THE POSSIBILITIES FOR APPRAISING TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

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Abstract

With the view to raising the effectiveness of Estonian educational system, new course concerning schools' and pupils' individual development must be taken. It can be achieved through performance management, which also generates the need to appraise schools' and teachers' performance.

The purpose of this article is to bring out the opportunities for appraising schools' and teachers' performance in Estonian general education schools in a perspective of organizational culture and educational policy. On the assumption of teachers' main activities the authors grouped evaluation criteria into activities connected to school management and activities connected to educational process. Teachers' appraisal criteria a brought out in three main themes: teachers' personal characteristics, learning process and learning environment and school management and development. The authors also debate over the Estonian educational policy.

Keywords: performance, performance management, appraisal, evaluation, organisational culture, effectiveness, education, educational policy.

Introduction

Organizations', its employees' performance and activities is recommended to evaluate (measure) to diagnose organization's shape and to change and direct it if needed. The need to appraise educational institutions' and teachers' performance has also a political perspective – to raise the effectiveness of state's educational system, the quality of education, the scholarliness of its citizens and to supply educational system with qualified and motivated teachers.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to bring out the opportunities for appraising schools' and teachers' performance in Estonian general education schools in a perspective of organizational culture and educational policy. The authors point out the important evaluation criteria to improve the effectiveness of Estonian general education schools and the performance of the teachers working in these educational institutions. The authors also debate over the Estonian educational policy.

The article consists of four important parts: 1) the experience in appraising teachers' performance and implementing pay-for-performance in world's educational systems; 2) the role of appraisal in school management; 3) the appraisal policy in Estonian schools, and; 4) the ways and opportunities for improving teachers' appraisal and developing organisational culture by bringing out the appraisal criteria for evaluating teachers' performance.

Kaplan and Norton (2003: 21) argue, if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. A lot depends on how the measurement is done, what measurement techniques and - processes are used – employees' reaction and behaviour depends on that. Management theorists and practitioners emphasise the significance of appraisal methods and process in management. But it is also important to remember that evaluation does not substitute management and it is impossible to measure all important activities and results in organization. The same is with political decisions – there is no unique model that educational policy makers can base on to make their political decisions and investments.

Schools' main objective is believed to be to shape individuals who are active, capable of developing and to create the fundamentals for their successful subsistence in society. In the literature of educational policy that is often called an educational process or educational production model. In that model political decisions are made based on the inputs and outcomes of different schools. But it is essential to notify that it is very difficult to measure schools' main objective reliably, therefore the key question is to develop appraisal system and finding information sources that accord to the schools' goals the most and which are associated with teaching and learning. There are also difficulties with defining the input and outcome of educational process which guarantee the effectiveness of school or educational system generally. That complicates the decision process of educational policy makers, who often have to make their decisions based on insight or on the impact of the decision to their political career.

The educational policy makers share the opinion that there is a need in Estonian general education system to analyze and evaluate what is done and to move further from there. It is also essential to improve the quality of learning process which is achieved by motivating teachers and improving their and schools' performance. To that end, schools have recently started to analyze and evaluate its activities more systematically. That manifests in creating systems for appraising teaching and teachers' performance. Teachers' appraisal should be based on the appraisal of their work performance. That enables to direct teachers to achieve their goals better and also gives an opportunity for motivating them in a perspective of school's better performance. These systems are still in its initial stage in a lot of schools and therefore the decisions about schools' activities, teachers' competence and efficiency are often made using casual and trivial indicators and methods.

The term "evaluation" has broadened substantially during years. Earlier, evaluation had rather elementary and raw control function, during what employees' performances were given quantitative estimations by its superiors (Pratt 1991). Nowadays it also concludes a lot of activities by what organization tries to appraise its employees, trains, develops and promotes them and tries to improve organizations' efficiency, also rewards are given for efficient work (Mani 2002: 141-142). Both quantitative and qualitative appraisal criteria and methods are important. Personnel appraisal has become a part of strategic human resource management, which tries to avoid appraiser's subjectivity and to balance estimation's qualitative and quantitative aspects (Fletcher 2001: 473-474).

Educational process differentiates significantly from the production process of private sector organizations and therefore creating a reliable appraisal system in schools in very challenging. Characteristics of the educational process that complicate the appraisal are the following (Engert 1996: 250; Mancebon, Bandres 1999: 133-134):

1. Multiple objectives and outcomes of educational organisations.
2. Many educational organisations' outcomes cannot be unambiguously measured or quantified.
3. The subject of exchange in the education is rather an outcome made up of elements having a diverse nature (knowledge, attitudes, rules of behaviour, values) which are produced in a joint form and are difficult to measure and aggregate.
4. Many of the components (attitudes towards life, position on the economic scale etc) in the production of education only reveal themselves later, once the education years have finished and even throughout the length of an individual's life cycle.
5. The educational production process is cumulative over time and depends on the context.
6. An indeterminate part of education received by an individual is not the consequence of his passage through the education system, but rather that of his personal experiences, of the communication media or of the relationships that he has had (family, social, friendships).
7. The production process is carried out by the customer itself (the pupil), who represents a fundamental input and whose involvement is an authentic determinant of the products obtained (the time dedicated to learning, his interests, his innate capacities).
8. Limited knowledge of the true correspondence relating inputs to outputs in the educational production process is a major problem (Hanushek 1986: 1154).

All these characteristics mentioned above, need to be taken into consideration while analysing the evaluation results of educational institutions', teachers' and pupils' performance. These characteristics should also be taken into consideration while making political decisions.

Experience in appraising teachers' performance and implementing pay-for-performance in world's educational systems

Many teachers are not satisfied with their wage and working conditions, which leads to the problem that teacher's profession is becoming unfavourable, some teachers are dissatisfied and some of them are leaving the schools. Despite of that, schools have to raise its performance to guarantee the supply of high-quality education. The effectiveness of educational system is a high political priority in many countries, but still some educational systems are more effective than others.

From the analysis taken by McKinsey& Company (Barber; Mourshed 2007: 56) in 25 best educational systems showed that their success is based on the skills to create the system that more efficiently fulfils the following three objectives:

- to find more talented people into the organization;
- to raise the quality of learning;
- to achieve continuous usage of exemplary teaching methods.

These are the key dimensions that constitute success for the organisations concerned. These key dimensions can be achieved by the usage of performance management.

Many democratic countries have taken performance management into use with the intention to modernize teachers' profession and to turn it more attractive, to raise the schools' performance orientation and to tie teachers' activity and results directly to schools' goals (Storey 2000: 509-510; Tomlinson 2000: 281-282). That creates the need to appraise schools' and teachers' performance which has also created many debates among pedagogues, theorists and politicians.

In England, schools have taken performance management into use since the year 2000. Durango Foundation for Educational Excellence report that schools that are successful in launching performance management have achieved the following (Performance management in ... 2000):
- a commitment to the attainment and welfare of pupils at their school;
- an appreciation of the crucial role that teachers play;
- an atmosphere of trust between teacher and team leader, which allows them to appraise strengths and identify areas for development;
- encouragement to share good practice; and
- the integration of performance management with the overall approach to managing the school.

Thus there are two major benefits that may be pointed out from the practice in England and why this practice is pointed out as effective management technique for schools: first, pupils will benefit because their teachers will have a more sharply focused picture of what, with encouragement, support and high expectations, their pupils can achieve; second, teachers will benefit. Teachers have the right to expect that their performance will be regularly appraised and that they will have a proper opportunity for professional discussion with their team leader about their work and their professional development. (*Ibid.*)

Despite of great expectations to performance management, new approach has involved a lot of resistance and critical opinions, especially among teachers. Teachers are very critical about performance management because they say that in schools, the nature of the task is much more diffuse to appraise teachers' work objectively and the allocation of responsibility for outcomes far less certain (Storey 2000: 519; Storey 2002: 321-322; Bartlett 2000: 35). Teachers are collegially responsible and pupils' educational process takes years and is affected by many teachers' contribution (Storey 2000: 519). There are also doubts whether pay-for-performance which is often implemented with performance management is the right incentive for teachers (Storey 2000: 516; Tomlinson 2000: 292). Therefore most of

the criticism concerns the appraisal of teachers' work performance and using the right appraisal criteria.

As has been frequently pointed out, choice of measures is crucial for a pay-for-performance scheme. The most obvious reason for this is that the performance measures are supposed to capture the key dimensions of what constitutes success or failure for the organisations concerned. A central feature of the argument for pay-for-performance is thus that adjusting pay in the light of such performance measures provides an incentive for employees to promote the success of the organisation. Naturally, therefore, inappropriate measures will run the risk of promoting and, in the context of pay-for-performance, rewarding activity which may be either irrelevant to organisational success or even counterproductive. (Cutler, Waine 1999: 59-60) In a perspective of educational policy it is also important that the actions constituting success to state's citizens' scholarliness should be awarded and extra monetary incentives should be directed in that purpose. So far, difficulties with setting measurable objectives and problems with reliable appraisal are the reasons why pay-for-performance and performance management are not combined enough in schools.

Therefore only the things that are reliably measurable and important to all parties should be measured. Appraisal should not generate fear and resistance, but it should motivate teachers to improve the quality of their work and to develop themselves. But appraisal may cause reverse tendencies. For example there are a lot of cases where appraisal has caused the burn-out of employees, especially when employee is not capable of achieving the objects set by its managers (Brown, Benson 2003: 67-68). Different appraisal criteria should be weighted and made comparable to each-other so that a numerical overall estimation may be given.

The research into teacher effectiveness by Hay McBer (McBer 2000: 6-9) brought out a model of teacher effectiveness, which underlies England's educational compensation policy They found that there are three main factors within teachers' control that significantly influence pupil progress: teaching skills, professional characteristics and classroom climate. Teaching skills are those "micro-behaviours" that the effective teacher constantly exhibits when teaching a class: high expectations for the pupils, good planning skills, employment of a variety of teaching strategies and techniques, clear strategy for pupil management, wise time and resource management, employment of a range of assessment methods and techniques and giving homework that are integrated with class work. The skills of creating natural lesson flow combined with a well-considered time management and the skills of having most of the pupils on task through the lesson, are also seen as an important part of teaching skills (see figure 1).
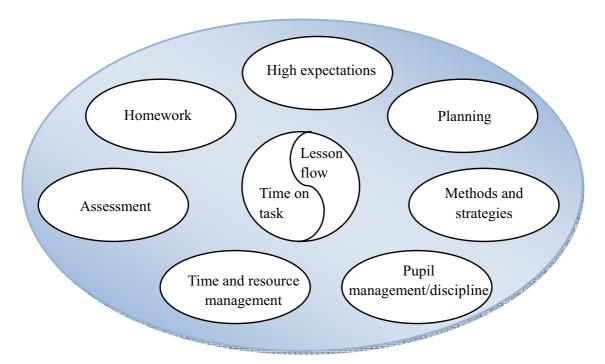
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Figure 1. The model of teaching skills. (McBer 2000: 10)

Professional characteristics are deep-seated patterns of behaviour which outstanding teachers display more often, in more circumstances and to a greater degree of intensity than effective colleagues (see figure 2). Five clusters can be brought out: professionalism (respect for others, the provision of challenge and support, expressing confidence and optimism about abilities and making an active contribution in meetings, creating trust with pupils), thinking (the ability of analytical thinking, conceptual thinking), planning and setting expectations (drive for improvement – not only a need to do a good job but also a need to set and measure achievement against an internal standard of excellence, seeking information, initiative to seize immediate opportunities and sort out problems before they escalate), leading (skills of managing teachers, passion for learning, high degree of flexibility to changing circumstances, commitment to holding people accountable – both pupils and others) and relating to others (understanding others, ability to impact and influence pupils to perform, good team working skills).
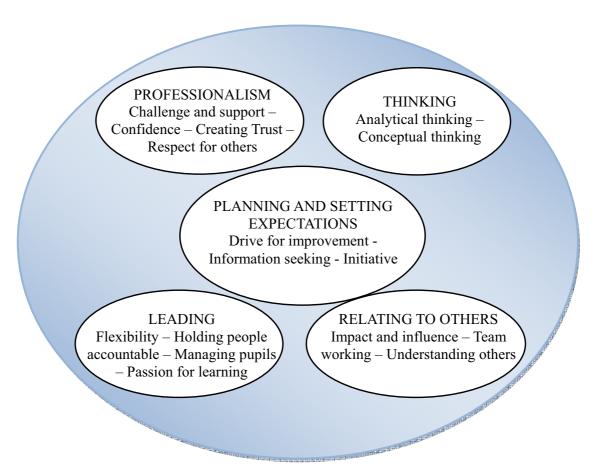
Figure 2. The model of professional characteristics. (McBer 2000: 19)

Classroom climate is defined as the collective perceptions by pupils of what it feels like to be a pupil in any particular teacher's classroom, where those perceptions influence every student's motivation to learn and perform to the best of his or her ability. Based on these three attributes it is possible to distinguish effective teachers from less effective ones. (McBer 2000: 6-9) Therefore it is recommended to use the model of teacher effectiveness while apprising teachers' performance. This approach is approved by the educational policy makers in England and also mainly done in English educational institutions. The authors of this article believe that the model of teacher effectiveness can also be implemented in Estonia, of course with some adaptations. This approach is developed further by the authors in the final part of this article (see figure 4).

Appraisal systems should be developed involving both organisation's management and other regular staff. If it is not done this way, appraisal systems won't work even when they are suitable and reflecting exactly the organisation's objectives, strategy and other important processes. Appraisal systems that are created only by higher levels of management or policy makers are not accepted as much as these created by all employees. Non-trusting or even withdrawn attitude is taken to that kind of approach. This manifests in organisational culture. Corresponding attitudes are common in European countries and they slow down the changes put into practice also for example in English schools (Jackson 1988: 15). It is pointed out that teachers who were involved into the development of appraisal systems were much

more aware of and accepted more the expectations set on their performance, understood the appraisal process better and were much more committed to it (Kelly *et. al.* 2008: 44). The research of Williams and Levy showed that the understanding of used appraisal systems was positively correlated with work satisfaction, organisational commitment and perception of justice (Williams, Levy 1992: 841). Thus performance management and appraisal system works best when it is an integral part of a school's culture; it is seen to be fair and open; understood by everyone and based on shared commitment to supporting continuous improvement and recognising success.

A lot of resistance concerning the usage of new management techniques in schools comes from the resistance to change. For example, Marsden and French (1998: 121) claim in their research that teachers' resistance to new performance management system and to appraisal result from the resistance to changes. Further, the research in question addressed teachers to answer negatively to research questions. For example if asked from employee whether he or she started to work harder after the implementation of pay-for-performance, a lot of them would answer that they did their work well already before launching the new system. This critical view is also pointed out by Richardson (1999: 19). While teachers get used to performance management system during its implementation period and develop much more reliable appraisal criteria and -methods based on their experience, teachers' performance management is continually complicated and problematic.

The role of appraisal in school management

During appraisal it is important to concentrate on objectives, process and people and to achieve balance between them. The criteria of teachers' appraisal should reflect teachers' actions starting from extracurricular activities, embracing the activities of the entire school up to specific aspects of learning process. An overview of the relations between criteria of teachers' performance appraisal, appraisal process and pay-for-performance is given on figure 3. The figure 3 is also often called as educational production model or educational process. That approach is the most popular concept in literature and in practice while discussing political decisions (Hanushek 1986).

Thus like in all processes, the educational process consists of inputs that are transformed to outcome/results through the processes that are being managed. Outcomes are the main objectives that every school tries to achieve. Implementing motivational system, including compensation in schools should guarantee higher quality of teaching for pupils, should change teachers' profession more attractive and should motivate teachers to develop and upgrade themselves (Performance-Pay for Teachers 2007: 12; Pay-for-Performance ... 2001; Türk 2008: 48-53). Perfor- mance appraisal should measure the performance and features that capture the key dimensions of what constitutes success or failure for the schools. These actions that constitute success for the school should also be valued through the motivational system, included compensation. Therefore teachers are better directed towards achieving school's overall objectives. Hence motivational system works as an input,

which guarantees better outcome. Therefore, pay and appraisal should be adjusted in the light of such performance measures provides an incentive for employees to promote the success of the organisation and achieving its goals.
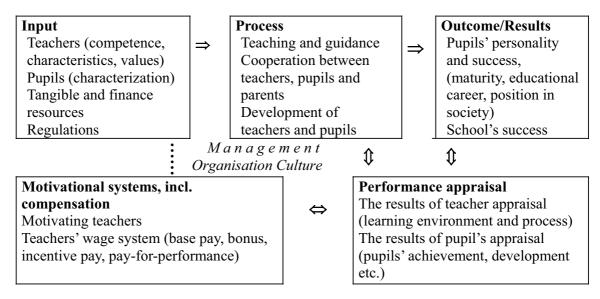
Input		Process		Outcome/Results
Teachers (competence, characteristics, values) Pupils (characterization) Tangible and finance resources Regulations	⇒	Teaching and guidance Cooperation between teachers, pupils and parents Development of teachers and pupils	⇒	Pupils' personality and success, (maturity, educational career, position in society) School's success

Management Organisation Culture

Motivational systems, incl. compensation		Performance appraisal
Motivating teachers Teachers' wage system (base pay, bonus, incentive pay, pay-for-performance)	⇔	The results of teacher appraisal (learning environment and process) The results of pupil's appraisal (pupils' achievement, development etc.)

Figure 3. The relations between teachers' performance appraisal criteria, appraisal process and pay-for-performance.

However, a disturbing pattern in the multitude of studies of this type is that no strong empirical evidence exists to support the contention that traditional educational inputs have the expected positive influence on educational outcomes (Worthington 2001: 245). Many previous economic studies have concluded that school inputs do not matter because school output is often uncorrelated with input variations (Brown, Saks 1975: 571). That brings problems to educational policy makers who have made their decisions based on this input-outcome model. The politicians prefer to subsidize input and there is a belief that investing more money to input increases the final value of outcome. But as already said there is no actual proof to confirm that bigger investment into the input guarantees the increase in outcome. Because of the vagueness in determining certain model of educational process, including input and outcome, clear policy prescriptions are difficult to develop.

Likewise, educational process is appraised externally by state (accrediting) and internally (self-evaluation) by school itself. Concerning the states' policy it is essential to bring out that external appraisal concentrates mostly on inputs and self-evaluation on outcomes. Because schools' main objective is to offer society a good outcome, the role of governmental appraisal should be decreased and instead appraisal based on schools' performance should be valued more highly.

The subject of teachers' work satisfaction and motivation has become topical lately. Further, non-pecuniary (intrinsic) rewards like pride, need for achievement, belonging to a team, are emphasised in addition to pecuniary while motivating teachers. Some authors argue that public servants, including teachers are mainly motivated by intrinsic motivational factors (Wright 2007: 60; DeCenzo, Robbins

2005: 274-275; Jobome 2006: 333), which should be taken into account while creating compensation systems (Tomlinson 2000: 286-287). Brown (2005: 477) has brought out that if teachers were asked whether pay-for- performance was a good practice for teachers' profession, most of the answers were negative. However the research showed that most of the respondents believed that better teachers should be rewarded higher compared to the ones with lower performance.

Arguments concerning whether pecuniary rewards are suitable motivators for teachers draw back to the understanding that low wage is demotivational for every-one (Bender 2004: 526). It is also demotivational if high wage level is achieved quickly and easily. (Cutler, Waine 1999: 67). Therefore to improve the educational production process the reliable performance appraisal system should be linked with motivational system with a view to achieve schools main objectives better.

The appraisal policy in Estonian Schools

The development of general education system depends on competent management, appraisal and political decisions. In ten years time, the external appraisal system for Estonian schools is developed and implemented. It includes school's criterion-based internal appraisal; state operated supervisory, tests while graduating I and II school level, final exams for primary schools and for gymnasiums and international comparative studies. The goal for apprising academic performance so far has been the supporting of development of the national curriculum and teachers' training. Less attention is turned to supporting the development of educational institutions and pupils' individual development. (Üldharidussüsteemi arengukava aastateks ... 2008: 20-24) Therefore the new course in Estonian educational policy is schools' and pupils' individual development, which is achieved through performance management.

Schools have recently started to analyze and appraise its activities more systematically. That manifests in creating systems for appraising teaching. The appraisal systems for apprising teaching are still in initial stage in a lot of Estonian schools and therefore the decisions about schools' activities, teachers' competence and efficiency are often made using casual and trivial indicators and methods. For example giving appraisal to teachers' work only one classroom observation is used. In England, that kind of approach is also common (Performance Management in ... 2000). This appraisal is quite random, is not sufficient and reliable. Deformations in appraisal results are generated by appraisers' preferences about the teaching techniques and by their bias and value judgements. Further, teachers do not like if their faults are pointed out by outsiders whose only role is to do sample inspection and whose estimation is inaccurate and tendentious because they do sample inspections.

Teachers are really sensitive towards appraisal because they themselves use complicated and objective appraisal systems in their everyday work (Krull 2001: 579). They will not accept general and simple procedures which aim is just to examine one's pedagogical competence. Attitude towards appraisal can be improved

by increasing the reliability of appraisal objectives, methods and procedures and by giving feedback and explanations to appraisal methods and -results. Many proofs show that teachers support appraisal systems that improve the development of their competences and are afraid of negative feedback. That is why is essential to be discreet and confidential while giving negative feedback.

Teacher appraisal systems emanate from teaching models which are not simultaneously acceptable in all subjects and for different teachers. Therefore the restrictions conditioned from teachers' model-based appraisal should be overcome and the reliability of appraisal results that emanate from the final objective of teaching should be guaranteed. Model-free appraisal enables to give objective appraisals to different teaching techniques. If not, trial lessons are organised especially by experienced teachers. These trial lessons may not be anything like the lessons teachers conduct every day and therefore false appraisals are made. Model-free appraisal gives better presumptions for applying teachers' individual speciality which also enables to motivate teachers to be more creative and to be less worried about what the appraisers expect them to behave like in a classroom.

All that necessitates the development and implementation of fitting appraisal systems and on the other hand the development of appraisal culture in Estonian schools. It is essential to notify that teachers, local authorities, parents and board of trustees should be involved into the development of schools' teachers' appraisal system (Pay-for-Performance ... 2001). Only then it is possible to create a fitting appraisal system, which is accepted by all parties and which enables to manage quick changes in schools' and teachers' activities. The modernization of appraisal practise imply the improvement of theoretical and practical knowledge about performance appraisal techniques, including appraisal criteria, -methods and -process (Türk 2005; Byars 2008; Messmer 2008; Employee Selection … 2009 etc.). Appraisal system also allows to determine the critical success factors and criteria to apprise one own performance.

Because of the fact that external appraisal (accrediting) concentrates mainly on input, internal evaluation is more valued. That is also a trend in educational politics – the role of outcome is increased and therefore during educational reform, headmaster's opportunities and rights should be broadened to manage schools and to motivate and reward teachers. New performance appraisal processes should be launched and implemented during this. First step in this direction is the development and implementation of self-evaluation systems in schools. (MacBeath 2008; Janssens, Amelsvoort 2008; Blok, Sleegers, Karsten 2008).

Self-evaluation is mainly oriented to school as a whole, not to individual performance. This generates less resistance in teachers and is more suitable because the creation process of appraisal system and guaranteeing its reliability takes more time. The idea of self-evaluation is not to evaluate individuals but processes and the results are used for unity and not to bring out the peculiarities of different individuals. Self-evaluation is one of the regulation-mechanisms of human activities, which is needed to perform changes in schools and to give evaluations to that action.

It is especially important in the circumstances of quick changes. Regular evaluation (on average once in a year) allows fixating organisation's shape, to bring out the dynamics of change, allows to see the development of its employees and to find out the efficiency of methods used during changes.

Self-evaluation enables to give estimation to organisations' activities and performance systematically and regularly and also completes the task of job analysis. During job analysis organisations' structure, work allocation and working order is examined and as a result its regulations (documentation) and structure is improved. One of the techniques in performance management is schools' internal benchmarking, which enables to be guided by exemplary experience through which schools' management can be improved.

Schools' self-evaluation should be democratic, reliable and based on clear procedure principles. Evaluation is given to the performance of teachers and to the management of school based on their development and progress. Self-evaluation implies the selection of appraisal objects and -subjects and the usage of fitting appraisal criteria and -methods. (Nikkanen, Lyytinen 2005) Teachers' competence, including its qualification and teachers motivation to apply it; plays an important role in teachers' performance. So it is not good enough to train and develop teachers, but also to establish conditions for applying them.

Self-evaluation raises the awareness and responsibility of teachers and increases the self-respect for its achievements, which also encourages teachers to develop themselves and to creatively apply their competence. With the help of self-evaluation, it is possible to recognise outstanding achievement and performance. School's shape and problems are being diagnosed during self-evaluation and also the needs for development and development strategies are being specified. In our researches it is emphasised that the most resultant is self-evaluation process itself rather than specific results. Teachers value teamwork, participative management and the creation of supportive environment by school management and educational officers highly.

Appraisal implies setting the main objectives and the selection of appraisal criteria and –methods based on these main objectives. Schools' main objective is to shape individuals who are active, capable of developing and to create the fundamentals for their successful subsistence in society. It is very difficult to measure it reliably, therefore the key question is to develop appraisal system and finding information sources that accord to the schools' goals the most and which are associated with teaching and learning. Appraisal results should help to diagnose organisations' shape and to find reserves and opportunities for improving activities done so far. Firstly one should answer question: what is done well and what should be done to improve it? As follows it should be concentrated on the question: what should be done to make the change happen? Often only the first question is asked and the work is continued as before. This discredits appraisal process and makes it greatly pointless.

Appraisal methods are self-analysis, report, inquiry, test, brainstorming, development and performance appraisal interview etc. Schools' self-evaluation is based on organisation's reports, conducted researches, the protocols of management and teachers' council meetings, study materials and so on. Development and performance appraisal interviews are held between school's headmaster and teachers and on the other hand between teacher and pupils. For getting additional information, inquiries, which need a very careful planning, are done with pupils, parents and alumna. It is essential to create impartial and neutral environment while conducting inquiries and to guarantee the confidentiality of gathered information. Equivalently important are the questions asked, appraisal criteria and the environment were the inquiry is held. For example the person who conducts the inquiry must not be personally interested in the results; therefore teachers should not conduct the inquiry which goal is to evaluate his or her performance. The appraisal process must be correctly restricted and the inquiry papers compiled so that they can be fulfilled with making just marks. It is not recommended to ask additional information about respondent and answering to open questions must be voluntary. For generating ideas brainstorming in working groups are effective.

The objects of appraisal may be schools' objectives, including academic performance, creation of innovative internal environment, the high-level arrangement of educational work and efficiency, creative learning process etc. Schools' internal environment may be divided to tangible and social. Organisational culture plays an important role in the creation and manifestation of social environment. It is not right to concentrate merely on efficiency indicators and if they are taken into account then they should not be the main indicators (Improving Student Learning ... 2008: 10). School has to deal with both talented and problematic children; therefore appraisal indicators are often process-centred rather than result-centred. Also school is often a local cultural centre completing regional and social oriented tasks.

To sum up, new ways for improving educational process like individual researches, essays, practice, group work and special courses should be taken into account while designing evaluation criteria (Entrepreneurship in higher … 2008: 8-9). The evaluation of Estonian schools has concentrated too much on knowledge estimation (including the results of national exams); therefore the guidance and development of pupils and teaching them to learn should be considered more. The formation of learning habits and the creation of the needed readiness for life are much more important than specific knowledge in some subject. Teachers should turn more attention to pupils' intelligence, communication skills, emotional development and supporting individual peculiarity. The creation of intellectual and creative environment should be valued among pupils. The subject-to-object relationship should be substituted by teacher-to-pupil relationship (subject-to-subject relationship). The authors of this article have worked out the appraisal criteria that help to solve the aforementioned shortcomings and to achieve new courses in Estonian educational policy,

The new perspective in educational policy - the ways and opportunities for improving teachers' appraisal and developing organisational culture.

As mentioned above, new courses in educational policy must be taken to develop more effective educational system. One of the opportunities is to employ performance management into educational institutions which also creates the need to evaluate organisations' and teachers performance. But while doing so, organisational culture needs to be taken in account. According to the modern approach, the success of an organisation as a whole depends not on the performance of some remarkable individuals but on the collective contribution of all members (Jacobs 1981). For the success, many people have to support the well being of the organisation and the organisation should be aware of its members' wish to support their organisation and understanding of the essence of collective work. The concept of organisational culture could serve as the framework for the relevant analysis because researchers as well as practitioners use the term of organisational culture if they want to underline people may either support or obstruct organisational efforts to bring these people together in order to pursue certain goals.

Grives (2000) argues that organisational culture is relatively recent foci for managers in organisations. Yet, the cultural perspective has served the special attention in the organisational studies since eighties of the former century, when the beginning of decade presented notable publications of the field (i.e. Ouchi 1981; Peters & Waterman 1982; Deal & Kennedy 1982). One of the reasons for this derives from developments in wide context of society because the organisational culture concept enabled to open various actual problems of those days.

The definitions of organisational culture vary from a very short description given by Deal and Kennedy: "It's the way we do things around here" (1982: 13) to more sophisticated ones, for example, as proposed by Schein (1985: 9). Several taxonomies exist in order to capture the variation of mechanisms that form commonly shared but unique combinations of values and behaviour patterns in organisations. The complex nature of culture leads to multidimensional approaches (see for a review Detert 2000; van der Post *et al*. 1997; Lau & Ngo 1996).

Every organisation has its own special organisational culture created collectively by its members and organisational culture gives guidelines for organisational members how to behave and thus it is related to the performance on the organisational and individual level. This is a mutual relationship because the certain type of organisational culture puts impact on the individual's performance on the one hand, on the other, the way how organisational members actually perform influences organisational culture. It implies that performance appraisal is also related to the organisational culture. Studies have demonstrated the existing relationship between performance and organisational culture (see for example, Chan *et al*. 2004, Denison *et al*. 2003, Ogbonna & Harris 2000, Kotter & Heskett 1992), while there some studies about educational system (i.e. Griffith 2003) but this field is poorly investigated. In order to fill this gap we present the relationships between

organisational culture and school's performance in Estonia at first, and then discuss how to employ this knowledge for improvements in the performance appraisal.

When starting abovementioned analysis the organisational culture should be defined, however, Lim (1995: 20) expresses that "A major obstacle to investigations of the relationship between performance and culture appears to be related to the application of the term "organisational culture". Definitional problems, as well as difficulties in the measurement of organisational culture seem to have contributed to the inconclusiveness of the research". We refer on Schein's (1992) understanding that organisational culture is influenced by two major factors – task and relationship orientation. Harrison (1995) distinguishes between task and person oriented organisational cultures. Task culture emphasises the superiority of the goals of the organisation over the member's personal goals. Person oriented orientation like Schein's relationship orientation is based on warm and harmonious interpersonal relationships. These two orientations – task-orientation and relation-orientation – are the vital aspects of organisational culture that can influence employee attitudes. We have developed an instrument that would enable measuring the two aspects in a reliable way (Vadi *et al*. 2002).

In the following paragraphs study by Aidla and Vadi (2007) is referred because they have shown some specific relationships between organisational culture and school performance. In order to measure secondary school performance, the results of the national examinations of secondary schools within six years (2000-2005) were used. The results are presented on the homepage of the National Examinations and Qualification Centre. The exam results in mathematics, English, composition and history were considered as the basis of comparison. For measuring the size of the school, the number of its pupils was used. A large school has over 800 pupils and a small school less than 800 pupils. In the organisational culture study 558 individuals agreed to participate in the study and they filled Organisational Culture Questionnaire. Both school level and individual level organisational culture estimations were measured with this method. Results are presented in the table 1.

According to the results organisational culture and school academic performance are not interrelated in all the secondary schools because the significant correlations were found only in large schools or those located in city or county town, whereby if the school is small or located in the rural municipality or small town, this connection was not significant. It shows that there can be significant variation among the schools and some reasons for that can be attributed to the matter that schools' human and material resources may differ due to their size and location. The other side of the picture is that the performance appraisal would take into consideration the school's size and location and obviously some other factors too.

Table 1. Correlations between OC orientations and school performance in Estonia (with respect to the location and size of schools)

Performance with respect to the location and size of the school	OC orientations	
	OC1[1]	OC2[2]
City or county town	0.78**	0.54*
Rural municipality or small town	0.13	0.27
Large school	0.84**	0.59*
Small school	0.05	0.09

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, * correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
OC1[1]-task orientation, OC2[2]- relationship orientation, $n = 60$.
Source: Aidla & Vadi 2007.

Indeed, there are other issues too. For example, many successful pupils living in a small town try to go to study into a city of county town school because they think that there are more opportunities to get a proper education. Because in similar vein, the study shows school's size and location play significant role when school administration's attitudes impact on pupils' national examination results was analyzed (Aidla, Vadi 2008). Large schools are more attractive employers for teachers etc. Here we focus on organisational culture aspect.

If we look the content of statement what formed the task orientation of organisational culture (for example, *"people are proud of their organisation"*, *"positive changes constantly take place"*, *"people are rewarded for their good work"*, and *"people's well-being is important"*), then we can hypothesise that there is a need for the profound explanation how organisational culture and performance are interrelated in small and in the rural municipality or small town located schools. This initial step hopefully creates the favourable context for the implementation of performance appraisal methods.

Relationship orientation indicates belongingness and coherence (statements for example, *"people know one another"*, *"all important matters are discussed with each other"*, *"people help each other in job-related situations"* and *"in tough situations there is a strong feeling of togetherness"*). This aspect of organisational culture emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relations that may alleviate tensions, completing a certain task. Here the metaphor "social glue," explicitly expresses the function of interpersonal relationships. This implies that performance is related to the interpersonal relationships and it gives possibility to evolve this to the performance appraisal too. Reasonable relationships generate mutual trust and support among organisational members. Again, in small and in the rural municipality or small town located schools the implementation of this idea must be well explained to the organisational members.

Irrespective to the multitude of the literature and articles written on the topic, the perpetual "reliable criterion problem" continues to receive considerable attention within the performance management literature (Fletcher 2001: 474). The indicators for performance measurement should be rational – they should assure sufficient and

complex information with optimal costs; they should be useful and reliable – they should reflect problematic fields, assure comparability and should be used easily. Accumulating facts does not guarantee that results and processes are measured and quantitative data does not ensure the right understanding of the situations. Likewise there is a hazard to overestimate one situation or fact when implications are made only based on that single event or fact. Therefore the purpose of this article is to bring out the opportunities for appraising teachers' action and performance and the criteria for comparing different schools in Estonian general education schools in a perspective of organisational culture and educational policy.

On the assumption of teachers' main activities, the evaluation criteria may be grouped into activities connected to school management and activities connected to educational process:
1. **School management**, including 1.1) participation in school management and development (teachers' council, board of trustees.), 1.2) participation in creating schools' working environment (tangible, social, cultural environment, employees satisfaction), 1.3) schools' development (development and implementation of schools' strategic development plan), 1.4) schools' public relations and communication with external environment, 1.5) instructing young teachers and guaranteeing the followers.
2. **Learning process**, including 2.1) activities concerning curriculum and programme of subjects, 2.2) teaching-methodical work (study materials, teaching techniques, homework), 2.3) educational environment (learning milieu, evaluation), 2.4) pupils' preparation for life (educational choices, career), 2.5) extra-curricular activities (events outside the lessons, extra-curricular activities, educational work), 2.6) the development of pupils personality (motivation for learning, skills of learning, social skills etc.), 2.7) considering and developing pupils' capabilities, 2.8) co-operation and getting along with pupils, colleagues and parents 2.9) pupils' academic performance (tests, national exams, olympiads), 2.10) the number of subjects and pupils 2.11) teachers' responsibility and conscientiousness (work discipline and documentation).

The reliable information about the quality of **learning process** may be gathered by inquiries. The peculiarity of pupils, including the age, should be taken into consideration in the compilation of inquiry. For example to the inquiry for the seniors of gymnasium, the following questions should be engaged (the criteria were developed based on the sources: Õppeasutuse sisehindamine 2008: 22-64; Guide for Education 2008: 23-25, McBer 2000: 6-29; Professional Standards for Teachers ... 2007: 1-31):
1. Teachers' values and attitudes (example, ethics, authority).
2. The level of preparation and content-richness of learning process.
3. The relevance of learning process and its relations to practice and other subjects.
4. Performing in front of the classroom, communicating (good contact, involving pupils and discussions).
5. Attitude towards pupils (impartiality and objectivity).
6. Understand-ability and the rate of exemplification of teaching.

7. Homework and their connection to lessons.
8. The rate of feedback and its constructiveness.
9. Skills to get pupils to work independently and with interest.
10. Skills of considering pupils' individual peculiarity.
11. The quality of study materials used.
12. Adhere to learning processes schedule and timetable.
13. Discipline in the classroom/motivational learning environment.

The authors of the article elaborated the model of teacher effectiveness used in England. The sub-criteria of the three main groups of teacher performance criteria were advanced (see figure 4). The main criteria for describing teachers' performance are personal characteristics, learning process and learning environment. The sub-criteria for evaluating them are brought out in the figure and also in the listing following the figure. These criteria and sub-criteria generate schools' and pupils' performance. The criteria pointed out in this article are based on several researches (case studies in several schools) and scientific sources, for example: McBer (2000: 6-29), Professional Standards for ... (2007: 1-31), Õppeasutuse sisehindamine (2008: 22-64), Guide for Education (2008: 23-25), Nikkanen, Lyytinen (2005: 219-223).

Teachers' personal characteristics
1.1) knowledge and skills in specialty
1.2) analytical and conceptual thinking
1.3) teacher's personality, authority and values (example, ethics)
1.4) drive for improvement and learning
1.5) unbiased and fair attitude towards pupils
1.6) getting along and co-operation with pupils
1.7) understanding and influencing pupils
1.8) co-operation with colleagues and parents
1.9) understand-ability of performing in front of the classroom, involving pupils
1.10) teachers' responsibility and conscientiousness

Learning process and learning environment
2.1) activities concerning programme of subjects
2.2) teaching-methodical work (study materials, teaching techniques)
2.3) creative, innovating and flexible learning environment
2.4) time management and motivative learning environment
2.5) supporting and involving pupils (giving examples, discussions)
2.6) considering and developing pupils' capabilities (educational career, supporting systems)
2.7) skills to get pupils to work independently and with interest (homework, research)
2.8) the relevance of learning process and its relations to practice and other subjects (including info technology)
2.9) evaluation and giving feedback (objectivity, constructiveness)
2.10) extra-curricular activities (events outside the lessons, educational work)
2.11) the development of pupils' personality (preparation for life, social skills)
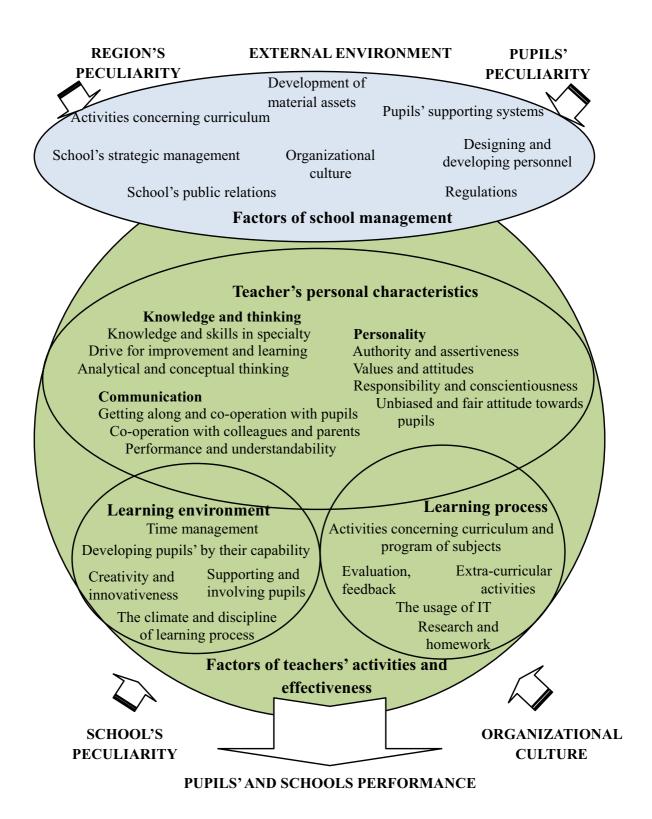2.12) the climate of learning process and discipline in the classroom

REGION'S PECULIARITY

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

PUPILS' PECULIARITY

Development of material assets

Activities concerning curriculum

Pupils' supporting systems

School's strategic management

Organizational culture

Designing and developing personnel

School's public relations

Regulations

Factors of school management

Teacher's personal characteristics

Knowledge and thinking
Knowledge and skills in specialty
Drive for improvement and learning
Analytical and conceptual thinking

Personality
Authority and assertiveness
Values and attitudes
Responsibility and conscientiousness
Unbiased and fair attitude towards pupils

Communication
Getting along and co-operation with pupils
Co-operation with colleagues and parents
Performance and understandability

Learning environment
Time management
Developing pupils' by their capability
Creativity and innovativeness
Supporting and involving pupils
The climate and discipline of learning process

Learning process
Activities concerning curriculum and program of subjects
Evaluation, feedback
Extra-curricular activities
The usage of IT
Research and homework

Factors of teachers' activities and effectiveness

SCHOOL'S PECULIARITY

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

PUPILS' AND SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE

Figure 4. The key factors of teachers' and schools' performance. (Compiled by authors)

School management and development

3.1) participation in school management (teachers' council, board of trustees, parents)
3.2) participation in creating schools' tangible environment
3.3) participation in creating schools' social and cultural environment
3.4) designing personnel and instructing young teachers, to guarantee existence of the followers
3.5) activities concerning curriculum (the structure of subjects and extra-subjects)
3.6) development and implementation of schools' strategic development plan
3.7) school's development and innovation
3.8) schools' public relations and communication with interest groups
3.9) developing and following regulations (including timetables).

Specific evaluation criteria for comparing different schools can also be developed. For example comparing gymnasiums, the following criteria may be used (the criteria were developed based on the sources: Õppeasutuse sisehindamine 2008: 22-64; Guide for Education 2008: 23-25; McBer 2000: 6-29; Professional Standards for Teachers ... 2007: 1-31):

1. The state of material assets (library, gym, catering, extra-curricular activities).
2. The level of computerization and the usage of computers in teaching.
3. The usage of modern info technology in communicating with colleagues, pupils, parents and other interest groups.
4. The number of pupils.
5. The volume and structure of subjects.
6. The number of foreign languages and special subjects taught.
7. The number of extra-curricular activities (the number of activities, speciality and the rate of participation in them).
8. The opportunities for teachers' development (the number of schoolings and financing).
9. Schools image and security perceived by parents.
10. The existence of supporting systems for pupils (study support services).
11. The number of entree applications and the level of competition.
12. The number of drop-outs and the number of absentees without excuse.
13. The number of pupils who graduated with medal, the results of national exams.
14. The percentage of graduates who got into university (or vocational school) (public financed full-time students, studying on fee, the level on competition, success in next school).
15. The number of pupils who participated in national or international Olympiads, competitions and exhibitions and their results.

While developing and launching appraisal system, a lot of attention should be turned to the communication that relates to it (Brown, Benson 2003: 69-70; Chang, Hahn 2006: 409). Selecting suitable and reliable evaluation criteria and -techniques are great assumption to efficient appraisal process. Likewise all the questions arising from the usage of appraisal results, making conclusions and the mechanisms of giving feedback to teachers, should be carefully considered. The appraised

employees should be notified of that before the evaluation process itself. It should be thought through and decided prior what kind of information is confidential and what is available for everyone. For declaring general information, different information channels may be used, for example organisations' internal communication channel, homepage, printed matters, board for information etc. The lack of feedback or its incorrect presentation may generate resistance, the evaluation system may be perceived as unfair and employees may feel like their effort is not valued adequately.

Conclusion

There is a clear understanding that Estonian educational system needs to be developed. The new course is more pointed to schools' and pupils' individual success, which can be achieved through the implementation of performance management.

But performance management can not be implemented effectively if there is a lack in appraisal system. The appraisal system used in Estonian educational sector concentrates only on academic performance, which does not accord with the main goal of the education – to shape individuals who are active, capable of developing and to create the fundamentals for their successful subsistence in society. Of course academic performance is important, but pupils' general skills are often brought out as even more important skills that guarantee pupils' success in the future (in the next educational level or in labour market).

The view developed by the authors of this article allows evaluating teachers' and schools' performance much broadly. Involving these appraisal criteria pointed out by authors to teachers' appraisal system allows creating more effective educational system through effective learning process and effective teachers. Of course this approach needs further development in the future and it is important to involve all parts of the educational sector, including teachers, headmasters, educational policymakers, parent, pupils and local authorities to that development process.

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