The Dynamics of Hope and Motivations in Groups Working on Complex Societal Issues

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Abstract: This paper reports results from a study of how participants' sense of personal hope and motivation was affected by a facilitated process in which four groups of people worked on different complex social issues. The group interventions were designed to scaffold increased understanding of the complexity of the chosen issue. A method called The Integral Process for Working on Complex Issues was used in all of the groups. Issues addressed in the four groups were: neighborhood deterioration, lack of community engagement, the need for better strategies for communication between rescue service actors in critical life-and-death situations, and transition to a more environmentally sustainable city. The study investigated the participants' self-reported changes in their levels of hope regarding the possibility of achieving positive results on the selected issue, and changes in their motivation to engage in work to that end. The data were gathered through interviews with individual group participants before and after the group process. The sessions supported group members to develop more awareness of the complexity of the issues, and to develop strategies for action.

The study indicates that the discovery of new potential pathways to manage an issue, through a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity involved, was a key factor influencing levels of hope and motivation. Reports from participants showed that when the participants formulated concrete actions that made sense to them, then "particularized hope" emerged, as well as motivation to continue to engage. Thus, increased levels of hope about a delimited part of the issue were reported, while in some cases, participants reported having less hope about the issue complex as a whole.

Keywords: Collective efficacy, engagement, hope, motivation, pathway perception, scaffolding, task complexity awareness.

Introduction

The roles that hope and motivation play when groups gather to work on issues of considerable complexity—especially those with a history of disappointments and failures—can be assumed to be significant, and may be affected by changes in awareness of the task complexity involved (Jordan, 2014). Examples of such complex issues are ethnic segregation in suburbs, city pollution and littering, land use conflicts, and violence against officials on duty.

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The purpose of this study was to elucidate the relationship between hope, motivation, and awareness of complexity, when groups worked on complex societal issues using a structured discourse for issue analysis and discussion. Factors that influence levels of hope, and the motivation to engage, need to be understood better, as do the interrelationships and dynamics between these dimensions. How the interaction of emotion and cognition influence deliberative processes is not wholly understood (Delli Carpini, Cook, & Jacobs, 2004), and research on the interrelationship between hope and motivation when groups spend time to analyze complex issues of public concern has to my knowledge not been carried out.

Four groups of concerned stakeholders participated in the study, based in Sweden, and the changes in their self-reported sense of hope and motivation before and after participation were analyzed. Each group was offered a facilitated, structured group process as support.

The study is based on a dialectical constructivist perspective.[2] Empirical data were collected to reveal the patterns of how participants constructed meaning about issues of concern to them, as well as how they felt about the possibility to achieve favored outcomes. The main objective of the study was the inquiry into how these patterns changed through a group process, and what consequences this could have for the participants' experience of hope, motivation and for their concrete actions.

The Issue of Defining Hope

The topic of hope spans several research fields, from philosophy and psychology to social and medical science. In the literature, hope has been characterized in a variety of ways, such as an attitude, a disposition, a social habit, a psychic force, a psychological asset, or in terms of process, activity or inquiry (Allec, 2004; Brackney & Westman, 1992; Cooke, 2005; McGeer, 2004; Nalkur, 2009). Hope has often been portrayed through dichotomies, (Jacoby, 2003; O´Hara, 2011) as either goal-oriented or existential; with an emphasis on cognitive elements and agency, or focused on affective features of hope. In a large literature review, Bright (2011) found that definitions of hope could be placed on a continuum, where existential definitions on hope was at one end, and goal-oriented definitions on the other end (Bright, 20011; Jacoby & Goldzweig, 2014).

A dynamic that add intricacy to the understanding of hope, is that what is hoped for can be more or less realistic or dreamlike. This is connected to hope´s close relationship to uncertainty, such as limited possibilities to predict future outcomes, and limited knowledge about which factors may change positively or prove possible to influence through individual or collective actions. Several factors spelt uncertainty adding up to the ever present unknown of the hoped for future (Wolsgård-Krøjer, 2014).

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[2] Although not so well integrated in my understanding in the beginning, my point of departure was that hope and motivation consist of both cognitive and emotional dimensions. Therefore, to understand the interplay, or – the dialectics – between these dimensions was an important consideration. This point of departure yields a dialectical constructivist perspective, which also got strenghtened as a result of conducting the study. (For a fuller view on the dialectical constructivist perspective, see Basseches & Mascolo, 2010).

While the concept of hope is complex, multifaceted and consequently described in a variety of ways, there seems to be general agreements that hope concerns human engagement with "the issue of possibility" (O´Hara & Ortiz, 2014, p.viii).

The experience of hope is subjective, which makes it difficult to define clearly or to measure, and suggests why the concept of hope has multiple definitions and measurements; some even in stark contrast (Jacoby, 2003; Jacoby & Goldzweig, 2014; O´Hara & Ortiz, 2014; O´Hara, 2011). The functions and effects of hope consequently relate to how the concept is used in the first place. In this study, the relationship between hope for desired change, and the individuals' motivation to participate in bringing their own capacities to bear on the issue, is in focus. This focus calls for a contextualization of the concept of hope in its relationship to motivation, which will be undertaken in the first part of the literature review. It is also important to define how the concept of hope is used in the study, which I will do in this section.

When attempting to define hope, one stands a risk of reducing the concept to the dichotomies and linear approaches associated with hope studies (O´Hara & Ortiz, 2014; Jacoby & Goldzweig, 2014). The point of departure here is that hope is a complex dynamic with both cognitive and affective elements, and manifest both as a quality of being and as an agentic force. Jacoby (2003) coined the expression "work of hope", referring to the variability as well as to the developing nature of the experiences people have when speaking about hope. This entails looking at hope from a process point of view, with its inherent dynamics of change. Both hope and motivation involve the dynamic interplay of elements, as "behavioral intentions involve insights into new perspectives (cognition), motivation to act (conation), as well as a new sense of empowerment (affect, or emotion)" (Ross, 2006, p. 149). The research question that this study addresses is how participants' levels of hope for positive change, and motivation to engage in action towards it, were influenced by the increased awareness of complexity they derived from participating in a facilitated group process. In resonance with this aim, hope and motivation is considered from a process perspective, and as a transitional phenomenon (Jacoby, 2003), which may be influenced by a number of factors over time.

Motivation and Social Context of the Study

Issues are complex when they involve a multitude of different types of conditions and causal relations, when many types of stakeholders with diverging interests are involved, and when stakeholders have dissimilar perspectives on the issues (Jordan, Andersson, & Ringnér, 2013; Rouwette, 2003). If the challenges are perceived as too great, the propensity to make efforts to resolve them is likely to be affected, resulting in pessimism, feelings of powerlessness, blame, or general frustration (Ross, 2006a). A mismatch between the capacity needed to deal with complex issues (DeLauer, 2009; Kegan, 1994; Rosenberg, 2002) and the frustration caused by the difficulty of addressing them gives rise to another set of challenges: how to find motivation to engage when frustration is high and the hope for a solution is low (Inglis, 2010; Ross, 2007, 2009). As passivity, hopelessness, and complacency pose huge threats to the growing need for sustainable management strategies (Ross, 2009), studies that contribute to a deeper understanding of these dynamics could add value to the development of methods for scaffolding the cognitive complexity that appears necessary to address the issues' complexity. Naturally, if

hope and motivation are not sustained when grappling with understanding the complexity of the issue, this will in turn affect the propensity for fruitful deliberations.

Challenges and Support: Scaffolding Complex Issue Analysis

The ability to both notice and handle various dimensions of a complex issue can be referred to as task complexity awareness (Jordan, 2011, 2014), a concept involving the awareness of "the possibility that there might be significant circumstances, causal relationships, potential consequences, and systemic characteristics that might explain occurrences and that might be useful to consider when deciding on a course of action" (Jordan, 2011, p. 60).

When using a structured group process on a complex issue, an important objective is to scaffold task complexity awareness of the issue of concern (Andersson, 2015; Jordan, 2014). An understanding of underlying principles of task complexity (Commons, Trudeau, Stein, Richards, & Krause, 1998) is therefore considered central when designing processes and providing appropriate facilitation for groups working on issues of societal complexity.

On a general level, the concept of *scaffolding* can be explained as a cognitive support structure that enables individuals of all ages to raise their ability and make it possible to complete tasks that otherwise may be too difficult to grasp (Commons & Goodheart, 2008). The term was first used in the cognitive domain as a metaphor for interactional support of children's learning processes (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976), but is now widespread in contexts of learning and skill development. In this paper, the concept of scaffolding is focused on the temporary, external support provided by methods and by facilitation strategies.

An adjacent and central role in a facilitated group process is to scaffold increased awareness of how the different stakeholders may reason about the same set of issues, thus increasing the potential for improved communication and understanding (Jordan, 2014; Ross, 2006b). Using a facilitated, structured process for group interaction that scaffolds the exploration of alternative perspectives can bring transformative insights, enabling multiple perspectives on the same issue of concern, resulting in the emergence of new thinking and decision-making (Inglis, 2009; Ross, 2009, 2011).

The Integral Process for Complex Issues (abbreviated TIP)

The cognitive scaffolding that was used to facilitate the group processes is called "The Integral Process for Working on Complex Issues" (Ross, 2006a). It was designed for group processes and was based on analyses of complex issues and theories of adult development. TIP is one of several related methods that aim at dealing with complex issues. Other methods are so-called "problem structuring methods," such as Soft Systems Methodology and the Strategic Choice Approach (Checkland & Poulter, 2006; Friend & Hickling, 2004; Rosenhead & Mingers, 2001).

TIP supports the development of task complexity awareness, as shown in a study using TIP, which hypothesized that participants' level of complexity used to reason about complex issues would increase; binomial test and related measures results were $p < .01$ with large effect size

(Ross, 2007). TIP was chosen for this study for three main reasons: (a) its fit with the research interest as a means to scaffold increased understanding in task complexity awareness, (b) the researcher's own knowledge about how to use this specific process, and (c) the function of TIP as a deliberative process for decision-making.[3]

TIP is a modular, step-by-step approach, in which each step goes deeper into the complex issue that has been selected.[4] This enables an understanding of symptoms of deeper systemic problems and the possibility to identify causal connections. The modular approach of TIP can be visually compared with structural scaffolding, which too is modular in design, so that one can use parts of the construction to complete specific tasks.

The content-free nature of a method makes it replicable, as indicated by a wide variety of uses of, for example, the commonly used SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunities, threats) analysis. As scaffolding, TIP can be used in a variety of contexts, and regardless of users' diverse issue concerns, to create more capacity for understanding the complexity of a selected issue.

In the next part of the study I survey relevant previous research on hope and motivation. Although there is ample literature about hope as well as motivation, little research has been done that directly relates to group processes, deliberative decision making, and issue complexity. There is extensive research on motivation as a construct, but in this review, the purpose was to focus on motivation in its relationship to personal and public engagement in issues of social concern, and to elucidate the interrelatedness between motivation and hope. While hope and motivation cannot be seen as entirely separate from each other, the differentiation of their relationships is an important part of this study.

After reviewing earlier research, I present the methodology of this study, followed by the results of the data analysis. Finally, there are some concluding comments on the interrelations of hope, motivation, and awareness of complexity, and indications of how these may be important factors to consider for group facilitation when working on complex societal issues. Some recommendations for further research are included at the end.

Previous Research on Hope and Motivation

Some frameworks that serve to unpack relationships between hope and motivation – including differentiations between individual and collective hope – will be discussed in this section. This serves as a background for the study, and is of deep relevance for understanding influences on hope and motivation when scaffolding task complexity awareness in a group process. Because the concepts of hope and motivation are broad, complex, and interconnected, an attempt to

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[3] Even though TIP was selected as the method used in this study specifically because it was designed to scaffold increased awareness of the issue's complexity among the participants, the purpose of the study was not to evaluate the effectiveness of TIP. TIP was simply an appropriate means for scaffolding awareness of complexity, thereby creating favorable conditions for studying how hope and motivation to engage were influenced by increasing awareness of complexity.

[4] See Appendix 1 for an overview of each step in TIP, or Ross, 2006a, for a full description of the method.

outline some of these relationships supports considerations about how a cognitive scaffolding process might affect hope and motivation.

Of particular interest is how other research describes relationships between hope, motivation and issue understanding. This topic concurs with how other researchers have related to, or tried to distinguish, between realistic and dreamlike hope, and expectation, as well as developed explanations for how hope can enhance motivation or lead to passivity.

Research that was found to be of particular interest to the aim of this study will be accounted for at the end of the literature review.

Unpacking the Intricacies of "Hope" and its Relationship to Motivation

While it may be evident that motivation is needed for starting to engage and act—especially when there are barriers to overcome in making substantial changes in issues of concern (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987), hope is often referred to as a prerequisite for motivation, even as a "psychic commitment to life" (Schneider, 1980, as cited in Hinds, 1984, p. 359). From this perspective, hope is viewed as a significant element that affects the motivation to engage in social action, by helping to transform worry into action and to motivate action in the face of uncertainty (Braithwaite, 2004; McGeer 2004; Ojala, 2011; Snyder & Feldman, 2000).

A psychological hope theory developed by Snyder (2000) consists of three cognitive components: goals, agency, and pathways (Snyder, 2000; Green, Oades, & Grant, 2006). The motivational component—agency—is seen "to propel people along the imagined route to the goal" (Snyder, 2000, p. 10). Snyder's hope theory is based on the assumption that human actions are goal directed and that hope is active when an individual is able to perceive pathways to achieve goals as well as to conceive of the possibility—agency—to act on them.

But the notion of hope as a positive force for agency and action is – as indicated earlier– not agreed on, and a more elaborate understanding is called for. In the literature, contrasting perspectives of hope and its relation to engagement and action appear, indicating polarization or stark contrasts; at some times pointing toward the constructiveness of a hopeful approach, and at other times the opposite (O´Hara, 2011). As it pertains to motivating individual or collective action, a common question in science civic sectors[5] is, how is hope truly conducive to action, and what kind of hope may dampen activity, perhaps resulting in pure passivity (Bovens, 1999; Harwood, 2005; McGeer, 2004; Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2010). While some studies indicate that hope can motivate engaged action, what explanations or definitions might unpack why hope at other times induces passivity?

Miceli and Castelfranchi relate the drive to hope beyond the limits of agency, where "hope implies the mobilization of our energy toward the future because it promotes both our patience to wait for any favouring condition and our readiness to take advantage of such opportunities" (2010, p. 267). From this view, hope can induce an individual to *stay open* to possibilities, even

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[5]See, for example, George Monbiot's article in the Guardian, http://www.monbiot.com/2012/06/18/the-mendacity-of-hope/ and Derrick Jensen's article in Orion Magazine, http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/170/f both retrieved 3 July 2012.

when the odds are low; expectation and hope can diverge, yet favor the tendency to act, "thus orienting one to act in view of the desired event despite the negative forecast" (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2010, p. 268). This approach recognizes the inherent tensions with hope and uncertainty, and how humans may handle such tensions.

The idea of foolish hope dates back to Plato, who called hope "a foolish counsellor" (O´Hara, 2011, p. 324). Theologian and existentialist philosopher Paul Tillich (1965) distinguishes the quality of foolish hope from genuine hope. Foolish hope is to wait passively for change, whereas genuine hope is to start taking even small steps possible toward living what one hopes for. Here, the focus is on the individual's ability to take steps to realize valued goals. Choosing a stance of passive hope is sometimes explained as having overly positive expectations of other actors to solve issues of concern to realize one's hopes (McGeer, 2004). McGeer calls this "wishful hope" and suggests the need for taking more responsibility for agency.

The founder of the Harwood Institute, Richard Harwood (2005), suggests that there is a clear divide between authentic hope and false hope and that there are different *processes* that foster the two. False hope is part of everyday life, for example, automatically trusting expressions by politicians, news media, and civic leaders. Even public opinion tools can foster false hope, by leading people into the false assumption that they have been heard. Well-intentioned community consultation may backfire, failing to create the community engagement it was intended to do, and instead leaving a community with decreased social capital (Hartz-Karp, 2007). By contrast then, authentic hope is ignited in people when they sense that something is true and meaningful, such as when seeing signs of small, but significant steps forward, or when engaging in collective conversations, focusing on real concerns and working together on common challenges (Harwood, 2005). Taking this perspective, a move away from unrealistic, "false" hope, may be a result of a deeper understanding about causal relationships of an issue of concern, and an opening for new, more realistically oriented hopes.

The ability to stay focused on present possibilities, while hoping for future outcomes, is an ability that sets hope apart from positive expectations, according to Miceli and Castelfranchi's (2010) notion of hope. From this view, hope differs from belief, optimism, trust, and faith, and overcomes the problem of naïve or false hope. The minimal cognitive ingredient is wish and recognition of uncertainty and possibility.

But while uncertainty is intrinsic to hope and may spur action even when the access to knowledge or information appears limited, research shows that when there is uncertainty, or when knowledge is incomplete, the tendency for inaction is higher, as people are less prone to act on uncertain options (Sundblad, 2008). Part of the remedy—to gain understanding—is not sufficient to activate hope and motivated participation; people need to perceive pathways for taking actions that effectively address the issue (Amnå, 2008, 2010; Snyder, 2000; Sundblad, 2008). According to Snyder (2000), gaining access to multiple routes to approaching a goal will positively affect the sense of hopefulness. But the motivation to stay open to new information is needed to seek out new options, which may be difficult when faced with countless obstacles. Hence, when the hoper cannot conceive of possibilities to take action toward that which is hoped for, passive waiting may be the favored approach. However, when there is motivation, the likelihood increases that people will invest more effort in processing a message, which in turn

affects the learning process and the ability to recall information (Petty & Wegener, 1998; Sundblad, 2008). Having access to information, as well as being motivated to process it, in turns shapes performance and the quality of decision-making (Druckman, 2004; Kuklinski, James, Quirk, Jerit, & Rich, 2001). Previous research with secondary school students (Persson, Lundegård, & Wickman, 2011) showed how the students were able to transform worry about the environmental issues into action competence [6] and hope. The authors suggest that the combination of listening to the students' ways of formulating their environmental concerns and adapting education to their questions was critical for this result.

The ability to perceive alternative pathways to reach goals and reclaim agency is a central variable for "higher hope people" and "lower hope people" in Snyder's hope theory (Snyder, 2000). Therefore, a significant strategy is to expand and strengthen understandings of pathways by breaking down strategies into clear and relevant steps, finding several alternative and plausible routes to get to the goals, and formulating sub-goals (Lopez, Floyd, Ulven, & Snyder, 2000). This is also an important function of successful scaffolding of task complexity awareness, which can furthermore result in the formulation of new objectives and purposes (Andersson, 2015; Jordan, 2014).

The element of uncertainty of outcome coupled with the perception that things can change for the better (Snyder, 2000; Ojala, 2007), make it hard to predict to what extent hope will complement motivation as a source for engagement. Still, even passive hope may serve as an internal help for an individual to endure a crisis that would at other times be psychologically overwhelming. Snyder and Feldman argue: "Whereas it is true that hope can be pacifying for a period of time, the very same hopeful thinking processes can turn revolutionary when a large number of people feel blocked in their pursuit of valued goals" (Snyder & Feldman, 2000, p. 4009).

As the foregoing discussion suggests, there is a complex connection between hope and understanding, such that assumptions, knowledge, and new information may give rise to fluctuations in the levels of perceived hope. Those fluctuations may affect the propensity to actively engage in realizing hopes.

Individual or Collective Hope and the Impact on (Shared) Motivation

The challenges of collective hope involve sharing visions and managing conflicting goals that may arise when facing issues of societal complexity. According to McGeer (2004), the ability to use one's own powers of agency in pursuing and communicating goals needs to be coupled with a solid understanding of how others may act to either enhance or inhibit their pursuits, depending on the quality of their interactions. Culture and context are also significant factors to consider, even for the role of agency (Nalkur, 2009). Nalkur argues that the self might not always be considered as the agent of hope; instead, supportive relationships and resources can be "more

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[6] The concept "action competence," as described by Breitung and Mogensen (1999), includes the co-variants knowledge of action possibilities, confidence in one's own influence, and a wish to act. To effectively develop action competence for understanding of environmental issues, approaches that reflect on communal issues and conflicts at several levels, that is, individual, social, and structural, need to be used.

effective agents for hope than the self" (Nalkur, 2009, p. 687). Amnå speaks about "having confidence in one's own ability to work in collaboration" (Amnå, 2010, p. 197) as a measure of collective efficacy and a motive for engagement. Results from previous studies, when using facilitated group processes on community issues, have indicated that stakeholders' confidence in the ability to work together can emerge from developing novel insights together (Ross, 2007; Rouwette, Bleijenbergh & Vennix, 2014).

Ojala (2011) refers to trust in other actors as a constructive source of hope and as a necessary condition for collective action. "This source of hope also seems to work as a motivational force, and, thus does not imply that one places all the responsibility for solving the problem on other actors" (Ojala, 2010, p. 12).

A Multidimensional Model of Hope

A framework called *The Multidimensional Model of Hope (*Dufault & Martocchio, 1985) incorporates two spheres of hope: particularized and generalized hope (Allec, 2004; Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; O´Hara, 2014). The framework indicates that there are multiple *processes* of hope that can be active in the same person simultaneously, regarding different objects and events, and through different ways of hoping. Particularised hope emphasises a cognitive component of hope (O´Hara, 2014) as it entails the identification of goals and assessment of task complexity as well as the capacities at hand for achieving specific goals. Generalized hope expresses as a broader scope of future possibilities, without focus on specific results, and can be viewed as a state of mind or life-orientation. This model explains how that the same person can feel very hopeful about certain parts of an issue, while having less hope about other aspects of the very same issue. Further, Dufault and Martocchio apply six dimensions to hope, including affective, cognitive, affiliative, behavioral, contextual, and temporal, which together form the "gestalt of hope" (Allec, 2004, p. 9). O´Hara (2014) proposes a development of this multi-dimensional model, by introducing *transformative hope*. This sphere signifies a way of hoping that may emerge in times of crisis, and lead to new ways of understanding human existence. Transformative hope touches human capacities to move beyond linear thinking, engage paradox and contradictions; enabling a non-discursive awareness (O´Hara, 2014) and the possibility of finding contentment regardless of outcomes. This framework proposes several important distinctions and contributes to the understanding of changes in levels of hope and motivation.

Previous Research of Particular Relevance

Although there are several studies that address different aspects of hope for positive change in societal issues of concern or motivation for personal engagement in issues of social concern (Amnå, 2008, 2010; Axelrod & Lehman, 1993; Inglis, 2011; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Ojala, 2007, 2011; Persson, et al, 2011; Ross, 2006b, 2007; Sundblad, 2008), the more specific aim of this study has not been researched in any depth. The aim was to investigate the effects that a more complex understanding may have on individuals' sense of hope for possible change, and their own motivation to address social issues of societal concern. I have found only one study that analyses the effects on hope and motivation of a structured discourse designed to increase complex attention to issues of concern.

In her doctoral dissertation, Ross (2006b, 2007) investigated the effects of using TIP from the beginning step through to deliberation—a total of six modules—in which eight participants from the general public partook. As a result of this finding, a portion of the post-interview was used for rating changes in the participants' hope and motivation about the issue they worked with during their meetings. Results showed notable positive increases in participants' hope and motivation. The most dominant reason given for increased hope and motivation was the "discovery of [a] new system or method to address issues" (Ross, 2007, p. 129); additional reasons included the positive qualities of the people in the group and working together to address the issue. All of the participants reported that the process had provided them with new insights, and half the group reported that they had embarked on new kinds of actions due to new ways of seeing the whole issue (Ross, 2006).

In a case study, Inglis used the deliberative part of TIP during one meeting of nine community members, to investigate the motivation "to engage in public discourse at a level complex enough to make real contributions to the solution for public problems" (Inglis, 2011, p. 13). With support for reflection on the issues of concern, the participants increased the capacity for listening to one another and generating new ideas collectively. Participants reported that the scaffolding that allowed them to consider multiple perspectives acted as a motivator to use an integral process, such as TIP, for future decision-making.

These two studies are the only instances found where researchers have empirically studied how participation in a structured problem analysis process has affected participants' sense of hope and motivation. There is obviously a need for more comprehensive research, involving more cases under different conditions, as well as more participants.

Research on individual motivation within the context of civic engagement and different forms of political participations (Amnå, 2008), showed results that are of particular relevance for this study. Through focus groups with representatives from political parties and citizens that seemed to be politically passive and unengaged, as well as interviews with individuals from non-governmental organizations and activists, Amnå (2008, 2010) found six dynamic and co-existent motives that contribute to some form of engagement, each one increasing the level of motivation to actively engage. These were

1. a sense of obligation,
2. a strong sense of issue-importance or even urgency,
3. a personal sense of ability (including the ability to work collectively with others),
4. having the experience of being needed—"in demand,"
5. being able to perceive pathways for action that addresses the problem, and
6. experiencing meaningfulness (from connecting with other people and developing new social contacts).

Amnå found that people who were more passive or uninvolved did not see the forms of action they could take as having any significant effect. An important emphasis in Amnå´s research is the concept of the standby-citizen, indicating a nuanced view on citizens' potential engagement, and the need for taking a variety of factors into account in order to understand the dynamics that are involved in creating conditions for engagement. The findings conclude that there are several

reasons for citizens to engage more actively or remain passive, and that no factor alone can explain everything.

The literature review focused on studies that investigated the role of hope and motivation in individual, social, and civic engagement. The interplay of hope and motivation was shown, concluding that the role of hope may lead to motivation for individual or collective action, as well as inhibit action and results in more passive approaches. Hope and motivation do not necessarily follow a parallel path, and may have different functions and consequences in relation to people's propensity to engage in action. The motivation to engage can be high, even if hope for significant results is limited, and people may have a high level of hope that a problem can be solved, even when they are not motivated to personally engage in working on the issue. Changes in hope and motivation occur dynamically—as a result of several co-concurring processes—and there are multiple reasons for choosing engagement and for experiencing hope.

Methodology

The mixed method study investigated any effects of small group work on concerned people's sense of hope and motivation (willingness to act) after participating in some parts of a structured scaffolding process for working on issues of concern. The focus of the study, then, was not on the groups' issue-related activities during the sessions, but on the individual participants' pre- and post-interviews, in which they used Likert scale ratings and free-form explanations to self-report each individual´s level of hope that the issue of concern with could change in a favorable way, and motivation to actively engage in actions relating to the issue their respective groups worked on.

Participants

Four groups participated in the study, which was conducted in Sweden. For each group, I contacted a key person, who in turn recruited the group participants. The aim was to work with voluntary groups formed by concerned citizens who wanted to address specific issues that were important to them, within non-governmental organizations or self-organized groups. Later, a group from the public sector was added, which contributed to test the scaffolding method in three different kinds of organizational structures and group formats .[7]

There were a total of 27 participants. Each group self-selected a beginning topic of concern, which then became the starting point for the group´s issue exploration, in which TIP was offered as scaffolding. An overview of the groups' contexts, general issues of concern, and participant demographics are presented in Table 1.

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[7] In Jordan et al, (2013) elaborations on working with different kinds of groups are made, but in this study, the focus is not comparing different outcomes at group-level.

Table 1. Study Groups and Participant Demographics

Group ID #	Context of group	General concern	No. of partici- pants	Age range	Gender	
					Female	Male
1	Public services	Communication between actors in critical life-death situations	7	35–46	3	4
2	Transition Sweden start-up group	Implementing an alternative currency	9	25–78	3	6
3	Swedish Union of Tenants	Community deterioration	6	38–66	4	2
4	Swedish Union of Tenants	Neighborhood activities	5	28–34	5	1

A Brief Description of the Issues that Engaged the Different Groups Public Services

This group's membership consisted of personnel from the ambulance service, SOS Alarm[8], and the police. The participants joined the group voluntarily, although it took place during their working hours.[9] The objective was to find sustainable action strategies to handle the critical and complex issue of incidents where an assembly point[10] is deemed necessary to reduce risks of violence for ambulance staff, while still needing to rapidly attend to citizens who are unwell.

Transition Sweden group: This group of people formed out of their common interest in investigating the idea of implementing a small-scale alternative currency in central Gothenburg and was motivated by a perceived need to gradually transition from the current economical system. Once the participants started engaging in the group process, topics on access to locally produced food and car free zones in the city took precedence, and the group reoriented its purpose.

Tenant groups 3 & 4: The two groups consisted of engaged tenants who were associated with the Swedish Union of Tenants and who voluntarily gathered to arrange activities in the neighborhood. A central issue for both these groups was the exodus of families that had lived in the areas for a long time, along with an ever-growing rate of first-generation immigrants moving in, creating instability and unwanted change. One of the groups was primarily concerned with creating more engagement in the local community, in particular regarding children´s activities

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[8] SOS Alarm is the name for the Swedish emergency service centres.

[9] The participants volunteered to participate, but acted as representatives of their respective organizations.

[10] An "assembly point" is a temporary stopping point set up for the ambulance, if there is a scene that poses a risk for the staff's safety. They wait at this point until the police have secured the scene.

and activities for elderly people. The history of negative interaction with local landlords and the Swedish Union of Tenants was also considered a major concern.

The other group wanted to work with decreasing littering and general deterioration in the area, in order to maintain an attractive community.

Procedures

Data Collection

The data were gathered through mixed-method interviews conducted with the individual group participants before and after their respective group's intervention period. The intervention period was comprised of five (but for one group, six) meetings that involved groups' participation in selected modules of TIP. Thus, pre- and post-interviews were, on average, separated by 6–12 weeks, depending on the group. The groups carried on with activities after the last interview (see Appendix, steps 8 and 9), but these are not included in the data for this study.

Data collection from these four groups, with a total of 27 participants, resulted in 54 total pre- and post-interviews, which were audio-recorded. Informed consent procedures were used according to Swedish standards for all interviews, as well as audio recordings during the group process.

Likert Scale Ratings and Interviews

The data collection involved 5 questions: a Likert style rating system (1) on motivation and (2) on hope. After asking the participants to rate their hope and motivation, respectively, I asked the follow-up question (3), *why do you rate it that way*, to elicit their free-form explanations of their motivation and hope rankings. Additionally, (4) they were asked why they participated, and (5) what they had got from participation. The scale was defined as follows:

1 = not hopeful/motivated at all
2 = between not and slightly hopeful/motivated
3 = slightly hopeful/motivated
4 = between slightly and moderately hopeful/motivated
5 = moderately hopeful/motivated
6 = between moderately and very hopeful/motivated
7 = very hopeful/motivated

Lastly, in the post-interviews, participants were asked to speak about what they had initially wished to get from participating and then asked to speak about what they actually got out of participating. Thus, the interviews generated both quantitative ratings and qualitative explanations.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data from the transcripts of the pre- and post-interviews were coded iteratively, in a qualitative coding manner (Huberman & Miles, 1994). In this way, the different types of factors mentioned by the participants as relevant for explaining their hope and motivation, as well as for explaining any changes after the group processes, were assigned to categories. Multiple iterations of this step-by-step clustering process were executed, which resulted in a final set of categories for analysis. The choice of an inductive approach was made in order to elicit the significant factors that the participants themselves gave as explanations for their sense of hope and personal motivation, rather than measuring a set of proposed categories.

In analyzing the interview data, I was specifically looking for shifts in hope and motivation, and for reasons the participants gave for being hopeful and motivated, as well as reasons they gave for not feeling so hopeful and motivated. Additionally, I looked for pointers indicating whether the sense of hope and motivation was oriented toward specific parts of the issue complex they had analyzed over the sessions.

The pre/post rating scale was used as a concrete measure of changes – increases and decreases—in hope and motivation before and after participation. The Likert-scale is ordered into the total group-level, as seen in figure 2.

Results

This section presents the empirical results of the study. First, the categories found through the content analysis of explanations for levels of hope and motivation mentioned in the interviews are presented and explained. Second, the quantitative data on levels and changes in hope and motivation are shown and salient patterns pointed out. And last, these two phases are integrated and expanded upon in the data analysis.

Explanatory Categories

The analysis of the interviews before starting and after completing the entire group process yielded several different types of reasons for levels and changes in hope and motivation. Some factors acted mainly as sources of hope and motivation, respectively, while others *also* acted as barriers. The following categories were identified in the interview data:

- *Issue importance*—the issue itself was considered important or urgent; thus, it needed to be addressed.
- *Pathway perception*—the respondent perceived meaningful ways to address the issue and take action and felt hopeful because of this, and/or felt motivated to use perceived pathways to work on the issue.
- *Personal resources*—respondents referred to an innate sense of optimism, confidence, strong willpower, talent, time to get involved, keen interest, or valuable knowledge.
- *Collective efficacy*—respondents sensed the possibility of working together toward a shared goal.

- *Other stakeholders*—participants expressed a sense of the engagement or support from actors outside the group, including those with perceived mandates connected with the issue.
- *Process approach*—participants felt motivated by the approach to working on the issue.
- *Goals/future*—participants shared their belief that their vision of the future after changes had occurred was a *source* of motivation.

Two additional categories emerged as perceived barriers to hope and motivation:

- *Structures/systems*—respondents talked about inherent limits in significant organizations or societal structures that would make the issue difficult to solve.
- *Issue complexity*—participants gained the insight that a resolution of the issue might involve more resources than first anticipated.

The categories found in the content analysis of the interviews were compared with categories mentioned in earlier research. Four of the six categories found in this study correlate loosely to Amnå's (2008, 2010) motives; with the exception of "sense of obligation" and "experience of being needed", which were not reasons found for hope and motivation in the data. The naming of three of the categories, namely pathway perception, issue importance, and collective efficacy, were directly inspired by earlier studies (Snyder, 2000; Amnå, 2008, 2010). As seen in earlier research, working collectively on an issue of common concern proved to be a source of both hope and motivation, and perceived support from other stakeholders appeared as both a motivator and a source of hope. The categories process approach, goals/future, structure/systems, and issue complexity did not correlate with earlier research, but emerged from the data.

Levels and Changes of Different Categories of Explanations

Table 2 shows frequencies and before/after changes of participants' uses of the different explanatory categories.[11] These are divided into reasons for hope and motivation, and barriers to hope and motivation.

Table 2. Summary of categories that explained participants' hope and motivation

Categories	Reasons for hope				Reasons for motivation			
	Before	After	Change		Before	After	Change	
			Qty	%			Qty	%
Issue importance	3	4	1	33%	15	8	-7	-47%
Pathway perception	10	17	7	70%	7	11	4	57%
Personal resources	7	0	-7	-100%	9	6	-3	-33%
Collective efficacy	12	11	-1	-8%	3	10	7	233%
Other stakeholders	6	13	7	117%	2	3	1	50%
Process approach	0	1	1	100%	2	5	3	150%
Goals/future	-	-	-	-	3	4	1	33%
Total reasons cited and net change	**38**	**46**	**8**	**-21%**	**41**	**47**	**6**	**15%**

[11] The numbers shown under before/after refer to how many participants mentioned each category during each of their interview. If the same participant (in the same interview) mentioned the same category more than once it is not accounted for in the result.

Barriers due to presence or lack of	Barriers to hope				Barriers to motivation			
	Before	After	Change		Before	After	Change	
			Qty	%			Qty	%
Pathway perception	10	0	-10	-100%	3	2	-1	-33%
Personal resources	4	0	-4	-100%	4	6	2	50%
Other stakeholders	10	12	2	20%	6	5	-1	-17%
Structures/systems	4	1	-3	-75%	-	-	-	-
Issue complexity	0	7	7	100%	2	3	1	50%
Issue importance	-	-	-	-	0	3	3	100%
Total barriers cited and net change	**28**	**20**	**-8**	**-29%**	**15**	**19**	**4**	**27%**

Prominent Patterns in Explanatory Categories

The patterns reported in Table 2 indicate that pathway perception was the category most *frequently* given by participants, and the one that was the most prominent explanation for hope as well as motivation *after* participation. The same category was also given as a significant explanation for barriers to hope and motivation before, and had the largest decrease after, participation. Thus, the importance of pathway perception turns up in the data in two ways. First, pathway perception is the most frequently mentioned reason for feeling hope and for being motivated. Second, lack of pathway perception is a frequently mentioned barrier to hope in the pre-interviews, while it is completely absent in comments on barriers to hope in the post-interviews.

Issue importance was the single most frequently given explanation for motivation before participation, while slightly less frequently mentioned after.

Collective efficacy was an important factor for hope before and after participation, and it considerably increased as an explanation for motivation after participation. Before participation, personal resources, such as willpower, interest, or time to get involved, was frequently mentioned as a source of hope, whereas after participation this category was not used to explain levels of hope.

Perceiving support from other stakeholders increased as a reason for hope significantly, and slightly also for motivation after participation. When unpacking the issues' complexity, participants also became increasingly aware that a solution would involve many resources and take time. This was also perceived as barrier to stakeholder involvement: *"I think it* [the complexity] *may discourage some actors"* (post-interview, participant in group 3).

Perceiving a lack of stakeholder support was explained as a barrier both to hope and to motivation and this category increased marginally as a barrier for hope, while decreasing somewhat as reason for motivation, after participation.

Finally, the awareness of issue complexity was mentioned as a barrier to hope after participation, but issue complexity was not mentioned as affecting motivation as strongly.

Participants' Ratings Before and After Participation

Figures 2 and 3 show the changes in individuals' ratings of hope and motivation, averaged by their respective groups, before and after completing their series of meetings. The total ratings for all groups combined show a small, overall increase in both hope and motivation after participation. As indicated earlier, the rating scale ranged from 1 for "not at all" to 7 for "very."
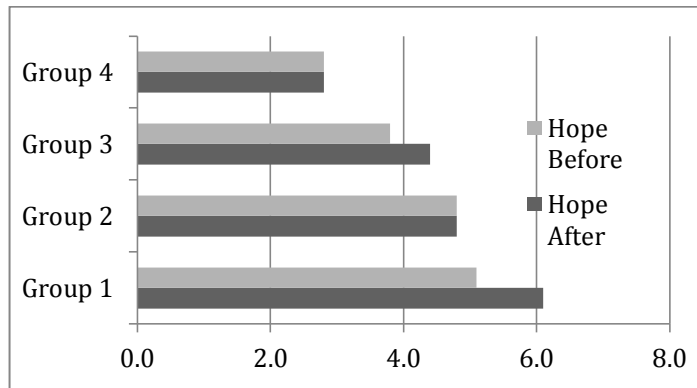
Figure 2. Changes in hope.
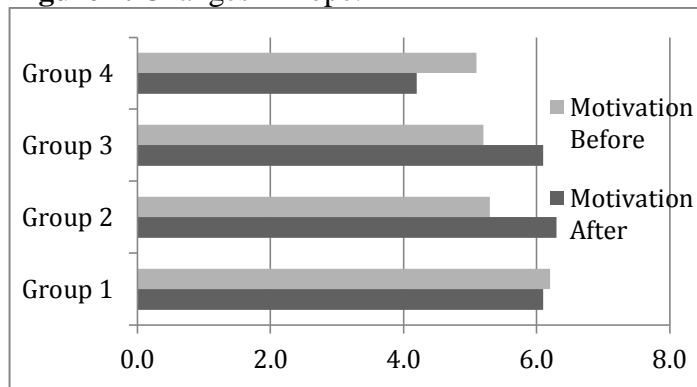
Figure 3. Changes in motivation.

The rates for hope and motivation were altogether higher in groups 1 and 2 than in the tenants' groups 3 and 4. On average, the measures of both hope and motivation were present at the start; only two participants rated "not hopeful" prior to commencing the sessions. The sense of hope that it would be possible to change the issue of concern varied after participation, but only three participants rated it as low as 2 (vaguely hopeful) or 1 (not hopeful). In all groups the rates for motivation were somewhat higher than the rates for hope, both prior to and after the sessions.

For group 1 (public service), there was a significant increase in hope after participation. Group members reported feeling certain that changes would happen, and spoke about pathways for action that they had previously not conceived of, including the implementation of new systems. For example, the group created an action plan for tackling different aspects of the same issue, by creating a guideline that consisted of a step-by-step routine for identifying, evaluating and handling threats. The motivation, which was strong from the outset, remained the same or increased marginally for five out of the seven participants. The group total motivation rate

decreased slightly, however, due to two participants' decrease in motivation—one for reasons to do with lack of personal resources, and the other due to experiencing less issue importance.

For group 2 (Transition Sweden start-up group), levels of hope remained the same before and after participation, while motivation increased for the group total rate. A variety of explanations were given for the increase; most prominent were the sense of collective efficacy, pathway perception, and process approach.

In group 3 (tenants), both hope and motivation increased after participation. This group managed to communicate their list of potential actions to change the issue with other stakeholders in subsequent joint meetings; hence, this was the most frequently given explanation for hope after participation. The participants explained that they saw concrete pathways and sensed they could work together to reach common, important goals.

In group 4 (tenants), the rate of hope remained the same after participation, while motivation decreased. Significant for this group was that the experience of lack of support from other important stakeholders that could affect the issues of concern was a strong barrier for both hope and motivation. The group as a whole did not sense that they could affect the overarching concerns for their neighborhood, and their personal resources were waning. For two of the group members in this small group, this also meant that over time they were less concerned about the issue, and instead, redirected their motivations to leaving the area and going to live elsewhere.

Analysis

How Task Complexity Awareness affected Hope and Motivation

An important aim of the group processes was to scaffold increased task complexity awareness. The developing understanding of causation relating to the issues of concern resulted in several types of changes in hope as well as motivation. The participants' changes in understanding of the issues are therefore central when gauging concurrent changes in hope and motivation. There were instances in the data of a reduction of "false hope" (Harwood, 2005), which must be taken into account when interpreting the overall changes in levels of hope and motivation. A reduction in hope is not necessarily a negative result in terms of public engagement, if it means that hope becomes more realistic. This was expressed in a post-interview by a participant in group 2: *"In some ways I have become less hopeful, even if I am still somewhat naïve, perhaps. I think I have gotten less naïve. . . . So I think it will take a longer time and demand more, somehow. It will not resolve itself, like."* In this example, understanding the complexities of the issue leads to a reduction in hope. This was not coupled with lesser motivation, but rather a reorientation of goals, and the focusing of present possibilities.

The complex interrelationship between hope, shifts in cognitive construction of the issue, and motivation is illustrated in the following example, where a participant in group 1 reported an increase in hope, but a decrease in his own motivation to work on solving the issue: *"I am somewhat less motivated now, because I experience that the problem is not as big as some people claimed initially, and in many situations things actually sort themselves out. The mapping of this issue has somehow shown this."*

The group sessions involved analyzing the larger complex of issues in relationship to sub-issues. This resulted in direction for the groups as well as individual participants for strategically working on one or several sub-issues. The development of sub-goals was expressed as an important motivator and as a source of hope. *"I am hopeful about treading the path, but the issue is immense. It will take time"* (post-interview, participant in group 2). In group 1, participants developed communication strategies in the public sector and a whole action system was launched, yet issues of systemic character became apparent during the group process, which were expressed as barriers to hopefulness for successfully working on the whole action system. *"I do not think we will solve the whole issue, but this part of the problem I think we will solve/improve on. I am hopeful about a part, but not the entirety"* (post-interview, participant in group 1). In the tenant group 4, participants reported a sense of lack in support and engagement from other stakeholders, but in one particular issue that had arisen they perceived pathways of action, which involved asking for support from key actors. Three out of five participants reported this as a source of hope for parts of the issue complex, while all of these participants reported less hope for the overall issue concern. These examples show how hope is expressed in the particularized sphere (Dufault & Martocchio, 1985; O´Hara, 2014), as it focuses on specific goals and involves the assessment of task complexity.

The study indicates that the scaffolding approach, which served to increase the awareness of task complexity, may have the effect of reducing hope and motivation, which can be explained by initial unrealistic hope. It may also lead to discovery of new pathways, which increases hope and motivation. The analysis of the data, supported by the study by Ross (2006) and Inglis (2011), indicate an indirect process of scaffolding hope and motivation, where the group sessions helped group members to navigate within the complexity of the issue, and to find some central strategies, rather than becoming overwhelmed by the immensity of the task. Reports from participants showed that when the participants formulated concrete actions that made sense to them, then "particularized hope" emerged, as well as continued engagement. Thus, it was possible to increase levels of hope about a delimited part of the issue complex, even while in some cases having less hope about the issue complex as a whole.

Three Categories that Explained Engagement

Levels of hope and motivation were explained by three categories related to *engagement*; ones' own capacity for engagement (personal resources), the groups' capacity for joint engagement (collective efficacy), and other stakeholders' willingness to engage. Seeing new possibilities to work together "with wise people," or identifying the potential engagement from other stakeholders, or feeling the internal strength and mandate to work toward the solution were all highly significant when explaining hope and motivation (as seen in Table 1). Equally, barriers to hope were explained as the lack of involvement from other stakeholders; lack of energy or stamina within oneself; or lack of power, mandate, or wisdom even, when working together. Depending on the context for the group, there were different concerns regarding stakeholders' involvement. In the case of the public service group (1), relevant stakeholders were already supporting the project, and in the Transition Sweden group (2), the group's approach did not depend on support from other stakeholders, although it still mattered to their endeavor. In the tenant groups (3 and 4), some of the participants felt disheartened about getting help from landlords, property owners, or the municipality. The interviews revealed individual patterns in

how engagement affected levels of hope and motivation, independent of contextual differences. These differences are interesting, and clearly show that multiple factors are needed to explain these levels.

For some participants, their own engagement was used to explain their high level of hope and motivation, as in the following example: *"I have always lost. But that is not an issue, here, because there is no other way, anyway. What does it mean to be a realist? For me, it means to comprehend the possibilities of doing something differently"* (pre-interview, participant in group 2, with hope rate 7). This example connects to the concept of transformative hope (O´Hara, 2014), signifying the ability to feel hopeful about change and being motivated to engage even when faced with crises and continuous loss.

A combination of explanations was often used, sometimes clarifying why motivation was higher than hope in a participant: *"Engagement, that is not the problem whatsoever… I am not the only person that has been engaged in this. I think many people from here would engage if there were chances to change things. Many would engage to such end. There are several people who are tired of what we have here today"* (pre-interview, participant in group 3). This participant post-rated 1 on hope, but 7 on motivation, which showed that her own engagement was not significantly affected by her lack of hope, but she did not deem it possible to make much impact unless the system changed, involving decisions other stakeholders needed to make. Two participants from group 4 (tenants) stated that they had given up hoping that other stakeholders would contribute to improving conditions. From the viewpoint of these participants, the neighborhood was continuously deteriorating, and they were now thinking about moving. *"I am 100 percent motivated as long as I live here. All the time I do things; not just me. But one needs to hear some feedback. Otherwise, one does not have the strength to carry on. In the end, one gives up"* (post-interview, participant in group 4).

Another example relating to engagement shows how both hope and motivation vanished with lack of other stakeholder engagement: *"Right now I feel I have to let go of it. If nobody else cares, then I cannot sit here and shout about it"* (post-interview, participant in group 2). In three cases, participants (from groups 1, 2, and 4) contributed some of their hopefulness to a certainty that the issue would get worse (and hence more urgent to solve) and over time increase other stakeholders' motivation.

The examples above touch on the multidimensional relationships of hope and motivation and indicate that it may be hard to predict when hope and motivation will support public engagement. It is evident that factors that explain hope and motivation varied individually as well as contextually, but that stakeholder engagement positively affected hope, and group involvement was an essential factor for hope and motivation. This is in accordance with Ojala (2010), whose study showed that trust in other actors was both a constructive source of hope as well as a motivational force. When stakeholder engagement was perceived (or anticipated), this affected levels of hope and motivation positively, but several participants reported that they still were willing to engage, even beyond hoping for improvements. To explain this, Miceli and Castelfranchi's (2010) notion of "active hope" may be used, favoring action even in the face of a negative forecast and with low odds of success.

In the post-interviews, personal resources were mentioned neither as a source of hope nor as a barrier to hope. The category increased slightly as a barrier to motivation after participation. My interpretation as to why it was not mentioned as a source of hope after participation is that the participants were further along in the group process and had developed a reliance on the collective engagement, rather than emphasizing their individual resources. Reports from the interviews showed an increased confidence in developing action plans together with others: *"I noticed that it is possible to work in a group"* (post-interview, participant in group 2). The notion of collective hope is an important factor to consider, as seen in earlier research (Amnå, 2008; Nalkur, 2009; Ojala, 2011) and can be strengthened by a constructive group process (Ross, 2006). Through interactions with others, individual powers of agency can also be strengthen by gaining an increased stakeholder understanding (McGeer, 2004).

There were no indications of "passive hope" in my study, perhaps because all participants joined voluntarily, and joining the group meetings was already a mark of an active stance. But passivity did set in concerning parts of an issue that the participants had given up both hope of changing and motivation to work on, while they were still open to engaging where it made sense and seemed possible. In the cases when participants carried hope that others would make changes that were beyond the groups' resources or mandate, they were still motivated to engage personally, using the pathways that seemed available. The line between active and passive hope here appears to be strongly linked with pathway perception and estimated possibilities to affect the issue of concern (as with "authentic hope"), as well as the time and energy needed to do so. Consequently, the same person might be partially passive and lacking in hope and actively engaged and hopeful.

In this section I have attempted to show how levels of hope and motivation were affected by engagement in the issue of concern. For a fuller picture, a deeper investigation of how the relationship between individual, group, and other stakeholder engagement affects hope and motivation would be necessary.

Conclusions

Hope and Motivation as Dynamic Processes

Hope is sensitive to a variety of conditions, such as time, information, personal resources, social context, and perceived support. People's hope and motivation can be significantly strengthened when experiencing direct, personal ways of working productively in a group of participants that share an interest in solving common concerns (sense of collective efficacy). This sense of collective efficacy, together with support from other stakeholders, may be a central motivator for continuing with deliberation.

From a standpoint of working with TIP, the process offers ongoing, dynamic change, and when new information about the issue complexity begins to sink in, some frustration and lack of hope may surface, along with uncertainty about how to progress. It is my experience that later in the process—after a group has chosen a focus—hope tends to increase, especially when action strategies are considered that match the scope of the group and the complexity of the chosen issue. This study confirmed that the discovery of new potential pathways to manage the issue,

through a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity involved, is a key factor for levels of hope and motivation, and hence, propensity to engage actively in efforts to address the issue.

As hope and motivation are continuously subject to dynamic change, the object of hope may shift over time, subjected to new conditions, such as access to new information and changes in social contexts. Moving away from "false (or naïve) hope" may at one point appear as lack of hope from a static viewpoint, but viewed dynamically, it may be the start of a renewed, different way of hoping. When facilitating groups, this may be important to keep in mind. If at one point, group participants experience lower levels of hope that desired outcomes are possible, it may be a phase of reduction of "false hope." If the continued work leads to the discovery that at least parts of the issue complex may be successfully addressed, or that new, previously not thought of, pathways to solutions are discovered, new hope and motivation may arise.

To distinguish between generalized, particularized and transformative hope, may be important for understanding the dynamics of hope and motivation when dealing with issues of societal complexity. Before discovering the degree of complexity of an issue complex, hopes may be strong, because one does not yet have sufficient insight into the difficulties involved. But while increased awareness of complexity may lead to decreased hope regarding the possibilities of resolving the entire issue complex, a more differentiated understanding may lead to strongly increased hope that certain parts of the issue complex can be addressed successfully, even though other (perhaps major and important) parts will be more difficult to manage.

A tentative conclusion, gained from the study, is that reduced motivation is not necessarily a negative outcome of a group process, when working on complex issues. Participants may discover that the issue was not as urgent or important as initially thought. They might therefore have good reasons to engage less in that particular issue and instead prioritize other tasks in which it now seems relatively more important to engage.

A limitation of this study was that it is low in number of participants, which limits inferences from the findings. The significance of this research is first and foremost in drawing attention to the consideration that increased task complexity awareness – effected by a scaffolded issue analysis – may affect hope and motivation in complex ways. When working with groups, a dynamic and non-linear understanding of hope and motivation may enable a process facilitator to trace these kinds of changes.

Implications for Research and Practice

It is a challenge to scientifically investigate hope, to succeed in shaking off its epithet as a vague emotion (Ojala, 2011), while not creating a large gap between how researchers construct hope and what people really talk about when they talk about being hopeful (Bruininks & Malle, 2006).

In this study, some important findings were made, contributing to the understanding of the role of hope and motivation when groups work with complex issues of public concern. The main outcomes of the study were the following:

- an empirically based set of factors relevant for explaining patterns of change in hope and motivation when people participate in multi-phased processes designed to increase their ability to recognize, handle and potentially forsee task complexity
- empirical results regarding the dynamics between the factors and their level of importance for explaining hope and motivation.

While the constructs of hope and motivation have overlaps, the results showed that it might be highly meaningful to differentiate their meaning and explore how different aspects of hope relate to motivation to engage in action. Concrete examples of such relationships are offered through the distinctions made by the participants in the group processes. The study was limited in scope and more research would be needed to firmly grasp these dynamics.

How hope and motivation affect individuals, groups, and organizations when addressing complex public issues needs several research approaches to achieve a fuller picture of the roles that hope and motivation play. As mentioned earlier in this study, a deeper investigation of how the relationship between individual, group, and other stakeholder engagement affects hope and motivation is needed to understand these relational dynamics. Another perspective on this topic could prove valuable, namely, how various facilitators understand the dynamics of hope and motivation throughout group processes involving complex societal issues.

A natural progression from this study would be to investigate how increased hope and motivation affect deliberative decision-making on key issues, once groups have spent a significant time grappling with the issue complexity, using a scaffolding approach (such as TIP). This may entail community-wide questions, or policy questions within an institution. It would also be of value to study the dynamics between task complexity awareness and hope and motivation over longer time spans, while concurrently tracking how groups that grapple with issues of public concern over time transform their ways of dealing with these issues.

The main contribution was the uncovering of some of the complex dynamics between task complexity awareness, hope and motivation. This study indicated that increased task complexity awareness affect different aspects of hope and motivation in several ways. To understand these findings in more depth, further studies are required in order to gain more understanding about individuals' meaning-making processes. Such understanding can help inform facilitators who wish to actively mobilize the kind of constructive hope that can lead to purposeful and well-directed engagement.

Appendix 1. Modules of TIP used in each group

TIP modules that the groups carried out	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Step 1: Create a map of the territory Identify all topics of concern and how they interconnect and impact each other. Use that work to inform the choice of one topic to start with.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Step 2: Align toward the goal Deliberate about how to use and coordinate people's different tones and intentions toward the work's focus.				
Step 3: Develop a portrait of the issue Identify the impacts and causes. Decide initial issue(s) to work on. Get a clear picture of the array of conditions that comprise the selected issue.	✓	✓	✓	
Step 4: Invent an action system Identify the array of changes to reactively and proactively impact the issue. Decide which can be done by an array of appropriate actors (e.g., individuals, groups, organizations, governments). Identify which ones represent discrete sub-issues.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Step 5: Use the action system and select a focus Review the list of potential actions and discuss what impacts the chosen scope of actions could have on the issue. Make decisions about appropriate directions forward individually, as well as for the group. Develop a statement of the goal for the group that communicates the chosen scope. *For a deliberative scope*: Articulate a precise issue question, or 'name,' for the sub-issue or complex decision that needs to be worked on and deliberated.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Step 6: Develop the approaches to the issue question Expose the array of approaches to the issue question that are driven by different perspectives on it.				
Step 7: Deliberative decision-making and meta-approaches Deliberate the pros and cons *within* each possible approach, and the pros and cons *across* all approaches. Make decisions about which elements of each approach are needed for a thorough, integral approach.				
Ongoing Step 8: Coordinate systemic action Divide into task groups, arrange oversight, develop and coordinate ongoing feedback and evaluation loops, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ongoing Step 9: Intentional systemic action, evaluation, and learning Engage in individual and institutional action, reflection, deliberation, evaluation, communication systems, adjustments, etc.	✓	✓	✓	

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