualitative distinction and differences in degree of membership as quantitative distinctions. (Ragin, 2000, p. 149)

Different types of fuzzy set

The three-value fuzzy set is the simplest form of this instrument. The third value added is the 0,5, which indicates objects that are neither fully in nor fully out of the set. The five –value fuzzy set is still simple but, in Ragins terms, a more elegant form. This form of fuzzy set uses the numerical values 0, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, and 1. Essential for the five-value fuzzy set, according to Ragin is, that it is separates between cases that are "more in" from those that are "more out" and it distinguishes between cases that are "mostly in" versus "fully in" and between cases that are "mostly out" versus "fully out". The five-value fuzzy set is useful when the researcher have a substantial amount of information about the cases, but the evidences is not strictly comparable between the cases.(Ragin, 2000, p. 155-157) The seven-value fuzzy set adds two more stages to the set. To visualise this I have used the table on the next page.

This table shows both the differences between crisp set and fuzzy set but also the differences between different types of fuzzy set.

Crisp set	**Three value fuzzy set**	**Five value fuzzy set**	**Seven value Fuzzy set**	**"Continuous" Fuzzy set**
1=fully in	1=fully in	1=fully in	1=fully in	1=fully in
			0,83= mostly but not fully in	
		0,75=more in than out		Numerical scores indicating that degree of membership is more "in" than "out" (0,5<x < 1)
			0,67= more or less in	
	0,5=neither in nor out	0,5=neither in nor out	0,5= neither in nor out	0,5= neither in nor out
			0,33= more or less out	Numerical scores indicating that degree of membership is more "out" than "in" (0 <x<0,5)
		0.25=more out than in		
			0.17=mostly but not fully out	
0=fully out	0=fully out	0=fully out	0=fully out	0=fully out

(Sources: Ragin, 2000, p. 156)

This section will just deal with the basics of fuzzy set and necessary conditions. I don't have enough knowledge about the research object to discuss the technical specifics of the approach at this time.

Fuzzy sets and necessary conditions

Ragin describes focus on finding necessary condition as very important in social theory. This is because necessary conditions can bring clarity to large bodies of social science thinking. A example that is mentioned is Skocpol's 1979 study "*States and Social Revolutions*". Skocpol's study gave at hand that state breakdown is a necessary condition for social revolution. This is important in two aspects, both for the development for theories of revolutions and for the conceptualization of social revolutions and the descriptions of types of revolution.(Ragin, 2000, p. 203)

It is also important to focus on necessary conditions for another reason. It could give our politicians knowledge about, for instance under what conditions ethnic conflicts develop, so that they can be avoided in the future. Finding necessary conditions can , therefore, have a great practical impact on policy (Ragin, 2000, p. 203).

How can necessary conditions be expressed explicit? A factor that is necessary is a condition that needs for a specific occurrence to develop. The equation D=TG expresses two factors necessary. If stable democracies (D) shall develop is trust (T) between the citizens *and* economic growth (G) necessary conditions. It is the combination of the two that is the condition (Denk, 2002, p. 71).

Fuzzy sets and sufficient conditions

To study sufficiency is central when we are dealing with studies that have a high degree of casual complexity. When the causation is complex no single condition may be either necessary or sufficient. This is because causes are sufficient only in combination (Ragin, 2000, p. 230). This is shown by the section below.

A sufficient factor is one that develops under the condition that the same situation develops during other conditions. The equation D=T+G contains two sufficient factors. Stable democracies (D) develops in societies where the level of trust (T) is high. At the same time, stable democracies also develops in societies with high economic growth (G). (Denk, 2002, p. 70)

When we talk about sufficient conditions it is necessary to talk about subsets. This means that the study of causal sufficiency addresses whether a cause or a combination of causes is one of many ways to reach an outcome. To illustrate the subset principle Raging uses the following example: Consider two fuzzy sets relevant to students in a course; those who *studied hard* and those who *performed well on the exam.* To study hard is one of several ways to do well on the exam. Likely there will be individuals who perform well on the exam without studying hard. If we assume that all those that study hard perform well on the exam. It follows that membership in the fuzzy set *studied hard* will be a subset of membership in the fuzzy set *performed well on the exam*. The outcome will likely be that the relationship will be that those who studying hard also do well on the exam, but we will also have some student who will have a good result without studying hard. It would then be reasonable to argue that *studying hard* is sufficient but not necessary for *performing well on the exam*.

My study

The purpose with this study is to investigate ways in which independent schools develops, with the starting point of the two theories of Pluralism and Corporatism. The second purpose is to see if the way under which the independent schools develop has any influence on the users' ability to practice influence.

I will now describe the relationship between my variables in part one of the study, with the starting point of my declaration of purpose the relationship between my variables will be the following:

Independent variable: The occurrence of corporatism or pluralism
Dependent variable: The result of the political outcome- independent school or not.
Units of analysis: Municipalities.

For this investigation I am going to use a comparative approach. Both the case study and the comparative approach are useful for me, but because I am more interested in explaining the general I will choose the comparative approach. I am also in that stage in which I see that my investigation is more of a theory developing one, rather then a theory testing one. Why I choose to see my investigation as a theory developing is because of two reasons. The first reason is based on some theoretical considerations. Both theories have a very low level of development because they are based upon studies conducted mostly on national level. This means that the theories are based on data collected at the national level, so I can't be sure that the theories can explain phenomena on a lower level than national. The second reason why I see the approach of this investigation as more of a theory developing one is because of how the selection of cases is made. In other words because of which strategy that is used. The strategy that I am going to use is Mills Indirect Method of difference. Why I am going to use this strategy depends upon the fact that I am selecting the cases on the dependent variable. This means that I am, in the first part of the investigation, going to investigate municipalities that have non-municipality schools and those who haven't. The fist faze of the investigation is then focused on which of the independent variables that gives the certain result on the dependent variable. I have not come so far as to make the theories into measurable units. What I must focus on is to what extent the organization is institutionalized into the decision making process, in other words the level of competition. I must also focus on the number of organizations involved in the process.

One of the critics of Mill is Stanley Lieberson who in the article *Small N's and Big Conclusions*, means that one of the problem with the method is that it is to deterministic, which means that a given factor should produce a given outcome. To eliminate this problem Lieberson argues that the researcher should think in terms of probability. Given one factor increases the probability for a certain outcome. This means for me that I should think in terms of probability when it comes to the outcome. This could also be helpful when it comes to minimize the problems concerning the theory that I described earlier. Using Fuzzy set and focusing upon necessary and sufficient conditions we add the probabilistic view to the research.

As method, in part one, for collecting the data I am mostly going to use interviews and studies of official documents. The interviews will be conducted with a snowball sampling approach, since it can be difficult in the initial part of the investigation to know which one to interview. It is also important that I create variation among the ones I am interviewing. The respondents should be people from organisations, representatives from the municipalities, representatives from the schools and citizens who use these services.

In the second part of the investigation I will develop the dependent variable and focus on the possibilities for the citizens to become involved and their ability to participate, both at the municipality level and on the school level. This is one part that I need to develop more and I am eager to get comments on how that could be done. In the second part of the investigation I will focus on those municipalities that have allowed independent schools. Not all municipalities in Sweden have allowed the development of independent schools.

In the second part of the investigation I'm changing the perceptive from the policy process to a user perspective. It is in this part that the theories of influence and Hirschmans exit and voice will be useful. What I want to investigate in this part is if the possibility for the users of independent schools is dependent of the policy process, whether the process is characterised of corporatism or pluralism. A question could be if the character of the policy process affects the user's ability to use exit or voice. This is also something I need to develop more, and I would be grateful for any comments.

In part two I am, for the most part, going to use interviews to collect the data. I am also considering using a questionnaire but at this stage of the research project it is to early to say.

I have decided to test this approach in a smaller scale during the fall, which I hope will help me to give me some answers. What I am going to do is to investigate a small number of municipalities. This in order to get more information about the empirical conditions and to test this research plan in a small scale. The information I hope to get is, for example, how many municipalities I must investigate. And the range of variation among these municipalities. I must have municipalities that have a variation in size and in degree of urbanization. Both big urban and small non-urban municipalities need to be included in this study, this in order to maximize the variation.

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