CROWN PRINCE FREDERIK
Center for Public Leadership

EFFECTS OF PROFESSONAL COLLABORATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Background

Organizing and leading professional collaboration is an important task in all schools. Students' learning outcomes and social well-being depend on teachers working together to improve teaching quality. In addition, professional collaboration strengthens teacher motivation and self-efficacy. Investigating how professional collaboration takes place and whether some forms of collaboration are more effective than others is therefore key to creating successful public schools.

Over the years, student-centered professional collaboration with a clear learning focus has increased in public schools. Yet, we have surprisingly little research-based knowledge about the effects of the large amounts of public and private funds invested in developing teachers' competences to collaborate. Moreover, we lack knowledge of the leadership and organizational set-up needed to support positive results.

Objective and research method

This research project will examine different forms of professional collaboration in Danish public schools and their effects on student and teacher outcomes. The objective is to identify how professional collaboration can improve student learning and well-being, teacher motivation and competence, and overall teaching quality and practice. The project is designed as a mixed-methods qualitative and quantitative study consisting of four research packages:

1. A review and empirical mapping of the scope and content of professional collaboration with the aim of improving student outcomes in Danish public schools.
2. A qualitative field study of how teachers and pedagogues collaborate, and how this affects teaching quality and professional competences.
3. A mixed-methods study of the effects of leadership and teacher training on professional collaboration.
4. A quantitative longitudinal study of the effects of professional collaboration on student and teacher outcomes.

Additional information

The project is headed by Professor Lars Qvortrup in close collaboration with Senior Researcher Bente Bjørnholt (VIVE) and Associate Professor Anne Mette Kjeldsen (AU). The project funded with DKK 4.9 million from the AP Møller Foundation in 2020-2023.