

# MOTV: Research Methods and Data Resources for Social Sciences - Case of Finland

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Do we need another web resource  
for social science courses on  
quantitative methods...

...if the name is

'Menetelmäopetuksen tietovaranto'?



# Players and their needs

## ■ 1 Students

- need to get introductory course material on quantitative methods in their own language
- a web resource with an integrated introduction to methods, statistical software and data suits well for computer classroom
- need to have real, fresh, and substantively appropriate data

# Players and their needs

## ■ 2 Teachers

- need resources that meet the students' needs
- need resources that are suitable for their learning environment both in substantial and technical terms (various disciplines, teaching methods, equipment etc.)
- need material that suits well also for self and distance learning and for compensation purposes

# Players and their needs

- 3 The national data archive, FSD
  - general promotion of the young archive and its services
  - the archive needs links to university teachers and students (and researchers) in order to build national support services
  - a structure for keeping track of the data use and teaching materials related to the archive's data sets
  - need to integrate archive's services to the national web project aiming to a virtual university that focuses on materials for university teaching

- How to organise the services of a national data archive...

...so that its data sets and their documentation are effectively utilised also in academic teaching,

...and so that teachers' activities give maximum added value to shared data resources?

# We need...

- A portal
  - that integrates archive's data sets sufficiently with the teaching materials of methodology courses
  - that succeeds in collecting and organising teaching materials and other added value from the data users in computer classrooms

# We also need...

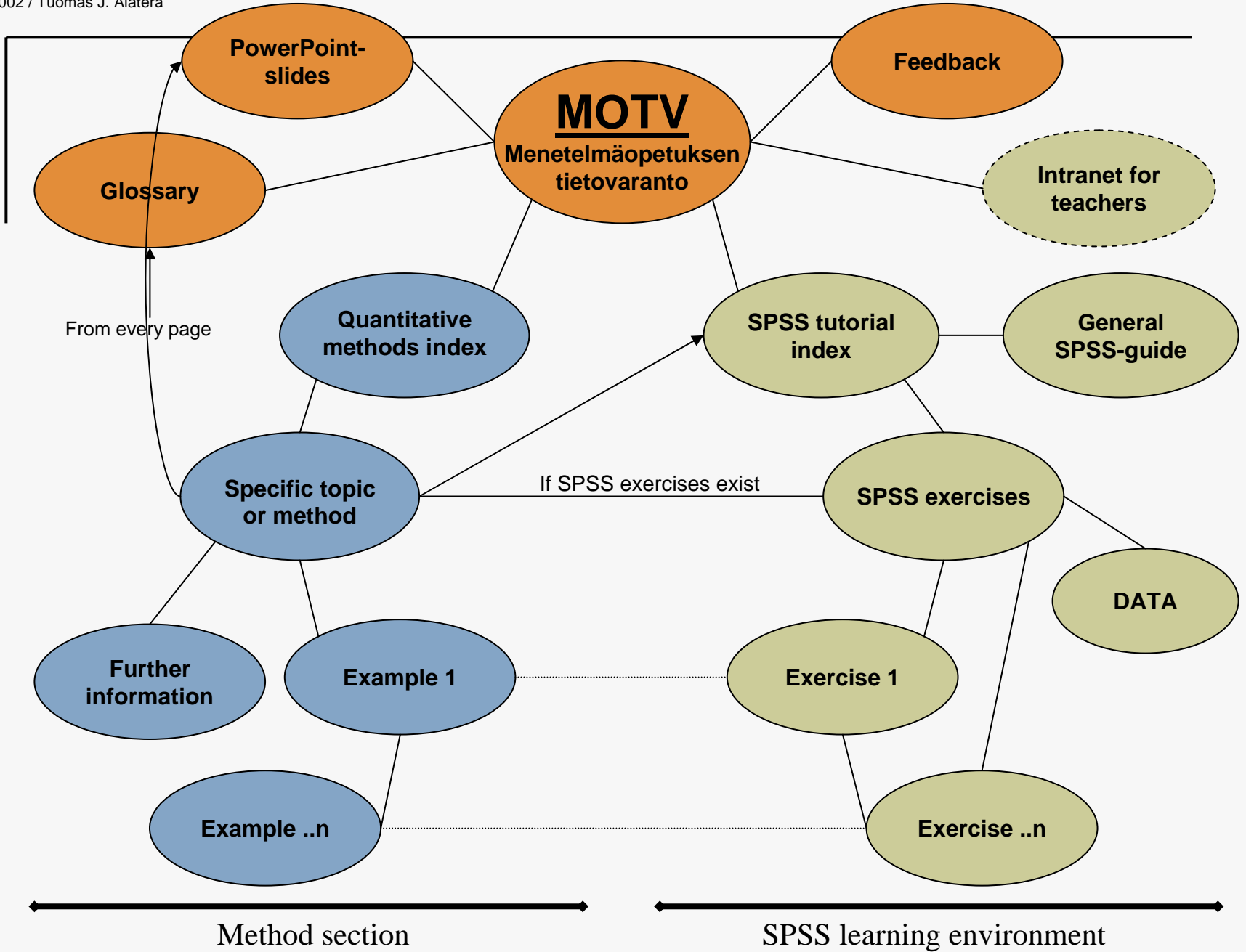
- An expert network
  - to build the start-up portal
  - to test it and develop it (feedback)
  - to use and expand it with shared responsibilities
- Resources
  - start-up resources
  - maintenance and co-ordination
  - development with divided workload (expert network)

# What's in there now?

- a method section and a SPSS-tutorial
- introduction to scientific research and to basic quantitative methods
- also other materials needed in teaching (slides etc.)
- exercises based on three different data sets
- accessible to all
  - main focus on university students and teachers
- trial use since January 2002

# The project

- began at fall 2000
- two full time specialists for 6 months: one for method texts and one for SPSS-environment
- one full time coordinator & HTML coder
- other collaborators
- layout
  - static HTML, orthodox HTML...
  - suitable for multiple platforms, older computers, smaller screens, exotic browsers...



# A quick look

- easy to remember this URL is!  
<http://www.fsd.uta.fi/tietovarannot/menetelmaopetus/>

# What's the situation today?

- almost all basic text material is online
  - advanced methods are sufficiently covered elsewhere in English?
- the number of exercises is growing considerably during the summer 2002 - but even more is needed
- supplementary material partially online

# In the near future...

- new and specific data sets are needed
  - data / subsets suited for different disciplines
  - one collected especially for MOTV
- challenge: teachers' intranet under construction
  - a forum for teachers to share their visions
  - to create examples and exercises based on FSD's data sets
  - to share their own products

# In the distant future...

- a step towards qualitative methods?

# Challenges

- how complete should these materials be as teachers will (and should) accomplish their courses in their own way?
- various substantive needs of different disciplines
- a typical social science survey data does not always meet the needs of statistics teachers
- dependency on one or more commercial statistical software programmes and of their versions
- what to do with the "advanced" methods
- towards a more problem based and comprehensive learning environment

THE END  
Thank You!

