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Community and the development of individual key competencies:

Zhejiang University student communities as a case study

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Content

- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion



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Background: Student community (SC) and key competencies

China

1990s: student success, moral behavior, and community effects

2000s: university development and student communities



< On further strengthening and improving undergraduate students' ideological and political education > (PCC and SC 2004)

<Strengthening and improving undergraduate students' community work > (CYL and MoE 2005)



Execution

work rules and regulations of communities in IHEs



Improved student key competencies through Community experiences

(Ding Jianyang 2003; Wuming & Dengjiang 2008, Zeng ying 2007)



Community types and individual development ?

Introduction

- Student communities (SC) and key competencies

not new, 1920s ‘experimental college’ program (Smith 2001)

1960s ‘learning environment’ in universities (Zhao & George 2004)

1980s growing recognition of SC (Ku 1996, MacGregor 1991)



“learning communities” (Tinto 1993, Cross 1998, Zhao & George 2004)

(Gabelnick, Matthews, Smith, 1990, 2001)



Student community experiences can improve

Literature review: concepts

What are individual **key competencies**: flexibility

Key qualification (1974 Mertens) and key competencies (Pratzner 1978)

key competencies

- **UK** Further Education Unit (1979)
- **US department of Labor** (1990-1992)
- **China** (2003) Core Skills Standardization System

• **OECD (1997-2002)**: Definition and Selection of Competencies: theoretical and Conceptual Foundation



important for a successful life and effective participation in different fields of life (OECD 2000)

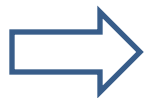
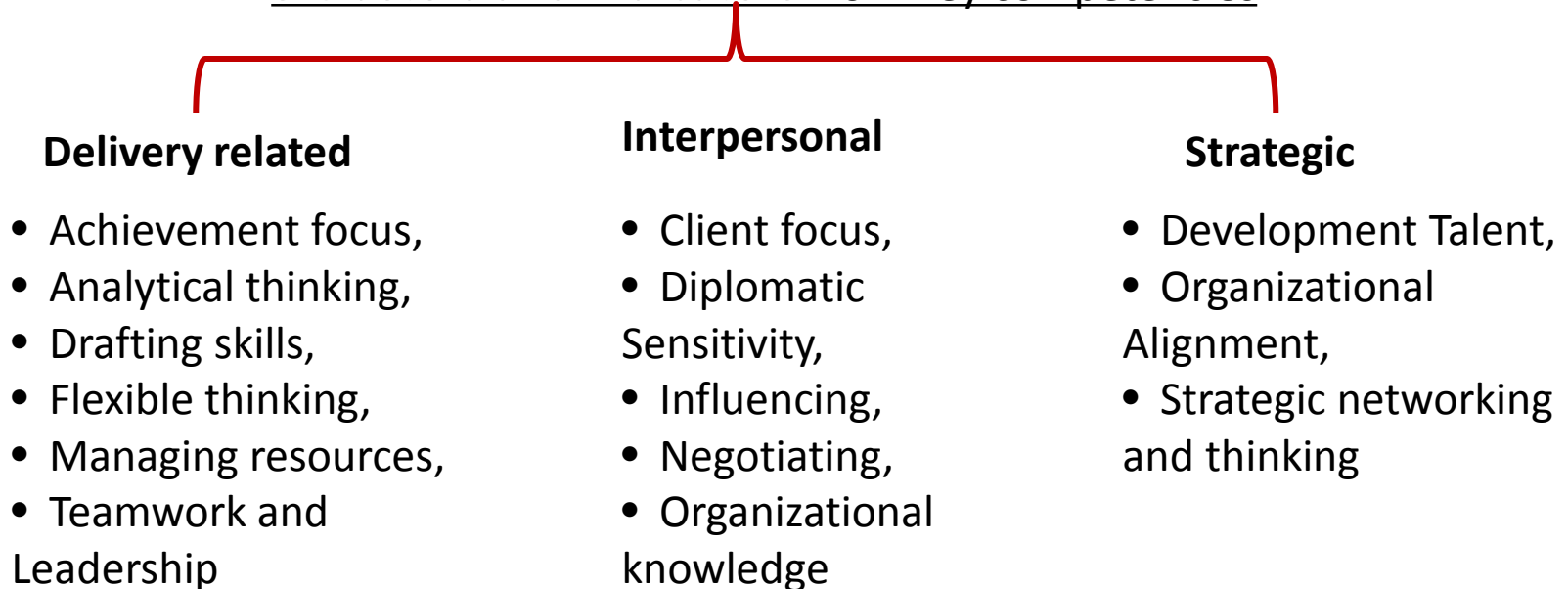


1. Guided by the demands
2. Personal ability
3. Comprehensive ability
4. Lifelong education
5. Individual self-cognitive ability

- OECD Level 1-5 key competencies framework (2005)

Definition of Key competencies: as personal attributes, technical or professional skills, enable the delivery of role/job (OECD 2005)

3 Clusters and indicators from Key competencies



Development of individual key competencies may have positive effect on communities and other people

Literature review: **concepts**

- **Student Communities:** ‘group of peer students participating in various activities together’ (Johnson and Johnson 1994, Brower and Detinger 1998) **and its importance for student retention, success, and personal development** (Astin 1984; Tinto 1993) **and key competencies** (Wuxiujie 2009)



constructivism approach (Piaget, Vygotsky)

- Develop physical, logical, **social knowledge**
- social collaboration (teamwork)



Student community participants

‘similar goals, ideas, interests’ with autonomy

(Liujunyan 2007, Wuming 2008)

Literature review: theoretical background

constructivism approach (Piaget, Vygotsky):

Development is conceptualized as a progress for students' growth and new environment (Zhao & George 2004)



Mutual interaction

Connection of cognition and language



Make mistakes or induce disequilibrium (Piaget 1964)

Interaction with students and community



1. Further develop student identity and skills (Heannie Daniels and Jennifer Brooker 2014)
2. Learning into world view
3. Powerful interpersonal practices (Zhao & George 2004)

Literature review

Student participation in communities > Non-participating students

- **High grades and more persistence** (Tinto and Goodsell 1993)
- **More engagement, high persistent rates, and greater social development** (Shapiro and Levine 1999)
- **Improve self-management and self training skills, overall quality and student key competencies** (Liujunyan 2007; Wuming 2008; Wuxiujie 2009)



'efficiency of student communities'

Method: Qualitative research

1. **Method:** Ethnography and a case study

- *Why (what) students are participating in communities*
- *why (what) they believe about the development of individual competencies skills linked with community experiences*

2. **Criteria** for selecting participants:

- *Random selection*
- *Undergraduate students at ZJU who are participating in communities (December 2013)*
- *Interview time: 10-20 minutes*

Method: Qualitative research

- Rerecording data (**audio**) and procedures for transcribing data
- Method outline and examples: interview Semi-guideline
- Decision to stop data collection: 99 undergraduate students
- Interviewers: preservation of subject anonymity

Research Purpose:

Investigate whether community experiences are linked with development of individual key competencies

Research questions:

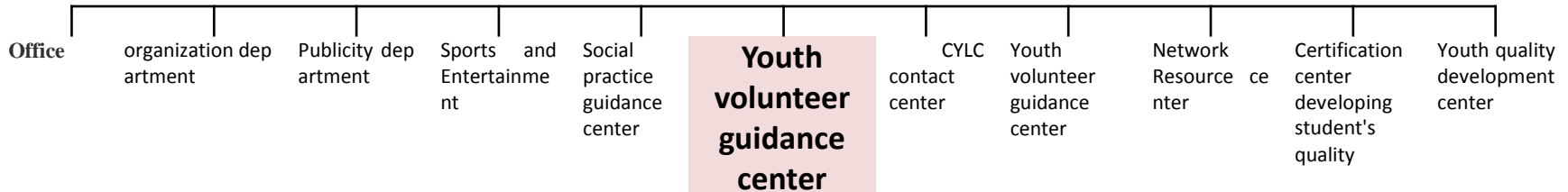
1. What is the relationship between community experience and the development individual key competencies?
2. What is the motivation of community participants in the development of individual key competencies?
3. What progress is seen in the development individual key competencies from community experience?

Research setting

Zhejiang university students Union
(Found: 2006.6)

Figure 1

The Communist Youth League Committee (CYLC) of ZheJang university



Practice Public service (36)	Sports (14)	Co
Service Community		Co

ZheJiang University as a case study:

1. Number of full time undergraduate students: **23,302** (2013. December)
2. **132** student communities
3. Approximately **20,000** students participations in communities
4. 1st year (80%)/ 2nd year (60%)/3rd year (30%)/ 4th (less than 5%)

Table 1. Characteristics of Students in communities

Total No.		Service Community (45)		Culture, physical, and Hobby Community (39)		Academic Community (15)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
99	100	45	45.45	39	39.39	15	15.15
Gender	Male	19	40.40	14	47.50	7	17.50
	Female	26	59.60	25	44.07	8	13.56
Member Type	Ordinary	14	28.28	8	50.00	6	21.43
	Core	31	71.72	31	43.66	9	12.68
Year	1 st year	4	8.08	2	25.00	2	25.00
	2 nd year	7	19.19	10	52.63	2	10.53
	3 rd year	33	64.65	23	35.94	8	12.50
	4 th year	1	8.08	4	50.00	3	37.50
Community selection		1		2		More than 3	
No. of members		75	75.76%	19	19.19%	5	5.05%

Data Analysis

Recognition of concepts

1. What is the relationship between Community experience and development of individual key competencies?

Motivation

2. What is the motivation of community participants in the development of individual key competencies?

Progress of individual key competencies

3. What progress is seen in the development individual key competencies from community experience?

OECD (1997-2002): Definition and Selection of Competencies

OECD Level 1-5 key competencies framework



Content analysis: frequency of key words (%)

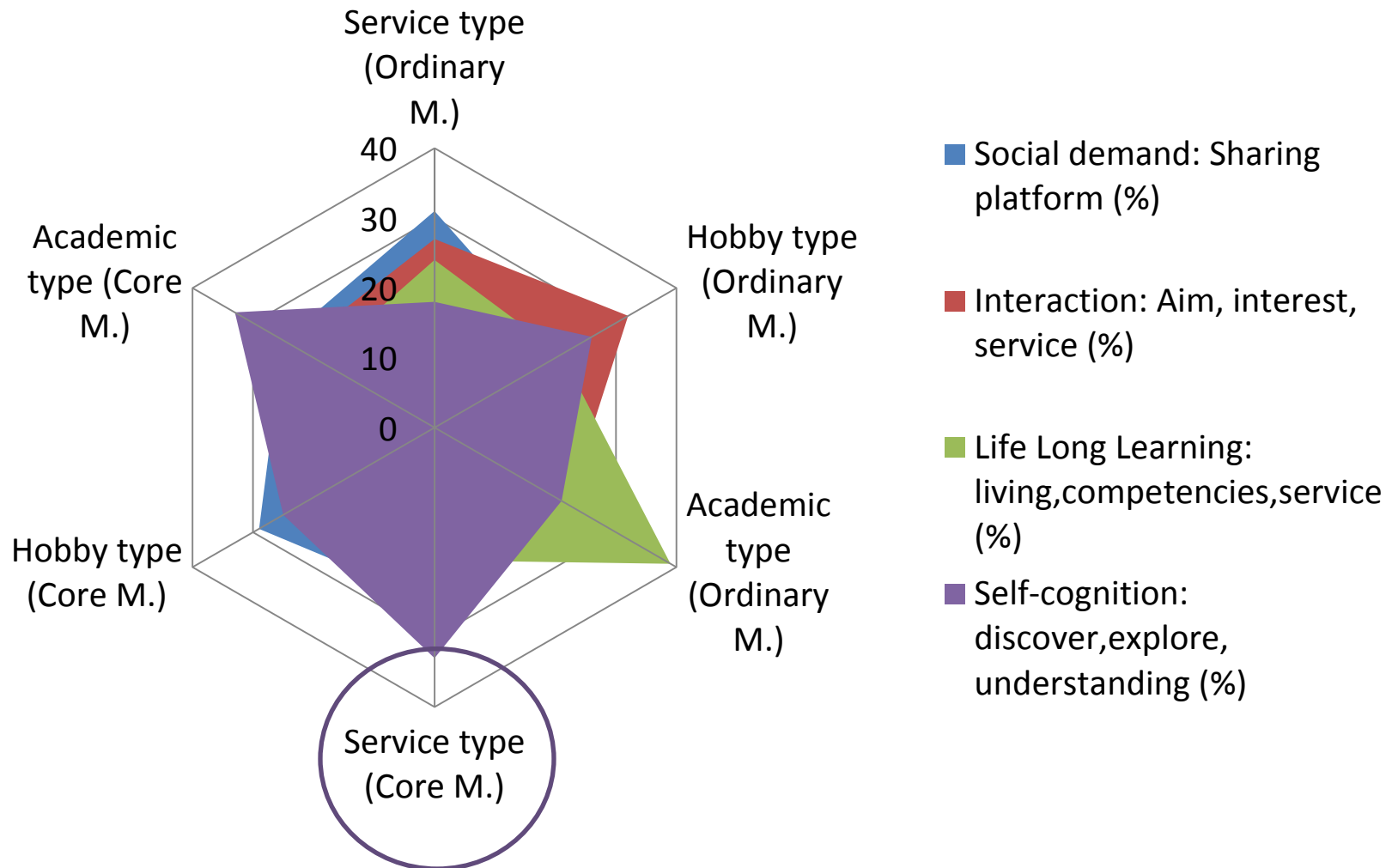


This study controlled for **member and community types**

Recognition of Concept

a. What do you think of student community

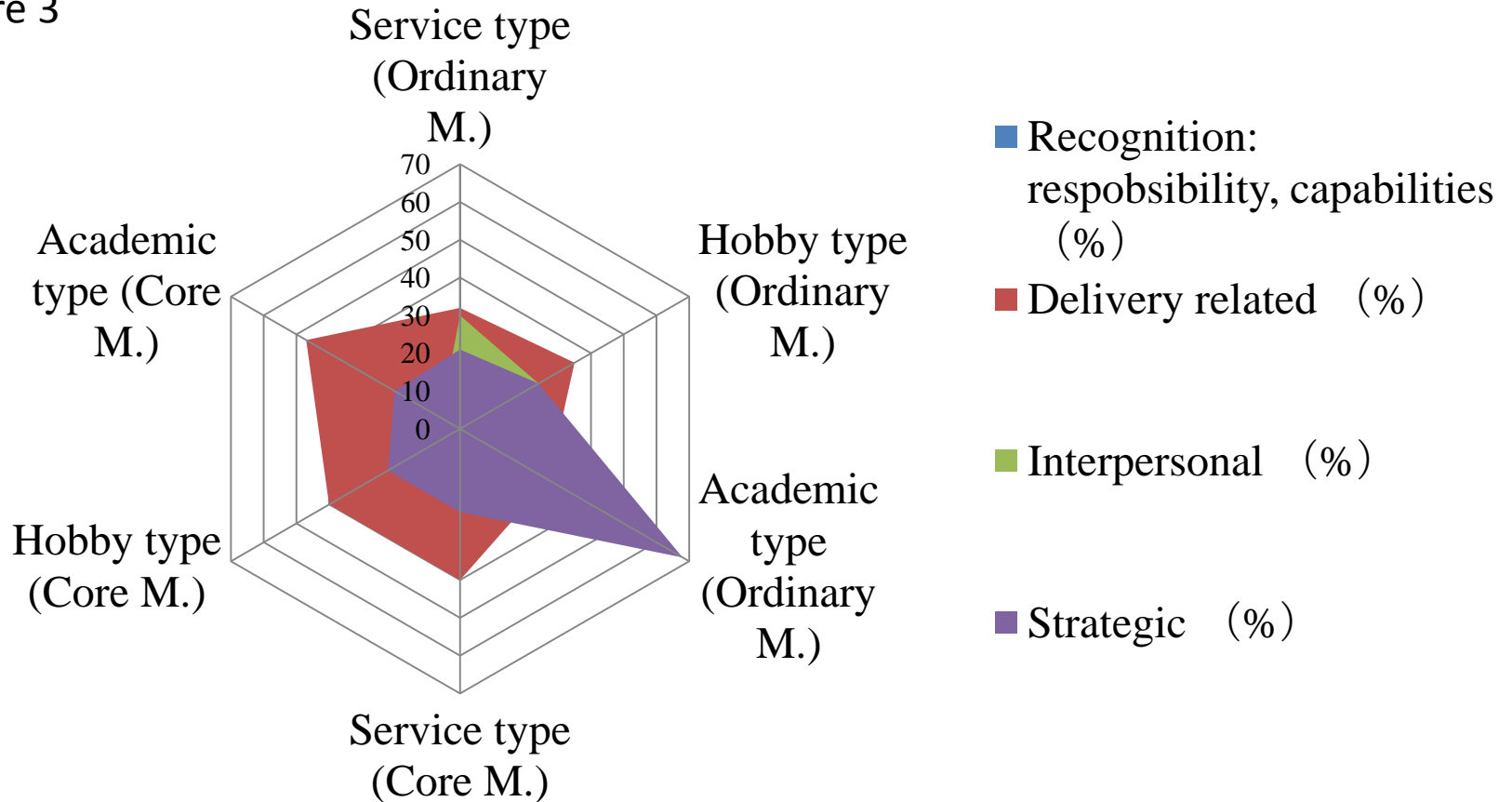
Figure 2



Recognition of Concepts

b. What do you think of key competencies?

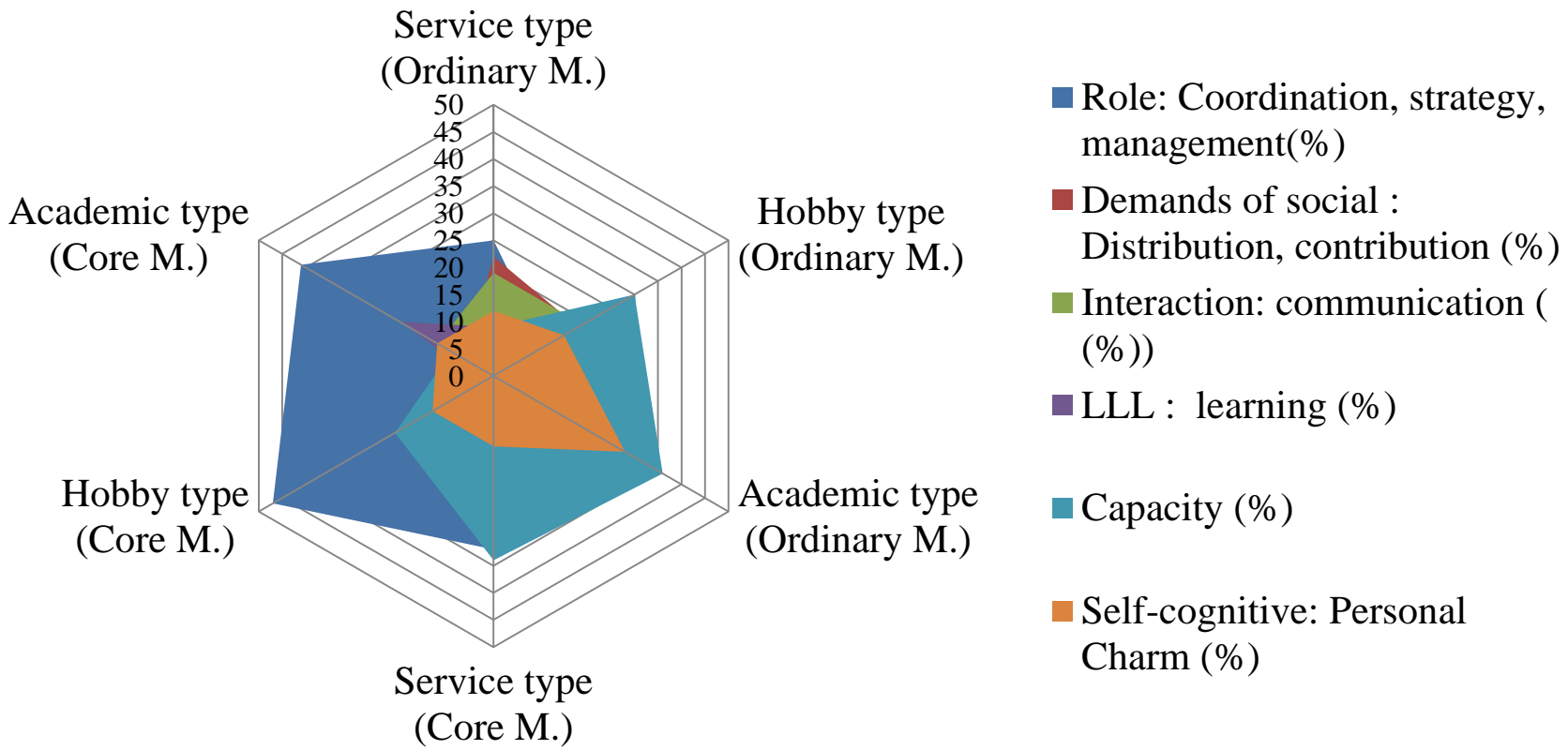
Figure 3



Motivation of participations

a. What was the role of community activities in the development of individual key competencies?

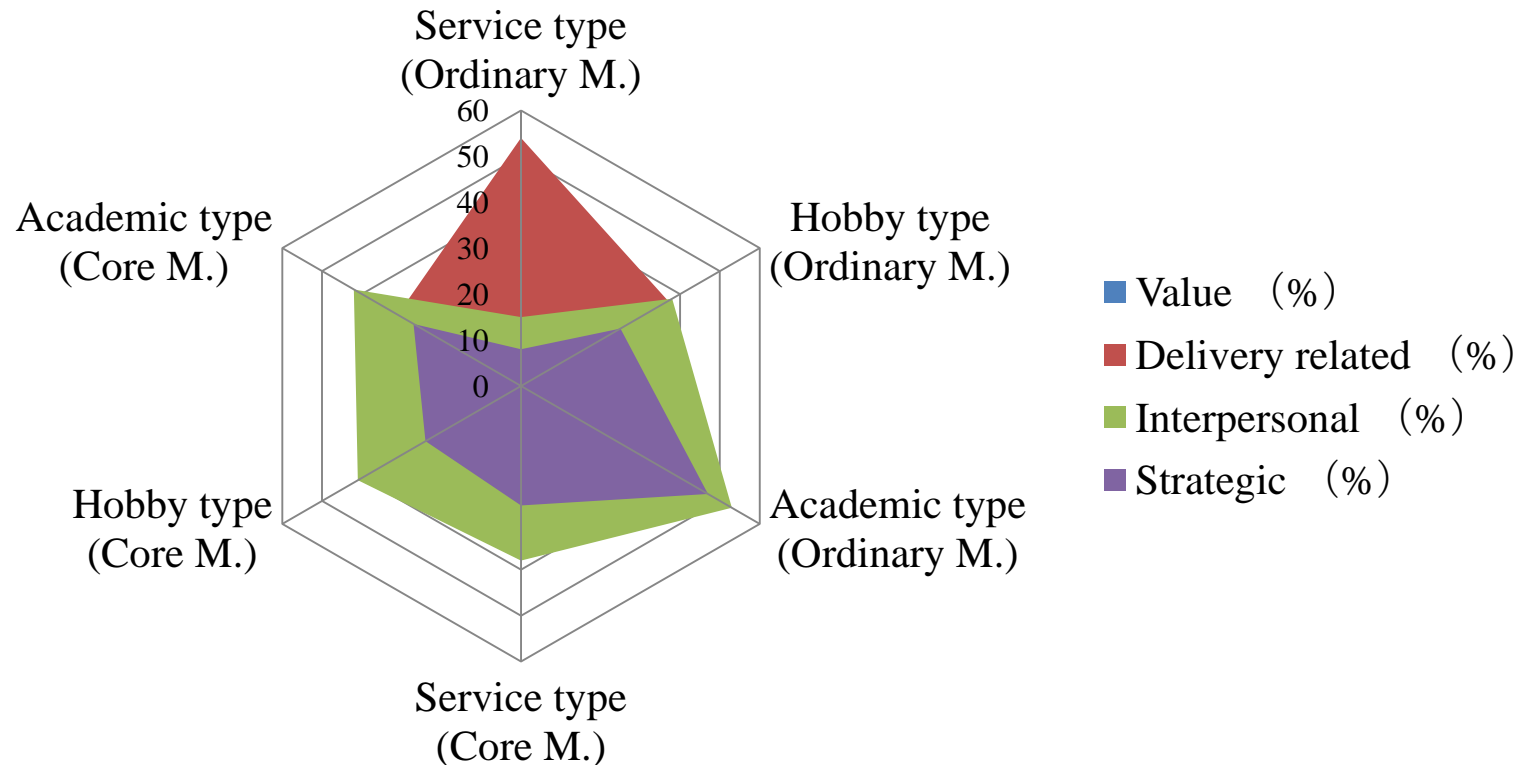
Figure 4



Motivation of participations

What are the changes in the development of your key competencies through community experiences ?

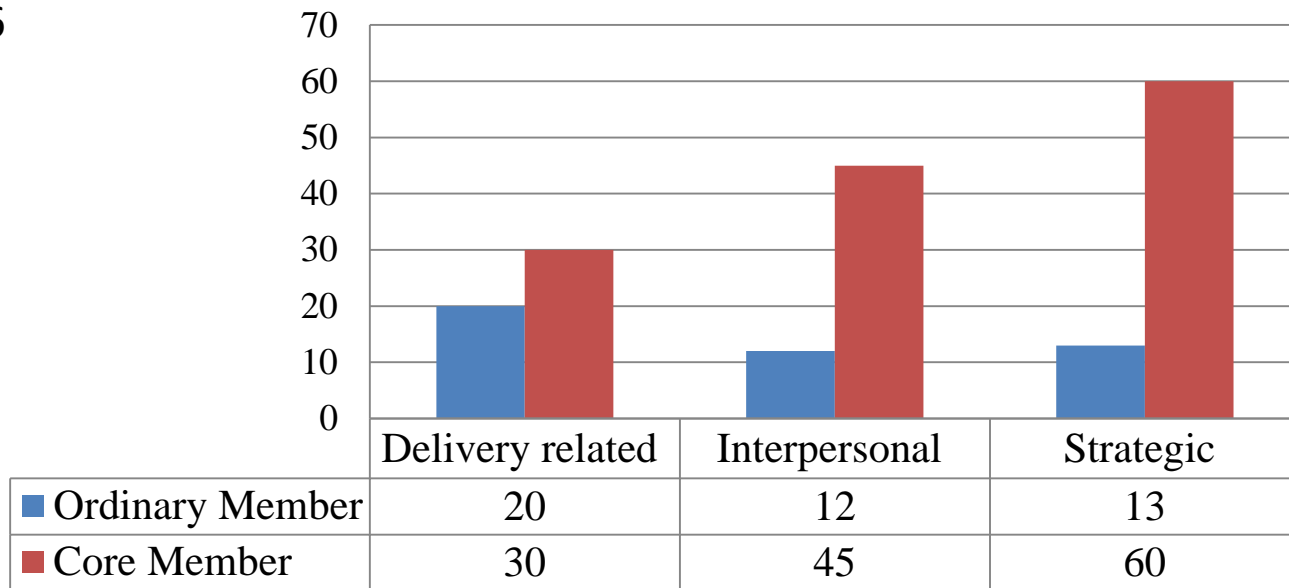
Figure 5



Motivation of participations

c. What do you think about comparing core members with ordinary members?

Figure 6



Core member

V

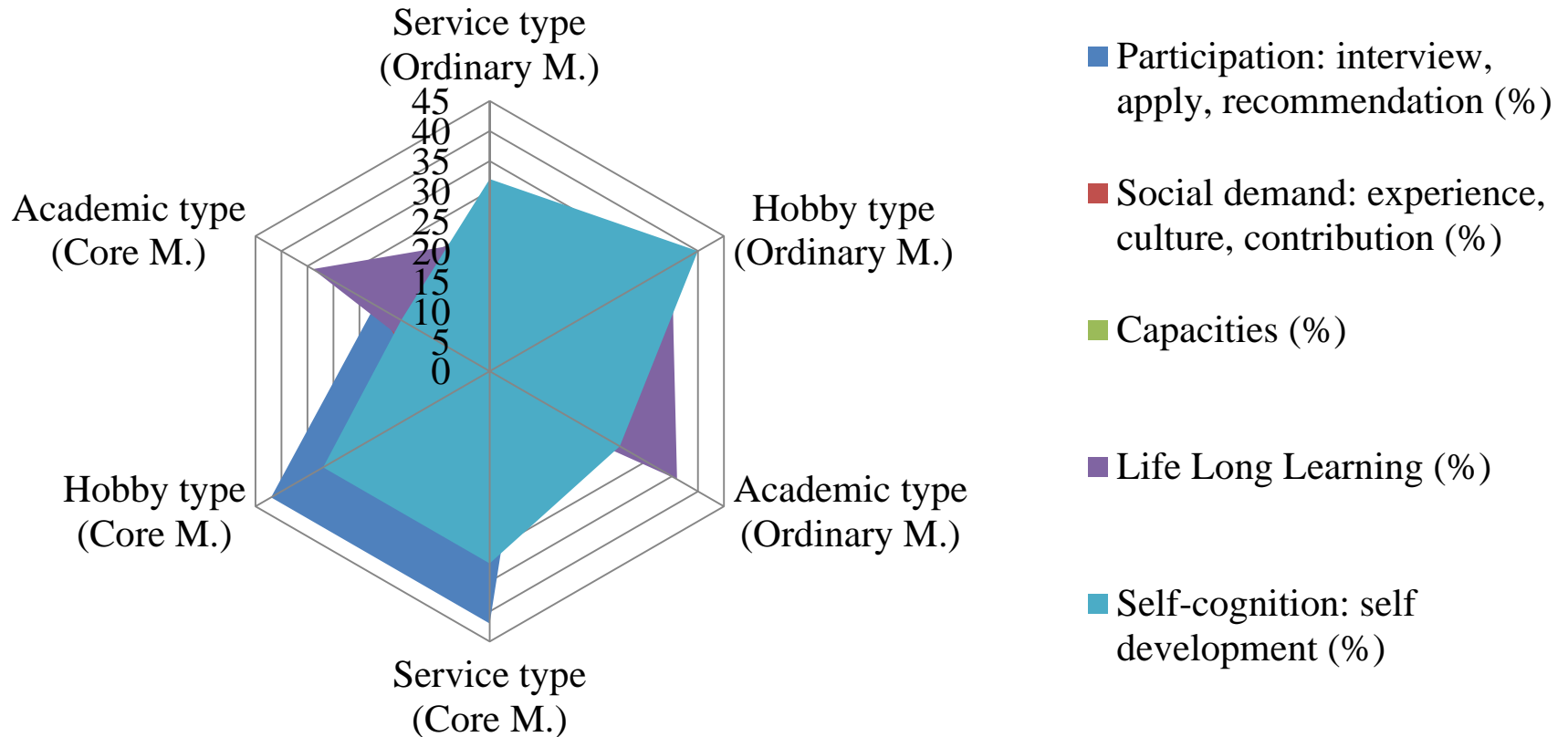
Responsibility	Engagement	Skills	contribution	Attitude	Vision	Work type
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Ordinary member

Progress of Individual key competencies

a. What key competencies do you think you learn most from your community?

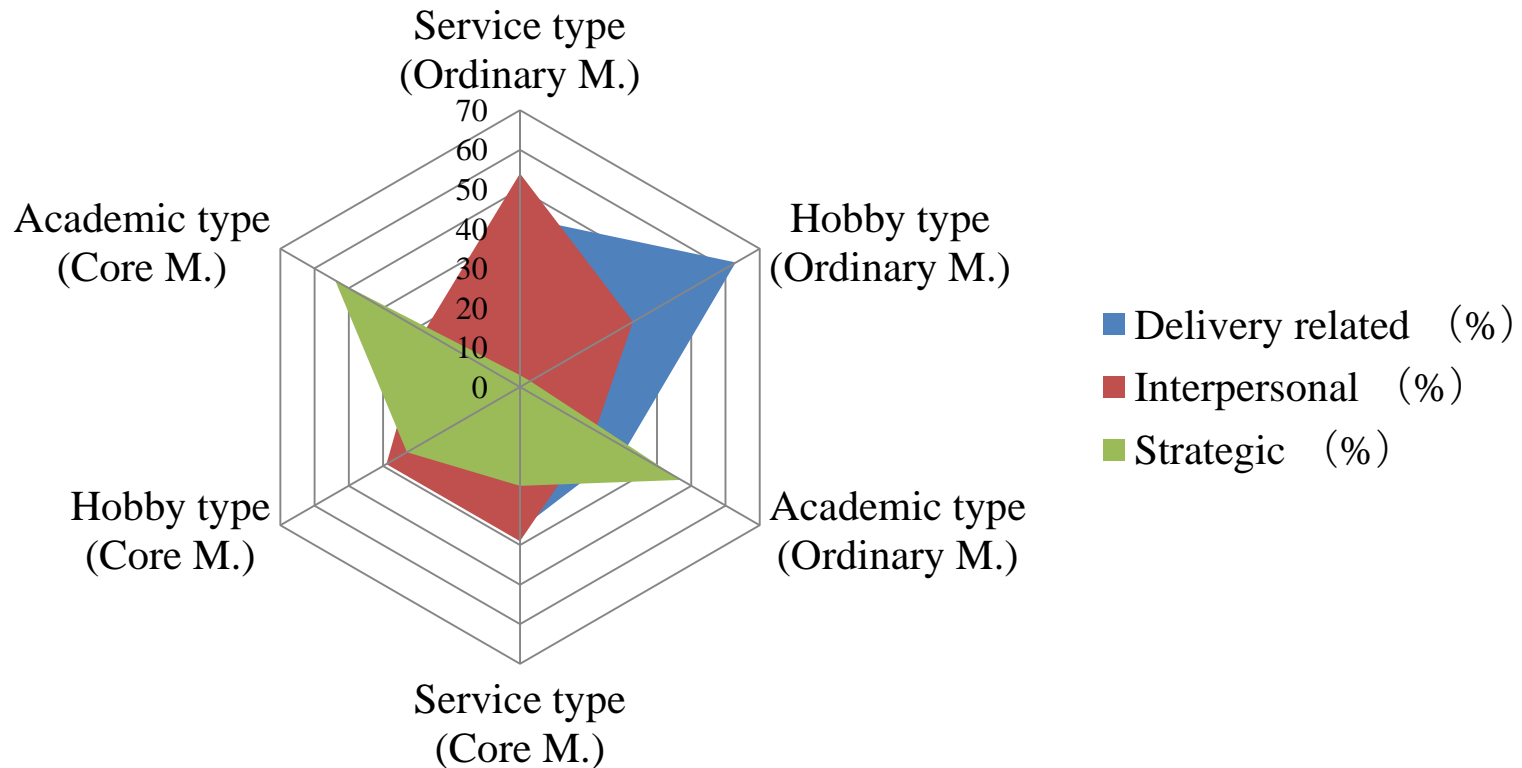
Figure 7



Progress of Individual key competencies

b. What was the outcome of your key competencies

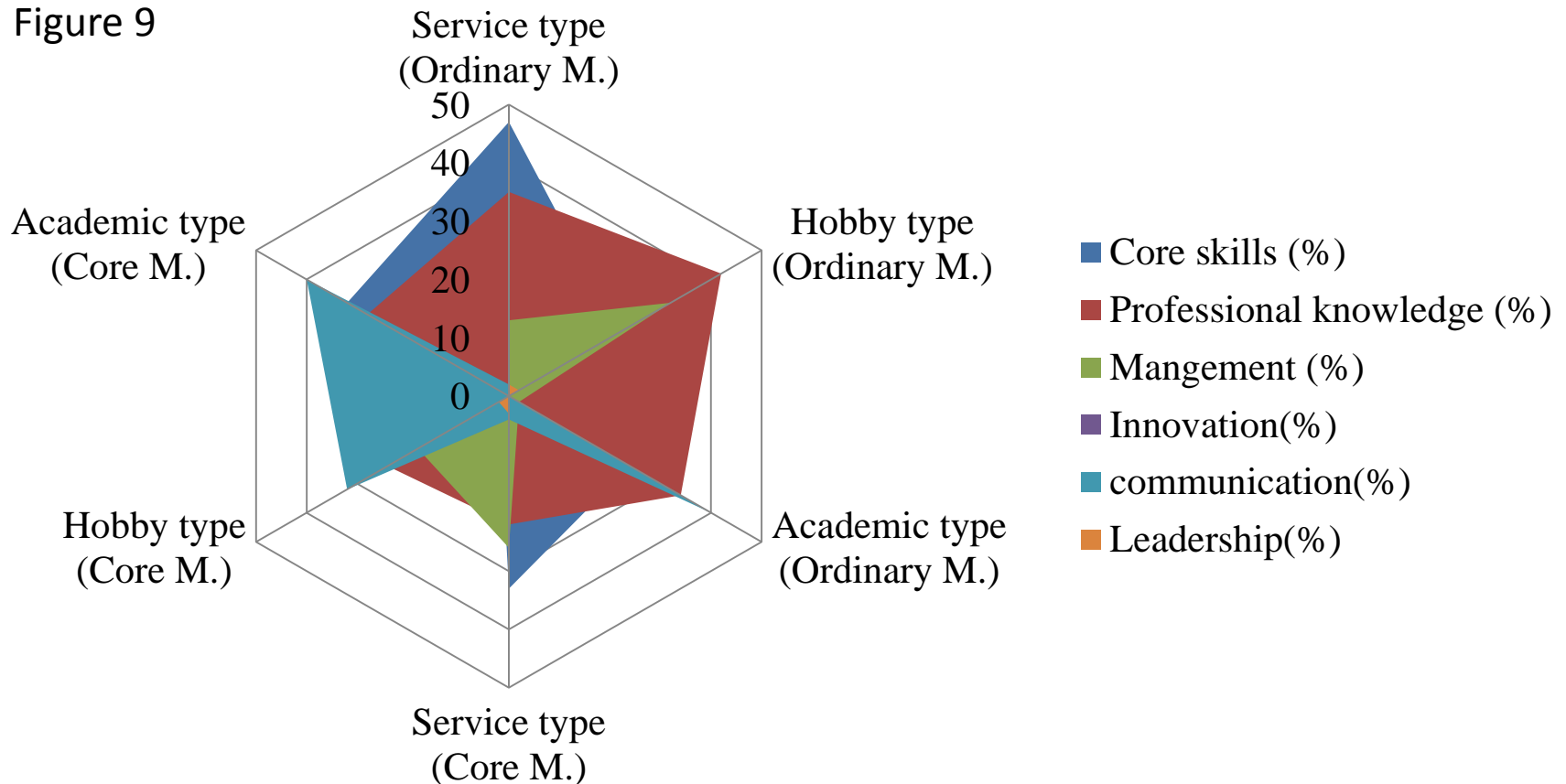
Figure 8



Progress of Individual key competencies

b. What individual key competencies do you want to improve through community experiences?

Figure 9



Results I



1. Positive attitudes
 - a. Clear understanding of community definition.
 - b. Not clear on definitions of key competencies; satisfaction of self-improvement through community experiences.
2. More trained Core members have more core competency training
3. Both member types want to improve core competencies seen in other members.
 - a. Service type members: core skills
 - b. Hobby and academic type (ordinary M.) professional knowledge
 - c. Academic and hobby type (core M): communication



Results II

4. OECD key competencies and motivation of participants
 - a. Academic type (members): interpersonal
 - b. Service type (ordinary Member): Delivery related

5. Progress of individual key competencies
 - a. Hobby type: Self-cognitive
 - b. Hobby (Core M.) Service (Core M.): Process participation]
 - c. Academic type (members): LLL

limitations



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- Did not compare student levels and gender
- Did not include views students who do not participate in communities
- Not included different levels or types of universities
- Some OECD categories are too large, need further empirical research

Thank you!

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