

**Validating a new instrument  
used to evaluate the  
Professional Development schools' quality  
and designed as a self-evaluation tool**

**Janine Haenen, M.Sc.**  
University of Professional Teacher Education Leiden

**Ton Kallenberg, M.Sc.**  
University of Professional Teacher Education Leiden

**Jeannette Geldens, Ph.D.**  
University of Professional Teacher Education De Kempel, Helmond

contact:  
haenen.j@hsleiden.nl

With the cooperation of  
Frank Rokebrand,  
Edmée Suasso  
Mattie Wethlij

CBPR

Bergen, Norway

2008

**Validating a new instrument  
used to evaluate the  
Professional Development schools' quality  
and designed as a self-evaluation tool\***

**Index**

Introduction .....	3
PDS.....	3
Advantages of PDS.....	3
The instrument.....	4
The respondents.....	6
The results .....	6
Key Literature.....	7

---

**\* Citation titel:**

Haenen, J., Kallenberg, T., & Geldens, J. (2008, Nov. 26 - 28). *Validating a new instrument used to evaluate the Professional Development schools' quality and designed as a self-evaluation tool*. Proceedings 3rd European Conference on Practice-Based and Practitioner Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI\_PBPR.), Bergen, Norway.

## **Introduction**

My name is Janine Haenen and I am working in the Netherlands at The Leiden University of Professional Teacher Education, at the Research and Innovation Centre. I am involved in a teacher education program, aimed at the development of the student teachers' research skills. And I do research myself as well.

This paper is about this research, done with my colleague and co-author Ton Kallenberg and Jeannette Geldens from The University of Professional Teacher Education De Kempel. We did research in cooperation with Frank Rokebrand, Edmée Suasso and Mattie Wethlij.

We validated a new instrument used to evaluate the Professional Development Schools' quality. This new instrument is based on a doctorate research (Geldens, 2007).

This paper contains three themes:

1. The concept of Professional Development school (PDS) in The Netherlands
2. The newly developed instrument with the purpose to measure PDS' quality
3. Results of our research about the reliability and validity of this instrument

## **PDS**

In The Netherlands, more and more primary and secondary schools function as a Professional Development School (in short PDS) over the last years. Within a couple of years almost all the primary schools in The Netherlands have to function as a PDS.

A PDS is a primary or a secondary school in which a new learning environment has been created aimed at educating student teachers or newly appointed teachers within the school context itself. This is done in collaboration with a teacher training institute. Usually, such a PDS is not well enough equipped for educating student teachers and they don't have the facilities and conditions to run a teacher training program.

Therefore, a PDS should design and implement a new learning environment. In this process both the PDS and the teacher training college have a common responsibility. The teacher training college has the final responsibility for the educational process of the teacher students and newly appointed teachers at the PDS.

## **Advantages of PDS**

What are the main advantages of educating new teaching staff in the school context itself?

- Integrating theory – practice, which is an extremely important point, because the gap between theory and practice can be reduced.
- New staff can be added to a school, because student teachers are really teaching and take over classes
- The shared responsibility PDS – teacher training institute, leading to a developing expertise. Because the PDS has to professionalise itself in educating teaching staff, the quality of new and seated teaching staff and the education they give have to be increased.

Next, I will inform you about the process of validation of the new instrument that is supposed to measure the quality of a PDS. Why is such an instrument important and what does it look like? First of all, I have to mention that my research institute has not been involved in the design of the instrument. We came into the picture after the design, and my work had been focussed on the validation of the questionnaire.

### **Guaranteeing the quality**

Due to the growing role of PDS in the education of new teachers, it is very important to guarantee the quality of such a newly used learning environment. Because PDS is a relative new concept, at this moment there is not an instrument measuring its quality. That is why a new instrument had been developed.

A special feature about this new instrument is that it is a self-evaluating tool. That means the school itself can evaluate its own PDS' quality with this instrument.

The PDS can take its own responsibility to self-asses the quality related to the education of the student teachers. Of course, such a new instrument should be evaluated itself and the goal of this study was to evaluate the reliability and the validity of this new instrument.

### **The instrument**

The developed instrument consists of a questionnaire with five different sections to be filled in by actors at the teacher training institute and the PDS.

There is a questionnaire for trainers at the teacher training institute, for training coordinators, for teacher counsellors, for students and for headmasters of the PDS.

These are the five groups that are involved in the PDS-concept. This is also a strong point about this instrument: that all the actors who are involved in the PDS-concept, can give their opinion of PDS' quality with this instrument.

Each of the five questionnaires is about four main issues related to the PDS-concept. Issue 1 is about the learning and guiding process. Issue 2 is about the conditions of a PDS. Issue 3 is about the gains of the PDS, and issue 4 is about the relationship between the primary school and the teacher training college.

Each of the four issues contains several standards. A standard is a description of a desired quality related to that issue. A standard is a scale in the questionnaire (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Example of three issues with their standards

ISSUE I: LEARNING AND GUIDING PROCESS

Standard 3: The PDS offers the student a complete learning curriculum
Standard 4: The PDS offers the student a challenging learning curriculum
Standard 5: The PDS offers opportunities to learn in practice

ISSUE III: GAINS

Standard 9: A PDS is successfully if there are enough gains
---

ISSUE IV: RELATIONSHIP PDS AND TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

Standard 11: The PDS plays a role in the educational process of the teacher training college
Standard 12: The PDS plays a role in the assessment of the student

Each standard contains several indicators, which are the questions about that standard. The respondents have to give their opinion of an indicator by filling in a four points scale (A), ranging from option 1 'this indicator is not present in the PDS' to option 4 'the indicator is strongly present in the PDS. The choice of a four point scale is made on purpose, because now the respondent is forced to choose a negative or a positive option. They do not have the possibility to choose an option in the middle (for example: I don't know). See Figure 2. for an example of a standard with some indicators.

Figure 2. Example of a standard with indicators and its explanation

9	Standard 9: The PDS-concept is successfully if there are enough gains.	A	B
	<i>Indicators:</i>		
1	We feel a lot more competent.	-- - + ++ ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	In our school we reduce the workload for the teachers.	-- - + ++ ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	We support developments in the school ontwikkelingen.	-- - + ++ ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My opinion about this standard	<b>1 2 3 4</b>	

Explanation	
A. Opinions about the indicators -- Weak - More weak than strong + More strong than weak ++ Strong ? I don't know	Opinion about the standard <b>1</b> unsatisfactory <b>2</b> mediocre <b>3</b> satisfactory <b>4</b> good
B. Would you like to develop?	

So the respondent can give his or her opinion about an indicator by filling in the four point scale. Next, the respondent also has to fill in if he/she wants that indicator to be developed in his own PDS (B).

And finally the respondent has to give his/her opinion about a whole standard, by filling in a mark form 1 till 4. The 1 means unsatisfactory and the 4 means satisfactory. So you can imagine, it had been a hell of a job to validate this instrument, because of all the options and possibilities within the instrument itself. But we received a lot of cooperation, both from the different training institutes as well from PDS. However, we didn't have enough participants for such a research.

### The respondents

Four teacher training colleges in The Netherlands participated in our study and they helped us in finding our respondents. In the table you can see how many respondents filled in one of the five questionnaires.

Table 1. Respondents

	training co-ordinators	teacher counsellors	teacher trainers	students	headmasters
Total	40	44	41	46	24

As you can see all the groups, except of the headmasters, consist of sufficient respondents to interpret the statistical results. Unfortunately, only 24 headmasters filled in their questionnaire. This number of respondents is actually too low to interpret statistical results. Because we thought that the headmasters are an important group involved in the PDS-concept, we decided to use the results of the headmasters anyway. But we had to interpret the results of this group very carefully.

### The results

We investigated the reliability and the validity for each of the five questionnaires and we did this by using the statistical program SPSS.

The overall conclusion of these analyses is that the five questionnaires of the developed instrument are satisfactorily reliable. Almost all of the standards in the five questionnaires appeared to be reliable enough. And we found surprisingly high reliabilities!

Some standards in the questionnaires had such a high reliability, because these standards contained comparable indicators. If you ask a couple of times the same question, just formulated with others words, you will find indeed a high reliability. Therefore, we suggested removing some of the indicators that were asking for comparable answers. Removing some of the indicators is also a good idea, because the five questionnaires contain many questions. The danger with many questions is that a respondent has neither the time nor the interest to fill in the entire questionnaire.

The second conclusion is that this instrument is only partially valid: not all the standards appeared to be valid, or were only partially valid. Some of the standards can be made valid by reconstructing some of the standards.

The main conclusion is that this instrument is not yet valid enough to use it like this. But with our recommendations we can improve this instrument, so it can be used to evaluate PDS' quality. That's why this new instrument could become important for the development of the PDS concept in The Netherlands.

## **Key Literature**

- Geldens, J. J. M. (2007). *Leren onderwijzen in een werkplekleeromgeving. Een meervoudige casestudy naar kenmerken van krachtige werkplekleeromgevingen voor aanstaande leraren basisonderwijs (Proefschrift Radbouduniversiteit Nijmegen)*. Helmond: Kempellectoraat, Hogeschool de Kempel.
- Hoffmans & Heegsma (2007). *Zelfevaluatiekader opleiden in de school. ZEK OIS kader, versie 2.0*.
- Kallenberg, A. J. (2007). *Opleiden van leraren bij institutionele samenwerking: Een vierluik*. Heerlen: Ruud de Moor Centrum, Open Universiteit Nederland.
- Onderwijsraad (2005c). *Leraren opleiden in de School*. Den Haag: Onderwijsraad.