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EVALUATION IN WORK OF PRINCIPALS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE METHODOLOGY APPROACHES

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Abstract

Teachers´ evaluation provided by school principals is often used during reforms of school systems. The aim of the paper is to provide an overview what is being researched and how the evaluation in work of principles is surveyed. The review study is trying to find answers to these following research questions: a) How is evaluation used by elementary school principals? b) What methodological approaches are applied in the research of this topic? A database ERIC and a Web of Science have been used in order to gain the survey. There were 47 research surveys. Mostly these surveys have been published in the last seven years, where data obtained mainly in the USA. The researchers were mainly involved in these following topics: 1) implementation of a teachers´ new evaluation system, 2) perception of the evaluation system by school principals and their role including recognition of differences at novice teachers or experienced ones, 3) assessing the teachers´ effectiveness. In order to obtain research goals and to find answers to research questions a diverse spectrum of research questions have been used: quantitative, qualitative, mixed design and an analysis of obtained data. Inspiration for research of evaluation in work of school principals in the Czech context will be a solution of professional research questions which would focus on the perception of evaluation system by school principals and their roles in that system.

Keywords: Review, principals, teacher evaluation, research methods.

1. Introduction

There is a great emphasis put on increasing of teachers´ quality in the last years during reforms of educational systems, where teachers´ evaluation is mainly used (e.g. Atkinson et al., 2009; Flores, 2012; Harvey, 2005; Leithwood & Earl 2000; Liu & Zhao, 2013; Robinson & Timperly, 2007). Evaluation of teachers depends on the evaluation system, which is applied at schools. Principles and their way of school management play a central role in it. Naturally, the school management is crucial in creating effective schools where pupils have excellent results (Hvidston, McKim, & Mette, 2016). Strong school management might or not help evaluation culture, professional teachers´ development and also pupils´ learning outcomes.

2. Problem Statement

School management approach is naturally being developed in the life of a school (mainly principles, deputies). Leading pedagogue worker are continuously being educated and getting better in their managing competencies including competencies towards teachers´ evaluation. The result of school evaluation depends on the interaction of pedagogical workers and teachers.

The goal of the paper is to provide an overview what is being researched and how concerning the topic of evaluation in work of schools' principles.

3. Research Questions

We asked two essential research questions to be answered in this paper. The first one was: How is evaluation used by elementary schools' principals? The second and main research question (closely connected with the first one) was: What methodological approaches are applied in the research of this topic? The findings resulting from the answers are presented in the sixth part of this paper.

4. Purpose of the Study

The review study is a part of a wider research project, which deals with research questions: How is the evaluation used in work of schools' principles? This study should help to obtain ideas and inspiration to survey evaluation in work of principles. This is just an initial phase of the research where the research survey should be narrowed as well as to obtain a suggestion for a research design in order to research evaluation activities in work of elementary school principals in the county of Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic.

5. Research Methods

There was this following procedure during selection of studies. Firstly, in databases ERIC (The Education Resources Information Centre), Web of Science which contain reliable sources (mostly reviewed) from a pedagogical research there were links being looked up: e.g. "evaluation", "teacher evaluation", "school principals", "principal evaluation", "elementary school". Some of the articles have

been found in both databases, more of them just only in the one. The following table 1 implies a selection of studies´ sample. In the total there have been selected and gained 47 studies (pool of articles).

Table 01. Selection of studies from the database ERIC and the Web of Science

	ERIC	**Web of Science**
Key words	educational leadership, school administrators, leadership, evaluation, performance evaluation, school principals, assessment	evaluation, teacher evaluation, principal, principal evaluation, school principals
Number of articles	2.799	335
Studies selected	17	30 (+ 2, appeared also in the database ERIC)

Articles had been chosen from the set of studies which met the following criteria: a) journal study published in b) English language, which presented c) original research (empiric study, i.e. theoretical or overview studies had been excluded) in the last d) twenty years. Furthermore, e) respondents from elementary schools represented a source of data (e.g. principals, their deputies, teachers). Last but not least f) there must have been studies, which focused on research of some of the aspects of evaluation in work of school principals. Studies were selected based on publication of researchers´ findings, where a questionnaire or interviews were asking principals or teachers from elementary schools, secondary and high schools. Therefore, the selection of studies is not strictly about researches which were provided on at elementary schools.

Even with the process described above, the review is restricted: only a limited number of databases and full texts available were used. This could have led to omitting important research conclusions stated in review studies.

6. Findings

Based on the set research questions, we pursued the set goals, or research questions and research methods used of the studies.

Characteristics of these studies are following:

- These are current research finding. In most cases (in 45 studies) the researches have been published during the last seven years. Just only in two studies (Halverson & Clifford, 2006; Yavuz, 2010) the research survey was done earlier.
- Studies have been published in 31 reviewed journals. More than one study has been occurred in these journals (in alphabetical order): American Educational Research Journal; Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy; Educational Administration Quarterly; Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis; Educational Management Administration & Leadership; International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership; International Journal of Leadership in Education; Journal of Educational Administration; NCPEA Education Leadership Review; Studies in Educational Evaluation.
- Most studies come from North America (35 from the USA, three from Canada). Furthermore, there were 7 surveys made in Asia (two studies from Israel, one from Indonesia, one from Iran,

one from Jordan, one from Pakistan and one from Turkey) and 3 from Europe (one study from the Netherland, one study from Cyprus and one from Portugal). Flores and Derrington (2015) published findings comparing a situation in south east of the USA and in Portugal.

6.1. Objectives & research questions of studies

Researches were engaged with several topics in the studies, which were explicitly listed in 39 studies. The topics are as follows: 1) implementation of the new evaluation system of teachers, 2) perception of the evaluation system of the principals and their role including depicting differences in novice teachers and the experienced teachers, 3) assessment of teachers´ effectiveness. Minority topics are as follows:

- comparability of classroom observation (Wind, Tsai, Grajeda, & Bergin, 2018);
- difference in evaluation of principals (Jones & Bergin, 2019);
- principals´ competencies (Ross & Cozzens, 2016);
- development of evaluation abilities of principals (Davis, Leon, & Fultz, 2013);
- impact of evaluation of teachers´ professional development (Liu, Visone, Mongillo, & Lisi, 2019; Mette et al., 2017);
- impact of teachers´ evaluation on school operation (Wiyono, 2017);
- influence of evaluation system (Grissom, Blissett, & Mitani, 2018);
- influence of the environment of the school operation: a) inspections (Ehren, Perrymana, & Shackleton, 2014), b) educational policy (Donaldson, 2013);
- influence of pupils´ testing on the principal´s role (Prytula, Noonan, & Hellsten, 2013);
- perception of evaluation methods by teachers (Al-Tarawneh, Al-Oshaibat, & Al-Nizam Ismail, 2016);
- teachers´ perception of principals during evaluation (Mette, Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Nieuwenhuizen, 2015; Range, Anderson, Hvidston, & Mette, 2013);

Implementation of a new system of teachers´ evaluation or system of evaluation in school is concerned in 9 studies (Derrington, 2016; Derrington, 2013; Derrington & Campbell, 2015; Derrington & Campbell, 2017; Dodson, 2017; Donaldson & Woulfin, 2013; Lochmiller & Mancinelli, 2019; Neumerski et al., 2018; Quinn, Kane, Greenberg, & Thal, 2018), where these following research questions were being discussed:

- „How did principals and teachers work together to implement a new teacher-evaluation system? What specific professional development activities supported implementation of teacher evaluation? "(Derrington, 2016)
- „What benefits do principals perceive these new evaluation systems providing for their work? "(Neumerski et al., 2018)
- „How did principals exercise agency within the structure of the new teacher evaluation system? "(Donaldson & Woulfin, 2013)
- „What metaphors do principals use to conceptualize or make sense of the change during the teacher evaluation implementation? "(Derrington, 2013)

- „How have principal perspectives and practices of teacher supervision and evaluation changed during the first 3 years of implementation of a new teacher evaluation system? "(Derrington & Campbell, 2015)

Perception of the evaluation system by school principals and their role is a subject of topics found in 10 studies (Cohen-Azaria & Zamir, 2018; Grissom & Bartanen, 2018; Hvidston et al., 2016; Kraft & Gilmour, 2016; Lavigne & Chamberlain, 2016; Reid, 2017; Renihan & Noonan, 2012; Rigby, 2015; Sharief, Naderi, Hiedari, Roodbari, & Jalilvand, 2012; Vogel, 2018). Where for example these following research questioned were being addressed:

- „What are principals' views on the purpose of teacher evaluation? What are principals' perspectives on how to improve the quality of feedback teachers receive through the evaluation process? " (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016)

- „How do principals perceive the school evaluator's role? What are their actual requirements and expectations of this role? " (Cohen-Azaria & Zamir, 2018)

- „What are the perceptions of principals' regarding their own supervision/evaluation? What are the perceptions of novice and experienced principals' regarding formative supervision?" (Hvidston et al., 2016)

- „Whether principal effectiveness is associated with lower teacher turnover on average. What extent the association between principal effectiveness and teacher turnover differs for high-performing and low-performing teachers, and, furthermore, whether these associations vary by different measures of teacher performance?" (Grissom & Bartanen, 2018)

- How school principals consider effective and ineffective teachers is dedicated in 7 studies (Donaldson & Mavrogordato, 2018; Harris, Ingle, & Rutledge, 2014; Maharay, 2014; Master, 2014; Orphanos, 2014; Range, Hewitt, & Young, 2014; Wind et al., 2019). There are examples of the following research questions:

- „What data sources do principals use to identify marginal teachers, and how do their views differ by gender? What supervisory methods do principals use when attempting to improve marginal teachers, and how do their views on the methods differ by gender?" (Range et al., 2014)

- "Can principals distinguish effective and ineffective teachers? What teacher and school characteristics influence principals' evaluations of teacher effectiveness? What principal characteristics and practices influence evaluations of teacher effectiveness?" (Orphanos, 2014)

- "How school leaders use high-stakes teacher evaluation to improve and, if necessary, remove low-performing teachers in their schools? How cognitive, relational and organizational factors play a role in shaping the way school leaders implement teacher evaluation?" (Donaldson & Mavrogordato, 2018)

6.2. Results - methods and approaches used in studies

A variety of research questions were used in order to achieve research goals and find answers to research questions (see table 2).

Table 02. Methods and approaches used in studies

Methodological approach	Method	Studies
19x quantitative design	18x survey	Sharief et al. (2012); Prytula et al. (2013); Range et al. (2013); Ehren et al. (2014); Maharay (2014); Orphanos (2014); Range et al. (2014); Mette et al. (2015); Al-Tarawneh et al. (2016); Hvidston et al. (2016); Lavigne & Chamberlain (2016); Ross & Cozzens (2016); Dodson (2017); Wiyono (2017); Paufler (2018); Quinn et al. (2018); Yousaf et al. (2018); Lochmiller & Mancinelli (2019);
	1x interview	Harris et al. (2014)
19x qualitative design	10x semi structured interviews	Derrington (2013); Donaldson (2013); Kraft & Gilmour (2016); Derrington & Campbell (2017); Mette et al. (2017); Cohen-Azaria & Zamir (2018); Donaldson & Woulfin (2018); Neumerski et al. (2018); Shaked (2018); Vogel (2018)
	6x case study	Halverson & Clifford (2006); Yavuz (2010); Derrington & Campbell (2015); Rigby (2015); Derrington (2016); Reid (2017)
	2x focus groups	Renihan & Noonan (2012); Tran & Bon (2015)
	1x interviews and observation	Donaldson & Mavrogordato (2018)
6x desk analysis	Data analysis of obtained from information systems	Master (2014); Grissom et al. (2018); Grissom & Bartanen (2018); Wind et al. (2018); Jones & Bergin (2019); Wind et al. (2019)
3x mixed design	Survey and interviews	Liu et al. (2019); Davis et al. (2013); Flores & Derrington (2015)

Questionnaires of own construction have been used during the surveys (16x). In two case researches worked during creation of the questionnaire from already made ones: in the study Range et al. (2014) it was represented by a questionnaire used in a dissertation work by Jankord (2000) and in the second case (Ross & Cozzens, 2016) there was a questionnaire called Leadership Behaviour Inventory (Green, 2014). In 9 cases we talk about a survey, where respondents represented school principals (from 70 up to 1.142 respondents), and in 5 studies the researches were questioning principals (from 80 up to 300) and also teachers (from 50 up to 600) and in 4 cases they questioned teachers only (from 74 up to 314). Descriptive statistics was always used for presentation, where in 4 cases there were t-tests used (Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Range et al., 2014; Hvidston et al., 2016; Yousaf et al., 2018), in 4 cases ANOVA (Al-Tarawneh et al., 2016; Sharief et al., 2012; Range et al., 2013; Wiyono, 2017), in two regression analysis (Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Mette et al., 2015), in two LSD tests (Sharief et al., 2012; Range et al., 2013) and in one case Shapiro-Wilk test (Ross & Cozzens, 2016) and in one a correlation (Yousaf et al., 2018). A content analysis of open questions was used in one of the study (Lochmiller & Mancinelli, 2019).

During interviews the respondents were formed from only school principals – the number of respondents differed from 8 up to 60. The interviews were in the range from 45 min up to 90-minute-long interviews and were always transcribed and coded. In the Vogel study (2018) was explicitly listed that it was the NVIVO coding. Derrington chose an interesting way (2013) analysing metaphors of school

principals describing their experience with implementation of the new evaluation system for teachers gained from ca 60-minute-long interviews and coded afterwards.

A questionnaire was also used in studies with a mixed design. Liu et al. (2019) interviewed in total of 1991 teachers: a) What do Connecticut teachers report about the feedback they receive in the teacher evaluation process? b) To what extent is teacher-perceived effectiveness of feedback to improve instruction related to teacher perceptions of feedback format, content, and characteristics; evaluator credibility; and professional development support? They used descriptive statistics, logical regression and model making for presentation of findings. Davis et al. (2013) interviewed 101 principals and were looking answers for these following research questions: a) How do urban principals develop leadership expertise? b) How important (comparatively) are on-the-job experiences and administrative credential programs in the development of leadership expertise among urban principals (and with what skills)? c) How important are the 1996 ISLLC Standards for School Leaders in the development of leadership expertise among urban principals? They used descriptive statistics in order to present findings from 41 item questionnaire; as well as factor analysis, t-tests and ANOVA. After the questionnaire survey was completed they interviewed 20 out of 101 principals over the phone in the range of 20-30 minutes.

Desk analysis represent specific methodological approaches where researches gained robust data from information systems of competent states of the USA:

- Jones & Bergin (2019) analysed date from the Network for Educator Effectiveness (NEE) in Missouri, where Many-facet Rasch model (MFR) was used. At first 421 principals watched a video recording from a classroom, which they assessed (= calibration was made) and they observed at their 4640 teachers. Than the data was analysed by the researches.

- Wind et al. (2018) analysed data from the NEE (Missouri) gained during observations from the total of 1324 school principals, where comparability of the structure that evaluations levels during classroom observation was considered in all phases of teaching.

- Wind et al. (2019) analysed date from the NEE (Missouri) gained during observations in 265 K-12 districts during the years 2016-2017 from 549 principals and from 4992 teachers. They made a quantitative analysis and created a model based on those data.

- Grissom et al. (2018) published results from data analysis from the database (Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model - TEAM),) obtained in the state of Tennessee every year about school principals during the years 2011-2012 up to 2014-2015. When they were engaged in: What are the distributional properties of the summative TEAM administrator practice ratings?

- Grissom and Bartanen (2018) published results from data analysis from a database Tennessee's state wide evaluation system, obtained in the state of Tennessee every year from about 58 000 teachers during the years 2011-2012 up to 2015-2016. Scores on these individual components are aggregated using weighting formulas that vary based on a teacher's subject assignment (i.e., tested or non-tested subjects) and the availability of prior student achievement data; the typical split over the years of the data is 50% from observations, 35% from student growth, and 15% from the achievement measure.

7. Conclusion

In the previous text, we introduced the objectives and methodology of research studies focused on evaluation in work of elementary school principals. Now we will try to summarize the findings and discuss them in broader context.

An important theme for us is the question: How to assure generalized view of evaluation in work principals? from individual research articles. Here we get to the limits of meta-analysis of qualitative and mixed design research reports. Another question is whether: Are experiences generalized from different countries? Is it possible share experiences from studies to Czech context? Thanks to this review, we will be better able to design our following research activities.

Overview study has shown that the main topics during researching the evaluation in work of principals are following :1) implementation of a new evaluation system of teachers, 2) perception of system evaluation of principals and their role including depicting differences in novice teachers and well experienced ones, 3) assessment of teachers´ effectiveness or inefficiency. In terms of researches concerning methodological aspect there are three ways: quantitative, qualitative, mixed design and analysis from data obtained which are used.

Inspiration in order to research evaluation in work of school principals in the Czech context would be a solution of similar research questions such as Kraft and Gilmour (2016): What are the principals´ views on the purpose of teachers´ evaluation? 2) How do principals balance during expanding their role of pedagogical leadership (instructional leaders) with their other duties? What are the principals´ experiences during a classroom observation and an evaluation interview? What is the principals´ view, how to improve the quality of teachers´ feedback throughout the evaluation process? We shall use research questions similarly such as Lavigne and Chamberlain (2016): What self-confidence do the school principals have in terms of their ability and knowledge needed for conducting evaluation of teachers? How much time do school principals spend during evaluation of teachers? How do the school principals evaluate various measures and tools used in models of teachers´ evaluation? A mixed research design would be probably used there, a questionnaire survey specifically and then followed by a semi-structured interviews focused on findings which methods are listed by the school principals in connection with evaluation of teachers at school as well as used during Derrington research (2013).

Acknowledgments

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