

Experienced Teachers' Orientation toward Professional Learning

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Course: Master's thesis (201500002)

2019-2020

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Submission date concept: 6th June 2020

Number of words: 7990

Abstract

Many studies emphasized the importance of teachers' professional learning in our educational systems and investigated that the success of educational spending hinges on teachers' performance. Striking is experienced teachers' professional learning, since previous research described difficulties experienced teachers have in sustaining their motivation to learn and develop. Using the methodology of a comparative case study and using a cross-case analysis, this study presents seven orientations of experienced teachers toward professional learning in Dutch primary education, by taking their current career stage into account. Examining eight overarching themes and patterns led to a richer and more comprehensive understanding of experienced teachers' professional learning, the difficulties they face and the needs they have. Viewing the possibilities and needs of these experienced teachers in professional learning rather than their difficulties and imperfections can enrich experienced teachers' sustaining of motivation to learn and develop.

Keywords: professional learning, development, experienced teachers, career stages, motivation to learn, primary education

EXPERIENCED TEACHERS' ORIENTATION TOWARD PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Our changing society demands professionals who acquire new and different abilities in order to maintain current knowledge, skills, and experiences (Rotherham & Willingham, 2010), which results in investments in the development of professionals (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In their synthesis, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) stated that investment in development requires investment in education, which in turn requires good teaching for all learners. According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), good teaching means highly committed teachers who develop and network with each other and use all their experiences and capabilities. Teachers' professional learning should be the major focus of educational systems in this changing society, since the success of educational spending hinges on their performance (Corcoran, 1995; Corcoran, Shields, & Zucker, 1998; Cuban, 1990).

Research already investigated that teacher learning occurs within a complex system where many dynamics interact (Akkerman & Bruining, 2016; Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Collins & Clarke, 2008; Davis & Sumara, 2006) and depends on the uniqueness of the context and the person (Blackman et al, 2006; Bore & Wright, 2009; Briggs, 2007; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Remarkable in previous research is the professional learning of experienced teachers in primary education, compared to teachers with less years of experience. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) described in their synthesis the difficulties these experienced teachers have in sustaining their motivation to learn and develop. Day and colleagues (2007) found that 43% of teachers with 24+ years of experience in primary education feel trapped and find it hard to sustain motivation. A few years before, Hargreaves (2005) examined the ways that age and career stages influence teachers' emotional reactions to development and change. He found that teachers with 24+ years of experience are negatively vociferous regarding changes and development, which is perpendicular to the demands of our changing society.

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Since previous studies demonstrated highly striking findings regarding experienced teachers' professional learning in primary education, which is remarkably not in line with the major focus of teachers' professional learning, research is needed to investigate which dynamics in this complex system of learning affect their negative feelings and perceptions toward professional learning. Specific explanations for these feelings are of importance to invest in development and education, in order to subsequently achieve that experienced teachers are also highly committed to develop, to learn and to use all their experience and capabilities to create good education. This study will therefore address the research question: how do experienced teachers in Dutch primary education describe their orientation toward professional learning at their current career stage?

This research starts by bringing together multiple conceptualizations from effective professional learning and the progress of professional learning via career stages. Afterwards, it will focus on definitions of experienced teachers and on factors that may influence their orientation toward professional learning.

Professional Learning

To understand the definition of professional learning, it is important to explicate the difference between professional learning and professional development. Professional learning is customized based on teachers' needs, sustained and interactive. It fosters teachers to organize their own learning, to learn in their own daily contexts and to take responsibility for their professional learning. Professional development on the other hand, consists of one-time activities such as workshops, lectures or seminars; it is a planned one size fits all approach (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone & Long, 2016).

In recent years, researchers' attention toward teachers' professional learning grew in order to establish the conditions and factors for professional learning (Opfer & Pedder,

2011; Richardson & Placier, 2001). Garet, Porter, Andrew, and Desimone (2001) concluded that teachers need time to absorb and develop new knowledge. Two studies found that teachers with 80 hours of professional learning in one year use their learning experiences significantly more in practice than teachers with fewer hours dedicated to professional learning (Corcoran, McVay, & Riordan, 2003; Supovitz & Turner, 2000). Sustained, intensive, continuous and collective professional learning is more effective than sporadic, brief and individual learning (Gusky, 2002; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In their experimental intervention study with 270 teachers in 90 schools that consisted of 8 days of professional development including individual coaching, Garet and colleagues (2008) found that teachers' professional learning has little or no impact when it focuses on individual learning instead of collective learning.

Career Stages

According to Fuller (1969), an understanding of teachers' life and career stages is helpful when identifying their orientation toward professional learning. Day and colleagues (2007) confirmed in their study that teachers' professional learning depends on various factors in their personal life (e.g. health, relationships or dependents), and in their professional life (e.g. experiences of learning, support or progression). A frequently used and common model to characterize career stages is based on the number of years of teaching, see Table 1 (Day & Gu, 2010; Huberman, 1989; Sammons, Day, Kington, Gu, Stobart, and Smees, 2007).

Table 1

Career Stages in Number of Years of Teaching

Years of teaching	Characteristics of career stage
1-3	Commitment during career entry
4-7	Focus on stabilization

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	Discover one's identity as teacher
	Increase one's efficacy in the classroom
8-15	Manage changes based on engagement
16-23	Focus on commitment through career advancement
24-30	Challenge to sustain motivation
	Work-life tensions and transitions
30+	Tired and trapped feeling
	See no need to develop and cope with change

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) confirmed in their study that life stages determine the level of energy and openness to change someone can sustain, whereas career stages affect the teachers' level of experience, expertise, and responsibilities. In order to understand this striking difference between experienced teachers and others, an explanation of experienced teachers is needed. An understanding of their description toward professional learning can be helpful to achieve that they are more open to development again.

Experienced Teachers

A study by Day et al. (2007) showed that 43% of teachers with 24+ years of experience who remained in the position of teacher in primary education feel trapped and find it hard to sustain motivation. In addition, Hargreaves (2005) found in an analysis of 50 interviews with elementary, middle and high school teachers that teachers with more than 20 years of experience lose their energy and describe themselves as tired and less patient. Drake (2002) also concluded that teachers are less willing to change or reform after 20 years on the job.

Hargreaves (2005) distinguished four types of experienced teachers in the last phase of their teacher career. First *the renewals*, who challenge themselves within their classroom

and school. *The positive focusers* avoid distractions by nonstop education reforms of questionable value and focus on their own impact in their classroom and school. *The negative focusers* always look for the easiest way to do their job, without any tensions or new challenges. Last, *the disenchanted*, lose their motivation and ideals since they were part of many reforms and changes which are discharged later.

Teachers' Orientation toward Professional Learning

Next to an understanding of experienced teachers orientation toward professional learning, an elaboration of core features which affect their orientation is helpful to understand what causes experienced teachers' feelings regarding professional learning. Previous research already investigated undermentioned features which affect professional learning in general (Day et al., 2007; Garet et al., 2001; Maskit, 2011; Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Leadership. Research showed principals' leadership to be important for a positive orientation toward professional learning of their teachers (Blasé & Blasé, 2002; Day et al., 2007; Lieberman & Miller, 2005). Day et al. (2007) found that 75% of teachers experienced good leadership as helpful to sustain their professional learning. Having a clear vision, being committed to the school, trusting teachers and being open, and demonstrating personal care for teachers are mentioned as good leadership (Day et al., 2007). Research also investigated that leaders must consider teachers' initiations and decisions toward professional learning (Calvert, 2016). Teachers must have the opportunity to take the lead in their own professional learning.

Professional culture. The unquestioned and traditional values, beliefs and assumptions that organizational members share about appropriate behavior can be defined as culture (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Schein, 1992). The professional culture shapes the experiences teachers have toward professional learning. Research investigated that schools

with a professional culture based on organizational learning perform better in change and development, since learning takes place in groups and teachers work together to discuss, share and criticize new ideas (Louis, 1994; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995). Research done by Newman and associates (1996) in 24 schools, noted that teachers' collective participation leads to sharing expertise and practice experiences on one hand, and on the other hand to a sense of commitment and responsibility to their shared learning (Garet et al., 2001; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Knapp, 1997). Day et al. (2007) found in their study that 63% of the teachers feels colleagues are crucial in sustaining their professional learning.

Active learning. As already mentioned in the 1990s by Lieberman and Grolnick (1996) and Loucks-Horsley et al. (1998), teachers' active engagement in professional learning is crucial for a positive orientation toward their development. Active learning is nowadays a common form of professional learning, in contrast to traditional forms of professional development like courses or conferences, which are more and more seen as ineffective for increasing teachers' skills and knowledge compared to active learning which occurs in the teachers' meaningful workplace environment (Garet et al., 2001; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love, & Stiles, 1998). In addition, active learning in teachers' meaningful workplace environment enables teachers to perform longer professional learning activities sustained over time and to experience coherence with other learning and development in practice (Garet et al., 2001).

Taken together, previous research investigated the difficulties experienced teachers have with sustaining their motivation to learn and develop. Since these findings are not in line with research focused on the importance of teachers' professional learning in our changing society, additional research is needed to examine which dynamics affect experienced teachers' orientation toward professional learning at their current career stage,

in order to subsequently achieve that experienced teachers are highly committed to develop, to learn and to use all their experiences and capabilities to create good education. The next section contains how this will be investigated.

Methodology

The most appropriate design for this current study was a qualitative design based on a constructionist epistemology. Constructionism assumes that what counts as knowledge is based on social interactions and interpretations amongst individuals. Knowledge is a shared construction that incorporates perceptions and experiences of individuals within contexts. This epistemology reflects the importance of subjectivity, without rejecting some notion of objectivity (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

According to Stake (1995) and Yin (2003), a comparative case study can be approached from this constructionist paradigm, which facilitated a holistic understanding and provided the researcher the opportunity to explore causes of underlying principles, based on an in-depth investigation (Yin, 2003). In relation to constructionism, the social interactions within this case study enabled the researcher to understand experienced teachers' perceptions and experiences and created a deeper understanding of the complexity of professional learning.

By using this approach, there was a close collaboration between the participants and the researcher, which enabled the participants to tell their own stories and provided the researcher with the opportunity to be part of the knowledge construction (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The researchers' positionality focused on previous experiences in primary education, which allowed the researcher to make sense of what the experienced teachers told.

Participants' descriptions of their views of reality enabled the researcher subsequently to understand them (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993). To interpret, compare and

contrast these individual cases, a cross-case analysis was suitable to find common patterns in the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Method

Context. Recruitment for this study included 25 schools for primary education within one unified organization. All schools, located in the south of the Netherlands, belonged to one municipality. 14,5% of the population in this city belongs to the age cluster 0-14 years, which concerns primary education. 71,2% of the whole population has a Dutch background; Turkey is the second most common background with 3,7% and Morocco the third common one with 2,8%.

The organization enrolled 8000 children and employed 750 professionals, an average size for Dutch primary education organizations. The size of the schools varies from small with approximately 150 children to large with circa 800+ children. Also the educational concept and the sociodemographic characteristic differ per school.

Participants. The unit of analysis, the participants to be included, must be distinguished from the ones who are not, by bounding them in space and time. The unique cases in this study are bounded by their years of experience in Dutch primary education. Included cases had more than 24 years of experience, which implied that the cases belong to the last career stage, with the additional boundary of at least 24 hours a week. This 0,6-1,0 FTE includes next to teaching tasks also a fixed percentage of hours for professionalization.

This study examined a subset of 7 participants with the most years of experience (i.e. 24 years or more), with a maximum of one teacher per school. The researcher bounded the cases based on their school, in order to reach a distribution as wide as possible within different schools, since different educational concepts and populations may affect teachers' professional learning. This distribution implies that not every school is represented. In order

to recruit only one participant per school, the researcher asked school leaders to identify potential participants within their school. Every teacher who met the boundary criteria received an invitation to participate. After this sample selection, the group of 7 participants included 5 females and 2 males with a range of experience in Dutch primary education between 32 and 41 years ($M = 37,57$).

Data collection. Four interviews took place in the experienced teachers' primary schools. Participants chose a confidential and agreeable room within the school. The researcher did the last three interviews online via Microsoft Teams. Prior to the interviews, all participants received an information letter and a consent form by email which contained information about the purpose of the research, confidentiality and privacy and participants' rights (see *Appendix B*). The first part of the interview was about a verbal explanation of the information letter, participants' potential questions about the information letter and signing the consent form, after which the recording started.

Questions in the second part of the interview related to the personal life of teachers to get to know them much better, see *Appendix D*. The researcher asked them about their development in personal life and potential personal changes that affected their life work ratio. The third part contained questions about their orientation toward professional learning and their experiences with career stages. The researcher asked them how they experienced professional learning during their years of work, how they experience their current career stage and what their perceptions are about the career stages they were in, during the past years. Questions in the last part related to various factors that may have influenced their professional learning and their orientation to professional learning. The interviews lasted approximately one hour.

The researcher stored the recordings anonymously in a password protected university server, by using pseudonyms. Thereafter, the researcher transcribed all

interviews anonymously and deleted the identifiable recordings from YODA, which implies that only the transcripts were still traceable.

Data analysis. Since the researcher adhered to the approach of cross-case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984, 1994), the first step was creating the theory driven codes, see *Appendix E*. These codes can be defined as labels for assigning units of meanings to the descriptive information (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Then, the researcher read all transcriptions separately, in order to create an understanding of the fundamental structure and the codes.

To determine the data driven codes with an inductive approach, the researcher reread the first two cases, noted possible additional codes and added these to the codebook (see *Appendix E*). The researcher then identified both the theory driven and data driven codes in the first two cases.

In the next phase of analysis, the researcher discussed all codes with an expert researcher, in order to check whether the researcher created an appropriate codebook. To determine whether the codebook sufficed, the researcher and the expert researcher both read the first case individually and discussed afterwards the codes and corresponding units of meanings they noted, until they had a consensus regarding the codebook that was useable. By using this codebook, the researcher identified subsequently the agreed-upon codes in the six leftover cases.

After the identification of the codes in all seven cases, the researcher merged the units of meanings from each separate code into a code list. These code lists facilitated the comparison and synthesizing of the overarching themes in the different cases. In order to transform the data from the code lists and find the overarching themes and patterns on which interpretations are based, the researcher made a data matrix in which she outlined the

themes per code for each participant, see *Appendix F*. After synthesizing these themes, the researcher found patterns to interpret in the light of the research question, see *Appendix G*.

Trustworthiness. This current research took several considerations into account to demonstrate that it was conducted in a consistent, precise and exhaustive manner. In order to be as confirmable as possible, the researcher recorded all interviews and transcribed them subsequently. These transcriptions can be used to check whether the findings are based on participants' responses instead of on the researcher's motivations and interpretations. Next to that, the researcher showed credibility by involving an expert researcher in the data analysis, in order to make sure that the data analysis was systematic and correct. In addition, this current study achieved dependability, by investigating as transparent as possible. The sharing of all data collection and data analysis processes, enabled other researchers to replicate it and to find similar findings.

After analyzing all data, the researcher integrated a member check in the research procedure to establish credibility and trustworthiness. The researcher sent the transcript of the interview to the participant, after which the participant could agree with the content or not. In addition, participants had the opportunity to clarify citations and to add other perspectives.

Results

In this section the researcher outlined her interpretations and discoveries in the light of the research question, which she supported by examples and description of the context. According to Matthews (2005), showing what feelings of participants are about or what their judgements are based on strengthened findings. In order to be able to understand the findings in a holistic perspective, first the researcher shortly introduced the participants by using their pseudonyms, see Table 2.

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Table 2

Participants by Using Pseudonyms

Pseudonym	Years of experience	Current group they teach	Additional tasks
Anna Maas	35	All groups	Intern supervisor
Babette Mensink	38	1-2	Confidential contact person
David Jochems	41	6-7-8	Confidential contact person
Henk Neijen	41	8	Confidential contact person Social security coordinator
Kristel van Abeelen	40	3	
Marloes van Eindhoven	36	1-2	Extracurricular support for all groups 1-2 Culture coach
Tessa Campenhout	32	1-2	

Findings

In order to find an appropriate balance between the details of the data and the big picture of the research in relation to the research question, the researcher established the patterns that emerged from synthesizing the themes. This closely adhered to Sandelowski's and Barroso's (2003) approach to conceptual/thematic description. The eight overarching themes and patterns will structure the outline of the findings.

The positive impact of learning together in daily practice. Participants expressed their preference of learning by doing in their daily context, in co-operation with fellow colleagues. This requirement of professional learning met the need of exchanging and sharing expertise and knowledge. Anna Maas described professional learning with the term

experiential and stated: "I have just learned a lot by doing things. By teaching a lot of classes, by experiencing a lot of children, by doing many conversations with parents."

David Jochems explicitly described the role of colleagues in his professional learning in the daily context. He experienced in his career that learning occurred when he observed others and their professional behaviour. By asking him what he should describe as important for professional learning, David stated:

Learning things from others. You are never too old to learn. At the moment, there is so much you can use to improve your education. Look at others, take a look in someone's classroom and see how they are doing it.

Colleagues functioned as critical friends with new or different insights that forced him to think more critically about his professional conduct. Henk Neijen and Tessa Campenhout expressed the positive impact of learning together in daily practice by specifically describing the need of functional applicability.

Comparing the cases, the researcher found a difference between participants in their needs as an experienced teacher. Three participants described the role of learning by doing in practice regarding their motivation to learn. Learning together in the daily practice motivated them to learn and stay up to date. In addition, they experienced this form of active learning as more approachable than other forms of professional learning.

Individual choices based on personal interests or talents stimulate professional learning. All seven participants elaborated the importance of freedom of choice, based on their own interests or talents. Kristel van Abeelen and Maartje van Eindhoven described facing their abilities and strengths as a stimulation for professional learning. Kristel stated: "I always encounter things I think about, I don't know enough about this yet. Or, I would like to delve into this, or...". In addition, Henk Neijen described professional learning from the viewpoint of intrinsic motivation. He explained the importance of personal interests:

“The most ideal situation is when all colleagues learn from their own perspective. So, when everyone can choose what they want to do, what fits within their interests and what helps the children and fellow colleagues.”

In comparison to the other cases, four participants explained the difference in making choices themselves in their current and in previous career stages. They experienced professional learning back in the days as collective and team-based, although in their current career stage they experience the positive impact of individual choices on their motivation to learn. Tessa Campenhout told:

Professional learning is especially something of the last years of my career. In the beginning, I have not been aware of that. That is now more than 30 years ago, so maybe it was different back in the days. I did my teaching tasks and was not into professional learning. At least on a personal level, or your own choices. Of course we did team professionalization. And along the way, actually only in recent years, I started to make more choices myself and I chose things for my professionalization next to the team part.

Overall, participants endorsed the positive impact of individual choices and its stimulation regarding professional learning. Being able to, and getting the opportunity to determine yourself what you need to learn in order to optimize your daily practice, is needed to retain motivation in the current career stage.

The importance of taking responsibility in professional learning. The pattern regarding taking responsibility in professional learning was twofold. On one hand it was related to a professional's responsibility to organize one's own learning. Compared to others, Kristel van Abeelen and Henk Neijen both argued that professional learning is about taking the initiative to improve your professional conduct. According to them, you can only determine your learning path yourself. Henk Neijen described:

Every teacher needs the urge to learn and develop yourself, based on what fits you the best. Based on what you would like to know, what you would like to do. It has to be useful in your own daily context.

On the other hand, taking responsibility in professional learning was related to the professional culture within a team. Tessa told in the interview: "That is how it actually works, together with colleagues. We talk about it together, we talk about our students, our concerns and our goals. And this is how our professional learning arises, individually or in small groups." Five participants described this need for mutual involvement, initiative and stimulation.

Fluctuations in time, choices and interests for professional learning due to issues in one's personal life. Participants expressed a diversity of issues in personal life that had a positive or negative impact on their professional learning. According to six participants, circumstances in personal life led to a decrease in FTE; personal life of one participant just led to an increase of FTE. Participants mentioned that raising kids, their relation status, medical issues or being a caregiver affected the degree of professional learning. Marloes van Eindhoven described:

When my ex-husband left, everything in life changed. I entered a new phase in which I had to make other choices, life was in all possible ways different than before. I had to build up my life again, so you are looking for the little stability you can find. I experienced the search for a new balance between my private and professional life as hard.

Circumstances in personal life did also affect participants' professional attitude. They described the importance of shaping your personal and professional attitude by the occasions that happened in personal life. According to Anna Maas it was all about getting to know yourself: "The things I experienced made me a powerful person. When you

confront a lot of issues, you first have to confront yourself. You get to know yourself. You learn to take the perspective of others.” Participants described next to that the interaction between personal and professional life as decisive regarding choices and interest within professional learning. Babette described the impact of personal issues on their professional learning:

I started to study children with a lead in development, since my son had one. At my son's school, there was little attention for his cognitive lead, what hurt me as a mum and teacher. So I decided I wanted to make the difference for children in my class with a lead in development.

Remarkable was the fact that all participants experienced some troubles in their current or in previous career stages. They expressed the importance of awareness of every teacher's personal life, since there is a strong interaction between home and school.

Balance between setting priorities and making choices to stay up to date and creating more time and space for learning is needed due to a lower level of energy. The involved participants described unanimously their search for a balance between setting priorities and making choices to stay up to date. Unless they still have the motivation to do all kinds of professional learning, they had to acknowledge their level of energy is lower than in previous career stages. Participants expressed the feeling that accepting this lower level of energy is not always easy, but nevertheless realistic. Marloes described what she experienced:

I'm always looking for some professionalism opportunities and new ways to strengthen my professional conduct. Sometimes developments or changes are going really fast, and that is what I experience by myself. It isn't that easy and simple to do like 25 years ago. I now have to make choices myself, otherwise you cannot sustain.

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Four participants described in addition the process of creating awareness regarding the amount of things you can do. David Jochems explained: "If you are an older teacher, you have to make conscious choices. You can't do everything any more. Be aware of the fact that you can't and don't overcharge yourself." The experienced teachers were aware of their possibilities and simply stated that it is impossible during this latest career stage to do everything. Babette described making these choices and setting priorities as a possibility to keep work manageable. This awareness induced more long-term job satisfaction and results in being able to do your work until retirement.

By asking what participants need as an experienced teacher with a lower level of energy compared to younger colleagues in order to continue professional learning in their current career stage, they described the importance of having enough space and time to learn. Anna stated:

You have time in your daily work schedule to update everything, but you don't really have time to invest in yourself or your professional conduct. Your days are full with updating everything you need to, but there is a shortage of time and space to make news plans and apply new ideas or insights.

Tessa expressed the importance of your professional environment to be aware of this lower level of energy of an experienced teacher. According to her, it stimulates experienced teachers when the principal or fellow colleagues accept the fact that is not going that fast anymore. The acceptance created confidence.

The positive impact of mutual interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement since it facilitates learning. All participants appointed the need they have for mutual appreciation and sincere interest, both between principal and teachers and amongst teachers. Kristel stated that this mutual appreciation and interest is the basis of professional learning:

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I just need people around me who support me. I have to be honest, I really like it and need it to know and hear what I'm doing right. I feel supported and appreciated, which I think is the basis to learn.

In addition, Tessa and David emphasized the importance of getting confidence and encouragement regarding professional learning. They explicitly described the positive impact when a principal gives teachers confidence in professional learning and let teachers participate in developments within the school. In all cases participants described the impact of mutual interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement regarding the ambiance within a school. According to them, all four factors led to a positive ambiance which thereafter influences teachers' motivation to learn.

Nevertheless, some of the participants referred during the interview to unpleasant prejudices that they face in daily practice. They described the way that colleagues approximate them with biased assumptions, without first immersing themselves in one another. Babette explained:

I do experience prejudices in primary education. If you reach a certain age, if you are older, people immediately determine that you are stuck in time. That you are not aware of the newest developments in education. And yes, that is a biased assumption.

These prejudices harm experienced teachers' feeling of mutual interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement.

Importance to stay up to date to be able to create the best learning environment. The researcher concluded during the interviews that these experienced teachers all have a positive view regarding professional learning. They described the importance of professional learning and how it impacted their career. What the researcher was interested in, was what cranked on their motivation to learn in their current career

stage. Participants unanimously described the love for children, the love for their development and the love to teach as motivators. Every child deserves a teacher who teaches passionately. When the researcher asked David what still motivates him, he answered: "The love for children." In addition, Henk stated: "Especially the way you see children and their development is important to me. As a teacher you may not experience children as difficult. It is your job to find the cause behind their behaviour. Children are unintentionally difficult." According to the participants, staying up to date is necessary to be able to create the best learning environment that every child deserves.

Changes in workplace, function or daily practice facilitate professional learning. While analyzing the data, the references the experienced teachers made regarding situations that facilitated their professional learning during their career were striking. In all cases, participants described changes of their context, which can be divided into changes in workplace, changes in function and changes in daily practice. They explained that these changes led to new learning experiences. Kristel described during the interview:

After 25 years working in the same school, I had the feeling... My husband, who is also working in primary education, told me it was time to do something different. He thought I was working for too long at the same place. I have to be honest, I experienced it myself too. At every meeting, I could predict what would happen and what every colleague would say. So my children were older and another school within the board asked for fulltime, experienced teachers. I thought, why not? So they hired me and those next four or five years were the most educational years of my career. The switch was something I should have done much earlier.

Next to the change of workplace by moving to another school, participants described the effect of changes in function or daily practice within the same school as positive regarding

professional learning. They experienced that changes brought new situations in which they faced new challenges and learning situations.

Experienced teachers' descriptions and experiences insinuate that there may be a direct relation between changes of workplace, function or daily practice and professional learning. How these changes affect the career stages of experienced teachers, will be part of the next section, the discussion. The researcher will also summarize and interpret the main conclusions based on the eight overarching themes and patterns. Next to that, limitations, implications and recommendations for further research and practice will be part of the next discussion section.

Discussion

This research aimed to examine how experienced teachers described their orientation toward professional learning at their current stage and how related features affect their orientation. Findings derived from seven holistic interviews showed eight patterns, which will be used by the researcher to answer the research question.

Experienced Teachers' Positive Attitude Toward Professional Learning

The findings showed a striking result compared to scientific findings in previous work. This research showed experienced teachers' positive attitude regarding professional learning in their current career stage, which is contrary to research done by Day and colleagues (2007). They found that 43% of experienced teachers (i.e. 24 years or more) felt trapped and had troubles with sustaining motivation regarding professional learning. Besides, Drake (2002) concluded that teachers are less willing to change or reform after 20 years of experience on the job. In this current study, none of the participants described a decrease of willingness to change, reform or learn. Some of them even described the opposite, since the impact of their personal life on professional learning diminished.

Positive Impact of Learning Together in Daily Practice

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Experienced teachers described the positive impact of learning together in daily practice, which is in line with the definition of professional learning compared to professional development (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone & Long, 2016). This pattern corresponds with research done by Newman and associates (1996) who investigated that professional learning in groups is more successful than individual professional learning, since it leads to sharing expertise and experiences and to commitment and responsibility to learning. Besides, Garet et al. (2001) already concluded that active learning in teachers' meaningful workplace environments had a positive impact on teachers' professional learning in two ways. It enabled teachers to perform longer professional learning sustained over time and it stimulated coherence with other learning and development in practice.

Positive Impact of Individual Choices Regarding Professional Learning

The researcher found a positive impact of individual choices on experienced teachers' professional learning. Participants described the stimulation of the ability to base choices regarding professional learning on their personal interest or talents. This need corresponds with the theoretical description of professional learning, in which researchers described that professional learning fosters teachers to organize their own learning (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone & Long, 2016). Besides, Calvert (2016) already investigated the importance of teachers' initiations and decisions toward professional learning. Experienced teachers described, in line with the research done by Calvert (2016), how their role as a leader affected their ability to make choices themselves during their career, both positively and negatively.

Mutual Responsibility for Learning is Needed

The researcher noticed a shift during experienced teachers' career stages from team-based learning to professional learning based on individual choices and teachers' intrinsic

motivation. This observation is strengthened by multiple scientific studies in which the swift from traditional forms of professional development to active forms of professional learning with teachers' engagement is mentioned as more effective for increasing teachers' skills and knowledge (Garet et al., 2001; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love, & Stiles, 1998). This swift in type of professional learning is related to the overarching pattern in which the researcher found the importance of taking responsibility in professional learning. The researcher concluded the two-sidedness of taking responsibility; on one hand, it is related to organizing your own learning, which is in line with the general definition of professional learning (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone & Long, 2016). On the other hand, responsibility in professional learning is about mutual involvement, initiative and stimulation as regards collective learning. This second perspective of taking responsibility is an extension regarding to the general definition of professional learning.

Issues in Personal Life Affect Degree of Professional Learning

Experienced teachers described the fluctuations in taking responsibility in professional learning due to issues in personal life. In their current career stage, experienced teachers have more time compared to previous career stages, since they had other personal or professional priorities. The researcher noticed the importance of awareness of every teacher's personal life, since there is a strong interaction between home and school. Previous research (Day et al., 2007; Fuller, 1969; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) confirmed the importance of understanding teachers' personal lives, since various factors determines their level of energy and openness to professional learning. Life stages are more dependent per person, compared to career stages, since a major event can happen at any stage. Participants experienced different moments of impact during their life stages, which resulted in a decrease of FTE, a lower degree of

professional learning due to a shortage of time and space or a tightening of their professional attitude.

Impact of Lower Level of Energy

Unless teachers experience more time in their current career stage due to a more quiet period in their personal life, they acknowledge they have to set priorities and make choices regarding professional learning due to a lower level of energy they are struggling with. In line with previous research (Day et al., 2007; Hargreaves, 2005; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) experienced teachers expressed the feeling that accepting this decrease of their energy level is not easy, but nevertheless realistic. A special need of experienced teachers can be summarized as more time in their regular schedule to learn and develop themselves. It can be concluded that creating awareness regarding the amount of things an experienced teacher can do in order to keep work manageable is important, both for the experienced teachers themselves and for their professional environment. Simply doing everything is impossible during this latest career stage, so making choices and setting priorities is indispensable for long-term job satisfaction until retirement.

The Need for Mutual Interest, Appreciation, Confidence and Encouragement

The awareness of experienced teachers' needs is an important pattern within the findings. The researcher found an overarching theme which is based on the positive impact of mutual interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement. The researcher noticed the importance of small signs that improve the professional ambiance within a school, like asking how you are doing or what you need or getting a compliment. These expressed feelings are in line with previous studies, which investigated that a collaborative professional culture, wherein teachers and their management encourage each other to learn and develop, led to a better performance in change and development than schools with an individualistic professional culture (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995). In a study

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done by Day et al. (2007), 63% of the teachers confirmed the importance and positive impact on the interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement of colleagues.

Negative Impact of Prejudices on Professional Learning

Nevertheless, the researcher concluded that biased assumptions about experienced teachers harm their feeling of mutual interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement. As investigated by Hargreaves (2005), only a few experienced teachers belong to the disenchanted ones or the negative focusers. In practice, colleagues seem to forget the fact that experienced teachers also can be a renewal or a positive focuser. Prejudices now lead to a professional culture in which all experienced teachers are lumped together. What experienced teachers do need instead of biased assumptions, is visibility, openness and trust, both in relation to their colleagues as well as in relation to their principal. These conditions create the opportunity to exchange experiences and knowledge, to discuss subjects, to accost each other and to ask questions, which all stimulates professional learning. Day et al. (2007) already found that 75% of teachers described visibility, trust and openness, which is again confirmed by this study.

Intrinsic Motivation to Stay up to Date

Elaborating on the different types of experienced teachers, the researcher concluded the necessity experienced teachers see to stay up to date. In contrast with previous studies, the researcher noticed that the experienced teachers sustained their motivation during their career stages. They stay up to date driven by their love for children. Next to that, it can be concluded that the majority of experienced teachers in this study do honour their professionalism in relation to professional learning. Despite the fact that Hargreaves (2005) distinguished these positive types of experienced teachers, multiple studies only described experienced teachers as tired, less willing to change or trapped (Day et al., 2007; Drake, 2002; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). Next to the drive to create the best learning environment for every child and the

relation with experienced teachers' professional honour, their motivation to learn was also sparked by changes in workplace, function or daily practice, which experienced teachers described as facilitating professional learning. It can be concluded that these changes led to facing new challenges, new learning experiences and new insights.

Limitations

In order to interpret the above mentioned conclusions, the researcher noticed characteristics of the methodology that may have impacted these interpretations of the findings. In this study, the researcher assumed a small sample size of ten participants, which typically suited qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As a result of the corona crisis, the number of cases decreased from ten participants to seven, since experienced teachers prioritized other proceedings in their daily practice. The number of cases did not harm the researcher's search for relationships in the data, but the rejection of participation can be seen as a limitation, since a sample size that is too small cannot support claims of having achieved valid conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Next to a change of the sample size, the researcher was forced to change the procedure of data collection. Owing to the restrictions due to the corona crisis, the researcher did four interviews face to face and three interviews online via Microsoft Teams. In these online interviews, the researcher experienced a lack of relation, non-verbal communication and eye contact, which decreased the researcher's ability to ask suitable follow-up questions. The researcher was also not able to influence the ambiance before starting the interview by putting participants at ease. The researcher experienced this lack of basic conditions as a limitation, since these online interviews led to less useful information.

The different perceptions the participants and the researcher had on professional learning was a limitation as well. In many international scientific studies, researchers made a clear distinction between professional learning and professional development (Archibald,

Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone & Long, 2016). In Dutch primary education, only the term professional development is used for both professional learning and professional development; there is no distinction. After the process of data collection, the researcher questioned herself if participants really understood professional learning and the difference with professional development. The researcher did not define this distinction beforehand in the interviews, which might be a limitation for the results.

Last, the researcher realized that the participants are part of the same organization as the researcher is in, which could result in a skewed relationship between both. The researcher clearly indicated her role and position in relation to this study and to the organization to every participant. Despite this clarity and the attitude of the researcher, some participants still asked the researcher about opportunities for professional learning within the organization, which was not related to the research question.

Implications

Concerning the theoretical implications, this study can be seen as a critical extension of previous scientific studies about experienced teachers' professional learning. The degree of positivity they used in describing their orientation toward professional learning and their needs were striking and against the investigations researchers already did. Besides, this research investigated the mutuality of responsibility in professional learning. Existing literature describes the importance of teachers' responsibility to their own professional learning (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Labone & Long, 2016), but the current study added the interaction between teachers and their professional environment in taking responsibility.

Regarding the practical implications, this study can be seen as a guide to understand experienced teachers' needs in professional learning. Consequences of this study will in

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practice be related to modifications that are needed to meet experienced teachers' needs. The researcher is aware of the fact that the conclusions in this study ask for changes in practice, regarding avoiding prejudices, facilitating time to learn and develop and facilitating changes in workplace, function or daily practice. A positive consequence of this study for practice is to better understand experienced teachers' needs, instead of using biased assumptions.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, limitations and implications, the researcher noticed recommendations for both further research and practice.

Recommendations for further research. Since the fixed structure of career stages based on years seems to be inefficient for defining life stages, further in-depth research is appropriate, to determine the impact of (experienced) teachers' personal life on professional learning. It is now still unclear what exactly impacts professional learning and at what point the impact is the biggest. It is a challenge to investigate how these life stages can be clustered, in order to find a relation between life and career stages.

Further research is also needed with a focus on experienced teachers' ability to sustain motivation. The findings in this study are in contrast with previous studies, which sparks curiosity. Further research could focus on the differences between experienced teachers in sustaining motivation and on features that possibly affect their motivation. This may lead to a more complete picture on experienced teachers' orientation toward professional learning in their current career stage.

Recommendations for practice. In order to formulate recommendations for practice as concrete as possible, the researcher described reflections that teachers, the school management and the unifying organization can take into account regarding experienced teachers' professional learning:

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- Do experienced teachers get the opportunity to learn by doing, together with colleagues in their daily practice?
- Is professional learning based on experienced teachers' personal interests or talents?
- Do experienced teachers have the opportunity to make choices regarding professional learning themselves?
- Is there mutual responsibility within the school regarding professional learning?
- Does the learning environment fit experienced teachers' needs in space and time to learn?
- Is there awareness of experienced teachers' lower level of energy?
- Are experienced teachers able to set priorities and make choices?
- Is there mutual interest, appreciation and encouragement, without prejudices?
- Does the professional culture stimulate equivalence?
- Do experienced teachers have the opportunity to change workplace, function or their daily practice?

Based on the findings and conclusions within this current research, a standard package of advices or solutions does not fit experienced teachers' needs in professional learning. The seven participants described different needs toward professional learning, which is logical given the personal and professional differences. Above mentioned reflections can be used to understand the individual experienced teachers and help them to sustain motivation to learn and develop in practice. All this with the aim to create the best education for every child.

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Appendix A

FETC Form

Section 1: Basic Study Information

1. Name student:

H.C.A. van Kerkhof

2. Name(s) of the supervisor(s):

Brianna Kennedy

3. Title of the thesis (plan):

Experienced teachers' orientation toward professional learning

4. Does the study concern a multi-center project, e.g. a collaboration with other organizations, universities, a GGZ mental health care institution, or a university medical center?

No

5. Where will the study (data collection) be conducted? If this is abroad, please note that you have to be sure of the local ethical codes of conducts and permissions.

In a primary school organization named Xpect Primair. It is located in Tilburg and consists of 25 primary schools with approximately 750 teachers.

Section 2: Study Details I

6. Will you collect data?

Yes, continue to question 11.

7. Where is the data stored?

X

8. Is the data publicly available?

X

9. Can participants be identified by the student? (e.g., does the data contain (indirectly retrievable) personal information, video, or audio data?)

X

10. If the data is pseudonymized, who has the key to permit re-identification?

X

Section 3: Participants

11. What age group is included in your study?

Teachers with more than 24 years of experience in primary education.

12. Will participants that are recruited be > 16 years? Yes

13. Will participants be mentally competent (wilsbekwaam in Dutch)? Yes

14. Does the participant population contain vulnerable persons? No

(e.g., incapacitated, children, mentally challenged, traumatized, pregnant)

15. If you answered 'Yes' to any of the three questions above: Please provide reasons to justify why this particular groups of participants is included in your study.

All participants are > 16 years, since they have more than 24 years of teaching experience. These unit of analysis is based on career stages.
Participation in this research is voluntary.

16. What possible risk could participating hold for your participants?

A possible risk could be that they feel controlled by someone within the organization on their professional development.
The questions and the tone of questions can make a big difference in this research.

17. What measures are implemented to minimize risks (or burden) for the participants?

All data will be anonymously stored in a prepared data store. As soon as the interviewer stored the data, no names, personal data or connections of participants are visible anymore.

18. What time investment and effort will be requested from participants?

An interview duration of one hour.
Reading the informed consent and the members check will take together half an hour.

19. Will be participants be reimbursed for their efforts? If yes, how? (financial reimbursement, travelling expenses, otherwise). What is the amount? Will this compensation depend on certain conditions, such as the completion of the study?

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No.

20. How does the burden on the participants compare to the study's potential scientific or practical contribution?

Their effort contributes to more in-depth information about their perceptions of professional development. Scientific and practical conclusions can be used in their organizations as well.

21. What is the number of participants? Provide a power analysis and/or motivation for the number of participants. The current convention is a power of 0.80. If the study deviates from this convention, the FERB would like you to justify why this is necessary.

(Note, you want to include enough participants to be able to answer your research questions adequately, but you do not want to include too many participants and unnecessarily burden participants.)

The number of participants is 7.

22. How will the participants be recruited? Explain and attach the information letter to this document.

This study examined a subset of 7 participants with the most years of experience with a maximum of one per school, in order to reach a distribution as wide as possible within different school types with different cultures. This distribution led to different in-depth insights from different perspectives, which strengthened the comparison of differences and similarities between cases within the cross-case analysis. This distribution also implies that not every school is represented. In order to recruit only one participant per school, the researcher asked school leaders to identify potential participants within their school. Every teacher who met the case criteria received an invitation to participate.

23. How much time will prospective participants have to decide as to whether they will indeed participate in the study?

Two weeks.

24. Please explain the consent procedures. Note, active consent of participants (or their parents) is in principle mandatory. Enclose the consent letters as attachments. You can use the consent forms on Blackboard.

In order to achieve active consent of all participants, they receive both an information letter and consent form by email at least two weeks before the interview takes place. They are able to read the informed consent beforehand. In the first part of the interview, the researcher will verbally explain the informed consent, where after the participants have the opportunity to ask questions.

25. Are the participants fully free to participate and terminate their participation whenever they want and without stating their grounds for doing so? Explain.

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Yes, they are. This information is part of the informed consent.

26. Will the participants be in a dependent relationship with the researcher?

No.

27. Is there an independent contact person or a general email address of a complaint officer whom the participant can contact?

No, but participants are able to contact supervisor Brianna Kennedy if there are any complaints.

28. Is there an independent contact person or a general email address of a complaint officer whom the participant can contact in case of complaints?

No, but participants are able to contact supervisor Brianna Kennedy if there are any complaints.

Section 4: Data management

29. Who has access to the data and who will be responsible for managing (access to) the data?

The researcher (Hanna)

30. What type of data will you collect or create? Please provide a description of the instruments.

Data will be collected by a semi-structured interview. The interview will be recorded and afterwards transcribed.

31. Will you be exchanging (personal) data with organizations/research partners outside the UU?

No

32. If so, will a data processing agreement be made up?

X

33. Where will the data be stored and for how long?

The data will be stored on YODA.

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34. Will the data potentially be used for other purposes than the master's thesis? (e.g., publication, reporting back to participants, etc.)

No.

35. Will the data potentially be used for other purposes than the master's thesis? (e.g., publication, reporting back to participants, etc.)

No

Appendix B

Information Letter

Informatiebrief voor deelname aan (sociaal-)wetenschappelijke onderzoek

Experienced Teachers' Orientation toward Professional Learning
(*De kijk van ervaren leerkrachten op professionele ontwikkeling*)

7 februari 2020

Geachte heer, mevrouw,

Middels deze brief wil ik u toestemming vragen om mee te doen aan het onderzoek "Experienced Teachers' Orientation toward Professional Learning". Dit onderzoek heeft tot doel het volledig begrijpen van de ervaringen van ervaren leerkrachten als het gaat om professionele ontwikkeling. Daarbij wordt onderstaande onderzoeksvraag gehanteerd: "How do experienced teachers in Dutch primary education describe their orientation toward professional learning at their current career stage?"

(*Hoe beschrijven ervaren leerkrachten in het basisonderwijs hun professionele ontwikkeling in de huidige fase van hun carrière?*)

Achtergrond van het onderzoek

Het onderzoek is tot stand gekomen vanuit de behoefte om de professionele ontwikkeling van ervaren leerkrachten beter te kunnen begrijpen. Om dat doel te bereiken, zullen we te weten moeten komen wat ervaren leerkrachten zelf ervaren en beleven als het gaat om professionele ontwikkeling.

Opzet/uitvoering van het onderzoek

Het onderzoek bestaat grofweg uit drie delen, (1) het vergaren en opstellen van een theoretisch raamwerk op basis van bestaande wetenschappelijke onderzoeken, (2) het afnemen van interviews met ervaren leerkrachten en (3) het analyseren van de verzamelde gegevens waarbij gezocht wordt naar overeenkomende patronen, maar ook verschillen en oorzaken daarvan.

Het interview zal plaatsvinden op uw eigen school en zal ongeveer een uur duren.

Opnemen van het interview

Het interview zal worden opgenomen, waarna de audio-bestanden in de beveiligde omgeving zullen worden opgeslagen.

Vertrouwelijkheid verwerking gegevens

Voor dit onderzoek is het nodig dat ik een aantal persoonsgegevens van u verzamel. Deze gegevens zijn nodig om de onderzoeksvraag juist te beantwoorden, dan wel om u te kunnen benaderen voor een eventueel vervolgonderzoek. De persoonsgegevens worden direct na het interview geanonimiseerd en in een beveiligde omgeving opgeslagen. Deze beveiligde omgeving bevat een beveiligingscode.

Uw gegevens zullen voor minimaal 10 jaar bewaard worden. Dit is volgens de daartoe bestemde richtlijnen van de VSNU. Meer informatie over privacy kunt u lezen op de website van de Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens:

<https://autoriteitpersoonsgegevens.nl/nl/onderwerpen/avg-europese-privacywetgeving>

Vrijwillige deelname

Deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig. U kunt op elk gewenst moment, zonder opgave van reden en zonder voor u nadelige gevolgen, stoppen met het onderzoek. De tot dan toe verzamelde gegevens worden wel gebruikt voor het onderzoek, tenzij u expliciet aangeeft dit niet te willen.

Onafhankelijke contactpersoon en klachtenfunctionaris

Als u vragen of opmerkingen over het onderzoek heeft, kunt u contact opnemen met de onafhankelijke contactpersoon Brianna Kennedy, b.l.kennedy@uu.nl.

Als u een officiële klacht heeft over het onderzoek, kunt u een mail sturen naar de klachtenfunctionaris via klachtenfunctionaris-fetsocwet@uu.nl

Als u na het lezen van deze informatiebrief besluit tot deelname aan het onderzoek, verzoek ik u bijgevoegd toestemmingsformulier te onderzoeken en voorafgaand aan het interview in te leveren bij de onderzoeker.

Met vriendelijke groet,
Hanna van Kerkhof

E: hanna.vankerkhof@xpectprimair.nl / h.c.a.vankerkhof@students.uu.nl
T: 06-41202233

Appendix C

Consent Form

Toestemmingsformulier voor deelname aan (sociaal-)wetenschappelijk onderzoek

Hierbij verklaar ik de informatiebrief met betrekking tot het onderzoek "Experienced Teachers' Orientation toward Professional Learning" gelezen te hebben en akkoord te gaan met deelname aan het onderzoek.

Naam:

Datum:

Handtekening:

Appendix D

Interview Questions

Part	Theme	Questions
1.	Information letter and consent form	<p>Did you receive the information letter and the consent form?</p> <p>Did you read the information letter?</p> <p>Do you have any questions regarding the information letter or your participation in this research?</p> <p>Are you willing to participate in the research with the conditions as mentioned in the information letter?</p>
	General acquaintance	<p>Can you tell me what your role/function is within this school?</p> <p>Can you tell me how your career looked like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which groups did you teach? • In how many schools did you teach? • What are your interests within the educational field? • Have you always worked full-time/part-time? • How do you like working as a teacher?
2.	Personal life / life stages	<p>What issues in your personal life affected your professional choices?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this change over time during different career stages?
3.	Professional learning in	<p>How would you describe professional learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think is important regarding

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- school professional learning?
- How did your professional learning look like in the past career stages?
- What have you done to develop yourself?
 - Which choices did you make yourself in professional learning?
 - Which choices were made for you in professional learning?
- Career stages How did you experience professional learning in the past career stages?
- Does your professional learning differ compared to 25 years ago?
 - Which differences and similarities do you experience now compared to 25 years ago?
- Which phases did you experience in your professional learning?
- How did these phases look?
 - What did you experience as pleasant?
 - What did you experience as unpleasant?
 - In which way affect personal issues your professional learning in different phases?
4. Influencing factors What do you think is important regarding professional learning?
- What helps you/would help you to stay up to date and to develop yourself continuously?

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- What role has your principal?
- What role do your colleagues have?

What impact has the professional culture in this school on your professional learning?

Can you describe your most ideal form of professional learning in your current career stage?

- How does it look like?
 - Where does it take place?
 - When does it take place?
-

Appendix E**Codebook With Deductive and Inductive Codes**

Code	Description	Example
Description of professional learning	Teacher describes a specific element of professional learning (e.g., customized, sustained, interactive, daily context, responsibility).	“So, I've always been very active in that through courses and all sorts of things I've done to keep up with the new trends in education.”
Personal life referencing	Teacher refers to a circumstance in personal life that had a positive/negative influence on professional learning (e.g., birth of children, bereavement, illness, etc.)	“Yes, partly because of my medical background. A few years ago I had meningitis in which I almost died. And then afterwards another medical issue with my legs and yes, that actually made me decide to use that possibility to work a day less.”
Differences during career stages	Teacher states in what way career stages affect openness to professional learning and/or types of professional learning.	“I had the feeling that back in the days things went more slowly and many more people were sceptical about trying something new.”
Level of energy to learn	Teacher refers to their own level of energy in relation to	“Yes, and make conscious choices yourself when you

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	professional learning.	are older. You can no longer do everything.”
Types of experienced teachers	Teacher refers to the type of experienced teacher they are (e.g., renewal, positive focuser, negative focuser, disenchanted) or types of experienced teachers in their school environment.	“Uhm, yes, as you indicated and because of course I know a lot of people in my age group who were already ‘dying’ (losing motivation) several years ago and who comment on everything and don't like it anymore and the like.
Effect of leadership	Teacher states in what way leadership affects professional learning (e.g., vision, trust, opportunities, time, etc.).	“It also depends on who is the director or manager. How he/she is and how he/she can motivate people. And not only motivate, but also show that they are behind the plans.”
Influence of professional culture	Teacher describes in what way his/her colleagues influence professional learning (collaborative culture vs. individualistic culture).	“Well, you should at least have openness and trust and that you can go to everyone.”
Collective participation	Teacher describes the	“As a result, you are also in

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referencing	influence of shared learning on professional learning (e.g., role of colleagues, group learning vs. individual learning, sharing expertise/experiences).	contact with many VCPs from other schools. We can also keep in touch with each other via an app, and if things are developed at other schools or tips are given, they will be shared.”
Effect of active learning	Teacher states in what way active learning affects professional learning (e.g., classroom-based learning, development in practice, coaching).	“When we introduced IPC, we also received guidance in your classroom.”
<i>Experienced teachers' needs</i>	<i>Teacher describes of gives examples of what he/she needs in professional learning in the current career stage, to keep developing themselves.</i>	“So I might be thinking of some social counselling with older teachers.”
<i>Description of motivation to learn</i>	<i>Teacher describes what affects his/her motivation and openness to learn.</i>	“Yes, for the sake of our children, that is what we do it all for.”
<i>Learning experiences referencing</i>	<i>Teacher refers to learning experiences that occurred, based on a new phase or</i>	“Then I went to this school which was a very good choice. The change. Just a

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change that facilitates

learning.

breath of fresh air, new

colleagues, a different way of

working.”

Note: Data-driven codes are in *italics*.

Appendix F

Data Matrix With Themes Based on Researcher's Interpretations

	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4	Participant 5	Participant 6	Participant 7
	Anna Maas	Babette Mensink	David Jochems	Henk Neijen	Kristel van Abeelen	Marloes van Eindhoven	Tessa Campenhout
Description of professional learning	Learning by doing Exchange of expertise and knowledge in practice Talent-based	Learning in practice Self-made choices Different sources of information Appreciate the little moments	Learning in the daily context, form others Self-made choices, based on strengths (and weaknesses) Different sources of information Daily business	Self-made choices, based on personal interests Take responsibility to learn and develop Functional in daily practice	Sustained series of 5 a 6 meetings Stay up to date in daily practice Based on personal interests Take responsibility to learn and develop	Based on daily practice Based on personal interests Take responsibility to learn and develop	Importance of applicability in practice Sustained series of a few meetings Learning by doing in practice Self-made choices
Personal life referencing	Interaction between personal and professional life Personal life	Personal life influences choices and interests in professional learning	Medical background influences the degree of professional	Age influences FTE Personal life influences FTE Personal life	Personal life influences FTE Personal life influences choices and interests in	Personal life stages affect the degree of professional learning	Personal life influence space and time to develop and learn Personal life

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	influences professional attitude Personal life influences FTE Personal life influence space and time to develop and learn Importance of getting to know yourself	Personal life influences FTE background influences FTE Personal life influences choices and interests in professional learning	learning influences choices professional learning influences FTE Personal life influence space and time to professional learning Interaction between personal and professional life	influences choices professional learning influences conception of professional learning Personal life influence space and time to develop and learn Interaction between personal and professional life	professional learning influences Personal life conception of professional learning professional learning and time to develop and learn influence space and time to professional learning	Interaction between personal and professional life Personal life influences attitude toward professional learning Personal life influences choices and interests in professional learning	influences FTE between personal and professional life Personal life influences attitude toward professional learning Personal life influences choices and interests in professional learning
Differences during career stages	Now feeling more responsible to develop in comparison with previous stages	Few changes in educational concepts, only new names differ Now less	Back in the days more sceptical about learning and changes Now a process of	Few changes in educational concepts, only new names differ Now learning	Development during career stages to a professional sector Addressed to your	Now more selective choices Less energy to do new things compared to	In previous stages focussed on teaching Back in the days more collective

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		motivation based	learning together	more based on	professional	previous stages	learning, now
		on the content of	Now a support	personal choices,	learning now		personal choices
		meetings, many	base to try new	in previous stages	Now more time		Now consciously
		rehearsals	things	based on collective	and space to learn		engaged in
				learning	and develop, based		professional
					on experience		learning
							Now more focus
							on lifelong
							learning
Level of energy to		Importance of	Importance of	Importance of		Importance of	Awareness of
learn		setting priorities,	setting priorities,	tranquillity to be		setting priorities,	lower level of
		making choices	making choices	able to stay up to		making choices	energy
		Awareness of the	Awareness of the	date		Importance of	Awareness of the
		impossibility to do	impossibility to do	Importance of		listening to	impossibility to do
		everything	everything	setting priorities,		yourself	everything
				making choices			
Types of	Corresponds with	Awareness of a lot	Loss of motivation	Differences in	Awareness of	Positivity creates	
experienced	your personality	prejudices about	and fun	mindset	changes in practice	optimistic	

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teachers	Awareness that older teachers can feel lost within a team	experienced / older teachers Experienced teachers are seen as old and worn	Awareness of vulnerability Awareness of changes in practice that can be hard to implement Differences in mindset Corresponds with your personality	Corresponds with your personality Ability to feel young within a team is necessary	that can be hard to implement Loss of motivation and fun	mindset; what is still possible? Awareness of changes in practice that can be hard to implement Experienced teachers are seen as old and worn Awareness of a lot of prejudices about experienced / older teachers	
Effect of leadership	Importance of appreciation Space and confidence make you grow Getting feedback	Importance of facilitating learning Visibility of school leader in daily practice	Influence of leader on motivation to learn Importance of encourage learning Both leader and	Importance of support of leader in learning trajectories Mutual appreciation	Visibility and openness of leader important for learning Importance of support of leader	Sincere attention of leader Ability to fathom teachers and their needs Importance of	Importance of encourage learning Importance of creating support within a team Positive ambiance

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	contributes to learning	Positive ambiance influences learning	teacher are equivalent parties in development	Facilitates space and time to develop and learn	Appreciation is the basis of leadership	common values and vision	influences learning
	Importance of radiating tranquillity		Importance of creating support within a team		Importance of feedback and critical friend	Both leader and teacher are equivalent parties	and time to develop and learn
			Importance of common values and vision			Importance of appreciation and being seen	Facilitates space and time to develop and learn
Influence of professional culture	Enthusiasm of colleagues stimulates learning	Common values and vision stimulates learning	Importance of openness and trust within a team	Common values and vision stimulates learning	Professional attitude of all colleagues needed	Collaboration facilitates learning	Mutual involvement stimulates learning
		Collaboration facilitates learning	Importance of communication; ask and talk	Importance of mutual stimulation	Importance of accost colleagues	Importance of mutual stimulation	Importance of communication;
		Importance of mutual stimulation	Getting opportunities to develop	Be aware of learning and development of colleagues	Possibilities to discuss with colleagues	Humour facilitates openness and trust	ask and talk
					Importance of appreciation and		Importance of mutual stimulation

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					support		
Collective participation referencing	Importance of learning together / sharing in practice Exchange of expertise within and between schools	Increases motivation to learn Creates a collective support Exchange of knowledge	Creates collective support for school developments Keep in touch with each other The importance of sharing in practice, within and between schools	Increases motivation to learn	Importance of discussing and sharing what has been learned Exchange of expertise and knowledge		Increases motivation to learn Importance of discussing with each other Exchange of expertise and knowledge in practice
Effect of active learning	Learned the most by doing Learning from others in daily practice	Importance of ideas and insights of others, changes your perspective Keeps professional learning approachable Based on struggles daily practice	Importance of coaching and guidance in practice Learning from others in daily practice	Learning from others in daily practice Importance of coaching and guidance in practice	Importance of coaching and guidance in practice Critical friend in daily practice	Learning by doing in daily practice	Practical approach of professional learning Importance of practical applicability Learning by doing in daily practice

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Experienced teachers' needs	Importance of sincere attention	Reassurance that educational concepts do not change that much	Importance of support in sustaining motivation		Importance of oblige learning and development	Question how teachers feel and what they challenge	Question how teachers feel and what they challenge
	Expertise of experienced teachers deserves space to be shared	Learning trajectories based on initial situation and needs of experienced teachers	Question how teachers feel and what they challenge			Space and time to be able to learn and develop	Importance of own choices, oblige does not work
	Learn from colleagues in daily practice	Importance of sincere attention for needs	Social counselling/ meetings for experienced teachers			Reassurance about educational changes the next 10 years and their position	Reassurance that learning and development can be simple and small
Description of	Personal interests	Personal interests	Personal interests	Personal interests	Being curious for	Seizing	Being able to
		Less prejudices	Importance of appreciation				Direct contact with other experienced teacher who can help
							Acceptance of less energy to learn

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motivation to learn	Enthusiasm of others	Importance to stay informed	Be able to do the best for children	Energy / enthusiasm to learn something new	the unknown	possibilities in your environment that fit your interests	determine your own learning path
Creating the best learning environment for children	Importance to stay up to date	Importance to stay up to date	Stay informed of changes in our society	Being able to do the best for every child	yourself personally and professionally	Ability to think out of the box	Learning based on daily practice
	Creating the best learning environment for children	Importance of stay up to date	Importance of stay up to date	Added value for the daily practice	Importance of professional honour to stay informed, to do the best for children	Stay informed, stay up to date	
Learning experiences referencing	Change of workplace facilitates learning	Change of workplace facilitates learning	Learning creates the need/feeling to do something else	Change of workplace facilitates learning	Change of workplace facilitates learning	Change of workplace facilitates learning	Changes in daily practice facilitates learning
	Change of or additional function facilitates learning	Based on personal/ professional needs and interests	Importance of new challenges	Change of or additional function facilitates learning	Changes in daily practice facilitates learning	Change of or additional function facilitates learning	Change of or additional function facilitates learning
	Contradictions demotivate	Importance of new or different	workplace facilitates learning	Based on personal/ professional needs	Based on personal/ professional needs	Importance of new or different	

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learning	insights	Change of or	and interests	and interests	insights
		additional function	Contradictions	Importance of	Changes in daily
		facilitates learning	demotivate	critical friends to	practice facilitates
			learning	learn	learning
					Importance of
					tranquillity for
					openness to learn

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Appendix G

Overarching Themes and Patterns Derived From Synthesis

Corresponding codes	Themes/patterns
Description of professional learning	The positive impact of learning together in daily practice
Influence of professional culture	
Collective participation referencing	
Effect of active learning	
Experienced teachers' needs	
Description of motivation to learn	Individual choices based on personal interests or talents stimulate professional learning
Description of professional learning	
Differences during career stages	
Experienced teachers' needs	
Description of motivation to learn	
Description of professional learning	The importance of taking responsibility in professional learning
Differences during career stages	
Influence of professional culture	
Personal life referencing	Fluctuations in space, time, choices and interests for professional learning due to issues in one's personal life
Types of experienced teachers	
Level of energy to learn	
Types of experienced teachers	Balance between setting priorities and making choices to stay up to date and creating more time and space for learning is needed due to a lower level of energy
Experienced teachers' needs	
Effect of leadership	
Influence of professional culture	The positive impact of mutual interest, appreciation, confidence and encouragement

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Collective participation referencing	since it facilitates learning
Experienced teachers' needs	
Description of motivation to learn	Importance to stay up to date to be able to create the best learning environment
Learning experiences referencing	Changes in workplace, function or daily practice facilitate professional learning
