Implementing Knowledge Through Development Projects

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Abstract: The main objective of this article is the implementation of knowledge in organizations, taking place in the context of development projects. Some of the issues discussed are: What kind of learning conditions do the development projects have to offer? What are the causes and consequences of different levels of engagement from the staff in the projects? Why is often so difficult to transfer what is learned or implemented by the organization during the projects to the everyday activities of the organization after the finishing of projects? In the article a typology of development projects is presented and discussed as different ways of framing the organizational learning processes. The article is based on an empirical study of four organizational development projects (covering the organizations as a whole) run by four Danish upper secondary schools("gymnasium"). The study included questionnaires as well as interviews with the management and staff, plus a survey of selected written materials and documents¹. In the various ways in which different groupings among the staff and the management are relating to the project are described. A special focus is set on the different perspectives on the projects established by the staff and the management and how the perspectives have consequences on the actual learning outcomes of the different groups in the organization. Another issue is the weak links between what is experienced by the staff as 'ordinary problems' his objectives and goals of the development projects. The theoretical frame of analysis has references to the 'outside-in' perspective on organizational learning, presented by the neo-institutional theory (Scott 1995 DiMaggion& Powell 1983, Czarniawska & Sevon 2005, Røvik 2007) Nanoka and Takeuchis model of knowledge transformations in organizations (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995) and of the forms of the knowledge), Argyris and Ellström's distinction between the learning modes of correction and development (Ellström 2001, Argyris 1992).

Keywords: organizational learning, development projects, implementation of knowledge, organizational concepts

1. The background of the study

The article is based on a study of four development projects taking place in four Danish upper secondary schools in 2004-5. Organizational development projects are understood as a particular form of intentional organizational learning. Development projects provide a framework for participants' behavior and create some extraordinary conditions for learning (Laursen 2006). The project is seen, partly as a mental framework producing new perspectives on the organization, and partly as a social framework producing a different set of conditions for working in the organization, for instance including a tolerance towards making mistakes. The difference between the everyday routines of the organizations and the extraordinary conditions of development projects has been an important issue in the research on organizational learning (Argyris 1992, Ellstrom 2001, Engeström 1987) and specifically in relation to development (Ellstrom 1996, Elkjaer & Lysgaard 1998).

The broader political and social background of the four projects includes a major change of focus in the development activities considering teaching and learning at the second level in the Danish educational system, a change which can be described as a shift from activities almost entirely carried out by the teachers on an individual basis, to activities carried out in teams – or even including structural changes at an organizational level. (Damberg et al 2000 & 2001, Dolin & Ingerslev 2002). In an evaluation report Damberg suggested that the development projects going on in this area, in general did not seem to have a broad influence on the organization as a whole (Damberg op.cit.) This might be explained by the fact, that professional development as considered by the teachers, is understood as the responsibility of the individual rather than an organizational issue and that the initiatives behind most development projects seem to be taken on an individual or small group level in the organization, motivated by a personal wish to become a better teacher(Dolin & Ingerslev 2002),

The four projects were taking place in the context of a development program for the upper secondary schools in Denmark, highlighting the necessity of improving the quality of the high school education system, confronting the new challenges and requirements of the globalized economy. One of the prime intentions of the upper secondary school reform was to strengthen the relations between school subjects and to increase the element of self-governance in the study activities of the students. The prerequisite for this seems to be a change at the level of the entire organization, affecting both teacher, headmaster and student practices.

¹ The research project has been described in Dolin et.al 2005 and some of the results are further discussed in Laursen 2011. ISSN 1479-4411 139 ©Academic Publishing International Ltd Reference this paper as: Laursen, E. "Implementing Knowledge Through Development Projects" *The Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management Volume 9 Issue 2 (pp139-148), available online at www.ejkm.com*

On this background of the research questions for the study were:

"How are the practices and the understanding of the working tasks of the management and the staff influenced by participating in development projects, where the organizational structures of the school is changed towards greater collaboration among the staff in relation to the teaching activities."

"(Dolin et.al., 2005, p. 7).

And in addition to that:

To what extent is the new knowledge (new methods, new organizational concepts),introduced to the organization through the development projects actually translated into new practices and new ways of organizing well known procedures? And to what extent was this new knowledge transferred to everyday routines after the project has ended?

The concept of 'School development' here refers to targeted efforts to change both the structure of collaboration and the very practices of teaching in such a manner that the organizational structure is changed as well. 'Understanding of the working tasks' includes both observable changes of leaders and teachers' actual practices and changes in the ways they perceive the tasks and the attitudes held toward certain ways of doing them.

2. The projects observed

Two of the four investigated development projects are described briefly as cases below. At the end of this section key characteristics of all four projects will be summarized.

2.1 The small town school (school a)

The school is a small provincial college with approximately 300 students and 35 teachers. In the official presentation material of the school , emphasis is put on professionalism, plus a secure and functional school environment. The students of the institution are described as motivated and skilled, and the school holds the largest percentage (of the four experimental schools) of teachers holding the opinion, that the problems related to the teaching activities are not caused by certain groups among the students. The school is recruiting the students from a rather limited area. And thus from time to time, it must confront the political threats of closing down the institution. One of the counter strategies of the school towards this threat has been efforts to recruit a have a larger part of the youth in the area, for a high school education.

Except a few, more traditional orientated , small scale experiments , the school only had experienced a few development projects and the current one can be viewed as management's attempts to get the school 'on the bandwagon' and to make the school appear more 'modern' .Of the four schools in the study, this was the school , where the teachers in the past have participated the least in interdisciplinary activities .

The current experiment is management-driven. A similar attempt was previously voted down in the pedagogical advisory board. The financial support for the current project has been granted on the initiative of the rector. At the same time, the management has tried to legitimize the project through producing the greatest possible teacher involvement through all phases of the project,

The purpose of the increased cross disciplinary collaboration focused on the development of students' skills in relation to work project-oriented and interdisciplinary ways of studying.

Especially, students on the third year level must engage in a multidisciplinary, group based project course. The challenge here was to create a common understanding among teachers concerning the concepts of problem-orientation and project organization.

Observed from the perspective of the management the target of the project is to create development dynamics at the school, and to produce an overall higher enthusiasm and engagement in the staff, in relation to the daily work-related activities.

From the perspective of the staff, the development of competencies was the most important aspect of the project, as they considered skills in interdisciplinary - and project-oriented teaching to be most important and necessary for them in the future.

The project was implemented through a steering group established by the educational council. It was open to all and over time it came to include one third of the teachers. Rector was a reluctant member of the group, but would rather have a situation where the teachers through the group claimed their ownership to the study.

As part of the experiment there has been" pedagogical days" together with five training courses attended by all teachers at the school on the s.c. 'kubus model' considered as a management tool, the experience from teaching in projects, the concept of competence, teachers' roles and teacher collaboration.

The entire project was discussed at a row of meetings in the pedagogical council at the school. There has also been prepared documents for clarification of key concepts, professionalism, and interdisciplinary perceptions of competence

The experiment was evaluated relatively thoroughly. After the project was completed, questionnaires were given to all teachers and students and selected teachers were interviewed. The assessment of the experiment from the teachers was largely positive, but there was disagreement about students' academic benefits of project work, about the possible creation of greater differentiation between students and skepticism about the study transfer value of daily teaching. The project resulted in a clear and positive change of attitude in relation to project work as well in a number of broader educational orientated discussions and activities with an impact beyond the project. So there has been a marked change of attitude among the staff, but still it might be hard to tell to what extent the new practices and knowledge are actually used in the daily routines of the school.

2.2 The suburban school (school c)

The school is located in a suburban area on the outskirts of a larger urban area. The students are recruited from the town and partly from a rather large environmental area. It is a medium sized school with 500 students and approx. 60 teachers. There are six secondary tracks and two HF traces.

In the nearest vicinity, the only competitor is a high school with commercial lines of study, while in relation to the broader neighborhood there is one more, even larger high school in the central, downtown part of the urban area. The school does not see itself as threatened by other competitors in the area.

The previous developmental orientated activities of the school had a smaller, scope, focusing on special parts or functions in the organization. It was typically s.c. 'entrepreneurial projects ' driven by the ideas, energy and enthusiasm of individual members of the staff, without much lasting effect on the entire organization. The students of the school are described as decent and motivated, Causing only few problems and disturbances.

The overall objective of the current project is to provide students with the skills needed to succeed in further education and in employment, with particular emphasis on the social and personal aspects of study skills. Beyond this, the goal is to build an organizational frame for the unified development of competencies in the students, as well as in the teachers. With a special emphasis on skills in relation to meta-learning, and in collaborating with other students doing projects. In relation to teaching skills there is a special emphasis on the implementation of interdisciplinary student projects, the integration of IT in the teaching and a cross disciplinary knowledge sharing.

To ensure these broad and ambitious goals several methods and tools are implemented by the development project, including team organization, electronic student competence schedules, mentoring, student portfolios, electronic conferences and websites. The project is organized by a steering group and virtual consultants who actively support team function and the virtual knowledge sharing.

According to both the staff and the management , the school had already before the project started , initiated a positive transition and development with emphasis on maximum use of IT in the teaching

and in the study activities of the students, and gradually developing a team based organization, supported by technical and pedagogical training of the staff. Among the staff, the development project is generally considered as strongly management driven, with the rector in a key position. The relatively newly employed rector spotted the possibility to integrate and coordinate the various smaller projects going on at the school under one overarching theme, and thus to tie together the many loose ends in one integrated project encompassing the whole organization. The role of the rector is here to contribute to the overall understanding of the project and facilitate the integration of the efforts under the common framework, while the rest of the management (the inspectors) must formulate the broad directional lines defining the contents and operational goals of the project. Top-down management of the project is very evident and it is highlighted by the institution.

The experiment was on the agenda in the Education Council for a considerable period..

The management has tried to implement the project by establishing a number of virtual consultancy functions, which are recruited from the staff. This has produced resistance in the Pedagogical Council. A resistance aimed at to both the targets and the content of the projects as such, as well as against the implementation of a more vertical organizational structure in the traditionally very 'flat' organizational structure. As a consequence of this critical stance from part of the staff, a number of the appointed virtual consultants have resigned. After the project ended, the discussion concerning the organizational structure has continued. Several of the new elements implemented in the project are now integrated in the daily routines of the school, others like electronic conferences and student portfolios are used more marginally now. Most important the implementation of the new knowledge elements presented in the course of the project, in the daily routines of the school has been carried out in a rather selective manner, with marked differences between the motivation and perhaps also the necessary qualifications held by the different groupings in the staff, concerning actually using the new methods and knowledge on a daily basis.

2.3 Summing up on the four schools

The following figure (table 1) offers an overview of the development projects of the four schools involved in the study. It is based on the intended activities as described in formal applications. Another source was the descriptions of the activities derived from the interviews and the survey from the study, and from the various documents of documentation produced by the projects:

Table 1: Overview of the development projects

	School A Traditionally orientated small town school	School B Survival by series of development projects	School C New management - differentiated staff	School D Integrating the diversity of tracks and levels
New knowledge Implemented	Cross-disciplinary curriculum PBL	A rich diversity of 'local' experiments	IT-based learning Team-structure Mentors Portfolios	Shared intro module for different tracks PBL as 'standard' method on all tracks and levels
Expected specific results	Producing active and competent learners Implementation of the new methods	Putting the elements tested, to an effective use	The competent use of the new methods	Better coherence in the course of study for the individual student The competent use of the new methods
Broader goals considering the development of the whole organization	Developing a more dynamic staff Giving the school a more modern 'brand'	The diverse local experiments acting together, producing a general quality development of the school	Facilitating the development of meta-competencies of the students, producing a better coherence in the learned competencies	Better coherence between the different teaching – and learning activities

We notice a difference between the four schools in how explicit the quality improvement of the teaching and the learning results of the student are expressed as a target for the development project. Alternatively the projects are aimed at actually implementing the new knowledge, concepts and methods, in a competent way.

3. Theoretical perspectives on development projects

Generally considered projects represent a way of organizing the solution of complex and difficult tasks and problems. (Mikkelsen & Riis 2002, p. 12). A project is in this sense a certain way of organizing complex tasks, and refers also to a temporary activity, with planned points of starting and of ending. Typically, tasks and problems that cannot in obvious ways are handled through the standard practices and patterns of cooperation within the organization. At the same time the development projects construct a special social and mental framework with a marked difference from the 'normal' activities of the organization.

Development projects might also offer a possibility for the organization to import relevant new ideas, knowledge and methods. Creating a well-defined, delimitated territory of experimentation, where it is allowed to make mistakes, development projects make it possible for the organization to test, adapt and even learn interesting new 'organizational concepts' (Scott 1995, Røvik 1998).

The American organization researcher *Chris Argyris* has distinguished between two learning systems, where one characterizes the normal ways of regulating social behavior in the context of the workplace environment. These 'standard contexts' are according to (Argyris 1992). Argyris characterized by a set of guiding values such as "avoiding loosing face " and "underscoring the alleged rationality of behavior" and a set of guiding action strategies oriented towards maximum control of environments and tasks, and self-protection. The general implications of these contextual conditions are claimed by Argyris to be a widespread occurrence of so-called defensive routines and relationships, Resulting in a very reluctant attitude towards the implementation of- and the experimenting with new knowledge and innovative ways of doing things.

The Swedish learning researcher Per-Erik Ellstrom has developed this understanding of the routine-oriented contexts of work organization which he describes as a behavioral adaptation to defined goals and well-known means, and based on an accepted consensus on standard procedures for doing the tasks and on the quality standards related to the results. It focuses on establishing the highest possible safety and security, and there is a low priority for learning, experimentation, innovation and taking risks as well as to investments in further education and time to experimentation (Ellstrom 2001).

Like Argyris, Ellstrom makes a distinction between this 'normal' context of work, and another, more unusual context, which he characterizes as a context for development-oriented learning, where the objective is to create variation in thinking and actions and to encourage innovation and reflection. He characterizes this type of context by an acceptance of uncertainty and conflict, and emphasizes the risk-taking and pleasure in- and motivation in favor of experimentation combined with a high priority for learning relevant resources such as time and training. His description of this extraordinary context of organizing work is slightly different from the one found in Argyris, who is stressing the opportunity of the staff and the management to make information-based choices and decisions. Combined with a broad participation in planning and implementation, where conflicts around both ends and means are legitimate.

In the perspective established in this study it makes sense to see development projects as 'extraordinary contexts of work' as done by Ellstrom. Within defined time frames, they create some special conditions with the aim to develop the organization in order to reach certain objectives or adapting it to interesting new concepts and methods.

The extraordinary conditions of the development projects create special conditions and special motivations towards experimenting, implementing and developing new ways of doing things, and of new things to do as well. The interesting question concerns the possibility of transferring the developed results of the projects to the 'normality' of the daily routines.

An important perspective on development projects used in this study is provided by the neoinstitutional theories on organizational development consequences of adaptive importations of organizational concepts and receipts (Meyer & Rowan 1977, Meyer & Scott 1983, Scott 1995), Czarniawska & Sevon 1996, Røvik 1998). Finally, *Ikujiro Nonaka* and *Hirotaka Takeuchi* 's (1995) model of the "four modes of knowledge conversion" (the SECI-model) pinpoints internalization seen as a transformation from explicit to tacit knowledge, (op.cit. 69), and socialization as important moments in the process of adaptation, where communities of practice or organizations succeed in making foreign knowledge' their own. It is obvious that these two modes of knowledge transformation include a substantial part of the learning and knowledge creating activities which ideally speaking ought to take place in the context of organizational development projects. Still, Nonaka and Takeuchi do not discuss the problems of transferring what has been internalized and socialized in the extraordinary contexts of the projects, to the daily routines of 'normal work'.

Among other results this study shows us, how different groupings in an organization hold different attitudes both towards the testing of the new knowledge in the context of the projects and towards transferring the new practices to the everyday practice of the organization. Another theoretical perspective of relevance for this particular aspect is observing organizations as more or less loosely coupled systems allowing them to make choice different types of adaptation (Weick 1976).

4. Making sense of the projects

Based on the interviews with management and staff on the four schools, as well as on the data material from the survey, the study showed some results with relevance to the understanding of learning processes in the contexts of organizational development projects:

The general attitude towards the project as such was positive, including a positive acceptance of the overall objectives. Likewise, there was a positive attitude concerning the necessity of the project and towards taking part in it at a personal level. At the same time, there were marked differences among different groupings in the staff as to how the more *specific* results of the project were perceived and evaluated, and they also showed substantial differences in their interest in transferring the knowledge internalized and socialized during the project to everyday routines of the organization, after the termination of the project. Furthermore, the staff in general only saw a rather weak relation between overall goal and objectives of the projects and the demands and problems of their daily work.

Instead of having a clear and well defined relation to the everyday problems of teaching, both the staff and the management showed a marked tendency to perceive the projects as efforts to 'modernize' the organization.

As already mentioned, there was a general and positive accept of the necessities of the project. Still the study also showed common trends as well as considerable differences in how the background and specific necessities of the projects were perceived and explained.

References to the *outside world* as an explanation was generally made in very broad and general terms, like 'globalization' and a trend towards growing international economic competition (an exception was references to the public authorities' requirements and expectations). It is worth noticing that the teachers at all the four schools made few interpretations of their own as to what *specific* new demands the development of society was imposing on high school education. Still, references to the environment were often used in explanations of their positive attitude towards the project.

Furthermore the description of internal factors in the organization used as an argument in favor of the projects largely referred to new organizational concepts, especially methods related to teaching. In the questionnaire sent to all teachers and the management at the four schools we asked the question "what do you think is the purpose of the current projects?" Here, 23% of the staff answered with references to aspects of the teaching activities, 33% identified other internal aspects of the organization, such as obtaining various objectives of organizational development. Only 6% referred to external factors such as competition from other schools, and to the demands of the different stakeholders. But most often, references were made in general terms, such as the need for 'renewal' and for developing the 'traditional' ways, and not to the quality of teaching, specific problems or needs for improvements.

In general the staff seems to be very conscious about the fact that the projects are driven by the management and as such they are to be considered as part of a broader strategic plan, combined

with an awareness of the possible use of the development projects by the management in order to promote their own interests and to profile their own leadership.

Turning to the management, explaining the background and purpose of the projects they make references to both internal and external challenges and opportunities. In general, there seems to be a close connection between the way in which the management tries to outline and perceive the development projects and the way they think about their own role as managers. An important aspect of this seems to be the intention of the management to use the projects in developing and testing new forms of management.

Summing up, these diverse tendencies as to how the projects were evaluated and perceived make it relevant to point out that 97% of the members of staff answered, "yes, I expect future benefits from the project.", when asked in the survey. And 94% answered, "yes, I expect the project to have future consequences for the school as a whole." But these responses were made when respondents were asked about benefits and consequences in general terms. However, all four projects introduced important methods and concepts which were not included in the daily routines of the organization after the termination of the project, and several groups among the employees told us in the interviews that they did not expect the project to have substantial future consequences for their own teaching practices.

When combining these two observations we end up with what might be called 'the paradox of development projects' produced by an opposition between positive attitudes toward the project at a general level, and a marked and selective reluctance transfer substantial parts of project to the daily routines of the organization.

In the last part of this article these results will be further discussed.

5. What is the importance of organizational concepts?

Broadly speaking, the four development projects studied are orientated towards the implementation of a set of organizational concepts in the practices of the organization.

But what kinds of motivation do organizations have for implementing new ideas and methods?

Answering this question it is, according to the neo institutional perspective, relevant to make a distinction between coercion and consent. In some new organizational concepts are implemented they are so to speak demanded formally by the legislation, other are used as a result of independent decisions made individually by the organizations. In understanding implementation based on consent, a distinction is made between instrumental orientated – and symbolic orientated motives (Powell & DiMaggion op.cit., Scott op.cit., Røvik op.cit.).

An instrumental orientated motivation is generally orientated towards producing a positive development in the efficiency or the quality in the core productive efforts of the organization.

A symbol orientated motivation on the other hand is orientated towards creating legitimation, accept and status on the behalf of the organization. This identity-driven effort is directed by norms, values and taste, with references to the relatively stable values and standards integrated in the relevant professions as well as more dynamic trends, fads and fashions (Czarniawska & Sevon op.cit.).

As already mentioned development projects in this study are mainly grasped as contexts directed towards the implementation of organizational concepts. I have also previously mentioned that the employees only to a modest degree did perceive the four development projects as something which was caused by the concrete problems of teaching, that is as 'instrumental-orientated projects',

Likewise we found that projects are usual not perceived as 'experimental projects', that is motivated by the desire either to experiment and develop some already used elements in teaching, or to try to translate or adapt some exciting new educational methods developed by others in their own teaching. Taking the 'local' objectives and problems as points of departure for the implementation. On the contrary, the employees largely perceived the projects as 'modernization projects', that is projects where new educational and organizational ideas, knowledge and methods are implemented, not as a

responses on specific problems but rather motivated by the development goals of the entire organization, combined with a close connection to the interests and strategies of the management.

In table 2, I try to characterize the three types based on five parameters. All three types are useful impetus for organizational development. The claim here is that they produce mutually different frameworks for organizational learning.

'Spur' refers to the background or motivation of the project. In all four projects, the start is made by an intention to make use of different pedagogical ideas, concepts and methods (see table 1). In B-school this was combined with a real problem in the outside world, namely a declining number of students and thus possible redundancies in the staff. This problem will be solved through the expansion of the activities and of the economic foundation of the institution produced by expanded project activity, because funds earned by running the projects outbalance the diminishing income from the declining student numbers. Also at A high school there was a specific problem as to a spur as student criticism was directed towards the traditional teaching methods widely used at the school. But this problem only added some direction to the project. The important motivating factor was the need, perceived by the management, for developing a rather dull staff. In this case, the implementation process itself is important, while it is of less importance what specific methods are chosen. In C and D schools, this applies even more so, since their development projects are not aimed at specific problems, but at achieving a higher level of consistency in the teaching and development of the competencies of the students. An objective, inspired by the dominant discourses in relation to a coming reform of the upper secondary school system. It is characteristic that none of the four projects can be characterized as 'experimental projects', maybe with the exception of the B project, which dissolves into a multitude of smaller 'local' projects and experiments - probably influenced by local issues and local enthusiasts with specific interests and core competencies.

Table 2: The three types based on five parameters

	Instrumental orientated projects	Modernization projects	Experimental projects
Spur	Problems Low quality Critique	Models for being a moderns organization	New methods relating to the key tasks of the organization
Development task	Solving specific problems Improving the quality on well-defined parameters	To develop = to modernize the organization	Often undefined
Methods	Selected according to problem Already developed and tested	Well known, but adapted to the specific context	Innovated in the organization or developed in an experimental manner
Expected results	Same as the development tasks	The implementation and actual use of the new methods and concepts	Further innovative development Making useful and interesting adaptions
Kind of Rationality	Improving Efficiency	Implementing Modernizing	Exploration Innovation

The development projects encompassing the whole organization are very often conceptual projects. These projects are often perceived by the employees as projects 'owned by the management', that is top-down directed and tightly connected to managerial goals and strategies. On a daily basis these projects are usually managed by employees having experiences and competencies from experimental projects of the past. Often these employees become the target of the criticism of the more skeptical segments of the staff. As a rule it is difficult for these rather dynamic and innovative orientated persons to keep the enthusiasm and spirit alive. Also it is often difficult for the rest of the staff to get a clear perception of the relation between the content and objectives of the conceptual projects and the daily routines and problems of the organizations.

6. Different interests and orientations among the employees

I shall now return to what I have earlier labeled "the paradox of development projects".

In order to understand this paradox, I think it is important to notice the substantial differences in how the importance and usefulness of the various aspects of the projects were assessed by the different segments of the employees, reflecting the different positions and interests of the segments.

Especially the new ways of organizing and managing the work processes (e.g. team organization), making teaching a more collective and cross-disciplinary activity, have been met with opposition from the more traditionally orientated staff members. Some of the teachers, holding high status positions inside the hierarchies of the local communities of practice, are clearly experiencing the new ways of organizing the teaching activities as a threat to their position and status. Especially when the new competencies (in relation to IT or managing the interdisciplinary teams) introduced by the projects are considered as just as important and valuable as the traditional academic competencies. These members of the staff, holding central positions in the disciplinary based communities of practice (Lave & Wenger 2005) in general, exert a strong influence on the question of maintaining the methods, knowledge and concepts introduced by projects.

Understanding why important elements from the development projects are not transferred to the daily routines of the organizations after the projects have stopped, the crucial question might not be what is learned (or not learned) through the project. The important question seems to be how the objectives of the project interfere with the interests of the different groups among the staff and management. A conflict of interest often produces substantial differences in the engagement of different groups in the implementation of the organizational concepts.

7. Conclusion

The development projects presented in this article supplied the empirical basis for the construction of three project types, providing us with a frame of description and understanding of the differences between the content, objectives and consequences of the projects, Each of the three types here outlined, are aiming at three different sets of objectives. *Instrumental oriented projects*, are thus aiming at the development of higher efficacy and quality, defined by well-known tasks and standards (better solutions to well-known problems). While *modernization projects aim at* importing and implementing new and attractive methods and models, representing new ways of being a 'modern organization' (new procedures, creating new tasks and problems). Finally the *experimental projects* aim at continuing already ongoing tasks of innovative developments related to the practices actually going on in the organization.

It was claimed that the different positions and interests held by different segments of the staff and the management in the four schools produced different perspectives on the projects, with consequences on the possible transference of the elements implemented by the organization through the projects into the normal routines of the organizations. The rather influential and powerful senior staff members holding central positions in the communities of practice at the schools, are often opposed to the consequences produced by the implementation of new teaching practices and ways of organizing the work routines, At one hand they are in favor of the more strategic objectives of the projects, but on the other, they don't want the experiments to interfere with their teaching routines on a more permanent basis. Motivated through this double perspective they are producing a kind of *loosely coupled organization* (Weick 1976) with marked differences between what is decided and what is actually done. And these examples of organizational hypocrisy (Brunsson 2003) are offered as an explanation to 'the paradox of development projects'.

Attempts to alter the relationship between management and employees were pointed out as an important aspect of all the four projects. However, the issue was not included explicitly as an objective in the projects. Nevertheless the issue actually caused a large number of conflicts and frictions in the staff and between groupings in the staff and the management, because the redefinition of the relations between management and staff during the projects merged with the general effort to transform work from an individually based practice into of team-based effort... An effort presenting controversial perspectives which might produce conflicts among different segments of the staff.

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