

Assessing learning at the workplace

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Assessing learning at the workplace

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Agenda

- Defining learning at the workplace
- Assessing learning at the workplace

- Facilitating learning at the workplace:
 - Structure
 - Culture
 - Leadership
 - Personal factors

- Conclusions
- Discussion

Defining learning at the workplace

Learning at the workplace

Who has in the last three months.....

1. Studied work-related literature?
2. Tried out new teaching/work methods?
3. Asked feedback from pupils/colleagues on the way of teaching/working?
4. Discussed with colleagues about (educational) improvement and innovation in school/the organisation

Defining learning at the workplace: what's in the name?

- Learning at work, work-based learning, workplace learning.....
- General definition: all the learning that occurs in the context of work
- However distinction between
 - 1) Workplace learning and outcomes of employees (teachers and students)
 - 2) Workplace learning and outcomes of students as part of their training
- This presentation focusses on topic 1)

Outcomes of learning at the workplace

Individual:

- Enhance professional expertise/competence and personal flexibility
- Better task and role performance
- Creative solutions and innovative behaviour¹

- Bad work practices

Organizational:

- Organizational performance
- Organizational development

Thurlings, M., Evers, A. T., & Vermeulen, M. (2015). Explaining Teachers' Innovative Behavior. *Review of Educational Research*, 85(3), 430-471.



Assessing learning at the workplace

Assessing learning at the workplace

- General definition: assessment considers quality of performance
- Assessment of
 - learning processes (e.g. learning at the workplace)
 - outcomes (e.g. professional expertise/competence)
- Summative assessment (certification)
- Formative assessment (feedback and development)
 - Assessment in workplace learning by nature unplanned and formative
- Self-assessment versus assessment by others
- This presentation will focus on formative self-assessment of learning processes at the workplace



Self-assessment of learning at the workplace: the development of a measurement instrument¹

- Learning at the workplace more narrowly defined as participation in learning activities at work
- Categories of learning activities at work:
 - 1) Keeping up-to-date: reading
 - 2) Keeping up-to-date: participation in work-related training
 - 3) Experimenting
 - 4) Reflecting and asking for feedback
 - 5) Collaborating with colleagues with the aim of improving lessons
 - 6) Collaborating with colleagues with the aim of improving school development
- In total 21 questions measuring frequency of behavior

¹Evers, A. T., Kreijns, K., & Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M. (2016). The design and validation of an instrument to measure Teachers' Professional Development at Work. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 38(2), 162-178.



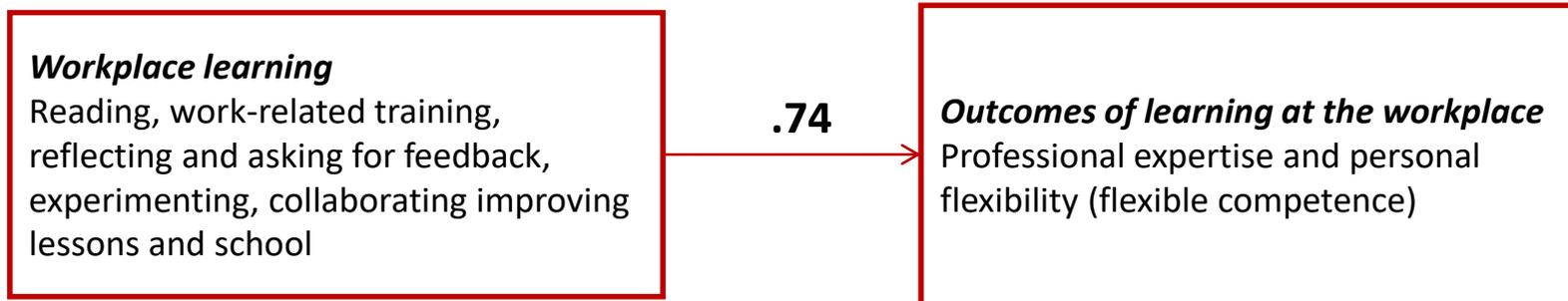
Validation of the instrument

- Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirmed 6 factor structure
- Reliabilities of 6 factors (or subscales) were sufficient to good (Cronbach's alpha between .67 and .80)
- At the moment also translated and validated in Italian
- For more information about validation, see:

¹Evers, A. T., Kreijns, K., & Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M. (2016). The design and validation of an instrument to measure Teachers' Professional Development at Work. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 38(2), 162-178.

Results: workplace learning strongly related to professional expertise and personal flexibility

- Outcome of path analysis¹:



¹Evers, A. T., Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., Kreijns, K., & Vermeulen, M. (2016). Job demands, resources and flexible competence: The mediating role of teachers' professional development at work. *Journal of Career Development*, 43(3), 227-243.



Results: means of learning at the workplace activities for three educational sectors in the Netherlands

Table 1		Table 2		Table 3	
Category Learning activity at Work	Primary education N = 509 Mean	Category Learning activity at Work	Secondary education N = 394 Mean	Category Learning activity at Work	Vocational education N = 249 Mean
Collaborating school level.	5,17	Reflecting & asking feedback	4,65	Reflecting & asking feedback	4,90
Collaborating lessons	4,72	Collaborating school level.	4,59	Collaborating school level.	4,58
Reading	4,68	Reading	4,43	Reading	4,25
Work-related training	4,51	Collaborating lessons	4,16	Work-related training	4,25
Reflecting & asking feedback	4,45	Work-related training	3,99	Collaborating lessons	4,22
Experimenting	4,15	Experimenting	3,96	Experimenting	4,03

Mean measured on 7-point likert scale (almost never – almost always)

N = number of respondents

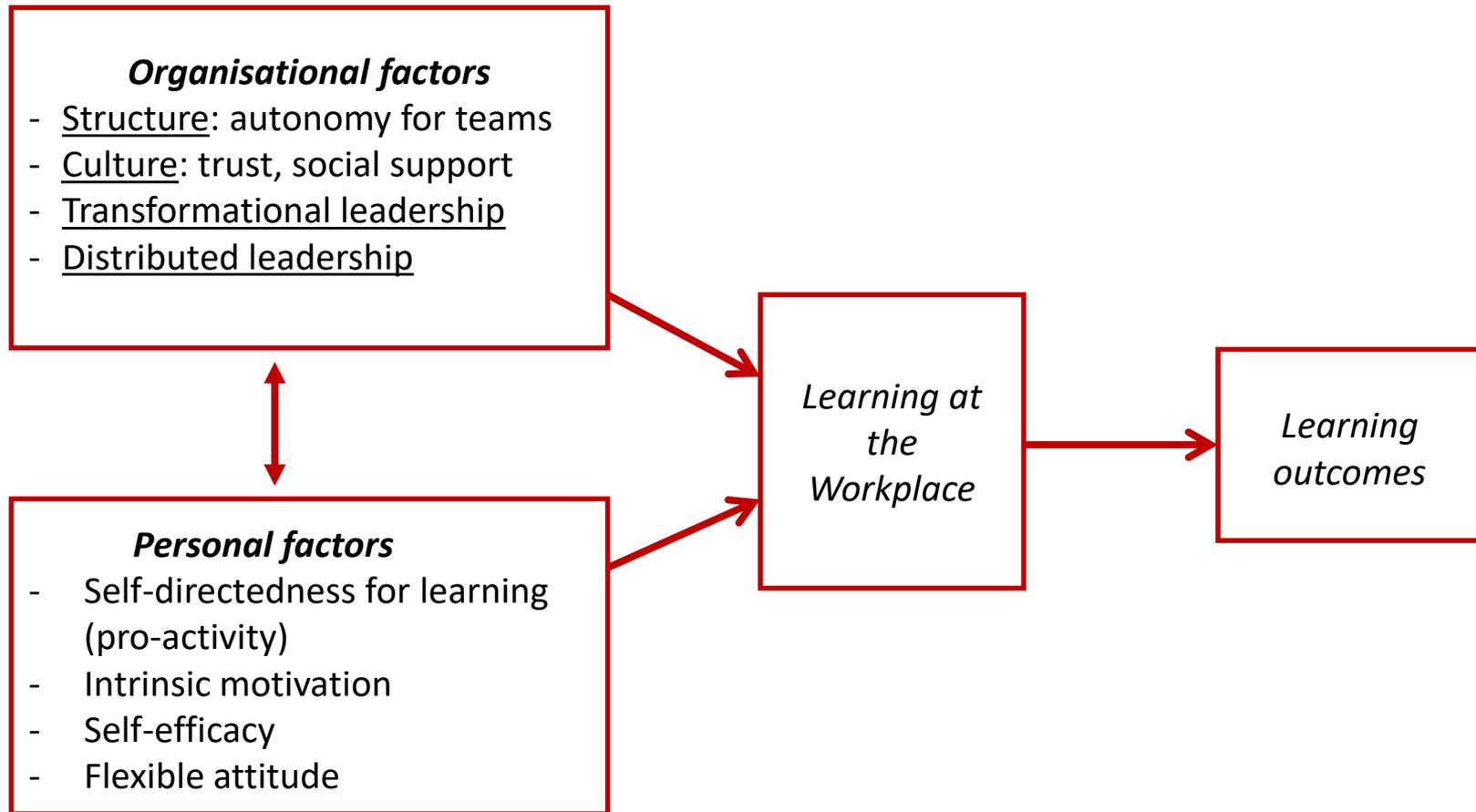


Use of instrument in practice

- Self-assessment: Instrument shows where teachers are in practice with regard to workplace learning
- Be aware: it is a self-report instrument
- Instrument to be used in formative way
- Instrument can be used as monitor
- Important to discuss results in teams of teachers

Facilitating learning at the workplace

What are important factors facilitating learning at the workplace? Structure, Culture, Leadership, Personal



Kyndt, E. & Baert, H. (2013). Antecedents of Employees' Involvement in Work-related learning: A systematic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(2), 273-313.



Good practice: Secondary school Vathorst College¹

- Amersfoort (Centre of The Netherlands)
- 971 students
- 110 employees (89 teachers)
- Head master, deputy head master, 4 section leaders, 7 coordinators

¹Hulsbos, F. A., Van Langevelde, W. S., & Evers, A. T. (2016). Combining forces. Distributed Leadership and a professional learning community in primary and secondary education. Heerlen: Welten Institute- Open University of The Netherlands.



Organisational factors: Structure: learning houses

- Thematic education
- Autonomy for teams of teachers
- Subject teams (coordinates)
- Necessitate teachers to collaborate and improve

Organisational factors: Culture

- Open culture and trust
- Supportive atmosphere
- Stimulates informal collaboration

Organisational factors: Transformational and distributed leadership

- School leader (transformational):
 - Receptive, supportive and has trust in teachers' professionalism
 - Ambitious and decisive
 - Clear vision as a continuous process
- Distributed leadership:



Personal factors: Collective teacher profile

Self-directed, intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy to collaborate, flexible attitude

Conclusions

- It is at work where most learning happens
- Important to assess this
- Do something with results of assessment
- Discuss in teams and possible facilitation

Facilitating learning at the workplace

- Build an organizational structure that enables and necessitates teachers to collaborate
- Work on an open culture with opportunities to bring in new ideas, make mistakes, trust and social support
- School leader: vision as a continuous process, inviting and supporting for new ideas, trust in teachers' professionalism
- Facilitate distributed leadership in which every teacher can enact (temporary leadership) roles and behaviour
- Work on a collective teacher profile

Thank you for your attention

- Questions?

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Discussion

- Does your organization facilitate workplace learning? Why? Why not?
- Is workplace learning included in appraisal talks?
- Does your organization have a clear teacher/employee profile?