



Høgskolen i Telemark

Promoting quality in leadership through interactive research

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Background

- Ph.D – Newly qualified pedagogical leaders´ competence building (Ødegård 2011).
 - The newly qualified pedagogical leaders are challenged on leadership issues in a context with contradictory, indistinct and vague discourses
 - The newly qualified pedagogical leaders experience complicated leadership problems
 - Leading the staff is the biggest challenge for the newly qualified
 - The newly qualified are dependent on their staff to give dem legitimacy
 - Taking part in the practical work in kindergarten gives the newly qualified legitimacy



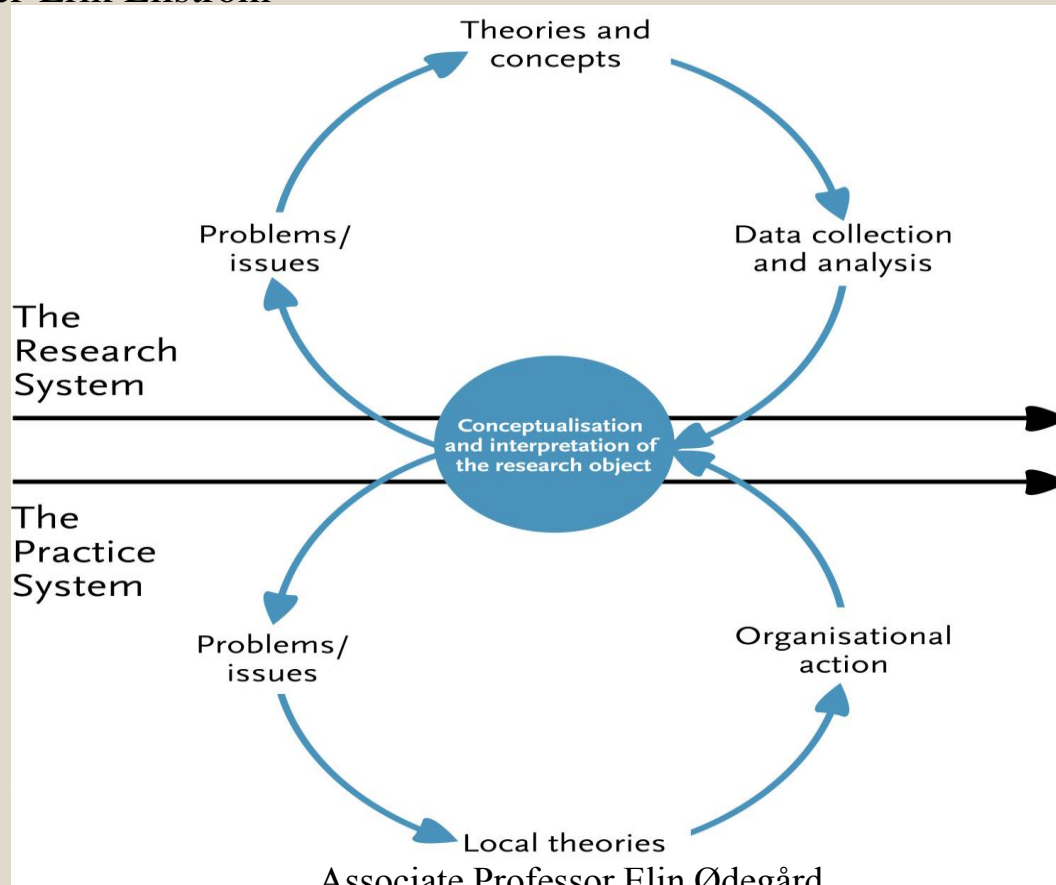
Theoretical framing

- Socio-cultural approach
 - Inspired by Vygotsky, Bakthin and Wertsch
 - Central concepts are:
 - Mastery - «knowing how»
 - Appropriation - The process of taking something that belongs to others and making it one's own
 - Cultural tools - Individual, concrete and systemically cultural tools
- Leadership approach
 - Inspired by Spillane, Gronn and Wadel
 - relational, contextual, distributed, situated and interactional leadership theories
 - Loyalty
 - Legitimacy



Design and methods

- Model Per-Erik Ellström





The context

- Three kindergartens
 - About 60 participants in the kindergartens
 - 11 departments
- Two researchers
 - 2 master students
 - 4 students in mentoring education



Design and methods

- An interactive research 2013 – 2017
 1. **Initial phase**
 1. Meetings with the one owner and three heads of three kindergartens
 2. Twelve leaders in three kindergartens are interviewed in focus groups. Three to five informants in three groups.
 1. The intention with the interview is to catch the participants' views and discussions around the concepts legitimacy and loyalty and the possible relationship between these two concepts
 2. **Implementation phase**
 1. Meetings with all the staffs to present the project
 2. Meetings with the participants to evaluate and plan the project
 3. Observation of supervision and staff meetings
 3. **Conclusion phase**



Results from the initial phase

- Legitimacy and loyalty are intertwined concepts
- The leaders meet ethical dilemmas
 - In-between horizontal and vertical loyalty
 - Loyalty to the owner of the kindergartens
 - Economical perspectives
 - Loyalty to the children
 - Quality perspectives
- The leaders are talking less about loyalty to the staff
- The leaders are not aware of how they get their legitimacy
- Lack of places for reflections



Implementation phase 1

- Kick off meetings in the kindergartens
 - What is the quality of our departments
 - Select an area for improvement
 - How to use mentoring for quality improvement
 - All departments have regular mentoring sessions
 - The leaders are responsible for the mentoring



Results from implementation phase 1

- Observations from 30 mentoring sessions
- Interviews of the leaders and the assistants
- Analyses of the material together with the participants for planning of the project
- Analyses of the material together with students
 - 2 master degrees
 - 4 students from mentoring education
- Analyses of the material for one journal article



Our preliminary findings

- The leaders' professional competence is expressed in different ways
 - Some have clearly expressed their professional expertise others are more vague
- The participants in the mentoring sessions often have a common understanding of the issues presented
 - The wellbeing of the children is often expressed
- The leaders and the assistants give express that mentoring sessions is good venues to address the challenges
 - They all want to continue with formal mentoring sessions



Reflections and discussion

- Some challenges with the interactive design
 - Ethical considerations
 - Proximity and distance
 - Confidentiality
 - Power
 - The leaders as mentors
 - The relation between the participants
 - The relations between the participants and the researchers



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