# Co-Producing Capability

*The effects of people management activities on professional capability of teachers in secondary education.*

Marit Baukje Weggemans

**Voor mijn ouders.**

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**Research Master Thesis Public Administration and Organizational Science**

*Utrecht University & VO-raad*

Marit Weggemans (3179621)

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Mirko Noordegraaf (UU)
Second Reader: Dr. Eva Knies (UU)
Supervisors VO-raad: Dr. Bas de Wit & Annemiek Staarman

Thesis defense: 16th of October 2015 at 16.00 p.m., Utrecht School of Governance

This preface is probably the first section (and perhaps also the last) of this thesis that you will read. For me as the writer however this is the final part of what I have been working on. While writing this preface I am reflecting on a research period of nine months which is about to come to an end now. Ending things always result in mixed feelings for me. Friends and family will confirm that I hate saying goodbye, and I am not a big fan of change either. But, I've learned to finish things with a positive feeling and to emphasize on the good side, like remembering the good laughs after a family visit, the nice ice cream you ate during your Italian holiday, or in this case the inspiring period I've had during this research period.

Just calling it an inspiring nine months would be jumping to conclusions too soon, because there were also days with uncertainty and moments of frustration. I have learned that the researcher goes through all kinds of emotions while conducting a research, but also that during this period of time the same is true for your family and close friends. Nevertheless, I would not have wanted to miss this final period of my study. Thanks to the people that surrounded and supported me, I can look back on this time with a positive feeling.

I would like to thank first of all Prof. dr. Mirko Noordegraaf who offered me the chance to be a member of his research team for the NWO BOPO research on professional capability. Being part of this team, together with Madelon Heerema and Dr. Nina van Loon, has brought me much, and inspired me to continue with the research on professional capability for my own final thesis. I enjoyed working with you all, and would like to thank you for your support and sharing your knowledge and experience with me. Another person who I would like to thank is Dr. Eva Knies who stepped in after a few months of research, but soon proved to be a critical and supportive second reader and who contributed much to this final version.

Dr. Bas de Wit and Annemiek Staarman were my supervisors at the VO-raad. It was Bas who already inspired me in 2012 to continue doing research in the educational field, and who offered me the opportunity to work on my research at the VO-raad. Together with Annemiek they proved to be a great support team. With critical notes, humor and a lot of sector knowledge they supervised me during these months of research. I would like to thank you both for your interest and involvement, which meant a lot to me.

I would finally like to thank my partner Marijn, close friends and family. I hope they already know how much I have appreciated their patience, support and love, but it feels great to be able to write it down here and telling them how happy I am that they are such an important part of my life. I am looking forward to spending more time with you all, now that I can't use this thesis as an excuse any longer. *Marijn, Daan, Ria, Ise en Mama & Papa een extra bedankje voor jullie!*

I will end this research with a symbolic dot, just like my uncle placed one on the front and back of the cover from this thesis, which he designed. This dot represents closure in all its facets, but hopefully it will also represent room for new experiences to come.

The educational sector faces various problems like high drop-out and burn-out percentages of teachers, the expected shortage of teachers, declining performances and young teachers who leave the sector within five years. These problems are a great cause for concern as teachers are of vital importance for education. Their functioning is not only important for daily practice, but even more important for the quality of education (e.g. Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Leisink & Boselie, 2014).

Concerns about education and the position of teachers appear at different levels in society; from the general government, to the professional domain, and the school organization. Teachers feel pressured and seem to experience more stress and demands, but there are also 'frontline teachers' or 'active agents' who try to reshape the profession from within. However their approach seems to be too ad-hoc and unstructured to really accomplish change for teachers. To deal with the demands and pressure in education teachers seem to need besides the more classic competences, also *professional capability* as coping behavior. This way there is expected that they will be able to deal with not only problems inside their classroom, but also with matters like the increased critical role of parents, or the inspection for education outside their classroom. Therefore it seems important to support teachers in their development and offer a structured environment like the school organization, where teachers and school leaders can work on the development of professional capability together.

Despite the debated position of school leaders (*managers*) in public organizations, their role seems to be crucial for professional development since they can also be seen as 'organizational agents' who fulfill a key role in the organization. From their position they can undertake different activities to support teachers in their day-to-day activities and in their development. When studying the activities of managers the concept of people *management* is used. This concept consists of two elements which are the *HR-practices* and the l*eadership behavior* that managers can use to support employees (Knies, 2012). More specifically, to support the professional capability of teachers. Professional capability is defined as: *'a specific type of proactive coping behavior which helps teachers to deal with – and at times resist – work related expectations, challenges and burdens that dynamic environments and stakeholders pose upon them'* (Noordegraaf, et al, *under review*). The theoretical assumption is that different resources, like *PSM, autonomy* and *internal and external network use*, can contribute to the development of professional capability. But, since managers can function as 'organizational agents', besides teachers as 'professional agents', the expectation is that they can have together an essential role in the development of professional capability through these different resources.

To learn more about the professional capability of teachers and the effect that people management activities can have, the following central research question was formulated: *What are the effects of people management activities on professional capability, and how can these effects be explained?* This central research question is accompanied by both theoretical and empirical sub-questions. After a thorough literature study, an empirical mixed method study was conducted to answer this central research question. In total 1.069 teachers received a digital survey of which 550 teachers responded, and 32 school leaders were interviewed in focus groups. This together resulted in rich data for analysis. The survey data was analyzed with SPSS in which multiple regressions were conducted, and the interviews were transcribed and analyzed through different coding steps (Boeije, 2012).

The first result is about the current degree of professional capability. Teachers in secondary education score a 4.5 on a 7-pointscale. This score indicates that teachers already make use of their professional capabilities. This score is a positive indicator for the sector, and offers a starting point for further development to which this research and its results can contribute. All tested resources – PSM, internal networks, external networks and autonomy – had a positive significant effect on professional capability. When adding people management to the research model it was remarkable to see that the people management component *support in development* had the most positive significant effect on the resources -PSM, external networks and autonomy. At the same time it was striking to see that teachers perceived this activity now as most negative with a mean of 3.17 on a 5-pointscale. The final step was to test the indirect effect of people management on professional capability. It can be concluded that people management matters for the professional capability of teachers, in other words managers can make a difference for the behavior of teachers. The indirect effect measured takes place through the different resources for professional capability, namely: PSM, autonomy, internal- and external networks. The most important (mediating) resource proves to be *autonomy*. All people management activities had an indirect positive effect on professional capability through autonomy.

This implies that managers' activities should not only be focused more on offering *support in development of teachers*, but that they should also be more aware of the importance of *autonomy* as a resource for this capability. This does not mean that teachers need limitless autonomy to develop professional capability. It means that teachers and school leaders together need to discuss what autonomy means and work together on an agreed form. This makes that the concept of professional capability is neither top-down nor bottom-up, it is about co-producing capabilities. Both the manager and the professional need to strive for a relationship which makes it possible to work together on the development of professional capability. Only this way managers and teachers can deal with problems and work on quality of education together.

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## 1. A QUESTION OF CAPABILITY?

High dropout numbers of teachers, young teachers who leave the sector within five years, declining educational performances, and an upcoming shortage of teachers (CBS, 2015; AOB, 2014; Rijksoverheid, 2014a; Rijksoverheid, 2014b). These are all problems in the educational sector, where the position of teachers is the central point of discussion. Teachers have an essential role in school organizations, and are as such a crucial factor for quality of education (e.g. Barber & Mourshed, 2007). It seems important that the sector, and teachers in particular, is able to deal with the multiple problems in education without the threat of too much work related stress or illness. Quality of education, in all its facets, is not only important for the sector, but also for society as a whole. The expectation is that teachers need a specific type of behavior to deal with work related pressure and demands. Therefore this study looks more closely at the *professional capability* of teachers which is defined as a specific type of coping behavior (Noordegraaf, van Loon, Heerema & Weggemans, *forthcoming*).

To study this professional capability and the development, there are three different levels that can be looked at, namely: the national- (macro), professional- (meso) and organizational (micro) level. The first level is the national domain, in which the central government can be marked as the most influential actor. The central government is involved in the problems around teachers and their functioning in several ways. For example by taking financial measures to support teachers in their professional development[1].Despite this involvement, the problems that professionals experience also seem to be partly due to this level. Because teachers often perceive the government as a demanding actor who is mainly focused on quality of education from an economical perspective, in which teachers have become an instrument to reach this[2] (Thomas & Davies, 2005; Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013; Onderwijsraad, 2013).

The second, is the professional level which seems to be closer related when focusing on the capability of teachers. This domain takes place outside the school organization, and is a place where teachers traditionally used to meet to discuss specific work related topics (Leenheer, 2015). More recently this domain seems to be characterized by discussions about what it means to be a teacher in the twenty-first century, and more important, what is needed to be one (Ibid). These discussions seem important when looking more closely at the differences among teachers. Because on the one hand there are a lot of teachers who experience strong feelings of stress and pressure with even the possible risk of burn-out. These teachers do not feel capable enough to deal with all the demands

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[1] See: 'Afspraken over investering tot 1,2 miljard in onderwijs'. Accessed via:
http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/nieuws/2014/08/28/afspraken-over-investering-tot-1-2-miljard-in-onderwijs.html
[2] See also: 'De Staat van de Leraar' april, 2015.

they are confronted with in their work (e.g. Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013). On the other hand it is also interesting to notice that there are teachers who seem to suffer less and do feel capable of dealing with demands and pressure (Newman, 2013). There is even an upcoming movement of teachers who want to reshape the profession and show more proactive behavior (Kneyber & Evers, 2013; Vink, 2014). This movement is led by 'professional agents' or 'forefront teachers' (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2012; Noordegraaf, 2015)[3]. In society these forefront teachers use channels like social media, or newspapers to announce and share their thoughts (e.g. Leenheer, 2015; Evers & Kneyber, 2015).

At this point the group of forefront teachers is still quite diffuse. And although they reach a lot of people, the way they communicate can be characterized as ad-hoc and diffuse because a lot of these initiatives just pop-up in society. It can be argued if this is the most effective strategy for structural change and development in the teaching profession to deal with problems like demanding stakeholders and feelings of pressure due to the increased focus on quality of education. Therefore, to study more closely what professional capability looks like and how it can be developed the focus of this research will be on the organizational level.

## 1.1 PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY AND THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The central domain of focus is the school organization where teachers and school leaders meet. While now the initiatives and debates around teachers mainly take place diffused at different places in society, there is not much focus on what actually happens at the level of the school organization itself, while this is the central place where teachers work. The term *organizational level* is used in this research to refer more specifically to the role of school leaders within the school. School leader refers to the managers who lead in the school and are responsible for the daily functioning of teachers.

At this point the role of the manager is often excluded from the discussions around capabilities of teachers, while managers can play an important role in the support and development of teachers in the organizational context where they daily function. And although the group of forefront teachers might seem to suggest that teachers can deal with problems in education on their own, there are strong indications both in literature and in societal debates that school leaders can play an essential role as 'organizational agents' in the functioning of teachers (*employees*) (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eyal & Roth, 2011; Knies, 2012, de Wit, 2012). There are many ways in which managers can support teachers; from a friendly chat during daily practice to helping them in their

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[3] See different initiaties like: 'De staat van de leraar 2015'; See also 'De onderwijzer aan de macht, Tegenlicht broadcasted on 01-02-2015; 'De Nederlandse school, opleiding tot meester-docent voor pioniers in het onderwijs, acces via: http://www.denederlandseschool.nl/; and 'The alternative' Jelmer Evers, and René Kneyber.

professional development by offering different types of training. Research shows that when teachers do not experience enough support from their school leaders the chance of getting a burn out increases (Jackson, Schwab & Schuler, 1986). As emphasized, teachers can present themselves as 'organizational agents', but school leaders can also be seen as 'organizational agents' within the school organization. Therefore an important aim of this research is to learn more about the organizational context in which professionals and managers meet during the development process of professional capability.

Professional Capability is defined as a: 'specific type of proactive coping behavior which helps teachers to deal with – and at times resist – work related expectations, challenges and burdens that dynamic environments and stakeholders pose upon them' (Noordegraaf, et al, *under review*). If teachers are able to use this coping behavior as a strategy, the expectation is that they are better able to deal with the demands and pressure that have become part of their daily reality. While other studies mainly have focused on the *negative* aspects of coping in the public domain (e.g. Lipsky, 1980; Tummers, et al., 2015), this study focuses on the development of professional capability as a *positive* coping strategy, and therefore it tries to contribute to more knowledge about what works to deal with demands that school organizations and professionals within in particular, are facing. (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*).

Professional capability is the type of behavior that is expected to contribute to the more classic competences of teachers like the didactical, pedagogical and subject-specifically ones, because the idea is that teachers also need this specific professional coping behavior to deal with the demands and stakeholders in their daily work outside their classroom. This does not seem to be fully covered by the classic competences right now, which also seems to be the point in the current discussion around increasing the competence requirements of teachers[4]. The expectation of the concept *professional capability* is that this type of coping behavior will help teachers to function in a more healthy manner when dealing with stress and demands in their working context (Noordegraaf, et al, *forthcoming*). This concept was originally developed for the project 'Professional capability' linked to the larger 'Discomfort of autonomy' project[5] (see Noordegraaf, et al. 2015). This previous research showed that specific personal and organizational resources (*antecedents*) can contribute together to the development of professional capability, despite or due to the demanding context in which teachers need to function (Ibid). In the research mentioned above there were positive indications found to include the role of school leaders as well. Therefore

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[4] See: https://www.onderwijscooperatie.nl//wp-content/uploads/Voorstel-Herijking-Bekwaamheidseisen-2014.pdf
[5] This large scale project was supported by Policy-oriented Research in Primary Education (BOPO), financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

this research tries to fill in this gap and continues its focus on the role of school leaders in relation to the professional capability of teachers in the organizational domain.

This means that if problems in education need to be dealt with, it seems important to stimulate the capabilities of teachers as 'organizational agents' due to their central role in working on quality of education (e.g. Barber & Mourshed, 2007). Developing professional capability as positive coping behavior can contribute to deal with demands and stakeholders in a healthier and less stressful manner. School leaders as 'organizational agents' can play an essential role in the functioning of teachers, and for example in reducing the risk of burn-outs from teachers (van Horn, et al., 1997). Therefore including their role as organizational agents seems relevant and important for this research and for the development of professional capability (Knies, 2012). At this point initiatives to stimulate the development of teachers are still diffuse and unstructured, and they mainly seem to take place outside the context of the school organization. But, in fact it is this organizational level that is important for teachers, because it can offer a place where they can develop themselves in a structured context supported by their school leaders, and colleagues. How school leaders (*organizational agents)* connect with teachers (*professional agents)* to stimulate professional capability within the school organization together, will be researched in this thesis.

## 1.2 TEACHERS AS PROFESSIONAL AGENTS

A lot of teachers seem to suffer under big pressure (e.g. Noordegraaf, et al, *forthcoming*; Honingh & van Thiel, 2013; Thomas & Davies, 2005). They suffer from various types of pressure. Like there is the involvement of extra and more demanding stakeholders. Parents have become more critical stakeholders just like the media (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*). Teachers also suffer from the increased administrative tasks they need to keep up with every day (Ibid). And also, new measures like the law for 'tailored education' (*passend onderwijs*), which may imply they can have a number of children in their classroom who need a lot of special attention and care, put high demands on them. And finally they suffer more because they are judged on their output and achievements which have become more and more important in education (Biesta. 2012).

While teachers seem to suffer from this pressure and end up with stress symptoms like burn-out or a strong desire to leave the teaching profession, there are also teachers who in spite of, or perhaps thanks to all these pressures and demands, manage to deal quite well with the circumstances which seem to have become a part of their job. They can be seen as 'professional agents' (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2012; Noordegraaf, et al. *forthcoming*). The professional community presents at this point an interesting new movement in which various initiatives show that the teachers themselves try to stimulate changes in the teaching profession from the bottom. Although these initiatives might offer inspiration, or change on a small scale, the expectation in

this research is that changes should take place at the level of the organization where teachers perform their jobs and where they can develop their professional capabilities in a structured context. Based on previous research in primary education it can be concluded that several personal and organizational resources can contribute to the degree in which professionals develop and use their professional capability, but in this research the expectation is that school leaders also can play an important role in the professional capability of teachers (see Noordegraaf, et al., *under review*).

A good school leader for example can contribute to a greater well-being of teachers (Schaufeli, 2015; Jackson, et al., 1986). The professional communities seem to stress the idea that managers represent a different logic which is not supportive for the professional (e.g. de Wit, 2012). To be able to deal with the problems in education, excluding and ignoring the supportive aspects of managers is not a productive perspective, because research shows that managers can also be helpful and supportive (e.g. Schaufeli, 2015; de Wit, 2012; de Bruijn, 2011).

## 1.3 MANAGERS AS ORGANIZATIONAL AGENTS

Therefore, the interest in this research goes out to what school leaders can actually do to support and help teachers in developing capabilities, by seeing managers as 'organizational agents' who have an essential role in the school organization and in their relationship with teachers (Eisenhardt, 1989; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012). Seeing managers as 'organizational agents' emphasizes on the supportive role in organizations that managers have for their employees by translating HR-policies, and influencing teachers through their leadership behavior (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012).

This supportive role of managers contrasts a bit with the classic management debate in which managers and professionals were supposed to be opposites (e.g. Tummers, et al., 2009; de Bruijn & Noordegraaf, 2011; de Wit, 2012). Managers would be limiting the autonomy of professionals, and not understand professionals well enough to manage them (de Bruijn, 2011). However, this debate is changing into more productive forms of cooperation between managers and professionals. De Wit (2012) showed in his research that despite all the assumptions about managers, managers in education can actually be loyal in their attitude and behavior towards teachers, while leading their schools at the same time (pp. 317). Also other authors like de Bruijn (2011) emphasize on the helpful and necessary role of managers for professionals.

This essential perspective on the role of managers can also be found in Human Resource Management literature (HRM) (e.g. Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Bowen and Ostroff (2004) emphasize on the relation between managers and employees and how they can create a strong 'organizational climate' together, which can contribute to reaching organizational

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effectiveness (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). To study more closely what managers actually do to support teachers, the term Human Resource Management (HRM) will not be used here, because the concept of *people management* was chosen for this research instead (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). This concept refers to both the *HR-practices* that managers undertake and to their *leadership behavior* (Knies, 2012; Purcell & Hutchinson. 2007). Both components of people management are considered to be important activities for the support of employees.

## 1.4 TOWARDS CAPABILITY: RESEARCH PURPOSE & QUESTION

The assumption in this research is that professional capability is needed to deal with problems like increased demands, more critical stakeholders and a stronger focus on output which results in more feelings of pressure, stress and high dropout numbers under teachers. Professional capability is defined as a specific type of coping behavior that teachers can help dealing with the demands and circumstances they need to function in daily. If teachers manage to develop this behavior it can possibly contribute to positive outcomes like quality of education, and wellbeing of teachers. But before the effects of professional capability can be looked at on an organizational level, the central focus in this research will be first on the effect of the activities that managers undertake to support the professional capability of teachers.

Therefore the central question in this research is:

**What are the effects of people management activities on professional capability, and how can these effects be explained?**

To answer this central research question the thesis is structured by the use of sub-questions. Each question will be answered in a different part of the thesis. These sub-questions are:

**Sub Questions for Theoretical Framework:**

1.  What is professional capability?
2.  What are the most important resources for professional capability?
3.  What is people management and how can this affect professional capability?

In the theoretical chapter the two central concepts for this research are explained. The first question focuses on the concept of *professional capability* and tries to explain where this concept comes from. The second sub-question looks at the antecedents of professional capability from a theoretical perspective. Based on previous research on professional capability in primary education both personal and organizational resources for professional capability will be looked at (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*). With the third question the second concept of this research is explained, namely: *people management.* Also, how people management can possibly affect professional

capability, will be studied more closely. This theoretical exploration helps to structure the research model for the empirical part of this research and answer the empirical questions. This model will be presented at the end of the theoretical framework. The empirical questions in this research are:

**Sub Questions for Empirical Results:**

4. What is the degree of professional capability of teachers in secondary education? (*survey results*)
5. What is the effect of the different resources on professional capability? (*survey results*)
6. What is the effect of the implemented people management activities on the perception about these activities by teachers? (*survey + interview results*)
7. What is the effect of people management activities on the resources of professional capability? (*survey + interview results*)
8. What is the indirect effect of people management on professional capability through the (mediating effect of the) different resources (*personal & organizational*) for professional capability? (*survey)*

The first empirical question (*4.*) gives insight into the current use of professional capability as strategic coping behavior of teachers. Knowing the current degree (/*level*) offers insight in what the situation is at this point in secondary education regarding the professional capability of teachers. The second empirical question (*5.*) looks at the effects of both the personal and organizational resources that can have an effect on the professional capability of teachers. This information is important because it can offer information about which resources are important for the development of professional capability.

Thereafter the role of the school leader is included in the form of the concept *people management*. In the sixth question the focus is on the effect of people management activities on the perception of teachers about these activities. How do they perceive the activities which managers implement to support them? This question offers more information about how teachers experience these activities right now. The next question (*7.)* is about the effects of the people management activities on the various resources for professional capability. The answer on this question shows which people management activities that managers undertake can have an effect on the different resources. This information is an important first step for the final question which looks at the mediating effect of the different resources between people management and professional capability. Only when a significant effect between certain activities and resources is measured, they can have a mediating effect on professional capability (*8.*). And this is what the answer on the final empirical question offers: it provides more information on which particular people management activities in combination with which resources can have an effect on the

professional capability of teachers. This information is important and relevant because it can offer more insight into how professional capability can be developed and supported by managers.

## Implications

9. What are the theoretical and practical implications of this research for teachers and managers in education, but also for other sectors in general?

The thesis will be ended by presenting theoretical and practical implications forthcoming from this research. In figure 1. the global model of this research is presented. This model will be further developed in the theoretical chapters of this research.

**Figure 1 Conceptual research model**

6 De Volkskrant, 18-10-2014: 'Leraren mopperen veel maar doen uiteindelijk wat van ze gevraagd wordt'.

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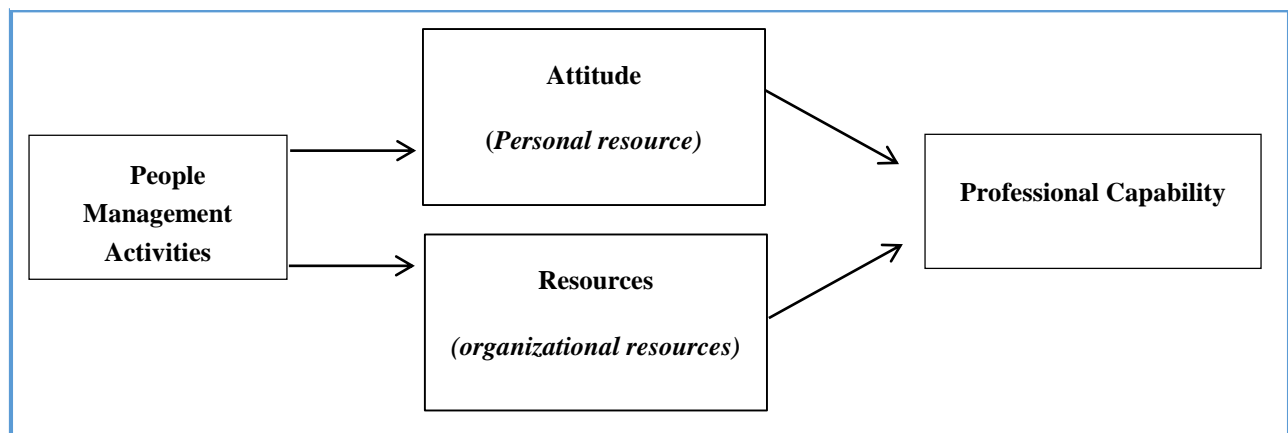
## 1.5 RESEARCH RELEVANCE

The relevance of this research is both societal, theoretical and methodological. A general aim of this research is to contribute to a more positive discussion around the position and capabilities of teachers. Often the debate around teachers seems to be characterized by complaining which can be considered as less helpful to actually change something about the current position of teachers[6]. The emphasis in this research is on what can actually be done to change and develop the capabilities of teachers, instead of blaming and explaining why there are problems in education (e.g. Steijn & Noordegraaf, 2013). Theoretically this aim is supported by the fact that professional capability is defined as a *positive* coping strategy instead of a *negative* one (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*). As emphasized in the introduction, where other studies have mainly focused on the negative aspects of coping in the public domain, this research focuses on coping as a positive strategy to deal with

demands and pressure in the working context of professionals. This research tries to contribute to more knowledge about positive coping as a strategy in the public domain. Besides, this research also connects with literature written about new forms of professionalism by offering empirical insight in the professional capability of teachers (e.g. Noordegraaf, 2015a, Evans, 2008; Hargreaves, 2000)

Societally, this research tries to connect with the societal debate on new forms of professionalism for teachers, and make a contribution by offering empirical results about the current degree of professional capability. In society different movements led by proactive teachers can be recognized which pop-up at various places right now (Leenheer, 2015). These teachers try to reshape the teaching profession and stimulate other teachers to develop themselves and become more proactive, instead of being victimized (e.g. Kneyber & Evers, 2013). Learning more about the current degree in which teachers use their professional capability seems important because it can help to understand where teachers stand right now. This can offer a starting point for further steps and development for teachers. It might be possible that the degree of professional capability turns out to be higher than expected, which would be a positive indication for teachers and the sector overall. But it could also be quite low and indicate that teachers indeed are not able to use their professional capability perhaps due to the circumstances in which they need to function. Both would be interesting outcomes to learn more about.

Professional capability is a relatively new concept which has been developed for a large scale research among teachers in primary education[7] (see Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming.*). Partly repeating this research now in secondary education by measuring the degree and the effect of the antecedents on professional capability, can contribute to more knowledge about the differences and similarities between these two sectors, which both have to deal with comparable circumstances like an increased focus on output, loss of autonomy and high drop-out numbers of teachers. This information can be useful to deal with the problems in education right now, also it can be relevant for other public sector organizations. But more important is the extension of the original research model by including the role of school leaders. Based on interview data from the previous research in primary education, strong indications were found to include the role of school leaders as well. Therefore it was chosen in this research to focus in particular on the effect that school leaders (*managers*) can have on professional capability.

Instead of using concepts like supportive leadership or transformational leadership to study the role of school leaders, the concept of *people management* was chosen which is not only about leadership behavior but also about HR-practices to support employees (Knies, 2012). Using this

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[7] See: http://www.nwo.nl/onderzoek-en-resultaten/onderzoeksprojecten/79/2300183979.html

concept seems relevant with the increased focus and interest in HRM in education[8] (Rosenmöller, 2015; Leisink & Boselie, 2014). At this moment it turns out that there is still room for development in school organizations regarding their strategic HRM policies (Onderwijsraad, 2013). The challenges that school organizations face, together with the awareness that teachers are crucial for reaching organizational goals connects with thoughts of the classic *Human Resource Management* (HRM) study field. An important question in HRM-studies is about which practices contribute to positive outcomes for both the organization and the employee (Knies, 2012: 2). In education the focus on HRM and the professional development of teachers has increased strongly during the last years. But not much empirical evidence about how school organizations apply HRM and deal with the challenges in their schools has been available yet. Therefore this research tries to make a contribution to this discussion.

Finally, using people management in the research model is also theoretically interesting because the scales are still relatively new and have not been used in the educational sector before, and besides, it is methodologically interesting to use the people management scales not only in a survey but also for interviews which is a new contribution within this research (See Knies, 2012:222). Using 'people management' as input for a topic list can contribute to new information and insights into what managers actually do and cannot be captured easily in structured survey questions.

## 1.6 RESEARCH OUTLINE

This thesis contains in total 8 chapters, of which this *first chapter* is the introduction of the thesis. *Chapter 2.* looks more closely at the context in which the topic of this research takes place. The most important contextual factors are presented and discussed on a global level.

*Chapter 3.* is the first chapter of the theoretical framework. In this chapter the concept of professional capability and its antecedents are discussed. The first two sub-questions are answered.

*Chapter 4.* continues with the role of managers as 'organizational agents' and the people management activities they can undertake to affect the professional capability. Sub-question three is answered here.

In *chapter 5.* the research methods used are described. In this chapter is explained which choices were made regarding the methods, case selection, and research techniques. For example, why a mixed method study design was chosen and how respondents were approached, is discussed here.

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[8] Sector Agreement for Secondary Education 2014-2017, see ambition 5 & 6, pp. 15. Klaar voor de toekomst! Samen werken aan onderwijskwaliteit - Sectorakkoord VO 2014-2017 (http://www.vo-raad.nl/userfiles/bestanden/Sectorakkoord/Sectorakkoord-VO-OCW.pdf).

In *chapter 6.* the first empirical quantitative results are presented. The degree of professional capability of teachers in secondary education is discussed here, and also the effects of the different antecedents on professional capability (*sub-question 4&5*).

*Chapter 7.* is the second empirical chapter and discusses the perceived and intended effects of people management activities in school organizations (*sub-question 6*). This is done by both quantitative- and qualitative results. The perceived people management activities are measured through the use of the survey which is answered by teachers. The implemented people management activities come from the qualitative part of this research for which managers were interviewed about their leadership behavior and HR-activities. Both the direct effects on the sources for professional capability and the mediating effects measured, are presented and discussed (*sub-question 7-8*).

In the final *chapter 8.* after a short recap of the previous chapters, the main question of this research is answered. Subsequently the implications for both teachers and managers in education are looked at, but also more general for other sectors (*sub-question 9*). The thesis ends with a reflection part on the research, in which short-comings of the research and future recommendations are discussed.

## 2. CHANGING CONTEXTS IN EDUCATION

In this chapter are both the internal and external context of this research discussed. The internal context refers to what happens inside the school, more focused on the position of teachers and managers. The external context refers to what happens outside the school organization and start with describing the global developments in education and slowly narrows its scope on the current position of teachers. These contexts are both relevant for a better understanding of the context in which the school organizations and teachers need to function on a daily basis.

### 2.1 THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Public organizations, like schools are for a great part dependent on external funding they receive from the central government. This funding seems to have become an instrument to control indirectly for the quality of education. Due to the law 'good education, good governance' it is even possible that the minister of education can decide to interfere in the schools' management when targets are not met (Honingh & van Thiel. 2014). Even funding can be repealed (Ibid). Schools, and teachers feel they are losing their autonomy due to this increased focus on results and the pressure this has brought during the recent years (Ibid). These feelings seem to be a part of the current problems in education. To understand how this situation has arisen some important general developments will be discussed next.

### 2.1.1 LOSS OF AUTONOMY

The first important development which took place since the eighties, is the development 'from government to governance' (e.g. Rhodes, 1996; Newman, 2001; Bovens, et al, 2007). During this development took the central government a step back and started to 'row' less on the achievement of goals, and 'steered' more by stating what norms to attain (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). The idea was that organizations themselves knew best how quality could be reached, and autonomy could be helpful to decide on this. During this period school organizations had a strong desire for more autonomy to work and decide on the quality of education (de Vijlder, 2004; de Wit, 2012; Honingh & van Thiel, 2014). This resulted in a government that gave schools more policy-making capacity and room to decide how quality in education could be reached (de Vijlder, 2004; de Wit, 2012; Honingh & van Thiel, 2014). This freedom was accompanied by the 'lump sum' that schools received and which they could spend according to their own ideas (de Wit, 2012). It was during this period that schools received more autonomy, and also teachers enjoyed this freedom in their own classrooms (Hargreaves, 2000).  But with the influence of New Public Management (NPM) this autonomy seemed to have decreased again.

The general thought behind NPM is based on a private business model in which efficiency, results, and reaching targets in the public sector are central (Hood, 1991). The underlying assumption is that an increased focus on output of public organizations should lead to more efficiency and better results, just like clear professional standards and performance measures should be contributing to these results (Hood, 1991). Due to this efficiency thinking more schools merged, and bigger upper school boards arose. These big school organizations seemed to have efficiency advantages at first, but in the end it was the central government that was afraid of monopolies and a loss of quality, which resulted in the discouragement of this development again (WRR, 2004: 135). Nevertheless bigger schoolboards were constructed and still exist in the educational landscape nowadays.

The NPM-influences also changed things for teachers in their classrooms. NPM is associated with a strong managerial focus on results and output. The idea is that management should be 'private business like', and 'hands on' (Hood, 1995). Although this may be helpful to reach targets in an efficient manner, a strong focus on 'results control' can also be linked to the pressures that teachers experience during the performance of their daily tasks (Merchant, 1982; Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013). Focusing on quality and control measurements too strongly can result in these feelings of pressure, stress or even policy alienation (Travers & Cooper, 1996; Galton & MacBeath, 2008; Forrester, 2011; Tummers, 2012; Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013). This seemed to have become the case for a lot of teachers in education right now. Schools, and teachers need to monitor and justify their results continuously for external organizations like the inspection of education. This costs a lot of time which is not always considered necessary or useful. All this together can contribute to the problems in education that teachers experience like stress, burn-out and drop-outs.

It may seem as if the external influences, like NPM, are named in this chapter as the (main) reason for all the problems in education and those from teachers in particular, but that would be too simplistic. The development of NPM can be considered unavoidable, including its effects on professionals (Noordegraaf, 2015: 10). In fact, it is important to be aware of these effects for the reconfiguration of professionals in education (Ibid).

### 2.1.2 PROFESSIONALS DEVELOPMENT

This reconfiguring of the teaching profession seems to be taking place through diverse channels. More informally organized are the new movements in society which are led by proactive teachers who want to change something in their profession. These initiatives or movements can be characterized by the fact that they are mainly led by teachers, take place outside the school organization, and new media forms like twitter or Facebook are often used to communicate

(Leenheer, 2015). A view examples of such Dutch initiatives are: 'The Crowd, Leraren met Lef (*teachers with guts*), Leraar24 (*teacher24*), Het Alternatief (*the alternative*), and Curious Teachers'. Each in their own way these initiatives try to make a change for the profession and stimulate other teachers to change as well. Although just a small group of teachers actively participates in such initiatives at this point, it seems to be a first indication that teachers want to change their profession and work on new forms of professionalism in education (Ibid). At this point such initiatives mainly seem to take place outside the school organization, and it turns out to be difficult for teachers to transfer them into the school organization (Leenheer, 2015). Often experiences and ideas that teachers bring into the school are seen as a nice perk, for which there is not enough time to really do something with it inside the school (Ibid).

There are also more formal and structural forms of change. These can be found for example in the plans from educational organizations like the Council for Secondary Education (*VO-raad*) or the Cooperation for education (*Onderwijscooperatie*). In its last sector agreement the council clearly stated the ambition to support teachers further in their development and help them to become co-owner of this process[9]. Another important point on which is particular emphasis in this agreement, is the professional space that teachers need to be able to work on their development. This point is also made by the Cooperation for Education, who also emphasize on the importance of professional space as one of their focal points[10]. The sector agreement motivates that professional space is not only something that needs to be 'asked for' by teachers, but also something that needs to be 'given' by managers (pp. 16). This perspective suggests that managers and teachers need to cooperate.

The perspective in which managers and teachers are both responsible for professional development and quality of education, can also be recognized in *strategic HRM* in education (e.g. Leisink & Boselie, 2014). Strategic HRM can be defined as: "the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable the firm to achieve its goals." (Wright & McMahan 1992: 298). During the recent years in which quality of education has become more important due to influences like NPM, and in which the essential position of teachers has become acknowledged more and more, the interest in strategic HRM for school organizations has increased along. The basic principles of strategic-HRM are not totally new in education, they elaborate on the integrated personnel policy (IPB) that was introduced in education in 2000 after the Ministry of Education and the employers organizations in education had reached an agreement (Leisink &

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[9] Sector Agreement for Secondary Education 2014-2017, see ambition 5 & 6, p. 15. (http://www.vo raad.nl/userfiles/bestanden/Sectorakkoord/Sectorakkoord-VO-OCW.pdf).

[10] See Onderwijs Coöperatie: https://www.onderwijscooperatie.nl/activiteiten/professionele-ruimte/

Boselie, 2014: 5). The recent sector agreement 2014-2017 for secondary education[11] describes among other things the focus on professional learning, but also the aim to support the strategic HRM use of school organizations to work more efficiently on organizational goals. This support seems important because at this point it turns out that there is still much to be gained for school organizations when it comes down to using HRM and the connection with specific organizational goals (Onderwijsraad, 2013; Leisink & Boselie, 2014).

What all these developments from in the external context mean for the internal context will be discussed in the next part of this chapter.

## 2.2 THE INTERNAL CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The term 'internal context' is used here to refer to the context within the school organization. This context is about the position of managers and teachers in the school. Both positions have changed enormously since the eighties. Teachers can no longer be considered the autonomous teacher since they need to deal with a more demanding and controlling context, and the enlargement of school organizations due to NPM influences has resulted in big changes for the position of managers as well.

The merging of schools resulted in bigger organizations with internally a more businesslike structure with often new management layers as a result (de Wit, 2012: 38). The importance of the position of school leaders literally increased and received more attention. It resulted in the foundation of sector organizations like the VO-raad, but also in more training and education programs for school leaders in education (Ibid). Managers became more and more responsible for efficiency, quality, and reaching organizational goals, something that put pressure on the tasks of managers as well. From an organizational perspective this increased position of managers in education was a logical step, but nevertheless their positions became point of discussion, because teachers in schools felt more and more their managers did not understand them any longer. Managers would be mainly focused on their managerial tasks, and had no eye for the needs of teachers. Support from school leaders is important for teachers because many feel pressured due to the stronger focus on results in education, the increased role of critical stakeholders like parents and other extern parties like the inspection for education (e.g. Jackson, et al., 1986).

Besides the changes in the role of managers, there are also changes going on for teachers. For a long time the classic image of the teacher prevailed: 'the autonomous teacher who taught in a box' (Hargreaves, 2000: 160). By this is meant that teachers mostly functioned in their own classroom, separated from their colleagues. They knew best how to handle their pupils, and did not

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[11] See: Sector Agreement for Secondary Education 2014-2017, see ambition 5 & 6, p. 15. (http://www.vo raad.nl/userfiles/bestanden/Sectorakkoord/Sectorakkoord-VO-OCW.pdf).

wish any interference from others (Ibid). But, this image of the autonomous teacher is slowly changing into a more connected type due to changes in society (Idem: 162). The movement of forefront professionals, as mentioned in the previous part, seems to motivate this change in the profession of teachers (Noordegraaf, 2015). Teachers try to become the initiators from the bottom, instead of being guided top-down. This in contrast with the perspective of the government who think that teachers need to be supported and helped in their development, in which the assumption seems to be that teachers are not capable of doing this on their own[12]. The image of the teacher who needs to be helped and supported clearly contrasts with the image of the independent and proactive professional. This contrast seems to widen the gap between the internal and external context, teachers don't feel understood and feel like they are being checked all the time[13].

This might also result in problems for the position of managers. With the changing position of teachers in education there are more questions about the role of the manager too. When teachers are becoming stronger and more independent, the need for a manager can become less important. In the debate about forefront teachers the term 'flipping the system[14]' has been introduced which means that teachers should be more at the top of the chain, and managers need to reconfigure their position. What this reconfiguration actually looks like is hard to say at this point. A shared form of leadership (distributed leadership) seems a relevant option in which both manager and professional become responsible for organizational goals. The image in which professionals and teachers can actually empower each other was already sketched by the commission of Rinnooy Kann in 2007. Managers should be the ones to support teachers and create conditions in the school under which teachers can perform optimally (Ibid).

At this point this view seems to be a panacea still, considering the debate in which professionals generally do not seem to consider the manager as particularly supportive. Although managers could be the ones to make a change together with teachers, it might still take a while to collect some positive examples first. This research tries to make a contribution to learn more about managers and teachers in education at this point in time.

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[12] See: 'OCW in gesprek met leraren over regeldruk' 08-04-2015.
[13] Onderwijs lijdt onder druk inspectie'. De Volkskrant, 02-04-2015.
[14] Flip the system'. Accessed via: http://www.flip-the-system.org/.

## 3. PROFESSIONALS AND CAPABILITY: A NEW FORM OF BEHAVIOR

This first theoretical chapter is about explaining what professional capability is, and which resources are important from a theoretical perspective to develop professional capability. The sub-questions, as formulated in the introduction of this thesis that are answered in this chapter are: W*hat is professional capability? (§ 3.2)*, and *what are the most important sources for professional capability? (§ 3.3)*. The chapter is ended with a short conclusion for the theoretical implications for the research overall *(§ 3.4)*.

But, before these questions are answered we must first look at what defines a professional and how professionalism in education is changing *(§ 3.1)*. In this research teachers are framed as professionals, and therefore looking more closely at what a professional characterizes is an important starting point for this research. In literature there is often discussion about who are 'classic professionals', and if teachers can be seen as such. To address this discussion and motivate why teachers are framed as professionals a short overview will be given of the most relevant literature on professionalism and how this is changing in education.

### 3.1 PROFESSIONALS

The debate about what exactly a professional is consists of a lot of different definitions and perspectives. This makes it difficult to agree on what the characteristics are that distinguish a professional from a non-professional for example (e.g. Freidson, 1991; Tummers, Bekkers & Steijn, 2009). Freidson (1991:169) argues that 'much of the debate about professionalism is clouded by unstated assumptions and inconsistent and incomplete usages'. Despite this lack of transparency in the debate, there are several definitions of professionals and their professionalism. For example, a broad definition about professionalism comes from Gabe, Burry and Elston (2004: 163): 'a particular kind of occupation, typically one with high status and high rewards, requiring long formal training and delivering a personal service'. Another definition more focused on the task of the professional comes from Noordegraaf (2015:4) he describes professionalism as: 'a matter of professionals treating complex cases in relative isolation'.

These definitions about professionalism do not address the whole discussion on what exactly characterizes or defines a professional. Noordegraaf (2015) speaks of 'pure professionals' when defining the classic professional. The classic professional can be characterized by his own body of knowledge and skills, standardized work routines, and a special education and socialization process (e.g. Freidson, 1986, 2001; Noordegraaf, 2015). Teachers seem to be a different type of professional compared to the pure or classic professional, since for example their work is not characterized by mainly standard work routines. But at the same time they have their own education

and socialization process, which takes place both during special training programs and later during their work in the school. This would make them look more like the classic professional.

What connects professionals in general, and therefore also teachers, is that they develop their 'own professional standards', and 'tacit knowledge' which cannot be captured in rules and asks for autonomy to perform their profession (Noordegraaf, 2015). Especially for teachers, besides certain standards, the tacit knowledge they develop during their career is of great importance. This distinguishes them for example from managers in the organization, or other 'non-professionals'. Therefore a solution to overcome the discussion about if teachers can be seen as classic professionals, is to acknowledge their professionalism, but not to define them as classic professionals. Instead teachers can better be described as: 'people who perform work with a service and knowledge-intensive nature' (Kwakman, 2011: 298). Therefore teachers are also defined in literature, and in this research, as 'the knowledge worker' or even better 'the new professional' (Weggeman, 2014).

## 3.2 WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY?

In the next part of this chapter the concept of professional capability and its origins will be explained. The chapter starts with an introduction on the pressure that professionals can experience and the problems they need to deal with. This is part of the motivation why teachers need professional capability. Subsequently professional capability will be further defined and explained.

### 3.2.1 PROFESSIONALS UNDER PRESSURE

For a long time teaching was mainly about educating children in a classroom. Teachers could literally teach in their own classroom without having to deal with others (Hargreaves, 2000: 160). Teachers preferred this autonomous position and were not yet very much actively involved in any form of professionalization, they simply just focused on their role as an educator for the children in class (Ibid). But, this classic professional minding his own business without any interference of managerial influence, seems to have become outdated. The autonomous position of the classic professional is gradually reconfiguring into a more controlled form of professionalism (Noordegraaf, 2015; Noordegraaf, et al. *forthcoming*; Hargreaves, 2000). This controlled form of professionalism is more dominated by managerial influences which seem to have become stronger with the rise of influences like New Public Management (NPM). This increased focus on the output can result in strong feelings of pressure by teachers (Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013; Noordegraaf, 2011; Scott, 2008; Ackroyd, Kirkpatrick, and Walker, 2007; Thomas & Davies, 2005). Teachers have to justify their work more by for example intensively administrating their results in class, this

way the outcome can be checked and optimal efficiency and quality can be strived for by the government but also by public managers (e.g. Merchant, 1982).

Teachers feel their autonomy has decreased and they cannot perform their job like they used to due to all the extra performance measures and the new intensified demands of other stakeholders like parents and the inspection for education (e.g. Forrester, 2011; Bejerot & Hasselbladh, 2011; Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*). For the classic idea of autonomy it is important and required that choice and feeling like being the initiator of one's own actions is experienced (Deci, et al., 2001:931). If this form of autonomy is no longer or less experienced by teachers, this altogether can make teachers feel disappointed or trapped, which can even result in 'policy alienation' (Tummers, 2012). In literature this group of professionals is often referred to as 'victims' deprived of their 'professional pride' due to many managerial measures (Evans, 2008; Galton & MacBeath, 2008; Jansen, et al., 2011).

An obvious solution for all the problems that professionals in education face nowadays may seem to give professionals in education their autonomy and 'professional pride' back (Jansen, et al 2011; Noordegraaf et al., *forthcoming*). But it has to be questioned if this would even be possible and helpful for teachers for several reasons. First, the idea of the pure professional and his limitless autonomy seems to have become outdated. This strict form of autonomy does not even seem preferable and possible any longer since cases have become more complex and demanding (Noordegraaf, 2015a). This asks for transparency and support from others which is complex in a strictly autonomous culture. Second, stakeholders like parents are higher educated and have become more critical. Also other stakeholders like the inspection for education have become more critical and have a bigger influence on what happens in the classroom (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming;* Noordegraaf, 2015a:12). They literally seem to interfere in the professional autonomous space of teachers. The role of these stakeholders cannot be simply ignored or excluded. Third, only blaming external factors like the central government and managers for the increased pressure seems not to be the complete story, professionals do also have responsibility for their own functioning and well-being. This responsibility problem cannot simply be solved by getting more autonomy and stimulating the professional pride of teachers. Fourth, and maybe the most important argument is that not every teacher is a 'victim' or feels like one (Noordegraaf, et al, *forthcoming*). Therefore framing teachers only as victims is not considered to be helpful. There are also teachers who are enthusiastic about their work and are able to function as active 'agents' (Priestley, et al., 2012). 'Active agency' refers to the capacity of teachers to: 'critically shape their responses to problematic situations' (Biesta & Tedder, 2006: 11). Teacher agency is not something that teachers 'have', but something that teachers 'do', it suggests certain behavior which can be developed (Priestley, et al., 2012: 3). Teachers can use specific coping strategies to deal with difficult

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situations they face in their work (Hupe & Van Der Krogt, 2013; Newman, 2013). This proactive behavior of teachers in which they are able to cope with their professional circumstances, like administration systems, critical parents or demanding colleagues, is what is called 'professional capability' (Noordegraaf, et al, *forthcoming*).

### 3.2.2. A SPECIFIC TYPE OF PROACTIVE AND POSITIVE COPING

Before professional capability will be defined more precisely, there will be first looked at the background of the concept and important related concepts like coping, empowerment and professional development are discussed.

The concept of professional capability found its origins in the field of public administration and psychology studies. An important concept used for the development of the concept professional capability is 'coping'. As a response to Freud's studies in the 19th century on ego struggles against unpleasant feelings, a new research line started under the label of coping studies (Tummers, Bekkers. Vink, & Musheno, 2015:7). Lipsky (1980) was one of the first public administrators who looked at coping strategies of frontline workers in the public domain. In his study several tactics were recognized which frontline workers used to deal with the demands of bureaucracy and clients at the same time (Ibid). More recently a big literature review study of diverse coping studies of frontline workers showed that since the eighties globally three 'families of coping' can be distinguished (Tummers, et al., 2015). These are: *moving towards clients*, *moving away from clients* and *moving against clients* (Idem: 17).  Moving towards clients in the case of a teacher could mean that teachers give more attention to children in the classroom with learning problems, with a risk of not giving enough attention to the other children. Moving away from clients could result in routine behavior which means no custom work any longer but treating all cases alike. And moving against clients could in the worst case result in an aggressive teacher.

It is remarkable to see that coping studies in the field of public administration mainly focus on the relationship between the frontline worker and the client (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*). While it could be stated that professionals, as in the case of teachers, need to deal not only with clients (*children*), but also with demanding managers, parents, media and even societal organizations. Besides, coping is not merely a concept with a negative connotation, it can also have positive outcomes. Teachers slowly start to realize that they can cope in ways which can positively contribute to changes in the system like the forefront teachers of 'The Alternative' showed by writing a book and discussing it at the level of the central government (Kneyber & Evers, 2013).

A distinction can be made between coping as an *emotional response* and coping as a *strategy* (Schwarzer & Taubert, 2002; Drnovšek, Örtqvist & Wincent, 2010). In the case of an

emotional response teachers could for example feel the need to complain more about their work situation. This response is not used to change the situation, but more to regulate the personal emotions and learn to deal with the situation (Schwarzer & Taubert, 2002). A risk of such emotional responses is that the level of stress can increase and can even result in burn out symptoms. This emotional response is not the type of coping that professional capability is about, because professional capability is more about coping as a *strategy* (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*).

Strategies can be recognized in coping literature in various forms. In education they can be helpful for teachers to regain control over the personal work situation and functioning (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2008). Teachers can for example use the strategy of a 'symbolic implementation' when they don't see the need of a new task (Idem: 42). This way tasks are performed differently than they were originally intended (Ibid). Policy alienation can also be recognized as a coping strategy which is the result of a professional who feels alienated from his tasks (Tummers, 2012). Whereas these strategies still mainly focus on preventing, or dealing with negative aspects, the field of *positive psychology* offers a different direction.

Positive psychology can be defined as: 'the study of the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions' (Gable & Haidt, 2005: 104). As the definition shows, positive psychology is more oriented to what works and the well-being of people instead of what is causing stress symptoms like a burn out (Ibid). This positive approach has the assumption that individuals do not only respond to their environment, but are also willing to actively shape or contribute to this environment (Greenglass, 2001: 2). Their coping style can be seen as goal management instead of risk management (Idem: 3). With this positive and proactive coping perspective, the discussion around professionals under pressure and the causes of this pressure, is turned into something more positive where options and capabilities of professionals become central.

### 3.2.3 DEFINING PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

Coping strategies are always directed towards a situation, or a goal of which the individual feels it needs to be dealt with (Schwarzer & Taubert, 2002). What strategy to use depends on this situation or goal, each situation can ask for a different coping strategy (Ibid). In the case of teachers the central goal of using professional capability can be described as delivering quality of services in a context where challenges and obstacles are faced (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*).

These challenges and demands teachers are confronted with can be recognized at various places in and around the work domain (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming:* 13). The first is the *task environment*, teachers need to educate children but also talk to parents or think about their teaching

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programs (Ibid). The *work environment* is not only about tasks, but also about demands for professional practices (Ibid). Teachers have to participate at study days, and deal with other tasks such as information nights for parents. Then there is the *organization environment*, which can be characterized by the multiplicity of stakeholders, like not only children, but also: parents, school directors, and the inspection for education (Idem: 14). Dealing with the various stakeholders can be quite demanding because different interests and demands can arise. The teacher for example, does not only have to deal with educating children, but also with the demands of the school director, directions from the central government, and wishes from parents. Working in the public sector seems to have become inherent to balancing wishes of stakeholders and dealing with all the multiple demands. Therefore using the right coping strategy to enjoy work and stay healthy seems important.

When teachers are able to choose the right strategy and can proactively cope, the expectation is that they show professional capability as behavior. This concept is defined as teachers who: '*proactively cope with – and at times resist – work-related expectations, challenges and burdens that dynamic environments and stakeholders pose upon the professional*' (Noordegraaf, van Loon, Heerema & Weggemans, *under review*). Although the concept might suggest that professional capability is some sort of skill or competence, but based on its origins in the coping literature *professional capability* must be seen as a specific type of *proactive coping behavior* that professionals can use. It is a continuous variable which means that teachers can show more or less professional capability, instead of being professional capable or not at all. This means in sum, based on the proactive coping and positive psychology literature, that a teacher: (e.g. Greenglass, 2002; Schwarzer & Taubert, 2002). A. 'can anticipate which *dilemmas* or conflicts in work practice may occur (including environments and stakeholders)'; B. 'has a course of action that is *proactive* rather than reactive'; C. ;'focuses on the broader goal (delivering *quality*) instead of the risks'; and D. 'uses the vocation and colleagues as a source in their proactive coping' (Noordegraaf, et al., *under review*: 11).

The type of teacher who is able to use professional capability as coping behavior is not only focused on his own classroom, but also on education in a broader sense. He speaks up when necessary, shows initiative in his work, and is able to deal with the constraints and challenges which he faces in his daily work and context. This proactive behavior of professionals is expected to be something that can be developed by professionals. This makes that the concept of professional capability also relates to other professional concepts like 'professional development'. Professional development is a key point both in education and other public sectors. It can be defined as: 'Professional development programs are systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students'

(Guskey, 2002: 381). In accordance with the definition of professional development, professional capability can be seen as behavior that professionals can develop, and of which the belief is that it can contribute to more well-being of teachers and better quality of education. Although there seems to be a general agreement on the importance of such programs, they do not turn out to be all that effective (Idem: 382). To make development in general, and also of professional capability, a success it is important to realize that change is a process, and not an event (Ibid). Teachers won't implement change uniformly, some teachers will use it sooner than others (Idem: 387).

Professional development and professional capability also has to do with the 'empowerment' of in this case teachers. Psychological empowerment is about 'the believe that goals can be achieved, awareness about resources and factors that hinder or enhance one's efforts to achieve those goals, and efforts to fulfill the goals' (Zimmerman, 1995: 582). If teachers feel empowered it will be more likely that they will use their professional capability, because feelings of empowerment can make that teachers believe 'they have the skills and knowledge to act on a situation and improve it' (Short & Rinchart, 1992:6). Although the concept of empowerment and professional capability show similarities and are closely related since they are both focused on dealing with problems and feeling capable of doing so, they also differ since empowerment is defined as a process and it is not oriented only towards individuals but also to the empowerment of organizations (Short, 1992), while professional capability is seen as a specific type of behavior and is only focused on professionals.

In the next part of this chapter is explored which resources can help to develop the professional capability of teachers.

## 3.3 RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

To increase the capability of the sector overall, then ideally professionals would be able to use their professional capability in their daily functioning in a comparable degree. However, the expectation is that there are differences in the degree of professional capability from teachers. This expectation is based on the observation that some teachers seem to behave more proactive, while others complain more and show less proactive behavior. It seems relevant to know why some teachers have a higher degree of professional capability than others. Therefore there will be looked at the different resources that professionals can use to positively affect their capability. But, before the possible resources are discussed there is first a closer look at theories written about the development of employee behavior in an organizational context.

### 3.3.1 EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR & PERFORMANCES

Both in human resource (HR) literature and in psychology studies different models have been developed which focus on the functioning, and development of employees for better individual and organizational outcomes. In the classic HRM performance chain from Wright & Nishii (2007) the focus is on the relation between HRM and performance. Performance can mean various things for organizations, in the case of school organizations this could mean quality of education for example. Although in HR studies this economical value is often looked at when measuring performance, in the *balanced approach* the focus is also on the societal and individual employee benefits (e.g. Boselie, Bruster & Paauwe, 2009). This balanced approach with special attention for the employees is an important one for this research. Because professional capability of teachers is considered as positive behavior, of which is expected that it can both contribute to more well-being of teachers (*employee benefit*), and to better quality of education as an organizational outcome (*organizational benefit*).

**Figure 2 HRM Performance chain (based on Knies, 2012).**



The focus in this research is not on the complete performance chain and its outcomes. It is on the first components of the HRM performance chain in which the relation between HR-practices, (*people management*), resources (*personal and organizational resources*), and behavior of employees (*professional capability*) is researched (Wright & Nishii, 2007). These first chains were chosen to study more closely because the assumption in this research is that it is necessary to learn more about the HR-practices and the resources for professional capability, before the performance outcomes can be looked at. This means that there is tried to learn more about the 'black box' without studying (yet) its effects on performance. In some studies the attitude and behavior of employees are considered outcome variables, while there are also studies that consider this as mediating variables (e.g. Knies, 2012: 33). In this research professional capability is considered as behavior of employees and can be seen as part of the black box between HRM and performance.

The idea that employees in an organization have value for the organization comes from the *resource based view* (RBV) (e.g. Vandenabeele, Leisink and Knies, 2013). 'The basic assumptions underlying the RBV are increasingly accepted as the main rationale for positing a link between human resource management and organizational performance' (Idem: 42). By this is meant that

studying, in this case the professional capability of teachers, can be seen as an accepted link between HRM and performance. This link is an important one to study more closely because the resources that an organization can offer, has advantages for the performance of the organization overall. In line with the RBV can teachers be seen as an important value for the school organization in which they work. Due to their specific tacit knowledge which is hard to share with others, and the interaction they can have with their colleagues which can make them perform better as a team than they could have individually (e.g. Knies, 2012; Vandenabeele, et al., 2013).

### 3.3.2 RESOURCES AS BUFFER AND FACILITATOR

In strategic human resources management (SHRM), which is based on the idea that HR-strategies can lead to positive outcomes for organizations, there is a special focus on employee development (Jiang, et al, 2012). Diverse theoretical models have focused on this development. To explore which resources can contribute to a higher degree of professional capability from teachers it was chosen to look more closely at the job demands resources model (JD-R) for this research. This choice was based on the assumption that the demands in education have increased and cause extra pressure and stress for teachers. The JD-R model is focused on the individual level of professionals and the demands they are confronted with, and is oriented towards more positive outcomes for the professional due to the positive psychology background on which the concept of professional capability is also based. The JD-R model assumes that different resources can buffer the effects that job demands can bring and that specific resources can aid the employee 'to cope with demands, work on performance and protect employees against ill health' (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007: 315).

In psychological resource theories the focus is on the resources that people need which help them to adapt and to deal with the demands they face in their work (Gruman, 2014). The JD-R model received considerable attention in management literature because it focuses on both the job resources and the demands that need to be dealt with. In first instance the model was created as a tool to measure the risk of burn-outs, but it turned more into a positive model that focuses on the aspects that employees help to function well (Schaufeli & Taris, 2013). The job resources can help employees to reduce the job demands they are confronted with and stimulate their own development and growth (Gruman, 2014). These are resources which are either/or: 'Functional in achieving work goals; reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; and stimulate personal growth, learning, and development' (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007: 312). Research on this model has shown that job resources are positively related to positive work outcomes, and that job demands are related to negative work outcomes (Baker & Demerouti, 2007).

These resources can be found at the level of the organization (career opportunities, schooling, and trainings) the interpersonal and social relations (colleagues, team support, and

leadership), the organization of work (role in decision making, goal clarity), and at the task level (autonomy, performance feedback) (Idem: 312-313). The model is based on the idea that these resources can contribute to: 'positive motivational outcomes of employees and lead to a higher work engagement, low cynicism and excellent performance' (Idem: 313).  Based on the attributed value of the different resources in the JD-R model which can buffer the work demands, but also contribute to positive work outcomes for individuals, it was decided to also include different resources in the research model for professional capability.  The expectation is that teachers need different resources that can help them to develop the degree of professional capability. The resources are divided into personal resources (*attitudes*), and organizational resources. Both are explained in the next part of this chapter.

### 3.3.3 ATTITUDE & RESOURCES

As emphasized resources are, based on the role of resources in the JD-R model, considered to be important for the development of professional capability. Therefore different resources based on previous research on professional capability in primary education, are described in this sub-chapter (see Heerema, et al., *under review*.)

The personality of employees can play a role in how work is perceived and how stress or demands are dealt with (Bakker, Demerouti & Sans-Vergel, 2014). Some employees know better how to mobilize their resources than others based on their personal profile (Idem: 394). An extrovert person will be more likely to have contacts and ask for help (Ibid). However, personality may be influential, but personal characteristics are also hard to change, therefore personal characteristics of individuals are not included as a resource in the model for professional capability.

Motivation is the first resource that is looked at more closely. Motivation is by Deci and Ryan (2000) defined as being 'moved to do something' (pp. 54). They emphasize that someone who is motivated is more willing to change and do something, while someone who feels unmotivated is not inspired to behave proactive (Ibid). Deci and Ryan (2000) stress in their *self-determination theory* that motivation is not a dichotomy, but can be seen more in terms of a continuum. They show that levels of motivation can differ, but also the *orientation* of the motivation, by this is meant what motivates teachers in their work (Ibid). An important point of orientation for teachers can be the public sector in which they work.  When teachers have a desire to contribute to the public interest there is referred to a specific type of motivation, namely: *public service motivation* (PSM) (Perry & Wise, 1990: 368). The original definition of PSM is formulated by Perry and Wise (1990) as: 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions' (pp. 368). Research has shown that when teachers are highly motivated to contribute to society they perform well (Andersen, Heinesen & Pedersen,

2014). Public service motivation is a type of motivation that is intrinsic, they don't get an extrinsic reward like high salary or great bonuses. It is a specific type of motivation that is oriented towards society, and while contributing to society they possibly deal more proactively with the problems and demands they face in their work, otherwise they cannot contribute to the public interest. Therefore the expectation is that:

*H1: The degree of PSM from teachers has a positive influence on the professional capability of teachers.*

Besides the PSM-attitude of teachers as personal resource, they can also have access to other organizational resources. In the JD-R model *work autonomy*, *training* & *education*, *information* and *(social) networks* are all marked as important resources for employees. In the self-determination theory for motivation three similar resources can be recognized, namely: *autonomy*, *relatedness* and *competence* (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Both models claim the importance of these resources for the proactive and motivated behavior of employees. Based on different studies, which focused on the importance and effects of different resources (like autonomy and social support) to deal with demands (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004), was for this research model chosen to include: autonomy, internal and external networks as resources for professional capability, next to the already explained concept PSM. Each variable, and why it was included will be discussed next.

Because autonomy is traditionally associated with teachers and their classrooms, it seems an obvious choice to include this important variable into the model as a possible resource for professional capability (e.g. Hargreaves, 2000). Teachers used to be king in their own classroom and preferred the autonomy they had (Ibid). But due to changes in the profession, the sector and the school this autonomy is slowly changing, and it may seem like teachers still experience enough autonomy, but due to increased control measures their autonomy is restricted more and more (Noordegraaf, et al, *forthcoming;* Honingh & van Thiel, 2014). Autonomy proves to be helpful for professionals to make their own decisions and considerations (e.g. Jansen, et al, 2013; Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013). This way professionals can develop their own standards, deal with the demands and choose how to deal with the demands in their work. It is assumed that autonomy also offers space for professionals to use and develop their professional capability. Therefore it is considered an important resource for professional capability, and the next expectation is formulated:

*H2a: The degree of autonomy of teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

Besides autonomy, the social networks both inside and outside the school are expected to be important sources for professional capability as well. Social support proved to be an important

variable in the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Based on the assumption that social support can help teachers to deal better with demands, social support was included in this model as a resource for professional capability as well. When teachers are part of a supportive team in the school, and they can discuss problems with colleagues, they are likely to behave proactively instead of passive (Bakker, et al., 2014; Bakker, van Emmerik & van Riet, 2008). When there are problems that teachers are confronted with and they have a supportive network in the school they can ask for help and support more easily. Besides the expectation that an internal network can offer social support, the expectation is that this also counts for professional networks outside the school organization. Support and help is easier organized when there is a strong and helpful network for the professional, and external networks can also contribute to more knowledge and extra information (Leenheer, 2015). When teachers make use of networks outside the school they can collect new information and translate this into the school (Leenheer, 2015). The translation of new information into the school is still a point of concern, because often there is not much time or interest for what teachers have learned outside the school organization (Ibid). The formulated expectations are:

*H2b: The degree of internal networks used by teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

*H2c: The degree of external networks used by teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

These expected relationships discussed in this chapter are summarized in the following model:
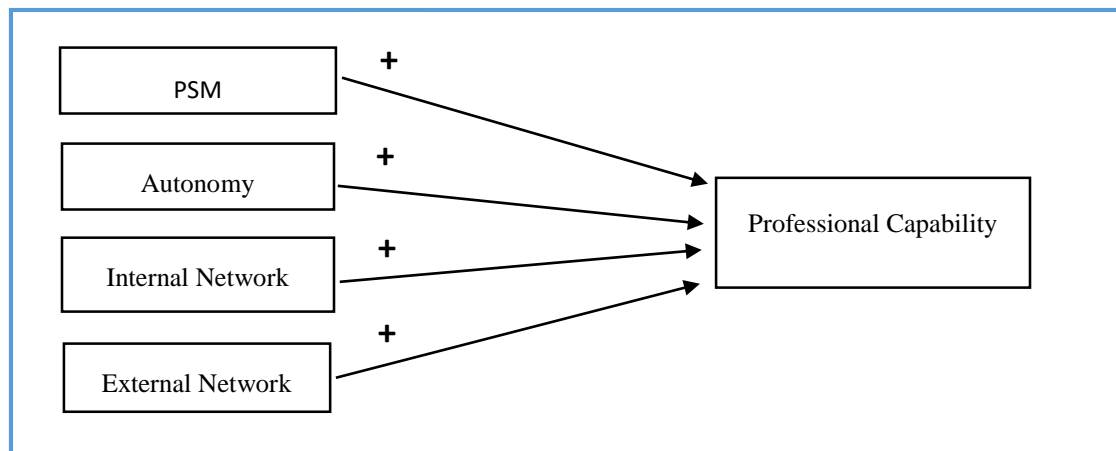


All hypotheses are also summarized in the conceptual model (figure 3. & table 1.) at the end of this theoretical framework.

Teachers can be recognized as the new type of professional, or knowledge worker who needs to develop themselves and keep up with the quickly changing and demanding context they work in. Due to pressures and demands that come along with actors like the inspection for education, the central government, or critical parents, teachers can feel their autonomy is getting more restricted, they can experience more stress and lose pleasure in their work. Although not all teachers seem to endorse these feelings, because there are also teachers who do not suffer from pressure or stress and enjoy their work, the assumption is that professional capability can help teachers to behave in a proactive and healthy manner. Professional capability is in this research defined as teachers who: '*proactively cope with – and at times resist – work-related expectations, challenges and burdens that dynamic environments and stakeholders pose upon the professional'* (Noordegraaf, et al., *under review*).

Professional capability is defined as a specific type of coping behavior of individual teachers (*professionals*), and the expectation is that certain resources, based on research models like the JD-R model, can contribute to the development of professional capabilities. Different resources were defined with on the one the hand the attitude (the personal resource) of the professional which is defined as the motivation to contribute to society, also named *public service motivation.* and on the other hand the organizational resources that a teacher can use like the professional *autonomy*, and the *internal* and *external networks*.

At this point is the concept of professional capability and its resources mainly discussed without the interference of the school leader or manager. Although professional capability suggests that this is the type of behavior that professionals can develop and use on their own, the expectation is that managers can have an essential role in the development of professional capability of teachers. What this essential role looks like, and what managers actually can do will be explored in the next theoretical chapter.

In the previous chapter the first two theoretical sub-questions were answered. In this chapter the focus is on the role of managers in relation to professionals and their professional capability. The theoretical sub-question answered in this chapter is: *What is people management and how can this affect professional capability?* (§ 4.3).

The concept for professional capability in the previous chapters might have suggested that teachers are able to develop their capabilities themselves. But, based on the observed differences of professional capability in the professional domain and the ad-hoc approach for development, it can be doubted if professionals are actually able (yet) to develop this independently, and if therefore the role of managers can simply be excluded from this discussion and development. That is why the focus in this chapter is not simply on the question *if* managers can help professionals, but more on *how* they can do this.

This chapter starts with a general introduction on managers in education (§ 4.1), to continue with what managing professionals means (§ 4.2), subsequently the concept of people management is looked at and the effects of people management on professional capability are discussed (§ 4.3). The last paragraph of this chapter concludes with the most important overall theoretical implications for this research, the theoretical model and the hypotheses (§ 4.4).

### 4.1 MANAGERS IN EDUCATION

Before addressing the point how managers can support the professional capability of teachers, the position of managers in public organizations is discussed. This is an important point to focus on first, because like stressed in the introduction, at this point managers seem to be excluded from the professional development debates too often, while the expectation within this research is that managers (school leaders) have an essential position in the school organization.

Due to big reforms in education, like also described in the contextual chapter (H2), the focus on output and managerialism increased in various public sectors like also in education (e.g. Hood, 1991). The role of school leaders increased, since they became responsible for more tasks and efficiency and quality measures in the school organization (e.g. de Wit, 2012). Teachers questioned the role of managers, because managers would contribute to the pressure that teachers experience, and not support them in the right way. Managers would simply be just focused on results and other output, instead of on the well-being of teachers (e.g. de Wit, 2012). Besides, they would not respect the autonomy of teachers enough which increased the feelings of pressure as well (de Bruijn & Noordegraaf, 2011; Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013).

It is not unexpected to notice that teachers and managers can represent different logics in the school organization (Freidson, 2001; de Bruijn, 2011; Noordegraaf, 2015b). Teachers would be mainly focused on their own profession of which the care for and education of pupils are a big part, and managers would focus mainly on reaching targets and efficiency measures for the organization. Therefore logics of managers and professionals have often been described in literature as contrasting or even opposing (e.g. Tummers, et al., 2009; de Bruijn & Noordegraaf, 2011; de Wit, 2012).

But simply framing managers as the problem for teachers does not seem to be helpful in dealing with the problematized position of managers, nor telling the whole story. Because research shows that in education managers also keep the preferences of teachers in mind while leading their school (de Wit, 2012: 317). They show loyal behavior in various ways, for example they can form a 'buffer', or show their devotion to teachers and even sacrifice themselves by making certain decisions for the sake of teachers (Ibid). More inactive forms of loyalty are also shown by school managers in the form of feelings of guilt and worries about their relationship with teachers who might get harmed (Ibid).

Also de Bruijn and Noordegraaf (2011:18) emphasize that contrasting the position of managers and professionals is not helpful. They claim that this debate about managers and professionals is partly symbolic for the changes in the public sector, where many things are going on like a more businesses oriented way of working due to NPM influences (Ibid). Observing this change is not the solution, neither is the solution to remove all managers from organizations, because there is no such thing as 'the manager'. Managers can be recognized in different forms, in different organizations, with different backgrounds, and with different tasks (de Bruijn & Noordegraaf, 2011; Mintzberg, 2011). Neither can be said that there is such a thing as 'the professional' (de Bruijn & Noordegraaf, 2011: 19). 'We will have to do it with managers and professionals', is the claim made by these authors (Ibid).Following this statement of de Bruijn and Noordegraaf (2011) managers and professionals should do it together.  This perspective connects with the idea of managing professionals, in which strategies to work together are looked for. This perspective is explored further in the next part of this chapter.

## 4.2 MANAGING PROFESSIONALS

How managers best can manage professionals is not something for which a 'one size fits all' approach can be presented. Weggeman (2014) describes in his book *Managing Professionals? Don't!* the art, as he calls it, of managing professionals (p. 3). Although the title of the book seems to suggest the redundancy of managers in professional organizations, the line of reasoning in the book is less radical and describes a 'new role' for the manager. Managers need to learn how to step

back, by which is meant fewer rules and procedures, and how they can create more collective ambition. Weggeman (2014) his assumption is that professionals are already motivated for most of the time and don't need to be managed. Managers are only needed at the right time, and the right place of the organization, which is as less as possible from the perspective of the professional (Ibid).

This image from Weggeman (2014) about the motivated, and self-aware professional who doesn't needs to be managed all the time might be a bit drastic. Differences in the needs and wishes of professionals do exist. For example: a young motivated teacher, can need extra attention from his manager to learn more about the profession. De Bruijn (2011) sees professionals not only as motivated and autonomous like Weggeman (2014), but he sees them also as 'ordinary people who are not just hardworking, passionate and innovative professionals' (p.36). Besides he recognizes that there are also 'passive and routine-driven professionals' (Ibid). To support all professionals de Bruijn (2011) emphasizes that despite the differences, managers and professionals should and can actually be seen as complementary to each other. Once the manager is able to respect the tacit knowledge of professionals, the manager can support professionals in various manners (Ibid). Managers can for example present and involve professionals with other perspectives and beliefs (Idem: 37).This can help to possibly change or adapt 'defensive routines' (Ibid). Or they can bring in managerial interventions to break through professional patterns, or bring in non-professional parties to learn from different approaches (Idem: p. 38). This seems important for teachers who need to function in a demanding context which can ask for change.

Various researches in education show how managers and teachers can indeed be complementary to each other like the research of Evans (2000). This research shows how managers prove to be helpful during changes in the school, by highlighting the challenges to teachers instead of presenting them 'as pill they are trying to sugar' (Evans, 2000: 189). This way teachers feel they are taken seriously, and the manager is on 'their side'. Another example can be found in the research of de Wit (2012). His research shows that managers in education can function as a heat shield, by being loyal in their behavior to teachers. This type of supportive management relates to the concept of 'people management which is discussed in the next part of this chapter (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012).

## 4.3 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

When discussing the topic about management and what managers can actually do to affect the professional capability of teachers this can be approached and measured in different ways. In this research the importance of the HRM performance chain for the well-being of teachers and school performances is acknowledged, and therefore it also seems important to study more closely the professional capability of teachers which can be recognized as employee behavior which is a part

of the performance chain (see also §3.1). Managers can be framed as *organizational agents* who have an essential role in (school) organizations, in which they do not only translate new policies into the school, but also show leadership behavior (Eisenhardt, 1989; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012). Due to their role as organizational agents the expectation is that managers can also have an effect on the behavior of teachers, and stimulate their professional capability. Because of this duality in their management task this research doesn't talk about HRM, but about *people management* (Eisenhardt, 1989; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012).

People management is a concept that found its origin in HR-studies. Purcell and Hutchinson (2007) motivated as one of the first that employees are not only influenced by the HR-policies they experience, but also by the leadership behavior of managers. Managers turn out to be more and more responsible for the translation of HR-policies into the organization towards employees, and at the same time they are responsible for employees with who they have an interpersonal relationship (Knies, 2012:27). The assumption is that the combination of these two elements (HR-practices & leadership behavior) can be seen as a strong combination for the organizations climate and its performances, more than the separate elements would be on their own (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004: 209). Because of this strong management combination the expectation is that using people management to develop professional capability can have a positive effect. How both components can contribute to professional capability of teachers, and what they actually mean is discussed for both elements separately in the next part of this chapter.

### 4.3.1 THE FIRST ELEMENT OF PEOPLE MANAGEMENT: HR-PRACTICES

The first element of people management are the *HR-practices* (Knies, 2012). These are about the task that managers have to translate the intended policy of the organization into an implemented form for employees. Managers have a special position in the translation of the HR-practices which are developed and intended on an organizational level to be subsequently translated and implemented by managers for employees which results in the actual practices (e.g. Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). Based on the distinction of Guest (2007), Knies (2012) makes the choice to look for HR-practices at the implementation of *general rules* which apply on big groups of employees like CAO agreements, but also to look at the *individual arrangements* which are specially made for individuals by the manager.

Of both components, *the general rules* and *the individual agreements,* is expected that it can affect the professional capability of teachers, but also its resources. The general rules can for example be about the hours that teachers need to have available for training and education which can be seen as an important condition for professional development. During training teachers can learn for example how to deal with critical parents, or how to create a stable work-private balance.

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Besides these positive effects, it is important to emphasize that such agreements can also result in feelings of pressure. When teachers often feel they do not have time to participate in trainings while their managers repeatedly encouraged them to do so, this can result in even more stress. The individual arrangements that leaders make with teachers in a special situation like when they experience too much stress, might be helpful for teachers, since in education stress and burn-out are frequent problems for teachers (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). In this case managers can for example help to create certain strategies to help teachers to deal with the stress they experience (Law & Glover, 2000).  Making special agreements for the particular work situation of teachers can possibly contribute positively to their functioning. Simply supporting teachers by talking about their stress, and showing your willingness to listen as a manager can be helpful as well (Law & Glover, 2000; Jackson, et al., 1986).

### 4.3.2 THE SECOND ELEMENT OF PEOPLE MANAGEMENT: LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

The second element of people management is leadership *behavior* (Knies, 2012). Leadership behavior turns out to be an important element for managers and is based on the theory around *leader-member exchange* (LMX). LMX is about the quality of the relationship between the leader and the member (Tummers & Knies, 2013: 859). In general it can be stated that when the relation between the leader and the employee (*member*) is strong, this will result in better job outcomes like higher performance and supervision satisfaction (Ibid). The uniqueness of the LMX theory is that it not only focuses on the position of the leader like well-known theories about transformational and transactional leadership do, but LMX focuses on the relationship between the leader and the employee.

There is critique as well on the LMX concept around the ambiguity of the concept and how it is measured in research (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Because LMX might suggest that it is about a relationship, often in research only the perspective of the leader is measured, while the interaction is important. Therefore looking at both aspects of the relationship, from the leader and the employee in research, can be an important solution. Despite this critique there is an often used conceptualization by Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995). They focus on respect and trust in the relationship between leader and employee. The assumption is that a relationship can evolve when there is a basis of trust and respect (see also Knies, 2012: 29). This relationship with their leader can be important for employees because it can help them to perform and therefore it might also be helpful for their behavior.

There is at this point not much empirical research done on the effects of people management in which both components -the HR-practices and leadership behavior- were included. In a study of Gilbert, de Winne and Sels (2011) both components of people management were used and showed

that they had a positive effect on commitment of employees. More recently Knies (2012) used both components in her research and showed that people management matters. Both the HR-practices and the leadership behavior affected the ability, commitment and autonomy of employees. Knies (2012) emphasized in her research on the fact that the role of the manager is not only important for the implementation of the HR-practices, but his leadership behavior is just as important. The importance of this latter component has not been recognized in HR-literature this strongly before.

In this present research both the conclusions of Gilbert, et al (2011) and Knies (2012) are important indicators for the positive effect that people management can have on employees and their behavior. From their role as 'organizational agent' is expected that managers can affect the different resources for professional capability. Although it might seem that teachers can make use of these resources to increase their professional capability on their own, reality shows that teachers often feel they do not have enough time to participate in networks outside the school (Galton & MacBeath, 2008). This could indicate that a manager is needed to support teachers to make use of external networks if this indeed could positively affect their professional capability. Also the degree of autonomy is not something a teacher can decide upon on his own, autonomy is something that is organized between the logic of the manager and that of the professional (Heldal, 2015). To learn more about the effect of the different people management activities on the resources for professional capability the following hypotheses are tested:

*H3a: People management-activities which are perceived as supportive by teachers have a positive effect on their attitude (PSM)*

*H3b: People management-activities which are perceived as supportive by teachers have a positive effect on the different organizational resources (internal networks; external networks; autonomy).*

The above presented hypotheses test the direct effect of people management on the different resources for professional capability. But, the expectation is that the people management activities also have an indirect effect on the professional capability of teachers. The indirect effect of what people management on professional capability can look like, will therefore be described in the next part of this chapter

### 4.3.3. INDIRECT EFFECTS

With the indirect effect is meant how people management can affect professional capability through different resources. This is what is called mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1173).

Not much empirical evidence exists about the indirect effect of people management on the behavior of employees, due to the fact that it is a relatively new concept. Knies (2012) showed in her study about the antecedents and effects of people management that both elements of people management affected the abilities, commitment and autonomy of employees (AMO). These three variables proved to be important factors that mediated between people management and performance (Ibid). Unlike the study of Knies (2012), the AMO-variables are not included in this current study to learn more about the black box between HRM and performance, but the different resources (*PSM, internal- and external networks, and autonomy*) for professional capability will be included as possible mediators between people management and professional capability.

The first hypothesis that is formulated focuses on the effect of PSM as mediator between people management and professional capability. PSM is a specific type of motivation which proves to facilitate specific desirable outcomes and behaviors for organizations like job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Pandey, Wright & Moynihan, 2008). In this case is the behavioral outcome professional capability. The expectation based on previous research is that PSM can be positively affected by leadership (Wright, Moynihan & Pandey, 2011). A leader for example can act in specific ways that can increase the effect of PSM (Idem: 207). Because PSM can have a positive effect on organizational outcomes and behavior, the assumption is that it can also contribute to more professional capability. This effect is measured indirectly because PSM can be positively affected by organizational leaders. Therefore the following hypothesis was formulated:

> *H4a: People management activities have a positive influence on professional capability of teachers through the mediating effect of PSM.*

The next two resources which are considered to be possible mediators between people management and professional capability are internal and external networks. The importance of network use has been acknowledged by diverse authors because it can contribute to exchanging knowledge and capturing this knowledge, especially tacit knowledge, which is important for organizations (Kaše, Paauwe & Zupan, 2009). In particular the research on organizational capital was relevant because it supports the idea that more social interaction can lead to better organizational effectiveness ( Idem: 617). In literature there was a focus on how HR-practices could enhance such relationships (networks) (Ibid). Kaše, Paauwe and Zupan (2009) showed in their research that in particular: 'relationship-facilitating work design, along with training and development HR practices, were clearly shown to positively affect the structural relation within a firm's social net-work' (p. 630).

Therefore based on the importance of network use both in- and outside the school organization, the expectation is that it can contribute to more professional capability. But since teachers complain about their lack of time, it cannot automatically be expected that teachers also

see and understand the importance of network use themselves. Both components of people management, the HR-practices and leadership behavior can support teachers to make more use of such networks, which in the end can affect their professional capability. Therefore the following hypotheses on the indirect effects are formulated:

> *H4b: People management activities have a positive influence on professional capability of teachers through the mediating effect of internal networks.*

> *H4c: People management activities have a positive influence on professional capability of teachers through the mediating effect of external networks.*

The final resource is autonomy. The need for autonomy for teachers seems to have been acknowledged by diverse studies (e.g. Pearson & moomaw, 2005). Just like other professionals teachers need the freedom to treat cases the way they consider best. Therefore autonomy also seems to be an important resource for professional capability. Autonomy may offer extra room to decide on how to behave/cope with certain work related aspects like the demands and stakeholders. But autonomy is not to be considered something upon which professionals can decide on their own 'how much they need' (Honigh & van Thiel, 2014). Autonomy needs to be arranged between the logics of professionals and managers, which not always proves to be an easy task (Heldal, 2015). Nevertheless, based on the importance of autonomy for teachers, the expectation is that it can positively function as a mediator between people management and professional capability. Therefore the last hypothesis formulated is:

> *H4d: People management activities have a positive influence on professional capability of teachers through the mediating effect of autonomy.*

### 4.3.3 THE IMPLEMENTED AND PERCEIVED LEVEL OF PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

In HR-studies it was assumed for a long time that the HR-practices in organizations were developed on an organizational level and subsequently implemented like they were intended from above (Knies, 2012). Mintzberg was one of the first who noticed the difference between the 'espoused strategy of an organization' and the 'realized strategy' (as cited in Wright & Nishii, 2007). More recently the distinction was made between different organizational levels. The different levels can result in differences in the intended practices from the senior-management and the way it is implemented by managers, and subsequently perceived by employees (e.g. Wright & Nishii, 2007; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012). Because after the intended practices developed by the senior management, the line managers in the organization implement the practices further into the

organization. This results in what is called the implemented practices (*actual practices*)[15]. Then the employees in the organization receive and perceive the people management activities when they are translated to them by the manager.

The theoretical distinction that is made between these three different levels is important because the underlying assumption is that differences can exist between what was intended and what actually was put into practice (Knies, 2012: 25). Managers may for example reconsider what they see as important and implement not all the practices as they were intended to. Subsequently employees (teachers) may perceive it differently because they experience it from their own position. This means that the different positions are worth considering when thinking about the effect of people management because of the different opinions and perspectives.

Although all three levels are interesting and important to look at more closely, the level of the manager (*implemented*) and the employee (*perceived*) was chosen to look at in this research. This because the intention of this research is not to research what the effect of a particular HR-practice is through the different levels of the organization, but to research the effect of people management activities on professional capability of teachers. How teachers perceive the people management activities, and how this is communicated by the management is, following Bowen and Ostroff (2004), important because when 'employees develop a shared interpretation of the organization's policies, practices, procedures, and goals' and together 'share a common interpretation of what is important and what behaviors are expected and rewarded', a so called 'strong situation' can arise (p. 204). A strong situation is important because the assumption is that this can contribute to organizational effectiveness (Ibid). Therefore the manager has a crucial role in translating the HR-practices to the employees.

Assuming that a good communication and explanation of the HR-practices can contribute to a better and common understanding from teachers about the organizations policies, practices, procedures and goals, it seems an important condition for managers to be a supportive force for teachers to help them develop their professional capability. If they experience their manager as positive and supportive this can possibly contribute to the development of professional capability.

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[15] Although in literature the concept *actual practices is used*, instead of the concept *implemented practices*. There is in this research chosen for the concept implemented practices in line with Knies (2012:222). She stresses that the concept of actual practices can be confusing because it suggests some objectivity which cannot be met when using self-reporting methods.

In these last two chapters is the most relevant literature discussed for this study, which has resulted in the construction of the research model (see figure 3.). This model contains all important concepts which will all be shortly summarized in these last concluding paragraphs of this chapter. In the model different numbers can be found which correspond with the hypotheses which will be tested empirically in this research. All the formulated hypotheses in this research are summarized in table 1. The model will be discussed horizontally from the right to the left. At the right end of the research model the concept of professional capability can be found.

Professional Capability is defined as a proactive coping strategy which teachers can use to deal with the demands and pressures in education. In this model professional capability is seen as a specific type of employee behavior which can possibly contribute to positive outcomes like more well-being for teachers, but also better quality of education. These possible outcomes of professional capability were not tested in this research, because the focus is first on the relationship between managers and professionals and their behavior.

Different resources were studied more closely as possible antecedents for professional capability. A distinction was made between: *personal* and *organizational resources*. PSM is marked as a personal resource for which the fact that teachers work in the public sector is seen as a possible important influential factor for professional capability. As possible organization resources the use of internal and external networks are included into the research model, and the amount of job autonomy that teachers experience. To make optimal use of these resources there is expected that school leaders can affect professional capability indirectly through these different resources, therefore the concept of people management was included in the model as well.

People management is a concept from HRM-literature which consists of two elements*: Implementation of HR-practices & Leadership behavior*. The expectation is that people management activities matter and can have a positive effect on the resources and therefore indirectly also on the professional capability of teachers. In the research model is a vertical dotted line visible between the managers *implemented* people management activities which will be studied on school level, and the *perceived* people management activities by teachers which are studied on an individual level. This is an important theoretical distinction to make because the assumption is that the better the implemented activities are received by teachers, the more likely the chance on a 'strong situation' will be (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Such a situation seems important because it can possibly contribute to the development of professional capability. The line is dotted because this part of the research will be more explorative, and not tested within a separate hypothesis.
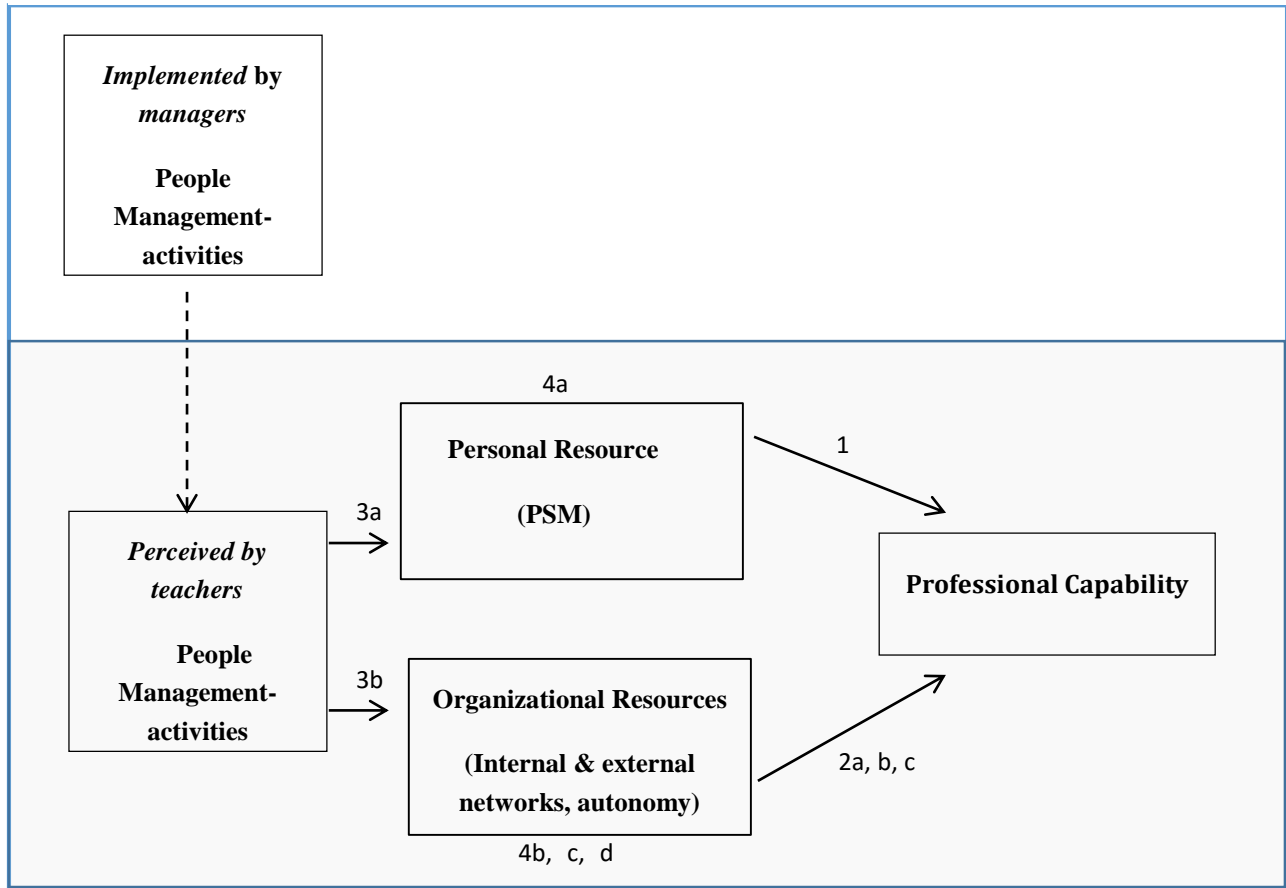
**Table 1 Hypotheses for empirical research**

| Hypotheses | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Attitude + Professional Capability** | 1. | The degree of PSM of teachers has a positive influence on their Professional Capability. |
| **2. Resources +Professional Capability** | 2a. | The degree of autonomy of teachers has a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers. |
| | 2b. | The degree of internal networks use by teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability. |
| | 2c. | The degree of external networks use by teachers has a positive influence on their Professional Capability. |
| **3. People Management Activities + Attitude & Resources** | 3a. | People management-activities which are perceived by teachers as supportive have a positive effect on their attitude (PSM) |
| | 3b. | People management-activities which are perceived by teachers as supportive have a positive effect on their resources (internal networks; external networks; autonomy). |

• • •

| 4. People Management Activities – Resources – Professional Capability | 4a. | People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of PSM. |
| | 4b. | People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of internal networks. |
| | 4c | People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of external networks. |
| | 4d. | People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of autonomy. |

In the next chapter is continued with the research design of this thesis. There is explained how the model was used for the empirical research, which methods were used and how the concepts were operationalized.

In this chapter is looked at the method and design of this research. First is explained why a mixed method design for this research was chosen (§ 4.1). Then is explained why both teachers and managers are focused on in this research (§ 4.2). To continue with the operationalization of the different variables in the research model (§ 4.3). Next the survey (§ 4.4) and the focus groups are discussed (§ 4.5), which also includes considerations and measures taken regarding the reliability & validity of this research.

### 5.1 COMBINING RESEARCH METHODS INTO A MIXED MODEL

In this research a mixed method design was used. By this is meant: 'research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or a program of inquiry' (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007: 4). Often mixed method designs have a sequential form, for example first a quantitative method and then a qualitative method, with a focus on one of the two approaches (Boeije, 2010). But, in this research quantitative and qualitative methods were used concurrently instead of sequentially. This because they both contribute to a different part of the thesis. Each method focused namely on a different research unit: the interviews were used for school leaders and the survey was used for teachers.

The mixed method design was chosen because generally speaking combining methods often contributes to a rich(er) result on the research topic (Fetters& Freshwater, 2015:116). And second, although more and more mixed method research has emerged, and acknowledged as a methodological approach in different study fields, still further embedding is needed to make it a widely recognized method in different study fields (Fetters & Freshwater, 2015). Performing a mixed method study in the field of public administration can contribute to this embedding as well.

Several arguments which support the choice for a mixed method design have been listed in this paragraph so far, but a mixed method design also has its pitfalls or risks of which the researcher should be aware. Briefly the most outstanding will be discussed relevant for this research. The first one is about the warning that when you combine methods, both should be applied in accordance of its own rules (Boeije. 2010). This means that as a researcher you need to play by the rules of both methods which can be demanding. This will be further discussed in the parts about the survey and the focus groups later in this chapter. Another point of care has to do with the integration of the results. Bryman (2007) remarked that many mixed method studies approach both parts as separate elements in their analysis, while integration could result in the added value of the method. This

doesn't mean that all parts need to be connected, but where possible making the combination is important (Bryman, 2007).

### 5.1.1 DIGITAL SURVEY AND FOCUSGROUP INTERVIEWS

When we look more specifically at the content of the research there are several arguments why there was chosen for this mixed method design. Like mentioned, in this research the qualitative and quantitative methods are used concurrently. To answer the research question was the first step to learn more about the current degree of professional capability of teachers in secondary education, and how they perceived the people management activities. To reach as many teachers as possible who can represent the population, the group of teachers was approached by the use of a digital survey (more about this method in § 4.4). Using a survey offered the possibility to measure the relations and effects of the different variables in the model from a big group of respondents. This way more can be learned about the professional capacity of teachers in the sector, the effect of the different antecedents and the effect of the people management activities, all from the perspective of teachers. In this case the quantitative method was considered best.

But the perspective of teachers is not the only valuable perspective to measure when researching the effect of management activities on professional capability of teachers. The perspective of managers, and in particular what their activities are is just as important. And, although for measuring the effects in the model at a multi-level it could have been interesting to use a digital survey for the managers as well, interviews with the managers were chosen for instead. Reason for this choice had partly to do with the fact that the relationship between managers and professional capability has not been researched yet, due to the relative newness of both concepts. Therefore interviews contributed better to an exploration about what managers exactly do in their daily practice, and how managers give meaning to these activities. This advice to explore qualitative what managers actually do is also given by Knies (2012:222).Another reason to choose for interviews has to do with the leadership topic. The risk of only using prepared survey questions is that a certain nuance gets lost, or that managers give socially desirable answers to the questions about their own skills (Fowler, 2014). Interviews can help to limit the risks of losing nuance, or answering socially desirable by for example using dilemma's and asking for examples from their daily practice (more about the focus groups and techniques in § 4.5).

### 5.2 TEACHERS AND MANAGERS AS RESEARCH UNITS

Both teachers and managers in secondary education were units of research. Teachers were in this research defined as the ones who are part of the teaching staff (*onderwijspersoneel*) and actually

educate children. This excludes the educational supportive staff members (*onderwijs ondersteunend personeel*).

School leaders or managers were more difficult to define as a group. Because the term school leader can refer to various positions in the school. It has become a collective name for different types of managers in school organizations, which can exist at different levels (de Wit, 2012: 88). In general three levels can be distinguished in school structures: The first one are school administrators who function on a level above the different school locations. The second one are the school directors. They manage a school location and they are responsible to the school director. The third one are the school leaders, or managers who are responsible for the daily functioning of the school and its teachers. They function in the middle of the dynamic between teachers and their school director. (de Wit, 2012). The focus of this research is on this last group of managers, because on a daily basis they are the ones who interact most directly with teachers. These managers in schools can have different labels varying from school leader (*schoolleider*), division chief (*afdelingsleider*), to team leader (*teamleider*) or section head (*sectiehoofd*) (van Kessel, et al., 2008: 19 as cited in de Wit, 2012).

## 5.3 OPERATIONALIZING THE VARIABLES

In this part of the chapter is explained how the variables were operationalized for both the quantitative part (survey) and the qualitative (focus group) part. The operationalization of each variable is an important element for the intern validity, which is about the question if actually is measured what the researcher intended (van Thiel, 2010: 58). First professional capability is discussed (§4.3.1), than PSM as personal resource (§4.3.2), than the different organizational resources (§ 4.3.3), than the people management activities (§ 4.3.4), and at last the control variables which were only included for the survey (§ 4.3.5).

### 5.3.1 PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

In the theoretical chapter the concept of professional capability has already been explained in detail and is it defined as: *proactively coping with – and at times resisting – work-related expectations, challenges and burdens that dynamic environments and stakeholders pose upon the professional* (Noordegraaf et al. forthcoming). Professional capability is the dependent variable in the research model. It is both measured under teachers in the survey, and talked about in the interviews with managers. This relatively new scale consisted of 8 items (van Loon, Heerema, Weggemans & Noordegraaf, *under review)*. The item answering categories were designed as a range, from 'never' (1) to 'always' (7). The reliability test showed a Chronbach's Alpha of .771. An example question

from the survey was: '*I balance the interest of [stakeholders] in such a way that it contributes optimally to the quality of [service]*' (for more see also the items in the appendix).

Somewhere during the interview a definition in Dutch was given about the concept of professional capability (*professioneel vermogen*) this helped to give a certain direction to the conversation and to be sure that was understood what was meant with the concept. Professional capability was not something that was measured under managers, and therefore the emphasis there was more on what managers could do to support teachers and help them to develop their professional capability. Therefore it was important that managers would have a global understanding of what was meant by this concept. Managers were asked for example what they already did to stimulate the professional capability of teachers, but also what they could do differently to stimulate this more.

### 5.3.2 PERSONAL RESOURCE

The assumption in the research model is that attitudes can function as a resource for the professional capability of teachers. And although different attitudes can be measured in the model, it was chosen to use the concept of *public service motivation* (PSM) (Perry & Wise, 1990) in this case. PSM may be understood as: 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations (Perry & Wise, 1990: 368). Teachers can be motivated to do their job in different ways, it might for example be the case that they just see it as a way to earn money, but their intrinsic motivation to work in the public sector might even be more important. When professionals, like teachers or nurses, have a strong desire to contribute to society, and are highly motivated to do this, this can have a positive effect on their performance (Bellé, 2013). A global scale was used to measure PSM (Wright, et al, 2012). The scale consisted of 8 items, measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1=completely disagree, 5=completely agree). (Chronbach's Alpha .802)

During the interviews was explored how managers try to influence the attitude of teachers. They was asked for example what they considered to be the strongest point of motivation for teachers to do their job, and what they subsequently did to stimulate this feeling?

### 5.3.3 ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

Three different possible resources for professional capability are distinguished in the research model; internal & external networks, and autonomy. This was done based on the *Job Demands Resources Model* (JDR-model). In this model autonomy, training, education and social support (internal and external networks) are marked as important resources when job demands are high (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

•••

With internal networks the social support for teachers within the school is meant, and with external networks the support from outside the school. When teachers have strong relations (networks) with colleagues in their school, the idea is that this can contribute to the relief of feelings of stress, but that it can also help teachers to ask for help more easily. Internal networks were measured with a scale based on the social support scale of Boyar, Campbell, Mosley, and Carson (2014). The scale consisted of 4 items and the answer categories were from 1=never till 7=always. The reliability test showed a Chronbach's Alpha of .750.

The expectation is that external networks can also help to increase the experienced social support of teachers, which can contribute to a more proactive attitude. To measure external networks there was a scale used from Moynihan & Pandey (2008), which was adapted at some points to make it more applicable to the specific context (Templates, DeVellis, 2003). The scale consisted of 4 items and there was a 7-point Likert scale used (1=never, 7=always). The Chronbach's Alpha measured was .840.

In the interviews both the internal and external networks were discussed. The internal network was discussed when the atmosphere in the team was asked about. How is collegiality in the team, do teachers help each other or do you as a manager need to support this? How does he (the manager) influence the internal social support? The external networks were asked if managers stimulate that teachers also go outside the school, and if they did, the follow up question was, 'In what way'? The external network was talked about in several forms, this could for example be about a congress, but also visits to other schools or network activities.

Autonomy is seen as a classic 'need' for professionals and an important resource because it can help to make decisions, and work the way that a professional considers best. Autonomy can give teachers the space to decide how to deal with the demands they face during their work (Bakker, Demerouti & Sans-Vergel, 2014). Autonomy was measured with 5 items, with questions like 'I can decide how to perform my daily work'. The scale was based on a scale from self-determination theory (autonomy). This theory comes from a research of Spreitzer (1995) based on the theory of Deci, Connell & Ryan (1989). There was a 5-point Likert scale used with 1= totally didn't agree, and 5= totally agree.  The scale consisted of 4 items, and had a Chronbach's Alpha of .746.

**Table 2 Results of Reliability Analysis**

| Variable | Number of items | Chronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| *Professional Capability* | 8 | .771 |
| *PSM* | 8 | .802 |
| *Internal Networks* | 4 | .750 |
| *External Networks* | 4 | .840 |
| *Autonomy* | 4 | .746 |

During the interviews autonomy was discussed as the space that teachers have to perform their work and make decisions about the content of their work. The managers were asked what they considered to be the autonomy of teachers, how far they thought it reached, and how they managed personally the autonomy of teachers. They were also asked if they could illustrate when they thought that there was too much or not enough autonomy for teachers.

### 5.3.4. PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

The independent variable in the model is *people management.* People Management is in this research seen as all the aspects which have to do with managing employees (Knies, 2012: 65; Purcell, et al. 2009). This means that people management is not only about implementing certain HR-practices, but also about the leadership behavior of managers. The concept people management is relatively new and was introduced in 2007 by Purcell and Hutchinson. Since then the operationalization and scale development is still continuing in which Knies (2012) developed a systematic approach to measure the people management activities which focuses both on the application of the HR-measures, and the support managers offer.

#### THE APPLICATION OF HR-MEASURES

The application of HR-measures and the support from managers can be measured from two different perspectives, one which is from the perspective of managers, and one from the perspective of employees. In the survey only this latter option has been used because the digital survey was answered only by teachers (employees). Paragraph 4.3.6 is about the interviews on people management with managers.

The use of HR-measures is one of the two elements from the people management activities concept (scale). The variable is measured through the use of two subscales: *support through HR-*

*measures,* and *support through customized arrangements.* The first component is the support teachers experience through HR-measures that are formulated on an organizational level, and the second is the direct support that teachers can experience in the individual agreements they make directly with their manager (Knies, 2012).

The subscale support through HR-measures contains 7 items and was measured with a 5-point Likert scale (1= totally didn't agree, and 5= totally agree). The scale is used from Knies (2012), and intends to measure as completely as possible the perceptions that teachers (employees) can have about the support that the HR-measures offer. An example question from this scale is: 'Do you experience support from the current HR-measures in your personal training and development? The Chronbach's Alpha measured was .808. The other subscale – support through customized arrangements – also comes from the research of Knies (2012). This second subscale contains two items and was again measured on a 5 point scale with a Chronbach's Alpha of .831.

When talking about the application of the HR-measures by managers the researcher was mainly informed about the HR-measures they used for teachers, like evaluation interviews, but also how they offered teachers possible special solutions when their situation asked for such a thing.

### SUPPORT PROVIDED BY MANAGERS

To measure the support that managers offer, again a scale from Knies (2012) was used. In the research of Knies (2012) support is provided by managers and defined in line with Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002) as: 'the extent to which managers in their behavior show that they appreciate the efforts of employees and are committed to their wellbeing (Knies, 2012: 68). Just like the previous variable this second variable – support provided by manager- is also divided into two components. These subscales are *support during daily functioning*, and *support in development*. Both are measured by the use of 4 items and a 5-point Likert scale. The first subscale is about the daily support that managers offer their employees. One of the items is for example: 'My manager informs if I can handle my job well'. The reliability test presented a Chronbach's Alpha of .932. The second subscale is about the support in development that is offered to teachers. One of the items in this scale is for example: 'My supervisor gives me the opportunity to participate in training'. The Chronbach's Alpha was .863.

**Table 3 Results of Reliability Analysis.**

| Variable- People Management | Number of items | Chronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| *Use of HR-measures* |  |  |
| *Support through HR-measures* | 7 | .808 |
| *Support through customized arrangements* | 2 | .831 |
| *Support provided by manager* |  |  |
| *Support during daily functioning* | 4 | .932 |
| *Support in development* | 4 | .863 |

When talking about the support that managers provided during daily functioning they were asked if they could describe how their relation with teachers looked like, if they met each other socially, and what the manager did to support teachers. To make this conversation concrete: the managers were asked if they could give concrete examples of how they supported teachers in general, but also in their (personal) development.

### 5.3.5 CONTROL VARIABLES

The survey list also contained several control variables. These are commonly used variables which help to look at the contextual factors, which can ultimately help to draw conclusions that are based on the variables in the model and minimalize the chance that wrong conclusions would be drawn based on not included variables. It is important to realize that conducting research in education is not a fixed experiment in which all factors and influences can be included. Nevertheless the research tried to look at the most important control variables on an individual level. The control variables in the model were: gender, age, tenure in education, highest level of education completed, and the degree that teachers have (first, second, basic or none). For gender (0=male, 1=female) dummy variables were made.

### 5.4 SURVEY

The survey used for this research was partly based on the survey from the NWO BOPO research of which I was a part of the research team, and helped design the survey as well (see also § 4.2). For this current research I adapted, in line with my research question, the survey again. To test this survey I asked family, friends, my supervisors and people from the field to test the survey. The goal of this 'pilot study' was to check if there were no mistakes in my questions like typing errors,

how long it took to answer, if the questions were straight forward, and if there were no other problems. After I received the feedback, I changed the formulation of some of the questions to make them more applied on teachers, I changed the order of the questions, and I contacted the helpdesk to help me with the look of the survey.

### 5.4.1 SELECTING & APPROACHING THE RESPONDENTS

To measure the current degree of professional capability from teachers in secondary education, it was best for the representation to approach a substantial number of teachers from various schools, at different places in the Netherlands. The total population of teachers is too big to research at once in a short period like available for this thesis, and in combination with a certain 'research tiredness' in education (e.g. de Wit, 2012), it was decided to approach a select group of school administrators directly with the help of the VO-raad. The VO-raad is the sector organization for schools in secondary education and was the organization that facilitated and helped during my research, since this researcher worked there as an intern. Through approaching school administrators, indirectly more teachers could be reached than when they would have been approached on an individual- or school level.

The school administrators were contacted directly by e-mail with a short summary of the research. Some administrators responded immediately, while non-respondents were contacted by phone after a week. In total 12 different school boards from different sizes, denominations and locations were approached. After several e-mails, telephone calls, and meetings this resulted in 6 participating school organizations, 18 different school locations, 4 different nominations (Catholic, Protestant Christian, Public and Generally Special), spread over 4 provinces, and 1069 teachers to invite.

### 5.4.2 COLLECTING THE DATA

In spring 2015 all teachers were invited by e-mail. These e-mail addresses were gathered through the contacts with the school administrators. The data collection took place in two phases. During the first round 695 teachers were approached, and during the second round 374. This was due to the fact that not all school organizations had confirmed their participation yet, and a number were approached later during the process. Therefore the survey was spread into two rounds. All teachers had been informed in advance about the research through their school administrator or directors. This was done to give attention to the research, and not 'surprise' teachers too much.

The e-mail that teachers received contained a link to a digital survey. This survey contained 33 questions nearly all of the multiple choice answering type, expect for the questions about age for example or the extra open answering options. Each question needed to be answered compulsory,

before it was possible to continue to the next question. In between there was an option to save the survey list and to continue at a later moment. To increase the response rate several measures were taken. First, the announcement that was spread under teachers about the research. This announcement was often accompanied with a motivation from the school organization, and why they considered participation important. Second, teachers were approached several times to participate. For three weeks they received a weekly reminder. And third, the school leaders were asked if they could give some extra attention to the survey in their schools. This resulted in the following response:

Table 4 Respondents for research

| | Teachers Invited | Teachers who responded-partly | Teachers who responded-completely | Total respondents | Total percentage of respondents | Total percentage of responded-completely |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Teachers** | 1067 | 145 | 455 | 600 | 56,23 % | 42,64% |

From the participating group of teachers are 47.9% men and 52.1% women (n=580). The average age of the participants is 45.11 years (SD 12.06), from which the youngest participant was 18 years old and the oldest participant 66 years old.  The biggest group of teachers (72.8%) is educated in higher education, almost a quarter of the participants (25.7%) went to university and only a small percentage is low educated (1.4%).

### 5.4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

After the survey was closed, the data set could be downloaded and imported into the statistical analysis program SPSS. After the dataset was prepared, like labeling missing's, and checking for outliers, all the different variables were tested with an explorative factor analysis. Based on the results all scales were constructed. The reliability of all constructs were tested with a Chronbach's alpha and were all above the recommended threshold of .70 (Nunnally, 1978). Since the data were cross-sectional the relations between specific variables were looked at. Since all the data were self-reported and collected from the same survey there is a risk for common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2003). To check for this bias a Harman one factor test was done on all the items of this study. 22% of the total variance was explained in the single factor, this is not the majority and therefore can be expected that there are no serious problems with bias (Ibid).

Multiple regression analyses were conducted in this research to analyze the different relationships. Besides multiple regressions, the 'Process tool' was also used to test the mediating relations. This is an additional option to add in SPSS. The process tool was designed by Andrew

F. Hayes (2012). This tool helps to calculate mediating and moderating effects. Following Hayes (2012) the decision was made to extent SPSS and perform the mediation analyses using this additional option. However, using a program like Mplus could have led to more conclusive analyses, for example structural equation modeling (SEM). Future research could perform such an analysis, although (Hayes (2012) stress the reliability of the program used in this research.

## 5.5 FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups can be defined as 'a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher' (Morgan, 1996: 130). The group is not randomly formed but purposely brought together. The strength, and reason why focus groups were chosen for this research, is that it is 'not just good to explore what different people have to say, but the real strength is in how it can provide insights into the sources of behavior and motives' (Morgan, 1996: 139). In the case of this research it means that the focus groups can help to gain insight in the behavior of managers and their motives. This is important information when studying the management activities that can have an effect on the professional capability of teachers.

The combination of using focus groups with surveys is often made in research, and knows several forms (Morgan, 1996). The form used in this research is that the focus groups add extra and different information to the results of the survey. In the survey only teachers are questioned about the impact of people management activities on their professional capability, while in the interviews this is asked more in depth from the perspective of managers themselves. This way the implemented and perceived perspectives can be combined in answering the central research question.

### 5.5.1 SELECTING AND APPROACHING THE RESPONDENTS

The contact with the school managers for the interviews went again through the school administrators. It was disappointing to notice that reaching the school leaders for interviews was difficult. An often heard response, if they responded at all, was that they were too busy, especially because the end of the school year was coming up. After consulting the school administrators about this problem, there was by the researcher concluded that reaching all school leaders would simply be impossible. Both for practical and pragmatic reasons mentioned here, it resulted in the solution of planning focus groups. The school administrators often helped to get in contact with the school directors of several locations from their organization. The school directors personally, or the supporting staff members helped to plan focus group meetings with at least three or more middle managers. This resulted in the following list:

| Focus group | Participating Managers | Participating school directors | Representing school locations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| **2** | 2 | - | 2 |
| **3** | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| **4** | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| **5** | 4 | - | 1 |
| **6** | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| **7** | 2 | - | 1 |
| **8** | 3 | - | 1 |
| | | | |
| **Total:** | 28 | 4 | 9 |

### 5.5.2 COLLECTING THE DATA

In total 8 focus groups took place (see table 6). For focus groups the general rule is that after 4-6 focus groups it is likely that a point of saturation in the data will be reached (Morgan, 1996: 144). For this research 8 focus groups took place since some groups only contained two or three persons. The interviews took place at the school locations in one of the conference rooms, or in a personal work room. The assumption was that interviewing the participants in their own environment would make them feel more comfortable and willing to talk. Although the managers were invited, it regularly happened that a school director asked if he could be part of the conversation as well Their participation was not considered a problem, and therefore also school directors participated in some of the conversations (see table 4.).

To make sure that the different focus groups could be compared with each other, a semi-structured interview was chosen in which the same topics were discussed. This meant that there was a topic list that was used as an input for the conversation (see appendix 2). This topic list was loosely based on the leadership scales from people management activities (HR-measures & Manager Support) of Knies (2012). These scales were not used before in a qualitative format, and in the translation of the scales into interview questions some choices had to be made. One of the choices was to formulate the questions less structured, and use them more as input to learn about what managers actually do. Another choice was to ask more for examples from daily practice, like what managers do to keep in contact with their teachers. For reasons of reliability the topic list it was checked and tested on colleagues and a teacher. After feedback, it was adapted at some points. It was shortened for instance, and questions were formulated more open. Although the topic list

was still quite extensively formulated, during the conversations it was used more loosely, and the order of the topics sometimes changed as well, while going along with the flow of the conversation. Nevertheless all topics were discussed. The examples and extra illustrations that managers gave during the conversations resulted in rich data, which would not have been gathered with only questions in a survey.

### 5.5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

During the focus groups the conversations were recorded, and transcribed literally. Recording the interview can be helpful for researchers since they can forget certain comments, or remember them differently. Therefore recording them and using transcripts can contribute to the validity of the research (Silverman, 2011: 278). The transcripts were first analyzed with the help of an open coding (Boeije, 2010). This means that the transcripts are globally analyzed by using a quite simple code tree, in my case this one related strongly to the topics in the topic list. The next step is fine-tuning the different codes, called axial coding. The final step was to selectively code the interviews and use the different coding steps to structure the categories and results needed to describe in the final analysis. In the analysis the interviews were used as extra support and information for the survey outcomes.

## 6. CURRENT CAPABILITIES AND THE EFFECT OF RESOURCES

In this first result chapter the focus will be on the professional capabilities of teachers and the resources that can have an effect on this. The first two sub-questions of this research will also be answered here. They are: *What is the degree of professional capability of teachers in secondary education?* And *what is the effect of the different resources on professional capability?* To answer these questions based on the attitude and resources in the research model, different hypotheses are tested. These are:

1. *The degree of PSM from teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

2a. *The degree of internal networks use by teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

2b. *The degree of external networks use by teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

2c. *The degree of autonomy from teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability.*

In this chapter several steps are taken. In §6.1 the descriptive statistics are described. Next, in §6.2 the different hypotheses are tested. For testing these hypotheses the statistical program SPSS was used. The final paragraph of this chapter (§6.3) concludes with the first interpretations based on the hypotheses results, and by answering the first two empirical sub-questions.

### 6.1 PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY & ANTECEDENTS: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In this part the descriptive statistics of the participating teachers are discussed. Both the means (M), standard deviations (SD) and the correlations are presented in table 3. The answer to the first sub-question about what the current degree is in which teachers use their professional capability, can already be presented based on the information in table 3. The degree of professional capability from teachers is almost 1 point above the mid-point of the scale with a score of 4.47. This score seem to indicate the potential for development and grow. The further implications of this score will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Table 3. also shows the significant relations. Only *tenure in education* and *age* highly correlate significantly with a .733 score, all the other scores correlate acceptably lower than a .60 score The high correlation between age and tenure in education is not unexpected because older people usually have worked in education longer than young people. Nevertheless there was decided to exclude age as control variable, to avoid the risk of multicollinearity in the analysis (Field, 2013).

**Table 6 Descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables and control variables. (n= 498 teachers).**

| Variable | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Professional Capability ^ | 4.47 | .86 | 1 | . | | | | | | | | |
| 2. PSM | 3.76 | .52 | .23** | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Internal Networks | 4.10 | .48 | .26** | .26** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 4. External Networks^ | 2.51 | 1.19 | .32** | .23** | .09 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 5. Autonomy | 3.84 | .60 | .21** | .26** | .28** | .03 | 1 | | | | | |
| 6. Gender | 5.21 | NA | -.09 | .02 | .05 | -.01 | -.08 | 1 | | | | |
| 7. Age | 45.11 | 12.06 | .16** | -.02 | -.13** | -.03 | -.07 | -.16** | 1 | | | |
| 8. Education | 2.74 | 1.02 | .07 | .01 | -.06 | .10* | .05 | .03 | -.02 | 1 | | |
| 9. Qualification level | 2.78 | 1.42 | -.01 | -.03 | .06 | -.15** | -.08 | .07 | .08 | -.51** | 1 | |
| 10. Tenure in Education | 4.49 | 1.80 | .21** | -.01 | -.10* | -.04 | -.10* | -.15** | .73** | .01 | .03 | .06 |

**\*\*p< .01 \*p< .05 NA =Not Applicable (This is a dummy variable). Education is about the highest finished level; Qualification level is the degree that a teacher has (first, second, primary education degree or none). Scales measured on a scale of 1-5 otherwise 1-7 (marked with an ^).**

The bivariate correlations in the table indicate that professional capability correlates with public service motivation (PSM), internal and external networks, autonomy, age and tenure in education.

## 6.2 TESTING THE MODELS

The first step is to test a model only with the different control variables. These are often used control variables: gender, education, qualification level, and tenure in education (see table 7.) This first model explains 4, 7% of the total variance. This model shows that only tenure in education has a positive significant effect on professional capability (B = .10 $p < 0.001$). The longer a teacher works in education, the higher the level of professional capability is. None of the other control variables had a significant effect on professional capability.

Table 7 Regression with control variables and professional capability as dependent variable.

| Variables | Model 1 | |
|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B |
| Constant | 3.85 | .20 |
| Gender | -.10 (-.06) | .08 |
| Education | .072 (.09) | .04 |
| Qualification level | .02 (.03) | .03 |
| Tenure in education | .10 (.20) *** | .02 |
| | | |
| R² | .054 | |
| R² Adjusted | .047 | |
| F | 5.076*** | |
| N | 496 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's (B) presented and the standardized Beta's (β) between brackets.*

### 6.2.1 PERSONAL RESOURCE

The next step is to add public service motivation as attitude to the model and test the first hypothesis: *The degree of PSM from teachers has a positive influence on their professional capability* (see table 8.). The results support the first hypotheses that the degree of PSM has a positive influence on the professional capability of teachers. This relation is highly significant (B =.39 $p < 0.001$). Also is in this second model the relation between professional capability and tenure in education of teachers highly significant (B = .10 $p < 0.001$). In model two is 10% of the total variance explained.

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**Table 8 Multiple Regression with PSM, control variables and professional capability as dependent variable.**

| Variables | Model 2 | |
|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B |
| Constant | 2.26 | .35 |
| Gender | -.09 (-.05) | .08 |
| Education | .08 (.09) | .04 |
| Qualification level | .02 (.04) | .03 |
| Tenure in education | .10 (.22) *** | .03 |
| PSM | .39 (.24)*** | .07 |
| | | |
| $R^2$ | .113 | |
| $R^2$ Adjusted | .104 | |
| F | 11.753*** | |
| N | 463 | |

*$p<.05$, **$p<.01$, ***$p<.001$. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's (B) presented and the standardized Beta's (β) between brackets.*

### 6.2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

After testing the first hypothesis on PSM, now the effects of the other resources on professional capability will be tested (see table 9.). Three hypotheses were tested. The first hypothesis (2a) on was about the positive effect of internal networks on the professional capability of teachers. For this hypothesis was support found in model 3. Internal networks have a significant positive effect on professional capability (B = .38 $p < 0.001$). The second hypothesis (2b) about the effect of external networks is supported with again a highly significant relation with professional capability (B = .22 $p < 0.001$). The third hypothesis tested is about the possible positive effect of autonomy on professional capability (2c). Also autonomy has a highly positive effect on professional capability (B = .26 $p < 0.001$). Therefore also hypothesis 2c is supported. The adjusted R-square of the model is 25%, which means that the tested resources explain 25% of the total variance in professional capability.

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| Variables | Model 3 | |
|---|---|---|
| | **B** | **SE B** |
| Constant | .50 | .40 |
| Gender | -.06(-.36) | .07 |
| Education | .07 (.08) | .04 |
| Qualification level | .04 (.07) | .03 |
| Tenure in education | .13 (.27)*** | .02 |
| Internal networks | .38 (.21)*** | .08 |
| External networks | .22 (.31)*** | .03 |
| Autonomy | .26 (.18)*** | .06 |
| | | |
| R² | .261 | |
| R² Adjusted | .250 | |
| F | 23.161*** | |
| N | 464 | |

*\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's (B) presented and the standardized Beta's (β) between brackets.*

## 6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the degree of professional capability and the effects of the different resources on professional capability. Two empirical sub-questions were answered in this chapter.

The first sub-question that was answered is: *What is the degree of professional capability of teachers in secondary education?* With a mean of 4.47 this score indicates that the current professional capability of teachers appears to be not as bad as would be expected based on the pressures, demands and complains in the sector. This score proves that teachers do use their professional capabilities right now, but shows in the same time that there is room for further development. The outcome that teachers to a certain extend use professional capability as a form of proactive coping behavior, is an important conclusion to draw since nowadays the position and capabilities of teachers are an often discussed topic at different levels in society, where concerns about quality of education are great. Teachers have a key role in contributing to quality of education and their professional capabilities can contribute to proactive and healthy behavior. This score can be considered as a first positive indicator for the sector with still room for development left. When looking at the score it may be concluded that although teachers can experience the pressure of work

as quite demanding they somehow seem to be able to use and develop their professional capability in a progressive way at the same time.

At the same time can be concluded that the relatively high score of the standard deviation (SD .855) shows that the scores on professional capability have a wide distribution. This indicates that between the groups of responding teachers the scores on professional capability differ. The more teachers score similar on professional capability, the lower the standard deviation will be. A low standard deviation would indicate that teachers overall have a similar degree of professional capability, which does not seem to be the case already right now. An indication based on this score could be that although the mean score of the group of teachers overall is quite high, there are still teachers in the group that need to be supported to develop their professional capability in an equal manner.

The second sub-question in this chapter was about the effect of the attitude and resources on professional capability. To answer this question four different hypotheses were formulated and tested in different multiple regression models. The results showed that all hypotheses can be supported (1-2c). The first hypothesis was about the positive effect of the degree of PSM on professional capability. PSM indeed had a positive significant effect on professional capability. Although PSM is something that can be difficult influenced as such, since it is a specific type of intrinsic motivation, it proves to be an important source for professional capability of teachers. In the last three hypotheses the effects of the sources on professional capability were tested. The first source was the internal network, which turned out to have a significant positive effect on professional capability. Also the external networks had this positive significant effect. This emphasizes the importance of stimulating, and provide room for teachers to participate in networks both inside and outside the school. Networks can offer support for teachers, but they can also supply them with new "tools" which they can apply in their work. The last source tested was autonomy. Professionals often mark autonomy as an important source for their functioning, to make decisions and considerations on their own decisions for example. In this case autonomy indeed proves to be an important source for professional capability to which it was positively significantly related.

In sum, the results show that both PSM and the other resources, internal networks, external networks and autonomy, have a positive significant effect on the degree of professional capability from teachers. This makes these resources worth focusing on when working on the development of professional capability of teachers. Also the current score on the professional capability of teachers is a positive outcome when considering the societal debates about the functioning of teachers. But assuming that this score still leaves room for development, and the position of school leaders is from a theoretical perspective important for the professional development and

functioning of teachers, the next chapter will look into the effects of the people management activities that school leaders can undertake to affect the behavior of teachers.

This chapter focuses on the role of the school leader and his activities in the form of *people management*. People management is both tested directly in relation to the resources and indirectly to the professional capability of teachers. This way the role of school leaders can be studied more closely. Three empirical sub-questions are answered in this chapter: *What is the effect of the implemented people management activities on the perception about these activities by teachers?; What is the effect of the implemented people management activities on the resources of professional capability?* And *What is the indirect effect of people management on professional capability through (the mediating effect of) the different resources (personal & organizational) for professional capability?*

For the analysis the statistical results are combined with the results of interviews among 32 school leaders. The interview quotes were used as an addition to the survey results. The descriptive statistics based on the survey data are presented in the first paragraph of this chapter (§7.1). Next, in §7.2 the relationship between teachers and managers when it comes down to the effect of the implemented and perceived people management activities is focused on. In §7.3 the effect of the people management activities on the different resources for professional capability is measured. This is done through the use of regressions. In §7.4 the indirect relationship between the people management activities and professional capability is measured through the mediating effect of the different resources. The answers to the different sub-questions and hypotheses are summarized and further interpreted in the concluding paragraph of this chapter (§7.5).

## 7.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The means (M), standard deviations (SD) and correlations are presented in table 10. The different variables of people management all correlate with each other on a high level. Except for the support through HR-measures, all the other people management variables correlate with professional capability. Also PSM, internal networks and autonomy correlate with all the people management components. External networks is the only variable that just correlates with the people management component support in development. Other significant correlations with the people management components are between tenure in education, which is significantly negatively related to support through customized arrangements. This correlation indicates that teachers who have just started working in education feel more supported by customized arrangements than those who have been working much longer in education. This correlation might be explained by the fresh perception of starting teachers who may look at things from a more positive angle. Another explanation could be found in the fact that during the last couple of years there has been a stronger focus on the position of starting teachers and the support they (need to) receive (VO-raad, 2015).

**Table 10 Descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables and control variables. (n= 468 teachers).**

| Variable | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.Supp. through HR-measures | 3.43 | .88 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.Supp. through customized arrangement | 3.32 | .91 | .57** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Supp. during daily functioning | 3.53 | .96 | .53** | .62** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Supp. in development | 3.17 | .83 | .57** | .56** | .60** | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Prof. Capability ^ | 4.47 | .86 | .07 | .16** | .17** | .15** | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 6. PSM | 3.76 | .52 | .15** | .15** | .16** | .20** | .23** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 7. Internal Networks | 4.10 | .48 | .23** | .29** | .29** | .24** | .26** | .26** | 1 | | | | | | |
| 8.ExternalNetworks^ | 2.51 | 1.19 | -.01 | .03 | .02 | .12** | .32** | .23** | .09 | 1 | | | | | |
| 9. Autonomy | 3.84 | .60 | .37** | .39** | .39** | .38** | .21** | .26** | .28** | .03 | 1 | | | | |
| 10. Gender | 5.21 | NA | -.02 | .05 | -.03 | -.02 | -.09 | .02 | .03 | -.07 | -.08 | 1 | | | |
| 11. Education | 2.74 | 1.02 | -.05 | -.07 | .01 | .00 | .07 | .01 | -.06 | .10* | .05 | .03 | 1 | | |
| 12. Qualification level | 2.78 | 1.42 | -.06 | .00 | -.03 | -.03 | -.01 | -.03 | .06 | -.15** | -.08 | .07 | -.51** | 1 | |
| 13. Tenure in Education | 4.49 | 1.80 | -.09 | -.15** | -.07 | -.09* | .21** | -.01 | -.10* | -.04 | -.10* | -.15** | .01 | .03 | 1 |

**p< .01 *p< .05 NA =Not Applicable (This is a dummy variable). Education is about the highest finished level; Qualification level is the degree that a teacher has (first, second, primary education degree or none). Scales measured on a scale of 1-5 otherwise 1-7 (marked with an ^).

In this part of the chapter will be looked more closely at how teachers perceive the different people management activities based on their answers in the survey, and how managers talk about the implementation of these activities based on the interview data. The quotes from the interviews with school leaders are used to enrich the survey data and highlight the story also from the perspective of managers. No hypothesis will be tested in this sub-chapter since the interview and survey data are different types of data which make it difficult to compare and test.

### 7.2.1 PROFILE OF THE MANAGERS

The multilevel approach of Wright & Nishii (2006) distinguishes different levels by which the HR-measures are translated into the organization. The intended level is not included in this analysis, only the implemented and perceived are studied more closely. For the implemented level from managers there were 8 focus groups with in total 28 school managers and 4 school directors. The explorative interviews focused on the implementation of the different people management activities that school leaders undertake to affect the professional capability of teachers.

All school leaders that were interviewed used to be full-time teachers before they became managers and most of them still worked as a teacher for a view hours a week beside their managing tasks. This combination makes that they relate to both the teachers' and the management team which certainly initially may result in feelings of mixed loyalty.

*I do feel part of the executives/management but at the beginning I found it quite difficult, especially for my section where I suddenly had to leave. (R2, line 169-170, interview 7)[16].*

Most managers did not participate in a special education program for their management job, although most of them received some sort of brief training, an assessment or a coach to support them in their new role. Only a small group participated in a MBA.

*I've done a kind of development assessment, the leadership circle, and I received some points for improvement, and that was about it, I think. (R3, line 8-9, interview 8).*

Being a school leader was often characterized as a job with a lot of different stakeholders involved like children, parents, teachers, school directors and even the inspection for education and the

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[16] In all interviews there was spoken Dutch, therefore the quotes are translated as accurately as possible. Nevertheless, this might result in some different wording or word-orders due to the translation from Dutch to English.

minister for education were mentioned. This makes it a demanding job, and you need to be able to switch quickly between your responsibilities. One of the managers described his job as following:

> *You're a spider in the web, it is not a simple nine to five office job. It is not a question of just doing a few tasks passed on top down. This job is about working with children, with parents, with organizations outside school; You work with a management team, with teachers, and there is the school policy too. You are also busy making plans together with your team, so you virtually do just about everything and if you do it right then you actually run a small school on your own (R2, line 55-59, interview 4).*

This short introduction of the school manager offers a good starting point for further analysis of the implementation of people management activities and the interaction that managers have with their teachers. In the next section each people management component will be discussed separately.

## 7.2.2 IMPLEMENTED AND PERCEIVED

**Support through HR-measures**

When discussing the HR-measures that managers undertake the topic often focused on the performance evaluations and the assessment interviews between managers and teachers (*functioneringsgesprek & beoordelingsgesprek)*. All schools had some sort of cycle to structure these interviews. Varying from one to three interviews a year. Although this structure did not necessarily mean that the conversations would actually take place. More than once the managers explained that they were too busy to plan the interviews like they should have done. Often the managers participated in both the performance evaluations and the assessment interviews. However, in case of the assessment interviews there was always an extra member of the school management present. The structure of the conversations and how they were used afterwards differed a lot. Some only used them to catch up, while others had a more official character. One of the managers explained that although he discussed things with teachers during these conversations, he never forced them to do things which might prove a waste of time and no results afterwards.

> *[During the evaluation conversation] People explain to me that they need to develop certain skills and then I sometimes say what I think is necessary for them to do. But I do not often say to them that I insist on them taking it up. Unfortunately the result is often that they do not keep their promise. (R1, lines 420-421, interview 8).*

Other managers explained the value of these conversations for the overall school strategy and ambitions. This quote came from a manager of a school which seemed to be unique in its approach and which had a lot of experience with this HR-measure.

*We have a certain format, we try to keep these conversations twice a year, at the start and the end of the year. We always ask about wishes that people have at the beginning of the conversation, What do your tasks and workload look like, are you interested in certain supportive or new functions? We discuss all these things. People can participate in courses varying from mindfulness to courses about tailored education. (R5, line 210-214, interview 6)*

Based on the answers of teachers in the survey the *support through HR-measures* was perceived by teachers with a mean score of 3.43. (SD .88). This suggests that teachers feel that they are supported on a reasonable level by the HR-measures of the organization. The score leaves room for development and the interviews with the school managers seem to support this idea. Although managers try to focus on the HR-measures and some are more successful in doing this than others, the majority is not yet focused on how these measures can help to reach bigger goals for the development of teachers and in the end for the organization overall. This appears from the fact that often agreements or plans are not binding, or directed towards a special development plan.

**Support through Customized Arrangements**

The next people management component discussed are the customized arrangements used by managers in their daily practice to support teachers. The topic about customized arrangements was discussed briefly in most interviews because it is a topic about a tool of which all managers know they can use, but only actually seem to use it when the teacher or a specific situation asks for it. Workload was often mentioned as a motive when special arrangements had to be made for a teacher:

*When someone suggests that the workload is too much for example, you come back on it and see how you can help someone and reschedule additional meetings with this person. Draw conclusions and listen well and if extra time off is needed we will try to arrange this. (R1, line 276-279, interview 7).*

*If there are all sorts of rules and regulations in the collective agreement, but we think that in your case there needs to be some room to go somewhere else, we will pick it up together. That's nice. (R1, line 135-136, interview 6).*

The perception of teachers about the customized arrangements is summarized in the mean score of 3.32 (SD .91). This score is lower than the previous component; *support that teachers perceive from the HR-measures.* This score on *support through customized arrangements* is again reasonable, but on the other hand not extremely high. This might be explained by the fact that managers do not often offer the possibility for such customized arrangements, and that teachers do

not ask about them either. The interviews with the managers seem to emphasize that this is not an often used tool to support teachers, it seems restricted to special situations like illness or when people seem to become overworked. Maybe if they would inform teachers about the options they would perceive them better.

**Support during Daily Functioning**

When it comes down to support during the daily functioning of teachers, managers claim to be quite supportive, but at the same time they struggle with a lack of time to find the right balance between the interests of both teachers and pupils. Positive examples of support were discussed in different forms, and also the importance of support. Some quotes about how support is offered:

> *I think we have the highest flower bill here. We have flowers sent for all kinds of occasions like illness or when someone moves house etc. (R6, line 190-191, interview 6).*

> *In education you can only reward people with your compliments. You have no other resources. You should reward people with your thanks and feelings. They make you proud. Giving compliments that is our instrument. (R6, line 164-166, interview 1).*

> *You really do not always want to know everything that people tell you, but you do listen. If you do not sympathize with the lows and highs, also with students, then you are fake and mean nothing to others. That is also true for your staff, if someone wants to see you, but you do not take the time for it… you should just let your work be. Some things have priority and you need to be aware of that. Sometimes you have to leave your work and help others. (R2, line 199-204, interview 4).*

But, beside these different examples on how managers support teachers, they also struggled and talked about less supportive examples. One of the reasons for being less supportive is a lack of time and the high workload they experience. This literally turned into avoidance behavior. As long as you don't see teachers, you don't need to support them seemed to be the underlying assumption.

> *I would like to have more time to talk with people from my team. …But sometimes you see that people need guidance or because they ask for support, and I have really too little time for it. (R1, line 119-121, interview 8).*

Two different managers even explained that at some point they kept the door closed and did not go to the staffroom anymore due to the fact that this would result in extra work from meeting teachers.

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*In this period we are all very busy, and then I avoid the staff room. Because otherwise I cannot do my job and finish what is on my to do list which is enormous at that moment….because it is so busy (R6, lines 245-247, interview 1).*

*The staffroom has also the disadvantage, that if you're very busy and you're going in there you will even be busier next. Some people find you important enough to talk to when they meet you in the staff room and not if they have to come to your room. So it also saves a lot of work if you just don't go in there. (R2, line 148-151, interview 5).*

The lack of time is also mentioned as an individual problem since it is also needed for their own development:

*Yes, I sometimes miss the time to develop myself as a manager as well (R3, line 400, interview 8).*

Another problem which could result in less supportive behavior is the loyalty of most managers towards the children. Although you might expect that they manage teachers, their loyalty towards the children costs a lot of their time which they cannot spend on teachers. One of the managers even explained that 70% of his time was reserved for helping children (R3, line 107-108, interview 8). Also other managers emphasized on their strong focus on children.

*I think, students will always be my top one priority. I will always make time for them. (R1, line 55, interview 7).*

*Your main priority are the students and how they are doing, that is why you have contact with parents and teachers (R5, line 124, interview 5).*

The strong focus on children might not per se be a negative one, this is what education is about in the end. But from an organizational perspective, and when it comes down to supporting teachers in their daily job it is important for the functioning of teachers that there is enough time left for this task too. Despite the lack of time and the focus on children, the perception of teachers shows that the support during their daily functioning offered by managers scores a mean of 3.53 (SD .96). This is the highest score on all people management components which means that it is experienced most by teachers. The support that managers claimed to deliver is also experienced by teachers when looking at the mean score, which is not shocking low, but neither extremely high. The mean score still leaves room for development which might be reached by a better division of time and labor. This way managers can implement their support better and teachers perceive this more positive.

**Support in Development**

When discussing the topic of professional capability, support in development seems to be an important component. From a theoretical perspective the expectation is that teachers can develop this proactive coping strategy with both the help of different resources and support from their manager. When talking about support in development it was remarkable to notice how the concept of 'development' was interpreted and enacted differently in each school. All schools are aware of the importance of support in development, but the way they act upon it and how actively they do this differs.

Most managers use the formal development conversations to talk about development in the form of schooling and training:

> *We interpret development very broad. We have development discussions in which teachers indicate what training courses they would like to do. Coaching is now offered, they get help with digital functions, training etc. (R1, line 279-281, interview 2)*

There was one school of which the managers discussed the development and well-being of teachers once a week in a real structured approach:

> *But above all that, eye for people is important, every Tuesday we discuss the teams here. An item on every week's agenda is if any of the colleagues needs extra attention, because that is important: the colleagues. They make the school, (R1, line 130-133, interview 6).*

It was remarkable to notice that development is not only about discussing training or schooling options, but maybe even more important is the fact that they try to pay extra attention to the self-efficacy of teachers. More specifically, they try to coach teachers to be more efficient in their work, and stimulate teachers to arrange things more together with colleges instead of asking always managers for help or expecting that they will solve things.

> *When a teacher comes to me with a problem I sometimes say to him; What makes you think I can solve it and you can't? That's really weird actually. (R1, line 379-380, interview 8).*

The way that managers try to create this awareness among teachers differs. But in general it can be concluded that having a chat about it is the most powerful instrument they have in their interaction with teachers.

> *Whenever I talk with teachers I try to give back what they can do themselves. (R1, line 206-214, interview 2).*

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> *I try to make them work in a team and I also approach them as a team as much as I can (R5, line 374-375, interview 1).*

The next example shows that creating a new form of awareness in which teachers are strongly addressed on their own responsibilities and capabilities, is preceded by a comparable awareness by the management itself.

> *R1: A few years ago I often fell into the trap, that if it really was a mess at a teachers classroom), I used to think that I really needed to do something about it.*
>
> *R2: Yes, you wanted to do it all by yourself….*
>
> *R1: And the first thing I do now is ask what have you done already to help? And then you hear: 'It is not my job to do something about it' and I say 'not your job? "" Yes it is!'. (R1 & 2, line 439-443, interview 3).*

This new type of (active) teacher they are trying to stimulate is not something that goes for all teachers. There are many teachers who are quite capable of solving their own problems and even stimulate colleagues to do so too:

> *There are also colleagues who say to each other: 'we should be able to do this just by ourselves', it is also said in meetings. Why? I do not know but it does have a kind of determined consciousness, that it is important to do things themselves and together. (R1, line 130-132, interview 1).*

This makes it look that managers have an important role in creating the awareness that teachers can and should do more themselves and in teams, instead of asking their managers. This can stimulate their personal development. But there are also teachers who don't need this type of support and do this themselves and even stimulate colleagues.

Teachers perceive the support in development they experience with a mean of 3.17 (SD.83). This is the lowest score of all the people management components which indicates that the support they experience is not much compared to the other types of support. Although the score is still above the midpoint of the scale, it is not extremely high. Two possible explanations can be given for this score; On the one hand it can be noticed that managers do not succeed enough in supporting teachers in their development, this might be a lack of communication or a lack of an appropriate training offer, and on the other hand it may be the case that teachers do not experience this support because they deal with things themselves far more than managers think they do. This suggests that they could be much further in their development than expected. Based on the score of professional capability as presented in chapter 6. this careful conclusion might not be completely unthinkable.

### 7.2.3 SUB-CONCLUSION

The managers presented during the interviews a rich image of the people management activities they undertake. They presented themselves as spiders in a web with a lot of different stakeholders and demands to deal with. Quick adjustments are needed to perform their jobs. Looking at the different people management components good examples can be recognized from all four components. Excellent examples are less common. This is also reflected in the perception of teachers. All scores on the people management scale perceived by teachers are above the mid-point of the scale, but they are still on an acceptable level which is not extremely high. The results show that the component *support in daily functioning* is perceived as the most positive one by teachers. *Support in development* has the lowest mean, which indicates that this component is perceived the most negative of all four. Support in development however seems to be an important form of support to help teachers develop in general and stimulate their professional capability. The fact that this is not perceived as such might be because managers do not succeed in translating the message to teachers, or they simply do not invest enough time in this type of support.

An important development which was discussed during several interviews with school leaders was about how managers try to create a new sort of consciousness among their teachers. By this is meant that they try to stimulate teachers to handle more proactive and deal with problems on their own, without immediately asking their manager for help. Also they try to stimulate teachers to solve problems more together. Therefore it seems like managers and teachers are working towards a new form of co-operation, in which the manager is becoming less' the 'classic top-down' manager, but more a supportive coach who tries to collaborate with teachers. And in which the teacher becomes a more self-efficacy type of employee. This empirical conclusion seems to be in line with authors like Weggeman (2014) & de Bruijn (2011) who promote a new role for the manager in their interaction with professionals.

In the next part of this chapter the effects of the different people management components on the different resources of professional capability will be measured. This way more can be learned about how people management activities can affect the different resources.

### 7.3 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

In this part of the chapter the relation between the people management activities and the different resources for professional capability is looked at. The sub-question answered in this part is: *What is the effect of the implemented people management activities on the attitude and resources of professional capability?* To answer this question different hypotheses are formulated and tested. These are:

*3a. People management-activities which are perceived as supportive by teachers have a positive effect on their attitude (PSM)*

*3b. People management-activities which are perceived as supportive by teachers have a positive effect on their resources (internal networks; external networks; autonomy).*

To test the different hypotheses several multiple regressions were done in the statistical analysis program SPSS. In each regression control variables were added (see table 11).

### 7.3.1 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT & PSM AS PERSONAL RECOURCE

In chapter 6. we saw that PSM proved to be an important resource for professional capability. This model will test if the people management activities can have a positive effect on PSM.

Table 11 Multiple Regression People Management and Resources Professional Capability

| Independent Variables ↓ | Dependent variables → | PSM | | Internal networks | | External Networks | | Autonomy | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| Constant | | 3.28 | .18 | 3.46 | .16 | 2.59 | .41 | 2.68 | .18 |
| Support through HR-measures | | .02 (.03) | .04 | .03 (.06) | .03 | -.15 (-.11) | .08 | .09 (.14) * | .04 |
| Support through customized arrangements | | .01 (.02) | .04 | .06 (.12) | .03 | .01 (.01) | .08 | .10 (.15) ** | .04 |
| Support during daily functioning | | .03 (.05) | .04 | .08 (.16)** | .03 | -.07 (-.06) | .08 | .08 (.13) * | .04 |
| Support in Development | | .09 (.15)* | .04 | .02 (.04) | .03 | .30 (.20) ** | .09 | .09 (.13) * | .04 |
| Gender | | .03 (.03) | .05 | .03 (.03) | .04 | -.00 (-.00) | .11 | -.08 (-.10) * | .05 |
| Education | | .00 (.00) | .03 | -.01 (-.03) | .02 | .04 (0.03) | .06 | .03 (.05) | .03 |
| Qualification level | | -.01 (-.02) | .02 | .02 (.06) | .02 | -.11 (-.14)* | .04 | -.01 (-.02) | .02 |
| Tenure in education | | .00 (.01) | .02 | -.02 (-.06) | .01 | -.02 (-.02) | .03 | -.02 (-.10) | .01 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| R² | | .045 | | .120 | | .049 | | .220 | |
| R² Adjusted | | .028 | | .105 | | .032 | | .2136 | |
| F | | 2.681* | | 7.815*** | | 2.923** | | 17.082*** | |
| N | | 461 | | 463 | | 464 | | 465 | |

**\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's (B) presented, and the standardized Beta's (β) between brackets.**

• • •

In the first regression PSM is the dependent variable and the people management components (and the control variables) are the independent ones (see table 11). The results of the regression shows that there is just one positive significant relation (p<.05). This effect is between *support in development* and *PSM* (B .09). This means that support in development from a manager can affect the PSM of a teachers. Although there was a claim in initial studies that PSM was only developed by socio-historical factors like education, family and history. In line with other research this result shows that it can be developed in an organizational context through the support of a leader (Wright, Moynihan & Panday, 2012: 208).

## 7.3.2 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

The next step was to add the different organizational resources into the model as dependent variables. The first variable was: *internal networks*. Only support during daily functioning had a significant positive effect on the internal network use of teachers (B = .08 p < 0.05). The more teachers feel supported during their daily functioning, the more they use their internal networks. School leaders are also part of this internal network and by stimulating the use of this network, the use increases. The fact that there is a significant relation between support during daily functioning and internal networks is also supported by what managers said about their activities during the interviews. One of the managers explained the importance of the daily contact with his teachers for the intern feel:

> *This [for the internal network] is a reason why I regularly have to go to the staff room just to feel how it is there, and to speak to people. (R2, line 338-339, interview 1).*

The next step in the analysis is including external networks as dependent variable. This time the regression shows that support in development is positive significant related to the external network use of teachers (B= .30 p< 0.01). This effect does not seem difficult to explain because when school leaders motivate teachers to develop themselves this could mean that teachers participate in more training- or schooling programs outside and use therefore their external network more. Also the level of qualification is negatively significant related to external networks (B = -.11 p < 0.05). During the interviews various school managers explained that they were not very much oriented outside their schools, they tried to stimulate it but not as one of their main prior goals. They did a lot of coaching on schooling, and the results show here that this is positively related to external network use.

In the final model autonomy was tested as the dependent variable. All people management components have a positive significant effect on autonomy (see table 11). Gender does also have an effect on autonomy, women score significantly lower on this variable than men. Autonomy was

an often discussed topic during the interviews. Managers seem to be aware of the importance of autonomy for teachers, but they also see that autonomy is changing for teachers. Autonomy does not mean that a teacher is a stand-alone in the organization, autonomy is more associated with a teacher who is capable of working independently. And although he shows autonomous behavior, managers still support him:

> *Autonomy should not be confused with indifference. If someone is autonomous, and you do not pay any attention then things go wrong. (R2, line 287-288, interview 6).*

### 7.3.3 SUB-CONCLUSION

Both hypotheses formulated at the beginning of this paragraph cannot be supported completely, only some components of people management had a significant effect on the attitude and resources. These conclusions are summarized in table 12. In the case of PSM only the component *support in development* had a significant effect. The component *support during daily functioning* only had a significant effect on the dependent variable internal networks, and the component *support in development* had a significant effect on external networks. Only in the last model with autonomy all the people management components had a significant positive effect on autonomy (see table 12.).

**Table 12 Overview of Supported hypotheses**

| | | Support through HR-measures | Support through customized arrangements | Support during daily functioning | Support in development |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3a.** People management-activities which are perceived by teachers as supportive have a positive effect on their attitude | **PSM** | | | | X |
| **3b.** People management-activities which are perceived by teachers as supportive have a positive effect on their resources. | **Internal networks** | | | X | |
| | **External networks** | | | | X |
| | **Autonomy** | X | X | X | X |

*The cells marked with an X represent for which combinations a significant relation was found and the hypothesis can be supported.*

In the last part of this chapter is looked at the effects of the resources as mediators between the different people management components and professional capability.

## 7.4 INDIRECT EFFECTS BETWEEN PEOPLE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

In this last part are the mediating effects between people management and professional capability measured. The assumption is that although teachers can use resources to develop their professional capability, in the end it is the manager and his activities that can direct on these sources and increase the effect indirectly on professional capability. Therefore the expectation is that professional capability can be affected by people management through the mediating effect of the different resources. The following hypothesis are tested in this part of the chapter:

*4a. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of PSM.*

*4b. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of internal networks.*

*4c. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of external networks.*

*4d. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of autonomy.*

**Mediation**

Baron and Kenny (1986) describe three conditions which a variable needs to meet to function as a possible mediator, these are: *(a) variations in levels of the independent variable significantly account for variations in the presumed mediator (i.e., Path a), (b) variations in the mediator significantly account for variations in the dependent variable (i.e., Path b), and (c) when Paths a and b are controlled, a previously significant relation between the independent and dependent variables is no longer significant, with the strongest demonstration of mediation occurring when Path c is zero. In regard to the last condition we may envisage a continuum* (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1176). For the different paths see figure 4.

Figure 4 Mediating Model: Baron & Kenny (1986)



Mediating variable

A          B

Independent variable          Dependent variable

C
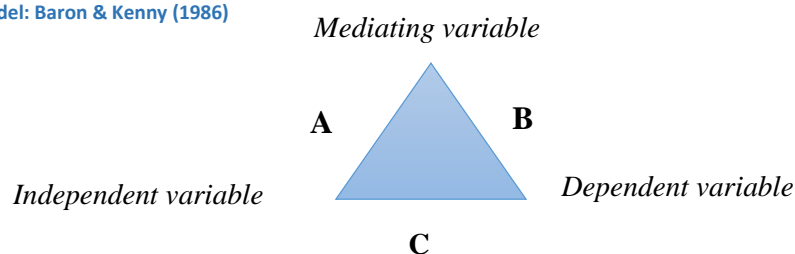
The first step is to check assumption A. When looking at the results in table 11 (p. 71), which respond with path A, there can be concluded that only the significant effects between the people management components and the resources meet this assumption. This means that not all people management variables and not all resources can be tested on their mediating effects. The paths that can be tested are:

**Table 13 Mediating paths**

| Independent Variable | Mediator | Dependent Variable |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Support in Development | PSM | Professional Capability |
| 2. Support in Development | External Networks | Professional Capability |
| 3. Support in Development | Autonomy | Professional Capability |
| 4. Support During Daily Functioning | Internal Networks | Professional Capability |
| 5. Support during daily functioning | Autonomy | Professional Capability |
| 6. Support through HR-measures | Autonomy | Professional Capability |
| 7. Support through customized arrangements | Autonomy | Professional Capability |

When next controlling for assumption b. in table 8 & 9, there can be concluded that all resources (the possible mediators) have a significant effect on professional capability (path b). This means that all paths summarized above can be tested separately in SPSS on their mediating effects.

## 7.4.1 PSM

The effect of *PSM* as a mediating variable between one of the components of people management, namely: *support in development* and *professional capability* as dependent variable was measured first. The results of the different paths in table 14 show that all assumptions are met as formulated by Baron & Kenny (1986: 1177). Model one shows that the independent variable affects the mediator. In model two is shown that the independent variable affects the dependent variable. And in the third model the mediator affects the dependent variable. This means that in the third model the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable must be smaller than in model two. This is also the case since in model three the Beta is .14 and in model two the Beta is larger with .18 (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1177).

This means that PSM functions as a mediating variable between support in development and professional capability (see also figure 5). PSM has a significant effect as partial mediator, which is also supported by the significance of the Sobel's test ($z' = 3.18$, $p<0.001$). PSM does not

fully mediate since in model three the effect of the independent variable still exists and has not reduced to zero (Ibid).

| | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = PSM | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| Constant | 3.36 | .16 | 3.12 | .26 | 1.96 | .36 |
| PSM | - | - | - | | .35*** | .07 |
| Support in Development | .13*** | .03 | .18*** | .05 | .14** | .05 |
| | | | | | | |
| Gender | .03 | .05 | -.08 | .08 | -.08 | .08 |
| Education | -.00 | .03 | .08 | .04 | .08 | .04 |
| Qualification Level | - .01 | .02 | .03 | .03 | ..03 | .03 |
| Tenure (education) | .00 | .01 | .11** | .02 | .11** | .02 |
| | | | | | | |
| R2 | 0.042 | | .090 | | 0.129 | |
| R2 Adjusted | .031 | | .080 | | .117 | |
| F | 4.006** | | 9.282*** | | 9.704*** | |
| n | 463 | | 463 | | 463 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the Standard Deviation.*

Figure 5 Mediating Model 1.



PSM

b= .13, p< .001          b= .35 p< .001

Direct effect: B= .18 p<.001.

Indirect effect: B= .04, 95% CI [.02, .08].

Support in Development

Professional Capability
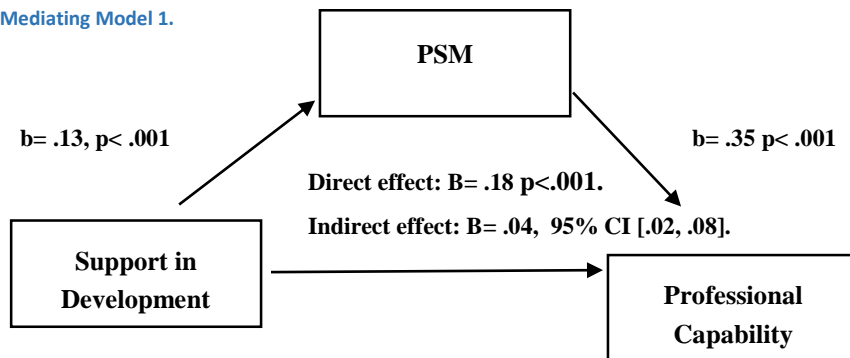
## 7.4.2 EXTERNAL NETWORKS

In table 15 the results are presented of the mediating regressions for the effects of external networks as mediator between support in development and professional capability (see also figure 6.). The results in the model show that all assumptions are met and that in model 3 the effect (B .14) is smaller than in model 2 (B .18). This indicates that the variable external networks functions as a mediator between support in development and professional capability. The results of the Sobel's test prove the significant effect of PSM as mediator (z' = 2.38, p<0.05). The variable external networks partly mediates the relation between support in development and professional capability

• • •

since the relation between the independent and dependent variable is not reduced to zero in model three (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1176). Another remarkable effect in both model two and three is the highly significant effect of tenure in education on professional capability. The longer a teacher works in education, the better and higher his professional capability is.

**Table 15. Mediating Regression**

| | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = External Networks | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| **Constant** | 2.21 | .40 | 3.12 | .26 | 2.62 | .26 |
| **External Networks** | - | - | - | - | .23*** | .03 |
| **Support in Development** | .16 | .06 | .18*** | .05 | .14*** | .04 |
| | | | | | | |
| **Gender** | -.01 | .11 | -.08 | .08 | -.07 | .07 |
| **Education** | .05 | .06 | .08 | .04 | .07 | .04 |
| **Qualification Level** | -.10* | .04 | .03 | .03 | .05 | .03 |
| **Tenure (education)** | -.01 | .03 | .11*** | .02 | .11 | .02 |
| | | | | | | |
| **R2** | .036 | | .090 | | .186 | |
| **R2 Adjusted** | .026 | | .080 | | .175 | |
| **F** | 3.497** | | 9.282*** | | 17.563*** | |
| **n** | 466 | | 466 | | 466 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the Standard Deviation.*

**Figure 6 Mediating Model 2.**
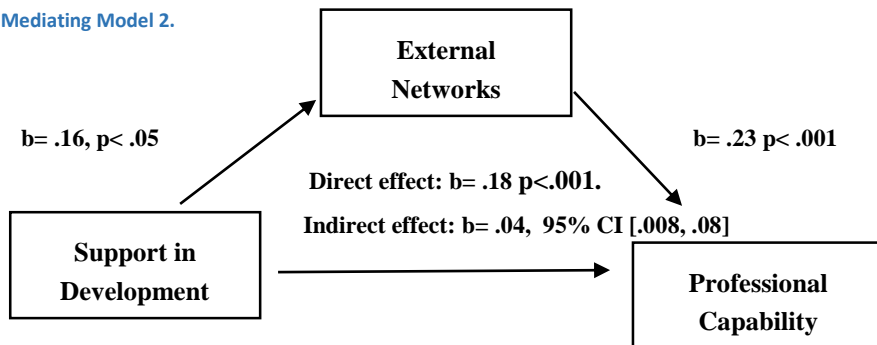


7.4.3 AUTONOMY I

Just like in the previous model *support in development* is the independent variable. Support in development is one of the four components of people management and is about how managers offer support to teachers to develop themselves on a professional basis. The expectation based on literature was that when support in development directs on autonomy it positively affects the people management behavior of teachers.

When checking the different assumptions, this seems to be the case indeed. Autonomy mediates between support in development and professional capability (see table 16.). The Sobel's test confirms the mediating effect of Autonomy (z' = 3.62, p<0.001). Autonomy partly mediates because there is still an effect of the independent variable in model three.

Table 16 Mediating Regressions

|  | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = Autonomy | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| **Constant** | 3.16 | .17 | 3.12 | .26 | 2.25 | .34 |
| **Autonomy** | - | - | - | - | .28*** | .07 |
| **Support in Development** | .27*** | .03 | .18*** | .05 | .11* | .05 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Gender** | -.10 | .05 | -.08 | .08 | -.05 | .08 |
| **Education** | .02 | .03 | .08 | .04 | .08 | .04 |
| **Qualification Level** | -.02 | .02 | .03 | .03 | .03 | .03 |
| **Tenure (education)** | -.03 | .01 | .11*** | .02 | .12*** | .02 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **R2** | .162 | | .090 | | .120 | |
| **R2 Adjusted** | .153 | | .080 | | .110 | |
| **F** | 17.948 *** | | 9.282*** | | 10.495 *** | |
| **n** | 467 | | 467 | | 467 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the Standard Deviation.*

Figure 7 Mediating Model 3.
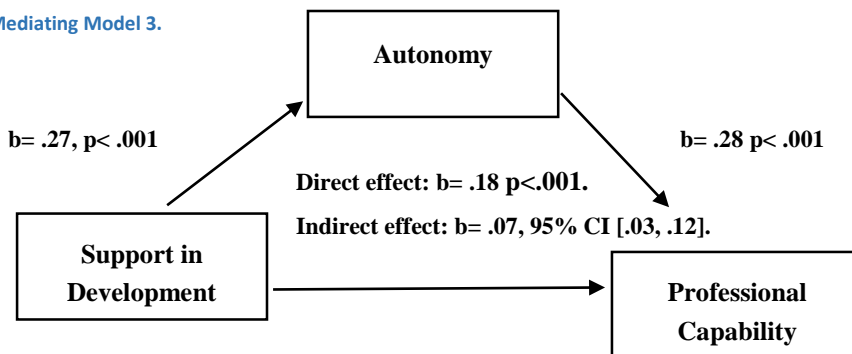


7.4.4 INTERNAL NETWORKS

For this mediation it was tested if the use of internal networks functions as a mediator between the people management component *support in daily functioning* and *professional capability* as a specific type of coping behavior. The different paths and models in table 17 show that again the expectation about the mediating effect can be supported. When a manager supports teachers in their daily functioning through the use of internal networks this positively affects the professional

capability of teachers. The use of internal networks partly mediates, this effect is significant and supported by the results of the Sobel's test (z' = 4.26, p<0.001). Other significant relations in model three are between education and professional capability and again between tenure in education and professional capability.

| | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = Internal Networks | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| Constant | 3.67 | .14 | 3.12 | .25 | 1.43 | .39 |
| Internal networks | - | - | - | - | .46*** | .08 |
| Support in daily functioning | .15*** | .02 | .16*** | .04 | .10* | .04 |
| | | | | | | |
| Gender | .04 | .04 | -.08 | .08 | -.09 | .08 |
| Education | -.02 | .02 | .08 | .04 | .08* | .04 |
| Qualification Level | .02 | .02 | .03 | .03 | .01 | .03 |
| Tenure (education) | -.02 | .01 | .11*** | .02 | .12*** | .02 |
| | | | | | | |
| R2 | .102 | | .092 | | .153 | |
| R2 Adjusted | .092 | | .082 | | .142 | |
| F | 10.436*** | | 9.535*** | | 13.841*** | |
| n | 465 | | 465 | | 465 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the Standard Deviation*

Figure 8 Mediating Model 4.



Figure 8 Mediating Model 4.
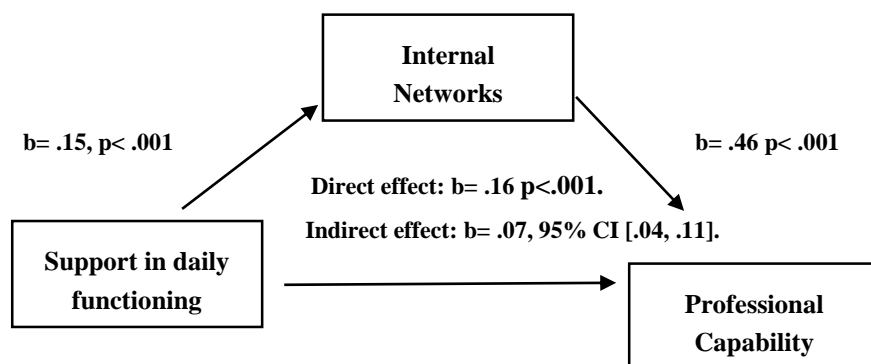
## 7.4.5 AUTONOMY II

From a theoretical perspective autonomy is important for the functioning of professionals, therefore it was tested if autonomy functions as a mediator between support in daily functioning and

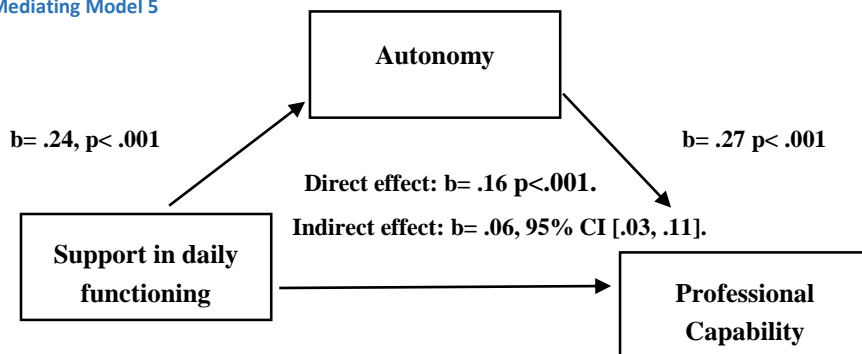professional capability. All assumptions of Baron and Kenny (1986) are met which means that autonomy indeed functions as a mediator (see table 18.). The results of the Sobel's test support this conclusion ($z' = 3.57$, p<0.01). The relation between support in daily functioning and professional capability is only partly mediated by autonomy. This means that other variables can also have a mediating effect. The mediating model explains 11% of the total variance.

**Table 18 Mediating Regressions**

| | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = Autonomy | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| Constant | 3.19 | .17 | 3.09 | .25 | 2.26 | .33 |
| Autonomy | - | - | - | - | .27*** | .07 |
| Support in daily functioning | .24*** | .03 | .16*** | .04 | .10* | .04 |
| | | | | | | |
| Gender | -.09 | .05 | -.08 | .08 | -.05 | .08 |
| Education | .01 | .03 | .08 | .04 | .08 | .04 |
| Qualification Level | -.02 | .02 | .03 | .03 | .03 | .03 |
| Tenure (education) | -.03 | .01 | .11*** | .02 | .12*** | .03 |
| | | | | | | |
| R2 | .166 | | .092 | | .121 | |
| R2 Adjusted | .157 | | .082 | | .110 | |
| F | 18.473*** | | 9.535*** | | 10.634*** | |
| n | 467 | | 467 | | 467 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the SD between brackets.*

**Figure 9 Mediating Model 5**



b= .24, p< .001

Autonomy

b= .27 p< .001

Direct effect: b= .16 p<.001.

Indirect effect: b= .06, 95% CI [.03, .11].

Support in daily functioning

Professional Capability

### 7.4.6 AUTONOMY III

Autonomy seems to be a strong mediator because it was tested again, but now with *support through HR-measures* as independent variable. From the different steps it can be concluded that autonomy
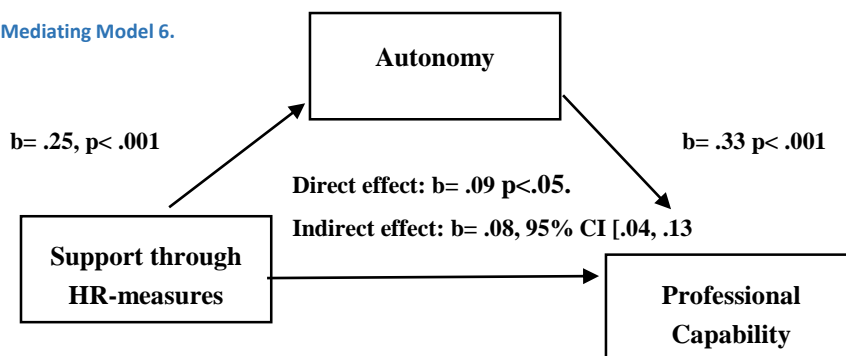
mediated between support through HR-measures and professional capability. Only this time there is something special going on since in model three the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable has practically been reduced to zero and has no effect any more. This means that there is evidence for a single mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1176). Autonomy proves to be fully mediating the relation between HR-measures and professional capability. The Sobel's test support the mediating effect of autonomy ($z'$ = 4.14, p<0.001). The fully mediating effect of autonomy means that when managers support through HR-measures on professional capability, this can only have an effect through autonomy as mediator.

**Table 19 Mediating Regressions**

|  | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = Autonomy | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| Constant | 3.07 | .18 | 3.42 | .03 | 2.37 | .34 |
| Autonomy | - | - | - | - | .33*** | .07 |
| Support through HR-measures | .25*** | .03 | .09* | .04 | .01 | .05 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gender | -.10 | .05 | -.11 | .08 | -.05 | .08 |
| Education | .04 | .03 | .09* | .04 | .08 | .04 |
| Qualification Level | -.00 | .02 | .03 | .03 | .03 | .03 |
| Tenure (education) | -.03* | .01 | .10*** | .02 | .12*** | .02 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| R2 | .157 | | .063 | | .121 | |
| R2 Adjusted | .148 | | .054 | | .099 | |
| F | 17.233*** | | 6.488*** | | 9.587*** | |
| n | 467 | | 467 | | 467 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the SD between brackets.*

Figure 10 Mediating Model 6.



b= .25, p< .001    Autonomy    b= .33 p< .001

Direct effect: b= .09 p<.05.

Indirect effect: b= .08, 95% CI [.04, .13

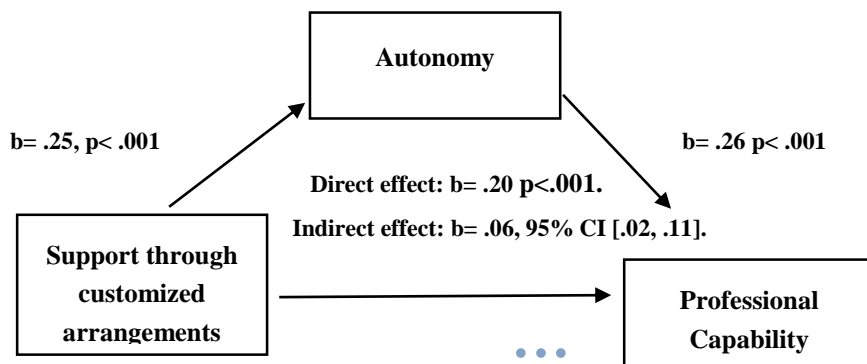Support through HR-measures → Professional Capability

The last tested combination is again with autonomy as possible mediator and *support through customized arrangements* as the people management component (see table 20.) Again it can be confirmed that autonomy functions as a mediator in this model. Also the significant level of the Sobel's test confirm this (z' = 3.42, p<0.001). Autonomy partly mediates the relation between support through customized arrangements and professional capability. Based on the previous tests it can be concluded that autonomy has as strong mediating effect between all four components of people management and professional capability. The importance of autonomy is something that managers should be aware of when they want to affect the professional capability of teachers.

**Table 20 Mediating Regressions**

| | Model 1 (A) Dep. variable = Autonomy | | Model 2 (C) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | | Model 3 (B) Dep. variable = Prof. Capability | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | SE B | B | SE B | B | SE B |
| Constant | 3.10 | .17 | 3.02 | .26 | 2.20 | .34 |
| Autonomy | - | - | - | - | .26*** | .07 |
| Support through customized arrangements | .25*** | .03 | .20*** | .04 | .13 | .05 |
| | | | | | | |
| Gender | -.13* | .05 | -.12 | .08 | -.07 | .08 |
| Education | .03 | .03 | .10* | .04 | .09* | .04 |
| Qualification Level | -.01 | .02 | .03 | .03 | .03 | .03 |
| Tenure (education) | -.02 | .01 | .11*** | .02 | .12*** | .02 |
| | | | | | | |
| R2 | .171 | | .097 | | .126 | |
| R2 Adjusted | .162 | | .087 | | .114 | |
| F | 19.021*** | | 10.192*** | | 11.058*** | |
| n | 466 | | 466 | | 466 | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001. In this table are the unstandardized Beta's presented and the SD between brackets.*

**Figure 11 Mediating Model 7.**



b= .25, p< .001

b= .26 p< .001

Direct effect: b= .20 p<.001.

Indirect effect: b= .06, 95% CI [.02, .11].

Autonomy

Support through customized arrangements

Professional Capability

In the previous sub-paragraphs different resources in combination with different people management components were tested on their mediating effect with professional capability as dependent variable. This resulted in 7 mediating combinations which are summarized in table 21. Support in development is one of the people management components and turned out to be important as independent variable in different mediating models. PSM, external networks and autonomy all three functioned as mediator between support in development and professional capability. It can be concluded that support in development is an important component in combination with the different mediators to affect professional capability. Just as autonomy proves to be a strong mediating variable, since it has a significant effect as mediator with all four people management components.

**Table 21 Overview of Supported hypotheses**

| | Support through HR-measures | Support through customized arrangements | Support during daily functioning | Support in development |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4a. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of PSM. | | | | X |
| 4b. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of internal networks. | | | X | |
| 4c. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of external networks. | | | | X |
| 4d. People Management Activities have a positive influence on Professional Capability of teachers through the mediating effect of autonomy. | X | X | X | X |

*The cells marked with an X represent for which combinations a significant relation was found and the hypothesis can be supported.*

In this chapter three sub-questions were answered. The first was about how teachers perceived the implemented people management activities and which activities managers undertake to implement them. To explore the activities of managers, the school managers were interviewed about their people management activities. The analysis of the interviews showed that managers undertook all types of different activities to stimulate their teachers. An important new sort of activity was creating a new sort of awareness among teachers about their self-efficacy as part of the support in development they offer. This seemed to be an important activity that managers undertook. Managers created this consciousness by addressing teachers about certain issues concerning their own responsibility. This way they tried to create a new attitude among teachers in which they can become more proactive and less depending on their manager. This seems important for the interaction that professionals have with their manager (and the other way around from the perspective of the manager), and can possibly contribute to the professional capability of teachers.

Subsequently the perception of teachers on the people management activities was presented in mean scores and standard deviations. All four mean scores on the different people management components were between 3.17 and 3.43. The highest score was for the daily support that teachers receive from their managers. This is a positive outcome because this means that teachers do experience this the most. This might be explained by the fact that having daily contact with employees is the easiest way of supporting them, or that teachers considered this component the most specific one while answering the scale. The lowest score was for support in development. This component was experienced the least by teachers. This might be explained by the fact that managers overall loosely support and mainly choose to do this during the formal conversation structure, in other words teachers seem to suggest that this could be done more by managers. Another perspective is that it may also be the case that teachers are very much engaged in their own development without needing the help of their manager.

The second sub-question answered in this chapter was: *What is the effect of the implemented people management activities on the resources of professional capability?* Which was tested by two hypotheses *(h 3a-b).* The statistical tests accompanied by quotes from managers showed that several paths were significant (see table 12.) The most remarkable, and perhaps not unexpected, effect was that support during daily functioning had a significant positive effect on internal networks. The more support teachers experience during their daily functioning, the better their use of the internal network gets. This seems logical because daily support can make teachers feel (well) supported and more appreciated. All four people management components had a significant effect

on autonomy. This means that autonomy strongly relates to people management and directing on autonomy can be done through all four subscales.

The third question answered in this chapter was: *What is the indirect effect of people management on professional capability through the mediating effect of the different resources (personal & organizational) for professional capability? (Hypotheses 4a-d).* Based on the assumptions of Baron and Kenny (1986) about measuring mediation, seven different paths were statistically tested on their mediating effect (see table 13.) The analysis showed that all paths tested had a significant effect as mediators. This means that if managers (*people management*) want to direct on professional capability of teachers this can be done through directing on one of the resources. All mediators had a partly mediating effect, except for one. If a resource partly mediates the relationship between people management and professional capability this means that also other variables can explain this relationship. Only one path fully mediated. Autonomy fully mediates between support through HR-measures and professional capability. This means that supporting through HR-measures can only have a positive significant effect on professional capability through the mediating effect of autonomy, and not by other variables. In practice this could mean that if a manager directs on autonomy through a specific HR-measure, this can indirectly increase the professional capability of teachers.

In the next and final chapter the central research question will be answered. This answer is based on the previous chapters in which the different sub-questions were answered.

## 8. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION: CO-PRODUCING IS THE ANSWER

In this final chapter, important implications of this research are discussed. Furthermore, the central research question will be answered. This chapter starts with a short introduction and repetition of the central research topic, goal and questions of this research (§ 8.1). Next, both theoretical and empirical questions of this research are answered (§ 8.2 & 8.3). After answering the sub-questions the central research question will be answered (§ 8.4). To continue with what this answer implicates both theoretically, and empirically (§ 8.5). Finally the research will be concluded with some final comments (§ 8.6).

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The educational sector faces various problems at the moment like high drop-out and burn-out percentages of teachers, the expected shortages of teachers, declining performances and young teachers who leave the sector within five years. These problems are cause for concern as teachers are of vital importance for education. Their functioning is not only important for the daily practice, but even more important for the quality of education overall (e.g. Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Leisink & Boselie, 2014).

Teachers experience more pressure and demands in their work. The focus on output has increased, and also parents have become more critical. This makes the position of teachers a point of concern. The position of teachers is debated at several levels in society like the central government, the professional community and at school organizations. It seems remarkable that often these debates are only focused on teachers and their position instead of seeing them as part of an organizational context.

Although teachers suffer, they can also be seen as 'professional agents'. The assumption about teachers as professional agents seems to suggest that teachers can develop professional capabilities on their own, whereas the problems in education and the differences among the teaching population seem to suggest something different. In the demanding context in which teachers work the development of this professional capability seems very important. The classic competences are strongly oriented to what happens inside the classroom, and do not seem sufficient for teachers to deal with the demands and stakeholders they are confronted with in their work inside or outside the classroom. It is expected that professional capability can fill this gap and provides teachers with the behavior they need.

A more structured approach seems needed to deal with the problems in education. The organizational context where teachers work seems therefore a relevant solution to study the professional capabilities of teachers more closely. School leaders (*managers*) represent an

important role in this organizational context where they can function as organizational agents who can help and support teachers (e.g. Knies, 2012). School leaders are not only responsible for implementing *HR-measures* but also for their *leadership behavior*. Both can affect the professional capability of teachers: therefore the concept of people management was included in this research.

The central goal of this research was to learn more about the effect of people management activities on the professional capability of teachers. The central question was: *What are the effects of people management on professional capability and how can these effects be explained?* To answer this central research question a mixed method study was performed using a digital survey which was spread among 1.069 teachers, and focus group interviews with 32 school managers about their people management activities. This combination led to rich data, which helped to answer the central research question.

## 8.2 THEORETICAL ANSWERS

In this part of the chapter the most important conclusions from the theoretical framework are discussed first. Each sub-question will be answered, before continuing with the answers on the theoretical sub-questions in the next part.

The **first** theoretical question that was answered in the theoretical framework was: *What is Professional Capability?* To be able to understand what teachers exactly need in education, and what this looks like, the concept of professional capability was extensively discussed. In literature professionals are often framed as victims who feel pressured due to the demands they are confronted with in their work (e.g. Noordegraaf & Steijn, 2013). But there are also professionals who don't experience this pressure and who are even able to actively participate in changes and reshape their profession from within, which suggests a certain form of professional capability.

Professional Capability is a concept that is both based on literature from psychology and organization literature. It was Lipsky (1980) who looked as one of the first at coping strategies in the field of public administration studies. He studied the professional discretion of front-line workers. Freud was one of the first to study coping strategies in psychology, which resulted in two different directions, coping as a response and coping as strategy. Based on previous work from authors like Lipsky and Freud the concept of professional capability was developed. The aim of this concept is to learn more about how professionals can deal with demands and pressures. Based on both coping and positive psychology literature, professional capability focuses on what works instead of what obstacles there are for professionals in their working context.

The central concept is defined as teachers who: '*proactively cope with – and at times resist – work-related expectations, challenges and burdens that dynamic environments and stakeholders*

*pose upon the professional'* (Noordegraaf, et al., *under review*). Although the concept professional capability might suggest a certain attitude, it is intended as a certain type of behavior that professionals can use and develop. More specifically, professional capability is a specific type of professional coping behavior.

The **second** theoretical question in this research was: *What are the most important resources for professional capability?* Assuming that professional capability is a certain type of proactive coping behavior that teachers can develop, possible resources for the development of professional capability were looked at. Other studies that looked at how employees can deal with work demands, like the JD-R model, showed that different resources like work commitment, or social support can contribute to more positive work outcomes and less burn-out symptoms among employees (e.g. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The most commonly named resources in this model are autonomy, social support and motivation. Based on these resources four different resources were selected for this current study.

PSM was the first resource and was distinguished as an intrinsic type of motivation, which can help teachers to perform well (Andersen, Heinesen & Pedersen, 2014). PSM is defined as: 'an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions' (Perry & Wise, 1990: 368). Besides PSM also other organizational resources were distinguished, namely: the use of internal and external networks, and autonomy. Internal networks denotes the social support network within the school. This network type can be used to receive support from colleagues, to ask for help or just to discuss specific topics. By exchanging experiences and advice, and by receiving support from colleagues, the expectation is that this could contribute in a positive way to the professional capability of teachers. The same applies for the use of the external networks. An external network can contribute to more knowledge, support and help from outside the school organization. The last resource defined is autonomy, which is often named as an important condition for professionals to perform their job. Autonomy offers space for the professional to make their own considerations and decisions; therefore the expectation is that this could contribute to the development of more professional capability (e.g. Frase & Fay, 2001).

The **third** and last theoretical question was: *What is people management and how can this affect professional capability?* The position of managers in education is not an easy one. With the increase of managers in education, more questions around their position arose. They were accused of being too much focused on output and results, instead of focusing on teachers and their way of thinking and functioning. This resulted in the debate about managers and professionals with many differences of opinion. More recently the focus has increased on what managers actually do and more important what they *can* do for teachers (de Wit, 2012). This more valued position for

managers can also be recognized in HR-literature, and more specifically in the concept of people management (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012). People management contains two different elements: The implementation of HR-practices and Leadership behavior. Both are divided into two different components, *HR-practices* are about the *support through HR-measures* and the *support through customized arrangements*, and *leadership behavior* is about the *support during daily functioning* & *support in development* (Knies, 2012). Both components together represent the activities that managers can undertake to support teachers. Since all four components are directed towards support based on different aspects, the expectation was that the different people management activities could also contribute to a higher degree of professional capability among teachers. Support in development could for example contribute to the use of more extern networks in the form of trainings and schooling which could possibly lead to more professional capability.

The literature review presented in the theoretical framework shows how through a 'chain approach' managers can contribute to the behavior of professionals (e.g. Knies, 2012) Affecting this behavior is in line with the 'balanced approach' not only important for the economical outcomes of the organization (*school*), but also for society and teachers (e.g. Boselie, Bruster & Paauwe, 2009). Well-being of teachers for example is such an outcome. To reach the aim for positive outcomes it is first important to know more about how managers can affect teachers and their behavior. Therefore this research has focused on these first steps of the casual HRM-performance chain of school organizations. This research is new and contains explorative elements since both concepts 'professional capability' and 'people management' are relatively new in the field of public administration and organization studies.

## 8.3 EMPIRICAL ANSWERS

In order to learn more about the professional capability of teachers and how this is affected by managers 5 empirical research questions were formulated and answered. All will be discussed step-by-step again in the next part.

The **first** empirical question answered is: *What is the degree of professional capability of teachers in secondary education?* Professional capability was measured on a 7-point scale and questions asked were for example: '*I balance the interest of [stakeholders] in such a way that it contributes optimally to the quality of [service]*'. The scale consisted of 8 items. In total 1.069 teachers were invited and 498 teachers responded completely. When answering this first sub-question the results in table 6. showed a mean score of 4.47 (SD.86). This means that the degree in which teachers self-report to use their professional capability is a 4.47. This score is one point above the theoretical mid-point of the scale. Despite the fact that the position and functioning of teachers is an often discussed topic in debates, this score seems to indicate that teachers already

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use their professional capability to a certain extent at this point. Although the score is not extremely low, it still offers room for development. The score of the standard deviation (.86) shows that there is still a relatively high distribution among the population of teachers, which means that the scores on professional capability among teachers vary. In other words this means that there are differences within the group of teachers that can be worked on to strengthen the overall professional capability of the teaching population. Nevertheless the mean score shows that the level of professional capabilities is quite high, and can be seen as a positive indication for the current degree of professional capability from teachers in secondary education. Despite, or thanks to the demands and perceived pressure.

The **second** empirical question was: *What is the effect of the different resources on professional capability?* To answer this question the dataset from the survey that teachers answered was used. These data were analyzed in SPSS using multiple regressions. The possible resources tested, as formulated in the theoretical framework for professional capability were: PSM, internal & external network and autonomy. The hypotheses were tested step-by-step in different models (see table 1, hypotheses 1-2c). The different models showed that all resources had a highly significant positive effect on professional capability (p<0.001). This means that all the different resources can positively contribute to the degree of professional capability as a coping strategy for teachers. This is valuable knowledge because it indicates which resources are important to stimulate for increasing the professional capability of teachers. School leaders can direct on these resources when they want to stimulate the professional capability of teachers for example.

The **third** question was answered in a new chapter (H7), and included the role of the manager. This question was: *What is the effect of the implemented people management activities on the perception about these activities by teachers?* Since Bowen and Ostroff (2004) talk about the importance of a strong 'organizational climate' it seems important that managers and teachers understand each other and that managers are able to translate their message well to reach organizational effectiveness. To answer this question the research looked at both the interviews with managers about their activities, and at the survey data from teachers about how they perceived the different people management activities.

During the interviews all people management components were discussed and several examples of specific activities were named. It turned out that managers were all aware of their responsibility for teachers, but a lack of time and focus made their activities sometimes diffuse. A lot of their time was spent on the pupils and other tasks like administration. The support offered was structured in formal interviews and meetings most of the time, and less spontaneous. Some managers did represent another image; they literally put the teacher central in the organization, and

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spent a lot of time on discussing and supporting teachers both directly and indirectly. The most important development when it comes down to the activities that managers undertake seems to be the process of creating a new sort of consciousness among teachers about their self-efficacy. By this is meant that managers try to stimulate teachers to behave more independent and efficient, and more oriented towards colleagues when they need help. This form of support in which managers try to create awareness seems important for the development of professional capability. Which should not only come from the professionals themselves, but also from the support offered by managers. Managers and teachers seem to work towards a new form of co-operation, in which the manager seems to be no longer the 'classic top-down' manager, but more a supportive coach who tries to collaborate with teachers.

Based on the mean scores from teachers on the four people management components varying between 3.17 and 3.53 (5-pointscale), it can be concluded that they are perceived as acceptable by teachers, but not very high. The highest score was for the component *support during daily functioning* and the lowest score was for *support in development*. The highest score indicates that teachers experience the support during daily functioning the most. The lowest score indicates that teachers do not experience much support in their development right now. This could mean that so far managers have not succeeded in translating their implemented activities to teachers, or that they simply do not offer this type of support enough.

The **fourth** question answered in the empirical part of this research in chapter 7. was: *What is the effect of people management activities on the resources of professional capability?* To answer this question the dataset with the survey answers of teachers was used again and analyzed in SPSS. Looking at the effects between the activities and the resources is an important first step to analyze, before looking at the complete mediating effect. If there is no direct effect, then there probably won't be a mediating effect with professional capability as dependent variable either. Four different hypotheses were tested (see table 12.) The different multiple regressions showed that only some people management activities had a significant effect on the different resources tested. The most outstanding conclusion was the fact that the component *support in development* was significantly positively related to three out of four resources (*PSM, external networks and autonomy*). Which suggests that support in development is an important type of support to offer. Another important conclusion is that all the four people management components had a significant effect on autonomy. This means that all people management activities are significant positively related to autonomy. This makes autonomy a multifaceted aspect, which can be affected by different types of support.

The **fifth** and final sub-question answered in this chapter before answering the central research question is: *What is the indirect effect of people management on professional capability through (the mediating effect of) the different resources (personal & organizational) for professional capability?* Based on the assumptions for mediation of Baron & Kenny (1986) different models were tested. This resulted in 7 different mediation paths (see table 13). All the different mediation models had a significant indirect effect on people management and professional capability (see table 21). The people management component: *support through HR measures* can only affect professional capability through directing on *autonomy*, since this relationship is <u>fully mediated</u> through autonomy. All the other variables partly mediated the relationship between people management activities and professional capability. Partly mediation means that also other variables can explain the effect between the dependent and independent variable.

*Support in development* proves to be the most important people management component in combination with three different mediators to affect the professional capability of teachers. *PSM, external networks and autonomy* all partly mediate the relationship between support in development and professional capability. *Autonomy* shows to be the strongest mediating variable. The fact that autonomy mediates the relationship between people management and professional capability strongly proves, quite in line with the literature, to be an important resource for professionals (.e.g. Deci & Ryan, 2000) Therefore it can be concluded that if managers want to affect the professional capability of teachers they need to direct on the autonomy of teachers. And from all four people management activities proves *the support in development* that a manager can offer to be the most effective one to increase the professional capability of teachers.

## 8.4 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTION: PEOPLE MANAGEMENT & PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITY

The answers to both the theoretical- and empirical sub-questions have contributed to answering the central research question, which was: *What are the effects of people management activities on professional capability, and how can these effects be explained?* This research has shown that people management activities do have an effect on professional capability. More specifically, this effect takes indirectly place through the mediation of different resources. Therefore it can be concluded that managers can have an effect on professional capability of teachers. This makes professional capability not only something for professionals, but something for managers and professionals together. This study showed how they can co-create professional capability.

The most important resource between people management and professional capability proves to be *autonomy*, but also *PSM*, *internal* and *external networks* proved to mediate. All people management activities had a positive indirect effect on professional capability through autonomy (see figure 12). That autonomy turns out to be such an important variable is not unexpected and

can be supported by the acknowledged importance of autonomy for professionals in literature (e.g. Frese & Fay, 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Moreau & Mageau, 2012). Autonomy can be helpful for developing own standards and rules, but also for developing long-term perspective, and even for the well-being of teachers it can be important (Ibid).

The most important people management activity to affect the professional capability of teachers is *support in development* (see figure 13). This component proved to affect the professional capability of teachers through three different resources, namely; *PSM, external networks* and *autonomy.* Support in development seems to be an important activity because the current degree of professional capability is a 4.5 and although this score is quite high, it still leaves room for development. That teachers could use this support more to develop their professional capability also seems to be emphasized by teachers themselves. They perceived the current support in development from managers with the relatively low score of 3.17. This score seems to indicate that more support could be offered by managers.

This conclusion is also accompanied by the interviews with managers who told a lot about how they tried to support teachers in their development, but that they often did not have the time to do this properly. An important activity they named was that they tried to make teachers more *aware* of their own strength and self-efficacy. Perhaps, not yet consciously, but it seems that managers were already cautiously coaching teachers to use their professional capability by making them more aware of their own capabilities. This process may be intensified and improved further with the help of the results from this research.

**Figure 12. Summary significant effect people management & Professional capability**
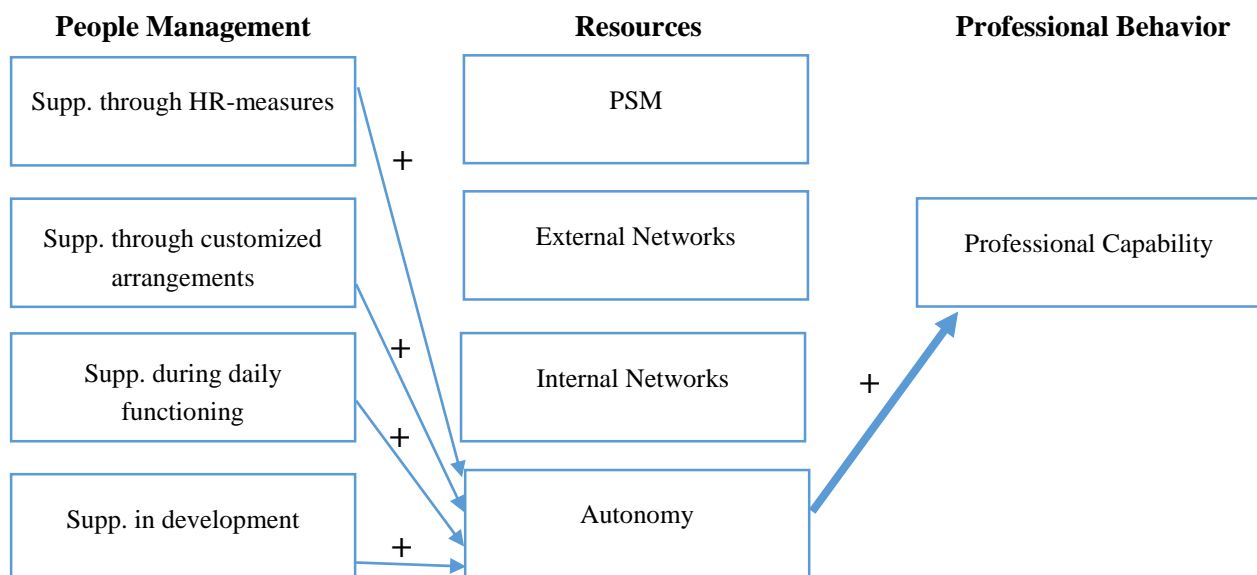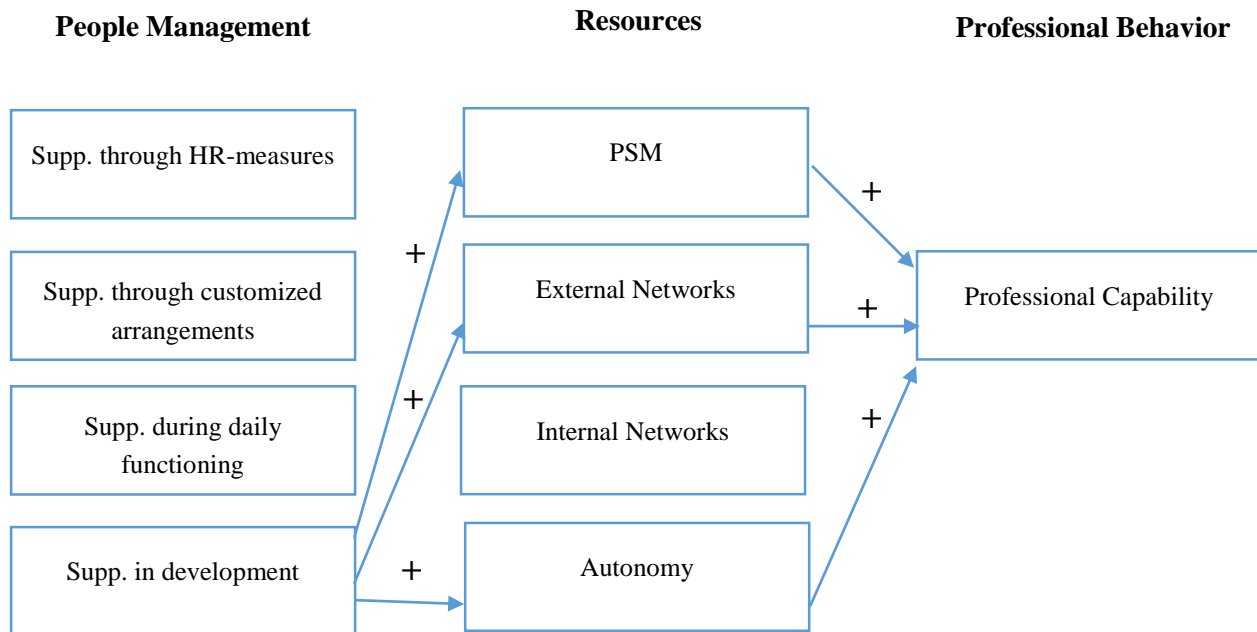
**People Management**          **Resources**          **Professional Behavior**

| Supp. through HR-measures |

| Supp. through customized arrangements |

| Supp. during daily functioning |

| Supp. in development |

| PSM |

| External Networks |

| Internal Networks |

| Autonomy |

| Professional Capability |

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## 8.5 DISCUSSION

The last question of this research to be answered is: *What are the theoretical and practical implications of this research for teachers and managers in education, but also for other sectors in general?* The outcomes of this research have implications for both the educational field, and the public sector, but they also have implications for academic research and raise new questions for future research. All these implications will be discussed.

### 8.5.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS & IMPLICATIONS

In this research two relativly new theoretical concepts were combined; professional capability and people management. Originally professional capability was conceptualized based on the image of an independent and self-supporting, proactive type of teacher (Noordegraaf, et al., *forthcoming*). This conceptualization was not focused on the role of managers and their influence. The assumption was that teachers, as professionals, need to be able to work on their professional capability themselves. However, based on empirical observations it became evident that the role of the manager could not simply be excluded, and that involving them could possibly even result in more professional capability. Therefore a theoretical contribution to the original concept and research model was made, which resulted in this current research.

By including the role of the manager this research has made a contribution by showing that there is indeed a relationship between people management and professional capability. This means

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that both the implemented HR-practices and the leadership behavior of managers can make a difference for the professional capability of teachers. Although discussions about new forms of professionalism for teachers might seem to suggest that teachers are becoming more independent and less in need of support from their managers (e.g. Noordegraaf, 2015a), this research shows that when it comes down to creating capability, it is not only about teachers, but even more important it is about how managers and teachers together can co-create more capability within the organizational context of which they are both part.

This makes the process in which professional capability can be developed not only a responsibility of teachers, but also of managers. Both are responsible for the development of professional capability to be able to face the problems in education. Managers already seem to be aware of this changing interaction since they also mentioned during the interviews how they were trying to create a new form of awareness among teachers about their functioning and capabilities. This was a new type of activity from managers about which no information was available before this study. Besides the already known people management activities, creating awareness among teachers about their own strength proves to be a new type of support that managers offer. They try to 'empower' their teachers.

Despite the fact that the position of managers in education has been doubted and questioned before in literature, it can be concluded that managers in this study relate to teachers and try to support them where possible, and that teachers need this and actually expect the managers to do so. This is important information for the perception within the sector. If problems in education need to be dealt with, manangers and professionals need each other to do so. This new 'balance' between professionals and their leaders, as described in this research, was also described by other authors like de Bruijn (2011) and Weggeman (2014). De Bruijn (2011) describes how managers need to respect things like the tacit knowledge of professionals more, only then they can become supportive leaders. Weggeman (2014) describes a 'new form' of leadership in which the manager becomes less visible and only intervenes when necessary. He claims the importance of creating a collective vision. In accordance with these authors this research concludes that: developing proactive behavior, like in this case professional capability of teachers, is needed to be able to deal with the demands and pressures in education. Therefore it is important that both teachers and managers try to work on this together.

Finding a new sort of balance is also important when it comes down to the fact that autonomy turns out to be such an important mediating resource between all people management components and professional capability (see also figure 12). The fact that teachers perceive autonomy as an important condition to perform their work was already emphasized in the

theoretical framework (Jansen, et al, 2011; Noordegraaf, et al., forthcoming). Also it has been described how teachers feel their autonomy is declining due to the increased focus on control and performance measures (e.g. Honingh & van Thiel, 2014). But this emperical outcome once more shows the importance of directing on the autonomy of teachers. Autonomy proves to be an important antecedent for proactive behavior, also in other studies (Grant & Ashford, 2008). This seems to result in the following, almost contradicting conclusion and implication; if managers want to support the development of professional capability of teachers they need to support them through autonomy.In short: to achieve 'more' a manager needs to direct 'less'. 'Less' refers to securing and enlarging the autonomy of teachers in this case. Teachers need this autonomy from their managers to be able to develop their professional capability.

On the other hand this does not indicate some sort of limetless form of autonomy, or 'the more the better'. Deci and Ryan (2000) emphasize that autonomy should not be equated with independence of individualism (p. 74). Some studies seem to relate the concept of autonomy to concepts like individualism and independence, which also indicates a low form of relatedness. This would not considered to be a positive form of autonomy for teachers to develop their professional capability because social support in networks proved to be an important resource. Instead Deci and Ryan (2000) refer to autonomy as: 'not to being independent, detached, or selfish but rather to the feeling of volition that can accompany any act, whether dependent or independent, collectivist or individualist' (p. 74). This type of autonomy is even related to collectivistic attitudes instead of individualistic ones (Ibid). This is the sort of autonomy which seems to be a resource for professional capability. Teachers need to act from their own 'volition' to develop new behavior like professional capability (Ibid). This is the sort of autonomy that needs to be directed on by managers, instead of offering them limitless autonomy. Limitless autonomy does not seem like a fruitfull solution because offering much space, also means that teachers need to know what to do with it.

Research on *professional space* 'professionele ruimte' relates to the more societal discussion about what autonomy means for professionals to be able to perform their job. Because professional space is oriented towards the relationship with colleges and in particular with school leaders (Hulsbos, Anderson, Kessels, & Wassink, 2012). Professional space, or autonomy in the case of this research, is not something that can be 'owned' by professionals, neither it is something that will be 'given' by school leaders. It is something that will be agreed on by the different parties involved. Therefore the concept of shared leadership also comes up. Because 'distribtued leadership' can be understood as characteristic of a team which bundles their expertise and makes use of them in achieving common goals' (Idem: 10). This connects with one of the main

conclusions of this research, namely the concept of 'co-producing capabilities' in which managers and teachers together have become responsible for the development of professional capability.

This study resulted in several implications which will be discussed for three different groups, the educational sector in general, for managers and for teachers.

An important outcome of this study for the educational sector overall is the fact that teachers scored a 4.5 on a 7-point scale for professional capability. This score implicates that teachers in secondary education are able to  make use of their professional capability already. This score was higher than initially expected, based on the societal debates and worries about the postion of teachers. This might indicate that the debates perhaps are led by an unfair negative connotation in which mainly the negative aspects are highlighted. Therefore it is important that this score is considered as something positive, and a as a startingpoint for the sector to further work on the development of professional capability. Positive outcomes need to be higlighted more to give a different direction to the often negative debates. This research showed which resources (antecedents) can contribute to the development of professional capability. Managers can use this knowledge to direct more on these specific resources for the further development of professional capability. Which in this case means that all four resources are important, but that autonomy in particular is important. A suggestion would be for maangers and teachers to discuss the role of autonomy and try to work on a distributed, or agreed form of autonomy together.

Based on the results of this study a more pracitcal implication can be given to managers in education who are daily responsible for teachers. This research showed that the way managers offer support to teachers proves to be important for professional capability. But on the other hand teachers did not perceive the support as extremly high. Therefore focussing on how managers offer support is important because there still seems to be room for development. If managers would be able to support and implement the people management activities better, the greater the chance would be that teachers also perceive them as more positive (Knies, 2012). Because right now all people management activities scored between 3.17 and 3.53, which cannot be considered as extremly high scores on a 5-point scale. Therefore a practical implication would be that managers themselves need more support and development first in order to to be able to support teachers in an effective manner. In this research the focus was on the support and development of teachers, but to offer this type of support, managers need to behave more as managers instead of former teachers, which too often seems to be the case now. Managers, as far as they can be marked as one group, cannot simply be blamed and therefore this is merely an advice on how they, being an important link in the performance chain, can contribute to better performances as well. During the interviews

managers often emphasized that they did not participate in a special schooling program to become a manager, most of them only received temporary support in the form of a coach or an assesment. Most of them learned by doing. Investing in more schooling and training could contribute to better professional school leaders. It is important to emphasize that not only teachers, but also managers have to deal with a lot of demands and pressures. This makes their position not an easy one either. Perhaps it can even be stated that managers also need to develop a certain form of 'managerial capability' to deal with the demands and pressures inherent to their position in the organization. Therefore a concrete recommendation would be that it is not only important to invest in the development of teachers, but also in the development of managers and their people management activities. Only this way they can work together on more capabilties.

Of all people management activies that managers can undertake the support in development of employees proves to be the most important for developing more professional capability. Support in development had an indirect effect on professional capability through PSM, external networks and autonomy. But it is also remarkable to conclude that teachers seem to eperience this type of support the least of all activities. Support in development received the lowest score (3.17) of all components. This indicates that managers need to take more care of this type of support, and reconsider how they can implement this in such a way that teachers perceive it better. A suggestion could be to work on support in development in a more structured way. Discuss this topic not only once a year during the performance evaluations and assesment interviews, but try to organize a development plan with planned meetings to work on support in development in a more structured format. But equally important is that teachers are also more aware of their own development and learn to ask for the support they need at an early stage. Professional capability is about a more dependent type of behavior in which manager and teacher are responsible together. This asks for a different attitude from teachers as well. Therefore it is important for a fruitfull start of support in development that both managers and teachers are highly committed.

Teachers and managers showed in this research the importance of working together on professional capability, therefore the final comment made in this section is the general advise for both parties to invest more time in talking with each other and discussing topcis that really matter for the daily practice and development. Often a lack of time seems to be a reason for not having these conversations, while the expectation is that this could be quite valuable for further development togetheter.

### 8.5.3 SHORTCOMINGS OF THIS RESEARCH

All studies know their short comings and limitations, and this one is no exception to that. Therefore the most important ones of this research will be discussed in this section. The smaller shortcomings were already discussed where possible in the separate chapters of this thesis.

The first theoretical limitation is about how the data was collected and analyzed. The fact that the datacollection was cross-sectional has some implications. Cross-sectional means that the data were collected at one point in time from the same group of individuals (Mann, 2003: 56). Although this type of study design offers advantages like a quick and effective way to collect a lot of data, the most important shortcoming is about: 'differentiating cause and effect, or the sequence of effects' (Idem: 57). This problem might be solved by using a longtudinal design for future research for example. Besides a thorough literature study, this shortcoming was dealt with in this research by also conducting interviews to learn more about possible relationships between the variables used in this research.

Another methodological limitation is the use of self-reported data. The survey was answered by teachers and focussed on how they perceived their own functioning and behavior. This brings the risk of bias (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002). 'Most people want to respond in a way that makes them look as good as possible' (Idem: 247). This can result in more positive results than reality would show. Nevertheless, there is no agreement on whether common-source or social desirable answers biases indeed endanger the validity of the research (e.g. van Loon, 2015: 241). A measure that was taken to decrease the effect of social-desirable answering, was the fact that teachers received the survey digital and were able to answer it in their own time and environment. This could decrease the impact of factors like social pressure-bias.

In the final research model different resources were included (PSM, internal- and external networks, and autonomy). The choice for these resources was in line with previous research on professional capability in primary education[17]. By using the same resources again more could be learned about the research model for professional capability, and about the differences between primary and secondary education. Therefore no other new resources for this study were included in the model. This might have resulted in limitations in a sense that no new resources were added to learn more about what affects professional capability. On the other hand since professional capability is a relatively new concept with ditto research model, the duplication within this study could also lead to more information and grounding of the concept instead of trying to already reinvent the wheel again.

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[17] This large scale project was supported by Policy-oriented Research in Primary Education (BOPO), financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).

The final point is about how the 'multilevel data' were collected and analyzed. Different authors have stressed the importance of studying multiple levels when looking at how HR-practices are translated and implemented into the organization. This is considered to be important because different levels can result in differences in the intended practices from the senior-management and the way it is implemented by managers, and subsequently perceived by employees (e.g. Wright & Nishii, 2007; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies, 2012). In this study was both looked at the implementation of practices and their leadership behavior of managers, and how it was perceived by teachers. But since different types of data were used (interview & survey data), it was difficult to test effects. This gave the study regarding the part where quotes from managers and data from teachers were compared a more explorative character instead of a testing one. Nevertheless, the interview data proved to be a true contribution to the research since there was not much qualitative information available about the people management activities of managers.

The shortcomings as discussed in this part of the chapter also result in new recommendations for future research, the most outstanding will be discussed in the next part.

### 8.5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research presented some interesting steps towards understanding the relation between professional capability and people management. But it also indicates some questions for future research which will be discussed next.

In the shortcomings section it was emphasized that in the research model no new resources were included. For further research it would be interesting and relevant to include new resources. By including new resources more can be learnt about the relationship between people management and professional capability. It is likely to expect that also other resources will mediate the relationship between people management and professional capability. A suggestion for a new resource to be included could be the resource: 'self-efficacy' (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Self efficacy is defined as: "beliefs in one's capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet given situational demands" (Idem: 408). During the interviews with managers there were several discussions about how they try to stimulate a new type of behavior of teachers. They try to make them more independent by for example directing on their own qualities, or advising them to more often discuss problems with colleagues. This might indicate that self-efficacy would be an interesting resource to include in the research model as well besides PSM, autonomy and internal and external networks. Possibly this resource mediates strongly between people management and professional capability as could be expected based on these interviews.

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The mean score on professional capability in secondary education was a 4.5 (SD .86). This score is almost one point above the score found in the research in primairy education 3.6 (SD 1.06) (Heerema, van Loon, Noordegraaf &Weggemans, *under review*). The differences in both scores asks for further research, because how can this effect be explained? A possible explanation might be foud in the level of education. In societal discussions there is an increased focus on the schooling of teachers. Higher educated teachers would lead to better performances in the school. Therefore it might be expected that the level of education of teachers can influence the level of professional capability as well. This is an interesting relationship for future study to learn more about differences in professional capability between educational sectors.

Another implication for future research would be about including outcome variables, like well-being of teachers and quality of education, in the research model as well. In this research the initial focus was on the first links of the casual HRM performance chain, instead of also including outcome variables as a result of specific behavior of teachers. Based on the balanced approach, including outcome variables like well-being of teachers and school performances would be an interesting and logical step for follow-up research. This way more could be learned about the effects of professional capability instead of only theoretically assuming that it leads to positive outcomes for both the organization and teachers' well-being.

Another theoretical implication is about the use of different data for the analysis. For future research a multilevel analysis would be an interesting addition with equal comparable data. For this research both managers and teachers were included, but the managers were not interviewed one-to-one with the responding teachers. Unfortunately finding enough managers willing to participate in interviews was not an easy job. Therefore it was decided to analyze both teachers and managers as a group and the interviews were integrated quite explorative. For follow-up research it would be interesting to make cases for example and use digital surveys for both groups. This way they can be analyzed better on a multi-level base (e.g. Knies, 2012).

To learn more about professional capability as a concept it would also be useful to translate this research to other public sectors than education only. Looking at the health sector for example, it could be interesting to study more closely what the professional capability of doctors or nurses looks like. This knowledge could contribute to a broader view on what professional capability means in another sector, and could make it possible to compare scores with each other. At this point it is only possible to compare the scores between primary and secondary education. Also studying the resources in a different sector could result in different outcomes. Autonomy for example, which proved to be an important resource for the professional capability of teachers, could mean for a doctor as a possible resource something completely different. Compared to a

teacher who needs to function as single professional in his classroom, it is not unlikely to assume that autonomy in a hospital, where lives may need to be saved, means something quite different. The implication to look more closely at what the resources for professionals in other public sectors mean, seems relevant when reconsidering and translating the conclusion of this research to other sectors as well. This exploration can contribute to more knowledge about professional capability as coping behavior.

And finally, this conclusion emphasises the need for further development of professional capability. But the inevitable critical question could be then: *how much further*? Because, the focus in this research was only on the positive aspects of professional capability as coping behavior, and not on the negative aspects which for example could manifest itself when a high degree of professional capability would be reached by a lot of teachers. It would not be inconceivable that high levels of professional capability could also lead to more ngative outcomes, like more discussion, and struggles among teachers. Although at this point an overall high degree of professional capability would be something to strive for, considering the downsides of too much capability is also an important point for future research. The point of having something too much as an employee was also made by van Loon (2015) who emphasized in her research on the risks of the 'dark side to public service motivation' (p. 245). She showed in her research hat high PSM can result in greater risk of burn-out (Ibid). Something comparable might also be a risk with high levels of professional capability. Therefore it is worth focusing on the pitfalls of professional capability as well in follow-up studies.

## 8.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this research the relationship between professionals and managers was described through the use of the concepts people management and professional capability. The results of this study have shown the importance of the relationship between managers and teachers since they are both needed to develop professional capability, and ultimately, to deal with problems in education. The people management activities that managers undertake to support teachers prove to make a difference for professional capability.

In other words, professional capability is about co-producing. Neither teachers nor managers can develop professional capability on their own, it is a joint effort. Hence it is recommended that both managers and teachers invest in their mutual relationship. Co-producing capabilities is important for teachers, and therefore for the sector overall.

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| **Professioneel Vermogen (Noordegraaf, et al., *under review*).** |
|---|
| Ik spreek me uit binnen de school als er problemen zijn die een belemmering vormen om goed onderwijs te leveren. |
| Ook al bemoeien schoolleiding, ouders en inspectie zich met hoe ik onderwijs moet geven, ik maak zelf de uiteindelijke afweging. |
| Ik zoek een balans tussen de belangen van leerlingen, hun ouders en de school zodanig dat het optimaal bijdraagt aan onderwijskwaliteit. |
| Ik neem actief deel aan discussies over de invulling van het leraarschap (kan zowel op school-, bestuurlijk als landelijk niveau zijn). |
| Ik zoek een balans tussen het belang van toets resultaten en andere aspecten van onderwijskwaliteit. |
| Ik geef aan wanneer verantwoordingsverplichtingen een negatief effect hebben op de invulling van andere taken. |
| Ik gebruik de administratieve systemen in mijn werk zo dat ze nut hebben voor mijn werk. |
| Ik ga zelf opzoek naar cursussen of trainingen voor vaardigheden die ik in de toekomst denk nodig te hebben. |

| **People Management:** *Ervaren ondersteuning door HR-beleid (docenten)* **(Knies, 2012).** |
|---|
| *Ik ervaar dat de volgende onderdelen van HR-beleid binnen de school(organisatie) in de praktijk gericht zijn op ondersteuning van mij als leraar...* |
| opleiding en ontwikkeling |
| doorstroom naar een andere functie |
| beoordeling |
| beloning |
| taakverlichting, taakverandering, loopbaan advies |
| vitaliteit (bv. preventie en gezondheid) |
| combinatie werk-privé (bv. flexibele werktijden, levensloopverlof, thuiswerken) |

• • •

| People Management: **O**ndersteuning door maatwerkafspraken (docenten) (Knies, 2012). |
|---|
| *Kunt u aangeven in welke mate u het oneens of eens bent met de volgende stellingen?* |
| Mijn leidinggevende maakt met mij afspraken die passen bij mijn persoonlijke situatie? |
| Mijn leidinggevende maakt individuele afspraken met mij (over werktijden, opleidingsmogelijkheden e.d.) waardoor ik mijn werk beter kan doen. |


| People Management: *Ervaren ondersteuning van uw leidinggevende bij uw dagelijks functioneren (docenten)* (Knies, 2012). |
|---|
| *Kunt u aangeven in hoeverre u het oneens of eens bent met de volgende stellingen? Deze stellingen gaan over de ondersteuning van uw direct leidinggevende in uw dagelijks functioneren als leraar.* |
| Mijn leidinggevende toont belangstelling voor hoe ik mijn werk doe. |
| Mijn leidinggevende toont belangstelling voor mijn persoonlijk functioneren. |
| Mijn leidinggevende laat waardering merken voor mijn werk. |
| Mijn leidinggevende informeert bij mij of ik mijn werk goed aankan. |


| People Management: *ondersteuning bij ontwikkeling (docenten)* (Knies, 2012). |
|---|
| *In hoeverre bent u het oneens of eens met de volgende stellingen m.b.t. de ondersteuning die u ervaart vanuit uw leidinggevende bij uw ontwikkeling?* |
| Mijn leidinggevende attendeert mij op mogelijkheden voor verdere opleiding, |
| Mijn leidinggevende biedt mij de mogelijkheid om aan opleidingen deel te nemen. |
| Mijn leidinggevende helpt mij doorgroeimogelijkheden op een hoger niveau te benutten. |
| Mijn leidinggevende helpt mij doorgroeimogelijkheden op het huidige niveau te benutten. |

| Public Service Motivation (PSM) (Wright, et al., 2013). |
| --- |
| Ik zie bijdragen aan de maatschappij via mijn werk als mijn persoonlijke verantwoordelijkheid. |
| Bijdragen aan de samenleving is belangrijker voor mij dan het behalen van persoonlijke prestaties. |
| Ik vind het belangrijk om bij te dragen aan het rechtvaardiger maken van de samenleving. |
| Ik bewonder mensen die zich inzetten voor het verbeteren van onze samenleving. |
| Rekening houden met het welzijn van anderen vind ik zeer belangrijk. |
| Ik ben bereid om persoonlijk veel op te offeren in mijn werk als het nodig is in het belang van de samenleving. |
| Ik zie het als mijn verantwoordelijkheid om bij te dragen aan de maatschappij als geheel. |
| Ik vind het belangrijk om deel te nemen aan activiteiten gericht op het aanpakken van sociale problemen. |

| Interne netwerken (Boyar et al., 2014). |
| --- |
| Ik wissel informatie en kennis uit met mijn collega's over onderwijs geven. |
| Ik help collega's |
| Ik vind steun bij collega's wanneer ik in een lastige situatie zit. |
| Bij het nemen van beslissingen, vraag ik collega's om advies. |

| Externe netwerken (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). |
| --- |
| Ik ga naar bijeenkomsten buiten mijn school die te maken hebben met het leraarschap. |
| Ik maak gebruik van een professioneel netwerk buiten school (andere leerkrachten, oud-studiegenoten etc.) om mij te helpen bij problemen. |
| Ik maak gebruik van een professioneel netwerk buiten school om ideeën op te doen voor mijn eigen onderwijs. |
| Ik maak gebruik van een professioneel netwerk buiten school omdat ik andere leerkrachten wil ontmoeten en daar steun bij kan zoeken. |

| **Autonomie (Deci et al. 2001; Vandenabeele 2014).** |
| --- |
| Ik ervaar vrijheid in het uitvoeren van mijn werkzaamheden. |
| Ik kan zelf beslissen hoe ik mijn werk uitvoer. |
| Ik kan deelnemen aan besluitvorming die te maken heeft met mijn werk. |
| Ik kan (samen met mijn collega's) beslissen over de methodiek die ik binnen mijn lessen hanteer. |

## TOPICLIST SCHOOL LEADERS (IN DUTCH)

*Introductie*
- o Voorstellen onderzoeker
- o Uitleggen globaal doel onderzoek / gesprek
- o Doornemen gesprekprocedure
  - o Duur gesprek (+/- 45-60 min)
  - o Antwoord geven mag, moet niet
  - o Geen goed of fout antwoord
  - o Iets onduidelijk? Vragen stellen kan altijd
  - o Waarborgen van anonimiteit
- o Toestemming vragen voor opnemen gesprek

*1. Achtergrond*
- o Op hoofdlijnen vragen naar respondent zijn/haar: naam, leeftijd, opleiding.
- o Hoe terechtgekomen bij de huidige schoolorganisatie en functie? (achtergrond als docent?)
- o Aantal jaren werkzaam binnen onderwijs/ school?

*2. Managementtaken algemene introductie*
- o Sinds wanneer heeft u leidinggevende taken?
- o Wat betekent het voor u om een goede manager te zijn binnen een school?
- o Hoe ziet een gemiddelde werkdag er voor u uit? (Opdelen in blokken waar aandacht naar uit gaat?)
- o Welke dilemma's/opgaven komt u tegen in uw werk?
- o Wat is het beeld dat u heeft van uw docenten?
- o Zijn er veranderingen te omschrijven in het docententeam? C.q. In de houding van docenten?

*3. Ondersteuning bieden dagelijks functioneren (people management)*
- o Hoe zou u uw stijl als leidinggevende omschrijven?
- o Hoe omschrijft u uw relatie met docenten?
- o Op welke manier zoekt u contact met uw docenten? Kunt u hier een voorbeeld van geven?
  - o Waar? Wanneer?
  - o Geeft u complimenten aan docenten? (waardering)
- o Bent u op de hoogte van het welzijn van uw medewerkers?
  - o Op welke wijze informeert u naar het welzijn van uw medewerkers?

• • •

     o   Kunt u hiervan een concreet voorbeeld geven?

o  Bent u ervan op de hoogte of werknemers hun werk goed aankunnen? Op welke manier informeert u hiernaar?

o  Hoe denkt u over de **autonomie** van docenten? Wanneer te veel of te weinig vanuit uw rol?

o  Wat is volgens u het sterkste punt van motivatie, hoe gaat u hiermee om?

*4. Managers & Professioneel Vermogen*

o  Ziet u de professionele ontwikkeling van docenten als iets van docenten zelf, of iets waarin u als manager ook een rol heeft?
     o   Waarom wel of niet?

o  Een belangrijk concept binnen het onderzoek is professioneel vermogen. Wat roept het begrip professioneel vermogen bij u op?

o  Korte uitleg van begrip professioneel vermogen geven – Hoe zou u het professioneel vermogen van uw docenten beschrijven?
     o   Kunt u dit illustreren aan de hand van enkele voorbeelden?

o  Op welke manier denkt u dat u op dit moment uw docenten in hun professioneel vermogen al ondersteunt?

o  Wat zou u persoonlijk als leidinggevende kunnen doen om dit professioneel vermogen (nog meer) te bevorderen?

*5. Ondersteuning in ontwikkeling (training)*

o  Bent u gericht op mogelijkheden voor verdere opleiding of verdieping van uw docenten?
     o   Zo ja, op welke manier attendeert u docenten hierop? *Voorbeeld vragen.*

o  Biedt u docenten de mogelijkheid om aan opleidingen deel te nemen?
     o   Komt dit initiatief van u, de docent of beide? Kunt u hier een voorbeeld van geven.

6. Netwerken

o  Hoe omschrijft u de sfeer tussen docenten intern?

o  Welke bijdrage kunt u als leidinggevende bieden aan het interne netwerk binnen de school?
     o   Kunt u een voorbeeld hiervan geven?

o  Stimuleert u docenten om ook buiten de school contacten met b.v. vakgenoten of de vakbond aan te gaan?

*Afsluiting*
    o  Nog opmerkingen, vragen, tips die niet ter tafel zijn gekomen?
    o  Bedanken voor tijd en informatie, afsluiten.