



# **GEDEELD LEIDERSCHAP EN STRATEGISCH PERSONEELSBELEID IN SCHOLEN**

**Eva Vekeman, Melissa Tuytens en Geert Devos**



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## Voorwoord

In dit rapport worden de resultaten van een onderzoek naar ‘Personeelsbeleid vanuit schoolperspectief’ gerapporteerd. Dit onderzoek kadert binnen het Steunpunt voor Onderwijsonderzoek. De dataverzameling werd uitgevoerd door onderzoekers aan de Universiteit van Gent van augustus 2017 tot september 2019. Dit onderzoeksrapport biedt een antwoord op de volgende onderzoeksvraag uit het meerjarenprogramma van onderzoekslijn 2.3: ‘Wie neemt een leidinggevende rol op voor de strategische planning en het personeelsbeleid in Vlaamse scholen?’. Meer bepaald zal in dit rapport ingegaan worden op hoe scholen verantwoordelijkheden delen op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelspraktijken en zal inzicht geboden worden in de manier waarop opportuniteiten gecreëerd worden voor gedeeld leiderschap in scholen. Tot slot wordt in dit rapport ook nagaan in welke mate het delen van verantwoordelijkheden en het creëren van opportuniteiten verschillend is tussen excellent en matig strategische scholen op het vlak van personeelsbeleid.

Dit rapport bevat de resultaten van een kwalitatieve studie en bestaat uit twee onderdelen. In een eerste deel wordt een korte Nederlandstalige beleidssamenvatting voorzien waarin de hoofdpunten van de Engelstalige onderzoekspaper worden toegelicht. Er wordt zowel aandacht besteed aan theorie, onderzoeksopzet, resultaten en discussie. In het tweede onderdeel is de integrale Engelstalige onderzoekspaper terug te vinden.

In een eerder onderzoeksrapport SONO/2019.OL2.3/2 (Tuytens, Vekeman & Devos, 2019) werd ingegaan op hoe scholen de strategische planning en het personeelsbeleid op elkaar afstemmen, rekening houdend met de interne en externe context. De resultaten uit voorliggend onderzoeksrapport bouwen voort op dit voorgaande onderzoeksrapport. In volgende onderzoeksrapporten zullen we enerzijds ingaan op de rol van schoolkenmerken in relatie tot strategisch personeelsbeleid en anderzijds zal onderzocht worden in welke mate strategisch personeelsbeleid gerelateerd is aan uitkomsten op leraarniveau (bv. welbevinden). Op basis van de onderzoeksresultaten uit deze verschillende onderzoeksrapporten zullen aanbevelingen voor het beleid en de praktijk geformuleerd worden. Deze beleidsaanbevelingen zullen een plaats krijgen in een eindrapport m.b.t. deze volledige onderzoekslijn. In dit eindrapport zullen de resultaten uit de verschillende onderzoeksrapporten ook samengevat en overschouwd worden.

# Beleidssamenvatting

## Inleiding

Verschillende onderzoekers hebben het belang aangeduid van schoolleiderschap in de context van (strategisch) personeelsbeleid (Leisink & Boselie, 2014). In dat verband worden schoolleiders vaak gezien als ‘poortwachters’ van scholen (Donaldson, 2013; Milanowski & Kimball, 2010). Enerzijds duidt onderzoek naar afzonderlijke personeelspraktijken (bv. leerkrachtevaluatie, aanwerving van leerkrachten) op het belang van schoolleiderschap (voor een overzicht, zie: Vanblaere, Tuytens & Devos, 2017). Zo wijst eerder onderzoek bijvoorbeeld op het belang van achtergrondkenmerken van de schoolleider (bv. de opleiding die de schoolleider zelf volgde, perceptie van schoolleider m.b.t. een ‘effectieve leraar’, vindrijkheid, initiatief en doorzettingsvermogen van de schoolleider) (Baker & Cooper, 2005; Liu, Liu, Stronge & Xu, 2016; Donaldson, 2013) en leiderschapstijlen (Vanblaere & Devos, 2016; Kurland et al. 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011; 2014; Vekeman, Devos & Valcke, 2016b). Anderzijds wordt in recent onderzoek ook de cruciale rol van schoolleiders onderstreept in het implementeren van strategisch personeelsbeleid (e.g. Janssens, 2016; Vekeman, 2018). Zo wijzen studies uit dat schoolleiders proactief dienen om te gaan met barrières binnen personeelsbeleid, ze best een geïntegreerde leiderschapstijl hanteren (i.e. een combinatie van instructioneel en transformationeel leiderschap) en een bepaalde responsiviteit ten aanzien van de aanwezige schoolcultuur moeten aan de dag kunnen leggen (Vekeman, 2018).

Strategisch personeelsbeleid houdt in dat verschillende personeelspraktijken afgestemd worden op de strategische planning (i.e. missie, visie, organisatiedoelen (of prioriteiten)) van scholen én de individuele noden van leerkrachten (Boselie, 2014). Uit onderzoek blijkt echter dat personeelsbeleid in scholen vaak niet als strategisch kan bestempeld worden (DeArmond, 2013; Smylie et al., 2004) en schoolleiders vaak een geïntegreerd perspectief op personeelsbeleid missen (Runhaar, 2017). Schoolleiders lijken geconfronteerd te worden met hooggespannen verwachtingen vanuit diverse hoeken (bv. de overheid, de samenleving en/of het schoolbestuur), maar ook vanuit een innerlijke druk die schoolleiders zich zelf lijken op te leggen (Devos, Vanblaere & Bellemans, 2018). Zo is er bijvoorbeeld de ontwikkeling naar meer autonomie, enerzijds, en de sterke nadruk op het afleggen van verantwoording, anderzijds (Kelchtermans & Piot, 2010; Mahieu, 2010). Ook hedendaagse maatschappelijke veranderingen (o.a. globalisering, migratie en toenemende diversiteit) maken dat het voor schoolleiders complexer en uitdagender wordt om gepaste ondersteuning te bieden aan leerkrachten en om tegemoet te komen aan verwachtingen vanuit de overheid (e.g. Kelchtermans & Piot, 2010; Mulford, 2010; Vandenberghe, 2008). Dit alles kan ervoor zorgen dat vaak de tijd ontbreekt om werk te maken van strategisch personeelsbeleid (Vekeman, Devos & Valcke, 2016a). Voortbouwend op onderzoek op het vlak van personeelsbeleid (Guest, 1987; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007) wordt in dit verband het belang aangeduid van ‘gedeeld leiderschap’. Het

delen van verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van personeelsbeleid wordt met andere woorden gezien als noodzakelijk om het implementeren van strategisch personeelsbeleid mogelijk te maken (Milanowski & Kimball, 2010; Leisink & Boselie, 2014; Leisink & Knies, 2019; Vanblaere et al., 2017).

De laatste 20 jaar is er heel wat onderzoek gevoerd naar kenmerken van gedeeld leiderschap en de conceptualisering ervan (e.g. Gronn, 2008; Harris, 2009; Spillane et al., 2004; MacBeath, 2005; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2007; Thorpe et al., 2011). Bovendien heeft onderzoek de relatie tussen gedeeld leiderschap en zowel leerkrachtenkenmerken (bv. doelmatigheidsbeleving, pedagogische vaardigheden) (e.g. Chang, 2011) als leraar- en schooluitkomsten (bv. organisatorische betrokkenheid, leerlingprestaties) (e.g. Hulpia, Devos & Van Keer, 2009b) onderzocht. Zo kwam een studie van Chang (2011) tot de vaststelling dat gedeeld leiderschap een positief effect heeft op de doelmatigheidsbeleving van leraren. Verder wees het onderzoek van Hulpia en collega's (2009b) uit dat de aanwezigheid van een samenwerkend leidinggevend team en de mate van steun die het leidinggevend team biedt aan leerkrachten een positief effect heeft op de organisatorische betrokkenheid van leerkrachten. Echter, tot nu toe hebben weinig onderzoekers gefocust op de link tussen gedeeld leiderschap en strategisch personeelsbeleid binnen onderwijs (Leisink & Boselie, 2014). Meer bepaald stellen we twee hiaten vast in de huidige onderzoeksliteratuur:

- 1) We weten tot nu toe weinig m.b.t. hoe verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelspraktijken gedeeld worden en of dit verschillend is naargelang de mate waarin scholen strategisch personeelsbeleid voeren.
- 2) Er zijn tot op vandaag weinig studies die zich richten op hoe scholen opportuniteiten creëren voor het delen van leiderschap.

Hoewel voorgaand onderzoek een onderscheid maakt in verschillende vormen of patronen van gedeeld leiderschap (Gronn, 2002; Macbeath, 2005; Spillane, 2006) hebben weinig studies tot nu toe onderzocht of het creëren van opportuniteiten verschillend is naargelang de mate waarin scholen personeelspraktijken op een strategische manier inzetten. Met het voorliggend onderzoeksrapport proberen we aan de hiaten binnen het huidige onderzoek tegemoet te komen en we maken hierbij gebruik van een kwalitatief onderzoeksdesign. Op basis van een voorgaande kwalitatieve studie<sup>1</sup> worden enerzijds 'excellent' strategische scholen en 'matig' strategische scholen met elkaar vergeleken m.b.t. gedeeld leiderschap.

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<sup>1</sup> Tuytens, M.; Vekeman, E. & Devos, G. (2020). Strategisch personeelsbeleid in Vlaamse scholen. Een exploratieve studie. Steunpunt Onderwijsonderzoek, Gent.



## Theoretisch kader

### *Gedeeld leiderschap*

Voortbouwend op het werk van Hulpia, Devos & Rosseel (2009a) definiëren we gedeeld leiderschap in de eerste plaats als het delen van leiderschapsfuncties binnen het 'leidinggevend team' (i.e. een groep van mensen met formele leidinggevende rollen binnen de school zoals de directeur, adjunct-directeur, graadcoördinator, zorgcoördinator, etc.). De directeur of de schoolleider maakt dus ook altijd deel uit van het leidinggevend team. Daarnaast beschouwen we - in navolging van Hulpia en collega's (2009a) en enkele andere auteurs (bv. Copland, 2003; Elmore, 2000) - leerkrachtparticipatie ook als een onderdeel van gedeeld leiderschap. Zowel het delen van verantwoordelijkheden binnen het leidinggevend team als het delen van verantwoordelijkheden met leerkrachten worden dus als twee gelijkwaardige aspecten van gedeeld leiderschap beschouwd in dit onderzoek.

### *Drie belangrijke posities binnen de school*

Om de mate van het delen van leiderschap te onderzoeken op het vlak van strategische planning en de vijf personeelspraktijken (i.e. 'rekrutering en selectie', 'opdrachttoewijzing', 'leerkrachtevaluatie', 'professionele ontwikkeling' en 'waardering en beloning'), focussen we op 3 groepen die in eerder onderzoek als belangrijke posities binnen de school werden omschreven (Liu, 2016): de directeur, het leidinggevend team en leerkrachten (zie Figuur 1).

**Figuur 1.** Overzicht van 3 posities binnen de school



Echter, het is belangrijk om hier te vermelden dat we ons bewust zijn van het feit dat zowel internationaal als binnen Vlaanderen bepaalde verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid (bv. 'rekrutering en selectie') ook kunnen gedeeld worden met actoren buiten de school (Liu & Johnson, 2006; Devos, Verhoeven, Stassen & Warmoes, 2004). Binnen Vlaanderen draagt het schoolbestuur de juridische verantwoordelijkheid met betrekking tot cruciale beslissingen binnen personeelsbeleid (o.a. aanwerving en benoeming van leerkrachten). Daarnaast toont onderzoek aan dat bepaalde verantwoordelijkheden binnen personeelsbeleid gecentraliseerd of gedeeld worden op het niveau van de scholengemeenschap (bv. gecentraliseerde aanwerving van leerkrachten of een gezamenlijke aanpak rond professionalisering van leerkrachten) (Devos, Van Petegem, Delvaux & Feys, 2010). Echter, binnen deze studie beschouwen we het delen van verantwoordelijkheden op scholengemeenschaps- of schoolbestuursniveau niet als een onderdeel van gedeeld leiderschap. Ten eerste doen we dit omdat in de praktijk de

meerderheid van de schoolbesturen de verantwoordelijkheid op het vlak van personeelsbeleid decentraliseren naar de individuele scholen (European Commission, 2013) en de schoolleider op deze manier in vergelijking met andere landen een vrije grote autonomie kent op het vlak van personeelsbeleid (OECD, 2004). In een voorgaand onderzoeksrapport (Tuytens, Vekeman & Devos, 2020) stelden we bovendien vast dat scholen vaak autonomie krijgen van het schoolbestuur op het vlak van personeelsbeleid en dat ze dit sterk waarderen. Ten tweede laten we de rol van het bovenschools niveau buiten beschouwing als we spreken over ‘gedeeld leiderschap’ aangezien bestaande studies rond gedeeld leiderschap zich gefocust hebben op het schoolniveau (Gronn & Hamilton, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2007). Wanneer dit relevant is, zal in deze studie wel naar de samenwerking binnen de scholengemeenschap en/of het schoolbestuur verwezen worden. Dit kan bijvoorbeeld interessant zijn om te verklaren waarom in bepaalde scholen beperkt gedeeld leiderschap op schoolniveau wordt opgemerkt.

### *Opportunities voor gedeeld leiderschap*

In dit rapport vergelijken we excellent en matig strategische scholen m.b.t. de manier waarop opportuniteiten gecreëerd worden om leiderschap te delen. Hiertoe steunen we op een bestaand theoretisch kader van Macbeath (2005) die 4 vormen van gedeeld leiderschap onderscheidt die gezien kunnen worden als acties van formele leiders (i.e. ‘formeel’, ‘pragmatisch’, ‘strategisch’ en ‘incrementeel’) en 2 vormen die gezien kunnen worden als acties van leerkrachten (i.e. ‘complementair’ en ‘cultureel’)<sup>2</sup> (zie Tabel 1).

**Acties van formele leiders.** Bij de eerste vorm, met name de ‘formele’, ligt het leiderschap als vanzelfsprekend bij diegene die deze rol formeel toebedeeld hebben gekregen. Verantwoordelijkheden worden gedragen door deze formele leiders (bv. de schoolleider, de adjunct-directeur, TAC) (die samen het leidinggevend team vormen). De verantwoordelijkheden worden dan ook vaak beschreven in de functiebeschrijving van deze formele leiders. In de tweede vorm, de ‘pragmatische’, worden taken en verantwoordelijkheden eerder op een ‘ad hoc’ manier toebedeeld door de schoolleider als reactie op externe gebeurtenissen, vragen van de overheid, lokale autoriteiten, buurtevenementen en/of druk van ouders. Dit is vooral bedoeld om de taken goed te verdelen. Teamleden worden bijvoorbeeld verantwoordelijk gesteld voor werkgroepen, kerngroepen en/of denktanks (bv. in functie van nieuw leerplan, sportdag, Jeugdboekenweek, Strapdag, milieu of evaluatie) en krijgen hiervoor al dan niet enkele uren vrijgesteld of gecompenseerd.

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<sup>2</sup> De vertaling van deze vormen uit de taxonomie van MacBeath (2005) is gebaseerd op Ros & van Rossum (2019).

**Tabel 1.** Opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap

<b>Acties van formele leiders</b>	
<b>formeel</b>	Verantwoordelijkheden worden aan formele leiders gegeven binnen het team.
<b>pragmatisch</b>	Verantwoordelijkheden worden op een ‘ad hoc’ manier aan teamleden gegeven (bv. op basis van externe gebeurtenissen).
<b>strategisch</b>	Verantwoordelijkheden worden aan teamleden gegeven rekening houdend met langetermijndoelen en expertise van teamleden.
<b>incrementeel</b>	Verantwoordelijkheden worden aan teamleden gegeven rekening houdend met de capaciteiten en bereidheid van teamleden om verantwoordelijkheden op te nemen.
<b>Acties van leerkrachten</b>	
<b>complementair</b>	Verantwoordelijkheden worden door teamleden opgenomen op een ‘ad hoc’ manier op basis van eigen interesses en/of noden.
<b>cultureel</b>	Verantwoordelijkheden kunnen niet individueel aangewezen worden; het opnemen van verantwoordelijkheden is een groepsactiviteit en deel van de cultuur.

De derde vorm wordt de ‘strategische’ vorm genoemd. Ook hier worden taken en verantwoordelijkheden toebedeeld door de schoolleider. Echter, in tegenstelling tot de vorige vorm wordt dit hier gedaan rekening houdend met langetermijndoelen en ontwikkelingen binnen de school. Op basis van expertise worden coördinatoren of kartrekkers binnen het team aangewezen (of geselecteerd) voor bepaalde werkgroepen (of kerngroepen) gericht op centrale thema’s of speerpunten van beleid. Deze kartrekkers nemen over het algemeen de leiding (al dan niet samen met de directeur) en leggen verantwoording af aan de schoolleider. De vierde vorm, ten slotte, wordt beschreven als de ‘incrementele’ vorm en wordt gezien als een overgangsvorm tussen de acties van leiders en de acties van leraren. In deze aanpak is nog steeds sprake van toegekend leiderschap in bepaalde rollen (bv. coördinatoren of kartrekkers) maar hier wordt ook sterk rekening gehouden met de bereidheid van mensen om verantwoordelijkheden op te nemen en de capaciteiten die ze hebben getoond in het opnemen van leiderschap. In deze vorm moedigt de schoolleider leraren aan om initiatieven te nemen om het onderwijs in de school te verbeteren, bijvoorbeeld naar aanleiding van een opleiding die ze hebben gevolgd of naar aanleiding van het feit dat ze leiderschapskwaliteiten hebben laten zien. Teamleden worden door de schoolleider in positie gezet zodat ze zelf leiderschap kunnen nemen. Vertrouwen van de schoolleider in teamleden speelt een belangrijke rol en er is steeds sprake van wederzijdse afhankelijkheid.

**Acties van leraren.** Een eerste vorm die onder de acties van leraren wordt onderscheiden is de ‘complementaire’ vorm. Hier wordt leiderschap opgenomen in plaats van gegeven en leerkrachten nemen verantwoordelijkheden op een eerder ‘ad hoc’ manier op basis van eigen interesses en/of noden. In deze situatie wordt er sterk vertrouwd op het initiatief van leerkrachten zelf om deel te nemen aan werkgroepen / kerngroepen of de verantwoordelijkheid op te nemen voor een bepaalde groep van leraren (bv. een vakgroep). In deze vorm wordt er verondersteld dat teamleden vanuit een schoolbreed perspectief kunnen handelen en denken. In de tweede vorm, met name de ‘culturele’, is leiderschap niet meer individueel aan te wijzen, omdat binnen de groep voortdurend leiderschap wordt getoond. Er is sprake van een hecht team met een duidelijk gemeenschappelijk doel, waarin iedereen voortdurend initiatieven neemt ten behoeve van dat doel. Het nemen van leiderschap is een groepsactiviteit, het is de cultuur. Het gaat daarbij om collectieve energie en intelligentie, het leiderschap is wederkerig en waardegedreven.

### Doel van het onderzoek

In dit onderzoeksrapport staan volgende 4 onderzoeksvragen centraal:

- 1) Hoe delen scholen verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelspraktijken?
- 2) In welke mate is het delen van verantwoordelijkheden verschillend tussen excellent en matig strategische scholen?
- 3) Op welke manier worden opportuniteiten gecreëerd voor gedeeld leiderschap in scholen?
- 4) In welke mate is het creëren van opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap verschillend tussen excellent en matig strategische scholen?

### Onderzoeksmethode

Om bovenstaande onderzoeksvragen te kunnen beantwoorden, werden diepgaande casestudies uitgevoerd in 12 basisscholen en 12 secundaire scholen. Scholen werden bewust gekozen in functie van de onderzoeksdoelstelling. Ten eerste werd een oproep gelanceerd aan alle Vlaamse scholen. In deze oproep werd gevraagd om scholen aan te melden die reeds een specifieke aanpak hanteren met betrekking tot 1 of meerdere personeelspraktijken. Op basis van deze oproep konden zo 14 scholen geselecteerd worden. Ten tweede, selecteerden we 10 scholen op basis van eerdere onderzoekservaring die we hadden binnen de school m.b.t. personeelsbeleid. Onze steekproef werd gestratificeerd op basis van een aantal kenmerken zoals onderwijsnet, schoolgrootte,

leerlingpopulatie (OKI), ligging van de school en onderwijsvorm (voor de secundaire scholen). Deze 24 scholen werden gedurende één volledig schooljaar onderzocht op basis van verschillende databronnen. In totaal werden 194 semigestructureerde interviews afgenomen met verschillende actoren binnen de school (i.e. schoolleiders en leerkrachten) en (indien relevant) ook op bovenschools niveau (bv. coördinerend directeur van de scholengemeenschap). Verder werden in totaal 66 observaties uitgevoerd van relevante gebeurtenissen voor het personeelsbeleid en de strategische planning binnen de school (bv. personeelsvergadering) en werden verschillende relevante schooldocumenten opgenomen in de analyse (bv. visieteksten). Deze dataverzameling liet ons toe om een zo volledig mogelijk beeld te krijgen op het strategisch- en personeelsbeleid van scholen en de mate van gedeeld leiderschap.

Om de verzamelde data te verwerken werd stapsgewijs te werk gegaan. In een eerste stap werden alle afgenomen interviews systematisch getranscribeerd en gecodeerd. Daarna werd op basis van de interviewleidraad een set van categorieën gecreëerd die gebruikt werd om de interviews te coderen. Verder werd telkens na het coderen van een interview (of een reeks van interviews) een samenvatting gemaakt per case (cf. 'interim case summary' (Miles & Huberman, 1994)). Deze samenvatting werd systematisch na het uitvoeren van verdere interviews aangevuld. In een volgende stap werd op basis van de samenvatting en de gecodeerde citaten een caserapport uitgewerkt per school waarin de resultaten van de verticale analyse gedetailleerd werden gerapporteerd. Indien relevant, werd ook aanvullende informatie uit de observaties en verzamelde documenten gerapporteerd in het caserapport. In een laatste stap werd een horizontale analyse uitgevoerd die focuste op gedeeld leiderschap en mogelijke verschillen in gedeeld leiderschap tussen excellent strategische scholen en matig strategische scholen. Het verschil tussen deze twee groepen van scholen zit hem in de mate waarin personeelspraktijken afgestemd zijn op de strategische planning en de individuele noden van leerkrachten<sup>3</sup>. Matig strategische scholen zijn scholen die maximaal 2 personeelspraktijken afstemmen op de strategische planning binnen de school én de individuele noden van leerkrachten. Excellent strategische scholen worden daarentegen gekenmerkt door het afstemmen van minstens 3 personeelspraktijken met de strategische planning binnen de school én de individuele noden van leerkrachten. Op basis van een voorgaande kwalitatieve studie (cf. onderzoeksrapport 2019\_OL2.3\_2) werd aan elke afzonderlijke personeelspraktijk een score per school toegekend gebaseerd op verschillende databronnen (interview met schoolleider, interviews met leerkrachten, documenten en observaties). Deze score bestond uit 3 niveaus: 0, 0.5 en 1. Een score '0' betekent dat de personeelspraktijk niet is afgestemd op de strategische planning van de school noch op de individuele noden van leerkrachten. Een score '0.5' wijst erop dat de

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<sup>3</sup> Deze tweedeling is louter gebaseerd op de mate waarin de 5 personeelspraktijken afgestemd zijn op het strategisch beleid van de school en de individuele noden van leerkrachten en heeft dus niet de intentie iets te willen zeggen over de kwaliteit van onderwijs die geboden wordt in de desbetreffend school.

personeelspraktijk is afgestemd op de strategische planning van de school of de individuele noden van leerkrachten. Een score '1' houdt in dat de personeelspraktijk is afgestemd op de strategische planning van de school én de individuele noden van leerkrachten. Meer details over hoe de scholen werden gescoord, kunnen teruggevonden worden in het eerdere onderzoeksrapport<sup>4</sup>. Om de onderzoeksvragen die centraal stonden in dit onderzoeksrapport te beantwoorden werden twee afzonderlijke 'beschrijvende matrices' (cf. 'case-ordered descriptive meta-matrix' (Miles & Huberman, 1994)) opgesteld waarbij de cases geordend werden volgens de twee groepen (i.e. 'excellent strategische scholen' en 'matig strategische scholen'). In de eerste matrix werd opgelijst per case wie al dan niet betrokken wordt bij de vijf verschillende personeelspraktijken (nl. de directeur, het leidinggevend team en/of leerkrachten). De tweede matrix geeft een overzicht van de manieren waarop de verschillende scholen uit ons onderzoek opportuniteiten creëren voor het delen van leiderschap (m.n. het onderscheid tussen 4 leiderschapsacties en 2 acties van leerkrachten door MacBeath (2005)). Deze matrices konden worden opgesteld op basis van de informatie die in de samenvattingen per case en de caserapporten werden beschreven. Om de matrices te interpreteren keken we voornamelijk naar het aantal cases. Volgens Miles & Huberman (1994) is het tellen van het aantal cases een goede techniek om betekenis te geven aan de data. Echter, in de resultatensectie beperken we ons niet enkel tot het rapporteren van aantallen. We proberen deze aantallen steeds in perspectief te plaatsen en te begrijpen door deze zoveel mogelijk te spiegelen aan de kwalitatieve data die we verzameld hebben. Daarom worden in de resultatensectie ook verschillende citaten uit scholen opgenomen.

## Resultaten

### *Verschillen in het delen van verantwoordelijkheden*

In lijn met eerdere studies (e.g. Spillane et al., 2007) toont dit onderzoek aan dat er een substantiële variatie is in hoe leiderschap gedeeld wordt (cf. 1<sup>ste</sup> onderzoeksvraag). Meer bepaald wijst deze studie op verschillen in het delen van verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid. Zo zien we dat verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van strategische planning (bv. visieontwikkeling, bepalen van prioriteiten) meer gedeeld worden met het leidinggevend team en leerkrachten dan verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van personeelsbeleid (bv. 'rekrutering en selectie' (R&S), 'leerkrachtevaluatie' (LE), 'waardering en beloning' (W&B)) (zie Figuur 2).

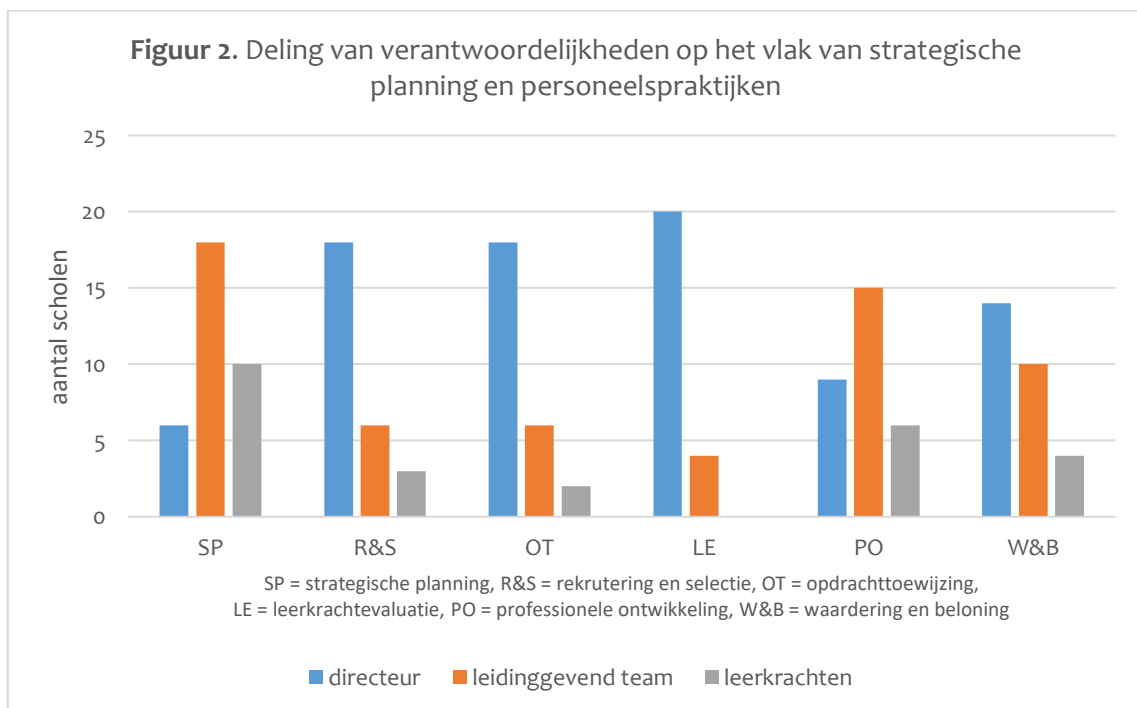
In de tweede plaats zijn er verschillen op te merken in de mate waarin verantwoordelijkheden gedeeld worden afhankelijk van de specifieke personeelspraktijk waarnaar gekeken wordt. Zo zien we dat in de meerderheid van de onderzochte scholen

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<sup>4</sup> Tuytens, M.; Vekeman, E. & Devos, G. (2020). Strategisch personeelsbeleid in Vlaamse scholen. Een exploratieve studie. Steunpunt Onderwijsonderzoek, Gent.

verantwoordelijkheden gedeeld worden op het vlak van ‘professionele ontwikkeling’ met het leidinggevend team en/of leerkrachten. Voor de andere personeelspraktijken (i.e. ‘rekrutering en selectie’, ‘opdrachttoewijzing’, ‘leerkrachtevaluatie’ en ‘waardering en beloning’) zien we dat het in de meerderheid van de scholen het leidinggevend team geen verantwoordelijkheid lijkt te dragen (zie Figuur 2).

Ten derde toont dit onderzoek aan dat verschillen in de mate waarin verantwoordelijkheden gedeeld worden, kunnen samenhangen met de mate waarin personeelspraktijken strategisch worden ingezet (cf. 2<sup>de</sup> onderzoeksvraag). Enerzijds wijzen de resultaten van dit onderzoek erop dat meer verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van de personeelspraktijken gedeeld worden in excellent strategische scholen in vergelijking met matig strategische scholen (zie Tabel 2). Hoewel het hier slechts om kleine verschillen gaat en we dus voorzichtig moeten omgaan met het interpreteren van deze percentages, is het zo dat excellent strategische scholen iets vaker het leidinggevend team en/of leerkrachten betrekken binnen personeelsbeleid. Anderzijds zien we dat matig strategische secundaire scholen vaker leerkrachten betrekken in strategische planning dan excellent strategische secundaire scholen. Voor de onderzochte basisscholen konden we op dit vlak geen verschil vaststellen aangezien deze over het algemeen in de meerderheid van de cases leerkrachten lijken te betrekken bij het bepalen van de strategische planning.



**Tabel 2.** Verschillen in het delen van verantwoordelijkheden tussen excellent strategische (ES) basis- en secundaire scholen en matig strategische (MS) basis- en secundaire scholen

	Schoolleider		Leidinggevend team		Leerkrachten	
	ES	MS	ES	MS	ES	MS
<b>Strategische planning</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Personeelsbeleid</b> (gemiddeld percentage over alle personeelspraktijken heen)	<b>60%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>8%</b>

Ten slotte merken we dat het delen van verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid ook afhankelijk lijkt te zijn van enkele structurele schoolkenmerken. Zo toont de analyse aan dat er belangrijke verschillen zijn tussen basisscholen en secundaire scholen. Over het algemeen zien we dat in secundaire scholen verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van personeelsbeleid meer gedeeld worden binnen het leidinggevend team en/of met leerkrachten in vergelijking met basisscholen. Basisscholen betrekken daarentegen (omwille van hun kleinschaligheid) vaker leerkrachten bij de strategische planning in vergelijking met secundaire scholen. Ten slotte toont de analyse aan dat een grotere school (i.e. een groter leerlingenaantal) meer mogelijkheden en middelen creëert voor gedeeld leiderschap en dat daar waar een succesvolle samenwerking op scholengemeenschapsniveau aanwezig is de nood aan gedeeld leiderschap op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid beperkt blijkt.

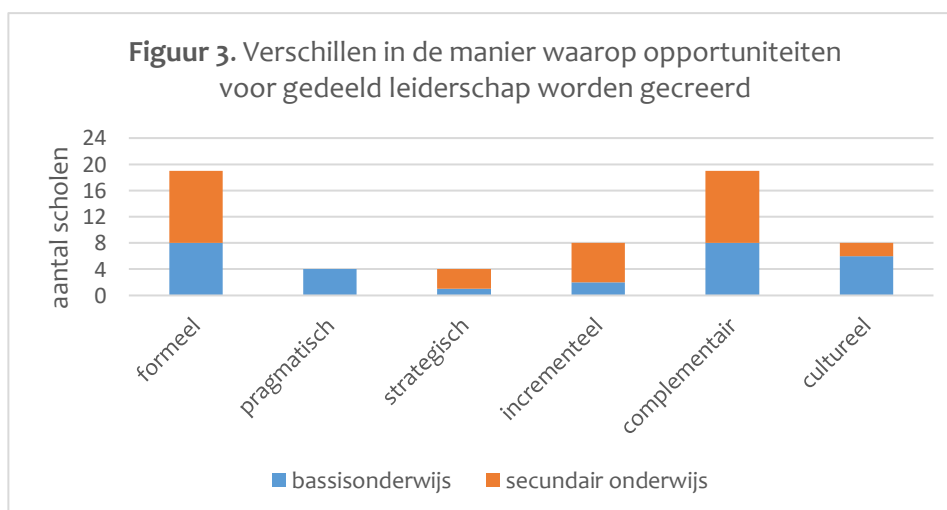
#### *Verschillen in het creëren van opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap*

Op basis van dit onderzoek kunnen we verder besluiten dat op verschillende manieren kansen gecreëerd worden voor gedeeld leiderschap (cf. onderzoeksvraag 3). Meer bepaald kwamen we tot de vaststelling dat opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap gecreëerd worden door formele leiders op zowel een ‘formele’, ‘pragmatische’, ‘strategische’ als ‘incrementele’ manier (waarbij de formele manier het meest voorkomend bleek te zijn) (zie Figuur 3). Dit betekent concreet dat schoolleiders leiderschap delen door iemand een formele opdracht te geven die vaak omschreven wordt in de functiebeschrijving. Dit betekent bovendien dat de persoon in kwestie hiervoor een aantal uren (vrijgesteld) krijgt waarbinnen deze leidinggevende taak (bv. beleidsondersteuner, graadcoördinator, sectorcoördinator, jaarcoördinator) kan vervuld worden. Verder tonen de resultaten van dit onderzoek aan dat in 1/3<sup>de</sup> van de scholen kansen tot gedeeld leiderschap gecreëerd worden op een incrementele manier. Dit betekent dat formele leiders meer verantwoordelijkheden geven aan teamleden wanneer deze bekwaamheid tonen in leidinggeven, enerzijds, en teamleden bereidheid tonen om meer verantwoordelijkheden op te nemen, anderzijds. Slechts in de minderheid van de onderzochte scholen vonden we dat leiderschap gedeeld wordt op een zuiver



pragmatische manier (i.e. ‘ad hoc’ als een antwoord op externe gebeurtenissen of als een antwoord om vragen van de overheid, lokale autoriteiten, de buurt of druk van ouders) of strategische manier (i.e. het binnenbrengen van nieuwe teamleden of opdracht toewijzen van teamleden binnen het team die specifieke expertise of capaciteiten hebben om een specifieke leidinggevende rol in te nemen in functie van doelen op lange termijn). Ten slotte wijzen de interviews ook op het feit dat ook leerkrachten zelf actie ondernemen om te participeren en dit op een complementaire (i.e. leerkrachten die verantwoordelijkheden willen opnemen doen dit op een ‘ad hoc’ manier in functie van eigen interesses en/of noden) en culturele manier (i.e. het opnemen van verantwoordelijkheden gebeurt spontaan en het delen van leiderschap gebeurt organisch onder de vorm van activiteiten eerder dan rollen). Meer bepaald stelden we vast dat in de meerderheid van de onderzochte scholen leerkrachten initiatief nemen om te participeren op een ‘complementaire’ manier.

Als we nagaan in welke mate het creëren van opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap verschillend is tussen excellent en matig strategische scholen (cf. onderzoeksvraag 4) dan valt het op dat scholen die leiderschap op een pragmatische manier delen, allemaal basisscholen zijn die tot de groep van ‘matig strategische scholen’ behoren (zie Tabel 3). Bovendien was het opvallend om vast te stellen dat in excellent strategische scholen formele leiders vaker opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap lijken te creëren op een strategische of incrementele manier in vergelijking met matig strategische scholen. Duidelijke verschillen in de acties van leerkrachten tussen excellent en matig strategische scholen waren op basis van de verzamelde data echter niet op te merken.



**Tabel 3.** Verschillen in het creëren van opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap tussen excellent strategische (ES) scholen en matig strategische (MS) scholen

	Acties van formele leiders				Acties van leerkrachten	
	formeel	pragmatisch	strategisch	incrementeel	complementair	cultureel
<b>ES</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<i>Basisscholen</i>	80%	0%	20%	40%	80%	60%
<i>Secundaire scholen</i>	100%	0%	40%	40%	80%	20%
<b>MS</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<i>Basisscholen</i>	71%	29%	0%	0%	86%	43%
<i>Secundaire scholen</i>	86%	0%	7%	29%	86%	14%

## Discussie

Als we de resultaten overschouwen, stellen we belangrijke verschillen vast in: 1) de manier waarop leiderschap gedeeld wordt op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid en 2) de manier waarop opportuniteiten gecreëerd worden voor gedeeld leiderschap. Aangezien weinig onderzoek voorhanden is dat onderzocht heeft hoe verantwoordelijkheden gedeeld worden op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid is het moeilijk om de verschillende bevindingen van dit onderzoek in perspectief te plaatsen. Echter, het feit dat schoolleiders over het algemeen de strategische planning niet alleen bepalen maar zich hiervoor laten bijstaan door het leidinggevende team en/of leerkrachten rijmt wel met literatuur die stelt dat strategische planning binnen scholen een professionele dialoog nodig heeft onder de vorm van gedeeld leiderschap (Hulsbos et al., 2010) en leerkrachtparticipatie (Moxley, 2004; McHatton et al., 2011; Crittenden & Crittenden, 1997). Het feit dat verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak ‘rekrutering en selectie’, ‘opdrachttoewijzing’ en ‘leerkrachtevaluatie’, daarentegen, nog vaak in handen van de schoolleider liggen, bevestigt de resultaten van eerder onderzoek naar het gebruik van deze afzonderlijke personeelspraktijken binnen het Vlaams onderwijs (bv. Devos, van Petegem, Vanhoof, Declercq & Delvaux, 2014; Devos, van Petegem, Vanhoof, Delvaux & Vekeman, 2013; Devos, Tuytens, Deconinck & Staelens, 2016; Engel & Finch, 2015). Op basis van internationaal onderzoek weten we dat schoolleiders minder geneigd zijn om leiderschap te delen als het gaat om beleidstaken (Camburn et al., 2003) in vergelijking met taken die gerelateerd zijn aan het lesgeven op zich (Spillane & Camburn, 2006). Hoewel bijvoorbeeld ‘rekrutering en selectie’ en ‘opdrachttoewijzing’ beiden beleidstaken zijn die belangrijke consequenties hebben voor het lesgeven (Engel & Finch, 2015), zou het kunnen zijn dat de meeste schoolleiders deze personeelspraktijken nog steeds als taken beschouwen waarvoor de schoolleider de verantwoordelijkheid dient op te nemen wat ervoor zorgt dat ze minder geneigd zijn om hen hier in te laten bijstaan door het leidinggevend team en/of leerkrachten. Dit zou mogelijks ook verklaren waarom verantwoordelijkheden binnen de personeelspraktijk ‘professionele ontwikkeling’ (die sterk verbonden is met het lesgeven) wel vaker gedeeld worden binnen het leidinggevend team. Verder komt dit onderzoek als één van de eerste

tot de vaststelling dat verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van personeelsbeleid vaker gedeeld worden in scholen die strategisch te werk gaan op het vlak van personeelsbeleid. Hoewel verder onderzoek is nodig om de resultaten van dit onderzoek te bevestigen op grote schaal, lijkt het er wel op dat schoolleiders die een strategisch personeelsbeleid installeren manieren hebben gevonden om hen te laten bijstaan in personeelsbeleid. Ten slotte stellen we belangrijke verschillen vast tussen basisscholen en secundaire scholen op het vlak van gedeeld leiderschap waarbij secundaire scholen leiderschap vaker lijken te delen. Een verklaring voor dit resultaat is dat secundaire scholen meer formele leiderschapsrollen kunnen creëren (bv. graadcoördinator, jaarcoördinator, TA(C)) (Hulpia et al., 2009a) in vergelijking met basisscholen die vaak gebrekkig omkaderd zijn en waarbij schoolleiders op weinig ondersteunend personeel kunnen rekenen (Devos, Tuytens, Leysen & Ysenbaert, 2013).

Daarnaast stellen we -in lijn met eerder onderzoek (Bouwman et al., 2019)- vast dat schoolleiders op verschillende manieren kansen creëren voor gedeeld leiderschap en leerkrachten zelf actie ondernemen om te participeren. Meer bepaald kwam voorliggend onderzoek tot de vaststelling dat opportuniteiten voor gedeeld leiderschap in de meerderheid van de gevallen op een formele manier worden gecreëerd door de schoolleider. Het feit dat over de jaren heen kansen gecreëerd zijn vanuit de Vlaamse overheid om een middenkader samen te stellen binnen het basis- en secundair onderwijs (bv. onder de vorm van BPT-uren) is een mogelijke verklaring voor dit resultaat. Slechts in enkele scholen binnen dit onderzoek (i.e. 4 basisscholen en 1 secundaire school) werd aangehaald dat er geen vast leidinggevend team aanwezig is binnen de school. Opvallend is dat in enkele van deze scholen wel een sterke samenwerking op scholengemeenschapsniveau wordt aangehaald waardoor de nood aan het delen van leiderschap binnen de school minder noodzakelijk lijkt. Ten slotte kwam dit onderzoek tot de vaststelling dat excellent strategische scholen vaker op een strategische of incrementele manier te werk gaan bij het creëren van kansen voor gedeeld leiderschap. Hoewel we dit resultaat deels konden verwachten op basis van een eerder studie (Tuytens, Vekeman & Devos, 2020)<sup>5</sup> die aantoont dat alle excellent strategische scholen bij opdrachttoewijzing zowel rekening houden met de strategische planning van de school als de individuele noden van leerkrachten, is het dit één van de eerste studies die een verband vaststelt tussen de manier waarop kansen voor gedeeld leiderschap gecreëerd worden en de mate van strategisch personeelsbeleid.

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<sup>5</sup> In de onderzoekspaper 'Strategisch personeelsbeleid in Vlaamse scholen' (Tuytens, Vekeman & Devos, 2020) werd onderzocht hoe leerkrachten binnen de school aan een bepaalde klas en opdracht (i.e. lesopdracht en/of extra opdracht binnen de school) worden toegewezen rekening houdend met de mate waarin deze opdrachttoewijzing afgestemd is op het strategisch beleid van de school en/of de individuele noden van leerkrachten. In de onderzoekspaper 'Gedeeld leiderschap en strategisch personeelsbeleid' trachten we een ander perspectief te bieden door zicht te krijgen op de manieren waarop teamleden verantwoordelijkheden krijgen en manieren waarop teamleden ook zelf verantwoordelijkheden nemen.

Uiteraard kent dit onderzoek ook enkele beperkingen en kunnen suggesties voor vervolgonderzoek geformuleerd worden. Aangezien dit onderzoek slechts uitgevoerd is in een beperkt aantal scholen in Vlaanderen zou het interessant zijn om dit onderzoek ook uit te voeren op grotere schaal en eventueel aan de hand van een kwantitatieve dataverzameling. Daarnaast kan het ook nuttig zijn om het dynamisch karakter van zowel strategisch personeelsbeleid als leiderschap in rekening te brengen in verder onderzoek (bv. aan de hand van een longitudinaal onderzoeksopzet). Een bijkomende beperking van dit onderzoek is dat we voornamelijk in kaart hebben gebracht wie verantwoordelijk is binnen de school voor de strategische planning en de verschillende personeelspraktijken en of dit gerelateerd blijkt te zijn aan de mate waarin scholen personeelspraktijken strategisch inzetten. Uiteraard bestaan er hiernaast nog verschillende andere onderzoekspistes. Zo zou het interessant kunnen zijn om te onderzoeken of de kwaliteit van samenwerking binnen het leiderschapsteam en/of met leerkrachten, de gehanteerde leiderschapstijl en/of de samenwerking binnen de scholengemeenschap of het schoolbestuur ook gerelateerd is aan de mate waarin scholen strategisch te werk gaan op het vlak van personeelsbeleid. Ten slotte erkennen we dat deze studie weinig verklaringen biedt waarom het delen van verantwoordelijkheden op het vlak van personeelsbeleid verschilt tussen scholen. Verder onderzoek zou ons dan ook meer zicht kunnen bieden op mogelijke verklaringen voor de vastgestelde verschillen in dit onderzoek. Onafgezien van deze beperkingen, menen we dat dit onderzoek tot enkele belangrijke implicaties leidt. In de eerste plaats komt dit onderzoek tegemoet aan belangrijke hiaten in de literatuur rond gedeeld leiderschap en personeelsbeleid in onderwijs. Dit onderzoek is namelijk één van de eerste die onderzocht heeft hoe gedeeld leiderschap vorm krijgt op het vlak van strategische planning en personeelsbeleid. Meer bepaald stellen we vast dat de manier waarop leiderschap gedeeld wordt afhankelijk is van verschillende factoren (i.e. specifieke personeelspraktijken, strategisch personeelsbeleid, structurele factoren). In dit verband menen we dan ook dat het belangrijk is dat in de opleiding van schoolleiders aandacht is voor deze verschillende factoren wanneer gedeeld leiderschap gepromoot of gestimuleerd wordt.

# Research paper: Distributing leadership and strategic HRM in schools

## Abstract

Although the importance of distributed leadership in the context of strategic human resource management (SHRM) has been stressed outside and inside the educational field, until now, little is known on the distribution of responsibilities in HRM in schools and the way opportunities for distributed leadership are created. Moreover, scant educational studies investigate how distributed leadership is related to the implementation of SHRM in schools. Using interviews with school leaders and team members in 24 Flemish schools we explore how responsibilities in HRM are distributed, how opportunities are created for distributed leadership, and how this varies by whether schools are excellent or moderate strategic in HRM. The cross-case analysis of the data points to a variety in leadership distribution depending on the HR practice looked at, the extent to which HR practices are strategic and schools' structural characteristics. Implications for research and practice are discussed.

## Introduction

Different researchers acknowledge the important role of school leaders for the enactment of (strategic) human resource management (S)HRM in education (Leisink & Boselie, 2014). In this regard, they are often seen as 'central gatekeepers' or 'street-level human capital managers' in education (Donaldson, 2013; Milanowski & Kimball, 2010) which is also pointed out by studies on single HR practices (for an overview, see: Vanblaere, Tuytens & Devos, 2017). Research on HR practices (e.g. teacher hiring, teacher evaluation) points for example to the importance of school leaders' background characteristics (e.g. principal's undergraduate background, perception on an 'effective teacher', ingenuity, initiative and determination) (Baker & Cooper, 2005; Liu, Liu, Stronge & Xu, 2016; Donaldson, 2013) and leadership styles (Vanblaere & Devos, 2016; Kurland, Peretz & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2010; Tuytens & Devos, 2011; 2014; Vekeman et al., 2016b). Moreover, recent studies focusing on the role of school leaders suggest that they play a pivotal role in implementing HRM strategically (e.g. Janssens, 2016; Vekeman, Devos & Valcke, 2016a). Recent studies show, for example, that school leaders: need to handle proactively in order to overcome various barriers in HRM, adopt best an integrated leadership style (i.e. combination of instructional and transformational leadership) and should be responsive towards the present culture within the school (Vekeman, 2018). Yet, it has been argued that in many schools HRM is anything but strategic (DeArmond, 2013; Smylie et al., 2004; Rebore, 2010) and educational leaders lack a systematic and comprehensive viewpoint on HRM (Runhaar, 2017). Moreover, research shows school leaders are confronted with high expectations from various angles (e.g. the government,

society and/or the school board), but also from an inner pressure that school leaders seem to impose themselves (Devos, Vanblaere & Bellemans, 2018). There is a trend, for example, towards more autonomy, on the one hand, and accountability, on the other hand (Kelchtermans & Piot, 2010; Mahieu, 2010). Moreover, current social changes such as globalization, migration and increased diversity also have an important influence on school leaders (e.g. Kelchtermans & Piot, 2010; Mulford, 2010). The role of school leaders in this regard has become much more complex in recent years (Vandenberghe, 2008) which leads to the fact that school leaders often lack enough time to work on strategic human resource management (Vekeman, Devos & Valcke, 2016a). Given these issues and building on HRM literature outside education (Guest, 1987; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007), distributed leadership has been stressed as a necessary and important pathway for SHRM in schools (Milanowski & Kimball, 2010; Leisink & Boselie, 2014; Leisink & Knies, 2019; Stein & Curtis, 2010; Vanblaere et al., 2017).

Over the past 20 years, a large body of literature about distributed leadership has emerged, focusing on the conceptualisation, formation and stimulus for leadership distribution (e.g. Gronn, 2008; Spillane et al., 2004; MacBeath, 2005). In addition, research has explored the relationship of distributed leadership with teacher characteristics (e.g. teacher efficacy; pedagogical skills) (e.g. Chang, 2011) and teacher and school outcomes (e.g. organizational commitment, student test scores) (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Hulpia et al., 2009b). A study by Chang (2011) found for instance that distributed leadership has a positive effect on teachers' efficacy. Furthermore, research by Hulpia and colleagues (2009b) showed that the presence of a collaborative leadership team and support of the leadership team has a positive effect on teachers' organisational commitment. Yet, until now scant studies focus on the link between distributed leadership and SHRM in education (Leisink & Boselie, 2014). Actually, we identify two main research gaps. First, little is known on the distribution of responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices and its relation with SHRM in education. Outside education, HR roles of agents inside and outside the organisation have been thoroughly examined in the extant literature (e.g. Valverde & Ryan, 2006). However, the simultaneous examination of agents within the educational context that have an input in strategic planning and different HR practices has not been previously undertaken, let alone its relation with the extent to which HRM is strategic in schools. Second, until now, scant studies investigate how schools create opportunities for distributed leadership and how this might be related to SHRM in schools. Although previous research distinguishes different forms or patterns of distributed leadership (e.g. Gronn, 2002; Macbeath, 2005; Spillane, 2006), few studies investigated the relationship between the opportunities created for distributed leadership and the extent to which schools are strategic in HRM.

In the present study we try to tackle these research challenges using a qualitative design. More specifically, we explore distributed leadership and examine how this might differ according to the school's strategic approach in HRM. Based on a previous

qualitative study, ‘excellent’ strategic and ‘moderate’ strategic HRM schools are compared. Based on these two groups of schools we compare, on the one hand, the distribution of responsibilities in strategic planning and five common HR practices in education (i.e. recruitment and selection, assignment, teacher evaluation, professional development and rewards). On the other hand, we compare the way opportunities are created for distributed leadership zooming in on 4 formal leadership actions (i.e. formal, pragmatic, strategic and incremental) and 2 teacher actions (i.e. opportunistic and cultural distribution) which were identified in earlier educational research (MacBeath, 2005).

## Theoretical framework

### Strategic human resource management (SHRM) in education

Strategic human resource management (SHRM) can be defined as an approach of human resource management which is ‘explicitly’ aimed at achieving individual, organisational and societal goals (Boselie, 2014). First, in order to achieve individual goals, different authors state that schools should invest in their ‘resources’ in line with the resource-based view (Barney, 1991; Leisink & Boselie, 2014; Smylie, Miretzky & Konkol, 2004). The resource-based view paradigm states that organisations achieve value through HR practices that are aligned with employees’ characteristics and needs (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001) or as Smith (2001) states in the context of education: ‘schools should take into account the needs of faculty across careers’. Second, in order to achieve organisational goals, it is important for schools to develop meaningful school goals, which are essential, sufficiently operationalised, and take the school’s context into account (Leisink & Boselie, 2014). In other words, an essential point to develop SHRM is that schools stipulate goals on their own and that schools work goal oriented. Yet, in line with Leisink and Boselie (2014) we believe the term "goals" and "outcomes" should not be interpreted narrowly in economic terms and specific school goals can also contribute to the development of certain school values. Therefore, we choose to focus in this study not only on school goals but look at the articulation of widely shared ownership and commitment to purpose in schools (i.e. mission, vision, values, and goals). Building on the work of Gurley and colleagues (2015), we refer with the term ‘strategic planning’ to the process of developing a clear school mission, shared vision, articulated values, and specific goal statements. Taken together, based on previous literature outside and inside education, we believe a balanced approach in HRM is necessary (Boselie, 2014). In this regard, SHRM in education is explicitly aimed at achieving individual goals, on the one hand, by taking into account the needs of individual teachers, and organisational and societal goals, on the other hand, by aligning HR practices with strategic planning in the school.

In the past years, various researches have put forward different HR practices and an awareness has grown that the relevance of HR practices and their effectiveness is context-specific. In this regard, recently it is stressed that the difference between the profit and non-profit organizations should not be ignored when studying SHRM (Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams & Vandenabeele, 2015). In this context, Runhaar (2017) conceptualized HRM in the context of schools. According to her, this conceptualisation helps schools to create a high-quality and committed teacher team. Relying on her work a set of common HR practices in education can be identified: staffing, professional development, performance appraisal and reward systems. The first HR practice, 'staffing' deals with the 'recruitment and selection' of new teachers from outside the school. Moreover, it includes the 'assignment' of teachers within the organization to specific tasks (Runhaar, 2017). In this study, we approach recruitment and selection, on the one hand, and assignment, on the other hand, as two separate HR practices. This choice was made as previous research (e.g. Donaldson, 2013) has shown that principals approach these practices differently. It seems that principals pay less attention to assignment compared to recruitment and selection (Donaldson, 2013). In order to capture these differences also in this study, assignment was studied as a separate HR practice. Professional development, here seen as a third HR practice, aspires the stimulation of continuous professionalization of teachers. Performance appraisal (or teacher evaluation which is a synonym) has both formative and summative objectives. In essence, it holds teachers accountable, but it is also a mean to improve teachers' practice. Both objectives require accurate assessments of teachers' performance based on a clear description of teacher standards. Reward systems can be financial (e.g., merit pay), although this is still rare in the educational context, or non-financial. Research has shown that teachers are highly intrinsically motivated. Hence schools should pay attention to teachers' intrinsic motivators in order to stimulate such intrinsic motivators such as providing positive feedback, allocating a challenging project or creating development opportunities.

### Distributed leadership

Although different definitions of distributed leadership exist (e.g. Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006), central in the theoretical framing is the social context and inter-relationships as an integral part of the leadership activity (Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007). Nevertheless, still many inconsistencies occur in the literature on the operationalization of the concept. Relying on the work of Hulpia and colleagues (2009a), we define distributed leadership in this study as the distribution of leadership functions among the 'leadership team', which is a group of people with formal leadership roles within the school (e.g. principal, assistant principals, grade coordinators, year coordinators, care coordinators). The leadership team thus always includes the school principal. The restriction to the members of the leadership team as actors among



whom leadership is distributed, is based on Camburn, Rowan, and Taylor (2003) who claimed that a limited number of formal members is involved in distributing leadership. Nevertheless, relying on relevant work in this regard (e.g. Copland, 2003; Elmore, 2000), we believe that distributed leadership is not limited to those individuals at the top of the organization. In this respect, we argue in line with Hulpia and colleagues (2009a) that leadership can be distributed among all members within the school and include teachers' participative decision-making as a form of distributed leadership. As such, within this study both the distribution of leadership functions with the leadership team and the participation of teachers are approached as two equal important aspects of distributed leadership.

**Three position-based groups.** In order to investigate the distribution of leadership among the leadership team and participative decision making of teachers in the context of strategic planning and HR practices, we focus on 3 three groups: the principal, the leadership team (including members with formal leadership roles) and teachers. As these groups were identified in previous research as 3 important position-based human units in schools (Liu, 2016), we also use these three categories here. It is important to notice that we are aware of the fact that (inter)nationally certain responsibilities in strategic planning and HRM (e.g. recruitment and selection) can be also distributed outside the school (Liu & Johnson, 2006; Devos, Verhoeven, Stassen & Warmoes, 2004). Regardless of the school's level and the school's sector, all school boards in Flanders have been granted autonomy in carrying out crucial responsibilities in HRM (e.g. teacher hiring or awarding tenure to teachers) (European Commission, 2013). Moreover, Flemish research shows that certain responsibilities in HRM are centralized or shared at school network level<sup>6</sup> (e.g. centralized teacher hiring) (Devos, van Petegem, Delvaux & Feys, 2010). Yet, in this study we consider the involvement of the school board and/ school network not as a part of distributed leadership. In the first place because in practice, the majority of school boards decentralise most of these responsibilities to the individual schools which makes that the school principal has a high autonomy in the way he/she implements HR practices (OECD, 2014). In the second place, this choice was made because the distributed leadership literature focused up to now on the school as unit of analysis and explored the spread of leadership among members of the leadership team and teachers without exploring the role of the district (Gronn & Hamilton, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2007). Nevertheless, when relevant, we will discuss the cooperation with the school network and/ or school board for some specific HR practices (e.g. 'recruitment and selection') in the results section. This is done when we experience, for example, that this cooperation is important to understand why only low levels of distributed leadership are noticed at the school level.

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<sup>6</sup> School networks ('scholengemeenschappen') group Flemish schools within an geographic area. The school network might play an important role in a school's HRM depending on the joint decisions schools make within the school network on resources or staffing.

**Taxonomy of leadership distribution.** When looking at how schools create opportunities for distributed leadership (and thus also teacher participation), we rely on an existing taxonomy of leadership distribution in education by MacBeath (2005). According to Bouwmans et al. (2019), MacBeath (2005) distinguishes four ways in which formal leaders can create opportunities for distributed leadership. The first, *formal distribution*, implies that formal leaders delegate influence structurally by describing leadership tasks in the job descriptions of members of the leadership team. The second, *pragmatic distribution*, implies that formal leaders delegate influence relatively 'ad hoc' as a response to external events, in response to demands from government or the local authority, neighborhood events or parental pressures. The third, *strategic distribution*, implies that formal leaders introduce (new) members or assign members within the team which have specific expertise and/or resources to fulfil specific leadership tasks. If formal leadership adheres to structure and protocol and pragmatic leadership is ad hoc, the distinguishing feature of strategic distribution is its goal orientation. It is not about pragmatic problem solving but is focused on a longer-term goal of school improvement. It is expressed most saliently in a carefully considered approach in appointing leadership roles. The fourth, *incremental distribution*, implies a transition from formal leaders' influence to teachers' informal influence. On the one hand, formal leaders give increased responsibilities to team members as team members demonstrate their ability to lead, and on the other hand, team members show willingness to take on more responsibilities. Incremental distribution has a pragmatic ad hoc quality, but is also strategic. Its orientation is essentially a professional development one in which as people prove their ability to exercise leadership they are given more responsibilities.

Following Bouwmans et al. (2019), we believe that when the conditions are set by the formal leaders, teachers can allocate influence within their team. To conceptualise the latter dynamic, we built on another part of the framework of MacBeath (2005), and distinguish two ways in which teachers participate within the school. The first way in which teachers can take opportunities to participate is the *opportunistic distribution* and implies that teachers willingly undertake additional responsibilities in an ad hoc manner. In this category, leadership is dispersed and is taken rather than given. It suggests a situation in which there is such strength of initiative within the school that capable, caring teachers willingly extend their roles to school-wide leadership. The second, *cultural distribution*, implies that influence is spontaneously and organically shared between teachers, and is expressed through activities rather than roles. In other words, the emphasis is on the 'what' rather than the 'who'. 'Distribution' as a conscious process is no longer applicable because people exercise initiative spontaneously and collaboratively, with no necessary identification of leaders or followers. It deserves a second discrete category because it switches the emphasis from leaders and leadership to a community of people working together to a common end with all the tensions and challenges that real vibrant communities display. Here, distributed leadership has become part of the team culture. In

both opportunistic and cultural distributions, some individuals may be included in and others may be excluded from exercising influence.

Based on the work of MacBeath (2005), we believe each of these forms represent a different way of thinking about leadership and exemplifies differing processes of leadership distribution. Each describes a prevalent form of thinking and practice in any given school. However, it is rarely that simple, as schools evolve through different stages and exemplify different approaches at different times and in response to external events. So although we present 4 separate categories for formal leader actions and 2 categories for teacher actions, these are neither fixed nor mutually exclusive. Each may be appropriate at a given time and in a given context.

### Distributed leadership and SHRM in education

As stated earlier, demanding job expectations of school leaders and the fact that HRM in education has been found to be often built around a limited range of disconnected practices and approached in a non-strategic way have led to increased attention for distributed leadership in: strategic planning (Uzarskia & Broome, 2019; Cheng, 2013), the enactment of single HR practices (e.g. Vanblaere et al., 2017) and the implementation of SHRM in general (Malinowski & Kimball, 2010; Leisink & Boselie, 2014; Leisink & Knies, 2019). As a result recent studies show there is a tendency to distribute some HR practices within the school such as teacher hiring (e.g. Cannata, Engel, Nguyen & Curran, 2017) and teacher evaluation (e.g. Goldstein, 2004). Yet, until now, scant research is available on the distribution of responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices, on the one hand, and the link between distributed leadership and the enactment of SHRM within education, on the other hand. Although some studies suggest that a distributive leadership style is positively correlated with the extent to which motivation and ability-enhancing HR practices are used in schools (Janssens, 2016), little is known on the possible link between distributed leadership and the extent to which HR practices are strategic in schools (i.e. aligned with the strategic planning of the school and the individual needs of teachers). As also outside educational literature HRM literature has evolved separately from that on distributed leadership (with little synergy between the two) (Rao-Nicholson et al., 2016), until now we don't know whether the distribution of responsibilities is linked to strategic HRM in schools. Therefore, this study has a mainly explorative character.

### Purpose

The present study aims to explore distributed leadership and strategic human resource management within schools by putting forward the following research questions:

1. *How do schools distribute responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices?*

2. To what extent is the distribution of responsibilities different in excellent and moderate strategic HRM schools?
3. How do schools create opportunities for distributed leadership?
4. To what extent is the way that opportunities are created for distributed leadership different in excellent and moderate strategic HRM schools?

## Methods

### Data collection

This study is part of a larger case study on human resource management from a school's perspective. For this research project we used a multiple case study design in order to deepen the understanding about strategic human resource management in elementary and secondary schools. More specifically, a sample of schools was used that was purposefully chosen. In this regard, we aimed to select schools that were particularly interesting based on one of their human resource practices and hence, had a high potential of being meaningful and enriching for this study. This means that we were not pursuing a representative, random sample, but we used a *stratified purposeful sample* (Miles & Huberman, 1994). When selecting schools, we looked for an equal representation of schools based on demographic characteristics (e.g. school size; educational umbrella organisation; pupil population (OKI), school location and type of education (ASO/TSO/BSO)). We selected a sample of 24 schools in total, in essence 12 elementary schools and 12 secondary schools (see Table 1).

In order to identify particularly interesting schools in light of their human resource practices, our case selection was twofold: 1) we launched a call to all Flemish schools to participate in the study through a newsletter that was sent out to all Flemish schools by the Ministry of Education. In this call, we asked to identify schools that had a specific approach of one or more human resource practices that are under investigation through an online form. In this form, we requested information about the specific approach of one or more HR practices and several characteristics of the school (elementary or secondary, school size, student population, etc.). 2) we selected schools based on our prior knowledge of the school. In essence this involved schools that already participated in previous studies that were performed in our research group. The focus of these previous studies was specifically on one of the human resource practices that are put forward in this study (e.g. teacher assignment, teacher evaluation, teacher recruitment). For the selection of our cases, first we looked at the schools that were identified through the call. In total, 14 schools were selected based on the call. This involved 8 elementary and 6 secondary schools. After this selection, we added 10 schools (4 elementary and 6 secondary schools)

to our sample based on our experiences with these schools through prior research on one of the HR practices.

In order to get a good insight in schools' human resource management and related factors (such as leadership, school context, etc.), we investigated the 24 cases throughout one entire school year using interviews, observations and documents. First, a pilot study in 4 cases (2 elementary schools and 2 secondary schools) was carried out during school year 2017-2018. Second, based on the same format of the pilot study, 20 cases (10 elementary schools and 10 secondary schools) were investigated during the following school year (from August 2017 until August/September 2018). The interviews were used as the main source of data collection. The observations and documents were gathered as a complementary data collection procedure in support of data triangulation. In total, we conducted 194 interviews with on average 8 interviews per school. In each school, three semi-structured interviews were conducted with the school leader (at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the school year). This approach gave us the chance to get insight in important moments related to HRM during the school year and time to gain deep insight in the different HR practices, strategic planning and schools' characteristics and context. The first interview with the school leader (at the beginning of the school year (August/September) can be seen as an explorative interview in which we focused on: 1) strategic planning, 2) HR practices (i.e. recruitment and selection, assignment, teacher evaluation, professional development and rewards) and 3) distributed leadership. Based on this interview we could also identify which are important moments during that school year related to strategic planning and/or HRM. Based on this interview also other relevant actors in strategic planning and HRM were identified. In this way, the researcher was given an initial overview of the school's policy and important actors within the school. Based on this initial overview, the researcher discovered with whom the interviews were best conducted and could make (in consultation with the school) a schedule of interesting observations. The theme setting of this initial meeting with the school leader is included in Appendix I.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of cases

CASE	SCHOOL LEVEL	SCHOOL SECTOR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	SES	LOCATION	EDUCATIONAL TRACK	LEADERSHIP TEAM
1	SE	KOV	950	1.06	urban	TSO/BSO/KSO	Yes
2	SE	GO	250	1.04	urban	ASO/TSO/BSO	Yes
3	SE	POV	380	2.23	urban	TSO/BSO	Yes
4	SE	KOV	1700	0.90	urban	TSO/BSO/DBSO	Yes
5	SE	KOV	280	0.48	Rural	ASO	Yes
6	SE	KOV	840	0.59	urban	ASO/TSO/BSO	No
7	SE	KOV	670	1.11	urban	ASO	Yes
8	SE	GO	540	1.83	urban	TSO/BSO/DBSO	Yes
9	SE	KOV	780	0.64	urban	TSO/BSO	Yes
10	SE	KOV	1100	0.29	semi-urban	ASO	Yes
11	SE	GO	360	0.60	semi-urban	TSO/BSO	Yes
12	SE	POV	320	0.37	Rural	ASO/TSO	Yes
A	PE	KOV	300	0.30	Rural	/	No
B	PE	OVSG	160	0.26	Rural	/	Yes
C	PE	KOV	440	0.38	semi-urban	/	Yes
D	PE	GO	280	0.54	Rural	/	Yes
E	PE	KOV	240	0.11	semi-urban	/	No
F	PE	OVSG	320	0.83	semi-urban	/	Yes
G	PE	GO	580	3.32	urban	/	Yes
H	PE	KOV	190	0.21	urban	/	Yes
I	PE	OVSG	290	0.88	Rural	/	Yes
J	PE	OKO - FOPEM	200	0.32	urban	/	No
K	PE	KOV	250	1	urban	/	Yes
L	PE	KOV	370	0.27	Rural	/	No

**Note.** Number of students are rounded. Bold numbers indicate large number of pupils (for elementary more than 270 pupils; for secondary more than 600 pupils) or high SES level (for elementary larger than 0.83; for secondary larger than 0.94) – School level: secondary education (SE), primary education (PE). School sector: KOV (Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen), GO (Gemeenschapsonderwijs), POV (Provinciaal Onderwijs), OVSG (Onderwijsvereniging van Steden en Gemeenten), OKO-FOPEM (Overleg Kleine Onderwijsverstrekkers – Federatie van Onafhankelijke Pluralistische Emancipatorische Methodescholen) Educational tracks: general (ASO), vocational (BSO), technical (TSO) and part-time vocational (DBSO) secondary education , Leadership team: Yes (leadership team available), No (no leadership team available)

The second interview with the school leader took place in the middle of the school year (December / January) and was focused on detailed aspects of strategic planning (i.e. vision development) and HRM, the school's internal (e.g. structural characteristics, cultural heritage) and external context (e.g. market context, institutional context), school characteristics (i.e. collaboration with teachers, shared vision, ...) and school leadership (Appendix II). Finally, in each school a final interview with the school leader was carried out in which the researcher could elaborate on topics that had not yet been addressed or could double check things which have been told by teachers or other school members. Moreover, this final interview gave the researcher the chance to discuss aspects that have changed throughout the school year on school level or policy level (e.g. experiences with the replacement pool). Moreover, during the school year, we conducted interviews with minimum four teachers per school. In order to gain insight on how these HR practices are perceived by teachers, we interviewed one beginning teacher, one less experienced teachers and two experienced teachers in each school. Also, if relevant for HR practices, we conducted interviews with other (teacher) leaders, members of the school board, etc. During the interviews, the perspectives of the respondents on the HR practices and strategic planning in the school were gathered (see Appendix II).

In addition to the interviews, we carried out observations within the school spread over the school year depending on school's planning. In each school 3 observations were planned: 1) a school staff meeting (i.e. 'personeelsvergadering'), 2) a meeting between leading actors with the school (e.g. meeting between coordinators and principal; principal meeting within the school or school network) and 3) a meeting between teachers (e.g. meeting between subject colleagues; meeting between parallel-colleagues). Due to practical issues or the fact some activities were less relevant, in some schools 2 observations took place. However, in total 66 relevant activities were observed in schools (varying in length from 30 minutes to approximately 4 hours per observation) using the observation scheme in Appendix III. The observations were mainly in order to check whether elements mentioned during the interviews were also effectively addressed (e.g. communication on school's vision, participative decision making in HRM). The observations provided also a concrete picture of how school leaders behaved during meetings and interactions with their staff, how staff members reacted and how they behaved towards each other.

Finally, we asked all schools to deliver relevant documents (on paper or digital) such as school regulations, texts on school vision or mission, school plan (i.e. 'schoolwerkplan'), professional development plan (i.e. 'nascholingsplan') and information for beginning and/or new teachers within the school. These documents were supplemented with other relevant documents related to HRM when available (e.g. checklist for teacher evaluation, format for teacher selection interview, reports on teacher meetings, etc.). When a school inspection report was available online, the report was also included for document analysis.

## Data analysis

In order to analyse the data we followed a clear step-by-step plan. First, all interviews were systematically transcribed and coded using Nvivo (i.e. a qualitative research software tool). Second, based on the interview protocol, sets of categories (or nodes) were created in Nvivo. The interviews were coded based on these categories in order to structure the text and to reduce the data. Third, after coding each interview or set of interviews an 'interim case summary' (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was adjusted or refined. An interim case summary is a provisional product of varying length that provides a synthesis of what the researcher knows about the case and also indicates what may remain to be found out. In our study the case summary presents (a) a review of findings, (b) a careful look at the quality of data supporting them, (c) the agenda for the next interview(s). The review of findings in the summary was ordered based on the different codes in Nvivo (cf. Appendix IV for case summary format). Fourth, based on the final case summaries (approximately 35 pages per case) and the coded interviews in Nvivo a detailed case report (on average 25 pages) was written for each school in which we reported on the within-case analysis for the different central variables (i.e. school's internal and external context, school characteristics, HR practices, school leadership, teacher characteristics and teacher outcomes). When relevant, we added extracted information from the observations and documents to the interim case summary and case reports. As both the analysis of the observations and documents were mainly supplementary to the interviews, the predefined categories were also used to analyse the documents and observations (Bowen, 1997). In a final step we carried out a cross-case analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in which we focused for this study on distributed leadership and possible differences between two groups of schools: 'excellent strategic schools' and 'moderate strategic schools'. The difference between these two groups of schools lies in the extent to which HR practices are aligned with school's strategic planning and individual needs of teachers and has not the intention to suggest any difference in educational quality. Moderate strategic HRM schools are schools characterised by the alignment of 2 or less HR practices with school's strategic planning and individual needs of teachers while excellent strategic schools are characterised by the alignment of 3 or more HR practices with school's strategic planning and individuals needs of teachers. Based on a previous qualitative study (cf. research report 2019\_OL2.3\_2) -in which the same cases were investigated- we could classify schools in one of the two groups. In the previous study for each of the 24 cases a score was given to each human resource practice under investigation. This score was based on several data sources (namely, interview data from the principal, interview data from teachers, documents, observations). This scoring contained three categories per HR practice based on the literature (Boselie, 2014): 0, 0.5 or 1. A score '0' indicates that a human resource practice is not aligned with strategic planning nor with individual needs. A score '0.5' shows that a human resource practice is aligned with strategic planning OR with individual needs. A score '1' demonstrates that a human resource practice is aligned with strategic planning



AND individual needs. Details about this scoring per human resource practice can be found in the earlier research report. When we look at the scoring of these cases, we notice that 10 out of the 24 schools align 3 or more HR practices (or in other words: 3, 4 or 5 HR practices) with the strategic planning of schools and the individual needs. As only a minority of schools could be classified in this group we labelled this group as 'excellent strategic schools'. On the other hand, we notice that 14 out of the 24 schools align 2 or less HR practices (or in other words: 0, 1 or 2 HR practices) with the school's strategic planning and individual needs of teachers. The term 'moderate strategic' was here purposefully chosen. Only in one out of the 14 schools none of the HR practices were aligned with strategic planning and individual needs. Yet, in this school and in all other schools of this 'moderate group' we see that they try to align HR practices with the strategic planning OR the individual needs. therefore, we use the term 'moderate' (compared to excellent) as these schools show clear efforts to install HRM strategically but do not (yet) succeed in a balanced approach.

In order to answer the research questions of this study, two separate 'case-ordered descriptive matrices' were created (see Appendix V and VI). According to Miles & Huberman (1994), a case-ordered descriptive meta-matrix is a powerful way to understand differences across cases as the matrix contains descriptive data from all cases, but cases are ordered according to a variable of interest (here: 'excellent strategic' versus 'moderate strategic'). The case-ordered descriptive meta-matrix in Appendix V visualizes differences in the way schools distribute responsibilities by indicating whether or not each position based group (i.e. principal, the leadership team and/or teachers) is involved in strategic planning and the five HR practices (i.e. recruitment and selection, assignment, teacher evaluation, professional development and rewards). We were able to create this matrix based on the information we reported in the within-case reports. More specifically we took a closer look at the following parts in the case report: 'distributed leadership', 'participative decision making', 'strategic planning', 'recruitment and selection', 'assignment', 'teacher evaluation', 'professional development' and 'rewards'. In Appendix VI a case-ordered descriptive meta-matrix is presented which gives an overview of differences in the ways school create opportunities for distributed leadership. We were able to create this matrix based on the information we reported in the within-case reports. More specifically we took a closer look at the following parts in the case report and case summaries: 'distributed leadership' and 'assignment'. In order to draw meaning from the case-ordered descriptive meta-matrices we made use of 'counting'. Miles & Huberman (1994) describe 'counting' as a descriptive and familiar tactic for generating meaning from case-ordered displays. This tactic helps to see the general drift of the data more easily and rapidly by looking at distributions. Yet, to generate meaning from these numbers we used the qualitative data and provided quotes in the results section.

## Data validity

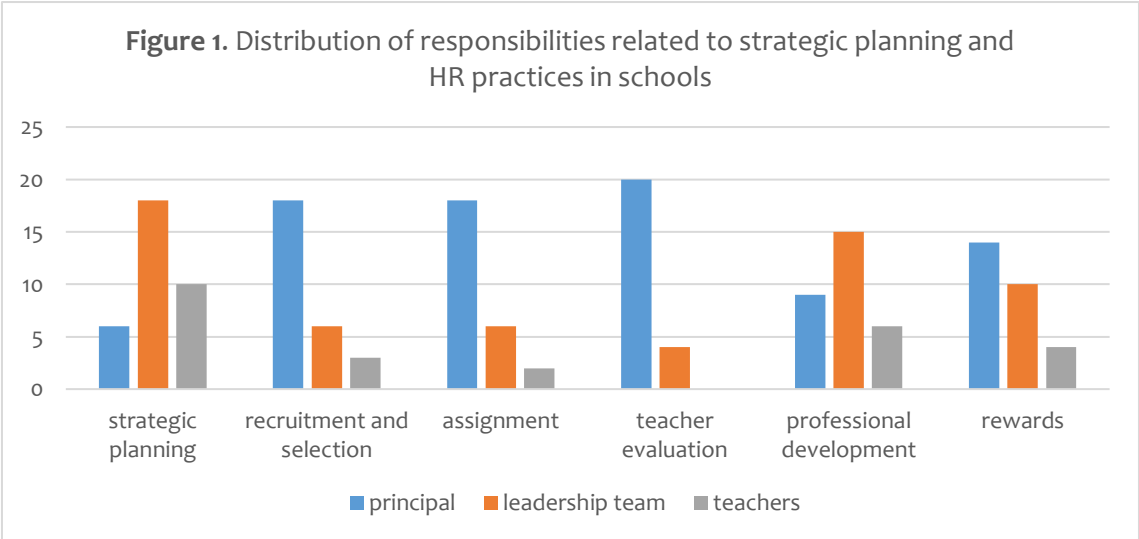
In this study, we took different steps to establish the validity of the interview data. First, we used multiple data sources to strengthen the validity of the interview data (Stake, 1995). In particular, we drew on interview data, observations as well as documents provided by the school. When differences were encountered between the information based on the interviews and the information we extracted based on the observations and/or document analysis, we asked school principals during the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> interviews for possible explanations. This approach helped us to confirm or adjust our earlier interpretations. Second, the triangulation of perceptual viewpoints of both principals, teachers and other relevant actors within the HR process helped to validate the responses from the different subgroups (Patton, 1990). In most of the cases the perceptual viewpoints of principals, teachers and other relevant actors were in general like-minded. When we encountered a different perceptual viewpoint, we asked the principal or other respondents for possible explanations in the following interviews. Based on these explanations we could confirm or adjust our interpretations. Moreover, when we encountered one perceptual viewpoint which deviated extremely from other viewpoints in the school, we did not include this perspective in our further analysis. Yet, when we encountered a difference in perceptual viewpoints it was mostly related to a certain aspect we talked about in the interviews (e.g. personal experience with the principal, a certain situation which occurred in the past). We never experienced that the inclusion of a deviating perceptual viewpoint would change the score of the cases as we used multiple data sources (i.e. interviews, observations and documents) to finally score the data. In other words, by making use of data triangulation a deviating viewpoint could be always placed in perspective. Third, in order to draw valid conclusions from the data, considerable time was spent to reading, re-reading and discussing the interviews within the research team which -according to Patton (1990)- also increases validity. By cross-checking decisions and interpretations within the research team including researchers with a large experience and expertise in studying leadership and school policy in Flemish education, we ensured that the conclusions accurately reflected the data. Cross-checking decisions and interpretations within the research team took place in different stages of the analytical process. In the first place, the coding scheme was developed within the research team. Based on the pilot study we discussed the coding within the research team which led to small changes. Some overlapping codes, for example, were deleted and more detailed (sub)codes were added (e.g. a distinction was made between ‘content of strategic planning’ and ‘process of strategic planning’). Moreover, substantive differences between codes that closely match were discussed substantially and a common approach was decided. In the second place, considerable time was spent to reading, re-reading and discussing the interviews when a detailed case report was written for each school based on the interim case summary. As such also the within-case analysis (which includes also an interpretation of codes) was discussed within the research team. Finally, in terms of

member checks (Creswell, 2012), we sent each case report to the school principal. We asked all principals to read the case report and asked them explicitly to inform us when they encountered possible misinterpretations. Although not all principals responded to this request, we received 16 replies from principals which all were positive.

## Results

### Research question 1: How do schools distribute responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices?

The case-ordered descriptive meta-matrix in Appendix V offers an overview of how the individual schools in our sample distribute the responsibilities for strategic planning and the five HR practices under investigation. Table 2 and Figure 1 summarize these findings per practice and show that in the majority of the participating schools the leadership team seems to have no responsibility in ‘recruitment and selection’, ‘assignment’, ‘teacher evaluation’ and ‘rewards’. Yet, in contrast, for strategic planning and ‘professional development’ we see that in the majority of cases not only the school leader is involved. For strategic planning and professional development, we notice that often the leadership team and teachers are involved. Second, Table 1 shows that only in a minority of cases teachers get also responsibilities in strategic planning or the five HR practices. In what follows, we will discuss the distribution of responsibilities for strategic planning and the five different HR practices more in detail.



**Table 2.** Summary per practice of distribution

	Principal	Leadership team (i.e. group of people with formal leadership roles such as assistant principal, TA(C), coordinator, policy supporter)	Teachers
<b>Strategic planning</b>	7 schools (PS: 2; SS: 5)	17 schools (PS: 8; SS: 9)	10 schools (PS: 7; SS: 3)
<b>Recruitment and selection</b>	18 schools (PS: 7; SS: 11)	6 schools (PS: 1; SS: 5)	3 schools (PS: 2; SS: 1)
<b>Assignment</b>	18 schools (PS: 10; SS: 8)	6 schools (PS: 2; SS: 4)	2 schools (PS: 0; SS: 2)
<b>Teacher evaluation</b>	20 schools (PS: 12; SS: 8)	4 schools (PS: 0; SS: 4)	No schools
<b>Professional development</b>	9 schools (PS: 5; SS: 4)	15 schools (PS: 7; SS: 8)	6 schools (PS: 2; SS: 4)
<b>Rewards</b>	14 schools (PS: 8; SS: 6)	10 schools (PS: 4; SS: 6)	4 schools (PS: 2; SS: 2)

**Note:** PS: primary schools; SS: secondary schools

**Strategic planning.** Related to strategic planning, we notice that the majority of schools (i.e. 8 primary schools and 9 secondary schools) in our sample involves the leadership team in developing the school vision and setting goals or priorities for the next school year(s).

*“Now we have to link our pedagogical project to [new school board]. I started with that, but X [the policy supporter] said: ‘I will also make a design and then we can gather to discuss it.’ I also thought about it, but I’m not facing this alone.” (Principal, school C)*

*“To design our vision, we worked separately with the leadership team. [...] We are convinced of the essence: we want to be a school that breathes warmth, where pupils feel at home. We want to be innovative. We think participation is important.” (Technical leader, school 9)*

Yet, in seven schools (i.e. 4 primary schools and 3 secondary schools), we see that not the leadership team but the principal takes the main responsibility for strategic planning.

*“I think he has a vision where he heads to. I’m convinced of that and he also made this clear: ‘my priorities are ready, I know where I head to.’ I think we now start to feel where he is heading to. ... Let me put it this way: with or without us, that point will be reached. And if possible, we will be able to participate, but our input will need to be damn good to convince the principal to change his course.” (Teacher, school 5)*

In five of these six schools (i.e. A, E, J, L and 5), however, there is no leadership team which explains why mainly the principal takes up this responsibility. However, when there is no leadership team (which is the case in 4 primary schools and 1 secondary school), often

this responsibility is shared by the principal with teachers (n = 4). We also notice that in 5 additional schools in which this responsibility is taken up by the leadership team, there is structural participation of teachers related to the strategic planning.

*“Actually everything that has to do with the school is discussed in a team meeting. For example, this year the decision was made to divide the playground in two parts. One part for primary and one part for kindergarten. That has been discussed and everybody could give his opinion. ... so the team has decided and I do think this was a big decision.” (Teacher, school J)*

*“I launched a system in order to set school priorities. It is really simple but it works. Every school year I survey teachers about school policy ... I ask them three things: ‘What is good?’, ‘What is not so good?’ and ‘What can be improved?’. I like to hear some solutions. These are really important questions. Many interesting things pop up by using this system.” (School principal, school 12).*

Finally, it is important to notice that in 5 schools also the school board or the school network is involved in strategic planning. In four secondary schools (i.e. school 4, 6, 7 and 10) the involvement of the school board in strategic planning speaks clearly from the interviews. Actually in these schools the school board pushes forward a central educational project and support its schools to pursue this vision (e.g. by informing new members about the project and by stimulate reflection on the project). Such an educational project often builds on core values (e.g. ‘challenge students to excellence’, ‘good relation between educators and students’ or ‘preferential love for the weakest students’) which have a long history or tradition. Moreover, in these schools the school vision is strongly build on that educational project and strategic priorities are often chosen in relation to the broader project.

*“All foundations of the educational project [of the school board] are important here. I can’t say that we put an emphasis on one foundation but certain situations make we put more emphasis on certain things than other. [...] Challenge pupil to excellence ... that is something which rests in our walls ... but also the core foundation ‘conscious, competent and compassionate’. I can’t choose one that is most important here but I believe the whole educational project is extremely important. That is our identity. It’s important that we save it and ensure it. If you can’t find yourself in our project that’s okay but that’s what we offer. Everyone can join but you can’t decide to pick the chicken or the shrimps. You take the whole paella.” (Principal, school 7)*

In one primary school (i.e. school E) we notice that strategic planning takes shape at the school network level by developing a shared vision on what ‘good education’ means and deciding on shared strategic priorities for all schools within the school network.

*“At the level of the school network we decided on strategic priorities. One priority, for example, is ‘student behavior’. Last year I went to the different schools of the school*

*network to see what was going on related to student behavior and more specifically difficult student behavior. We also created a learning network in which we want to bring people together and exchange experiences around that theme.” (Principal, school E)*

To conclude, we observe that for strategic planning responsibilities are clearly distributed; in most schools not only the principal takes the main responsibility as often the leadership team and/or teachers are involved. While no clear differences between primary and secondary schools could be noticed related to the involvement of the leadership team, the results show that the involvement of teachers is larger in primary schools than in secondary schools.

**Recruitment and selection.** In three quarters of the schools in our sample (i.e. 11 primary schools and 7 secondary schools), the principal takes the main responsibility in the school for recruiting and selecting new teachers (even if a leadership team is present in the school). Only in one quarter of the schools (i.e. 1 primary school and 5 secondary schools) this responsibility is shared within the leadership team and hence, more people are involved when recruiting and selecting teachers. In most of these schools this means that the assistant principal is also involved during the selection interview.

*“The assistant principal is most of the time present during the selection interview. Not in a structural way but very often because it is useful to rely on a second opinion. It is strange but most of the time we agree [...] We always choose a ‘consensus candidate’.” (Principal, school 7)*

Only in three schools (i.e. 2 primary schools and 1 secondary school) this responsibility is also shared with teachers within the school.

*“For the open positions in the school I invited always three candidates and then selected the best candidate. I always asked someone -who knows the school longer than me- to be also present at the selection interview. In order to discuss afterwards: ‘What do you think?’. In order to have two opinions.” (Principal, school G)*

*“In our school you have a selection interview together with a part of the school board and a selection interview together with a part of the teachers and the principal. The school board are actually parents. So, actually you have two selection interviews. I think this was good. During these different interviews different questions are asked. In the meantime I have been also involved in the selection interviews.” (Teacher, school J)*

However, we do also notice in Table 2 that in 5 schools where ‘recruitment and selection’ is solely the responsibility of the principal, there is also a collaboration at the school network or school board. Hence, the principal does not perform this practice

entirely alone. Yet, it is striking to notice that this collaboration at the school network or school board level was only noticed in primary schools.

*“We have a uniform selection procedure at the school network level. Teacher candidates apply and depending on how many candidates apply, the principals of the school network form one, two or three selection committees. We have a shared scenario we use in order that in each selection interview somewhat the same questions are asked and a decision is made on shared criteria.” (School network principal, school I)*

To conclude, we observe that for ‘recruitment and selection’ in most cases responsibilities are limited distributed with the leadership team and/or teachers. In cases in which responsibilities are distributed within the leadership team it concerns most of the time secondary schools.

**Assignment.** The distribution of responsibilities for assignment follows the tendency we see in the distribution of responsibilities for recruitment and selection. This means that the majority of schools (i.e. 10 primary schools and 8 secondary schools) places this responsibility with the principal instead of the leadership team.

*“I delegate a lot of things but one thing stays in my hands and that is human resource management. That’s what I think is important. In this phase of the reorganization is personnel important because it is the ‘gold’ of the organisation. [...] On a long term basis I’ll give more responsibilities to sector coordinators. For example for assignment. On this moment I chose to do not. We have a lot of new teachers. I have a better view on them because I selected them.” (Principal, school 8)*

*“No, the leadership team is not involved in assignment. I’m responsible for that. I look what their wishes are. If they want to switch to another year I try to look where it is possible.” (Principal, school K)*

Less than one third of the schools (i.e. 2 primary schools and 4 secondary schools) involves the leadership team to assign tasks within the school.

*“Assignment is more and more a responsibility of the coordinators. I ask them to make the assignments together with the teachers and ask to make sure these assignments are adjusted to the needs of the teachers. The less I need to involve in that process, the better it works. When I take this over, I take away the mandate of the coordinator. I want to touch this as less as possible.” (Principal, school 9)*

Finally, in two secondary schools (i.e. school 3 and 5) we notice teachers have a substantial participation when the principal assigns tasks.

*“I make the assignments. I ensure the tasks are distributed in a good way based on the preferences I received from the teachers. Afterwards the timetable is made by another*

*group of people. Without having a clear mandate for that, they advise me in teacher assignment. Sometimes they say: ‘When you would switch these teachers, they would be happy’. And in such situations I do this. [...] This group of people are teachers who work on the timetables for years. They have experience in that. When something is wrong in the assignments, teachers also contact them. They contact them first and afterwards the principal.” (Principal, school 5)*

To conclude, we might state that in line with the results for ‘recruitment and selection’ in most cases responsibilities in ‘assignment’ are limited distributed at the school level. Moreover, it is striking to notice that in the majority of cases in which responsibilities are distributed within the leadership team and/or teachers it concerns secondary schools.

**Teacher evaluation.** For this HR practice, we notice that the distribution of responsibilities is almost exclusively placed with the principal (i.e. 12 elementary schools and 8 secondary schools). One of the main reasons for this finding is the teacher evaluation legislation which stipulates that only formal leaders in the school can take up the role of teacher evaluator. In practice, this often means that only the principal is legally allowed to perform this role because no other formal leaders are present in the school (e.g. in most primary schools there is only one principal). This is the case in 14 schools (i.e. 10 primary and 4 secondary) in our sample where no one else can take up the role of evaluator. This means that in 6 schools (2 primary and 4 secondary) in our sample, there is a possibility to share this responsibility with other formal leaders besides the principal (e.g. with an adjunct-principal or TAC), but schools deliberately choose not to share this responsibility.

*“No, the assistant principal [which is also appointed as care coordinator] is not involved in teacher evaluation. We also discussed this with the school board and decided not to involved her. For course she also notices when things go wrong in the classroom. She supports teachers but when this does not work I’ll intervene. [...] When see would be appointed for more hours with the principalship I think we could share this responsibility but I don’t know whether teachers would accept it.” (Principal, case K)*

The remaining 4 schools (i.e. school 4, 7, 9 and 10) that can share this responsibility choose to do so. More specifically, the interviews show that the school principal in school 7, 9 and 10 shares responsibilities related to teacher evaluation with an adjunct principal or technical principal. In school 4 we notice that both principals (e.g. general principal, pedagogical principal, technical principal), adjunct principals and technical advisors (TA’s) have responsibilities in teacher evaluation. In none of the schools in our sample there is structural participation of teachers in outlining this HR practice. However, this does not mean that teachers cannot individually participate related to their own evaluation.

In summary we can state that ‘teacher evaluation’ is the only practice in which responsibilities are least distributed and for which in most schools only the principal takes



the main responsibility. Although only a few schools in our study distribute responsibilities regarding teacher evaluation, it concerns all secondary schools.

**Professional development.** Professional development is an HR practice that is shared the most in the schools we investigated in this study. No clear differences between primary and secondary schools could be noticed in this regard. Almost two thirds of the schools (i.e. 7 primary and 8 secondary schools) involve their leadership team in this practice. This often means that the leadership team decides on professional development priorities or take up a shared responsibility in stimulating teachers to develop themselves professionally based on individual needs. In only one third of the schools (i.e. 5 primary and 4 secondary schools) the principal is the main actor to take responsibility for this practice. However, we do also notice in the matrix in Appendix V that in 4 primary schools (where this is mainly the responsibility of the principal or a shared responsibility with teachers) there is also a collaboration at the school network or school board level. Hence, in the majority of schools the principal does not perform this practice entirely alone. In case E, for example, internal professional development days are often organized in collaboration with the school network, as the following quote illustrates:

*“Most of the time someone extern to the school was invited to the school to give a presentation. This year we changed this approach. In the morning we work together with the schools of the school network. This year all teachers received information on [a new curriculum ] and in the afternoon we organized workshops which were developed by our own teachers. So we asked teachers in the different schools: ‘What is your talent?’. [...] In total we had 16 workshops given by teachers within the school network.” (Principal, school E)*

Furthermore in case I professional development priorities are determined and monitored jointly at the school network level.

*“Not every schools should develop a professional development trajectory on his own. For some topics we try to do this together. It’s always a trajectory of 2 years. First teachers are informed and then there is an analysis of the initial situation. No, for the topic ‘STEM’ we selected STEM-ambassadors at every school who will disseminate the knowledge and experience they acquired within the professional development trajectory. They can then try to find support in their teacher team for STEM.” (School network principal, school I)*

In six schools (2 primary and 4 secondary schools), teachers are also structurally provided with opportunities to participate related to this practice. On the one hand, we notice teachers are asked to participate in setting priorities for the professional development plan of the school.

*“Last team meeting I gave every teacher three post-its. They could write down 3 topics for the upcoming internal professional development day. Based on this input I need to*

*select of course but based on their input I will organise the internal professional development days.” (Principal, school I)*

On the other hand, the interviews show that teachers sometimes are also involved in certain professional development initiatives. For example, in some schools teachers get responsibilities in the professionalization of teachers (e.g. for a certain subject or theme) by giving internal workshops or through building a working group. Furthermore, we also see that teachers are asked to organise a part of the internal professional development day.

*“Last year I followed a course about a certain drawing software on two Wednesdays. Another teacher replaced me during these two days. After the course I could give the workshop to my colleagues. In this school we often work like this.” (Teacher, school 9)*

*“The principal stimulates teachers to share knowledge from professional development initiatives. We can share our expertise at a team meeting but it is also possible that he asks you to present a certain teaching practice he [the principal] noticed in your class. In this way we learn from each other. Yet, the principal takes initiative for that.” (Teacher, school F)*

To conclude, we observe that for ‘professional development’ in most cases responsibilities are distributed at the school level. No clear differences could be noticed between primary and secondary schools.

**Rewards.** For this HR practice, we notice that the distribution of responsibilities is more evenly divided among the principal and the leadership team. In 14 schools (i.e. 8 primary schools and 6 secondary schools) the principal takes the lead, while in 10 schools the leadership team takes responsibility for rewarding teachers. In cases in which the leadership team takes responsibility this often means that rewarding teachers is a shared responsibility between the principal and the leadership team. Nevertheless, in some cases the interviews suggest that members of the leadership team take up this responsibility instead of the principal, as the following quote illustrates:

*“No, we notice she [principal] has difficulties with rewarding teachers. [...] She puts effort in it but sometimes she forgets people. When I say this to her, she reacts: ‘What that teacher does, is something which is evident, no?’. Nevertheless, it is often something evident ... I believe people like to be appreciated for that. She is not aware of that and sometimes she says: ‘I find this difficult’. [...] I try to compliment her in that and appreciate teachers regularly.” (Assistant principal, school K)*

Only in four schools in our sample (i.e. 2 primary schools and 2 secondary schools), teachers are also structurally involved (besides the principal) in rewarding teachers. In most of these schools there is group of teachers who gets the responsibility to reward teachers on a regular basis through the organisation of different activities.

*“The principal asked me to make a team focused on rewarding teachers. He said: ‘Do your thing.’ I always communicate in a transparent way but I can organise a lot of things here. [...] I think this is extremely important. It is possible in this school. We can organise a lot of things for teachers. The principal agrees with that. I can image it is different in other schools” (Teacher, school 8)*

Taken together, we might conclude that for ‘rewards’ schools vary in the way they distribute responsibilities. While in almost half of the cases the principal takes the lead, in almost half of the other cases the leadership team is involved. No clear differences could be noticed between primary and secondary schools.

#### Summarizing scheme result research question 1

	Distribution of responsibilities	Primary schools (PS) versus secondary schools (SS)
<b>Strategic planning</b>	Large	> in PS
<b>Recruitment and selection</b>	Small	> in SS
<b>Assignment</b>	Small	> in SS
<b>Teacher evaluation</b>	Small	> in SS
<b>Professional development</b>	Large	No clear differences
<b>Rewards</b>	Moderate	No clear differences

#### Research question 2: To what extent is the distribution of responsibilities different in excellent and moderate strategic schools?

In order to answer the 2<sup>nd</sup> research question we looked for differences in distributed leadership between the groups of excellent strategic schools (n= 10) and moderate strategic schools (n = 14) in our sample. Therefore, we looked at how many excellent strategic schools and moderate strategic school distribute leadership for strategic planning, on the one hand, and the 5 HR practices (i.e. recruitment and selection, assignment, teacher evaluation, professional development and rewards), on the other hand. Table 3 gives an overview of differences between these two groups in the involvement of the principal, the leadership team and teachers for strategic planning and the five HR practices. The percentages presented in this table are based on the amount of excellent/moderate strategic schools in which these three groups are involved (cf. Appendix V). In what follows, we will discuss differences in the involvement of the leadership team and the involvement of teachers between the group of excellent and moderate strategic schools.

**Table 3.** Differences in distribution of responsibilities between excellent and moderate strategic schools

	Principal		Leadership team		Teachers	
	ES	MS	ES	MS	ES	MS
<b>Strategic planning</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Primary schools	40% (20%*)	29%	60%	71%	60%	57%
Secondary schools	0%	43% (14%*)	100% (20%)	57% (29%*)	0%	43%
<b>Recruitment &amp; selection</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Primary schools	80% (40%*)	100% (40%*)	20%	0%	20%	14%
Secondary schools	60%	57%	40%	43%	20%	0%
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Primary schools	80%	86%	20%	14%	0%	0%
Secondary schools	60%	71%	40%	29%	20%	14%
<b>Teacher evaluation</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Primary schools	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Secondary schools	60%	71%	40%	28%	0%	0%
<b>Professional development</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>14%</b>
					<b>(10%*)</b>	
Primary schools	40%*	43%*	60%	57%	40%	14%
Secondary schools	20%	43%	80%	57%	40%	14%
<b>Rewards</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>14%</b>
Primary schools	60%	71%	40%	29%	20%	14%
Secondary schools	40%	57%	60%	43%	20%	14%
<b>Total HR practices (average)</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Primary schools	72%	80%	28%	20%	20%	8%
Secondary schools	48%	57%	52%	57%	16%	8%

**Note.** ES = excellent strategic schools; MS = moderate strategic schools; percentages = percentage of ES/MS schools involving principal / leadership team / teachers, \*percentage of schools in which also involvement of schoolboard / school network is noticed

**Involvement of the leadership team.** Table 3 shows that excellent strategic schools in general involve the leadership team a little bit more in strategic planning and HR practices compared with moderate strategic schools (with no meaningful differences between excellent primary and excellent secondary schools or moderate primary and moderate secondary schools). More specifically, we see that for strategic planning 80% of the excellent strategic schools involve the leadership team compared with 64% of the moderate strategic schools. Only in two excellent strategic schools (i.e. school A and E) the leadership team is not involved in strategic planning. Yet, in these two schools no formal leadership team is present in the school (see Table 1) which explains why strategic planning is not a shared responsibility of the leadership team. In the group of moderate strategic schools we notice that in 5 schools strategic planning is not distributed with the leadership team. As in the group of excellent strategic schools, in 3 (out of 5) schools no leadership team is present. Yet, in two schools (i.e. school 2 and 6) there is a leadership team present but strategic planning is not discussed within the leadership team. Actually, interviews and observations of leadership team meetings in these schools indicate that the cooperation

with the leadership team is mainly focused on making practical arrangements but not on strategic planning issues.

Furthermore, when we look at the average total for the HR practices we see that 40% of the excellent strategic schools involve the leadership team in HR practices, while only 31% of the moderate strategic schools were found to involve the leadership team for HR practices. This result might imply that excellent strategic schools distribute leadership more often with the leadership team. In addition, the interviews suggest that school leaders in moderate strategic schools refer more often to practical reasons for distributed leadership compared with excellent strategic schools. For example, for the HR practice 'rewards' we notice that in moderate strategic schools leadership is often distributed to the leadership team and/or teachers as the principal (and teachers) recognizes this is a personal weakness or the principal experiences there is limited time to reward teachers. Actually, we conclude that in moderate strategic schools often the responsibility is placed with someone else than the principal.

*“Yes, the care coordinators (which are part of the leadership team) play an important role in rewarding teachers. They are stronger in rewarding teachers than I.” (Principal, school K)*

*“The previous principal appraised and complimented teachers extremely. This is not my style. So, I was kind of a cold shower for them. I know it is my weak point and I'm aware of that.[...] My adjunct-principal is different. He always looks at the bright side of life.” (Principal, school 7)*

*“Yes, me and [name teacher] have a responsibility in rewarding teachers because we thought it was really necessary. [...] Our principal doesn't scatter compliments. Yet, in the beginning of the school year we experienced there was a negative atmosphere within the school. Therefore, we started with compliments for teachers during the first team meeting with small greeting cards. Those are only small things.” (Teacher, school H)*

In contrast, in the excellent strategic schools we often notice that both the principal and members of the leadership team / teachers have a responsibility in rewarding teachers. Actually, in these schools rewarding teachers is a shared responsibility. Moreover, the involvement of the leadership team or teachers is explicitly asked by the principal.

*“The principal asked me to make a team focused on rewarding teachers. He said: ‘Do your thing.’. I always communicate in a transparent way but I can organise a lot of things here. [...] I think this is extremely important. It is possible in this school. We can organise a lot of things for teachers. The principal agrees with that. I can image it is different in other schools” (Teacher, school 8)*

**The involvement of teachers.** When zooming in on differences in the involvement of teachers, the average total for HR practices in Table 3 indicates that the involvement of teachers for HR practices is a bit larger in the excellent strategic schools compared with the moderate strategic schools (ES: 18%; MS: 8%). Actually, we see that only in two excellent strategic schools there is no involvement of teachers in any of the HR practices (i.e. school A and 4). This is in contrast with the large amount of moderate strategic schools (i.e. 8 schools) in which there is no involvement of teachers in any of the HR practices. No clear explanations are given within these schools why teachers are not involved in HRM. It seems that school leaders in moderate strategic schools often do not consider teacher participation in HRM as an opportunity. Finally, taking these results into account, it is striking to notice that for ‘strategic planning’ teachers are involved more often in moderate strategic schools (50%) compared with the excellent strategic schools (30%). Yet, a detailed inspection of Table 3 shows that these differences can be mainly explained by differences between secondary schools. Actually, we see that both in primary excellent schools and primary moderate schools teachers are involved in the majority of cases (ES: 60%; MS: 57%). Yet, when we look at secondary schools only, we notice that excellent strategic schools do not involve teachers in strategic planning compared with 43% of the moderate strategic schools (i.e. school 2, 5 and 12). When we searched for explanations for this finding, the interviews showed us that these three schools are rather small compared to the other secondary schools in our study (i.e. school 2: 250 pupils; school 5: 280 pupils; school 12: 320). The fact teachers are involved for strategic planning in these cases can be possibly explained by the fact there is a rather small teacher team present at school.

**Outlier cases.** As we are aware of the fact that Table 3 point only to relatively small differences between excellent strategic and moderate strategic schools, we searched for possible outlier cases in the group of excellent strategic schools and moderate strategic schools. When we inspect the case-ordered descriptive matrix in Appendix V and Figure 2, we notice that in both the excellent strategic group and moderate strategic group outlier cases could be identified in which the positive relationship between the extent to which HR practices are strategic and the extent to which HR practices are distributed with the leadership team and/or teachers (as discussed above) remains absent. When we look at the excellent strategic group of schools, we notice that in two primary schools (school A and E) no responsibility in HRM is distributed with the leadership team as no leadership team is present at school. Yet, in these cases we notice a strong and strategic collaboration at the school network level for different HR practices. As a result, it seems that the distribution of HR responsibilities is less necessary at the school level. For teacher recruitment and selection, for example, in these two schools a good cooperation at the school network level helps to make strategic selection decisions.

*“I’m very happy that it is centralized. Why? They have more experience on HR and recruitment. There are specifics for the school which I can communicate with the commission and the coordinating principal. Also, the previous mentor is part of the*

commission. Those two know our school regarding school culture. But they can also compare certain things. They have seen a bunch of candidates and they can evaluate the candidates better than I can. Just the fact that the committee includes different profiles, it makes they can make an objective selection decision.” (Principal, school A)

“We follow the same procedure in order to ensure that we look at the same things. We made a job profile together with all principals within the school network. We reflected on: ‘What do we expect from a teacher? [...] The ultimate goal is to get the right man at the right place and to know which profiles we have and what we miss.’” (Principal, school E)

Furthermore, when we zoom in on the moderate strategic schools, we notice that in two secondary schools (school 1 and 10) (almost) all HR practices are distributed to the leadership team. Yet, these cases are both large secondary schools (school 1: 950 pupils; school 10: 1100 pupils) in which the distribution of responsibilities is rather an opportunity than a strategic choice.

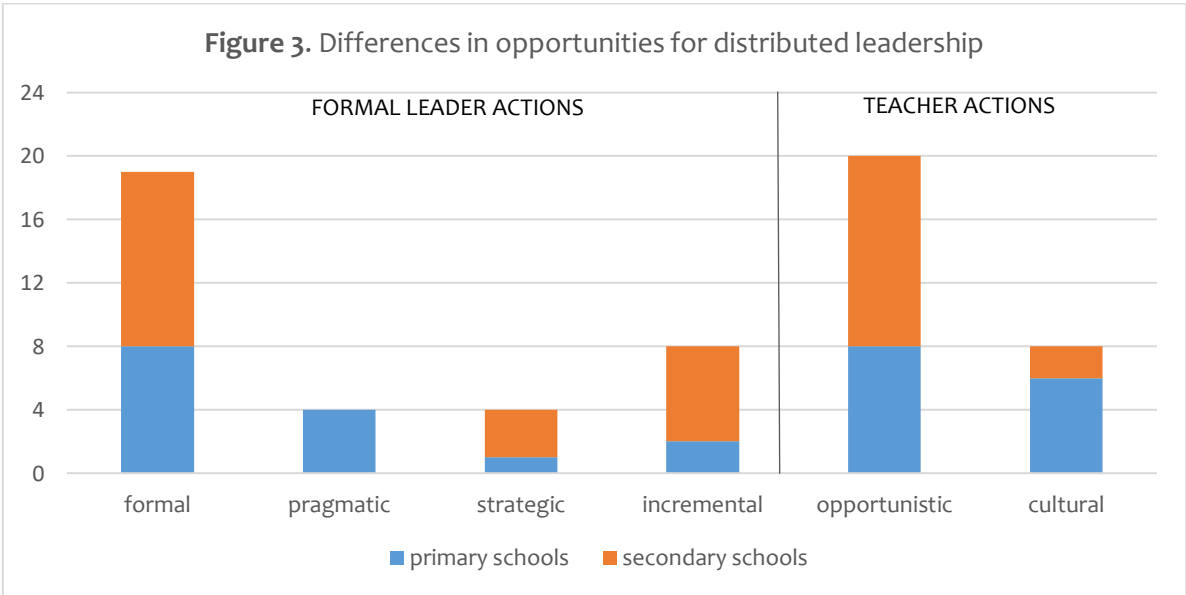
“We distribute responsibilities between 3 principals and we have two institution numbers. [name] is principal of the first grade for the first institution number. The second institution number is larger than 600 pupils so we can also appoint an adjunct principal. I’m the general principal for the whole schools. We distributed the responsibilities (in HRM) according to the background of the principal.” (Principal, school 10)

Figure 2. Outlier cases



Research question 3: How do schools create opportunities for distributed leadership?

The case-ordered descriptive meta-matrix in Appendix VI presents an overview of the differences in which schools created opportunities for distributed leadership and ways in which teachers take these opportunities to participate. A summary of these differences for both primary schools and secondary schools in our study is illustrated in Figure 3. Based on this figure we notice there are differences in the way schools create opportunities for distributed leadership. In the first place, we notice that principals in our study create opportunities for distributed leadership in a ‘formal’, ‘pragmatic’, ‘strategic’ and ‘incremental’ way with ‘formal’ distribution occurring in a majority of schools (alongside with another formal leader action or teacher action). Moreover, we notice that in secondary schools opportunities are more often created in a ‘strategic’ or ‘incremental way’ while the ‘pragmatic’ way seem to be only noticed in primary schools. In the second place, we notice that teachers also allocate influence within their team by taking opportunities to participate in an opportunistic and cultural way with the ‘opportunistic’ distribution occurring the most. Yet, in one school (i.e. school C) we could not find enough evidence to state also teachers allocate influence in an opportunistic or cultural way. Moreover, the results show that in some schools opportunities for distributed leadership are created in more than one way, pointing to the fact that these 4 formal leadership actions and 2 teacher actions are not mutual exclusive.



In what follows, we will discuss the forms in which opportunities for distributed leadership are given and taken following the order in which we see them to occur in the 24 schools participating in this study. We start first with describing the formal leader actions and end with the teacher actions.



## Formal leader actions

**Formal distribution.** Figure 3 shows in the first place that in the majority of the participating schools (i.e. 8 primary schools and 11 secondary schools) opportunities for distributed leadership are created in a formal way. This implies most of the time that the school principal delegates influence structurally by assigning people with hours to fulfill a specific task and describes these tasks in a job description of team members. Both primary and secondary schools seem to take opportunities to distribute leadership by assigning people within a formal role (such as the role of policy supporter, department coordinator or grade coordinator). In some schools people get a fulltime assignment for this formal role, while in other schools teachers take up this responsibility part-time besides a part-time teaching position.

*“We are not entitled to get a full-time assistant-principal. Only when you have 600 pupils a schools gets entitled to get one. Is that bad? I don’t complain but you need to be creative. Gradually I build up a relationship of trust with one of the teachers. [...] What did I do? I ensured one teacher got 10 hours of coordinatorship besides his teaching job. He is a teacher but for 10 hours he is exempt from teaching to support me.” (School principal, school 12)*

*“Yes, I have a leadership team. It is called a ‘core team’ in this school consisting of me and the care coordinator who is also appointed with 8 hours for policy support.” (School principal, school C)*

Yet, the interviews also suggest that in five schools (i.e. 4 primary schools and 1 secondary school) leadership is not distributed in a formal way.

*“No [members of the leadership team are not appointed in a formal way]. Neither within a working group nor within the team. Yet, when I’m absent in the school the most experienced teachers replace me. This is based on their age and their experience. People think this is important but within the school it is not arranged in a formal way. Nevertheless I composed some working groups. We have one working group for toddlers, for example. In this case, I assigned two people to that working group of which at least one is kind of the leader of the kindergarten team. This way, I know when pedagogical and didactical matters have to be communicated to the team, it is important to have that person with me but I don’t put a title on those people.” (School principal, school A)*

*“No, I don’t have team members with a formal leading role. Yet, I have a group of teachers which I call ‘the advisory board’ [consisting of voluntary teachers]. With this group I discuss upcoming changes and policy I created. [...] Actually it functions as a sounding board.” (School principal, school 5)*

Finally, it is important to notice that in all primary schools there is a care coordinator appointed in a formal way. In most primary schools the care coordinator is clearly appointed and described as a member of the leadership team with an important role in strategic planning and/or human resource management, as illustrated in the following quote:

*“According to me the position of the care coordinator is extremely important. The care coordinator needs to support the vision of the school and needs to develop that vision. [...] I think it is the most underestimated function. The care coordinator is the left- and right hand of the principal and is important for school policy and quality assurance.” (School principal, school B)*

Nevertheless, it struck us that in 6 primary schools (i.e. school A, E, F, J and L) principals do not refer to the care coordinator as a member of the leadership team. In those cases the care coordinator is often described as a position which seems to be loosely coupled from general strategic planning and human resource management.

**Incremental distribution.** In the second place, we notice in one third of the schools in our study (i.e. 2 primary schools and 6 secondary schools) opportunities for distributed leadership are created in an incremental way. We see that in these schools increased responsibilities are given to people as they show their ability to lead (based on specific expertise or leadership skills) and as they show willingness to take up more responsibilities. The following quotes from both primary and secondary schools illustrate clearly that ‘ability’, ‘capability’ or ‘expertise’, on the one hand, and ‘willingness’, ‘motivation’ or ‘engagement’, on the other hand, are important factors that principals take into account when distributing responsibility in an incremental way.

*“Most of the time there position has grown spontaneously. How do you select those people? ... Most of the time those people are also the ones who take up the responsibility of subject coordinator. Actually, there are the mom or dad of the group. It has grown gradually ... I’ll be honest, there are not in line to take up the role of department coordinator. [...] We expect a lot of them ... sometimes more than what they get back from it. It should be very motivated people with a talent in coordinating. [...] Is it someone who has a good position with the team? Most of the time we take into account different aspects. [...] It grows spontaneously. It needs to be someone who is capable.” (School principal, case 9)*

*“I consciously chose to appeal to the talents of teachers. For example, a teacher from the 3rd grade is also part of the core team. Actually, that’s the leader of our annual theme. Our theme this year is environmental awareness at school. That is someone who has been engaged strongly in this topic over the past years. On her initiative we are now engaged to earn the ‘green flag’ [price for the most environmentally conscious school]. Now we want to link this also to children’s rights. I asked her if she was willing*

*to lead that group. She gets 2 hours for this responsibility.” (School principal, school D)*

**Strategic distribution.** Furthermore, the interviews indicate that in almost a quarter of the schools in our study (i.e. 1 primary school and 3 secondary schools) members with specific expertise or skills are introduced or asked to fulfill specific leadership tasks which points to a strategic way of leadership distribution. In cases where this form of distribution is noticed, we see leadership distribution goes further than pragmatic problem solving but is focused on long-term school goals or priorities.

*“The one who was pedagogical coordinator last year did not function anymore in the leadership team. Because she was not a good match within the leadership team, I assigned her back to a classroom. She started part-time together with [name of teacher within the school who is also part of the leadership team]. Their collaboration was not good. [...] Suddenly on a Friday she informed us that she would not come back on Monday. Her duo-partner was then assigned only to the classroom. As a result there was again a vacant position in the leadership team. [name] came in then. She is a very strong teacher who left education partially. I contacted her -with the help of my network- and asked her to come to our school to work specifically on pupil behavior. She is very good in this task. She focuses for example on playground policy.” (School principal, school G)*

*“The leadership team consists of different sector coordinator. In order to choose those coordinators I asked myself: ‘What does this sector need at this moment? Which competencies are necessary?’ Of course I also need to take into account statutory positions – e.g. the existing technical advisors. Yet, when [name coordinator] retired I assigned this position to [name]. From that moment on he became coordinator for the commercial sector. This is a strategic choice because I know that he is the one that needs the department at this moment. There was a need for structure in this sector. He is efficient and with his competencies he fits the position perfectly at this moment. [...] A lot of teachers told me that they are happy I put them there. They say it is the one they needed.” (School principal, school 8)*

**Pragmatic distribution.** Finally, we also see that in a minority of schools in our study (i.e. 4 primary schools) opportunities for distributed leadership are created in a pragmatic way. In those schools we notice that principals delegate influence relatively ‘ad hoc’ as a response to external demands. In this regard, we notice for example that in some elementary schools (of one specific. umbrella organisation) a core team is composed in order to implement a new curriculum.

*“I don’t have a fixed core team. [...] This year we have two priorities: implementing [a new digital school platform] and [a new curriculum]. [...] Each time I ask different*

*teachers to participate [in working groups focused on these priorities].” (School principal, school L)*

Moreover, we also notice in some schools leadership is distributed in response to the fact pupils and teachers are spread over different locations (i.e. school I) or in response to sudden changes in the leadership team, as the following quote illustrates.

*“It [the procedure of becoming an assistant principal] was a fast and strange procedure. The previous care coordinator -who also took up the role of assistant principal- had the ambition to become fulltime principal in another school. During the previous school year she applied for a position but she did not get it. Last summer holiday she applied again for another position and she got it. The last week of August I was called by our principal. She said: ‘Yes, we have a problem. [name previous assistant principal] is gone. I need someone to support me. I asked [teacher from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade] because she works here for the longest but she is not willing to do this. You are the second one, are you willing to take up this role? I asked her if I could think about it. She said I could but I did not have much time because the week after that the school started. I started the assistant principalship without knowing what it really would mean ...” (Assistant principal – CASE K)*

## **Teacher actions**

**Opportunistic distribution.** In more than three quarters of the participating schools (i.e. 8 primary schools and 12 secondary schools) we notice that teachers undertake additional responsibilities in an relatively ‘ad hoc’ manner. The interviews in these schools suggest that leadership is taken rather than given and principals trust heavily on the fact that capable and caring teachers are willing to extend their roles. Most of the time we notice that this is stimulated by the school principal (or the leadership team) by launching an open call to participate in a board (e.g. ‘advisory board’, ‘pedagogical commission’) or working group (or ‘core teams’, ‘project teams’, ...) which are focused on school priorities and / or activities / projects that take place once or which occur each year.

*“Last year she applied to be part of core team [in order to implement a new curriculum]. [...] I asked for voluntary participants and she was willing.” (School principal, school L)*

*“We have a couple of core teams which organise core activities such as ‘health policy’ or ‘events’. In each core team clusters project teams. In the core team ‘health policy’, for example, there is a project team ‘sport’ or ‘healthy food’. Since two years we do not oblige teachers anymore to take part in these teams. We focus on teachers’ personal engagement. Who wants to participate? And actually we now see that more activities are organized than before. ... That nice to see and points to the engagement of people.” (School principal, school 3)*

*“I launched a call and asked who wants to get engaged [in the advisory board]. I first asked myself: ‘Should I compose a group a representative group of teachers in which different categories are represented? But since we are a small team I did not do that. Actually, everyone who was willing is now part of the board.” (School principal, school 5)*

**Cultural distribution.** Finally in 8 schools (i.e. 6 primary schools and 2 secondary schools) we notice that influence is spontaneously and organically shared between teachers (or that the school wants to achieve that). In these schools we see that people exercise initiative spontaneously and collaboratively, with no necessary identification of leaders or followers. On the one hand, we notice that in three primary schools (i.e. school A, B and F) solely a cultural distribution is noticed implying that distributed leadership is seen as a part of the team culture.

*“It is a nice story in my school. Teachers in this school were used to have a principal who said: ‘I expect this and I want you to do that’. Then I came in ... I’m someone who says what I expect but I don’t say what people should do. I expect that they take up the responsibility. They need to see themselves what is happening within the school and how they can search their own way in it.” (School principal, school E)*

*“I’m convinced of the fact that within a large school you need to work with working groups and responsible people. We approach this in our school in a different way. I see that here things happen in a spontaneous manner: ‘Shouldn’t we do that?’. I think you get that back when you give autonomy to people. That’s the only thing we can do in education.” (School principal, school B)*

Although this is not the case in all three schools it is striking that in a couple of these schools not all teachers perceive this organic and shared responsibly as something positive. For some teachers this cultural distribution seems to lead to feelings of uncertainty and the need for a clear leading role of someone within the school.

*“It takes a lot of time before there is clarity. This school year we focus on playground policy. We talked a lot about that. There was someone who came to our school to talk about that. Actually nobody said what the purpose was ... When went home with a feeling like: ‘What does it yield?’ ... Sometimes this leads to resentment between teachers.” (Teacher, school E)*

On the other hand, we see that in 5 out of these 8 schools (i.e. school D, J, H, 2 and 11) this cultural distribution is present for certain aspects in the school while the opportunistic distribution is also noticed. In these schools a limited amount of core teams are compiled around certain priorities (e.g. ‘implementing new curriculum’ or ‘developing new evaluation approach’) or activities. Nevertheless, for other school matters teachers take up a spontaneously and show a collective responsibility.

*“Specific working groups do not exist in our school. We are such a small group ... If three have to sit together, you might do this also with six people. Everyone knows this. We are used to do things all together.” (Teacher, school H)*

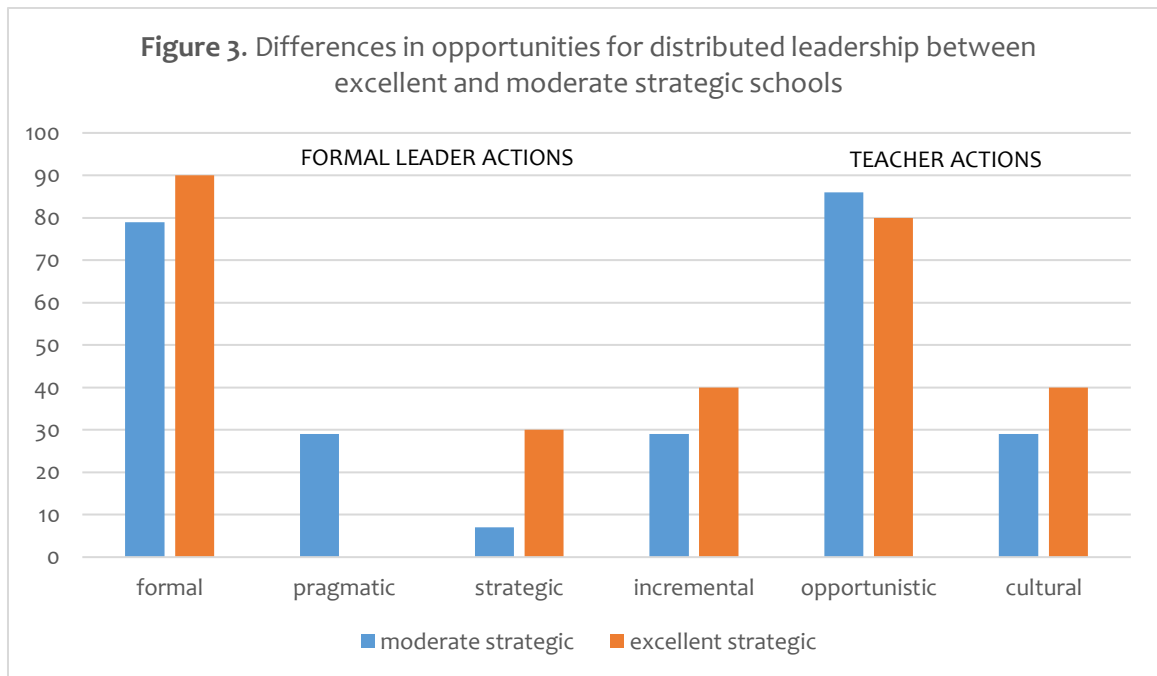
*“People are used to that now. They know we have an annual theme every year. People think about that in advance. People approach me spontaneously or approach the core team and give suggestions. We also take into account their idea. Actually, it is always team work. In the beginning I took the lead but now we do that as a group.” (School principal, school D)*

Taken together, we might conclude in most schools teachers allocate influence by taking the initiative to participate in a specific group (i.e. working group, core team, project team) and/or by sharing influence in a spontaneous and organic way between teachers. Only in one school (i.e. school C) we could not find enough evidence to state also teachers undertake responsibilities. In this school we notice an atmosphere in which teachers take seldom initiative to participate. As a result, the school principal needs to oblige teachers sometimes to participate in one or more working group(s) each year.

*“I told teachers that they need to engage for minimum one working group. They can choose which group they want. Certain working groups ask more work from teachers than others.” (Principal, school C)*

**Research question 4: To what extent is the way that opportunities are created for distributed leadership different in excellent and moderate strategic schools?**

Looking at Table 4 (and Figure 3), we see that differences between excellent and moderate strategic schools can be noticed in the extent to which opportunities are created for distributed leadership. Yet, these differences seem to be larger for the formal leader actions compared to the teacher actions. In what follows these differences will be discussed.



**Table 4.** Differences in opportunities for distributed leadership between ES and MS schools

	Formal leader actions				Teacher actions	
	formal	pragmatic	strategic	incremental	opportunistic	cultural
<b>ES</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Primary	80%	0%	20%	40%	80%	60%
Secondary	100%	0%	40%	40%	80%	20%
<b>MS</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>29%</b>
Primary	71%	29%	0%	0%	86%	43%
Secondary	86%	0%	7%	29%	86%	14%

First, when we look at the formal leader actions we see that in moderated strategic schools opportunities are in some cases created in a pragmatic way while this seem not to occur in the excellent strategic schools. This means that in moderate strategic schools principals delegate influence more often ‘ad hoc’ as a response to external demands, structural characteristics of the school (e.g. different locations of the school) or sudden changes in the leadership team. Yet, here it is important to indicate that these differences were only found for primary schools as we did not found evidence for the fact opportunities are created in a pragmatic way in secondary schools.

Second, we notice that in excellent strategic schools opportunities are more often created in a ‘formal’, ‘strategic’ and ‘incremental’ way compared with the moderate strategic schools. The largest differences can be found for the ‘strategic’ distribution (difference of 23% between ES and MS) followed by the ‘incremental’ and ‘formal’ form of distribution (difference of 11% between ES and MS). This result implies that in contrast with

moderate strategic schools in excellent strategic schools: 1) people (within or outside the school) with specific expertise or skills are approached more often to be part of the leadership team; 2) increased responsibilities are given more often to people as they show their ability to lead and as they show willingness to take on more responsibilities; 3) people are more often structurally assigned with hours to fulfill a specific task (which is often also described in a job description). Moreover, it is important to state that these differences between excellent and moderate strategic schools are proportionally larger in primary schools than in secondary schools.

Third, Table 4 shows, on the one hand, that no clear differences could be found between excellent and moderate strategic schools in the way teachers undertake additional responsibilities (e.g. be part of a board or working group at school). Actually in both groups of schools it seems that teachers take up such responsibilities in a relatively opportunistic way or 'ad hoc' manner. On the other hand, Table 4 indicates that in excellent strategic schools people more often exercise initiative spontaneously and collaboratively, with no necessary identification of leaders or followers (i.e. cultural distribution). Moreover, while in one moderate strategic school (school B) we noticed solely a cultural distribution, in two excellent strategic schools (school A and F) solely a cultural distribution is noticed implying that distributed leadership is seen as a part of the team culture.

## Discussion

Using a multiple case study design, this study explores how schools distribute responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices and to what extent the distribution of these responsibilities is different between excellent and moderate strategic schools. In addition, this study explores how schools create opportunities for distributed leadership and to what extent this is different between excellent and moderate strategic schools. In what follows the results of these research questions will be discussed.

### Variation in the distribution of responsibilities

In line with evidence from previous studies (e.g. Spillane et al., 2007), this study suggest that there is a substantial variation in how leadership is distributed across schools. More specifically, we found variation in the extent to which responsibilities are distributed depending on: 1) whether we look at strategic planning or HR practices; 2) the specific HR practice looked at; 3) the extent to which HR practices are strategic in schools (i.e. excellent strategic versus moderate strategic schools) and 4) school's structural characteristics (e.g. school level, school size and cooperation with the school network).

**Variation depending on strategic planning versus HR practices.** The results of this study show that while in the majority of schools responsibilities in strategic planning are more clearly distributed with teachers, responsibilities in HR practices are in general often



more in the hands of principals. Scant research comparing the distribution of responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices in schools is available, which makes it difficult to reflect on the results of this study based on previous literature. Yet, the fact that schools in our study tend to distribute responsibilities in strategic planning in large extent rhymes with literature stating that strategic planning in schools needs a professional dialogue served by distributed leadership (Hulsbos et al., 2012) and teacher participation (Moxley, 2004; McHatton, et al., 2011; Crittenden & Crittenden, 1997).

**Variation depending on the specific HR practice.** When we look at the 5 HR practices central in this study, we notice that the distribution of responsibilities depend on the specific HR practice looked at. While for ‘professional development’ responsibilities are clearly distributed, for other HR practices the school leader seems to act as the central gatekeeper. For the HR practices ‘recruitment and selection’, ‘assignment’ and ‘teacher evaluation’, for example, we found that in the majority of the participating schools the leadership team nor teachers seem to have a responsibility. More specifically, the involvement of other actors than the principal seems to occur the least for ‘teacher evaluation’ followed by ‘recruitment and selection’ and ‘assignment’. This result largely confirms earlier research on these single isolated HR practices. Although there is a tendency in shifting leadership responsibility for teacher evaluation, several authors (e.g. Goldstein, 2004; Goldstein & Noguera, 2006; Spillane, 2006) agreed that teacher evaluation is traditionally the domain of the principal and both teachers and principals want to keep it that way. This is also the case for Flanders, where different studies (e.g. Hulpia et al., 2009a; Devos, van Petegem, Vanhoof, Declercq & Delvaux, 2014; Devos, van Petegem, Vanhoof, Delvaux & Vekeman, 2013) indicated that the principal is the main actor for evaluating teachers. The reason for that is that the Flemish legislation on teacher evaluation obliges the evaluators to be higher in rank than the teacher. In many primary and secondary schools this means that only the principal can take the role of teacher. Yet, in line with the studies of Devos and colleagues (2013; 2014) we also found that often the school deliberately decides not to distribute this responsibility to other formal leaders within the school as principals want to keep this responsibility in their own hands. Furthermore, when looking at literature on teacher selection we also find confirming evidence for the results of this study. Engel & Finch’s (2015) study showed, for example, that teacher hiring is not often distributed by principals among colleagues. In contrast, many principals in their sample indicated that the decision regarding whom to hire is ultimately their own. Although there is relatively scant research on the distribution of responsibilities in teacher assignment, the literature up to now confirms our findings related to assignment: decisions concerning the allocation of teachers to course and program assignments are primarily the responsibility and prerogative of school principals (Devos, Tuytens, Deconinck & Staelens, 2016; Ingersoll, 2000). In contrast with the HR practices ‘recruitment and selection’, ‘assignment’ and ‘teacher evaluation’, this study indicates that for ‘professional development’ in the majority of cases not only the school

leader is involved. Actually, we observe that for ‘professional development’ responsibilities are clearly distributed. Based on previous research we know that principals are less likely to share leadership when tasks are administrative in nature (Camburn et al., 2003) and more likely to do so when tasks relate to instruction (Spillane & Camburn, 2006). Although ‘recruitment and selection’ or ‘teacher assignment’ are both administrative tasks and tasks that have major implications for teaching and learning (Engel & Finch, 2015), it might be that most school leaders still perceive school staffing practices (including ‘recruitment and selection’ and ‘assignment’) mainly as an administrative task as personnel are the largest cost in any school’s budget. This might result in principals being less inclined to share leadership responsibilities among their leadership team or teachers (Engel & Finch, 2015). In contrast, this might explain why for ‘professional development’ -which is more closely related to instruction- responsibilities are more often distributed within the leadership team. This result is in line with prior research showing more shared responsibility in leadership activities related to professional growth (Inspection for Education, 2014; Spillane & Camburn, 2006). Finally, for the HR practice ‘rewards’ we could not notice a clear trend in the data. Actually we saw that the distribution for this HR practice seems to vary from school to school. In approximately half of the cases the principal seems to lead, while in almost the other half of the cases the leadership team seem to be involved. As few research is available on the distribution of responsibilities for rewarding teachers, we cannot really compare these results with previous evidence.

**Variation depending on the strategic approach in HRM.** Furthermore, the results of this study point to the fact that the variation in distribution of HRM responsibilities also might depend on the extent to which HR practices are strategic in schools. On the one hand, we found that the distribution of responsibilities in HR practices tend to be larger in excellent strategic schools compared to moderate strategic schools. As only small differences could be noticed, we know we should be prudent in interpreting this result. Yet, it seems that excellent strategic schools involve the leadership team and/or teachers more often in HR practices. On the other hand, we notice that although no clear differences between the excellent and moderate strategic schools can be found in the extent to which the leadership team is involved for ‘strategic planning’, we see that proportionately more moderate strategic schools (in secondary education) involve teachers compared to excellent strategic schools (in secondary education).

**Variation depending on schools’ structural characteristics.** Finally, this study shows that the variation in the distribution of HRM responsibilities seems to depend on some structural school characteristics. In the first place, we noticed important differences depending on the school level (i.e. primary versus secondary education). In general we found that in secondary schools responsibilities in HR practices are distributed to the leadership team and/or teacher more often than in primary schools. More specifically, we found - in line with previous research (Devos, Tuytens, Deconinck & Staelens, 2016; Devos,

van Petegem, Vanhoof, Declercq & Delvaux, 2014; Devos, van Petegem, Vanhoof, Delvaux & Vekeman, 2013) - that in secondary schools responsibilities are more often distributed for 'recruitment and selection', 'assignment' and 'teacher evaluation'. An explanation for this fact is that secondary schools are able to rely on more formal leadership roles than primary schools. While recent studies indicate that primary schools in Flanders have often limited resources to appoint formal leaders (besides the principal) (Devos, Tuytens, Leysen & Ysenbaert, 2013), secondary schools can appoint most of the time several full-time equivalents for policy or pedagogical support. In this regard different principals, adjunct-principals, technical advisors, grade coordinators, etc. can be part of a leadership team (Hulpia et al., 2009a). Furthermore, we noticed that the involvement of teachers in strategic planning is larger in primary schools compared with secondary schools. A possible explanation for this result might be that the teacher team is most of the time smaller compared to secondary schools which makes it possible to let teachers participate in strategic planning. Finally, the results of this study showed that a larger pupil population creates more possibilities to distribute leadership and a successful cooperation at the school network level seem to limit the necessity to distribute HRM responsibilities at the school level.

### Opportunities for distributed leadership

Based on the results of this study we might conclude that school leaders create opportunities for distributed leadership in various ways. This finding supports previous studies which argue that formal leaders (e.g. Hairoon & Goh, 2015; Tian et al., 2016) and more specifically school leaders (Bouwman et al., 2019) delegate distributed leadership and that they decide who can fulfil leadership roles. More specifically, we found that the schools in our study create opportunities for distributed leadership in a 'formal', 'pragmatic', 'strategic' and 'incremental' way. More specifically, our findings show that in the majority of our participating schools opportunities for distributed leadership are created in a formal way alongside with another formal leader action or teacher action. This result might be explained by the fact that the past years there is an increasing trend towards distributed leadership in Flemish education (Devos, Tuytens & Hulpia, 2014; De Neve & Devos, 2017; Struyve, Meredith & Gielen, 2014; Vanblaere & Devos, 2016). In addition, over the years Flemish educational policy has created opportunities for middle management in both primary and secondary education (e.g. by assigning hours for specific pedagogical tasks<sup>7</sup>). Actually, only in a couple of schools the school leader indicated there is no formal leadership team. Yet, in those schools we notice there is often a strong participation of teachers and/or collaboration with the school network. Besides the formal way, the results show that in one third of our schools opportunities are created in an incremental way. Only in a minority of schools we found that school leaders create opportunities for distributed leadership in a pragmatic or strategic way. Furthermore, it

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<sup>7</sup> BTP: Bijzonder Pedagogische Taken

was striking to notice that schools in which opportunities were created in a pragmatic way were all moderate strategic schools belonging to primary education. On the other hand, the results showed that in the majority of excellent strategic schools and secondary schools opportunities were created in a strategic or incremental way. This result could be partially be expected as we know from a previous study (Tuytens, Vekeman & Devos, 2020) that all excellent strategic schools approach the HR practice ‘assignment’ strategically (i.e. aligned with strategic planning of the school and the individual needs of teachers). Although in this previous study we focused on the assignment of all teachers within the school (and thus not only members of the leadership team), this result shows that the strategic approach in specific HR practices (such as ‘assignment’) has possibly also an effect on the way school leaders distribute leadership within the school. Finally, the interviews also point to the fact that teachers also allocate influence within their team by taking opportunities to participate in an opportunistic and cultural way with the ‘opportunistic’ distribution occurring in the majority of the cases. This finding confirms earlier findings of Bouwmans and colleagues’ (2019) study. Actually, these scholars argue that distributed leadership structures continue to be influenced by leaders in formalized hierarchical positions and therefore a cultural distribution as described by MacBeath (2005) may not occur that often.

### Limitations and recommendations for further research

Several limitations of our study should be acknowledged. First, our sample was limited. In this regard, we believe it would be interesting to repeat this study in a large quantitative study in order to confirm our results in a representative sample. A larger sample size might also provide the chance to encounter a varied set of combinations between leader- and teacher actions which is interesting to investigate in future research. Furthermore, as we know both SHRM and distributed leadership has a dynamic nature (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016), we believe that longitudinal designs would enable future scholars to study changes over time in the way school leaders implement SHRM and distribute leadership. This would also facilitate the estimation of the causal impact of distributed leadership on SHRM (or SHRM on distributed leadership). Another limitation of this study is that we mainly provided insight in who is responsible within the school for strategic planning and HR practices and whether this is related to strategic HRM in schools. Still several other interesting paths for future research remain unexplored. In this regard it would be interesting to investigate whether other factors such as the quality of cooperation within the leadership team, leadership styles (of the principal but also of different members within the leadership team), the cooperation with the school network and/or involvement of the school board is related to strategic HRM in schools. Further, while we find variation across excellent and moderate strategic schools, we did not examine the extent to which these differences result in a more effective teacher population at the school. In this regard, it would be useful for future

research to extend the current study by examining the extent to which distributed leadership in HRM is associated with attracting, selecting and retaining more qualified teachers and/or teachers who then perform better on the job. Finally, we recognize this study provides little insight in ‘why’ we found differences in the extent to which responsibilities are distributed within the school. In this regard, we believe it might be interesting to search for possible explanations for the extent to which responsibilities are distributed within the school in future research.

## Implications

Despite these limitations and research challenges for the future, we can deduce several implications. First, the current study contributes to research on distributed leadership in several ways. As far as we know, it is the first in-depth study to explore the distribution of leadership tasks in relation to a set of different HR practices adding to a small but growing body of applied research on how leadership is distributed within schools. Corroborating evidence from previous studies, we find substantial variation in how leadership is distributed across schools. Yet, this study shows that this variation can be explained by the nature of HR practices, the strategic approach in HRM but also by schools’ structural characteristics. In this regard, we believe that our results illustrate the need for those training current and future school leaders (administrators and teacher leaders alike) to stress the necessity of taking into account the school context when promoting distributed leadership. Possible areas to emphasize in training include discussion of: the quality of distributed leadership, strategies for deciding whom to include in HR practices and at what stages collaboration might be most beneficial.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I: Theme setting initial meeting with school leader

- Jaarplanning
  - o Strategisch schoolbeleid
  - o Rekrutering en selectie
  - o Opdrachttoewijzing
  - o Professionele ontwikkeling
  - o Leerkrachtevaluatie
  - o Beloningsmogelijkheden
  
- Belangrijke actoren
  - o Schoolteamleden (leidinggevend, leidinggevende leerkrachten, andere)
  - o Schoolbestuur
  - o Scholengemeenschap
  
- Beschikbare documenten
  - o Schoolvisie/pedagogisch project
  - o Schoolwerkplan
  - o Onthaalbrochure nieuwe leerkrachten
  - o Nascholingsplan
  - o Evaluatiereglement
  - o Functiebeschrijving
  - o Schoolreglement
  - o Voorbeeld van vacature
  - o Verslagen (bv. van selectie/rekrutering, evaluatieverslag)
  - o Andere?



## Appendix II: Interview protocol – school leaders and teachers

### LEIDRAAD DIRECTIES:

- Schoolstructuur:
  - Samenstelling schoolbestuur (hoeveel scholen, welke scholen (niveau en locatie))
  - Relatie met schoolbestuur
  - Samenstelling scholengemeenschap
  - Samenwerking scholengemeenschap
- Culturele erfgoed:
  - Hoelang bestaat de school al?
  - Zijn er de voorbije tien jaren grote veranderingen in de school geweest?
  - Zijn er belangrijke zaken in de geschiedenis van de school die nog steeds een invloed hebben op de werking vandaag?
- Arbeidsmarkt
  - Tekort aan leerkrachten?
  - Scholen in de buurt die concurrentieel zijn bij het aantrekken van leerkrachten?
- Institutionele context:
  - Beleid:
    - Welke aspecten in uit het onderwijsbeleid zijn cruciaal (stimulerend of beperkend) voor de strategische planning en personeelsbeleid dat u kan voeren in de school?
  - Vakbond
    - Hoe is de verhouding met de vakbondsafgevaardigden binnen de school?
- Schoolleiding:
  - Ervaring
  - Hoe zou u goed leiderschap omschrijven?
  - Welke eigenschappen moet een leider in uw functie idealiter bezitten?
  - Welke zijn uw sterke punten als u deze eigenschappen bij uzelf bekijkt?
  - Welke zijn uw werkpunten als u deze eigenschappen bij uzelf bekijkt?

- Wat zijn uw belangrijkste taken als schoolleider binnen de school?
- Zijn er andere leidinggevendenden binnen de school?
- Hoe worden de taken verdeeld onder de leidinggevendenden? Weten leerkrachten bij wie zij waarvoor terecht kunnen?
- Hoe verloopt de samenwerking tussen de leidinggevendenden?
- Schoolkenmerken:
  - Formeel overleg:
    - Welke formele overlegmomenten zijn er binnen de school?
  - Leerkrachtparticipatie:
    - Hoe worden leerkrachten betrokken bij de strategische planning en het personeelsbeleid?
  - Professionele leergemeenschap:
    - Hoe zou u de relatie of de sfeer tussen de leerkrachten omschrijven?
    - Wat is uw visie op samenwerking?
    - Wat vindt u belangrijke voorwaarden voor samenwerking?
    - Hoe wordt samenwerking gestimuleerd op school (formeel en informeel)?
    - Gezamenlijke verantwoordelijkheid
    - Gedeprivatiseerde praktijk
    - Reflectieve dialoog
  - Leerkrachtautonomie:
    - Hoe belangrijk vindt u de autonomie van leerkrachten en op welke vlakken?
    - Hoe tracht u die autonomie te stimuleren?
  - Gedeelde visie:
    - Kunt u de visie van de school omschrijven?
    - Hoe is deze tot stand gekomen?
    - Hoe draagt u deze uit als schoolleider?
- Schoolbeleid:
  - Strategische planning:
    - Wat zijn op dit moment de cruciale schooldoelen waar u aan werkt?
    - Hoe zijn deze doelen tot stand gekomen?

- Hoe evalueert u of u de doelen bereikt?
- Worden deze doelen aangepast? Wat is dan de aanleiding?
- Hoe probeert u de concrete doelen te bereiken?
- Personeelsbeleid:
  - Hoe pakt u selectie aan?
  - Hoe pakt u de opdrachttoewijzing aan?
  - Hoe pakt u leerkrachtevaluatie aan?
  - Hoe pakt u professionele ontwikkeling aan?
  - Hoe pakt u de waardering/beloning van leerkrachten aan?

### **LEIDRAAD LEERKRACHTEN:**

- Leerkrachtkenmerken: (alle leerkrachten)
  - Welk vak heeft u binnen de school?
  - Welke andere taken neemt u op zich binnen de school?
  - Hoelang heeft u al les binnen de school? (vastbenoemd?)
  - Hoelang bent u al leerkracht?
  - Hoe zou u uw rol als leerkracht in de dagdagelijkse lespraktijk omschrijven?
  - Wat zijn uw sterke kanten als leerkracht?
  - Wat zijn uw werkpunten als leerkracht?
    - Kunt u leerlingen goed motiveren in uw lessen?
    - Heeft u het gevoel dat u uw klassen goed in de hand kan houden? Een goed klasmanagement kan hanteren?
    - Kunt u gemakkelijk werk- en evaluatievormen toepassen in uw klassen die tegemoet komen aan de noden van de leerlingen?
- Schoolbeleid: (alle leerkrachten)
  - Strategische planning:
    - Wat zijn op dit moment de cruciale doelen waar de school aan werkt?
    - Hoe gebeurt dit?
  - Personeelsbeleid:
    - Selectie: (beginners en TADD)

- Hoe vond uw aanwerving in de school plaats?
- Welke vragen werden gesteld tijdens het sollicitatiegesprek?
- Was u zelf tevreden over de manier van aanwerving?
- Hoe bent u opgevangen tijdens uw beginperiode hier als leerkracht?
- Opdrachttoewijzing: (TADD en ervaren)
  - Hoe gebeurt de opdrachttoewijzing aan leerkrachten in de school?
  - Wanneer wordt deze gecommuniceerd?
- Leerkrachtevaluatie: (TADD en ervaren)
  - Heeft u een functiebeschrijving gekregen?
  - Zijn er op regelmatige basis functioneringsgesprekken?
  - Worden er ook evaluatiegesprekken gehouden?
  - Hoe verzamelt de directie informatie over uw praktijk/uw functioneren?
  - Is er een specifieke evaluatie geweest naar aanleiding van uw TADD-aanstelling?
  - Vindt u zelf dat u voldoende feedback krijgt omtrent uw functioneren? (formeel/informeel)
- Professionele ontwikkeling: (alle leerkrachten)
  - Hoe belangrijk vindt u professionele ontwikkeling zelf als leerkracht?
  - Hoe wordt deze gestimuleerd in de school?
- Waardering – beloning (alle leerkrachten)
  - Hoe weet u of men uw werk in de school waardeert?
  - Heeft u zelf het gevoel gewaardeerd te worden?
  - Krijgt u ook beloningen? Welke?
- Afstemming personeelsbeleid (TADD en ervaren)
  - Heeft u zelf het gevoel dat de verschillende aspecten van personeelsbeleid afgestemd zijn op elkaar? Voorbeeld?
- Schoolleiding: (alle leerkrachten)
  - Wat zijn de sterke punten van de schoolleider?

- Wat zijn werkpunten van de schoolleider?
- Ondersteunt uw schoolleider uw dagelijkse (les)praktijk? Hoe doet hij/zij dit?
- Vertrouwt u de schoolleider?
- Weet u waarvoor u bij de schoolleider terecht kan?
  
- Schoolkenmerken: (alle leerkrachten)
  - Formeel overleg:
    - Welke formele overlegmomenten zijn er binnen de school?
  - Leerkrachtparticipatie:
    - Hoe worden leerkrachten betrokken bij de strategische planning en het personeelsbeleid?
  - Professionele leergemeenschap:
    - Hoe zou u de relatie of de sfeer tussen de leerkrachten omschrijven?
    - Hoe wordt samenwerking gestimuleerd op school (formeel en informeel)?
    - Komen leerkrachten bij elkaar in de klas?
    - Overlegt u vaak met collega's? Waarover? Wanneer?
    - Vindt u zelf samenwerking belangrijk?
  - Leerkrachtautonomie:
    - Kan u voldoende zelf beslissen over uw klaspraktijk?
  - Gedeelde visie:
    - Kunt u de visie van de school omschrijven?
    - Hoe wordt deze gecommuniceerd naar leerkrachten en leerlingen, ouders?
    - Is het personeelsbeleid van de school ook afgestemd op de visie van de school? Hoe merkt u dit?
  
- Uitkomsten leraarniveau: (alle leerkrachten – behalve laatste twee vragen enkel TADD/ervaren)
  - Voelt u zich goed op school?
  - Zou u liever lesgeven op een andere school?
  - Bent u tevreden in uw job als leraar?

- Zou u liever een andere job uitoefenen?
- Voelt u zich thuis in het lerarenteam?
- Wat zorgt er vooral voor dat u dagelijks met plezier komt werken?
- Hoe probeert u als leraar bij te blijven met de nieuwe ontwikkelingen? (formeel en informeel leren)
  - Vakontwikkelingen
  - Meer algemene ontwikkelingen in onderwijs
- Welke veranderingen in de klas hebt u recent doorgevoerd? Wat was de aanleiding hiervoor?

## Appendix III: Observation scheme

Datum, tijdstip, plaats van observatie, activiteit, aanwezigen:
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Beschrijvende gegevens (acties, gedrag, gesprek)	Reflectieve informatie (eigen bedenkingen, ideeën, vragen, bezorgdheden)

## Appendix IV: Case summary format

Variabele	Deelvariabele	Wat we al weten...
INTERNE CONTEXT	Onderwijsnet	Vooraf gekend
	Onderwijsniveau	Vooraf gekend
	Schoolstructuur	Grootte en complexiteit schoolbestuur en scholengemeenschap: Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Schoolgrootte	Vooraf gekend zie: <a href="http://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/nl/onderwijsstatistieken/themas-onderwijsstatistieken/leerlingenaantallen-basis-en-secundair-onderwijs-en-hbo5">http://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/nl/onderwijsstatistieken/themas- onderwijsstatistieken/leerlingenaantallen-basis-en-secundair-onderwijs-en-hbo5</a>
	Leerlingpopulatie	Vooraf gekend zie: <a href="http://www.agodi.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Publicaties_Leerlingenkenmerken_Overzicht_2016-2017_bao.pdf">http://www.agodi.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ Publicaties_Leerlingenkenmerken_Overzicht_2016-2017_bao.pdf</a>  <a href="http://www.agodi.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Publicaties_Leerlingenkenmerken_Overzicht_2016-2017_sec.pdf">http://www.agodi.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/ Publicaties_Leerlingenkenmerken_Overzicht_2016-2017_sec.pdf</a>
	Culturele erfgoed	Normen en waarden, historiek, identiteit, leeftijd: Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Schoolligging	Vooraf gekend
	Schooltype	Vooraf gekend
	Middelen	Vooraf gekend zie:



		<a href="http://www.agodi.be/nieuwe-omkadering-basisonderwijs">http://www.agodi.be/nieuwe-omkadering-basisonderwijs</a> Niet voor secundair onderwijs?
	Schoolprestatie	Doorlichtingsverslag indien aanwezig, databundel leerlingen (gegevens over prestaties van leerlingen in vervolgonderwijs, gegevens over instroom/uitstroom)
EXTERNE CONTEXT	Arbeidsmarkt	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Institutioneel – beleid	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Institutioneel – vakbond	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
SCHOOL- LEIDING	Ervaring	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Transformationeel	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Instructioneel	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Administratief	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Ondersteuning	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Gedeeld	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
SCHOOLKEN MERKEN	Formeel overleg	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten

	Leerkrachtparticipatie	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Professionele leergemeenschap	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Leerkrachtautonomie	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Vertrouwen	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Gedeelde visie	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
SCHOOL- BELEID	Strategisch	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Personeelsbeleid	REKRUTERING EN SELECTIE Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten  OPDRACHTTOEWIJZING Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten  LEERKRACHTEVALUATIE Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten  PROFESSIONELE ONTWIKKELING Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten  WAARDERING EN BELONING Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
LEERKRACHT - KENMERKEN	Demografisch	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Functie	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Carrièrefase	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten

	Vak	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Statuut	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Onderwijsopvattingen	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Doelmatigheidsbeleving	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
UITKOMSTEN LERAAR-NIVEAU	Welbevinden	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Professioneel leren	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Lerarenverloop	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten (o.a. databundel personeel)
	Interactie tussen leraren	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten
	Veranderingen in de klas	Info uit interviews, observaties en documenten

## Appendix V: Case-ordered display - How do schools distribute responsibilities in strategic planning and HR practices?

		<b>Principal</b>	<b>Leadership team<sup>8</sup></b> (i.e. group of people with formal leadership roles such as assistant principal, TA(C), coordinator, policy supporter)	<b>Teachers</b>
<b>EXCELLENT STRATEGIC SCHOOLS (10)</b>				
Primary schools (5)	CASE A	X (SP / R&S* - A - TE - PD* - R)	(not present in school)	X (SP)
	CASE D	X (TE)	X (SP / R&S - A - PD - R)	X (SP - R)
	CASE E	X (SP* / R&S* - A* - TE - PD* - R)	(not present in school)	X (PD*)
	CASE F	X (R&S - A - TE)	X (SP - PD - R)	X (SP - PD)
	CASE G	X (R&S - A - TE - R)	X (SP / PD)	X (R&S)
Secondary schools (5)	CASE 3	X (R&S - A - PD - TE)	X (SP / R)	X (PD - A)
	CASE 4		X (SP* / R&S - A - TE - PD - R)	
	CASE 8	X (R&S - A - TE - R)	X (SP / PD)	X (R)
	CASE 9		X (SP / R&S - A - TE - PD - R)	X (PD)
	CASE 11	X (R&S - A - TE - R)	X (SP / PD)	X (R&S)
<b>MODERATE STRATEGIC SCHOOLS (14)</b>				
Primary schools (7)	CASE B	X (R&S* - A - TE)	X (SP / PD* - R)	X (SP)
	CASE C	X (R&S* - TE - R)	X (SP / A - PD)	
	CASE H	X (R&S - A - TE - R)	X (SP / PD)	X (R)
	CASE I	X (R&S* - A - TE - PD* - R)	X (SP)	X (SP / PD*)
	CASE J	X (SP / R&S* - A - TE - PD* - R)	(not present in school)	X (SP / R&S)
	CASE K	X (R&S - TE - A)	X (SP - PD - R)	
	CASE L	X (SP / R&S* - A - TE - PD - R)	(not present in school)	X (SP)
Secondary schools (7)	CASE 1	X (TE)	X (SP / R&S - A - PD - R)	
	CASE 2	X (SP / R&S - A - TE - PD - R)	X	X (SP / PD)
	CASE 5	X (SP / R&S - A - TE - PD - R)	(not present in school)	X (SP / A)
	CASE 6	X (SP* / R&S - A - TE - PD - R)	X	
	CASE 7	X (A)	X (SP* / R&S - TE - PD - R)	
	CASE 10		X (SP* / R&S - A - TE - PD - R)	
	CASE 12	X (R&S - A - TE - R)	X (SP / PD)	X (SP - R)

**Note:** SP = strategic planning; R&S: recruitment & selection; A: assignment; TE: teacher evaluation; PD: professional development; R: rewards; X (with SP nor HR practices between brackets) = there is a leadership team but it is not involved in SP or HR practices; \*also involvement of schoolboard / school network

<sup>8</sup> The leadership team includes also the principal

## Appendix VI: Case-ordered display - How do schools create opportunities for distributed leadership?

<b>EXCELLENT STRATEGIC SCHOOLS (10)</b>		<b>Formal leader actions</b>				<b>Teacher actions</b>	
		<b>formal</b>	<b>pragmatic</b>	<b>strategic</b>	<b>incremental</b>	<b>opportunistic</b>	<b>cultural</b>
Primary schools (5)	A						x
	D	x			x	x	x
	E				x	x	
	F	x					x
	G	x		x		x	
Secondary schools (5)	3	x			x	x	
	4	x				x	
	8	x		x		x	
	9	x			x	x	
	11	x		x		x	x
		<b>8</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MODERATE STRATEGIC SCHOOLS (14)</b>							
Primary schools (7)	B	x					x
	C	x					
	H	x	x			x	x
	I	x	x			x	
	J					x	x
	K	x	x			x	
	L		x			x	
Secondary schools (7)	1	x				x	
	2	x		x		x	x
	5				x	x	
	6	x				x	
	7	x			x	x	
	10	x			x	x	
	12	x			x	x	
		<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>