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Salutogenic Resources in the Everyday Lives of Teachers

Promoting workplace learning and well-being

Marie Nilsson

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
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Abstract

The aim of this thesis was to explore salutogenic resources in the everyday lives of teachers, and to investigate how an intervention of collegial reflection influences their work-related learning and their well-being.The thesis includes two parts, a needs assessment and an intervention, performed between 2009 and 2016. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been used in the process of the thesis. Methods used for data generation have been multistage focus groups interviews, individual interviews, questionnaire, open mail questions, and digital recordings of the reflection meetings. Four different methods have been used For the analyses: content analysis, hermeneutic analysis, multiple linear regression, and thematic analysis.

The findings indicate that the caring relationships with pupils, but also colleagues, were important for the teachers' finding meaning in their work. The caring relationships and the sense of meaningfulness were important resources for the teachers well-being.

Collegial reflection was a health promoting resource in that it contributed with social support from colleagues, a sense of belonging, a consensus regarding shool issues, and recovery. This recovery occurred while the teachers were having their collegial reflection, indicating that they still felt recovered even though they were reflecting on work-related issues.

The thesis also indicates that teachers' experiences of time pressure at work was the variable with the strongest associaton to their experience of work-life balance. The integration of work and private lives is an important part of being a teacher. Certain aspects of work was considered as positive and salutogenic when integrated with their private lives, such as the creative aspect of teaching. However, other aspects, such as ruminating over abused pupils, were affecting their well-being in a detrimental way when integrated in their private lives.

In a time when much focus is put on teachers' increasing workload, documentation and psychosocial risks, it is important to pay more attention to the salutogenic and the enhancing aspects of teachers' work. By doing that, teachers' well-being may be enhanced, as well as supporting teacher retention.

Key words

Workplace heatlh promotion, teachers, salutogenesis, intervention, collegial reflection

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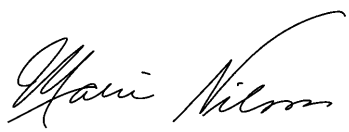
Signature  Date 2017-04-10

Salutogenic Resources in the Everyday Lives of Teachers

Promoting workplace learning and well-being

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This thesis is dedicated to my family: to my mother and father because you have always believed in me; to Göran for your never-ending support; and to Karl and Axel because you are the meaning in my life

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List of publications

This thesis is based on the following papers, referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.

I Nilsson, M., Ejlertsson, G., Andersson, I. & Blomqvist, K. (2015). Caring as a salutogenic aspect in teachers' lives. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 46*, 51-61.

II Nilsson, M., Blomqvist, K., & Andersson, I. (2017). Salutogenic Resources in Relation to Teachers' Work-life Balance. *WORK: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment, and Rehabilitation, 56*(4).

III Nilsson, M., Andersson, I., & Blomqvist, K. Co-Existing Needs – Paradoxes in Collegial Reflection. (Submitted for publication).

IV Nilsson, M. & Blomqvist, K. Promoting teachers' learning and their well-being through collegial reflection. (Submitted for publication).

Concepts and Abbreviations

In this thesis there are concepts that may be perceived as understood by people in more or less the same way as if we have a similar pre-understanding and frame of reference. In an everyday context, there is a core of a common understanding (even though it may be less common than we would like to believe), and this is a prerequisite for societies to function. However, in a scientific context, it is important to clarify what is meant when we use certain concepts. Such a concept – which I paradoxically just used, supposing you would understand what I meant – is *the everyday life*. If we question the obvious, it is clear that the everyday life embraces different aspects for different people. Such an aspect is whether we use the individual or the family as the main unit (Ellegård, 2001). In this thesis, I used the individual's perspective, and viewed him/her as entering different arenas, such as the home, the workplace, the store, and the gym. However, the home and the family are important parts of the individual's life. Everyday life includes all the activities that take place during a day, which thereby also includes one's work. It also includes all days of the week, and not only Monday to Friday.

Despite the multitude of understandings of *work* as a concept, there is still no definition accepted across different disciplines (Karlsson, 2013). In this thesis work is defined as gainful employment, and does not include domestic work, such as household chores. Nor is voluntary work included in the definition. The concept of *work conditions* is used as circumstances in daily work which impact how one experiences work (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). Examples of such circumstances are workplace characteristics, management and organization of work. The term *workplace* refers to the actual school where the teachers work. *Telework* is described as working outside the traditional workplace through the use of communication technology (Major & Germano, 2006).

GRR	Generalized resistance resources
PAR	Participatory action research
SER	Specific enhancing resources
SOC	Sense of Coherence
WHP	Workplace health promotion
WLB	Work-life balance

Preface

å leve

å leve

er ikkje akkurat det lettaste som finst

ikkje alltid vakre roser

og fin musikk

men siden no

dette orgelet likevel står her

kan vi väl spele litt på det

ARNE RUSET

In public media as well as in the scientific discourse, teachers are often depicted as having an increasingly difficult work situation, leading to negative consequences for their health and well-being. Being a doctoral student in public health science I cannot help but question this public image of the teachers' situation. If being a teacher means having such a difficult work situation that it leads to an impaired health and attrition – why do so many teachers stay in the profession? In public health science, and especially in health promotion, the salutogenic perspective is an important complement to the more pathogenic perspective. To search for resources to health and well-being, instead of risk factors for ill health, is an appealing approach. With this as a foundation, I decided to look at the resources that support teachers in keeping a sound well-being and even improving it. In short, what elements and what processes make teachers feel good in their work, and in their everyday life as a whole? It was decided that an intervention focusing on collegial reflection should be implemented. The intention was to investigate whether it would improve the teachers' work situation, as well as their well-being.

Since the winter of 2009/2010 a workplace health promotion (WHP) project has been carried out in a municipality in southern Sweden. It all started with a request from the municipality to initiate collaboration with the university where I am employed. During the first unconditional meeting we decided to ask the Child- and

Education Department if it were interested in introducing a WHP project in one of its schools. The department was interested, and so was the school principal, who was asked to embark on the project. A meeting was set up with the teachers at the school, and our preliminary ideas about a collaboration project were presented. The teachers were also asked if I could spend some time with them, accompanying them during their workday, join their lessons, and spend their breaks with them. One reason for this was that I wanted the teachers to get to know me before they decided whether to participate in the project. Another reason was for me to gain a better knowledge of the teachers' workday. However, these proceedings involved a practical dilemma in that I occupied two different roles. In one role, I was the passive observer with the intention of not being noticed. In the other role, I was more active, seeking contact with the teachers and attempting to create dialogues with them. After this period of acquaintance, all the teachers were asked if they wanted to be part of the project. Seven teachers were interested, and they formed a focus group together with myself as the researcher. This was when the data collection for the thesis started.

The way we designed the research project had important implications on the project but also on me as a researcher. Not only should I present a thesis, with the scientific standards of rigor. I was also expected to accomplish something valuable for the participating teachers. These expectations came from the teachers, the principle, the Child- and Education Board, the Child- and Education Department, my supervisors, and not the least, from myself. Granted, I did not have to do this alone, as it was a project with a participatory design. Still, I had great hopes that the WHP project would actually lead to improvements for the participating teachers – and even more than that – and I felt that I had a great responsibility for this to happen. The research project has therefore had two parallel tracks during the entire process: one scientific track leading to a doctoral thesis; and one empirical track leading to improvements in the teachers' work situation.

Initially, the aim of this thesis concerned teachers' salutogenic resources in relation to their experience of work-life balance (WLB). The first two papers therefore include such a focus on teachers' WLB. However, because the thesis was conducted in a participatory manner, this initial focus changed during the research process. The participating teachers preferred to focus more on the work domain, and chose an intervention of collegial reflection as a means to enhancing their workplace learning and their well-being. Consequently, the WLB focus has been less evident in the last two papers, and workplace learning and professional development have been more pronounced. Since the thesis has been conducted within the public health science field, the focus on the teachers' well-being has been a constant feature during the entire research process.

There are several possible perspectives from which to view the teachers' work-related learning and well-being, e.g. the society, the organization, the group and the individual. I have chosen to look at the issues from the teacher's point of view. I have aimed to place the teachers in a comprehensive context as well as a local context, in order to understand the circumstances that influence them. I have also looked at them through their interaction with colleagues, their social networks and their families. Even so, the main focus has been the individual teacher's perspective.

There are some fundamental assumptions that have guided my work throughout the process of this thesis. These are:

- Teachers are not helpless victims of difficult and deteriorating work conditions. They are competent and resourceful professionals, who make the best of their situation and have the ability to both manage and improve their work situation.
- The different domains within people's lives cannot be separated into different entities. As a human, we experience our everyday lives as a whole, although with different parts in it.
- By adopting a holistic approach, we accept the complexity, and even sometimes, the contradictions it contains.
- How people live their lives, working lives as well as private lives, is not a static condition. Circumstances change, people change, and this influences the way we lead our lives.

Seen through my eyes, the sited poem of Ruset relates to life's inevitable inclusion of both good and bad. Our everyday lives contain difficult and strenuous elements, but also possibilities and resources for well-being. The challenge is to open up to these possibilities, and play the organ when given the chance.

Introduction

This thesis focuses on teachers' resources for their WLB, their workplace learning, and ultimately their well-being. During the past few decades there has been an increasing focus on the detrimental aspects of teachers' well-being and work conditions, in Sweden as well as internationally. Changes in teachers' work situation include an increasing workload and administration, as well as a more pronounced accountability and evaluation (Greenville-Cleave & Boniwell, 2012; Carlgren & Klette, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007). When examining teachers' work situation, issues such as lack of professional development, threats and violence (Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2011), lack of recovery (Aronsson et al., 2003), and decreasing autonomy (Stenlås, 2011) are addressed. Few studies focus on aspects that are contributing to their satisfaction of being a teacher (e.g. Månsson, 2008; Persson, 2006). Yet, studies have shown that most teachers have a positive feeling when they go to work (Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2011) and they find teaching meaningful (Persson, 2006; Månsson & Persson, 2005).

The recent changes in the teachers' work situation have in many Western countries coincided with a negative development of teachers' health and well-being. Teacher stress and burnout are found to be related to teachers' work situation (Hultell et al., 2011; Gu & Day, 2013), and an increasing attrition and problems with teacher retention are also found (Ahlgren & Gillander Gådin, 2011; Konu et al., 2010). There are few studies concerning the salutogenic aspects of teaching.

Similarly, when examining research on WLB it is mostly the negative perspective which is focused on. The approach is often a role conflict perspective, stating that participation in one role (e.g. the work role) interferes with the participation of another role (e.g. the family role) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The role expansion theory, stating that multiple roles are positive for one's well-being, is not as frequent in research (Camgoz, 2014; Gatrell et al., 2013). There are relatively few studies examining teachers' WLB (Palmer et al., 2012), and the majority of them emanates from the role conflict perspective (Ryan, 2008; Cinamon & Rich, 2005; Bragger et al., 2005).

The setting for this thesis is a workplace. The workplace has the potential to support employees through different approaches, yet previous research has mostly addressed employees' life styles and behavioral change, and not paid as much attention to the social environment and the setting (Torp et al., 2011). The need for

interventions targeting the environment has therefore been raised (Torp, et al., 2011; Harden et al., 1999). In addition, as most interventions use a top-down approach, the need for more studies on workplace health promotion using participatory settings approaches is called for (Torp et al., 2011).

Background

Working as a Teacher

In every situation where humans work together, it is essential that the conditions are supportive. When the conditions are not supporting the interaction, or even counteracting it, there is an evident risk of people becoming ill. This is what we can see in the human sector, e.g. health care, social services and education. Teachers' well-being is presented as being affected negatively by their work, internationally as well as in Sweden (Hultell et al., 2011; Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011; Konu, et al., 2010). There has been a decline in human sustainability. That is why it is important to focus on the positive aspects of people's everyday lives, the resources, the health, and the things that actually work. If we focus too much on ill health, on the high sick leave, and on the things that do not work, there is a risk that this will be maintained. On the other hand, if we focus on the strengths, they can also be preserved and perhaps even increased (Jönsson et al., 2006).

As part of the human sector, teachers in many Western countries, have faced considerable changes in the past decades. Since the late 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, there have been a number of reforms in the Swedish school system (Gustafson, 2010). They can be interpreted as a reflection of broader societal and international trends, where marketization and privatization are influencing the development (Rothstein & Blomqvist, 2008; Berg, 2000). These trends are not unique for teachers, but can be seen in the entire public sector, and they have influenced a number of professions. However, the situation for teachers has been on the public agenda as a serious problem, as it not only effects the teachers themselves, but their pupils as well. Up until 1988, the Swedish school was centrally governed by the state, and directed by central and uniform guidelines (Rothstein & Blomqvist, 2008), based on social democratic values. Equality and inclusion were guiding principles (Lundström & Holm, 2011), aiming at increasing the education level as well as promoting social equality (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016; Lundström & Parding, 2011; Arnesen & Lundahl, 2006). By this time, the late 80s and beginning of the 90s, a gradual decentralization took place, and an allocation of resources resulted in a more pronounced responsibility for the municipalities. Leading by objectives and results was also introduced as part of the changes in education (Lundström & Holm, 2011; Lundahl, 2002). As Lundström and Holm (2011) state:

"The development and expansion of market solutions is one of the most important changes in Swedish education in the last 30 years" (s. 193). Another reform, which was in line with the general trend of marketization and freedom of choice, was the introduction of the school choice reform and a voucher system (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016; Rothstein & Blomqvist, 2008). Yet another recent change was the introduction of certification of teachers. In 2011, the Swedish Parliament decided to introduce certification of teachers into the Education Act, with the goals of enhancing quality, raise teachers' appraisal, and clarify what teachers are certified to teach.

These relatively recent changes in Swedish education have had a profound impact on teachers' working conditions (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016; Arnesen & Lundahl, 2006). According to Ballet et al. (2006), there has been an intensification of work as a result of market-oriented education policies. Teachers are increasingly responsible for new and different work assignments, tasks that are not related to the core activity of teaching (Persson, 2006). The possibility for people to choose the school of one's choice, and thereby contribute with a school voucher, makes schools apply competitive actions, and as a result of this the teachers' work tasks are increasingly about marketing (Lundström & Holm, 2011). A study by Lundström and Holm (2011) shows that:

> Some teachers maintain that the role of the school has changed from being an institution with a focus on pedagogical issues to a more businesslike arena (s. 197).

The increased pressure for schools to have pupils that perform well is related to the competition situation (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). As each school is dependent on the school voucher, it is important that pupils choose their preferred school, and successful schools with high-grades among the pupils are attractive.

Extended assessments and evaluation are other effects on teachers' work conditions, and can be related to decentralization as well as management by objectives and results (Stenlås, 2011; Lundström & Holm, 2011). Management by objectives is accompanied by a culture of check-ups (Stenlås, 2011), and assessment and evaluation are thereby tools for establishing whether there is quality in the teaching or not. The teachers need to assess the results of their pupils, and through this assessment of the pupils, the teachers are assessed as well. Assessment and evaluation have become instruments of control in the hands of politicians (Stenlås, 2011). However, discussions regarding the time and resources that the evaluations take from the core tasks of teaching are scarce (Stenlås, 2011). With the teachers' assessment of the pupils' success comes the accountability for it. Consequently, there has been an increase in pressure regarding teachers' accountability, and the

means to assess this, is often pupil performance on standardized test scores (Adler, et al., 2008; Buchanan, 2015; Evetts, 2009a; Evetts, 2009b).

In addition, the marketization of education seems to have had implications on teachers' professional identities (Lundström & Holm, 2011). As the influence of the market has become more pronounced, the governance of education and teachers has changed (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). Friedson (2001) describes three different types of ideal governance of professionals: the logic of profession; the logic of bureaucracy; and the logic of the market. In the logic of profession, the employees are in control of their work, and they have an autonomy which is based on trust in their knowledge and ability (Friedson, 2001; Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). Their position is also characterized by collegiality and a shared profession-specific knowledge base (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). This logic entails a commitment to clients, or in this case, pupils (Lundström & Holm, 2011). The logic of bureaucracy uses a "top-down" governance (Lundström & Parding, 2011) and emphasizes "managers, bureaucratic procedures with standardization and evaluation, as well as accountability and efficiency" (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016, s. 2). Practical examples of governance by this logic are pupil well-being meetings, development plans and evaluations (Lundström & Parding, 2011). The commitment in this ideal governance logic is directed towards management and superiors within the hierarchical organization (Lundström & Parding, 2011). The third type, the logic of the market, is focusing on economic motives, and what the customer – in this case, the pupils and their parents – want and need (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). Competition is central, and the customer's choice is governing how the teachers should act. Traditionally, teachers have been depicted as belonging to the logic of profession, but also the logic of bureaucracy (Lundström & Parding, 2011). There is, and has for a long time been a tension between being loyal towards oneself and one's professional skills at one end, and towards the aim of the organization at the other (Lundström & Parding, 2011). With the marketization, and the school choice, there is a third logic, that of the market. What previously was a tension between the logic of profession and the logic of bureaucracy, has now become a tension between all three logics. Lundström and Parding (2011) speak of clashes between these logics. An example of such an opposition is when the long-term planning and coordination of the bureaucracy logic meets the flexibility value of the market logic. Another clash, one between the logic of profession and the logic of market, is when teachers experience that marketing or advertising tasks are performed at the expense of the core task of teaching. As Lundström and Parding (2016) conclude: it has become a clash between selling and educating. These competing logics, and the indication that traditional professional values are devalued, have implications for the teachers' identities (Lundström & Holm, 2011; Parding & Berg-Jonsson, 2016). When demands are made to act in opposition with the logic of profession, one's identity as a teacher may be questioned. Traditionally,

teachers have been entrusted with far-stretched autonomy. With the introduction of the market logic, this autonomy has been challenged in different ways. One such way is autonomy in relation to management. Since it has become increasingly important to market one's school and attract new pupils, it has also become more difficult to publicly raise problems or negative opinions regarding one's work situation (Lundström & Holm, 2011). Another expression of limited autonomy is in relation to the pupils. With the school voucher system, the pupils have an increased power to place demands on the teachers, and the teachers may in turn feel obliged to adjust to circumstances even if they go against their professional opinion (Lundström & Holm, 2011).

When examining recent research as well as the popular media, it is evident that the teachers' work situation has been intensified (Ballet et al., 2009; Murfitt, 1995; Sugden, 2013; Holm & Lundström, 2011). A result of this intensification is, among other things, less time for preparation and reflection (Ballet et al, 2009). Since reflection is considered an important part of teachers' professional development (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Schön, 1983), it is a relevant and pressing issue.

The presented picture of the recent changes within teachers' work situation regards mostly issues, which are perceived as negative from the teachers' perspective. Even so, there are elements, which are perceived as positive by some teachers. Lundström and Holm (2011) showed that the increasing competition may contribute to improvements and better performance among the teachers. It could also lead to an increased consciousness about the advantages of their school, and a willingness to express these strengths to the public.

The previous section has served as a presentation of the comprehensive social context in which teachers are working. In the next section, the concepts of health and well-being will be addressed, in order to present the ways they are used in this thesis.

Health and Well-Being

> *Ljuvliga mornar över Genesaret, ljuvligt att höra oxvagnarnas långsamma knirrande efter vägarna. Ljuvligt är ljudet från brunnen, vattendragarens sång. Ljuvliga är anemonerna om våren, mandelträdens blom, sipprandet av bäckar mellan alla stenar. Ljuvligt är det att känna hur vi förändras, hur kroppen växer och tankarna ändrar riktning! Ljuvligt att känna hur detta kärl som är kroppens långsamt fylls av liv och erfarenheter upp till brädden. Så ljuvligt att känna när det rinner över och sprider sig på marken, bland våra vänner och ovänner. Ljuvligt att bli mättad av bröd och mjölk, att tillsammans*

> *med andra känna ryggen värka om kvällen, att tillsammans med andra sitta runt en eld och ha viljan att förändra världen [ ] (Tunström, 1978, s. 158-9).*

When using a salutogenic perspective, the concept of health becomes fundamental. So what is health? A clear definition, accepted by most people in the health promotion discourse, is yet to be formulated. In addition, it is difficult to measure health, and therefore I have limited the use of health as an outcome variable. I believe it is easier for people to express how they feel in terms of well-being rather than in terms of health. Since this thesis focuses on teachers' perceptions and experiences of their everyday lives, this is most often placed in relation to well-being. As regards health, the most frequently used definition is the one expressed by the World Health Organization (WHO):

> Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1948, p.100).

WHO presents a positive definition of health instead of health being an avoidance of negative consequences. It also highlights that health is a human right, and that the main factors determining health are societal (Potvin & Jones, 2011). However, this definition has also been criticized for being too utopian.

In a holistic perspective on health, the focus is on the whole individual, e.g. "How is this person feeling?", as opposed to attending to separate parts of the human organism, e.g. "What lung capacity does this person have? (Nordenfelt, 1991). Eriksson (1989, 1994) states that health is to experience oneself as a whole person. This is related to how we perceive the human being and is thereby an ontological issue. Eriksson (1989, 1994) has developed the ontological health model, which states that health is an integration of different parts into a whole (Wärnå-Furu, 2014; Eriksson, 1989; Eriksson, 1994), and the human being is a unity of body, soul, and spirit. In this model, health is expressed as "a becoming", "a being", and "a doing", and the individual moves between these three dimensions (Wärnå-Furu, 2014). In "the becoming", the human strives to accept life's different contingencies, and through that grow to become who we genuinely wish to be. It is about being true to one's basic values. Health, expressed in terms of "being", means searching for well-being and an inner balance. It is connected to the individual's ability to be in relationships. By being confirmed by others, the individual experiences himself/herself as real and as having a value. Finally, "the doing" is connected to one's being and one's becoming, in that it has to be in concord with the other two elements. What one does has to be in accordance with one's values, and anchored to what is experienced as meaningful (Wärnå-Furu, 2014). As such, it includes an existential dimension (Strandmark, 2007). Similar thoughts are expressed by Blomqvist (2009), who found that people experienced themselves as whole when they were allowed to act according to their values and ideals. It was about being

able to look back on situations with pride, and although there were many obstacles, they still felt they had acted in agreement with their fundamental beliefs. Being whole was about having ties to oneself (Blomqvist, 2009). Gadamer (2003) discusses the holistic perspective on health in relation to specialization. While medical science has striven for excellence and further specialization, the more general view of the whole is lost. Health is a state of inner balance and being in accordance with oneself, and the whole should be a "guiding light" regarding health. To experience health is, according to Gadamer (2003), not to feel in any specific way, but instead it is one's being-in-the world. Ill-ness is something that intrude, and something that can be objectified and measured. Health, on the other hand, cannot be measured, as it is one's existence.

The bio-medical perspective stands in contrast to the holistic view on health (Medin & Alexandersson, 2000). According to this view, health is regarded as the opposite of ill health, and health is defined as the absence of ill health. As such it reduces the individual's holistic perception of health as being made up by his/her separate parts (Korp, 2016). It views health and ill-health as a dichotomization.

In this thesis, I use the definition of health, as expressed by Bringsén (2010):

> Health is a positive, subjective experience of oneself as a whole. Health can be measured by using individual's feelings/experiences of physical, mental and social well-being as indicators, and health serves as a resource for the individual when dealing with the various strains of everyday life or pursuing individual goals. Health can be promoted through the individuals' positive experiences as well as emotions, and illness is important because it may restrict an individual's ability to act. (p. 14)

This definition states that health can be measured, however, I prefer to use the term assess instead of measure. As a compliment to this definition, I want to add Gadamer's (2003) description of health as being-in-the-world. Since this thesis focuses on teachers' perceptions and experiences of their everyday lives, I have limited the use of health as an outcome variable. I believe that it is easier for people to express how they feel in terms of well-being rather than in terms of health.

During the work with this thesis, two researchers and philosophers have played a important role throughout the process, Aron Antonovsky and Hans-George Gadamer. When they write about health, they both use words that lead to an image of something elusive. Antonovsky (1987) discusses "the mystery of health" and Gadamer (2003) uses the expression "the enigma of health". These wordings suggest that the concept of health is multifaceted, and that it is difficult to capture the most central and inner depth of health. We all seem to know intuitively what we mean by health, but to actually put the intuition into words is not easy. Both Antonovsky and Gadamer recognized this difficulty.

As a complement to the concept of health, I use the concept of well-being. It is included in the WHO definition of health, but is perhaps even more contested than the concept of health (Seedhouse, 1995; Cameron et al., 2006). Critics state that a clear definition of well-being is lacking (Seedhouse, 1995) and describe it as "an open-ended catch-all category" (Cameron et al., 2006, p. 347), suggesting that the term is too broad to be useful.

There are two main perspectives regarding the use of well-being, the critical public health and the positive psychology movements (Carlisle & Hanlon, 2008). Using an individualistic perspective, hedonic psychologists describe the term well-being as consisting of subjective happiness, which is assessed by three components; the presence of a positive mood, the absence of a negative mood, and life satisfaction (Diener, et al., 1998). Similarly, an individualistic perspective is the eudaimonic approach, viewing well-being as experiencing positive emotions, but also the extent to which a person is fully functioning (Carlisle et al., 2009; Huppert, 2005), and living in accordance with personal values (Carlisle, et al. 2008). With this approach, well-being is more of a process in realizing one's true potential (Ryff & Singer, 2008), rather than being an outcome or end state (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

However, critics question this positive psychology perspective, where well-being is described in terms of attributes and characteristics of individuals (Ganesh & McAllum, 2010) and they object to its omitting the broader societal and social aspects of well-being. Critics perceive it as being part of the contemporary individualistic society, in which the individuals are viewed as independent and autonomous in their quest for satisfying subjectively defined goals (Carlisle et al., 2008), and as such also responsible for their own well-being (Sointu, 2005). The critical public health movement moves the emphasis from the individual to a more structural perspective. Yet another questioning of the happiness and well-being discourse, is that it can be difficult to achieve the prevailing ideologies of happiness and personal fulfillment, since life always contains difficulties and people must deal with them (Williams, 2000; Carlisle et al., 2008).

Consequently, the concepts of health and well-being are both complex. To make it even more complex, there is an important distinction to be made, between what health/well-being are, and what their sources and determinants are. As Medin and Alexandersson (2000) have demonstrated, depending on which scholar one refers to, well-being can be perceived as part of health, but health can also be seen as part of well-being. Similarly, health can be a source to well-being, just like well-being can be considered a source to health.

The way well-being is used in this thesis emanates from different influences. Diener (2000) states that subjective well-being refers to people's cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives, and as it is the individual who determines the criteria for his/her own well-being, it works in a democratic way. Ryff and Singer (2008)

describe well-being as a process instead of an outcome. From these two conceptualizations of well-being, I have come to view well- being as a subjective and cognitive, as well as affective, evaluation of one's life, and as such it is a constantly ongoing process in people's lives. Emphasizing the perspective of the individual teacher, I adopt a more psychological approach, although I appreciate the influence of the environment as well. I consider well-being to be a more comprehensive concept, and I see health as being part of well-being.

Teachers' Health and Well-Being

So what does research and statistical reports say about teachers' health and well-being? One approach is to look at it from either a salutogenic or a pathogenic perspective. The by far most frequent perspective, among both scholars and different associations as well as within public media, is to present the detrimental aspects. The use of a pathogenic perspective, and focus on identifying risk factors and preventive measures, is found in most of the literature. Teachers are reported to be experiencing more stress than people in other professions (Smith et al., 2000; Johnson, et al., 2005; Aronsson, et al. 2003). Stress and being burnt out are frequently addressed in research (Gu & Day, 2013; Hultell et al., 2011), indicating physical symptoms such as headache, frequent colds, as well as psychological consequences, e.g. lack of self-confidence, low job satisfaction, and low self-esteem (Schonfeld, 2001; Blase, 1982). Teacher stress has also been indicated to be associated with depressive symptoms (Kidger, et al., 2016). Both research and trade-oriented journals and statistical reports indicate that teachers are reporting poor physical health and poor psychological well-being when compared to other professions (Kidger, et al., 2016; Stansfield, et al., 2011; Johnson, et al., 2005; Sveriges Företagshälsor, 2016). A statistical report from Lärarförbundet (2015), using statistics from the Swedish Social Insurance Office, showed that sick leave had increased with 57 percent during a 5-year-period among teachers working in elementary schools. Among teachers in secondary schools, the increase was even higher. A recent report by the Swedish Work Environment Authority indicates that teachers' work environment involves both psychosocial risks, such as hazardous workload, as well as risks within the physical work environment, such as poor ventilation and loud noise (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2017).

When using a salutogenic perspective, the strengthening and health promoting aspects are in focus. This type of research is, however, not as frequent as ill-health-oriented research. Identified resources contributing to teachers' well-being are e.g. trust (Thoonen, et al., 2011), their relationship with pupils (Milatz et al., 2015), participation, and leadership (Lagrosen & Lagrosen, 2012).

Another approach to the study of teacher well-being is as process research or as context research. The latter focuses on various factors in the teachers' environment, such as their workload (Burke & Greenglass, 1995), their interaction with colleagues (Antoniou, et al. 2006), and student behavior (Evers et al., 2004), i. e. external factors in relation to teacher well-being. These external factors set the framework for the teachers' work situation, but each teacher responds to them in different ways. This relates to the first type, the process research, which focuses on aspects such as teacher motivation and teachers' coping strategies (Månsson, 2008). Parker and colleagues (2012) combined these two approaches and suggested an integrative model for teacher well-being.

Still another approach to teacher well-being is to use the structure of three categories: factors related to the teacher him/herself, to the profession and the workplace, and to a more comprehensive societal perspective (Huberman & Vandenberghe, 1999). An example of a factor related to the teacher is self-efficacy, while support from colleagues and relationships with parents are examples of factors related to the profession and the workplace. A factor related to society is e.g. national education policies (Aelterman et al., 2007).

Teacher resilience is an area, which has attracted an increasing attention within literature on teacher health and well-being. Described as "what sustains teachers and enables them to thrive rather than just survive in the profession" (Beltman et al., 2011 p. 185), it is an outcome of the relationship between the individual teacher's risk factors and his/her protective factors. It is a response to risk factors in the teacher's context, and thereby a pathogenic approach, However, it not about preventing risk factors, but a way to respond to them. As stated by Egeland et al. (1993):

> [It is] the capacity to maintain equilibrium and a sense of commitment and agency in the everyday worlds in which the teachers teach (p. 26).

Teacher resilience has been suggested as a way to understand why many teachers continue working as a teacher, even though their work situation is wearing them down. Resilience has been found to benefit by such factors as a strong sense of competence (Bobek, 2002), professional freedom (Sumsion, 2004) and the use of coping strategies (Sharplin et al., 2011). Mansfield et al. (2011) have further elaborated on the concept, and suggest a four-dimensional framework of teacher resilience: profession-related, emotional, motivational and social. In doing so, they recognize that resilience is "a complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional phenomenon" (Mansfield, et al., 2011, p. 364), and include in these dimensions particular qualities, capacities, and strategies that resilient teachers use.

Workplace Health Promotion

Health promotion, as a discipline, is closely connected to *values* (Korp, 2016) and ethics. A core idea within health promotion is the intention to in some way influence other people. And by influencing others, one intends to affect them and change them. There is an inherent teleological element in health promotion. We take these actions "in order to". As soon as we intend to somehow change another person, the question arises, "By what right?" What gives us the right to influence someone else to change his or her way of life? How can we presume that we know better than this person him/herself? But it also raises the ethical question of having the knowledge, the possibility, and perhaps the moral obligation to try to influence someone to improve his or her well-being. As for myself, I have come to terms with this ethical dilemma by adopting a participatory approach, in which I share the responsibility together with the people who take part in the research. I will come back to the participatory approach later in this thesis.

The concept of health promotion is sometimes used as containing both preventive and promotive health actions (Strandmark, 2007), even though they have different starting points. In this thesis, a distinction is made between the two, and when the concept of health promotion is used, it does not include the preventive aspect. Prevention emanates from the pathogenic perspective, and focuses on preventing ill health. Ill health can be manifested in disease, objective disorders, subjective sickness, malfunctioning and impairment (Bauer, et al., 2006). Based on the pathogenic perspective, the health action can vary between curing diseases, discovering diseases at an early stage, identifying risk factors and taking measures to prevent ill health from arising. On the other hand, health promotion rests on salutogenesis, i.e. how resources in people's lives support the development towards positive health (Bauer et al., 2006).

The Canadian Lalonde report (Lalonde, 1974) is often referred to as having initiated the shift from the previous focus on individual risk factors or risk behavior to a focus on health determinants in a context that strengthens people's health (Kickbusch, 2003). In 1986, the First International Conference on Health Promotion was held in Canada, resulting in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986). In this charter, WHO presented a definition of health promotion, which extends the focus from individual life styles to also include the interaction between the individual and the environment.

> Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. It moves beyond a focus on individual behavior towards a wide range of social and environmental interventions (WHO, 1986, p. 1).

The definition embraces both the autonomy of the individual and the importance of the environment. It recognizes the individual as having both the right and the power to be in control of his/her health, but also the individual responsibility for it. However, it also recognizes that we all live under different circumstances, and the possibility for the individual to take control over his/her health is influenced by the environment. It also highlights empowerment, i.e. supporting individuals and groups to change their situation to the better. The charter presents five key action areas, and creating supportive environment is one of them. It recognizes the inextricable links between people and their environment, and states this as the basis for a socio-ecological approach to health. The issue of creating supporting environments was further elaborated at the WHO conference in Sundsvall in 1991 (WHO, 1991), and is part of the new public health (Naidoo & Wills, 2000). The importance of the interaction with one's environment is similarly highlighted in the settings approach. Settings can be described as:

> The context in which people engage in daily activities and in which environmental, organizational and personal factors interact to affect health and wellbeing (WHO, 1998).

With the settings approach, the focus of health promotion interventions was moved from the individual to the settings of his/her everyday life. Other elements in the settings approach are the participatory approach, and the focus on the strengthening of resources for health (Dooris, 2012; Kickbusch, 2003).

Considering the amount of time people spend at work, it is a substantial setting for health promotion, and it is consequently recognized as a priority arena for health promotion (WHO, 2017). Work not only affects the employees' physical, mental, economic and social well-being, but also that of their families, the people they meet at work, and at a more structural level, the society (Chu et al., 2000). Workplace health promotion and its foci have undergone several changes in the last decades. In the 1970s and 1980s, the primary focus was on identifying risk factors in relation to the individual employee's lifestyle, and health promoting activities regarded issues such as stress management and health information seminars. In the 1990s, WHP adopted a more holistic settings approach, and the social and environmental determinants became more pronounced. More recently, the focus has included network developments and a more participatory and collaborative approach, leading to networks such as the European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (Chu et al., 2000).

Literature reviews examining research on WHP indicate that the greater part of the examined research focuses on individual lifestyle determinants, and this was especially evident within intervention studies (Torp et al., 2011; Harden, et al., 1999). Studies using a holistic and supportive environment approach were limited,

as were studies using a participatory approach. The need for interventions, using a supportive settings and participatory design, was highlighted in the literature reviews (Torp, et al., 2011; Harden, et al., 1999).

The issue of WHP is complex. Work may affect the employees' health and well-being in various ways, from hazards, such as toxic materials and risky behaviour within the physical environment, to psychosocial risks, such as stress and bullying. However, work can also affect the employees in a salutogenic way. Having an employment is in itself perceived as beneficial (van der Noordt et al., 2014), as it contributes an income, and to many provides a sense of self-worth and social networks (Naidoo & Wills, 2000). Other possible positive effects are engagement, meaningfulness, personal growth, and learning (Schaufeli, et al., 2009; Bakker et al., 2007). These positive and negative aspects are not mutually excluding, but can in fact co-exist. To make WHP even more complex, it is not only work-related issues that influence the employees' health and well-being. What happens outside work affects people's well-being as well, and this is brought into the sphere of work. The issue of work-life balance is relevant to this, and will be addressed below.

Work-life balance

> *Största delen av vardagsstressen beror helt enkelt på att vi inte är villiga att avstå från något. Den som avfärdar denna insikt som banal förbiser hur oerhört svårt det är att acceptera den. Vi har aldrig lärt oss att medvetet låta bli en sak för att riktigt kunna njuta av en annan. När allt kommer omkring lever vårt samhälle av väcka behov, inte dra ned på dem (Klein, 2008, s. 192).*

In Sweden, like in many Western countries, the concept of work-life balance (and related concepts) have received much attention. This leads to the question of what has caused this increasing interest. Some possible explanations have been taken up in the literature. An increasing marketization and global competition, leading to increasing demands on flexibility and adaptability is suggested as one cause. In order to be competitive, companies are often required to centralize administration, outsource and downsize (Fleetwood, 2007; Major & Germano, 2006). For the employees, this may lead to an increasing risk of losing their employment, and/or an increasing workload and longer work hours (Grosswald et al., 2001; Sparks et al., 2001). Other changes are technological advancements, such as computers and cell phones (Major & Germano, 2006), which enable employees to telework. It also facilitates working outside traditional work hours as well as increases one's accessibility, aspects that are relevant to WLB. The rise of the service industry is yet another change, leading to demands for a 24/7 workforce (Major & Germano, 2006). A demographic change is the increase of women in the workforce

(Fleetwood, 2007). Since women still have the main responsibility for domestic labor and childcare (Brannen, 2000), many women experience a `double burden´. With this in mind, there is sometimes a tendency to make WLB a gender issue. However, criticism has been raised, stating that this focus is too narrow. Similar criticism has been addressed regarding the focus of heterosexual dual-earner couples with children (Gatrell et al., 2013; Özbilgin et al., 2011; Ransome, 2007), and a call for a more inclusive focus has been raised.

A large number of terms have been used for the work/non-work interface, e.g. work-family conflict (as work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, Frone et al., 1992), work-family enrichment (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006) and spillover (Crouter, 1984). Broadly speaking, these different terms represent two perspectives on multiple social roles: the role conflict perspective, emanating from the role stress theory, and the role expansion theory (Nordenmark, 2004). The role stress theory assumes that having multiple social roles creates too many demands, which leads to a conflict between the different roles (Khan et al., 1964). As a consequence of the role overload, the health and well-being is affected negatively (e.g. Kinman & Jones, 2008). The role expansion theory maintains that engagement in each role contribute to positive effects, and that multiple roles promote health and well-being (Sieber, 1974; Barnett et al., 1992). Consequently, the role conflict theory rests on pathogenesis while the role expansion theory emanates from salutogenesis. Both theories have found support in empirical studies, indicating that multiple roles can be both detrimental and strengthening to people's health, depending on conditions and degrees (e.g. De Klerk et al., 2012; Michel et al., 2010).

Relevant to both perspectives, are the antecedents, i.e. the possible sources, and the consequences or outcomes. Starting with the conflict perspective, previous research has found behavior involvement (e.g. the number of hours spent at work) as an antecedent (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). Work demands, job dissatisfaction (Bernas & Major, 2000), long work hours (Major et al., 2002), working Sundays (Wirtz,et al., 2011), having responsibility for children or elderly care (Premeaux, et al., 2007) are other possible sources to work-family conflict. Suggested consequences are work or family dissatisfaction (Bernas & Major, 2000), psychological distress (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1999), poorer health (Grzywacz, 2000; Kinman & Jones, 2008) and heavy alcohol abuse (Frone et al. 1996). However, research has also identified resources, which may have a positive effect on work-family conflict. Social support from work (Kossek et al., 2012), from family (Patel, et al., 2008), support from the organization's work-family culture (Thompson & Prottas, 2005), hardiness (Bernas & Major, 2000), and savoring (Camgoz, 2014) are such examples.

Using the enrichening perspective, empirical findings have suggested antecedents such as emotional and social support from family (Abendroth & den Dulk, 2011),

working part-time or shiftwork (Agosti et al., 2015), experiencing job control (Abendroth & den Dulk, 2011), supervisor and coworker support (Thompson & Prottas, 2005), schedule flexibility (Kinman & Jones, 2008, Galea et al., 2014), and reflection on life (Agosti, et al., 2015). The consequence of these resources is an improved WLB, which in turn is related to health and well-being (Wagman et al., 2012; Gröpel & Kuhl, 2009); Christiansen & Matuska, 2006; Thompson & Prottas, 2005; Grzywacz, 2000).

A branch within WLB research addresses the management of boundaries between work and non-work (Rothbard & Dumas, 2006). Nippert-Eng (1996) describes people as being on a continuum with two poles, segmenters at one end, and integrators at the other. Being a segmenter means separating the work sphere from the private sphere, while the integrator does not demarcate between the two spheres. A Swedish study (Mellner et al., 2014), examining the boundary management preferences and work-life balance in a knowledge-intensive and flexible work context, indicated that there was a strong preference for segmentation. Similarly, it suggested that segmenters had lower actual weekly work hours than integrators.

In the above, the individual's perspective is in focus. However, WLB may also be addressed from an organizational perspective. The incentives for work organizations to improve employees' WLB are often to prevent illness, absenteeism, attrition (Jones et al., 2006), increasing performance and employee engagement (Lazar et al., 2010). Practices for supporting employees' WLB include family-friendly policies, flex time and telework (Lazar, et al. 2010). Telework offers a number of advantages, both from the employee's perspective, such as improved WLB (Sparrow, 2000), autonomy and flexible working hours (Harpaz, 2002) and from the employer's perspective, such as increased productivity and decreased absence and tardiness levels (Harpaz, 2002). Nonetheless, it also has negative effects, such as the individual having an impaired feeling of belonging, and an increased risk of not separating between the work and home spheres. A disadvantage from the employer's perspective is the possible damage to commitment to, and identification with, the organization (Harpaz, 2002).

I have chosen to use the term work-life balance, as it is used as an umbrella term and also is considered as more neutral. In this thesis, WLB is defined as satisfaction and good functioning at work and in the personal domain, with a minimum of role conflict, and a maximum of enrichment. This definition emanates partly from Clark (2000). With this definition, I focus on the individual teacher's subjective experience of WLB.

Reflection and Time

> *Långsiktighet och riktning plottras bort i detaljer. Det liv man vill drunknar i det liv man måste, och som jag ser det finns det bara en väg tillbaka: återkommande stunder av stillhet och eftertanke (Sjödin, 2015, s. 108).*

Reflection is often used as if there is a common understanding of the concept. However, it embraces a variety of meanings. One meaning of reflection is to meditate and give a phenomenon thorough consideration (Bengtsson, 1995). Another meaning of the concept is a systematic thinking about past experiences to deepen knowledge and learn (Rogers, 2002), and in this sense, reflection is more of a tool. The ideas of Lewin (1948) are often used as a structure for this type of reflective process (von Wright, 1992):

> First, you do and experience. Second, you reflect upon your experiences – what did I learn? what did I feel? and so on – so as to understand them in perspective. Third, you conceptualize the new insights and use them to shape a more adequate conception of the matter in question, a better theory of it. And fourth, you try out your revised theory and look for new feedback (von Wright, 1992, p. 65).

Sometimes reflection is perceived as something that occurs in action. Schön's (1983) concept *reflection-in-action* is an example of this, and it is often referred to in teaching. He distinguishes it from *reflection on action*, which is a way of reviewing and evaluating past experiences in order to improve future practice (Finlay, 2008). Both types are ways for professionals to become aware of their implicit knowledge and learn from their actions (Finlay, 2008), and the impact of Schön's work has been substantial. However, reflection-in-action has also met with criticism, as it is perceived as difficult to distance oneself while interacting with the pupils (van Manen, 1995; Moon, 1999). Thereby follows, that much of teachers' work is done in the routines of daily activities (van Manen, 1995). Schön (1983) too, did consider reflection as a way to recognize and change routines (Kvakman, 2003). Moon (1999) proposes a description of the term reflection as

> a basic mental process with either a purpose or an outcome or both, that is applied in situations where material is ill-structured or uncertain and where there is no obvious solution. Reflection seems to be related to thinking and learning (p. 10).

Another way to distinguish between different types of reflection is that between self-reflection and collaborative/collective reflection. Self-reflection can be described as both observing and interpreting one's actions, including one's motives and intentions with it (Von Wright, 1992). However, Höyrup & Elkjear (2006) stress the importance of not restricting the use of reflection to an individualized perspective.

Collaborative or collective reflection occurs in a social context, in which e.g. teachers functions as resources for each other, and they support one another to build new knowledge through dialogue and interaction (Hoffman-Kipp et al., 2003; Kwakman, 2003).

Reflection is considered a central part of teachers' learning and their professional development (Rogers, 2002; Moon, 1999; Hoffman-Kipp et al., 2003), Traditional forms of professional development includes fragmented activities such as workshops and invited speakers (Desimone, 2009; Borko, 2004; Selkrig & Keamy, 2015). However, recent conceptions acknowledge the importance of embedding it into the everyday lives of teachers (Desimone, 2009). Iterative collegial reflection is one way to embed professional development in the ordinary working day. Collegial reflection may provide the means to enhance learning by making tacit understanding explicit and questionable (Higgins, 2011; Kwakmark, 2003).

Centrally related to reflection – but also to WLB – is the concept of time. When we nowadays talk about time, it is often with a feeling of time as something precious and valuable. To not make use of time is often accompanied with a feeling of guilt or a bad conscience. Time is a commodity, which is to be treated with care. Above all, it is something that everyone is constantly aware of (Davies, 1989).

Time can be perceived either subjectively or objectively. Subjective time is valued by the individual, and can be experienced as e.g. slow or fast, while the objective time is divided and measured in hours and minutes (Enokson, 2009). The way people perceive time has changed throughout history. One way is the circular perception. With this perception, time moves in cycles, and occurrences and changes are constantly reiterated. The world is viewed as predictable (Heidegren, 2014), and as such it offers a sense of safety. Another way to perceive time is the linear time perception, which dominates the contemporary Western society (Davies, 1989). Heidegren (2014) differentiates between two kinds of linear time, one with a fixed future and one with an open future. In the linear time perception with a fixed future, the focus is ahead, in the future. Time is perceived as an irreversible process that leads to a determined goal. The Christian and the Jewish religions are examples of this linear time perception, as the meaning in life is to live according to God's plan and eventually reach heaven (Heidegren, 2014). Also, in the second linear time perception, the element of irreversibility is an important feature, but instead of having a pre-set goal in life, the future is viewed as something open and uncertain. With this view, the future is dependent on the way the individual acts, and there are endless possibilities. But with this array of possibilities, when one choose one action, one inevitably discard countless of others. The responsibility for one's own future lies with the individual, and there is always a risk of missing out on something. This linear time perception is coined by continuous movement and acceleration (Heidegren, 2014), as the individual only has a certain amount of time

to accomplish everything. It is also in line with the postmodern characteristic of individualization.

Rosa (2003) has raised the issue of *social acceleration*, a feeling that everything is moving faster. Even though he acknowledges that in fact *not* everything is accelerating, and there are e.g. social movements that actually counteract this development (see e.g. In praise of slowness – challenging the cult of speed by Honoré, 2004), there is still a sense of acceleration in society. He distinguishes between three different types of social acceleration. Technological acceleration is the intentional process of transport, communication and production. Acceleration of social change is another type, described as acceleration of society itself. One could argue that society has always been changing. However, he exemplifies the increasing pace of changes by family and work. The rates of families that are splitting up and forming new constellations are increasing, compared to when families were more stable. With regards to work, there has been a change from previously, sons inheriting their fathers' work, to children making their own choices of work but remaining with it the entire life, and nowadays when people often have several employments and works even during their lifetime. The third type, he calls acceleration of pace. This can be characterized either as people feeling that time is scarce and they feel time pressure, or as the tendency to do things at a faster rate, but also to be more efficient and do several things simultaneously. Leccardi (2003) propose a somewhat different argument in relation to Rosa's conceptualization of social acceleration. One example regards Rosa's idea of the acceleration society as built on the concept of time as linear and irreversible. Leccardi (2003) proposes that the subjective (or inner) time does not fit in with this linear time conception, as our dreams and feelings are often cyclical.

Although living in an era of individualization, Davies (1989) argues that it is not up to us alone, as individuals, to decide how to use our time. Instead time is relational, but it is also influenced by the social and cultural context in which we live. The way we choose to use our time is thereby dependent on our context, both in the immediate proximity with significant others, but also at a more comprehensive level. As regards teachers, previous research has indicated that less time for reflection is a consequence of teachers' work intensification, (Ballet, et al., 2006), and the need for structured time for teacher reflection has been raised (Moon, 1999).

Recovery

Considering teachers' work situation, they are at risk of not experiencing sufficient recovery (Aronsson, et al., 2003). As recovery, i.e. the process of unwinding and "charging the batteries", is important for restoring depleted resources and for people's well-being (Zijlstra & Sonnentag, 2006), it is a relevant issue within

teaching. If an individual does not experience recovery during long periods of time it affects both their psychological and physical well-being (deCroon, et al., 2004; Kivimäki et al., 2006). Breaks can be described as "a period of time during which work-relevant tasks are not required or expected" (Trougakos, et al., 2008, p. 134). The effects on recovery have been examined in relation to breaks during the workday (Trougakos, et al., 2008), in the evenings after work (Rook & Zijlistra, 2006; Sonnentag, 2001), at weekends (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2005), and during vacations (Westman & Eden, 1997). Previous research indicates that employees experience recovery when they are engaging in non-work-related activities during these breaks. Such activities can be low-effort activities (e.g. watching TV, browsing through a magazine), social activities (e.g. spending time with family, meeting friends), or physical activities (e.g. doing sports, going for a walk) (Sonnentag, 2001). On the other hand, work-related activities (e.g. practicing material or making preparations) were found to be negatively related to recovery.

Psychological detachment is suggested to play an important role in recovery. It can be described as mentally disengaging from work-related issues during time off (Fritz, et al., 2010). Previous research has indicated that thinking negative work-related thoughts during leisure time, so called ruminating, is related to poor sleep quality (Cropley et al., 2006; Cropley & Purvis, 2003), anxiety (Mellings & Alden, 2000) and poor physical health (Thomsen, et. al., 2004).

Research on recovery has shown that feeling recovered during leisure time predicted an increase in task performance after six months (Binniwies, et al., 2009. Previous research has also indicated a reciprocal association between recovery and work engagement (Sonnentag, et al., 2012), as well as between the need for recovery and home-work interference (Demerouti, et al., 2007). The need for recovery and home-work interference impair concentration, which may affect job performance, making it important for organizations to pay attention to recovery.

Framework and concepts

The salutogenic perspective

Generally there are two different, but complementary, perspectives to health development: the pathogenic and the salutogenic perspectives (Bauer, et al., 2006). While pathogenesis focuses on the determinants of ill health, salutogenesis examines how different resources support a development towards health (Antonovsky, 1987). In the salutogenic perspective, health and ill health are considered as two end points on a continuum, and the dichotomy between healthy and ill people is thereby rejected.

Antonovsky (1987) presented the theory of Sense of Coherence (SOC) as a way to understand why some people remain healthy despite experiencing difficulties in life. He found that individuals to a varying degree have, what he called, generalized resistance resources (GRRs). These are resources that serve as facilitating one's coping with stressors in life. Examples of such resources are self-efficacy, material wealth, social networks, and religion. Consequently, they are found both inherently with the individual, and as external resources. Antonovsky interpreted these GRRs as having some common qualities in that they supported the individual in making sense of his/her world, cognitively, instrumentally and emotionally, and thereby created a sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1996). SOC can be described as

> a generalized orientation toward the world which perceives it, on a continuum, as comprehensible, manageable and meaningful. The strength of one's SOC [...] was a significant factor in facilitating the movement toward health (Antonovsky, 1996, p. 15).

Nilsson et al., (2012) suggested an extension of Antonovsky's GRRs, and proposed, what they called, specific enhancing resources (SER). These resources are proposed as ways to understand the work-related factors and processes that support employees' SOC. As such, they contribute to employees' growth and their ability for resilience, i.e. both in a health promoting way and as prevention. Examples of SER are reflective skills (in relation to comprehensibility), flexibility (in relation to manageability), and social climate (in relation to meaningfulness).

The salutogenic perspective shares several elements thay are equally important within health promotion and the Ottawa Charter. Core values in health promotion and the Ottawa Charter are equity, participation and empowerment and in a similar way, they are central elements in the salutogenic perspective (Eriksson & Lindström, 2008). Both view health as an asset for life, and they see health as a process (Lindström & Eriksson, 2011). With these common features, Antonovsky (1996) considered the salutogenic orientation a more viable paradigm for health promotion than the disease orientation.

As a majority of health research is using the pathogenic perspective (Tones & Green, 2004; Bauer, et al. 2006), there is a need to "balance" the research field with research conducted from a salutogenic perspective. Both perspectives are needed in order to address different needs within society. In this thesis, the pathogenic perspective is ever-present, since it is needed in order to obtain a holistic view, but the emphasis is placed on the salutogenic perspective.

The participatory approach

One starting point for my thesis was that I wanted it to make a difference for the people involved, I wanted the knowledge to become useful in the longer perspective, as well as while we were working on the WHP project. Having this objective, it became clear that my intentions were related to participatory action research. This type of research aims to accomplish a change already during the ongoing research process.

There are a multitude of concepts, describing various forms of research with this objective: action research, participatory action research (PAR), collaborative research, and integrative research, to name some. These different types of research have many similarities, but also some differences. They all emanate from the perception that this type of research is an approach that collaboratively construct knowledge, which leads to some kind of change. Action research is described as having these two related purposes: to develop and bring about changes in the specific praxis, and to develop the knowledge that is related to these processes and changes (Rönnerman, 2004). In other words, it is a combination of practical problem solving and theoretical development (Berlin, 2004). A central idea in action research is, consequently, that the participants contribute to the knowledge development within their profession, both by reflecting on their work and by taking actions (Folkesson, 2004). It is not considered a method (Peterson, 2009) nor a methodology, but more of an orientation to inquiry (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Reason and Bradbury (2008) describe their view of participation from a more ontological perspective:

> Of course, participation is more than a technique. But it is also more that an epistemological principle or a key tenet of political practice. An attitude of inquiry includes developing an understanding that we are embodied beings part of a social and ecological order, and radically interconnected with all other beings. We are not bounded individuals experiencing the world in isolation. We are already participants, part-of rather than apart-from (p. 8).

Action research has been criticized for using too much of a "top-down" approach (Furenbäck, 2012) and for focusing too much on the action and not enough on the collaborative aspect. PAR has been suggested as an elaboration of action research, one that emphasizes this aspect to a greater extent and also advocates a greater parity between the participants (Furenbäck, 2012). PAR can be defined as follows:

> In participatory action research (PAR) some of the people in the organization or the community under study participate actively with the professional researcher throughout the research process from the initial design to the final presentation of the results and discussions of action implications (Whyte, 1991).

What is the main difference between conventional research and PAR? According to Cornwall and Jewkes (1995), PAR differs from conventional research regarding the question of power within the research process, extending from less to more power in the hands of the participants and the researcher, respectively. In PAR the participation "involves activeness, choice and the possibilities of that choice being affected" (Rifkin, 1990, quoted in Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). This is especially evident regarding the research questions, and by whom the research findings will be used.

Building relationships is fundamental in PAR (Petersson, 2009; Grant et al., 2008). Since the researcher often comes from outside the setting, the issue of gaining the participants' trust is both pivotal and a challenge (Grant et al., 2008). Strategies for building trusting relationship are e.g. to communicate openly and honestly, learning about the setting and the people who participate in it, and building informal relationships.

Stoecker (1999) discusses different goals which he considers important (he does so in relation to participatory research, however, while I consider it as relevant for PAR as well). The research project should lead to effective action, but it should also lead to learning. One type of learning is the generation of facts, but it is equally important to develop an understanding of oneself and one's context (Stoecker (1999). The success of a PAR project may thus be evaluated by the participants' learning as well as by the changes it initiates.

The values of working with a participatory approach is in line with the underlying values of health promotion. By involving the participants in the health promotion or the research project, many advantages are sought. Such an advantage is the belief that the needs of the people concerned are made explicit (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995), and one avoids to assume needs that in reality are preconceived ideas from outsiders. Another advantage is the expectation that when decisions to take action or to start an intervention are made, the grounds for successful implementation are already laid (Polanyi et al., 2005; Patton, 2002). Previous research indicates that participation has a strong positive association to goal achievement and organizational commitment, and a strong negative association with resistance (Lines, 2004).

The WHP project has been carried out as PAR, in that it aimed to contribute to changes in the participating municipality and school. The work has been done in a participatory manner, in which I, as the academic, played the role of a collaborator. Having more time at my hands than the participating teachers, I did most of the actual work myself. However, the teachers, the principal and the project support group were involved in the decisions regarding research questions, research methods, and the analyses.

Framework for workplace learning

Workplace learning can be described as "all learning taking place in workplaces or in relation to workplaces" (Illeris, 2011, p.3). Illeris (2011, 2015) presented a model for workplace learning, which emanates from the approach that learning always takes place at a social and an individual level. I have chosen to use this model as a way to present the findings from the WHP project. While his model focuses on learning, I have added the element of well-being to it when presenting my findings. In this section, however, I will outline Illeris' (2011, 2015) model, without the well-being aspect.

Learning consists of two co-determinant processes, which are both needed for learning to take place (Figure 1). The *interaction* process concerns the interaction between the individual and his/her environment. People continuously receive impulses from the environment, and we pay attention to these impulses to a larger or lesser degree. With the relationship to the environment follows that learning is dependent on time and place, i.e. that learning is situated. The other process is an individual learning process labeled *acquisition*, and this is what research has traditionally been focusing on. It consists of the individual's psychological processing of the received impulses. New impulses are added to previous learning, which explains why different people learn different things even though they may

experience the same impulses. Fundamentally, the acquisition is a biological process, whereas the interaction is of a more social nature.

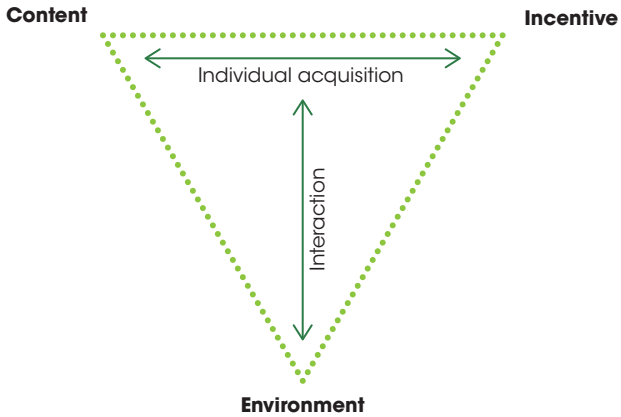


Figure 1.
The fundamental process of learning (after Illeris, 2015 , p 43)

Besides these two processes, learning is also composed of three different dimensions: the *content,* the *incentive*, and the *environment dimension.* The content dimension relates to what one learns, or what is intended to be learned: factual knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes, and behavior. Even though this view of learning is quite common, it offers a simplified picture of what learning is, as it omits the emotional and social factors of learning. The emotional element is, in this model, found in the incentive dimension. In order for the acquisition to take place, there needs to be some incentive, something that starts the process, and also carries it through. Examples of such incentive elements are feelings, motivation, and will.

> The acquisition process as well as the learning outcome […] depend on the incentive, i.e. the mobilization and the strength and nature of the mental energy that is driving the process. Knowledge, skills, insights, thinking, bodily functioning, ways of behaviour, identity – everything we learn always also has a psychodynamic or emotional side, which is concerned with how we feel about these functions, how we perceive them, what we want to do with them and how committed we are to them (Illeris, 2015, p. 20).

The content and the incentive dimensions are both related to the acquisition process, and they are thereby biological, individual, inner and psychological.

The environment dimension concerns the individual's interaction with the social and material environment. It includes the immediate environment, such as being

part of a work group, but also the more comprehensive environment, such as the municipality or national context.

> It is inherent in this [environment] dimension that the contents and emotional impulses of learning are always mediated through this dimension, but that they are, on the other hand, always acquired through the two other dimensions. It is important to emphasize that this mediation bears a social and societal imprint, even in cases where other people are not directly involved […], not only in cases of mediation by media […] but also in our interaction with the material environment. Because there is nothing in the world today which does not in one way or another reflect social and societal influence (Illeris, 2011, p. 24-5).

The presented model is Illeris' (2015; 2011) idea of a general learning model. However, he elaborated this model so that it would fit the context of the workplace, and subsequently introduced a model of workplace learning (Illeris, 2011). This model is presented below (Figure 2).

The workplace environment is depicted as a combination of two basic elements: the *workplace production* and the *workplace community*. Workplace production can be described as including all work tasks, such as the production of "articles, commodities, service, knowledge or whatever output or performance it may be – and the related administration, sales, promotion, etc." (Illeris, 2011, p. 30). There are several aspects of the workplace production, which are relevant as conditions for learning. As conditions, they can function as both resources and barriers to workplace learning. An important prerequisite for learning to take place, is the work content. What type of work it involves significantly influences the learning. As Illeris (2011) puts it:

> Work with living people calls for other types of competences and typically has a different subjective significance from industrial work with dead products. The emotional engagement in the work, and thus the dynamic forces in the learning processes, is different (p. 32).

The work content, is thus an important part of the workplace production, and it has implications for the employees' finding meaning in their work in two different ways. One way is the meaning it entails for the individual, what he/she finds meaningful from his/her own personal experience. The other relates to how the work is looked at by society. Is it work that is appreciated and valued by societal standards? In that case, it entails meaning as it is valuable for the common good. However, sometimes people find contradictory demands in the work content. Illeris (2011) gives the example of when standards of quality and quantity pose different demands. Work

situations, such as this, mean that the individual employee has to find ways to handle these contradictions.

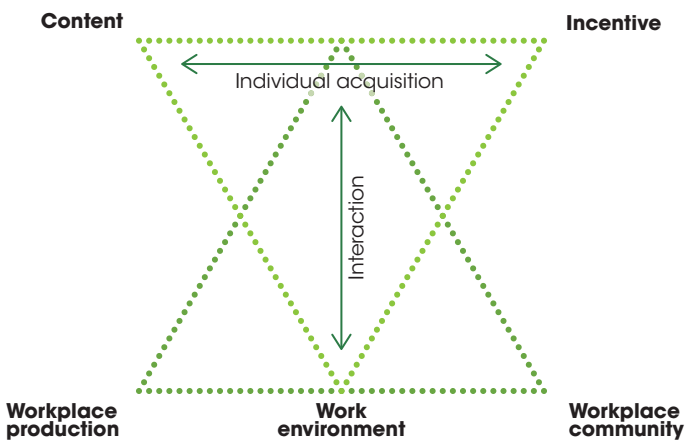
The possibilities for social interaction are also considered important to learning. Workplaces, in which there are possibilities for collegial discussion, reflection, and exchange of ideas are believed to promote learning. Another important aspect of the workplace production is the division of labor, i.e. the organization form. The vertical division of labor means that the decision-making and controlling functions are separated from the performing functions. In the horizontal division of labor, the different stages in the production chain are more integrated.

The second part of the workplace environment is the workplace community. It can be defined as:

> the totality of all human relations and connections and the communications, feelings, emotions, workplace culture and spirit and all the actions which are not primarily part of the production (Illeris, 2011, p. 30).

The workplace culture influences, for example, the attitudes towards learning. However, according to Illeris, (2011) there is often more focus on the workplace production than on the community.

In addition to the two elements of workplace production and workplace community, the individual's learning potential is an important part of the workplace learning. The learning potential means that each of us is in a continuous learning process. This process is influenced by past experiences but also one's aspirations for the future. However, since the design of the collegial reflection intervention did not allow for examining the individual learning potential, I will not include it in the analysis presented in the results.



Figur 2
The fundamental process of workplace learning (after Illeris, 2011, p 31)

Aim

The overall aim of this thesis was to explore salutogenic resources in the everyday lives of teachers, and to investigate how an intervention of collegial reflection influences their work-related learning, and their sense of well-being. Four papers and an unpublished report are included in the thesis. The unpublished report is only presented in the framework of the thesis.

The objectives were:

- to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers at a compulsory school experience the salutogenic aspects of their everyday lives (Paper I)
- to examine which aspects affect teachers' well-being in their everyday lives and to suggest recommendations for health promoting changes (Framework)
- to examine resources related to teachers' experience of their work-life balance (Paper II)
- to explore teachers' experiences of a method for recurrent structural collegial reflection with a settings approach (Paper III)
- to examine how recurrent collegial reflection may promote teachers' work-related learning, and how their well-being may be experienced as enhanced (Paper IV)

Methods

Design

Two parts can be discerned in this thesis. The first part is a needs assessment, which is built on focus groups interviews and individual interviews (Paper I) and a survey (Paper II). The results from the needs assessment came to serve as the basis for the development of an intervention (Paper III, IV). The intervention constitutes the second part of the thesis.

This has been a PAR project. Early in the project, a support group was formed. The objective for this group was to give support and feedback during the process of the project, and consisted of representatives from the participating school, the municipality and the university. The support group met twice a year. Most of the decisions during the research process have been taken together with the participating teachers, the principal and at times, the project support group. I presented different methods for data collection to the participants, and we made a joint decision on the methods to be used. The analyses were conducted by myself, my supervisors and colleagues. These analyses have been continuously brought back to the participating teachers, and elaborated further together. This was a way to create an interaction between theory and practice (Sandberg, 1982). The collaboration between the practicians and the researchers can be seen as contributing different aspects to the knowledge development. The teachers contribute their knowledge of their unique and specific context, and the researchers contribute their knowledge of previous research and methods for data gathering and analyses (Rönnerman, 2004).

Working with PAR has implications on my relationship with the participating stakeholders, especially the teachers and the principal. In order to gain their trust, and make them interested in participating in the WHP project – not only at the beginning, but during the entire process – I had to engage in a relationship with them.

> Whereas experimental research starts from the assumption that the researcher takes a disinterested, objective view in order to acquire unbiased, objective truths, action research assumes an engaged and subjective interaction with people in the research setting (Stringer & Genat, 2004, p. 26).

Polanyi et al.(2005) argue similarly for a more participatory and dialogue-based research on work-related health. My engagement with the teachers was an important part of working with this participatory approach. However, there was also a need for me to step back and view the dialogues and the analyses from a more analytical perspective, in order to meet the standards of science. Furthermore, I needed to raise the everyday experiences of the participants to a more comprehensive and general level. My supervisors and other researchers have played an important role in the process of changing these perspectives.

Context

The context for the project has been a municipality in the southern part of Sweden. One specific school has been involved in the project, from the beginning until the end. There are approximately 300 pupils at the school, from preschool classes up to sixth grade.

Since the start of the project in 2009, there have been many changes within the school context, both nationally in Sweden, and locally in the municipality where the project took place. On the national level the Swedish National Agency for Education introduced new guidelines regarding syllabuses and subject plans. The new guidelines include an education system based on fewer but more clearly defined objectives, and a new grading system. During the time of the WHP project, there has been much focus on the educational situation in Sweden. The deteriorating assessments and students results and grades have been on the public agenda, especially after the PISA report in 2015. The public opinion expressed great worries regarding the negative trend in learning results. As mentioned earlier, much of the debate has focused on the psychosocial work situation of teachers, and the reported deteriorating well-being due to this.

On the local level, there have been major re-organizations within the school department in the participating municipality. During the time of the project (2009-2016), the school has had three different principals, one of whom has been considerably more active and influential in the project than the other two. The municipality received criticism from the Swedish Work Environment Authority in 2013. Complaints included an elevated work load on principals and teachers, increased administration and documentation, and too many managerial changes. Consequently, the picture of the education in this particular municipality seems to agree with the public picture of Swedish education.

In Paper II the entire municipality participated as a questionnaire was offered to all schools in the area. In the other studies (I, Framework, III, IV) the context was limited to one school in the municipality.

Pre-understanding

We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are (unknown).

My ontological stance lies within constructivism. We create our understanding of the world while interacting with the environment. Thereby follows, that the reality is interpreted by each individual, and there is consequently no single reality to be described, let alone explained. Instead, different people experience different realities, and they are all equally true.

From the hermeneutic perspective, we are influenced by different tempi: the past, the present, and the future. What we have experienced earlier in life influences how we look at the world and the situations we experience in the present. Likewise, our expectations for what will come in the future influence the way we act now. The past and the future are, thereby, present in the here and now.

That said, my pre-understanding has consequently influenced the process of this thesis. In my background I have a Bachelor's degree in cultural anthropology, and I have found that anthropology has one important thing in common with health promotion as well as PAR: the respect for people's innate ability to determine what is best for themselves.

My pre-understanding also includes the inclination to adopt the salutogenic perspective together with the pathogenic one. This inclination comes from the years I have spent at the public health science department at Kristianstad University. During the last fifteen years, this department has contributed to the salutogenic research, and I have inevitably been influenced by this both through my undergraduate studies, and the more advanced studies.

Being part of society, I am constantly met by television reports and articles in the press, reporting on teachers' work situation and the present state of the Swedish school. This picture is partly supported by my own experiences as a mother of two school-going boys. Many of the teachers I have met are pressed for time and overwhelmed by documentation. However, my meetings with the Swedish school as a parent also show a picture of teachers filled with commitment, creativity and care. While working on this thesis, all these different pictures of teachers' work situation have been part of my pre-understanding.

Participants

In Paper I and the unpublished report seven teachers in grades 1-6 working at the same school, participated. One was male, and six were female, and they were between 37 and 63 years old. Their work experience ranged from 2 to 34 years. They were all married and had children. All the teachers at the involved school (n=19) were asked to participate in the study, and the teachers who chose to do so were included. As such, we used a convenience sampling strategy (Patton, 2002).

Paper II regarded the questionnaire, which was offered to 455 teachers, working at 26 schools within the municipality. All 1-9 grade schools in the municipality were asked to participate in the study, but four principals decided not to participate due to lack of time. The teachers working in these four schools were thereby not included in the survey. In all, 338 teachers (74%) completed the questionnaire.

The same school that was involved in Paper I was also involved in the intervention (Paper III and IV). All pre-school class to 6th grade teachers in the school (n=21) were asked to participate in the intervention. In total, 21 teachers participated. Fifteen of these were female.

Data generation and analysis

I have used both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the process of this thesis (Table 1). Focus groups interviews, individual interviews, and questionnaires were used for data generation in the needs assessment. Data generation in the intervention included open mail questions, digital recordings of the collegial reflection meetings, and individual interviews. For the analyses, four different methods have been used: content analysis, hermeneutic analysis, multiple linear regression (Paper I, II), and thematic analysis (Paper III, IV).

Needs assessment

Focus group interviews

As the aim was to examine teacher experiences of their everyday lives, a qualitative approach was chosen (Paper I, Unpublished report). We decided to use multistage focus groups interviews (Hummelvoll, 2008), which is considered as a relevant method when working with a collaborative research design. A focus group interview is an open-ended interview with a group of five to ten people, focusing on different aspects of a specific topic (Patton, 2002; Dahlin Ivanoff & Hultberg, 2006). It is a useful method when aiming to understand the multiple realities of everyday life:

> Participants construct a framework to make sense of their experiences, and in interaction with others these experiences will be modified, leading to the construction of new knowledge (Dahlin Ivanoff & Hultberg, 2006.

All participants worked at the same school, as the group constellation was based on pragmatic reasons. It is often recommended to aim for a homogeneous group, as they are based on common experiences (Dahlin Ivanoff & Hultberg, 2006), although having a heterogeneous group can increase the diversity of perspectives (Kitzinger, 1995). Often, the participants in focus groups are unknown to each other, but since the project took place in a single school, it was unavoidable that the participants knew each other. Focus group interviews were conducted by a moderator (Patton, 2002), and in this study, I had that role.

A multistage focus groups interview differs from the more common focus group interview. In the former, the same group explores the topic on several occasions. By meeting repeatedly, the phenomenon can be explored in depth, and the possibilities for raising the participants' experiences to a higher level of abstraction is enhanced

(Hummelvoll, 2008). The group met on four occasions, between December 2009 and June 2010. At the first two occasions, the focus was on "How do we, as teachers, experience our work life and our life as a whole?". From these dialogues, four areas appeared: Different roles within the teacher profession; Recovery; Demarcation; and Personal development dialogues. As the next step, it was decided to focus on one of the areas, Demarcation. At the next meetings we talked about demarcation between work and non-work, how to demarcate between the different roles inherent in the teacher role, and also the teachers' own strategies for prioritization in their everyday. After each focus group interview, the digital recordings were transcribed and then analyzed by one of my supervisors and myself. Each interview began with feedback on the previous interview, the analysis was further elaborated, and together we decided on the next step. After the last focus group interview, we agreed that individual interviews would be conducted with each of the seven teachers, in order for them to be able to speak more freely as needed.

Individual interviews

The semi-structured individual interviews took place either in the participants' homes or at the school (Paper I, Framework). The same interview guide was used for all seven interviews, and they lasted between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The individual interviews took place September – October 2010.

Content analysis

Two analyses of the data from the focus group interviews and the individual interviews were conducted by one of the supervisors and myself. Firstly, a content analysis was done, which resulted in an unpublished feedback report (Framework), presented to the municipality (Nilsson, 2012). Secondly, a hermeneutic analysis, inspired by Gadamer (2004) was done. The content analysis included both salutogenic and pathogenic aspects, whereas the hermeneutic analysis focused solely on the strengthening aspects.

Our research question was related to aspects which affect teachers' well-being in their everyday lives (Framework). This is an area with limited research, especially from a public health science perspective. A conventional content analysis, using an inductive approach, was therefore chosen to interpret the meaning of the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Kondracki et al., 2002). Through the inductive approach, the information from the participants was gained without preconceived categories. Our understanding of qualitative content analysis was based on the definition presented by Hsieh & Shannon (2005):

> […] a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (p. 1278).

The analysis started by reading all the transcribed interviews repeatedly in order to get a sense of the overall picture. Next, extracts that seemed to capture relevant thoughts were highlighted. Notes were taken by both researchers, respectively, regarding thoughts about the texts. This was first done individually, and then together. While continuing to read the texts, different extracts were found to be related to each other, forming an initial coding scheme. Subsequently, codes were organized into categories as meaningful clusters (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In all, ten categories were created in the content analysis (Unpublished report).

Hermeneutic analysis

The second analysis, based on existential hermeneutics inspired by Gadamer (2004), emanated from the qualitative content analysis (Paper I). This initial approach to analysis can be seen in several qualitative methods (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), and since Gadamer does not advocate one specific method, we could use the process of the content analysis as a starting point for the hermeneutic interpretation. As such, it was part of our pre-understanding. The hermeneutic analysis (Paper I), performed by myself and one of my supervisors, was an interpretation of the interviews with the teachers. This interpretation was influenced by the context in which the interviews took place, but also by the pre-understanding mentioned above. Patton (2002) states that:

> Hermeneutics […] reminds us that what something means depends on the cultural context in which it was originally created as well as the cultural context within which it is subsequently interpreted (p. 113).

Using a hermeneutic perspective, an interpretation cannot be unprejudiced. The interpretation of the teachers' experiences should therefore be regarded as influenced by their everyday lives, but also by the pre-understanding. Gadamer (2004) uses the metaphor of *horizon*, when speaking about the way we perceive the world and everything in it, our vantage point. One's horizon is influenced by experiences in the past, and they are therefore connected with the present and our understanding of the presence. One's horizon is similarly influenced by thoughts about the future, and the three tempi are thereby interrelated and simultaneously present in the presence. Pre-understanding is a fundamental prerequisite for understanding, and our interpretations are made through it (Ödman, 2004). Ödman (2004) also states that our pre-understanding is conditioned by the discourses we

are a part of, and express it as being discursively embedded in our history. The ways that the participating teachers understood their situation were thereby influenced by the discourses in which they were participating. Similarly, the discourses that my supervisor and I were part of influenced our understanding of the teachers' situation.

Another metaphor, used by Gadamer (2004), is *fusion of horizons*. It is used to describe a genuine understanding (Selander, 2004) and is a merging of different vantage points (Lindh, 2010). A horizon may, in this sense, be that of a text as well as an individual. A person' s vantage point is not static but can be changed in the meeting with other vantage points. To gain a new understanding, one needs to open up to another horizon, and change one's own. It is not about giving up one's own vantage point, but rather to merge it with that of another person. In such a fusion of horizons, the previous horizon has been moved (Selander, 2004). Central to accomplishing a fusion of horizons is the act of dialogue and the means for this is the language (Melberg, 1997). In line with what I previously stated regarding horizons, the act of dialogue may take place between the researcher and a text, as well as between people. Regarding the former type, Lindh (2010) states that:

> When interpreting a written text we need to treat the text as a partner in dialogue, not as enclosed within a fixed meaning. A dialogue structured as questions and answers opens up possibilities, given a genuine willingness to know (p. 18).

Gadamer (2004) describes understanding in the metaphor of *hermeneutic circle*. This involves a movement between the whole and the parts, and emanates from the hermeneutic rule that the whole needs to be understood from the parts, and the specific parts must be understood by the whole. As such, it is a circular relationship (Gadamer, 1997). The hermeneutic circle also includes a movement between the known and unknown, between self and other, and between past and present (Gadamer, 2004; Lindh, 2010) as well as between understanding and pre-understanding.

Our analysis process started with the research question regarding teachers' experiences of the salutogenic aspects in their everyday lives. Since the research question regarded individual teachers' experiences of their life situations, a hermeneutic approach was considered relevant. The desire to gain a deep understanding of a phenomenon is central in research within the Gadamerian tradition (Fleming et al., 2003). Throughout the entire analysis process, the pre-understanding of both my supervisors and myself was discussed. This was done between the two of us, but also in dialogues with other researchers.

In order to immerse into the phenomenon of the teachers' experiences, I transcribed the interviews myself. Looking at the text at the same time as listening to the teachers' voices was a way to become more absorbed in what they said. Listening

to their narratives and reading the text was done several times. However, the objective was not to adopt the teachers' understanding of their experiences, but to join it to my own understanding. This is relevant (Lamnek, 1995 in Fleming et al., 2003), as my pre-understanding will always be present in my interpretation of the phenomenon.

The analysis and the interpretations were done continuously during the data gathering process. As stated previously, before each focus group interview, the analysis from the previous interview was shared with the participating teachers and reflected upon together. This is also a part of the hermeneutic circle (Fleming et al., 2003), as our understanding of the phenomenon was changed during this process. Their understanding, as well as my own, changed because of our subsequent dialogues.

When all the interviews were transcribed, all texts were read to gain an understanding of the whole. Subsequently, the different parts of the text were investigated in relation to the sense of the whole, and themes relating to the whole were identified. Through the dialogue between my supervisor and myself, the themes and the whole were discussed, back and forth, and our preunderstanding was reflected upon in relation to the phenomenon. As the next step, sentences and sections that seemed to be representative for both the teachers' understanding as well as our own understanding were identified. These were presented as quotes in Paper I in order to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study.

Questionnaire survey

Based on the findings from Paper I, the support group decided to examine whether these findings were applicable to a larger number of teachers, i.e. all the teachers in the municipality. For that reason, a quantitative approach was chosen, with a questionnaire as data collection method. A literature review of relevant research, theories and instruments was conducted. Based on that review, and the findings from Paper I, a questionnaire was constructed.

The focus of the questionnaire was salutogenic resources in relation to WLB. A structure consisting of five areas was used in the questionnaire: demographic and personal factors; external non-work factors; work-related factors; the experience of combining work with personal life; and health related factors. It contained 39 main questions, with an additional number of sub-questions (in total 91 items). Indices of different domains were constructed by explorative factor analysis (PCA, four indices from 22 items), by theoretical relations (five indices from 31 items), or by use of established instruments (six indices from 38 items). These established instruments were used either as the original scale or as inspiration. To measure the participants' experiences of work-related issues, we used the *Work Experience*

Measurement Scale (WEMS) (Nilsson et al, 2010). The *Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale* (SHIS) (Bringsén et al., 2009) was used to assess the participants' experiences of their health and well-being. Other included scales were: the *Flourishing Scale* (Diener et al., 2009), which was used for questions regarding self-esteem and optimism; and van den Heuvel et al.'s (2009) scale regarding meaning-making. In order to assess quality of life, the question "How do you feel about your present life?" was asked, and the respondents were given seven bipolar items as alternative answers (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003). Paper I was used for the development of questions regarding recovery. Four questions/statements, inspired by Carlson et al., (2009), were included in the WLB index: "I am satisfied with my life regarding the work-life balance" (6-point Likert-type scale); "In all, how easy or difficult is it for you to manage the demands of your work and personal life?" (5-point Likert-type scale); "All in all, how successful do you feel in balancing your work and your personal life?" (5-point Likert-type scale); and "People who are close to me would say that I do a good job of balancing work and personal life." (6 point Likert-type scale). Cronbach's alpha coefficient was acceptable (0,72-0,95) for the 14 indices finally used in the study.

Before distributing the questionnaire, it was tested in a pilot study. Five teachers, living and working in a different municipality than the one participating in the survey, took part in the pilot study. Together with myself, each teacher discussed the questions individually, and small adjustments were made before distributing it in the participating municipality.

A test-retest was performed, with an interval of 14 days (n=39) in order to measure the consistency of the questions over time. The reliability of the questions was calculated and resulted in weighted kappa values for all questions between fair (0,39) and good (0,80) (Landis & Koch, 1977).

In order to raise the interest for participating in the survey, five meetings were held with all the principals in the municipality (one meeting in each school district). At these meetings, information regarding the survey was given, and a dialogue took place regarding how to best introduce the survey at each specific school. Each principal was asked if I could visit their respective schools, and inform the teachers about the survey and also motivate them to participate. Dates were set for me to visit the schools, and distribute the questionnaire. In all, 22 schools participated, from a total of 26 schools. In a majority of these occasions, I first introduced the questionnaire, and subsequently they completed the questionnaire while I was still present. The motive for this procedure was to increase the response rate, but also to be available for questions. As an alternative, the teachers were offered to bring the questionnaire home to complete it later and submit it in a confidential envelope. The whole process, from the literature review to the development of the questionnaire,

lasted between January and April 2012. The actual gathering of data took place in Maj-July, 2012.

Data from the survey was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22. The level of statistical significance was set to α=0,05. Bivariate correlations between the experience of WLB (index) and the 13 indices were calculated, using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The variables showing a medium to large correlation to WLB (r=0,30-0,80) were included in a multivariable linear regression with the index of WLB as the dependent variable. Three variables with low correlation to WLB (age, gender, and living conditions) were forced into the regression analysis in order to adjust for these variables. Two-way interaction was tested by introducing product terms of main independent variables in separate regression models. The results from this study was presented in Paper II. Some of the results were also published on the Intra-net in the participating municipality.

The Intervention

Digital recordings, Open mail questions, Individual interviews

Thus far into the research project, the project support group decided to implement an intervention. The discussions emanated from the findings from Paper I and II, and eventually it was decided to focus on Collegial Reflection. A meeting was held with the teachers, and the idea for the intervention was presented. Based on findings from Paper I and II, the teachers then prioritized topics for reflection. The intervention started the beginning of autumn semester of 2014 and lasted for autumn semester of 2015. During the first semester, three groups met on 14 occasions respectively, a total of 42 collegial reflection meetings. The meetings were digitally recorded, except on six occasions. The reason for the missing recordings were technical problems. The recordings from the group that had the most recordings were transcribed (n=14 transcriptions). During the same semester, fall of 2014, open mail questions were sent to the participating teachers on three occasions, including the same questions on each occasion. In all, 31 mails were completed, of 63 possible ones. In January 2015, six months after the start of the intervention, all teachers (n=21) were asked to be individually interviewed, and three teachers accepted, one from each reflection group. The data from all three methods, i.e. transcriptions from the recorded reflection meetings, the open mail questions, and the individual interviews, composed the empirical data for Paper III. Before writing Paper IV, additional individual interviews were conducted in January 2016. All teachers were asked to participate (n=21), and four accepted.

Thematic analysis

In the analysis for Paper III and IV, the qualitative approach of thematic analysis was used (Braun & Clark, 2006; Vaismoradi, et al., 2013). It can be described as "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis is a flexible method, and is not tied to a specific theoretical framework. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify within which theoretical position one is using the method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the analyses of both Paper III and IV, we adopted the `contextualist´ method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). With this, we acknowledged the participants' individual experiences and meanings, but also that these individual meanings are influenced by their social context. We used the content from the entire data set, i.e. the empirical material from all three data collection methods, when constructing the themes. Using that procedure, some depth might be lost, but in return, the overall description is maintained. According to Braun & Clarke (2006) this is a useful approach when investigating an under-researched area, such as the method for collegial reflection.

Thematic analysis shows several similarities with qualitative content analysis. Both methods examine data by systematically classifying the text into small parts of content and identify patterns (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). However, while content analysis may be used for analyzing data qualitatively but also quantify the data through the frequency of e.g. the occurrence of a theme, thematic analysis is used for purely qualitative account of data (Vaismoradi et al., 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006). In both methods, the gathering and analyzing are done concurrently, and the possibility to work either inductively or deductively is also open for both. Both analysis processes start similarly with reading and re-reading in order to obtain a sense of the whole. However, in thematic analysis, the context is included in the analysis to a larger extent, and a thematic map is included as a visual presentation of themes, codes and their relationships. The final part, i.e. the writing, is also emphasized as an integral part of the analysis in the thematic analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are constantly made throughout the entire research process. The first ethical consideration I had to make, regarded the current work situation of the teachers: if they were already experiencing a stressful work situation, how could I ask them to participate in a research project, giving them even more work? This ethical dilemma has been present through the entire research process, from the first qualitative study, to the questionnaire, and finally the intervention. Taken into ethical principles, this dilemma deals with the seemingly contradiction of non-

maleficence and autonomy. However, I came to the conclusion that the principle of autonomy carried more weight. Teachers are adults, and they are used to making decisions and letting their voice be heard. I concluded they would not feel obligated or coerced to participate if they did not want to.

A basic issue to decide upon, is the question of control over the research process. With whom is the control bestowed – the practicians, the researchers, or with an approach in which the power is shared? As noted earlier, we chose to work in a collaborative mode of participation in this project. In practice, it means that it was I, the researcher, who initiated the project, and also was responsible for its process, but it was the teachers and the principal, who defined the research questions. On the research process I have collaborated with the practicians, in decisions regarding research questions, methods for data collections, choice of and design of intervention. We have continually had dialogues on the specific issues at stake, and together we have made decisions on the next step. During each decision we have aimed at making the teachers' influence as manifest as possible. As long as it have been feasible and conducted according to scientific values, the research process has proceeded according to the practicians' wishes. The group of seven teachers has also been active in the analysis of the data in Paper I. I did most of the actual analysis, together with my supervisors, but I continually went back to the teachers to discuss the analysis and have it further developed. This approach was also a way to confirm the findings.

An ethical dilemma that I have dealt with while working in a collaborative PAR, is that although we have aimed at making the decisions in a dialogue in which the teachers have most of the saying, the fact is that I already have made some of the decisions prior to our meetings. As an example, when we were to decide on which data collection method we should use in the first study, I presented a number of feasible methods to the group and they then decided on the methods. But already by presenting some methods, I also excluded others. For practical reasons and by necessity, I had already made a prioritization. Hence, I executed control, while seemingly leaving the control in the hands of the teachers. Nonetheless, it was a pragmatic solution to a practical problem (and the teachers were grateful for not having to read methodological literature).

An ethical matter to be considered, arose when discussing the borderland between the work sphere and the private sphere. In Paper I and II, the private sphere was included in the study, and the ethical issue was: how do we avoid crossing the boundary of integrity, and protect the participants by avoiding an invasion of privacy? When issues from the private sphere were discussed, other people, such as family members, were discussed, and they had not been asked to participate in the study. This was especially evident in Paper I, in which we discussed matters dealing with private issues such as the relationships with partners and children, and also

issues about feelings. All participants had signed an informed consent form regarding a code of silence. Still, that is just a piece of paper, and an ethical question such as this one has to build upon the participants' respect for each other. The respect for privacy lie in the relationship. In the first study there was a mutual feeling of trust among the participants in the group, and a sense of security which all of us has built and kept along the process. In Paper II the respondents could simply refuse to answer any question they found too personal or private.

While deciding on the procedure of Paper II an ethical consideration became evident. With the intention of increasing the response rate, we decided that I should ask the participants to complete the questionnaire while I remained in the same room. Nonetheless, we realized that my presence could be perceived as compelling them into participating in the survey. However, since the teachers were offered to complete the questionnaire at another time, we concluded that the risk was minimized.

Finally, the intervention has involved an ethical consideration. The principal made the decision that all teachers at the school should participate in the reflection meetings. Thus, the teachers could not refuse to participate in the intervention. However, as research has to be voluntary, the teachers could not be coerced into participating in the research project, and they could therefore refuse to be part of it. When I informed about the intervention and the subsequent evaluation, they were asked to participate, and if so, to sign an informed consent form. Each teacher had the opportunity to decline to participate, and they would not be included in the research. All teachers agreed to participate and signed the informed consent form. However, the voluntariness of the participation may be questioned. It is not easy to withstand the group, and social pressure may compel individuals to participate despite hesitations. In this case I drew the same conclusions as when considering the appropriateness of placing additional workload on the teachers: each teacher could decline to participate, and no one else would have to know about it.

The studies were conducted in agreement with the Swedish Law of Research Ethics, SFS 2003:460, in line with the ethical guidelines of the Helsinki Declaration. Prior to the first study, my supervisors orally consulted the Board of Ethics and we found support for our intention not to seek ethical approval. This decision was based on the principle of non-maleficence, and the Swedish law of ethics.

Table 1. Methods used in the papers

Focus/Content	Data collection	Participants	Analysis	Papers
To gain a deeper understanding of how teachers at a compulsory school experience the salutogenic aspects of their lives	Digital recordings of mulitstage focus groups interviews. Individual interviews	7	Hermeneutic analysis	I
To examine which aspects affect teachers' well-being in their everyday lives, and to suggest recommendations for health promoting changes.	Digital recordings of multistage focus groups interviews. Individual interviews	7	Content analysis	Unpublished report In the thesis only
To examine resources related to teachers' experiences of their work-life balance	Questionnaire	338 (74%)	Multi linear regression method	II
To explore teachers' experiences of a method for recurrent structural collegial reflection with a settings approach	Digital recordings of reflection meetings Open mail questions Ind. interviews, 2015	21 16 3	Thematic analysis	III
To examine how recurrent collegial reflection may promote teachers' work-related learning, and how their well-being may be experienced as enhanced	Digital recordings of reflection meetings Open mail questions Ind. interviews, 2015 Ind. interviews, 2016	21 16 3 4	Thematic analysis	IV

Results

Teachers' well-being in their everyday lives

The objective of the first study was to examine aspects that affect teachers' well-being in their everyday lives. More specifically, we looked at "What are the salutogenic aspects in their everyday lives?". However, the findings showed it was impossible to avoid discussions of the pathogenic aspects. In order to present a more comprehensive image of the teachers' everyday lives, I have chosen to present both the salutogenic and the pathogenic aspects.

The salutogenic aspects

The everyday lives of the teachers included aspects which were interpreted as contributing to their well-being in a positive manner. The salutogenic aspects found in this study were mainly found in the relationships with people surrounding the teachers, both from the work and the private spheres.

The participating teachers said that working as a teacher was highly meaningful (Paper I), and the main cause for this was found in the caring relationships that teaching involved (Paper I). The caring element of teaching was channeled through both achieving results with their pupils, as well as through the actual act of creating something with them. The caring element was also seen in being present in the moment together with their pupils and when they felt they were really there for them. Consequently, the most important relationships were the ones with the pupils, but also the relationships with the colleagues, as well as with the principal (Paper I). The meaningfulness was found reciprocally, as it involved both giving care and receiving care from the pupils, colleagues, and the principal.

The teachers who participated in the study expressed meaningfulness to be a pivotal resource for their well-being. When they could see that their pupils made progress and learned things because of what they, as their teachers, did, it made them feel good as professionals. It gave them strength to balance other aspects at work, which were perceived as more draining than revitalizing. The caring relationships with the pupils not only affected the teachers' professional well-being, but also their overall well-being. It seemed as though their work contributed to giving meaning to their life as a whole.

The colleagues were also described as being important to the participating teachers' well-being (Paper I). They spoke appreciatively about their colleagues, and this relationship was described as bringing joy. Their reciprocal caring relationship was characterized by being there for one another. The teachers said they could talk about everything. They talked about feeling safe with their colleagues, which also meant that they could talk to each other about difficulties and problems. Through these talks with colleagues, they found both emotional and practical support. In addition, they said that they had great fun together.

Even in situations when a teacher was on the way to becoming burnt out, the collegial relationship seemed to be safe enough to take action (Unpublished report). Through the actions of colleagues, but also the principal, teachers who were not feeling well were supported to actually stop the negative process and change the situation. The colleagues could see the signals of ill-health, even if the teacher him/herself could not, and they took supportive action.

Teaching was also described as being creative (Paper I). Through the teaching, the teachers were allowed to think on new lines, to come up with alternative ways to reach the pupils, and to develop new methods. They perceived this creative part of their work as positive.

From the private sphere, the teachers' expressed their families to be a resource for their well-being (Paper I). Just to spend time with the family seemed to be strengthening, and it did not really matter what they did while spending time together. It was ordinary things such as mowing the lawn or spending a day in the woods. Or it could be just being together with your loved ones.

> [Like when I picked up my son from daycare] and he sat there having a bite to eat and he turns around, uses his hand full of paté to pat me gently, then I get a kiss. It's just so… wonderful… it means so much (Individual interview).

Recovery was an important resource for the teachers' well-being (Paper I). However, the things that brought recovery varied among the participants. For one teacher it meant sweaping up leaves, for another it meant being with friends, and for a third it meant sitting down in silence and have a cup of coffee. Common to all strategies, however, was that it occurred outside the school, in their private sphere.

The pathogenic aspects

The pathogenic aspects presented here, were the circumstances and conditions in the teachers' everyday lives that in some way influenced their well-being in a detrimental manner. Sometimes these aspects contributed to a more temporary feeling of discomfort, while on other occasions they affected the teachers' well- being in a more far-reaching way. An example of such a taxing element in the teachers' workday was when they found that a pupil was being abused at home (Paper I). The abuse could come

in different degrees, from battering and/or addiction, to situations where the children did not receive sufficient care or support from the parents. These aspects of the teachers' work were relational, and as such they were difficult to demarcate to the work sphere. Thoughts of the pupil invaded the teachers' private sphere and their time off work, and it affected their well-being in a detrimental way. They expressed feeling frustrated, as they reported about the situations to the social services, and yet many times nothing happened (Unpublished report).

The teachers also expressed a feeling of being powerless (Paper I), and it was related to when the abused pupil was *not* at school (Unpublished report). As long as the child was at school, the teacher had an influence on what happened to him/her, and the teacher experienced at least some control over the well-being of the child. However, as soon as the pupil left the school, the feeling of control diminished, and a feeling of powerlessness arose. In order to handle the feeling of being powerless, the teachers had adopted a sort of demarcation between the present that occurred within the school and the time and place outside of the school. They focused on the present: right here and now they try to make life as good as possible for the pupil.

> Especially when you see the child every day. And you see how bad he/she feels. Then, you still try to do what's good for them while they are in school. But it eats into you a lot. It's sort of an acceptance of things you cannot influence. You see, you have done what you can, and when the child is with me, I'm on top of things. But at home…, well, I just have to accept…(Individual interview, Unpublished report)

The teachers expressed that sometimes they experienced contradictory demands related to these situations (Unpublished report). The competing demands regarding how they should act as a fellow human being, versus their assignments as a professional teacher. To be able to feel they acted according to their own moral compass, they needed to commit to pupils who were being abused. However, this commitment included the risk of not being able to perform as a professional teacher, partly because it interfered with other components of their work, and partly because it drained them of energy and strength. In situations, such as these, the teachers found themselves caught between irreconcilable demands, and this affected their well-being negatively. One teacher described it as being in a conflict between herself and her assignment.

Another pathogenic aspect of the teachers' work domain was the changing work conditions and the increasing demands (Unpublished report). The participating teachers expressed an increased workload, which mainly consisted of more documentation and paper work (Paper I). These increasing work assignments lead to less time for the education assignment, which was seen as affecting their well-being negatively.

> Right now, the worst [thing with the job as a teacher] is being swamped with an extreme amount of extra tasks, so you cannot do them all… I want to focus on the teaching, but I end up spending so much time on other things that I do not

> have time to do as much as I would like to for the pupils. But… administrative things to be written, sent and fixed and that were not required before. It's a pity, because it's too much. I would have liked to have more time with the pupils (Individual interview, Unpublished report).

Locally, in the participating municipality, there had been a number of structural and organizational changes while the first study was carried out. New school districts were established, and new school managers and principals were appointed. The interviews showed that these local changes contributed to a feeling of insecurity and anxiety (Framework). Within the daily work there were many things that needed to be taken care of, such as being in charge of substitutes, and being in charge of pupil council conferences. There was a risk that many of the practical issues were missed, as pointed out by the participating teachers. This put extra stress on the teachers.

The teachers also raised the concern that the changing work situation contributed to less time for reflection together with colleagues and management (Framework). They described the everyday workday as being intense. As a consequence of the intense work pace, it was hard to find the time to actually sit down and reflect together with colleagues. They stated that collegial reflection was typically something that was not prioritized, when all the other assignments needed their time and attention. Some of them said that they now and then reflected with the closest colleagues, but this happened spontaneously and occasionally. They claimed to need more structured reflection time. The focus groups interviews (Paper I) seemed, to a certain extent, to have met this need.

> But that's exactly why we always come here, because we feel good sitting here and saying this. And that's what I mean, that this is the forum we should have had. I think that's what we need, and it cannot be negotiated away. Because we *do* it. I do the same thing, negotiating away things I *know* that I need, because I feel I have to do other things… that take time… (Individual interview, Framework).

Summary

The teachers described a number of resources influencing their well-being. The health-promoting resources were mainly found in various relationships. Within the work sphere these relationships were found with their pupils, colleagues and th principal, and within the private sphere they were with family members and friends.

There were, however, also pathogenic aspects on the teachers' everyday lives. Having to deal with pupils who were abused was such an aspect. A changing work situation, from a more comprehensive perspective as well as at a more local level, were other aspects which affected the teacher's well-being in a depleting way. Interestingly, all pathogenic aspects were work-related, while the salutogenic aspects were found both in the work and the private spheres.

Teachers' resources in relation to work-life balance

Initially the focus of this thesis was on teachers' resources in relation to their experience of WLB, even though it later changed with the intervention. The empirical findings from the first two studies (Paper I, II) suggest different strategies and resources being used by the teachers in order to manage their everyday lives, and support their WLB. The findings also suggest aspects which may be used as promoting WLB.

During the interviews, the participating teachers described several resources that supported them to a better WLB (Framework). Such a resource involved demarcation between the work sphere and the private sphere. One strategy to demarcate between the two spheres was to keep two different calendars, one for work and one for private appointments. The work calendar stayed at work, and was never brought home. Another example was to actively make the decision *not* to bring work home, if they knew it would be difficult to find the time to do it at home. This type of demarcation involved practical issues, and were done both spatially and temporally.

The issue of demarcation was, however, complex. It seemed difficult to demarcate some aspects of the teachers' work situation, and it was especially evident when they taught pupils who were abused at home. Thoughts of the child invaded the private sphere, and it affected their well-being detrimentally (Paper I). They spoke of their role as a social worker (Framework) and it was difficult to demarcate this type of work-related thoughts. Still, there were other work-related thoughts that were perceived as positive when they entered the private sphere, i.e. the creative ideas (Paper I). When the teachers were doing non-work-related activities, such as jogging, ironing clothes or mowing the lawn, ideas for development and solutions to work-related problems often came to them. This was perceived as positive. Similarly, an issue such as planning their teaching during their discretionary time, was experienced as positive. It contributed to a feeling of being prepared, and of being in control. Consequently, it seemed that it was difficult to demarcate the work-related element of invading thoughts of abused pupils from the private sphere, while other work-related elements, such as the creative ideas, were welcomed into the private sphere.

Another resource for managing their WLB was to actively structure their everyday lives, sometimes individually, and sometimes by using the family as the main unity (Paper I). They would create a `action plan´, a structure of what needed to be done, when it should be done, and by whom (Paper I). At times it was done together with the partner, as a way to accommodate the needs of each family member. At other times, the teacher used this strategy alone, in order to make sure each day contained time for the family, time for discretionary work, and time for themselves. Some teachers structured their everyday life by deciding to work part-time as a way to cope, and it was experienced as leading to an improved WLB (Framework).

Having a social network was an important resource in managing the everyday life. Several of the teachers described having supportive parents and siblings to help them,

when the family activities or the circumstances called for this. It was a way to solve practical and logistical problems (Paper I).

As presented previously, recovery was a salutogenic resource for the teachers' well-being. However, recovery was also used as a strategy to regain strength in order to continue working. To continue with the work, right after teaching ended that day, was perceived as less efficient, but with a moment of recovery it was more productive. By balancing work with recovery during their discretionary time, their strength was maintained and they were able to include relevant parts of their everyday life.

> Then, sometimes I can also feel that I am not always efficient directly after I have dismissed the class. I am a bit mentally tired and find it hard to get going on something right away, like "Yes, now I am going to plan this!". Instead, it's nicer to get a break, eat something or get outside for a while, or take a half hour rest on the couch or whatever. After that, I can get going on something, as I am alert, and then I can work more efficiently as well (Individual interview, Framework).

Results from the survey strengthened the findings from the interviews, and indicated recovery to be associated with the experience of WLB (Paper II). The teachers also experienced the school vacations as a time for recovery (Framework). They said that during the school vacations, they did not have any work-related thoughts. By letting go of work-related thoughts during their time off, they found recovery and were more fit to go back to work when the vacation was over.

The multiple linear regression analysis showed that time experience at work (Paper II) was the variable with the strongest association to WLB. Being able to finish one's work tasks without feeling pressed for time is thereby an important resource for teachers' experience of WLB.

Results from the survey identified two other possible resources associated with teachers' experience of WLB: satisfaction with the everyday life and self-rated health (Paper II). Being satisfied with one's everyday life included aspects such as co-habitation, economy, as well as issues regarding whether one's life was free/tied up and easy to live/hard to live. These aspects may be interpreted as having a partner would facilitate one's satisfaction with the everyday life, which in turn would enhance one's WLB. Both the focus groups interviews and the individual interviews from the first inquiry showed that living with a partner facilitated the teachers' WLB.

Summary

Findings from Paper I suggested that the participating teachers used different strategies for experiencing WLB. Demarcation between the work sphere and the private sphere was one strategy, and structuring the everyday life was another. Other resources for their WLB were various forms of social network, and the work conditions as a teacher.

The results from the survey (Paper II) indicated four possible resources regarded WLB. The variable with the strongest association was time experience at work, hence a work-

related factor. The other three, satisfaction with everyday life, self-rated health, and recovery, were all related to the individual.

Collegial reflection and its influence on teachers' work-related learning and their sense of well-being

The framework for workplace learning (Illeris, 2015; 2011) has been used as a tool for understanding the results of the WHP intervention (Figure 2). However, since it is a thesis in public health science, I have added the well-being perspective to the framework, and placed the collegial reflection in relation to how it has influenced the teachers' learning as well as their well-being.

The elements presented in this chapter are conditions that influence the participating teachers' workplace learning. The individual teachers and the work are interacting in the learning processes, and learning is thereby both an individual and an interpersonal issue.

The work environment dimension

The environment dimension describes the possibilities and the conditions for learning that work offers through the means of collegial reflection. In this dimension there are two relevant elements: the *workplace production* and *the workplace community*. Within the workplace production, different aspects are considered relevant by the framework, such as work content; possibilities for social interaction and division of labor. Within the workplace community, the context and the workplace culture have an important impact on the way employees learn and also what they learn.

Workplace production

Regarding the teachers' work content, the findings showed that teaching the pupils was a central component in the teachers' work (Paper IV). The collegial reflection offered a forum, where they could raise issues that were relevant to their teaching, and where their ambition to improve their teaching was supported. Their understanding of why pupils acted in certain ways was enhanced, and it contributed to their work. Their learning increased both through the sharing of thoughts and experiences, and through the sharing of information, practical help and tools.

The teachers' learning was also enhanced through the forming of the reflection groups (Paper III). They were not always in the same group as the colleagues with whom they normally worked closely, and consequently, the groups included colleagues with whom they were not so familiar. This was perceived by some as a way of making new acquaintances, and learning more about these colleagues and their way of thinking. As

one of the teachers said: “The structure of the group has meant more and new ways of thinking, not only the usual with the closest colleague” (Paper III).

The reflection groups offered possibilities for social interaction with colleagues, and this was important to their learning. The collegial reflection process of contributing with different angles on an issue was perceived as a way to re-evaluate one’s thinking and develop professionally (Paper III). The interaction also involved sharing thoughts and feelings, and at times it meant opening up to the group and admitting to being vulnerable. This contributed to a greater understanding of each other, and it also meant an increased feeling of safety among the colleagues. It worked in a reciprocal way, in that the feeling of being safe made the teachers more inclined to open up even more (Paper IV).

A condition that is influential regarding the workplace learning is the form of organization at the workplace. The basic organization at the participating school was mainly a horizontal division of labor. The individual teacher both planned, executed, and evaluated his/her work. By being part of the whole process, and also being able to see the results of one’s efforts, the possibilities for learning were enhanced. The collegial reflection offered a way to support this process, primarily in the planning and evaluation phases (var?).

Workplace community

Regarding the workplace community, the workplace culture is considered influential to learning. With the second model of collegial reflection, the teachers expressed that they had an increased feeling of consensus and of working together towards common goals. Through the collegial reflection, they seemed to have created a culture of working collaboratively, and it led to a common perspective on what they wanted to achieve at their school.

The context was mainly referred to as a barrier for the collegial reflection. The teachers described a work situation which was signified by time constraints and too much work. When the collegial reflection was implemented, the Mathematics Boost was also taking time from their other tasks. The feeling of being pressed for time seemed to influence the teachers’ attitude towards the collegial reflection, and consequently, some teachers did not consider it a way to increase their learning.

The individual acquisition processes: content and incentive dimensions

An individual’s learning is not only influenced by the interaction with the environment dimension, but also by two individual dimensions: the content and the incentive dimension. According to the Illeris (2011) model, the content dimension concerns e.g. the knowledge, skills, attitudes, ways of acting or reacting, modes of perception, and identity, that are learned by the individual. In order to acquire this content, regardless

of what it is, there needs to be some incentive for the acquisition process to start. This incentive may e.g. be feelings, motivation and will.

The content dimension

From the section above (the work environment dimension), it is evident that the teachers' learning was enhanced through the collegial reflection. Their learning concerned themselves, in that they became more aware of their own actions and expectations (Paper III, IV). The collaborative dialogue included hearing about other teachers' perspectives, which sometimes made them change their own perspectives.

They also learned about their colleagues, both in their professional role as a teacher, and at a deeper level, in that private and personal sides were revealed to each other (Paper III, IV). As a consequence, their attitudes towards each other changed. In their professional role, they learned how their colleagues handled difficult situations and problems, and through the second model of the intervention, they also learned how colleagues planned and assessed their teaching.

A third type of learning concerned the teachers' work (Paper IV). They received practical information and learnt about hands-on tools to be used in their own teaching. Through the collegial reflection, their different views on teaching were presented collectively, and their understanding of teaching was thereby increased. Each teacher contributed with his/her picture and together they created an even bigger picture than the one they had arrived with before.

Still another learning had to do with their increased readiness to question things that were previously taken for granted. This was found regarding to three issues (Paper IV). Through the reflective dialogues, they questioned their role as professional teachers, and what this role should or should not include. Different contents in the teacher role were reflected upon and they discussed whether they were really responsible. The questioning was also found in relation to their entire work situation. They questioned if it was sustainable, and whether it could continue in the same developmental direction as it had done. This was particularly evident in relation to their work intensification. This leads to the third type of questioning, which concerned their own actions and their own responsibility. Through the collegial reflection they brought to light thoughts about how they may need to change their own ways of acting and reacting as a way to respond to their work situation.

Lastly, the findings showed that the teachers' learning also included an inclination to think in a development-oriented way (Paper IV). The structure of the collegial reflection included a focus on creative solutions and positive aspects, and it seemed to have influenced the teachers to avoid dwelling over negative aspects of their work. The change from a negative to a positive focus was not limited to the collegial reflection, but seemed to accompany them afterwards as well. The collegial reflection facilitated the teachers' perception of positive aspects in that they were practicing it, and were also supported by the colleagues in the process.

Consequently, it seemed that the teachers' individual learning content included both knowledges, attitudes, and behavior. However, these acquisition processes do not happen without incentives. According to the framework (Illeris, 2011), the content and incentive dimensions are closely interrelated, and the emotional aspects also need to be considered when looking at learning processes.

The incentive dimension

The findings showed that among the participating teachers some were motivated to participate in the collegial reflection, while others were more reluctant (Paper III). The findings also showed an ambiguity within some of the teachers regarding the collegial reflection (Paper III). Even though they experienced frustration at having to attend the reflection meetings, once they were there, they seemed to appreciate it. However, the findings did not reveal whether this reluctance functioned as a barrier against their learning.

The teachers expressed a desire to develop and improve their teaching (Paper IV). This ambition was an incentive to learn and change and they expressed development as inspiring. However, they were also aware of the need to maintain a balance between changing and developing on the one hand, and relying on routines and feeling content with that, on the other. It is important to note, that this issue was interpreted as discussed in relation to their entire work situation, and not specifically the collegial reflection.

The participating teachers opened up to their colleagues and shared their vulnerability of sometimes feeling confused, anxious and doubting themselves (Paper IV). Getting to know each other better contributed to feeling more safe with each other, and as a consequence, they were more inclined to seek contact with their colleagues outside their collegial reflection group (Paper III). Consequently, it seems that the collegial reflection increased their motivation to work with other colleagues than the usual ones.

Learning, reflection and well-being

Illeris' (2011) model focuses on the learning processes, and it does not include how the learning may affect people's well-being. However, as the collegial reflection was implemented as a WHP project, we wanted to examine whether it influenced the participating teachers' well-being in any way. The findings showed that it did.

The teachers' work situation was experienced as intense, and the collegial reflection added to it even more, leading to a feeling of stress (Paper III). It seemed that it was difficult to manage and reconcile the demands of their different work assignments (including the collegial reflection), causing the teachers the pressure of contradictory demands. This influenced their well-being negatively. However, simultaneously with this negative influence, the collegial reflection also led to salutogenic processes.

The collegial reflection involved social interaction with colleagues. The teachers' sharing of experiences, thoughts and vulnerability, led to an atmosphere that was

experienced as safe for the participants (Paper IV). The social interaction within the reflection group also contributed to a sense of belonging among the colleagues (Paper III). These two feelings, of safety and belonging, were experienced as positive.

The social interaction that came through the collegial reflection groups also had implications for the teachers' recovery. The collegial reflection offered a possibility to, in some way, press "pause" during their hectic workday, and find recovery (Paper III, IV). Consequently, the chance to collaboratively reflect on issues seemed to be a way for the teachers to recover, even though the reflection concerned work-related issues. The fact that they could not do anything else – even if there were many other things that needed to be done – was for some teachers positive to their well-being.

As well as leading to recovery, the collegial reflection also led to joy and revitalization among the teachers (Paper IV). One of the teachers stated "[…] when you leave those meetings [the second type of collegial reflection] you feel sort of… you feel full of energy and you feel positive". They had fun together and the collegial reflection included lots of laughter.

The collegial reflection also contributed to colleagues supporting each other in demarcating between work and private time (Paper IV). When teachers felt guilty for not working more, their colleagues confirmed their need for setting limits to their efforts.

The colleagues also confirmed their feelings when teachers expressed feeling inadequate or doubting themselves. By their colleagues' confirmation of the way they were feeling, these feelings were experienced as something they had in common, and became in a sense, normalized. This enhanced their feeling of safety in their role as a teacher (Paper IV).

To summarize, the collegial reflection seemed to influence the teachers' well-being in a detrimental way, but even more so in a positive way. The contradictory demands of having too many work assignments and too little time, led to stress among the teachers when adding the collegial reflection to their work load. However, there were several salutogenic effects of the collegial reflection. It contributed social interaction, and the feelings of being safe and of belonging with the colleagues. It also offered the teachers both recovery and revitalization. Lastly, it contributed social support, and being confirmed by their colleagues.

Discussion

Discussion of the results

Teachers' work situation is often depicted in negative terms. The WHP project presented in this thesis has had a focus on teachers' resources in their everyday lives, particularly in their work. As such, it responds to the call for research using a salutogenic and health promoting approach, and the intention was to present a more balanced picture of teachers' work situation and acknowledge both its strengthening and detrimental aspects.

The caring relationship to the pupils is central to teachers' well-being. To give care, and to receive care in a reciprocal process is a central component for finding teaching meaningful, which contributes to the teachers' well-being. This is consistent with previous research, suggesting that caring is a central part of teaching (Goldstein & Lake, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994; Noddings, 1984; O'Connor, 2008). We define our existence by means of relationships (Buber, 2001; Strang, 2007), and relationships are the core of teaching. Consequently, being in relationships with the pupils contributes to the teachers' feeling that their work is meaningful, which confirms previous research (Gozzoli et al., 2015; Månsson & Persson, 2005). The reciprocal aspect of caring is important. When the teachers said that their influence on their pupils contributed to an improvement of the pupils' learning and development, and also sometimes gave the pupils safety and stability in relation to a turbulent life outside the school, it made their work meaningful. The well-being and growth of the pupils was linked to the teachers' well-being. Eriksson (1989; 1994) regards an individuals' ability to be in relationships as an important component of health, and sees the confirmation by others as a way to feel being valued. A study by Soini et al. (2010), confirmed that interaction with pupils, especially when they accomplished both pedagogical and more general social goals, contributed to teachers' well-being. Furthermore, Nilsson, et al. (2012) presented several factors and processes in a work context, which were interpreted as enhancing the employees' health experiences. Even though their context was a hospital setting, their findings are relevant, since both teachers and hospital staff are part of the human sector. Using the SOC theory as a framework, they identified several components that contributed to the employees' feeling of meaning. The caring nature of their work was one of them.

The teachers' caring relationship with their colleagues is also important to their meaning in teaching. The collegial reflection increased their understanding of each other, and

their feeling of being safe among colleagues was enhanced because of it. As previous research has indicated, the social climate at work influences the motivation to work and one's meaning (Nilsson et al., 2012). It is reasonable to assume, that other aspects identified in the findings, such as having fun together, and experiencing a sense of belonging together, also contribute to the social climate. Being confirmed by one's colleagues is a health promoting resource (Nilsson et al., 2012).

However, since teachers' work is becoming more intensified, and documentation and administrative tasks constitute an increasing part of teachers' work, they feel that less time and energy is available for the relationship with the pupils, but also with their colleagues. Considering that these caring relations are presented as pivotal for the teachers' finding teaching meaningful, it leads to important questions. What will happen if teachers' work conditions continue to allow for less relational time with their pupils? and with their colleagues? The risk that teachers' meaning in their work will diminish is evident. This may in turn have important implications for teacher attrition, as well as retention.

Consequently, the relationship to the pupils, mostly manifested in the pedagogical assignment, is an important health promoting recourse for the teachers. However, there is a side of caring to the pupils that under certain circumstances pose a risk concerning the teachers' well-being. When the teachers are confronted with pupils who are being abused, the caring aspect includes frustration and a feelings of being powerless. It leads to rumination, which is depleting, and may lead to a number of negative health effects, such as poor sleep (Cropley et al., 2006; Cropley & Purvis, 2003), anxiety (Mellings & Alden, 2000) and poor physical health (Thomsen, et. al., 2004). In the aforementioned ontological health model (Eriksson, 1989; 1994), an important part of experiencing health is to be true to one's basic values and one's actions must be in accordance with what is felt meaningful (Wärnå-Furu, 2014). When the teachers are faced with situations in which they cannot act according to their own moral compass, like the case when pupils were abused at home, the teachers' well-being is affected negatively. Consequently, they cannot act according to what they feel meaningful and in agreement with their fundamental beliefs (Blomqvist, 2009).

van Manen (2002) acknowledges this pathogenic aspect of caring, and use "caring as worrying" to describe it. In Swedish we use the "om-sorg" and "sörja för någon", which emphasizes this term's special meaning of caring. According to him, care is concern for other, and when meeting someone in their vulnerability – as the teachers do when seeing that their pupils are abused – it calls on their responsibility for the other. Caring-worrying is, according to van Manen (2002), a human response to vulnerability, and an aspect of caring that is often neglected in the discourse.

The teachers experienced feelings such as frustration, being powerless, and doubting their ability as a teacher, which affected their well-being negatively. Prolonged unsolved problems in social interactions with pupils have been associated with experiencing burdening, and are a risk for teachers being burnt out (Pyhältö et al., 2011). However, the participating teachers also expressed that their colleagues offered social support

when they were at risk of becoming burnt out. Their relationship was experienced as characterized by safety and trust, and this enabled colleagues to take supportive actions before someone became too ill. Pyhält, et al. (2011) suggested that teachers should be encouraged to learn strategies for identifying processes and practices which contribute to teachers being burnt out, and it seems that the participating teachers had done just that. Social support has also been found to be negatively related to being burnt out (Hakanen et al., 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Consequently, the colleagues functioned as a resource for the teachers by offering both emotional and practical support. Social support from colleagues has been found to function as a buffer against stress, when job demands are high and work control is low. A model that addresses these issues is the Job Demands-Resources, which postulates both a health impairment process and a motivational process (Schaufeli et al., 2009). When job demands (i.e. work overload, emotional demands, and work-home interference) increase, and job resources (i.e. job control, feedback, social support, and opportunities for learning) decrease, the risk for becoming burnt out increases as well. Their study also confirmed previous research (e.g. Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), stating that job resources, such as support from co-workers and superiors, are positively associated to work engagement. In addition, social support from colleagues and peers has also in previous research been identified as a protective factor with regard to teacher resilience (Anderson & Olsen, 2006; Brunetti, 2006). However, a limitation in research on resilience is that it has mostly focused on new teachers.

Recovery was found to be a salutogenic resource for the teachers. While they described several ways for getting recovery at the beginning of the WHP project, they all occurred outside the school during their time off work. Recovery during work was not described at the initial part of the project. However, with the collegial reflection, this changed. The findings showed that they experienced recovery during the collegial reflection, stating that since time was designated for the reflection, they could not do any of their other work task while being there, and this was recovering. Building on the job-recovery model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998), recovery is described as psychological detachment, i.e. mentally switching off from work (Sonnentag et al., 2010), and previous research often claims that recovery occurs during work breaks (Trougakos et al., 2008), in the evenings after work (Rook & Zijlstra,2006) and during weekends and vacations (Demerouti, et al., 2009; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2005). Recovery occurring during short breaks from work is referred to as internal recovery, while external recovery occurs after work (Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006). Interestingly, this study suggests that the teachers experience recovery during the collegial reflection, while they are *not* switching off mentally from work.

This thesis also shows that the teachers were revitalized during the collegial reflection, and they felt “full of energy and [they] feel positive”. This is an important resource, considering that work is often depicted as depleting the energy reserves of the employees (Demerouti, et al., 2009).

The findings in Paper II indicated that the teachers' ability to finish work tasks without feeling pressed for time was associated to their experience of WLB. The unfinished character of teachers' work is not new (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2006), but it seems that it has become more difficult to handle its fragmentation (Aili, 2007). Teachers' work is formed by interrupted and intermittent tasks as well as synchronous work (Aili & Brante, 2004), and it seems reasonable to assume that they use their discretionary time to finish work at home. Having flexible work conditions and being able to work at home, has often been presented as a `family-friendly´ employment practice. However, research has not been consistent about whether it affects WLB in a positive or a negative way (Sullivan & Lewis, 2006).

The teachers used different strategies for managing their WLB. Demarcation between the work sphere and the private sphere was one. In a time when the boundaries between the two spheres are becoming more permeable (Allvin, et al., 2006), and teachers have discretionary time, it makes the issue of boundary management relevant for teachers. The need for demarcating is individual, and differs on a continuum, from segmenting the two domains to integrating the two (Nippert-Eng, 1996). The findings in this thesis showed that the type of integration is also relevant. While creative thoughts about work were considered positive, rumination about suffering pupils, or about their own ability as a teacher, was detrimental to their well-being. As previously stated, psychological detachment, i.e. having no work-related thoughts, is believed to promote recovery (Sonnentag et al., 2010). Our findings indicate that only rumination was negatively experienced. However, whether our findings are related to recovery is unclear. Nonetheless, they show that the way segmenting and integrating are perceived by the teachers depends on the nature of the thoughts.

Lastly, I would like to discuss the way collegial reflection may influence teachers' professional identity. The findings showed that the collegial reflection contributed to a feeling of sharing the same perspective on things. Equally, it contributed to a feeling of working together towards a common goal and shared responsibility. This was found to enhance the meaning of teaching. According to Illeris (2011), work identity is mediating the influences of the interaction between the learner (e.g. the teacher) and the environment (e.g. the colleagues, the school, the comprehensive context). However, the workplace environment is also perceived through the teacher's work identity. Previous research has indicated that governance of teachers is mediated through three logics: the logic of profession, of bureaucracy, and of the market (Friedson, 2001). In the logic of profession, the professionals are in control of their work, and their autonomy comes from trusting their own knowledge and ability (Parding & Berg-Jansson, 2016). Collegiality is important to this logic, and the commitment to the pupils is central (Lundström & Holm, 2011). However, it has been suggested that focusing on economic motives and marketing the school, (i.e. the market logic's governance), is on the increase at the expense of teaching (Lundström & Parding, 2016). It is suggested that traditional professional values are being devalued, which has implications for the teachers' work identities. In a work situation, where teachers are faced with navigating between different tensions, collegial reflection may provide a way to alleviate the

situation. When teachers feel that technical and rational aspects have precedence over relational and emotional aspects (Buchanan, 2015) it risks affecting their work identity. If the caring aspect of teaching is limited in favor of administrative tasks, the way teachers look at themselves, i.e. their work identity, may change. The collegial reflection became a forum in which they could critically reflect on their role as a teacher and their environment, and they could enhance their feeling of being safe in their professional role. They were supported and confirmed by their colleagues to trust their knowledge and ability, i. e. strengthening the logic of profession. In addition, the recent changes in teachers' work conditions include an increased accountability. The feeling of shared responsibility with colleagues, as described being a result of the collegial reflection, may be a way to coping with the demands of accountability. Consequently, the collegial reflection may possibly be interpreted as a way to enhance teachers' resilience.

Methodological considerations

During the process of this thesis, I have chosen to work with different approaches regarding both data gathering and data analysis. In this section the methods used in the thesis are discussed regarding different aspects of quality and trustworthiness. The qualitative studies are discussed as one part, and the quantitative study is discussed as a separate part.

An important source for assessing the validity in action research is its pragmatic validity, i.e. the usefulness of the outcomes of the research (Stringer & Genat, 2004). Based on the findings from the first two papers, it was decided collegial reflection should be implemented among the teachers at one school. This was a decision made by the principal, the project support group, and myself. Consequently, the findings from the first two studies were assessed as useful, in providing a needs assessment of what the teachers appreciated as important. With regards to the intervention of collegial reflection, its design changed during the process, on the basis of the experiences of the participating teachers. The findings showed that during its process, the collegial reflection became an appreciated part of their work. One sign of this, was that the collegial reflection increased from initially one hour/week to two hours/week.

In WHP interventions, an important issue is its sustainability. My role as researcher and collaborator became less influential as the intervention proceeded. The fact that the collegial reflection has continued even after my leaving, suggests its usefulness for the teachers. It is an example of when the control of the intervention is taken over by the community (Stoecker, 1997).

Aspects concerning the quantitative studies

Credibility

Credibility involves the assessment of the "truth" of the data and the interpretations of it (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It refers to how the research process addresses the intended focus, and the consistency and richness of the findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Credibility may be enhanced by establishing a trusting relationship between the informant and the researcher (Lincoln, 1995). At the beginning of this research process, I spent time with the teachers from the participating school, being with them during their lessons, spending time in the staff room, and having coffee and lunch together. During these weeks, the teachers came to know me, and learned more about WHP and the values of salutogenesis and participation, which influence my thinking. Also, I came to know some of the teachers, and gained an understanding of their everyday work, and thus achieve an understanding of the context (Stringer & Genat, 2004). Building trust is important, when the inquiry is built on the informants' willingness to share their experiences (Peterson, 2006). The entire research process took eight years. Meeting each other for such an extended period of time offers the possibility to deepen the relationship and build a trusting relationship. A prolonged relationship in a setting is a way to enhance credibility (Genat & Stringer, 2004).

Credibility may also be strengthened by member checks (Shenton, 2004), i.e. the confirmation of the findings by the informants. During the focus groups interviews, the participants and I met on several occasions, and the analysis and interpretation from the previous focus group interview were discussed with the teachers on each occasion. Regarding the intervention, the credibility of the findings was strengthened by returning to the teachers a few months into the implementation of the collegial reflection, and discussing the findings with them. The findings were also confirmed by participating teachers in the project support group. However, a limitation of the analysis existed for Paper III and IV. While the analysis of the open mail questions and the recordings of the collegial reflection were discussed with the participating teachers, i.e. member check, the individual interviews (January 2015 and January 2016) were not included, nor were they confirmed by the teachers at a later time.

Data triangulation refers to the use of different methods and perspectives to illuminate research questions (Stringer & Genat, 2004) and it is considered a way to enhance credibility (Hsieh & Shanon, 2005). In Paper I, both multiple focus groups interviews and individual interviews were used. In the intervention, three methods were used for data gathering: digital recordings from the collegial reflection meetings, open mail questions, and individual interviews.

A limitation with the data gathering of the intervention was that the open mail questions were sent to me, and I performed the individual interviews. With this procedure, the teachers were asked to assess the intervention with the same researcher as the one who was involved in implementing the intervention. This involves the risk that the teachers would avoid giving negative critique. However, since they actually did give many

critical views on the intervention, it may be assumed that they did not feel restricted by the procedure.

In addition, a limitation of the analysis of the individual interviews (Paper III, IV) was the small number of interviews. Even though it can be interpreted as a result of their work conditions and their being pushed for time, it is still a limitation of the findings.

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the assessment of whether the findings are biased by the researchers' pre-understanding (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using a hermeneutic perspective (Paper I), this raises relevant and interesting questions since our pre-understanding according to Gadamer (2004), is a necessary prerequisite for understanding. It is my epistemological stance that the pre-understanding of my co-authors and myself has influenced our interpretations. However, in order to assess if the analysis is based on the researchers' preconceived assumptions (Lindh, 2010), it is important to account for one's pre-understanding. Our pre-understanding was presented (Paper I), albeit it may be questioned as it can only include a limited presentation. In addition, there is pre-understanding that is taken for granted and not reflected upon, and this influences the analysis as well.

In order to avoid bias in the findings, several researchers interpreted them. Different interpretations were discussed together. However, since all the researchers came from similar contexts, there is a risk of not questioning the influence of our pre-understanding enough.

By including the different analytical steps in the papers (Paper I, III, IV), the intention was to provide transparency and allow the reader to assess the analytical process.

Dependability

Dependability involves questions on how to determine the stability in the design and the performance of the analysis process (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). It is about assessing whether the outcome of a study can be replicated. Using a hermeneutic approach (Paper I) may differ from other qualitative approaches (Fleming et al., 2003) and present difficulties in assessing stability (Lindh, 2010). A fundamental stance in hermeneutics is that an individual's horizon of understanding is changed when meeting others in a dialogue. From this follows that both the participants' and the researchers' horizons of understanding change during the process. However, one way to promote consistency in the interpretations is the hermeneutic circle of moving between the parts and the whole, and thereby "facilitate harmony of the parts in the whole" (Lindh, 2010, p. 57).

In qualitative studies, it is difficult to repeat studies, since the participants' and the researchers' understanding changes during the process, and so do the contexts (Nilsson, 2010). However, one way to enhance dependability is to assess the concordance of analyses between different researchers. This was done in Paper I, but to a lesser degree in the analysis of the intervention, and this must be considered a limitation.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the assumption that the findings are applicable to other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to assess a study's applicability, the setting in which the study took place, as well as the methods used, need to be presented with a thick description (Stringer & Genat, 2004). The comprehensive as well as the local context in which the participating teachers were working was described in the studies (I, III, IV). This was done to enable readers to determine whether the findings are applicable to their setting,. The findings of Paper I represent a deeper understanding of teaching than concrete narratives, and therefore this enables recognition by other teachers in different settings. Nevertheless, these findings represent teachers in a Western context, which may limit its applicability to other contexts. Still, by abstracting their experiences, they can be made useful regarding teachers in other contexts as well.

Aspects concerning the quantitative study

As the study was cross-sectional, it was not possible to predict any causal relationship between the experience of work-life balance and the four associated variables. In order to determine the direction of the influence, a longitudinal design would be needed.

Internal validity

Good internal validity refers to the study's ability to measure what it was intended to measure (Creswell, 2012). Using previously tested questionnaires strengthened the internal validity. However, our questionnaire also included items that were constructed on the basis of the findings from Paper I and a previous literature review. These questions were not previously fully tested, which is a limitation. By performing a pilot study with five teachers in a different municipality, this limitation was addressed to a certain extent. The pilot study supported face validity, and the theoretical background conduced the content validity. Before distributing the questionnaire in the participating municipality, minor adjustments were made according to the pilot study.

The results of the study was based on a self-monitored questionnaire. This may limit its validity, in that it is dependent on the participants' understanding and interpretation of the questions. However, as a way to address this limitation, I was present while the respondents completed the questionnaire, and thereby available for clarifications.

External validity

External validity refers to the extent to which the results can be generalized to other contexts and people outside the sample (Kazdin, 2003). The participants in the study represented a large part of all the teachers in a municipality, which strengthened the external validity. There is reason to assume that the participating teachers are working under, more or less, similar conditions as many other teachers. A possible limitation was that four schools declined to participate because of the timing of the survey. This may have influenced the results, and its applicability. Because of the study design and

the participants' anonymity, it was not possible to do a dropout analysis of the missing 26% responses. This must be considered as a weakness.

Reliability

A study's reliability is an assessment of whether its results can be reproduced and replicated (Kazdin, 2003). Reliability was checked using a test-retest with an interval of 14 days, and it resulted in weighted kappa values for all questions between fair (0,39) and good (0,80) (Landis & Koch, 1977). Moreover, internal consistency was strengthened by only including indices with Cronbach's alpha 0,72-0,95, which would indicate that the variables were not too similar or over-lapping. However, the timing of the survey was important, as the study had a cross-sectional design. The survey was distributed in May-June, which meant that the teachers were busy with exams and assessments of pupils. This may have influenced the reliability of the results.

Concluding remarks

The findings of this thesis showed that the teachers' caring relationship with their pupils, but also with their colleagues, are central for their meaning of teaching. Considering the changing working conditions that today's teachers are facing, there is a need to acknowledge the importance of the caring aspect, and support this resource in their work.

The findings also showed that teachers experienced recovery during the collegial reflection, even though their minds were still on work-related issues. The collegial reflection was therefore a way to experience internal recovery.

Collegial reflection may be used as a resource for creating a supporting environment for teachers. By allocating time for collegial reflection, teachers' professional development as well as their professional identity may be supported. The collegial reflection contributed a sense of belonging, a consensus regarding school matters, and social support. Collegial reflection may therefore be considered both as a resource for teacher resilience and as a health promoting resource.

The work situation for the participating teachers was experienced as pressed for time. As a response to this work situation, the principal decided to devote 1-2 hours each week to collegial reflection with the ambition to ameliorate the situation. This points to the relevance of managerial support in the implementation of such interventions. This WHP project focused on both the social and environmental structure, as well as the individual. By embedding collegial reflection in the ordinary everyday work of the teachers, the structure served as a way to support the teachers' professional development. However, it is important to acknowledge that the implementation of the intervention was a long process. In order to implement collegial reflection in other settings, it is important to allow for the process to take place.

Teachers' role in society is crucial. From an individual perspective, the influence that a teacher has on his/her pupils may have a great impact on their coming lives. From a societal perspective, teachers' influence on the educational development is equally important. Our society needs healthy, motivated, and competent teachers, as they influence the education level of future generations. In addition, as numerous studies have shown, education is an important determinant of health.

Further research is needed to examine the salutogenic aspects of teaching. Since the sample in these studies is small, the risk of missing other resources is evident. By increasing both knowledge and focus on the enhancing aspects of teaching, the recruitment of new teachers but also the retention of the ones who already working, may be improved.

Further research is also needed to verify that collegial reflection is a resource for internal recovery. Since most research suggests that recovery takes place during breaks, there is need for more research investigating if collegial reflection contributes to recovery even though it concerns work-related issues.

In order to verify the findings of the four variables associated to WLB, the questionnaire needs to be used in other settings, such as other schools, but also different work contexts. Research on WLB also needs to be related to more aspects of the everyday life than work and family.

Populärvetenskaplig sammanfattning

Den här avhandlingen handlar om lärare, deras arbetssituation och hur den påverkar deras välbefinnande. Om att välja att betrakta lärares arbete utifrån de aspekter som bidrar till att de mår bra av att arbeta som lärare, utan att bortse ifrån en arbetssituation som också innebär stora påfrestningar.

Utgångspunkter för avhandlingen var att arbeta utifrån två grundantaganden. Det första var ett deltagarorienterat förhållningssätt, vilket innebär att man gemensamt, deltagare och forskare, arbetar med forskningen. Det andra grundantagandet handlar om att använda ett salutogent perspektiv, det vill säga att utgå ifrån de resurser som bidrar till välbefinnande och hälsa. Det salutogena perspektivet är ett komplement till det patogena, vilket i stället utgår ifrån att identifiera de faktorer som påverkar människors hälsa och välbefinnande i negativ riktning. Beroende på perspektiv får det konsekvenser för det konkreta hälsoarbetet. Medan det salutogena synsättet innebär hälsofrämjande insatser för att stärka resurser, leder det patogena synsättet till att identifiera faktorer som riskerar att bidra till ohälsa, och att antingen förebygga dessa eller mildra dess konsekvenser.

Avhandlingens övergripande syfte var att undersöka salutogena resurser i lärares vardag, samt undersöka hur en intervention i form av kollegial reflektion påverkar deras

arbetsrelaterade lärande och välbefinnande. Avhandlingen består av två delar. Den första delen är en så kallad behovsinventering, och bygger på fokusgruppsintervjuer och individuella intervjuer. Resultatet från behovsinventeringen låg sedan till grund för att utveckla en intervention. Interventionen utgör den andra delen i avhandlingen.

I den inledande studien träffades en grupp på sju lärare och jag i återkommande fokusgruppsintervjuer. Syftet var att få en ökad förståelse för salutogena aspekter av lärarnas vardag. Vi beslutade gemensamt om forskningsfrågan, metoder för datainsamling samt det nästkommande steget i processen, och vi diskuterade gemensamt de analyser som jag gjorde. Som ett komplement till fokusgruppsintervjuerna genomfördes även individuella intervjuer med lärarna i gruppen. I den andra studien undersöktes faktorer som påverkar lärares upplevelse av att ha balans i vardagen. En enkät delades ut till 1-9-lärare i en kommun, och svarsfrekvensen var 74% (338 lärare).

Utifrån resultaten från de båda första studierna togs beslutet att införa kollegial reflektion på samma skola som den inledande studien ägde rum. Alla lärarna på skolan deltog (21 personer). Reflektionsmötena ägde rum varje vecka, först under en timme men sedan under två timmar.

Avhandlingen visar att omsorg är en central aspekt för lärares meningsfullhet i arbetet som lärare. Genom att ge, men också ta emot, omsorg upplever lärare mening, och deras välbefinnande påverkas positivt. Att få utrymme och möjlighet till omsorg är därmed en salutogen resurs.

Resultatet visar även att den kollegiala reflektionen fungerande som en stödjande miljö, och bidrog till lärarnas professionella utveckling samt fungerade som en resurs för deras välbefinnande. Även om reflektionen handlade om arbetsrelaterade frågor, bidrog den till att ge lärarna återhämtning under arbetsdagen. Den bidrog dessutom med att öka känslan av samhörighet bland kollegorna, och skapa en känsla av samsyn i arbetsrelaterade frågor. Genom den kollegiala reflektionen upplevde lärarna att de fick socialt stöd från kollegorna, både vad gäller praktiskt stöd men också emotionellt.

Att ha förtroendearbetstid innebär vanligtvis i sig en ökad integrering av arbete och privatliv. Aspekter i läraryrket bidrar till ytterligare integrering, vilket ibland upplevs positivt, men vid andra tillfällen som negativt. Den kreativa aspekten av läraryrket, till exempel att finna lösningar och planera undervisningen, upplevs som en resurs för deras välbefinnande. Tillfällen, då till exempel tankar på elever som far illa, integreras i den privata sfären, upplevs däremot som en viktig patogen aspekt av läraryrket.

I en tid då mycket av uppmärksamheten kring lärare handlar om ökad arbetsbelastning och dokumentation, psykosocial ohälsa och elevers Pisa-resultat, är det angeläget att ge uppmärksamhet åt det som skapar meningsfullhet och välbefinnande i arbetet. Genom att stärka dessa resurser, kan de få ökat utrymme, såväl i lärarnas egna medvetande, som hos politiker och i massmedia. Det kan vara en möjlig väg att möta den negativa bild som ofta målas upp, och bidra till att lärare känner stolthet och både vill men också har kraft att fortsätta arbeta som lärare.

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Paper I

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Caring as a salutogenic aspect in teachers' lives

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Caring relationships are vital for teachers' well-being.
- Caring is channeled through "being" and "doing".
- Teacher education and management would benefit by including a health perspective.
- The study contributes to knowledge on how to retain teachers in their profession.

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ABSTRACT

This inquiry explored how a group of teachers experienced resources for their well-being, both at work and in their private lives. The findings indicate that caring, for others and for oneself, is central for teachers' well-being. Caring is manifested in being present in the moment, and in actions which promote the well-being of oneself and others. Implications from the findings suggest that both school administration and teacher education should pay special attention to the caring aspects of teaching, as they influence teachers' well-being and retention, as well as the pupils' learning. Health promotion interventions could benefit from these findings.

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1. Introduction

If you have read a newspaper some time in the last few years, chances are that you have read about the difficult work situation for today's teachers. They fight a struggle against reduced resources, increased demands and impaired health and well-being. If this is a "true" picture – why do people still choose to work as teachers? There is another perspective, which is seldom presented in the public media. It is this perspective that we aim to adopt in the present inquiry: the positive, strengthening aspects of the lives of teachers.

2. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework underlying the present inquiry consists of a salutogenic perspective and the discipline of health promotion.

When looking at health development the traditional perspective has been to focus on determinants of ill health, also known as risk factors (Bauer, Davies, & Pelikan, 2006). This pathogenic perspective emanates from ill health and aims at protecting and preventing people from falling ill. A complementary perspective to the pathogenic one was presented by Antonovsky (1987), labeled salutogenesis. The salutogenic perspective focuses on resources which support people to maintain and enhance health instead of avoiding ill health. Both perspectives are, however, needed. As Bauer et al. (2006) point out, salutogenesis and pathogenesis are simultaneous and complementary: "an individual can experience positive (e.g. well-being) and negative aspects of health (e.g. chronic disease) at the same time" (p. 156).

By adopting a salutogenic perspective, we focus on resources which strengthen the well-being and health of teachers. We reject the dichotomy between healthy and ill people, and assume a

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perspective where the dimension of health/ill-health or ease/disease is seen as a continuum (Antonovsky, 1987; Bauer et al., 2006). In line with the salutogenic perspective, Antonovsky (1987) introduced the Sense of Coherence (SOC) theory, stating that a strong sense of coherence enables people to make sense and deal with life's different stressors. Having a strong sense of coherence is believed to have an important bearing on health and well-being. The concepts of comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness are the core components of the SOC theory. Comprehensibility describes how an individual perceives life's stressors as structured, predictable and explicable. Manageability is about perceiving that one has access to resources to meet life's stressors, while meaningfulness is the conviction that the demands of the stressors are worth commitment and engagement (Antonovsky, 1987). According to Antonovsky (1996), the salutogenic orientation is a more viable paradigm for health promotion research and practice than the disease orientation.

Health promotion is described as the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health, while health is seen as a resource for everyday life and not the objective of living (World Health Organization (WHO), 1986). The Ottawa Charter for Health promotion has been used as a conceptual framework, adopting a socioecological approach to health. This approach states that there are inextricable links between people and their environment, and accordingly we assume that people and their work influence each other in a continuing and dialectical process, both in a salutogenic manner and in a pathogenic one. In health promotion a holistic perspective is assumed, claiming that the entire life situation is important for people's health, including individual factors as well as e.g. social, political and economic factors. Accordingly we assume a perspective that focus on a holistic view of the everyday lives of teachers, an everyday such as it is perceived by the teachers themselves. The participatory approach is another important aspect in the Ottawa Charter, and as such is included in the present inquiry. In the Ottawa Charter different priority action areas are presented. One of these action areas, creating supportive environments, is relevant to this inquiry and therefore we view work as a possible environment for supporting teachers' well-being.

The present inquiry adopts a settings approach to health promotion. This means addressing the contexts within which people live, work, and play (Poland, Krupa, & McCall, 2009). The Ottawa Charter describes health as a resource that is created in the context of everyday life and states that work and leisure time should be a source of health for people. We place this inquiry in the participants' work context, but also aim to include their family domain, and their leisure time.

3. Literature review

In many Western countries, there has been a negative development in the work environment and well-being among teachers (Ahlgren & Gillander Gådin, 2011; Gu & Day, 2007; Hemström, 2001; Konu, Viitanen, & Lintonen, 2010; Ross, Romer, & Horner, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). The work conditions for teachers have undergone profound changes, with broadening curriculum and increasing accountability, assessment and paperwork (Carlgren & Klette, 2008; Grenville-Cleave & Boniwell, 2012; Konu et al., 2010; Lambert & McCarthy, 2006; Månsson, 2004), and research addressing issues such as stress and burnout are ample (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Gu & Day, 2013; Kokkinos, 2007; Kovess-Masféty, Rios-Seidel, & Sevilla-Dedieu, 2007; Mearns & Cain, 2003). In England, teaching has become one of the most stressful professions (Roffey, 2012) and teacher retention is a major concern in many countries such as Australia, USA and in Europe (Ingersoll, 2001; Parker & Martin, 2009; Roffey, 2012). As a counterbalance to the detrimental aspects of teaching, there has been an attempt to shift the focus from teacher stress and burnout to teacher resilience (e.g. Gu & Day, 2007; Klassen et al., 2012) and to buoyancy (e.g. Cinamon, Rich, & Westman, 2007; Grenville-Cleave & Boniwell, 2012; Parker & Martin, 2009). This research provides a way of understanding what enables teachers to persist in the face of challenges (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011) and can be seen as a process that occurs in the context of person–environment interaction (Egeland, Carlson, & Sroufe, 1993). Gu and Day (2013) found that teacher resilience is much more than the capacity to survive and thrive in adversity. It is "the capacity to maintain equilibrium and a sense of commitment and agency in the everyday worlds in which the teachers teach" (p. 26). Work engagement research is another area which has received increased attention (Klassen et al., 2012), and is believed to be connected to teachers' health (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006). Research focusing on salutogenic aspects in teachers' lives (for example Aelterman, Engels, Van Petegem, & Pierre Verhaeghe, 2007) is, however, not as prevalent as research from a pathogenic perspective. Moreover, much of the research field of teachers has focused on work-related aspects, whereas research on their entire life situation is rare.

A relevant research area when investigating the entire life situation is work life balance. In recent years, the area of work-life balance has attracted considerable focus, in the scientific literature, as well as in the media. Research on work life balance has predominantly been conducted from a pathogenic perspective (Grönlund & Öun, 2010; Peeters, 2005; Rantanen, Kinnunen, Mauno, & Tillemann, 2011), often focusing on the individual's experience of lack of control, leading to negative health effect (Bohle, Willaby, Quinlan, & McNamara, 2011). Although some research has been published from a salutogenic perspective, there is still a need for research focusing on resources instead of risk factors within the area of work life balance (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Frone, 2003; Gatrell, Burnett, Cooper, & Sparrow, 2013; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002; Özbilgin, Beauregard, Tatli, & Bell, 2011). When reviewing research on the work-life balance of teachers, the picture remains the same: the focus has been on a pathogenic perspective (Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki, Kutcher, Indovino, & Rosner, 2005; Cinamon & Rich, 2005; Cinamon et al., 2007; Cooke & Rousseach, 1984; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). Consequently, there is a need for a further understanding of salutogenic aspects in the lives of teachers so they can be promoted.

4. Aim

To gain a deeper understanding of how teachers at a compulsory school experience the salutogenic aspects of their lives.

5. Methods

5.1. Design and procedure

Our research questions were "How do teachers experience their everyday lives?" and more precisely, "What are the salutogenic aspects of their everyday lives?". A qualitative and interpretive approach seemed appropriate, and we chose to use hermeneutics, not only as a philosophical foundation but a methodological tool as well. The hermeneutic theory can be useful when we seek to understand statements about how people experience their life situation (Selander & Ödman, 2004), as well as when doing qualitative empirical research in the human sciences (Smith, 2007). The epistemological base has been existential hermeneutics, mainly inspired by Gadamer (1989). It is the Gadamerian stance that we are never free from our experiences, and therefore always interpret and understand things on the basis of our preunderstanding. Our

preunderstanding is, as a consequence, an absolute prerequisite for understanding (Ödman, 2004), but it paradoxically also constitutes an obstacle to understanding (Dahlberg & Dahlberg, 2004; Geanellos, 2000). Gadamer (1989) uses the metaphor fusion of horizons to describe understanding. By opening up to another person's horizon, or that of a text, and allowing these two to merge, a new understanding takes place. A central thesis within hermeneutics is that the meaning of a part can only be understood in relation to the whole. Paradoxically, the whole consists of parts, and can therefore only be understood by the part. The hermeneutic circle is the metaphor used to describe this dialectic movement between whole and part, but also between known and unknown, self and other, and preunderstanding and understanding (Lindh, 2010).

In the Gadamerian approach, group discussions are useful in developing a deeper understanding (Fleming, Gaidys, & Robb, 2003) and multistage focus groups were therefore chosen (Hummelvoll, 2008). We decided to use a participatory approach with the intention that the research process should lead to positive changes in the participants' lives. This meant that we involved the teachers in decisions regarding research questions, methodological considerations, and a continuing feedback process regarding the analysis.

The context for the present study has been a compulsory school in a medium-sized city in Sweden. Approximately 300 pupils aged 6–12 attend this school. There are 19 teachers at the school, of which two thirds are women. After having received approval from the Childcare and Education Department and subsequently the school's principal, the project was presented at a meeting with the teachers. It was decided that I, (first author), should spend time with the teachers at the school to gain insight into the work aspects of the everyday life of these teachers, and to establish a relationship built on trust. According to Petersson (2006), trust is vital when the inquiry is built on the informants' willingness to share their experiences. Hence, I spent a few weeks with the teachers, accompanying them during classes, spending time in the staff room, and having coffee and lunch together. At the end of this trust-building period I spent two days in the staff' room, asking every teacher at the school about participation in the inquiry. Each teacher who accepted to participate was included in the research, resulting in a group of seven teachers.

5.2. Participants

The number of participants was six women and one man, aged between 37 and 63. They were all married and lived in double-income marriages. They had 1–3 children, and two of the participants had children who had left home. Experience as a teacher varied from two to 34 years. They all lived in private houses with a garden. Their leisure time was spent on personal activities such as jogging, doing handicraft and gardening, societal activities like political commitment and family-related activities such as involvement in their children's leisure time activities. As teachers they had discretionary time, i.e. ten work hours per week which could be performed when and where they chose. All participants were informed of the study aim and signed an informed consent form. The study was conducted in agreement with the Swedish Law of Research Ethics, SFS 2003:460.

5.3. Data generating

Focus group interviews and individual semistructured interviews were used for data gathering. These methods were chosen as we wanted to know more about how the teachers experienced their lives. Another reason for choosing focus group interviews was the belief that one's own thoughts evolves in the interaction with other people (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). Significant for this method is to encourage participants to share perceptions and points of view without any pressure to reach consensus (Kreuger & Casey, 2000). A focus group interview is lead by a moderator, in this inquiry me, and just like the other participants the moderator influences the group process. Four focus group interviews with the seven participating teachers were conducted over six months to deepen the understanding. In line with existential hermeneutics, an open approach regarding the participants' narratives was sought (Fleming et al., 2003), and only the initial question was planned beforehand prior to the first focus group interview. The following focus group interviews all started with a feed-back of the analysis from the previous meeting. All participants were thereby active in progressing the research process. The interviews lasted between one and two hours, and took place at the school. The empirical data from the four focus group interviews were supplemented by an individual interview with each teacher. The aim of this was to allow the participants to speak more freely in a private setting. These individual interviews took place either at the school or in the teachers' home, and lasted between 45 min and 1.5 h. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim.

5.4. Data analysis

The analysis was performed by the last author and myself, with contributions from the participating teachers. Although Gadamer (1989) rejected the idea of a "right method of interpretation" leading to the truth, as well as the possibility to present an objective picture of reality (Nyström, 2008; Selander & Ödman, 2004), the metaphor of the hermeneutic circle serves as a method of understanding a text. According to the hermeneutic perspective, an interpretation is not unprejudiced. People are never "blank" (Selander & Ödman, 2004) and subsequently, this inquiry has been influenced by the researchers' preunderstanding (Malterud, 2001). From a more obvious perspective, we are both living under similar circumstances as the participants, i.e. working as teachers and living in a family. In addition, our preunderstanding is conditioned by the discourses in which we participate. As we work at the same university, it is a plausible conclusion that we are to some extent framed by the same tradition. Ödman (2004) expresses this as being discursively embedded in history. The salutogenic perspective is, for instance, a salient part of the research and teaching at the Study Programme in Public Health and Education, of which I am a part, and the participatory perspective has been an important feature of the last author's previous work. Our experiences of salutogenesis and participatory research have surely been influential in the process. Even more important however, is the preunderstanding which is taken for granted and not reflected upon.

An initial naïve reading of the data material was done to get an idea of the entire text. The open question we posed initially when reading the interviews was used to find aspects affecting the teachers' well-being. The first reading showed a number of aspects, some understood as mainly pathogenic, others as mainly salutogenic. An example of a mainly pathogenic aspect was the frustration of feeling powerless when children were maltreated. Another example was the time-consuming task of assessing and documenting the pupils' progress. Aspects identified as mainly salutogenic were described in terms of relationships: with the pupils; with the principal; with colleagues; with significant others; and with oneself. In the following structure analysis, we focused on the salutogenic aspects alone within these five relationships. Meaning units were identified and then condensed and abstracted to form fourteen codes and subsequently two themes: (a) *"doing" as a salutogenic aspect of teachers' lives;* and (b) *"being" as a salutogenic*

aspect of teachers' lives. A comprehensive interpretation was then done (Fig. 1). During the analysis there has been an oscillation between the naïve understanding, the emerging codes and themes, and the comprehensive interpretation, i.e. between the whole and the parts, and between preunderstanding and understanding. Described in another way, there has been a fusion of horizons: that of the different interpreters and that of the text.

As interpretation permeates every activity, according to Gadamer (1989) a dialogical process is central to ensure trustworthiness. One way of accomplishing this is by giving feedback and ensuring further discussions with the study participants (Fleming et al., 2003). Feedback has been given to the teachers during the analytical process, and they have influenced the analysis through their knowledge and experiences. This is also in accordance with the participatory way of working (Polanyi, McIntosh, & Kosny, 2005).

6. Findings

The two themes found in the analysis are first presented with a *description* of each theme. Based on this description a *tentative interpretation* of each theme is presented. The themes are interpreted as being salutogenic resources in the lives of the interviewed teachers. A *comprehensive interpretation* is subsequently presented in the discussion. When quoting the participating teachers we use only pseudonymous female names. Since there are only seven participants, we would reveal their identity if we were to add more information. Additional examples of the teachers' statements connected to each code and theme are presented in Fig. 2.

6.1. Theme 1. "Doing" as a salutogenic aspect of teachers' lives

"Doing" was a prominent part of the teachers' lives. In their work, the one thing described as most important was teaching *the pupils*, and it was spoken of as joyful. They wanted to contribute to the pupils' learning as well as strengthen the pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.

> There are some rare times when you see that something is happening, when they feel themselves that they reach a higher level. Then, it can be purely related to the school subject or something else they make up, but when you see that sparkle in their eyes when it appears … As long as you see a few of those sparkles now and then, you can manage everything else, too (Greta).

> That's what you live for, that you have made a difference (Anna).

The major part of the teaching took place within the school, but a substantial part of the pedagogical tasks also took place outside the school, most often in the teachers' home. Examples of salutogenic tasks accomplished at home were planning lessons and solving problems. Teaching was described as creative, as the teachers were inventing new ways to help their pupils develop further. The creative aspect of work was seen both in the classroom setting and in the work carried out in the teachers' homes. Creative ideas often came up when doing something quite different from work.

> [The creative ideas may pop up anytime.] It may be when you're ironing, or whatever. Sitting in the car, walking around town or something … (Anna).

> But that's why we have the work schedule we have, with discretionary time. You cannot clock in that time, it's like being a writer or an artist. 'I'm going to work now' and then you sit there and nothing happens. But then you go away, and there is a click and it all comes to you (Maria).

> You think and you plan 'How should I structure this … ' (Greta).

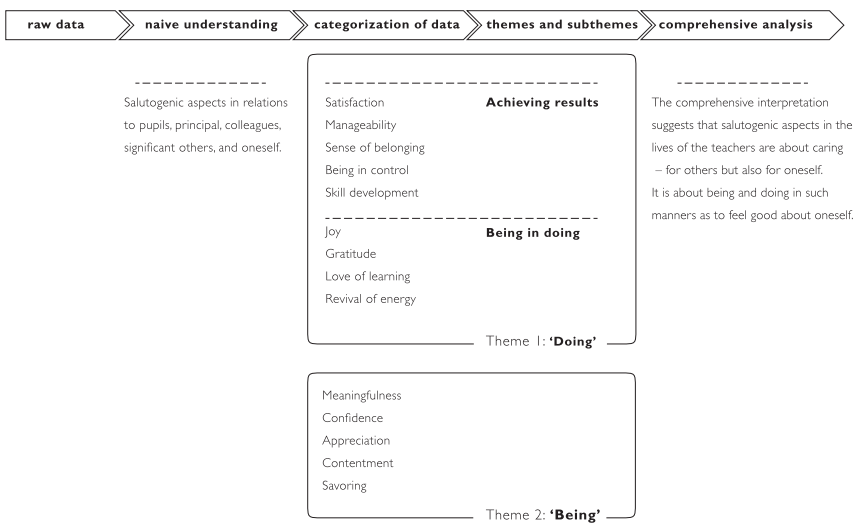

Fig. 1. Analytical process and findings.

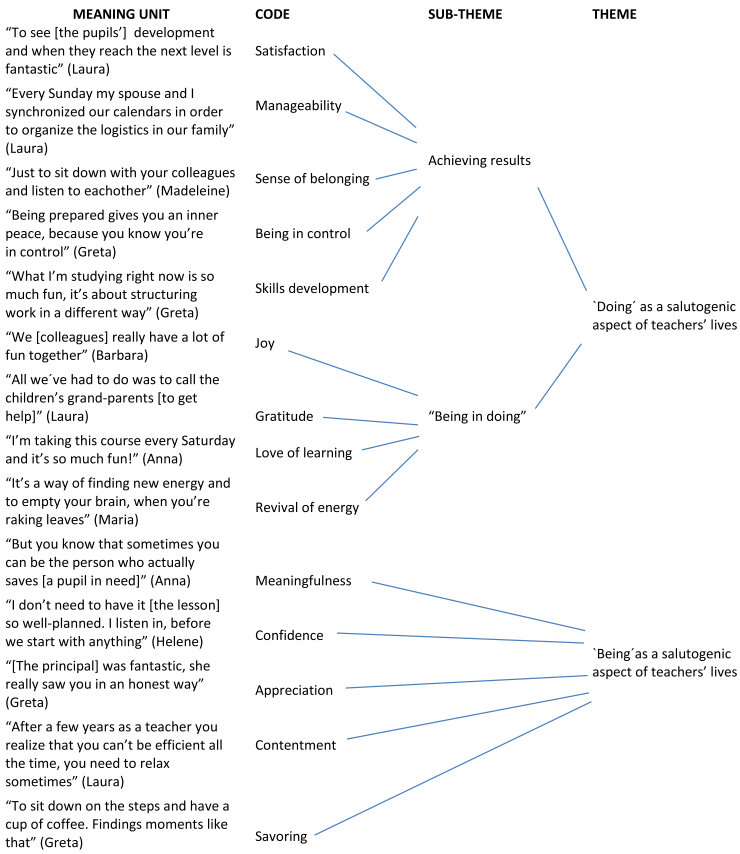

Fig. 2. Teachers' experiences of salutogenic aspects in their lives.

I can have one of those ideas when I'm jogging *'That's* how I should do it!' (Laura).

Mowing the lawn is really great! (Greta).

In the *relationship with the principal*, "doing" was found in the implicit presumption that teachers achieve results, and these results are manifested in the pupils' grades and in their behavior in class.

[The principle] told me what I was expected to do and I like it like that. Like freedom with responsibility. You are expected to do a good job. As long as we do that, we have a lot of freedom and that's good (Laura).

In the *relationship with colleagues*, the teachers spoke of "doing" in terms of supporting each other in problem solving by sharing experiences, and by giving practical assistance. They also organized social activities, e.g. parties and social events, as a way of having fun together.

[The colleagues offer] a forum where you can try to be constructive, and where the rest of us can say 'Yes, but what if you tried … what can we do to help … what can we do to ease your burden?' (Helen).

The colleagues are great, and they support you. You can talk about anything, and there is an open-minded atmosphere. We joke and have fun together – that's great (Anna).

"Doing" was also described when the teachers gave and received practical assistance by *significant others*, and when giving and getting hugs from one's children. In addition, cohabiting family members planned their everyday life together and structured it in a way that best suited everybody. These two examples were described as a way of facilitating the everyday life.

> To have an action plan for yourself, your very own. And it doesn't have to be on paper, but you can somewhere think through your everyday life in the first place. Making up your schedule sounds boring, but it's a kind of schedule over your time so you can see that you are covering the necessary things (Maria).

In the *relationship with oneself*, "doing" was described in various ways. By doing something completely different from work, the teachers described experiencing that they regained energy. Another way of "doing" was the desire to learn new things by taking a course, either related to work or personal interest.

6.1.1. Tentative interpretation

Based on the description above we interpret there are two important aspects in the everyday life of the teachers: achieving results and "being in doing". The first aspect focuses on the outcome. The second aspect, however, has an intrinsic value in the process, regardless of what comes out of it. In the teachers' descriptions of their lives, it is *achieving results* that is most evident. Achieving results is interpreted as meaning satisfaction, manageability, belonging, feelings of being in control, and skills development. Satisfaction is found in the pupils' learning and having done what is expected of them as teachers. The actions performed together with significant others mean experiencing manageability, whereas the sense of belonging is found in the collaboration with colleagues, and in the affectionate relationship with their children. Skills development is experienced when they learn new things to master something. All examples of achieving are seen as contributing to feelings of being in control.

> In the morning it gets going straight away … I start working right away as I want to be prepared when I get to work, and then I think through what I should be doing. But I don't see this as something stressful; it gives me inner peace as I know I'm in control. I feel satisfied when I get to work (Greta).

The other aspect of "doing", the *"being in doing"*, is not as apparent but still present in the text. The "being in doing" is interpreted as meaning joy, gratitude, love of learning, and revival of energy. The teachers experience joy when they create something together with the pupils and when they do things together with colleagues simply for the fun of it. The "being in doing" is seen as meaning gratitude when significant others are helping each other. This gratitude is not related to the result of the help, but seems to relate to the actual process of helping, and feeling privileged to be allowed to help. In the relationship with ourselves we interpret learning for the mere pleasure of it as the love of learning. All examples of "being in doing" have one thing in common: there are no demands to neither produce nor achieve. The "being in doing" is enough in itself, and means revived energy.

6.2. Theme 2. "Being" as a salutogenic aspect of teachers' lives

In some of the relationships, the teachers described situations in which there was a focus on enjoying what they experienced at that specific moment, i.e. being present. They described these moments as a way of feeling good. In the *relationship with the pupils*, it took place during class when the teachers showed openness to improvisation in relation to what was happening. This meant abandoning prearranged plans and giving priority to the possibilities of the specific situation.

> Okay, you need to have the courage not to give a damn about certain things. There is no 'must always'. And you have to get to the point where you say 'No, we don't care about it, we have no time because instead we are doing something else, which is fun' (Barbara).
>
> Or to teach them to mix with other people, learn how to socialize without fighting, how you communicate with each other – maybe that's what we should be doing instead (Maria).

They also expressed an ambition to be there for the pupils and thereby signal their importance. Another example of emphasizing "being" was found in the *relationship with the principal*. When having a conversation with the principal, the teachers described it as valuable to be both bodily and mentally present. "Being" was expressed in the *relationship with colleagues* as being there for each other, which was also the case in the *relationship with significant others*.

> We [colleagues] are allowed to be depressed and there are those who take care of us. So we care very much about each other (Madelaine).
>
> It is often about talking. Especially with my sister, who lives far away, and who I talk to on the phone. It's easier to talk on the phone. In a way, it's therapy, and you say what you like (Greta).

In the relationship with significant others, "being" was also described as being present in the different phases of the life cycle. Having smaller children meant needing to prioritize them.

> There are things I can do later, when the kids are grown-up and I have more time. Those things I can do when I am older and I get time to do what I want. It's just that they get first dibs, and then I get what's left over. That's the way it is. It's not a bother (Maria).

In the *relationship with oneself*, "being" was described as putting everything else on hold and focusing completely on the moment. "When I collect my children from daycare, the five-minute walk may take 45 min, and that's just enjoyable. To just stroll home and stop to look at snails or sticks" (Greta).

Another way of "being" was to enjoy not having made any plans. To have the freedom of doing precisely what feels right at that moment, or deciding not to do anything at all. Yet another way was to sometimes accept a lower standard than what was usually expected. This way of accepting "good enough" was applied both at work and at home, regarding household chores as well as work-related tasks. "I just decided that 'Now I'm going to work less! Don't take the job 138 percent seriously but take it a bit easy. It'll be okay anyway'" (Laura).

6.2.1. Tentative interpretation

Following the description of the second theme, we conclude there are several salutogenic aspects on "being". It is about being present here and now, and not thinking about what has been or what's to come. In one sense, it means letting go of control. The meanings found in "being" are meaningfulness, confidence, appreciation, contentment and savoring. When the teachers feel they are genuinely there for someone else, as they do in relation to the pupils, their colleagues, and significant others, they experience a sense of meaningfulness. By being there, ready to listen and give the kind of support the other person needs, they experience that their everyday life has a meaning, but also their life in a wider perspective. The meaning of confidence is experienced when they have the courage to be in the presence and be more responsive to the contingencies of the teaching situation. It means being confident in oneself and one's abilities, but also in the process of interaction with the pupils. "Being" is found when the teachers

experience the principal's signal that they are worth listening to, which means being appreciated for who you are. There is also a salutogenic aspect in having faith that even though different phases in life require different priorities, one's needs are eventually met. Instead of feeling guilty or vexed for not being able to do everything all the time, there is contentment in the existing situation. Life is like this, and it is as it should be. Contentment is also experienced in the teachers' accepting "good enough" as a way to consciously adopt an attitude that enhances their well-being. Savoring is experienced when they allow themselves to be completely present in the moment. It includes an ability to notice things that exist and feel grateful. By focusing on what is happening there and then, and not thinking of the past or the future, they experience a feeling of repose. This repose seems to lead to a replenishing of energy.

When looking at the meanings of the themes of "doing" and "being", they can be interpreted as answering the salutogenic question *what facilitates people's moving towards the health end of the health/ill-health continuum*. As such, they are salutogenic and promote the teachers' well-being. The meanings may also be viewed as acting salutogenically in a continuing and dialectical process between the teachers and their environment.

7. Comprehensive interpretation and discussion

Our comprehensive interpretation suggests that salutogenic aspects in the lives of the teachers are about caring – for others but also for oneselves. Caring is to allow yourself to be and act in such a manner that you feel good about yourself. By caring and by being cared for, human needs such as feeling meaningfulness are met.

Caring is a central part of teaching (Goldstein & Lake, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994; Noddings, 1984; O'Connor, 2008). According to Mayeroff (1990), caring is to help someone grow and actualize himself/herself – which includes caring for oneself. Caring is relational (Kim & Schallert, 2011; Martinsson, 1989; Noddings, 1984), and as such one is interacting with the environment in a dialectical process. It is not an attribute or a personality trait, but a moral relation (Goldstein, 1999; Noddings, 1984) and it includes both the person who cares and the person being cared-for. We define our existence by means of relationships (Buber, 2001; Strang, 2007), and we become who we are together with other people, which makes our making of meaning a shared concern (Schuster, 2006). Being an enactment of a relationship, caring embodies the relational nature of teaching and learning (Kim & Schallert, 2011). At the same time, caring means having the courage to listen to one's own needs. Within certain limits set by the social and physical context, it means going one's own way. It is not the same as doing anything one pleases. What one chooses to do is significantly determined by what is required by others if they are to grow, and by one's own needs to grow. To care for another person, one must be able to be that person in his/her world and to sense what his/her needs are. Noddings (1984, 2005) uses the term engrossment, when describing the one-caring as accepting the cared-for not as an object but as another self (Kim & Schallert, 2011). This requires the courage to explore the unknown, and trust in both oneself as well as the other (Mayeroff, 1990). Hence, when the teachers in this study show courage to meet the pupils where they are, as they do when improvising their teaching, their caring leads to a deepened understanding. By using Gadamer's perspective: when the teachers and their pupils genuinely meet, the process of change which takes place can be described as a fusion of horizons. Opening up to the unknown is the very core of the hermeneutic experience (Schuster, 2006). Caring takes the shape of encouraging dialogue and showing sensitivity to students' needs and talents (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006). Through the teachers' acting the pupils are confirmed and seen for who they are and what they need. At the same time, the teachers are strengthened by the confirmation of their own courage and ability for engrossment, and both the pupils and the teacher grow. "Thus, being in a caring relationship is seen as the primary means by which one builds his or her knowledge of self, especially knowledge of the best self one can imaging" (Kim & Schallert, 2011, p. 1060). When the teachers genuinely meet their pupils, they are being present in the here and now of teaching. This presence, described as "the experience of bringing one's whole self to full attention so as to perceive what is happening in the moment" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 267), not only affect the teachers' well-being but it also affects the quality of the pupils' learning process (Day & Gu, 2010). Noddings (2003) too, recognizes presence as a fundamental feature of care, and describes the encounter between teacher and pupil as "total", (cited in Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 270).

Caring is also about giving and receiving. By attending to the needs of one's children and one's pupils, the teachers feel good about themselves. So in a sense, when they give care they get a feeling of well-being. The same thing happens when they give care to their colleagues: they are given a sense of belonging in return. Caring is thereby about reciprocity that takes the shape of giving and receiving (Schuster, 2006). The concept of generosity is also related to this. Tudor-Sandahl (2012) states that "giving" is an act to which one often expects a response, whereas "being generous" is an attitude which is unconditional. Mauss (1970), however, states that a gift is never unconditional and there is always an inherent obligation to return a gift. Reciprocity norms guide much of human behavior (Ostrom, 2003), but does that mean that the participating teachers are giving care as a way of getting something in return, as in a trade? There is nothing in their narratives which indicates that this is the case. Still, they *do* get something in return, such as a feeling of meaningfulness and belonging. One does not give care to others so they can grow with the aim of actualizing oneself, but by helping others to grow one does actualize oneself (Mayeroff, 1990). Furthermore, we argue that to receive a gift – be it time, knowledge, patience or support – is also a sign of being generous. By receiving something back is to give others the possibility to be generous. It is a complex system of givers and recipients, of symmetry and asymmetry, and of reciprocity.

Consequently, by giving and receiving care in a manner that meets one's needs, one's well-being is enhanced. In a sense, this may seem like an axiom: naturally one feels good about oneself when being and acting in a salutogenical way. Still, however obvious in theory, it is not always easy to be and act in such a way in practice.

7.1. Caring in relation to "doing" and "being"

The teachers' caring is channeled through "doing" and "being". When working as a teacher, "doing" is always present, and manifested either as achieving or as "being in doing". These two forms of doing were discussed already by Aristotle, in his distinction "poiesis" and "praxis". Poiesis is used for actions which lead to a product, a result or a measurable goal, whereas praxis describes actions which have its own intrinsic value (Silfverberg, 1999). In the teachers' narratives, poieses is particularly salient in their work, because it is filled with tasks leading to a result. Praxis is not as apparent in the text. In the analysis, we called this form of doing "being in doing". There seems to be a common element in "being in doing" and in "being", which is to savor the moment. It seems like "being in doing" is closer to the state of "being" than to poiesis. There may not be any demands for results – if there are, it may even be that these leave less room for savoring?

The state of "being" is interpreted as leading to feelings of appreciating what one has and being content with it. When one is completely present in the moment, without worries about the past or the future, there is also a revival of energy. This replenishing of energy is not experienced when achieving results.

Consequently, the salutogenic feelings connected with achieving (poieses) and "being" and "being in doing" (praxis), are important elements of the teachers' caring. Nonetheless, these two ways seem to somewhat compete for the same space, and the question is: which of the two is given precedence? In today's society, there is a focus on achieving. The norms and values within the school system are also influential as to what is regarded as "good behavior". Since the school system is based on achieving specific goals, it would appear that poiesis is rewarded. Because the school and the society in general value actions which lead to a result, there seems to be a need for justification when the teachers engage in "being" and in praxis. It is not regarded as enough to savor the moment, and does not seem fully approved of. The teachers use expressions as "allowing oneself to just be" and there is an element of guilt as they are not achieving, and thereby not abiding the cultural norm of being efficient. To side-step the justification, the teachers use the same conscious strategy as the one described by Quoidbach, Berry, Hanseene, and Mikolajczak (2010): by deliberately directing attention to the present pleasant experience, the intensity and frequency of positive emotions are increased. This savoring strategy is one of several cognitive strategies which can be used for regulating positive emotions and improving one's well-being (Bryant, 1989; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2006), and is a way to show oneself care.

7.2. Caring in relation to meaningfulness

Meaningfulness is one of life's central issues, as it is difficult to imagine a life without meaning. Mayeroff (1990) states that in caring one lives the meaning of one's life. Antonovsky (1987) emphasizes the component of meaningfulness in the sense of coherence (SOC) theory, and Frankl (1999) also recognizes the importance of experiencing meaning in life. He states that striving to find meaning in life is the primary motive within people. Although the meaning of life changes constantly, from person to person and from hour to hour, it never ceases to exist (Frankl, 1999). The teachers' experiences when they care in the form of "being" can be related to meaningfulness. It is by caring for their children, pupils and colleagues, and by being cared for by them in a reciprocal process, that they find their everyday life to be meaningful but also their life as a whole. Thereby, it is in the relationships they find meaningfulness. It is also found in the other aspects of caring channeled by "being". By appreciating their life as it is, being content with it and savoring it, the teachers find meaning with their lives. In the interaction with others, the teachers are also confirmed, which is connected to meaningfulness: who they are and what they stand for is confirmed and appreciated, and it holds a meaning for another person (Strang, 2007) (Mayeroff, 1990). In other words, by meaning something to others, one's life and one's actions become meaningful. The growth of others is linked to one's own sense of well-being (Mayeroff, 1990). According to O'Connor (2008) the intrinsic value of caring behavior renders for many teachers meaning to their work, and it may also act as a justification to remain in the profession. Noddings (1984) discusses the reciprocal aspect of caring in relation to meaningfulness and states that "whatever the one-caring does is validated and made meaningful, or diminished and made meaningless by the response of the cared-for" (Goldstein, 1999, p. 658). Yet, the focus on reciprocity in caring has received little research attention (Kim & Schallert, 2011).

7.3. Caring in relation to sense of coherence

When using a salutogenic perspective, the sense of coherence theory (SOC) (Antonovsky, 1987) is a relevant tool. SOC is based on the three components: comprehensibility; manageability; and meaningfulness, and looking at the codes in this inquiry there are clear connections to these components. The codes which constitute caring as "achieving of results" are to a large extent connected to the first two components of SOC: comprehensibility (skills development) and manageability (manageability, belonging, feelings of being in control). By contrast, the codes which form caring as "being in doing" (joy, gratitude, love of learning) and "being" (meaningfulness, appreciation, contentment, savoring) are almost exclusively connected to the SOC component of meaningfulness. Parallels can be drawn to a study by Nilsson, Andersson, Ejlertsson, and Troein (2012), in which they identified specific enhancing resources in a workplace context. They found that aspects such as co-workers' appreciation, confirmation through encounters with other people, and joy, were related to bringing a sense of meaningfulness. Meaningfulness is considered the motivational component in the SOC theory, and comprehensibility and manageability seem hard to achieve without it in a longer perspective. We conclude that the meaningfulness component is to a large extent found in situations where the teachers allow themselves to be present in the moment, but also in the "being in doing" when they value the process of doing instead of achieving results. From a salutogenic perspective, it is important to value the strengthening aspects which are found in caring as "being in doing" and "being", because without them there is a risk that the strengthening aspects in caring as "achieving" may also diminish in a longer perspective. Taken into the teachers' work context: if they are not allowed to have the time and space for the meaningful aspects of their work, they may eventually lose the sense of meaning in their work as teachers, and seek work elsewhere. Indications of this development is already noticeable in several countries (Crossman & Harris, 2006; Inman, 2004; Jalongo & Heider, 2006; Skolverket, 2013; Unterbrink et al., 2007). Chang (2009) showed that in the US almost 40 percent of teachers choose to leave their profession within the first five years, and a similar situation can be seen in Australia (Parker & Martin, 2009). Teacher attrition is not a new problem. It is, however, of immediate importance.

7.4. Caring in relation to work life balance

Work life balance can be regarded as a personal issue as it is experienced subjectively by the individual. Still, it is always experienced in relation to the individual's context and to the people who are close, which makes it a relational issue. Simplified, work life balance can be described as having a life which is organized in such a way that all parts perceived as revitalizing are allowed to be present. This means that one part cannot impose on other parts, and not leave them enough room, and demarcation is thereby relevant. Demarcation is needed within the professional role as a teacher, but also between work and private life.

We find that within their professional roles, the teachers seem to have the need for both achieving things, and for being present in the moment and savor it without demands for achieving or producing. Because it is the achieving which is usually rewarded, it seems significant to pay more attention to the less rewarded aspect of savoring the presence. By allowing room for both achieving results and savoring the presence, the teachers may experience an improved balance in their work roles.

Regarding the demarcation between work and private life, the teachers seem to experience this paradoxically as sometimes necessary but at other times as undesirable. In order to have

enough time to their private life, they recognize the necessity of demarcating work from private life. Even so, they also recognize the opposite, i.e. the value of not demarcating work from private life, like in the case of creativity. Creativity seems to prosper when the teachers are doing something completely different from school-related work. When mowing the lawn, or taking a walk in the forest, good ideas often come up, and solutions to work-related problems suddenly appear. Creative thinking is believed to be fostered by positive emotions, e.g. savoring (Wood, Heimpel, & Michela, 2003). By savoring the moment and by being present in time and space in the activity, the mind seems to open up to creative thoughts, and work is thereby integrated into the private life. This type of work life spill-over is perceived as positive and stimulating.

The need for demarcating between the work sphere and the private sphere is individual. Whereas one person integrates work with private life in a manner that suits his/her needs and circumstances, another person prefers to segment between the two spheres (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Finding a good balance between work and private life is, however, not only a matter to the individual and people who are close to them. It is also of importance to the employer, since the teachers' experience of the work life balance affects their performance at work. Research has shown that social support from supervisors, but also from co-workers, can moderate the experience of conflict between work and family domains (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). Social support from the nonwork domain may also result in less work-family conflict (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). The principal has the means and the responsibility to support the teachers in demarcating work when needed. For teachers, the meaningfulness in their work is mainly found in the relationship with the pupils as shown in this inquiry and others (Persson, 2006). Just like other professions, in which relationships and care are prominent parts, the work as a teacher has a tendency to spill over into the private life. Sometimes, this is experienced as positive – which is the case with the creative thinking – but at other times it is not. This supports the idea of alternating boundary management (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012) along a segmentation-integration continuum (Bulger, Matthews, & Hoffman, 2007; Nippert-Eng, 1996). Some teachers need the support from the principal to prevent negative work life spill-over, whereas others manage the demarcation on their own. Thus, the flexibility of the principal is important, just like the sensibility to understand the needs of each individual teacher.

8. Methodological considerations and limitations

Health promotion research has been criticized for being too focused on prevention of pathogenic aspects and not paying enough attention to the salutogenic aspects (Antonovsky, 1996). In this inquiry we have tried to focus on the latter. Still, by doing so we are opening up to the same criticism of presenting too simplistic a picture. Having said that, we still choose to focus on the salutogenic perspective alone because the pathogenic perspective has already been amply discussed.

In a hermeneutic inquiry the fundamental criteria for validity is the hermeneutic circle: the parts and the whole must be coherent (Nyström, 2008). In the course of the inquiry we have moved back and forth between the transcribed interviews and the interpretations to find inconsistencies and alternative interpretations. We have also returned to the teachers and discussed our interpretations as a way to confirm the analysis. When using a Gadamerian epistemology, it is important to identify and question one's preunderstanding. This can be done through dialogues with colleagues. We have done so during the entire analytical process, but because we are all discursively embedded in the same history, there is a risk that our preunderstanding has not been questioned enough. Our interpretation of the resources found in the lives of teachers is, however, merely a contribution to the discourse. We present one interpretation, one representation.

Although the aim was to include many aspects of a teacher's life, it is clear that we have not succeeded to do so. The main focus has been on work-related aspects, and the private domain is much less evident. We have made large efforts during the interviews to include the private domain, but somehow the conversations always came back to work. One explanation for this might be that most interviews took place at the school, and the common element among the focus group participants was work. However, future research should aim at including the private domain to a larger extent, since from the individual teacher's perspective, work and private life are interrelated and both constitute his/her everyday life.

This inquiry has been conducted among teachers in a European context. Similar circumstances are found in other parts of the world, such as North America and Australia, making the findings applicable to other contexts. However, there are cross-cultural variations around the world, regarding for example the relationship between teacher and pupil or between colleagues, which may render the findings less relevant to some contexts.

Considering "the current educational climate that sees teaching as a check list of behaviors, dispositions, measures, and standards" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 265), future research may seek to find ways to allow the caring aspects of teaching to evolve. The salutogenic aspect of being present in the moment is another field, that would be of interest for future research. How do we create an educational climate, which allows for slowing down the pace and allows for presence in the moment, teacher and pupils together?

9. Implications and conclusions

Existential needs are met through caring. The salutogenic resources found in the teachers' experiences of caring are meeting basic human needs: e.g. meaningfulness, belonging, manageability, satisfaction, contentment, savoring and joy. When experiencing these resources, the teachers in the study feel good about themselves and about their lives. Through the caring relationships with the pupils, teachers' well-being is generated (Roffey, 2012), and this influences their motivation and job commitment (Klassen, Foster, Rajani, & Bowman, 2009) as well as acts as a justification to remain in the profession (O'Connor, 2008). Hence, by creating a context which allows caring relationships to evolve and prosper, instead of focusing on "today's imperatives for standardized achievement" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 265), teacher retention could be affected. Previous research has shown, that not only teachers' well-being benefit by caring relationships: learning and cognitive development among pupils are also improved by them (Collinson, Killeavy, & Stephenson, 1998; Goldstein, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978). The importance of caring relationships should be attended to in teacher education. As cited in Goldstein and Freedman (2003, p. 441): "To prepare teachers who will be able to draw on caring to build a strong foundation for their professional practices, we must create teacher education programs specifically focused toward this goal" (Goodlad, 1990). The findings of the present study emphasize that the school administration, as well as teacher education, should pay special attention to the caring aspect of teaching, as it influences both teachers' well-being and the learning process of pupils.

The findings of this study are most likely applicable for a majority of people. Even so, there are certain circumstances which are unique for people working as teachers. Because part of their work is done in their home it means that their work lives and their private

lives are blurred. As noted earlier, this is sometimes perceived as salutogenic to their well-being, but not always. When perceived as detrimental to their well-being, teachers would benefit by being supported to demarcate negative spill-over. By being attentive to what makes them feel good about themselves – be it poiesis, praxis, or being present in the moment – their feeling of having a balance in life could be enhanced. It could be a way to make priorities in their everyday lives, which improves their work life balance. This is an important issue for school management and teacher educators to deal with, in order to promote teacher retention, and to add to teachers' healthy perspective.

The salutogenic aspects in the lives of the teachers function in a dialectical process between the individuals and their environment. It is clear that the everyday arenas and the ordinary days filled with routines and things we often take for granted are places where we find recovery and where our well-being is enhanced. By being aware of these everyday resources at a conscious level one can savor and enhance them, both in a work context (Nilsson et al., 2012) and in relation to the entire life situation. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) holds that positive emotions not only make people feel good momentarily, but help people widen their outlooks on things and equip people with resources for life satisfaction (Fredrickson & Kurtz, 2011). As noted by Gu and Day (2007), positive emotions broaden the scopes of cognition, enable creative thinking and also augment people's enduring coping resources – hence they fuel psychological resilience. If these resources are supported to grow and revitalize, as in regenerative work (Kira, 2008), they can be valuable in workplace health promotion, as well as in health promotion interventions in general.

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Paper II

Title:

Salutogenic Resources in Relation to Teachers' Work-life balance

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Experiencing work-life balance is considered a health promoting resource. To counter-balance the negative development of teachers' work situation, salutogenic resources need to be examined among teachers.

OBJECTIVE: To examine resources related to teachers' experience of their work-life balance.

METHODS: Using a cross-sectional design, a questionnaire was distributed to 455 teachers in compulsory schools in a Swedish community. A total of 338 teachers participated (74%). A multiple linear regression method was used for the analysis.

RESULTS: Four variables in the regression model significantly explained work-life balance and were thereby possible resources: time experience at work; satisfaction with everyday life; self-rated health; and recovery. The strongest association with work-life balance was time experience at work. Except time experience at work, all were individual-related.

CONCLUSIONS: This study highlights the importance of school management's support in reducing teachers' time pressure. It also emphasizes the need to address teachers' individual resources in relation to work-life balance. In order to support teachers' work-life balance, promote their well-being, and preventing teachers' attrition, we suggest that the school management would benefit from creating a work environment with strengthened resources.

Keywords: recovery, survey, teachers' work environment, workplace health promotion

1.Introduction

It is well known that the work situation of teachers has undergone a number of changes during the last twenty years, and these changes have affected their psychosocial work environment, internationally as well as in Sweden [1-3]. In recent years, teachers are experiencing an increasing accountability, more assessments, and paperwork [4-9]. These changes in the psychosocial work environment have affected teachers' well-being in a negative way [10-13]. However, most teachers remain committed to their work and pupils [14], and despite high

levels of job demands many teachers find personal satisfaction in their work [10, 15]. This leads to the assumption that there are enriching aspects of working as a teacher. More attention should be paid to these aspects to balance the negative picture.

A prominent feature in the work of Swedish teachers is their discretionary work time of ten hours per week, which is mostly done at home. Teleworking, i.e. working away from the employer's main campus, is positively associated with autonomy [16] and flexibility [17]. It is a possible salutogenic resource, and it is also believed to have a positive effect on the employee's work-life balance (WLB) [18-20]. However, work flexibility in time and space can also affect work-life balance in a negative way [21, 22], especially for employees who prefer a segmentation between work and personal life [23]. When working as a teacher the WLB is perhaps even more challenging than for many others. In addition to literally bringing work into one's home, there is a tendency for teachers, as with other caring professions, to also bring work home mentally [24]. These circumstances may lead to a life where the boundaries between work and personal life are intermingled, making the demarcation an important issue. A report showed that 70 percent of the participating Swedish teachers could not stop "working" when they were actually off work [25]. Yet, this profession has been somewhat overlooked in WLB research. As teaching is a profession characterized not only by spatial but also mental overlap of work and non-work, it is important for teachers to psychologically detach themselves from work during non-work time. Fritz et al. [26] showed that psychological detachment from work, i.e. to mentally distance oneself from work during non-work time (e.g. no work-related phone calls, no e-mails) is related to enhanced well-being. In a study on recovery among Swedish teachers [27] approximately 20% of the participating teachers were found in the non-recuperated group, and in an evident risk situation. If teachers manage to mentally distance themselves from work on a regular basis, it can help restore lost resources because of work demands and also enhance their well-being [26].

In order to describe the phenomenon of work/non-work interface a number of terms have been used. Some concepts emanate from a role-conflict perspective (e.g. work-family conflict; negative spill-over; home-work interference), while others assume a more positive perspective on the work/non-work interface (e.g. work-family enhancement; positive spill-over; work-family facilitation). The commonly used umbrella term, WLB, adopts a more neutral perspective, albeit not un-contested. It is, in itself, ambiguous as it has different meanings, and the measurement of balance is problematic. It implies that work and personal life are separate domains, while in reality it is a complex and multi-dimensional mixture of the two. For the purposes of this study, the concept of WLB was defined as satisfaction and good functioning at work and in the personal domain, with a minimum of role conflict and a maximum of enrichment. The definition emanates from Clark [28, p. 751], but instead of

using her term “at home”, the term “personal domain” was used, giving it a broader meaning. An aspect of enrichment was also included, in line with the salutogenic perspective.

WLB literature is limited in various aspects [29, 30]. The focus has, for example, mainly been on heterosexual dual-earner families, rather than including other groups [30-32]. Mostly, focus has also been on work and domestic life, disregarding aspects such as leisure time [32]. Furthermore, there has been an emphasis on viewing WLB as “problematic” (for example [33, 34]), and rarely recognizing the possibly enriching aspects of combining a family with work [29, 35, 36]. Moreover, research has most often been done within the disciplines of organizational psychology, sociology or within management literature [29]. Studies on WLB from a health science perspective are not as frequent, especially not with a health promotion approach.

When previous research indicates that WLB is health related [e.g. 37-40], most research suggests that well-being is an outcome of WLB [41]. Still, a recent study [40] suggests the opposite direction, i.e. WLB is an outcome of well-being. This study showed that a group of nurses were using the strategy of taking care of their well-being as a resource for experiencing WLB. By taking care of themselves they could also take care of their jobs and families. In addition, most research has focused on establishing the relationship between WLB and well-being, and less research has examined why this relationship exists. Gröpel and Kuhl (2009) proposed the hypothesis that it is not only the perception of having sufficient time for work and social life, that affects the well-being, but having enough time to fulfil one’s individual needs within that time.

One significant antecedent to WLB is the workplace context. An important factor in reducing a negative WLB is management support [42]. Previous findings indicate that a work environment which supports employees to a better WLB also improves their employee well-being [43]. For example, a transformative leadership style has been found to improve perceptions of WLB and employee well-being [44].

The salutogenic perspective is a viable approach in health promotion [45], and it has been used as a theoretical underpinning in this study. By focusing on resources instead of risk factors, the possibilities to maintain and strengthen people’s well-being is increased. Research focusing on aspects which promote one’s well-being from a salutogenic perspective is, indeed, increasing. Positive psychology is one example [46], which aims to understand factors that allow individuals and communities to flourish [47]. Teacher resilience is another example, with the aim to understand why teachers are able to persist in the face of challenges [48]. Positive emotions, such as joy, are believed to fuel psychological resilience [6], as does a sense of accomplishment [49], and professional freedom [50]. There are several aspects of teachers’ work, which are perceived as resources in

promoting their well-being. One example is the feeling of meaningfulness being a teacher [51, 52]. The intrinsic value of caring is still another resource among teachers [24, 51, 53]. Yet another is the social support provided by colleagues [54-56] and by supervisors and the school management [3, 57].

Consequently, there is a growing interest and body of knowledge on resources that promote people's well-being. However, this previous research still needs to be related to WLB literature, and more specifically, teachers' WLB [58]. Based on previous studies, we hypothesized that WLB would be associated with recovery, collegial and managerial support, and health. Since there is a lack of studies addressing WLB among other groups than dual-earner couples with dependent children, we attempted to include other groups in this study. Finally there is need for broadening the disciplines focusing on the issue of WLB. We approached the topic from a public health science perspective, viewing the WLB issue from the perspective of the experience of well-being and health. The aim of this study was to examine resources related to the teachers' experience of their work-life balance.

2. Materials and methodology

2.1 Design and sample

In this cross-sectional study, a questionnaire was used to examine how teachers experience their WLB from a salutogenic perspective at a given time. The questionnaire was offered to all 26 compulsory schools in a community in Sweden, and 22 accepted to participate. The inclusion criteria of respondents were working as a teacher in any of these schools and having discretionary time of ten hours per week. In total, 455 teachers were offered to participate and the response rate was 74% (n=338). A description of the study population is presented in Table 1.

INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

2.2 Procedure

The survey was carried out in May-June 2012. In order to raise the interest about the coming survey, five meetings with school directors were held earlier in the spring. The principals in each school district attended these meetings, and were thus informed about the aim and the procedure of the survey. A date was set with each principal for the questionnaire to be distributed. In a majority of the schools, MN was invited to present the

survey to the teachers, and distribute and collect the questionnaire at the same time. This was normally done immediately before or after a staff meeting. On other occasions the questionnaires were distributed by a representative of that specific school, e.g. the principal. Each teacher had the opportunity to complete the questionnaire at home and return it later in an envelope. At the time of the survey, 28 teachers were absent from their schools. These teachers received the questionnaire by mail, and after one reminder 12 of them completed the questionnaire.

2.3 Questionnaire

A review on antecedents to WLB as well as on relevant theories and instruments was used in the construction of the questionnaire. A complementary addition was based on a qualitative study [51], focusing on the salutogenic aspects of teachers' everyday life, previously conducted with a group of seven teachers in the same municipality in 2010. The focus of the questionnaire was salutogenic resources in relations to WLB. Based on the literature review, demographic and personal factors, external non-work factors, work-related factors, the experience of combining work with personal life, and health-related factors were used as a structure. When constructing the questionnaire, previous scales and instruments were used when suitable, either as inspiration or as the original scale (Table 2). The *Work Experience Measurement Scale* (WEMS) [59] was used regarding work-related factors. The *Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale* (SHIS) [60] was used for questions regarding health and well-being. Questions on self-esteem and optimism were inspired by the *Flourishing Scale* [60], and to assess reflection and meaning-making we were inspired by van den Heuvel et al. [62]. To assess quality of life the participants were asked "How do you feel about your present life?" and seven bipolar items were given as alternative answers [63]. Questions regarding recovery were developed on the basis of the previous qualitative study in the same municipality [51]. Four questions, inspired by Carlson et al. [64], were included in the WLB index: "I am satisfied with my life regarding the work-life balance" (6-point Likert-type scale); "In all, how easy or difficult is it for you to manage the demands of your work and personal life?" (5-point Likert-type scale); "All in all, how successful do you feel in balancing your work and your personal life?" (5-point Likert-type scale); and "People who are close to me would say that I do a good job of balancing work and personal life." (6-point Likert-type scale). The majority of the questions in the questionnaire were constructed to have six response categories, with 6=strongly agree and 1=strongly disagree. Some questions had five alternative answers where

the middle alternative meant “neither/nor” or “both/and”. In total, the questionnaire contained 39 questions, of which a majority included sub-questions. The concept of work was defined as paid work.

The questionnaire was tested in a pilot study on five teachers in another municipality, and each question was discussed individually with the teachers. Minor adjustments were made before it was distributed to the selected school, e.g. omitting a middle-alternative as an optional answer. The questions were tested in a test-retest study with an interval of 14 days (n=39), and resulted in weighted kappa values for all questions between fair (0,39) and good (0,80) [65].

2.4 Variables

Explorative factor analysis (PCA) was done regarding the personal domain (12 questions, resulting in two indices: *supportive family* and *domestic autonomy*) and regarding the experience of one's life as a whole (10 questions, resulting in two indices: *satisfaction with everyday life* and *satisfaction with life as a whole*). When examining the rest of the variables, eleven other indices were created based on theoretical and logical considerations. Depending on the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (CA), one index was discarded (CA =0,60) while 14 were accepted (CA 0,72-0,95) (Table 2). The index variables were confirmed to have an approximatively normal distribution. Standardization of the indices was performed in order to make them range from 0 to 100. This enabled comparison with other studies using the same indices.

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

2.5 Data analysis

Bivariate correlations were investigated between the experience of WLB and 13 indices, using Pearson’s correlation coefficient (Table 3). The variables showing a medium (r=0,30 to 0,49) or large (r=0,50 to 0,80) correlation to WLB were included in a multiple linear regression analysis (12 indices). Three additional variables (age, gender, and living conditions) were included in the regression analysis in order to adjust for these variables. Two-way interaction was tested by introducing product terms of main independent variables in separate

regression models. P- values below 0,05 were considered statistically significant. IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22 was used for the statistical analysis of data.

2.6 Ethical approval

The study was conducted in agreement with the Swedish Law of Research Ethics, SFS 2003:460, which is in line with the ethical guidelines of the Helsinki Declaration [66]. The principle of voluntariness was met by the respondents' informed consent to participate in the survey. Precautions were made to ensure the anonymity of participating teachers as well as participating schools, and all data was treated confidentially.

3. Results

The response rate was 74% (n=338), and 79% of the respondents were women. Most of the participants were living with a partner and at least one child (50%). Teachers with no partner but with at least one child (6%) and teachers living alone (9%) were the smallest groups, while participants living with a partner and no children (35%) was the second largest group. Most of the participants worked 80 % or more of full-time employment (68%) (Table 1).

In bivariate correlations there was a strong ($r \geq 0{,}50$), positive correlation between the experience of work-life balance and five variables: *self-rated health*; *self-esteem and optimism*; *time experience at work*; *recovery*; and *satisfaction with everyday life* (Table 3). *Domestic autonomy* showed a weak ($r < 0{,}29$) correlation to WLB, and was thus excluded in the following multiple linear regression analysis.

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed with the index of WLB as the dependent variable and the remaining twelve variables from the bivariate correlation analysis as independent variables. The model indicated that four variables were significantly associated with WLB: *time experience at work* (β=0,315); *satisfaction with everyday life* (β= 0,274); *self-rated health* (β= 0,237); and *recovery* (β= 0,114) (Table 4). The adjusted R square of the total model was 0,661.

Interaction effects (two-way) were studied pairwise for the four significant independent variables, but also for age, gender, reflection and meaningfulness, internal work experiences, and satisfaction with life as a whole, in

relation to recovery and self-rated health. A significant interaction was only found for age and time experience as predictors of WLB ($\beta = -0.193$; $p = 0.045$).

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

4. Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine resources in relation to teachers' experiences of WLB, and it was hypothesized that WLB would be associated with recovery, collegial and managerial support, and health. The study demonstrated four factors associated with the experience of WLB. One of these factors is work-related (*time experience at work*), while the remaining three (*satisfaction with everyday life, self-rated health* and *recovery*) are related to the individual. The hypothesis of an association between WLB and recovery, and between WLB and health were supported, while the association between WLB and collegial and managerial support were discarded. If the significant factors could be strengthened, they would be important resources for teachers' WLB. However, these factors are interdependent, as individuals cannot be segmented into isolated parts. The different parts make up the individual as a whole person, and each part interrelates with the others [67]. The associated factors are discussed below.

4.1 Time experience at work

The *time experience at work* variable had the strongest association to WLB, i.e. the possibility to complete one's work tasks without feeling pressed for time. The descriptive result however, indicates, that a large part of the respondents stated low on this. The standardized mean of time experience for the participating teachers was 29. In a study from Lithuania, using the same index, the participating teachers stated a standardized mean of 64 [68],

and when comparing to other professional groups, such as physicians (mean=38), nurses (mean=63) [69], care-, service- and social workers (mean=61) [70], the participating teachers stated a significantly poorer time experience at work. The unfinished character has, traditionally, been a natural part of teaching [71]. Even so, this fragmentation seems to become increasingly difficult to handle [72]. The noteworthy low mean among the Swedish teachers could be related to the work intensification that teachers experience [1, 54]. Still, other professions which are considered as having similar work intensification, do not experience the same time pressure [69, 70]. A possible explanation could be that, for example nurses and social workers do not have discretionary time – teachers do. Teleworking among teachers is used as a strategy to accomplish their work on time [73]. It is also a resource for WLB, and considered a way to balance competing demands within the work domain and the private domain [18-20]. However, through the discretionary time work is brought home into the private sphere as part of the work structure. Previous findings have indicated that employees experienced more stress before going to sleep when they had worked during the evening [74], and therefore it is important to raise the awareness of its potentially negative effects on one's well-being. It seems that a majority of the participants are living with a feeling of not being able to accomplish their work on time. This is worrying, since the feeling of accomplishment and completion are salutogenic in themselves, and they are also resources for psychological resilience [49].

4.2 Satisfaction with everyday life

The index *satisfaction with everyday life* included questions regarding more tangible aspects of the everyday life, such as co-habitation, economy, and also questions whether life is perceived as free/tied-up and easy to live/hard to live. There are several aspects within the index of everyday life which have been found in previous research to be salutogenic resources in general as well as resources for WLB. Findings on WLB indicate that income is an important resource when meeting the needs of daily life, and can be used to facilitate the combination of paid and domestic work [75]. With a sufficient income people can outsource domestic work, leaving more time for other things. Leisure time is another aspect of everyday life, and it can be described as "free time" when one does not work, and when one engages in behavior that is enjoyable in themselves [76]. This can be linked to the respondents' answer to whether their everyday is free or tied-up. Leisure has been identified as a resource for promoting well-being and health and also functions as a buffer under adverse life conditions [77, 78]. Teachers' discretionary time could relate to their experience of having a free or tied-up everyday life in both a pathogenic

and a salutogenic way. Research has shown that work flexibility may effect WLB in a negative way [21, 22], but also as having a positive effect on WLB [18, 19]. Discretionary time may also be considered as an expression of professional freedom, which previously has been suggested to enhance psychological resilience [50]. The index also included living with a family, and family-related support has been found to reduce conflicts in the work-family interface [79-82]. Thus the separate aspects in the index are previously associated with WLB, as is the index as a whole in this study.

4.3 Self-rated health

As hypothesized, *self-rated health* was significantly associated to WLB. This result is consistent with previous research [37-40], of which a majority suggest that health is an outcome of WLB. On the one hand, the lack of experiencing WLB has been found to be associated with decreased well-being and quality of life [83]; increased stress [84]; impaired mental health [85]. On the other hand, work-family balance has been associated with well-being and overall quality of life [86, 87].

The standardized mean value for the participating teachers was, however, relatively low (mean=59) compared to other studies using the same instrument: teachers (in Lithuania, mean=65) [68], physicians (mean=75) [88], nurses (mean=76) [88]. Work intensification has been found to relate to impaired health [4-6] and teachers' work intensification could be part of the explanation. Still, doctors and nurses are also experiencing work intensification [89, 90], and they report a higher self-rated health. Caring is an important salutogenic element in teachers' work [24, 51, 53], and by attending to the needs of the pupils, teachers' well-being is enhanced [52]. A possible supposition is that along with the increase in documentation and work-load, which is part of the work intensification, less room is given for interaction with the pupils, and as a result less room for caring relations. In addition, it is mostly in the relationship with the pupils that teachers experience meaningfulness in their work [52]. As both caring [24, 51, 73] and meaningfulness [51, 52] are health enhancing factors, it would seem a plausible suggestion that intensified work with lesser interaction with the pupils, lead to negative effects on teachers' well-being and health.

4.4 Recovery

The ability to recover, i.e. the process of unwinding, is as important as experiencing a manageable workload. The index *recovery* includes recovery during work, off work, getting to/home from work, as well as a more general question regarding overall recovery. As hypothesized, the results demonstrate that recovery is correlated with WLB, and therefore a possible salutogenic resource. However, it is not possible to conclude whether WLB influences recovery, the other way around, or in a reciprocal process. Previous research examining this relationship has suggested all three directions. On the one hand, Stevens [91] suggested that improved WLB was positively influencing recovery. On the other hand, Sanz-Vergel et al. [92] showed that recovery in connection with breaks at work predicted work-family facilitation in the evening. Findings have also indicated that working one or more Sundays/month was associated with an increased risk of poorer WLB [93]. Finally, the reciprocal correlation between the need for recovery and home-work interference was supported by Demerouti, Taris and Bakker [94].

Research has shown that a high workload is related to impaired health and well-being [74, 95], and insufficient recovery is associated with psychosomatic complaints and burnout [95]. The workload of teachers in many countries has increased [96] and teachers are at risk of not experiencing sufficient recovery [27]. The recovery, that is gained during vacations fade out quickly, indicating the importance of getting recovery during evenings and week-ends [97]. This is, however, complex, because of the teachers' discretionary time. Park et al. [98] proposed that segmenting work and non-work roles may help employees to detach themselves and recover from work demands. Previous findings suggest that the spatial and temporal overlap between work and non-work may be easier to address, than the mental overlap [24, 73]. Regardless of what type of overlap, it is an important issue to address.

4.5 Methodological considerations

The cross-sectional design of the present study implicates that the timing of the survey is important. The questionnaire was distributed in May-June, which is a time when most teachers are busy with work, in addition to many social events which take place before the summer vacation. This could have had both positive and negative effects on the results, not the least on the self-rated health. Had the survey been conducted in another time of the year, the results may have been different. This has implications on the reliability of the results of the study.

Being a cross-sectional study it is not possible to predict any direction of the relationship between the experience of work-life balance and the four associated variables. We can conclude that there is an association. To determine how one variable effects another, a longitudinal study would be needed.

Another limitation of the findings is the interrelational aspect of WLB. Several of the significant variables are rather similar to each other, and they are both part of WLB and simultaneously associated with it. This could make it difficult to interpret the results. Nevertheless, testing for multicollinearity showed that the indices used in this study correlated in a satisfactory way ($r \leq 0,9$). The predominant absence of interaction effects contribute to a more straightforward interpretation of the result.

When planning the survey, one of the objectives was to include groups other than double-income families with children. However, when looking at the respondents, the group with teachers either living alone, or being a single parent, were too small to allow any further conclusions. Therefore, the need to look more closely at other groups, rather than examining the standard couple with children, still remains.

Some of the items of the questionnaire were not used before, but the pilot study supported face validity and the theoretical background conduced the content validity. However, the lack of profound testing is a limitation when interpreting the result.

The results of this study are based on a self-monitored questionnaire, which means that the results are dependent on the respondents' willingness to share their perceptions and experiences, and also on their truthfulness. There is also a possible limitation of the study regarding the respondents' understanding and interpretations of the questions. Validity was strengthened by using previously tested questionnaires, and by performing a pilot study with teachers in another municipality. Reliability was checked using a test-retest, and internal consistency was strengthened by only including indices with Cronbach's alpha 0,72-0,95, which would indicate that they were not too similar or over-lapping.

As the study was designed to allow participants to be anonymous, it means that it was not possible to do a dropout analysis.

5. Conclusions

This study contributes to existing literature by highlighting the issues of finishing work without time pressure as well as having sufficient recovery. Since previous research also has demonstrated the importance that time pressure and recovery have on people's well-being, much could be gained if school management reduced time pressure, facilitated prioritization between work tasks, and facilitated recovery during the working day. In order to make these changes, school management would need to create an educational climate that supports these health promoting factors.

The individual resources in relation to WLB is highlighted as important in relation to WLB. Among four factors associated with teachers' experience of work-life balance, three were related to the individual (*self-rated health, satisfaction with everyday life* and *recovery*). Most research on work-life balance has focused on the two domains "work" and "family", not paying much attention to individual resources. This points to the need to investigate individual resources to a larger extent that what has been done previously.

Teachers' discretionary time seems to be influencing their WLB in complex ways. While it renders the demarcation between work and non-work more difficult, it also is an expression for professional freedom and flexibility.

Most interventions have used a curative approach, and we suggest a shift in focus to a more health promoting approach. A focus on health-promoting interventions, i.e. strengthening resources regardless of whether work is done at the workplace, by the individual teacher, or in interaction with the personal sphere, the work-life balance of teachers could be improved. Experiencing work-life balance is considered an important resource for teachers to remain resilient despite difficult work situations, as well as improving their well-being. Strengthening resources would thus be of benefit not only to the individual teacher, but also to the school at large.

Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that this article content has no conflict of interest.

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Table 1. Description of the study population (n=338)

Variable	Groups	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	268	79,3
	Male	70	20,7
Age	<35	46	13,6
	35-44	131	38,8
	45-54	85	25,1
	>54	76	22,5
Co-habitation	Single parent with child/ren	20	5,9
	Couple with child/ren	168	49,7
	Living with a partner	118	34,9
	Living alone	31	9,2
	Missing	1	0,3
Employment of full time*	0-80%	65	19,2
	81-100%	230	68,0
	Missing	43	12,7

*Employment of full time=45 hours/week

Table 2. Overview of the indices in the study

Variables	No. of questions	Range	Scale type	Example of question	Cronbach's alpha	Mean (SD)
Work-life balance (WLB)	4	4-22	Varying	I am satisfied with my life regarding the work-life balance	**0.85**	14.2 (3.8)
Domestic Autonomy	4	4-24	Likert-type scale	I decide when tasks should be carried out at home	**0,89**	20.6 (3.7)
Supportive family	8	8-48	Likert-type scale	We encourage and support each other in my family	**0,89**	39.7 (6.5)
Self-rated health (SHIS)	12	12-72	Semantic differential	In the last 4 weeks, I have felt alert- felt tired, exhausted	**0,94**	47.6** (12.5)
Self-esteem and optimism	11	11-66	Likert-type scale	I lead a purposeful and meaningful life	**0,92**	55.7 (7.7)
Reflection and meaningfulness	5	5-30	Likert-type scale	I actively take the time to reflect on events that happen in my life	**0,80**	24.3 (3.9)
Internal work experiences (WEMS)	6	6-36	Likert-type scale	I feel that my work is meaningful	**0,86**	28.7 (5.0)
Supportive working conditions (WEMS)	7	7-42	Likert-type scale	We encourage and support each other at work	**0,89**	28.8 (6.7)
Time experience (at work) (WEMS)	3	3-18	Likert-type scale	I have enough time to finish tasks without feeling pressed for time	**0,84**	7.4*** (3.4)
Recovery	7	7-42	Likert-type scale	I feel that I get enough recuperation during my everyday life	**0,77**	24.6 (4.5)
Work-related autonomy (WEMS)	4	4-24	Likert-type scale	I decide when tasks should be carried out	**0,80**	14.9 (3.6)
Management (WEMS)	6	6-36	Likert-type scale	My immediate manager is available when needed	**0,90**	23.1 (6.8)
Satisfaction with everyday life	7	7-42	Likert-type scale + Semantic differential	I am satisfied with my life regarding the economy	**0,72**	31.4 (5.7)
Satisfaction with life as a whole	4	4-24	Semantic differential	I feel that my present life is worthwhile-miserable	**0,92**	20.0 (3.6)
Daily habits of eating, physical activity, sleeping*	3	3-18	Likert-type scale	I am very satisfied/not satisfied at all with my sleeping habits	0,60	12.3 (3.0)

Indices with Cronbach's alpha between 0,72 and 0,95 were accepted. *"Daily habits of eating, physical activity, sleeping" was discarded. **Standardized mean 59. ***Standardized mean 29.

Table 3. Bivariate correlations (Pearson correlation coefficient, r) between work-life balance and variables related to the individual, work, and the non-work areas

Variable	Resp. (N)	Standardized mean	Work-life Balance (r)
Work-life balance	331	57	-
Individual-related			
Self-rated health	325	59	**,69**
Satisfaction with everyday life	328	61	**,66**
Recovery	321	50	**,60**
Self-esteem and Optimism	325	81	**,54**
Reflection and Meaningfulness	325	77	**,45**
Satisfaction with life as a whole	327	80	**,44**
Work-related			
Time experience at work	330	29	**,62**
Work-related autonomy	330	55	**,47**
Supportive working conditions	331	62	**,41**
Internal work experience	327	76	**,35**
Management	327	57	**,31**
Non-work-related			
Supportive family	313	79	**,42**
Domestic autonomy	328	83	,20

All r values were significant (p= ,000).
Variables with r ≥0,30 were included in the multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 4. Results from a multiple linear regression model. Variables associated with the experience of work-life balance as dependent variable. Adjusted by age, gender and living conditions.

Variable	Standardized Coefficient Beta	t	*p*-value
Time experience at work	**,315**	7,466	**,000**
Satisfaction with everyday life	**,274**	4,582	**,000**
Self-rated health	**,237**	4,671	**,000**
Recovery	**,114**	2,467	**,014**
Satisfaction with life as a whole	-,111	-1,916	,056
Self-esteem and optimism	,070	1,132	,259
Reflection and meaningfulness	,068	1,415	,158
Work-related autonomy	,043	1,019	,309
Supportive working conditions	-,001	- ,010	,992
Internal work experiences	,059	1,279	,202
Management	-,033	- ,767	,444
Supportive family	,030	,668	,505

Significance level 0,05. Adjusted R Square 0,661.

Paper III

Title:

Co-Existing Needs – Paradoxes in Collegial Reflection. The development of a pragmatic method for reflection.

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Abstract

This paper addresses a feasibility study of a method for recurrent collegial reflection. A qualitative approach, using a participatory research design, was adopted. Data collection included digital recordings of

collegial reflection, open questions by mail, and individual interviews. Findings indicated contradictory feelings among the participating teachers regarding the intervention. Before implementing the method in another context, management needs to appreciate these contradictory experiences, allow for voluntary participation, address participants' expectations, and allocate time and tasks. We conclude that by creating a structure which supports teachers' collegial reflection, the school may function as a supportive environment, and a health promoting setting.

Intervention; Reflection; Teachers; Health promotion

1. Introduction

In recent years, the psychosocial work environment for teachers has changed, internationally as well as in Sweden (Arvidsson et al., 2013; Konu, 2010). Their work pace has been intensified, and teachers express needing more reflection time during their workday (Day, Hadfield, & Kellow, 2002; Hargreaves, 1998; Author, 2012 [details removed for peer review]). The development of work intensification is not unique for teachers, but can be noticed in other professions as well (Adams, Lugsden, Chase, Arber, & Bond, 2000; Green, 2004; Macky & Boxall, 2008), making it a relevant issue for many professions. Reflection can be done in different ways, and collaborative reflection with colleagues, i.e. collegial reflection, is one of them. Since collegial reflection also may take different forms, it is advisable to test it at the intended environment before implementing it comprehensively. A feasibility study makes it possible to identify methodological uncertainties of an intervention, and to test how the participants experience it, in order to modify changes according to the study results before any larger scale intervention (Richards, 2015). By adopting a settings approach, the setting is regarded as a social context in which environmental, organizational and personal factors interact. The settings approach includes consideration for the local prerequisites, and also allows for the participants to participate during the whole research process and give their picture of the intervention's feasibility. As research targeting collegial reflection with a health promotion approach has been scarce, and since there are uncertainties regarding how a health promoting intervention of collegial reflection should be designed, the present paper reports a study aimed at addressing this void. The research question was:

"How is a model for collegial reflection with a settings approach experienced by the participating teachers?"

2. Theoretical framework

1.1 The workplace as a health promotion setting

The workplace has been identified as a priority area for health promotion into the twenty-first century (WHO, 2017). It is significant not only for preventing risks, but also for creating an environment that is enhancing employees' health and well-being. Earlier, workplace health promotion (WHP) mainly addressed the individual employee, and emphasized lifestyle determinants of health, such as smoking and physical activity (Harden, Peersman, Oliver, Mauthner, & Oakley, 1999; Torp, Eklund, & Thorpenberg, 2011). However, with the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986), the settings approach became a pronounced feature of health promotion. In this charter, the WHO states that health goes beyond healthy life-styles and underlines the importance of creating health where people learn, work, play and love. The workplace is thereby an important setting. The settings approach rests on principles of participation by the people who are involved, and a holistic view on health as determined by a complex interaction of environmental, organizational and personal factors. With the settings approach, the workplace is viewed as a complex dynamic system, and as such the context plays a fundamental role (Hodgins & Griffiths, 2012), and needs to be considered in health promotive interventions, such as collegial reflection.

An important feature of the settings approach is the salutogenic perspective, i.e. strengthening people's resources with the aim of maintaining or improving their well-being and health (Antonovsky, 1996). By using a salutogenic perspective, the dichotomization between health and ill-health is opposed, and instead they are viewed as being two poles on a continuum. Salutogenesis looks into how resources in people's lives support the development towards the positive pole.

In line with the settings approach, Clement & Vandenberghe (2000) stated that the societal developments, which are facing today's teachers, calls for measures beyond what the individual can manage on his own. Each school needs to create favorable conditions for the professional development of its teachers, and

reflection is one way to contribute to such conditions (Manouchehri, 2001). Enabling collegial reflection can be seen as a way to structurally meet the changing psychosocial work environment, and support the individual teachers to collectively find alternative ways to understand and meet these changes.

1.2 Reflection

Reflection is a concept which is often used in today's work science discourse, and perhaps even more so in the educational context (Emsheimer, 2005; Ghaye, 2010). However, the frequent use of the concept has led to the paradoxical situation that it is used in a non-reflected manner (Bengtsson, 2007). Reflection can be described as systematic thinking (Rodgers, 2002), emanating from an experience (Cederwald, 2006; Emsheimer, 2005), and it is often depicted as leading to the testing of a hypothesis (Dewey, 1933; Lewin, 1948). Consequently, it combines praxis and action with theory and sense-making in a dialectical process (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & López-Torres, 2003). As a professional, one can reflect about what one does while doing it, i.e. reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983), but in this study reflection is used as reflection on action, i.e. after the action has been completed (Schön, 1983). In order to use reflection as a means for workplace learning, "it is important to recognize […] that the concept of reflection provides meaning at different levels – individual, group or collective and organization" (Hoyrup & Elkjaer, 2006, p. 29).

The importance of dialogical space among the members in a group is also stressed in team learning (Decuyper, Dochy & van den Bossche, 2010), and considered as an important requirement for learning. As learning is a desired outcome of reflection, the dialogue may serve as a possible way for the teachers to learn and develop professionally.

Collective reflection has been described in various ways. One example is technical reflection, which can be seen as an instrumental type of reflection, a response to problems without questioning the problem per se (Hatton & Smith, 1995), and having ends not open to criticism (van Manen, 1977). It is a "technical response to specific situations without changing perspectives" (Ward & McCotter, 2004, p. 250). This type of reflection, however, has limited possibilities of changing work conditions in a more profound way. Another example of collective reflection is the dialogic reflection, which can be described as a way of

"stepping back" from the actual event and consider different alternatives for explaining (Hatton & Smith, 1995) and synthesizing new ideas (Ward & McCotter, 2004). Yet another type of reflection is critical reflection. The importance of critical reflection has been raised in order to meet the demands of flexibility that are pervasive in the contemporary workplace climate of society (Fook, Collington, Ross, Ruch, and West, 2016). Critical reflection includes four steps of thinking: hunting assumptions; checking these assumptions; seeing things from different viewpoints; and taking informed action. In the first two steps, one tries to surface one's taken-for-granted assumptions, and then assess how accurate and valid they are for one's actions (Brookfield, 2012). The next step is a way to facilitate this process. By looking at the assumptions from different angles, these assumptions can be questioned. This leads to the last step, taking informed action. Critical reflection is thereby embedded in values and questions regarding power (Brookfield, 2012), and it is a fundamental element of work life as well as a democratic society at large (Illeris, 2015).

3. Literature review

Teachers' work situation has become more intensified, and documentation and assessment are increasingly requiring more of the teachers' time and effort (Ballet, Kelchtermans & Loughran, 2006). These changes are coinciding with the recent development in many Western countries, characterized by an increasing market orientation, competition, efficiency demands, assessment of results, and demands on the individual to develop professionally (Buchanan, 2015). Similarly, this development has also coincided with a deteriorating health and well-being among teachers (Kidger et al., 2016).

With an increasing focus on teachers' professional development, the focus on collegial collaboration and dialogue has similarly grown (Manouchehri, 2001). A central idea in this, is the collegial interaction (Park & Lee, 2015; Youngs & King, 2002), which may appear in different forms. One example is to have colleagues observe and give feedback on one's teaching (Reagan, Case & Brubacher, 2000), while another is to share experiences at workshops (Borko, Mayfield, Marion, flexer & Cumbo, 1997).

Another way to interact with colleagues is through collegial/collaborative reflection. Reflection, individual as well as collaborative, is considered as a valuable means to professional development (Glazer, Abbot &

Harris, 2004). There are a number of concepts used to describe similar processes, e.g. peer-to-peer exchange (Rocco, 2010), professional dialogue (Daniel, Auhl & Hastings, 2013), and peer coaching (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). Previous empirical research has often focused on teacher education or teachers in their early years of the profession (e.g. Harrison, Lawson & Wortley, 2005; Jay & Johnson, 2002), while less is studied on teachers in general (Glazer et al., 2004).

Collegial reflection entails both possible benefits and barriers. In a study about participation in a collaborative reflection group, teachers stated that their learning increased, both about their school and themselves (Glazer et al., 2004). Other rewards were highlighted in the same study, such as releasing of stress, having time to slow down, and experiencing that other teachers share similar feelings and they are not alone.

At the same time, there are important challenges to the participation in professional dialogue (Daniel et al., 2013). Limited time and access to peers is an important challenge (Glazer et al., 2004). Other challenges are insufficient structural and social supports, demands of immediate tasks (Horn & Little, 2010; Simoncini, Lasen & Rocco, 2014), and fear of being perceived as less competent, or the contrary, too presumptuous, by one's colleagues (Richardson-Koehler, 1988).

Some essential features have been recognized when designing reflection among colleagues. Boud and Walker (1998) suggested the context to be the single most important influence on reflection and learning. Issues to regard within the context are e.g. the comprehensive socio-political influence, the issue of building trust, and the question of power among the participants. Glazer et al. (2004) also highlighted some core issues, such as designating a space and time for reflection on a regular basis, and having an outside facilitator who guided the meetings. Other issues regarded having an agreement among the group members, ensuring their participation as well as respecting confidentiality, and lastly, to have a topic generation that is needs-based and emergent among the participants.

Besides being important to teachers' professional development, collegial reflection is also relevant as a link to well-being. Mutual support among colleagues may enhance their confidence and self-esteem (Lieberman & Miller, 2000), which are related to people's well-being (Pyszczynski et al., 2004). Social support from both colleagues (Greenglass, Burke, & Konarski, 1997; Griffith, Steptoe, & Cropley, 1999) and management

(Scott & Dinham, 2003; Thoonen, Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma, & Geijsel, 2011) are considered health-promoting resources, and can be mediated by collegial reflection. A study on physicians (Rabow & McPhee, 2001), in which reflection was implemented through a collegial discussion group, found that the participants' well-being was promoted.

Hence, with this in mind, and based on a previous study in the municipality indicating the need for reflection time (Author et al., 2015 [details removed for peer review], we decided to conduct a feasibility study on collegial reflection. Even though the teachers experienced time shortage, they expressed a wish to introduce collegial reflection as part of their work. If brief, but recurrent, collegial reflection meetings would support the participating teachers' professional development and enhance their well-being, it would be worth further investigation. The focus of this feasibility study was to look at the design of a weekly, 30-minute-long, collegial reflection model, in order to modify it and subsequently implement it in a larger scale.

2. Aim

The aim of the study was to explore teachers' experiences of a method for recurrent structural collegial reflection with a settings approach.

3. Methodology and Methods

The present inquiry rests on an epistemological viewpoint, which consists of believing in multiple realities, and seeking an understanding of a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Epistemology influences how participants are perceived in the research (Carter & Little, 2007), and as we believe that knowledge is created in collaboration between the researcher and the participants, a participatory research design was chosen. This paper addresses the feasibility of a method's design, while the effects of the collegial reflection, and the participatory action research process, are addressed in another paper (in progress).

Given that the aim was to explore the teachers' experiences of the method's design, a qualitative approach was chosen, using three methods for data collection: digital recordings of the reflection meetings; mailed open-ended questions; and individual interviews.

We assumed that an inquiry cannot occur within a value-free framework, and the researchers were hence an integral part of both the research process and product (Horsburgh, 2003). Assuming this stance, the research is not carried out in an epistemological vacuum, instead the research is affected by the context. Consequently, the contextual factors need to be taken into account.

3.1. Context

The intervention took place in a school, in a middle-sized municipality in the south of Sweden. Pupils attending the school go to preschool classes up to sixth grade.

A major reorganization within the municipality shortly before the intervention might have had importance for how the collegial reflection was experienced as concurrent events are likely to influence an intervention. This included a change of school districts and a redistribution of principals, causing profound changes in the teachers' everyday work environment. In addition, there was a thorough reconstruction of the school building in 2014, which meant that at the time of the intervention, the teachers were actually working at a construction site. Moreover, a major educational drive, the "Mathematics Boost", was launched for the teachers at the time of the intervention. This further training of mathematic teachers led to an increased workload as well as reduced time for collegial meetings. Despite – or rather thanks to – the reduced time for collegial meetings among the teachers, the principal at the participating school decided to implement the intervention of collegial reflection. The principal concluded that it was in trying work situations such as this, that reflection time was most needed.

3.2. Participants

In total, 21 teachers participated in the intervention, i.e. all the teachers in the school. Fifteen of these were female. In order to allow each participant enough time to talk, the participants were divided into

groups. These were based on what grade they taught, two groups with teachers from preschool classes up to third grade, and one group with 4-6 grade teachers.

3.3. Design and procedure of the intervention

The intervention was based on a need assessment from the same school as the intervention (Author et al, 2015 [details removed for peer review]). The need assessment suggested six topics which were considered by the teachers as important issues for their well-being, and it was decided to use these topics in the collegial reflection.

In line with the participatory and the settings approach, the intervention was designed in collaboration between the participating school (the principal and a group of seven teachers), a project support group, and the researchers. The support group, consisting of representatives from the municipality, teachers from the selected school, and representatives from the involved university, acted as a dialogue partner to the researchers. By involving the participants, several advantages were sought. One such advantage was that the needs of the people concerned were made explicit (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995), which avoided the assumption of needs that in reality were preconceived ideas from outsiders. Another advantage was that it increased the likelihood of a successful implementation of the intervention (Polanyi, 2005). Previous research has shown that the degree of participation relates to the achievement of intervention goals and less resistance (Lines, 2004), and consequently the aspiration was to include the participants as much as possible.

Before implementing the intervention, a meeting was held with all the teachers at the participating school. The objectives of this meeting were threefold: to inform about the plans; to inspire and motivate the teachers to participate in the intervention; and to establish the basic ethical values guiding the reflection meetings. During this meeting, the teachers were asked to prioritize among the six topics that were identified in the need assessment. The topics were prioritized in the following order: *Social relationships with colleagues; Recovery; Documentation; Delimitation within the professional role; Finishing work assignments without stress;* and *Delimitation between work and private lives.* These topics could be used as

a starting point for the collegial reflection, or as an alternative, they had the possibility to choose a topic of their own. Each topic could be reflected upon as long as the group felt the need.

Ethical values, regarding taking turns, showing respect, and not being judgmental were both discussed and presented in written form at the meeting. Ethical issues, such as these, are central in collaborative dialogues (Selkrig & Keamy, 2015).

Even though previous research has suggested the benefits of an outside facilitator (Glazer et al., 2014), it was decided that the collegial reflection was to be held by the teachers themselves. The intention was to make the intervention sustainable, and not dependent on the involvement of the researchers,. Consequently, there was a joint responsibility for the process during the reflection meetings, meaning that each participant was responsible for keeping the meetings as intended, and no one was assigned as leader. During the same meeting, each participant received written material about the reflection process that was to be used during the collegial reflection, the ethical guidelines, as well as questions to be used to aid the reflection process.

Previous research has indicated that designating time and space for collegial reflection on a regular basis is a core issue (Glazer, et al., 2004). Due to the teachers' work intensification, the design of the intervention was determined on a pragmatic basis. Each reflection meeting was to take thirty minutes, no more and no less. We hypothesized that thirty minutes would be short enough, not to interfere too much with the ordinary work tasks, but also long enough to allow meaningful reflection. The teachers met once a week for a reflection meeting at the school. By meeting on a weekly basis, our supposition was that it would be possible to continue the dialogue from the previous week, if needed.

The reflection dialogue followed a wheel of reflection, i.e. a pre-set structure in three phases (Figure 1). This reflection model was based on a modified version of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988), and was applied to give the participants a useful structure for their reflection process. Phase 1 began with one of teachers telling the others about a case, and included a description of it: "what happened?". Alternatively, they used the topic for a more general discussion: "what experience do we have?". In the next phase the participants evaluated the issue: "what was negative about it?" but also "what was positive about it?". In the third and final phase, the participants made conclusions from their dialogue: "what could have been done

differently?", "in the best of worlds…". Phase 1 and the negative evaluation in phase 2 were to take at the most one meeting, to avoid dwelling too much on the negative aspects of the issue. The positive valuation and phase 3 could take as long as necessary. There was a strong emphasis on keeping the reflection meeting as constructive and positive as possible, i.e. stressing things that actually work, but also creative ideas in relation to things that do not work.

Two months into the intervention, a follow-up meeting took place. At this meeting, the design and the process of the intervention were discussed, and uncertainties were ventilated. Ethical issues were once more discussed.

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

3.4. Data generation

Data was generated by means of three methods: digital recordings of the reflection meetings; mailed surveys; and individual interviews. All three methods were used in the result. A total of 42 meetings were held in September-December 2014, divided equally between the three groups. All meetings were digitally recorded except on 6 occasions, when the recording failed due to technical problems. The missing recordings occurred randomly in all three groups. The reason for recording the meetings was to get an insight into the reflection process, and also to get a group perspective on the collegial reflection.

In addition, six open-ended questions was mailed to the participating teachers on three occasions during the fall of 2014. The intention by using this method was to get an individual perspective on the collegial reflection while still being in the process of it. In all, 31 surveys were completed, of 63 possible ones. The same six questions were included on all three occasions. Example of these questions were: *What do you think about the design of the reflection meetings? Do you have any suggestions how to improve them?*

Six months after the first reflection meeting, individual interviews were conducted, with the aim of gaining an individual perspective on the intervention after it was completed. All participating teachers were asked to participate. Three female teachers, each representing one of the three groups, took part. The interviews

took place at the school, lasted for one hour each, and were digitally recorded. Examples of interview questions were: *What is your opinion about the reflection meetings? What do you think about the allocation of 30 minutes per week for collegial reflection?*

3.5. Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used ”for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Since this current method for collegial reflection has not been studied before, an inductive approach was used in the analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The collection and analysis of data was conducted concurrently.

In the first phase, we familiarized ourselves with the data, reading and re-reading the transcribed material, in order to get a sense of the whole. In the second phase, the generating of initial codes was done manually, by highlighting and writing notes on relevant texts. This is a way of organizing the data into meaningful groups, without making interpretations. The next phase included arranging the different codes into categories, and subsequently into themes (Figure 2). A theme answers the research question, often at an abstract level (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). In the two following phases, we checked if the categories and the themes worked in relationship to the entire data, and created a thematic map (Figure 3). Subsequently, the themes were defined and named. The final phase comprised of the actual writing, selecting extracts, and producing a report, and was part of the analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The analysis process comprised both a descriptive part and an interpretative part, with the latter being more prominent in the second half of the analysis. All data were treated similarly regardless if it came from digital recordings, surveys or interviews.

INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

3.6. Ethical considerations

Collegial reflection may involve certain risks for the involved participants. During the reflection meetings the teachers revealed experiences as well as opinions and values, and this could open up to vulnerability.

However, since each participant decided how much he/she wanted to reveal, we estimated the benefits to outweigh the risk. Another possible risk was that the reflection meetings added to an already stressful work situation.

Both written and oral information about the study and the recording of the reflection meetings was given to the participating teachers. The participants signed an informed consent form before starting the collegial reflection. All data has been treated confidentially, and measures have been taken to ensure the anonymity of the participants. The study was conducted in agreement with the Swedish Law of Research Ethics, SFS 2003:460. This law is in line with the ethical guidelines of the Helsinki Declaration (World Medical Association, 2013)

4. Findings

The analysis identified one major theme, Paradoxes in the design of the collegial reflection, and three categories: Wanting to decide and wanting to be guided; Meeting each other as teachers and/or as persons; and Looking for the safe and/or looking for the new.

Paradoxes in the design of the collegial reflection meant that the teachers expressed feelings and experiences that were often contradictory. These paradoxes were sometimes found in the same teacher, but most often found at a group level. The participants expressed two parallel experiences that the collegial reflection was both appreciated and depreciated. Some teachers were motivated to participate, and saw it as something positive.

> What I feel during our reflection meetings, is that they give us the opportunity to sit in peace and quiet and discuss things that are important, and we have the chance to come up with solutions (group 1, second mail survey).

Others were more hesitant about the reflection meetings, and expressed a need to use the time for other purposes. They experienced it as something other than their work, and it increased their stress.

> Mostly it feels like an extra stress, since because we're doing the Mathematics Boost, there is hardly any time for planning (group 1, first mail survey).

> I would have needed that time in order to have time to do my work (group 1, second mail survey).

INSERT FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

4.1. Wanting to decide and wanting to be guided

The findings indicate a paradox, consisting of both wanting to be *autonomous* and make one's own decisions, and also wanting to be *governed* and supervised by others. The freedom to make choices, and the responsibility it implies, is an inherent paradox. On the one hand, there is a desire not to have to make decisions, and to be given instructions on what to do. On the other hand, there is a desire to be autonomous and be able to choose what to do. This ambivalence was noticeable in several ways in the data. One example is the issue of scheduling the reflection meetings. Being used to taking responsibility in their profession, the teachers were given the possibility to choose within each group the time and day for their meetings. This issue turned out to be the one thing that created the most annoyance among the teachers. While some of the teacher viewed this option as an expression for their autonomy, some of the teachers considered it as a problem, and expressed a preference for having been told what time the meetings should take place. They did not want to decide themselves, but leave it in the hands of the principal. In this case, they preferred to be governed instead of given the responsibility.

> It [the time for the meeting] should absolutely have been decided before the schedule was made, that it's 16-16:30 or 14-14:30, or it doesn't matter. It has been the main point of frustration in all groups, that `Oh but I don't have the time now, and it doesn't suit me´… So, it has caused great frustration, nothing to do with [the reflection as such]. So we all think it's great once we are there. But it has been scheduled for awkward times as we had to schedule it between us, and that's not always a good thing (Interview 2).

Another issue of ambivalence was the topics for the reflection meetings. Prior to the intervention, the teachers made a priority list of topics to be used as a support for the reflection. It was also possible to

reflect on something completely different, an actual situation or a problem that any of the teachers had experienced. While some of the teachers appreciated the possibility to follow the topic list, others felt restricted by it. Hence, some teachers wanted the freedom to make the choice themselves, and others wanted to be told what to reflect upon.

> I feel that each one of us should contemplate whether we have something we wish to discuss. I don't think we should be controlled like that. I think it should be coming from ourselves (group 2, digital recording).

> Sometimes, some of us have felt frustration that we don't know what we are supposed to talk about. We are so goal oriented (interview 3).

4.2. Meeting each other as a teachers and/or as persons

Another paradox was linked to the actual purpose of the reflection meetings: whether they were meeting as *professionals* or as *private* persons. Some teachers expressed the need to meet as teachers, to exchange work-related ideas and discuss work-related issues. They considered the reflection meetings a way to develop as a teacher, and improve their work situation.

> When we are sitting discussing, we may come up with ideas on how to do things at the school, and that is positive, so there is an element of development in it. […] You may have your mind set on something, and then the others come up with a different angle, and then you can sort of re-evaluate yours… whatever you felt earlier (interview 1).

Others expressed a desire to get to know each other better as individuals, and not only as professional teachers. They anticipated the meetings to include personal aspects, and thereby getting to know each other in a broader sense than merely as professionals. These teachers were more inclined to *integrate* their private lives with their professional lives, whereas the others preferred s*egmentating* the two spheres. With an increased workload and intensified workday, there is less time for socializing and talking about issues that are not work-related, and they appreciated this opportunity, that was offered by the reflection

session. They even stated that these meetings were the only times when they could socialize in a more relaxed way.

> It's important to have fun together, take a break from the job with the others, talk about other things and not the job, share your private life so you know your colleagues a bit better (group 2, first mail survey).

> The discussions give insight into other people's everyday life, with worries and happy things. It also gives a great sense of belonging among us at the school (group 1, second mail survey).

4.3. Looking for the safe and/or looking for the new

An issue, causing contradictory feelings within the groups but sometimes even within the same teacher, was the constellation of the groups. While some stated that they wanted to form the groups according to teaching of *similar age groups or subjects*, others preferred to *mix the groups* completely. One advantage of being in a more homogeneous group was that it gave an opportunity to be more specific in their reflections. They could speak about class-related or subject-related issues, and thereby work with common issues in this forum. This view had connections to the former paradox, that of meeting each other as a teacher or as a person. Many of the teachers, arguing for meeting each other as professionals, valued the opportunity that the homogeneous group offered.

> I would rather have had groups with your work team… And then maybe we could… it doesn't necessarily have to be like that but maybe two work teams together (interview 1).

> If the groups had been more linked to the respective pupils' ages, it could be more like collegial learning and how we can improve our teaching based on research, and work with pupils with special needs (group 1, third mail survey).

Being in the homogeneous groups was also described as a way to *be with friends*, with whom they felt safe. Instead, the teachers who advocated for heterogeneous groups, valued the possibility to get to know their colleagues better, people they would otherwise not talk to very much. They saw the reflection meetings as a way to learn more about other colleagues and *make new acquaintances*. They stated that they often

chose the comfortable way and sat with close colleagues in the staff's room, and saw the meetings as an opportunity to widen their circles.

> I have missed the possibility to sit in peace and quiet and discuss with colleagues I otherwise don't see much of. It has been very positive (group 1, first mail survey).
>
> The structure of the group has meant more and new ways of thinking, not only the usual with the closest colleague (group 1, third mail survey).
>
> I think that I am now more inclined to have discussions with more people outside my work team (group 2, first mail survey).

These contradictory views, sometimes even expressed by the same teacher, can be interpreted as ambivalence between choosing what is familiar and safe, and the desire to expand.

5. Discussion

This paper addresses a feasibility study on collegial reflection, with the aim of identifying methodological uncertainties regarding its design, and also to test how the participating teachers experienced it. The design of the collegial reflection emanated from a pragmatic perspective: the teachers expressed a need for reflection but simultaneously experienced being pressed for time. The question was: how can we design an intervention to make it possible for the teachers to reflect together? With this point of departure, it was decided to do a tradeoff, i.e. to limit collegial reflection to thirty minutes, but in return include it every week. This can be seen as a way of adapting to the work intensification and "the new era of teacher professionalism" (Selkrig & Keamy, 2015, p. 430), which influences the managerial perspective on effectiveness and measurement of results. If the participating teachers experienced it as meaningful, it may also be a useful design for other workplaces and different contexts, since time shortage is prevalent in many professions.

The findings of the teachers' perceptions of the intervention indicated three paradoxes. At first glance, these paradoxes may seem like contradictions, but they are in fact co-existing. The paradoxes were found both at an individual level and a group level. Often, the paradoxes were parallel and differed in value from

time to time. To find these co-existing perceptions is perhaps not surprising at a group level, although it is important to deal with when implementing collegial reflection. However, they sometimes also appeared within the same individual. This ambiguity should not be considered as a weakness, but a natural part of the flexible character of reflection as well as being human. Nonetheless, the ambiguity of the parallel experiences needs to be acknowledged and addressed in order to obtain the necessary motivation and trust among the participants.

The findings indicated that the reflection process included an exchange of perspective among the group members, and at times also a re-evaluation of one's original perspective. This can be interpreted as a dialogic reflection, since the participants considered different perspectives, and searched alternative ways to solve problems (Selkrig & Keamy, 2015). Through dialogic and collaborative discussions of school issues, the participants were giving each other support, which has been shown in other studies as well (e.g. Fazio, 2009). As Brookfield (2016) states, sharing experiences with colleagues, but also challenging each other's assumptions, is a way to give support.

5.1. The set-up of the collegial reflection

The set-up for the collegial reflection included a *designated time and space* for iterative reflection, a *participatory approach*, and an emphasis on *ethical values* guiding the collegial reflection. The current collegial reflection had similarities to using protocols (Selkrig & Keamy, 2015) as a way to structure professional learning conversations, even though they were not used in full: it included a set structure for the reflection; it ensured that the description part and the negative evaluation took up a limited part of the allocated time; and ethical values were emphasized in the groups.

The design of the intervention included a *designated time and space* for the collegial reflection on a regular basis, as well as making it compulsory. This was done as a way to offer structural support, and integrate the collegial reflection in the teachers' ordinary work, and thereby create a supportive environment. Other studies have previously indicated the importance of designated time and space (e.g. Glazer et al., 2004). The set-up also included organizing the reflection groups according to similar grades. Previous research has

indicated that such groupings are important to teacher learning (Desimone, 2009; Borko, 2004; Little, 1993).

Regarding *the participatory approach*, the findings indicated that the element of being involved in the decision process was not appreciated by all teachers, which can be illustrated by the paradox of wanting to decide and wanting to be guided. It is the paradoxical relationship between, on the one hand wanting the responsibility, and on the other hand *not* wanting it. Bauman (2001) used the concepts of freedom and safety to describe this paradoxical relationship. There is a value in each of them, but in exchange for more freedom, one inevitably loses some safety, and vice versa. One cannot have full control over the decision-making while at the same time experiencing the safety of being guided by someone else.

An example of this paradox regarded the topics for the reflection. In line with the settings approach, which builds on the principle of participation by those involved, the teachers were involved in the topic generation for the collegial reflection. Six topics were previously identified in a need assessment conducted in the same school (Author et al, 2015 [details removed for peer review]), and consequently the topics emanated from the teachers themselves. These topics, prioritized in relevance by the teachers, were offered to guide the collegial reflection. Alternatively, the participants could choose a topic of their own. Previous research on collegial reflection has shown that topic generation should be need-based and emergent from the teachers themselves (Glazer et al, 2004). The findings of this study support this previous research, but it also highlights an ambivalence regarding whether the topics should be pre-determined or generated during the actual reflection process.

As part of the participatory design, the project support group, the principal, and a group of teachers were involved in the design and implementation process. However, not all teachers at the school were involved in this process, and this has previously been a criticism of participatory approaches (Nielsen, Randall, Holten, & González, 2010). In order to obtain the benefits of participation, all participants need to be part of this process (Hurrell, Barling, Kelloway, & Frone, 2005). Consequently, we conclude that the implementation of the collegial reflection would have benefited by an increased participation by the teachers.

Ethical values, underpinning the reflection meetings, were discussed prior to as well as during the implementation of the intervention. The issue of respect was manifested in both contributing actively as well as listening to one's colleagues. Respect was also demonstrated through honoring confidentiality within the reflection group. This was seen as a way to create trust among the teachers. Previous research has shown that taking turns and being prepared to listen are important elements in the process of collaborative dialogue (Selkrig & Keamy, 2015), and the issue of trust is an important part of collegial reflection (Glazer et al, 2004).

Furthermore, the findings indicated divergent experiences among the participants regarding the purpose of the collegial reflection. While all teachers seemed to value the possibility to reflect together on professional issues, some of them also wanted to include the more private sphere. We suggest that collegial reflection should start with focusing on the professional role, and in time, if the group members agree to it, the private issues may be included.

5.2. Time as an important issue

Time was a pivotal issue among the teachers. While some stated that they thought the collegial reflection was a good use of time, others did not. The findings indicated that one way to make use of the reflection time was to get to know new colleagues, but also to support professional learning by meeting with familiar colleagues from the same subject or grade. This highlights the issue of how the groups should be created. Either way, getting to know one's colleagues better, and feeling a sense of belonging with them, is a breeding ground for sharing experiences and offering social support. Social support from colleagues is a known health promoting resource (Greenglass et al., 1997; Griffith et al., 1999; Rabow & McPhee, 2001), and as was highlighted by Glazer et al. (2004), the feeling of not being alone in one's feeling is a powerful reward in collegial reflection. In addition, the participating teachers described the collegial reflection as a forum where they could "sit in peace and quiet". It seems as though the collegial reflection was an occasion when the teachers could unwind. Similar results have been found in previous research, suggesting that collegial reflection could release stress (Glazer et al., 2004), and since stress is considered as an important risk factor for teachers' well-being, it is a relevant aspect.

However, not all participants considered the implemented collegial reflection as a good way to utilize time. The findings showed that some teachers felt they would have needed the allocated time for other tasks instead, and even indicated that the reflection meetings were not considered as part of their work. The demands of immediate and multiple tasks have previously been found to constrain professional dialogues among teachers (Horn & Little, 2010; Simoncini et al., 2014), and previous research also indicated that high job demands have a hindering effect on participation in interventions (Dahl-Jørgensen & Saksvik, 2005). The findings of this study seem to support previous results, suggesting that other work tasks may have a hindering influence on teachers' attitude towards participating in collegial reflection. This highlights the importance that management needs to address the teachers' work load and support them in prioritizing among their tasks when implementing a new work element, such as collegial reflection.

The findings of the present study also indicated that some teachers experienced stress as a consequence of having to attend the collegial reflection. Thus it would seem, that the collegial reflection was releasing stress for some of the teachers, but actually adding more stress to others. This emphasizes that management needs to be aware of these divergent experiences among the teachers.

In this study, time was allocated for collegial reflection. However, it still meant an additional work task for the teachers, which led to a feeling of being pressed for time. Previous research has identified limited time as an important barrier for collegial reflection (Carr & Chamber, 2006; Glazer et al., 2004). In order to reduce the feeling of time pressure, management may alleviate it, not only by allocating time for collegial reflection, but also releasing staff from other tasks. By doing so, management would provide a clear message to the teachers as to the importance and the priority of the collegial reflection.

5.3. The influence of the context

The teachers expressed that because the collegial reflection coincided with an educational drive, the so called the "Mathematics Boost", they felt that extra weight was put on their already intense work situation. Conflicting priorities (Guastello, 1993), such as implementing the intervention at the same time as the educational drive, possibly had a hindering influence. Both the collegial reflection and the "Mathematics

Boost" required additional time and energy, and it may have influenced the teachers into prioritizing what to engage in. Previous research by Boud and Walker (1998) recognized the context as an important factor influencing reflection and learning, and both the intervention and the "Mathematics Boost" were initiatives that were imposed on the teachers by decisions made in their comprehensive context. The principal decided on the present intervention, and participation was compulsory for all teachers in the school. This is an example of what Hargreaves (1998) calls forced collegiality, which has been found to be less efficient than a collegiality characterized by collaboration based on spontaneity and voluntary participation. Even though the need for collegial reflection arose from the teachers themselves, some teachers felt coerced into participating. By allowing for a thorough dialogue before implementing the collegial reflection, and leaving room for voluntary participation, the outcome of the intervention may have been more positive.

Looking at the intervention from a settings approach, the context plays a fundamental role (Scriven, 2012). By embedding the reflection within the organization, and making it an integral component of work, the responsibility for it is not placed with the individual teacher, but within the work context. In the epoch of fluid modernity, and the individualized society, people often focus on their own responsibility and actions (Bauman, 2001). The high demands for flexibility and change require that individuals constantly make autonomic decisions. In collegial reflection, the focus may instead be placed on the social room, and some of the potential insecurity may be alleviated through collectivity. As Brookfield (2016) stated: "So-called individual problems need to be understood collectively" (p. 21).

In the postmodern era, teachers are faced with rapid changes, and this requires flexibility and adaptation to the marketization of education (Hargreaves, 2000), as well as putting pressure on their professional development. As part of a work context, teachers need to make "sense of one's work" (Docherty, Boud & Cressey, 2006, p. 194) and comprehend what is happening. Comprehensibility, but also manageability and meaningfulness are core elements in experiencing a sense of coherence, which in turn, is closely related to one's well-being (Antonovsky, 1987). Collegial reflection could be one way to meet these requirements, and to collaboratively with colleagues, make sense of one's work. Collegial reflection would thereby be a resource, not only for the teachers' professional learning, but also for their well-being.

6. Methodological considerations

When the teachers were asked to participate in the intervention, everyone agreed and signed the informed consent form. Their participation in the *intervention* was not optional, since it was the principal's decision that all teachers should participate. However, it was voluntary to take part in the *research*. Had any of the teachers declined, there would not have been any digital recording of the meetings. Admittedly, their choice to participate may have been influenced by the choices of their colleagues. Nonetheless, since each teacher could decline to participate, and no one would have to know about it, we concluded that the principle of voluntariness was met.

Whether the intervention was conducted in a participatory manner may, however, be questioned. Stoecker (1997) describes different forms of participatory research, and discusses the issues of power and control. In the presented intervention, some – but not all – teachers participated in defining the original research questions and methods for making the needs assessment. All teachers were involved in prioritizing the reflection issues in the intervention. Yet, the teachers had to comply with the principal's decision to implement the intervention. Teachers who had not been part of the needs assessment in the previous research studies, may have had the feeling that the intervention was initiated by the researcher and/or the principal – in any case an authority – and this could have generated resistance from them. As to the power relation between the teachers and the researcher, the latter made much of the initial decisions about the structure of the reflection meetings. However, two months into the implementation, this structure was modified according to the teachers' wishes and needs. Using Stoecker's (1997) terminology, the research was collaborative, as both the researcher and the teachers contributed their knowledge, and decided on the design of the intervention. Yet, to be truly participatory research, the teachers could have been more active in the research process. Still, knowing that time is a scarcity for teachers, it was difficult to accomplish this in practice. Consequently, the power over the intervention can be said to be divided between the teachers, the principal, and the researcher. Nonetheless, one result of the design was that the intervention continued even after the researcher withdrew from the research project. This indicates that the participants were not dependent on the researcher's presence (Stoecker, 1997), which can be considered a strength with the design.

A potential risk in choosing a particular method for reflection lies in its becoming reified, and simplified to just another technique. It runs the risk of missing the exploratory element of reflection and limiting its potential (Cressey, Boud, & Docherty, 2005). Too much formalization may also provoke resistance among the participants (Solomon, Boud, & Rooney, 2006). However, by being attentive to the process and modify and change its design according to the participants' opinions, we aimed at keeping the generative and flexible character of reflection, as well as the participatory approach.

Three different methods were used for data collection. Even though participation in the mailed open questions as well as the interviews was limited, the use of data triangulation is a strength of the study. While the mail survey and the interviews added an individual perspective on the intervention, the digital recordings contributed with a groups' perspective on it.

In order to strengthen the credibility of the results, they were discussed with the participating teachers at a meeting a few months into the implementation. The results were also confirmed by participating teachers in the project support group. Dependability was enhanced by using the same mail questions and interview questions for all participants, and also by repeated discussions with other researchers. By presenting quotes to illustrate the analysis, we aimed to strengthen confirmability, just like being several researchers analyzing the material.

A relevant question regards transferability: whether this method is applicable to other contexts, both within the school context and to other professional groups. The aim of this study was to explore the participating teachers' experiences regarding this method. Since the contextual prerequisites are unique for this school, we conclude that in order to transfer the results, they need to be re-contextualized. Having done that, we believe it applicable to other contexts.

7. Implications and conclusions

In summary, this feasibility study presents a method for integrating collegial reflection in teachers' ordinary work, and thus create a structure that functions as a supportive environment. By doing so, it may contribute to a health promoting setting for the teachers. It provides knowledge on how a particular

method for collegial reflection was experienced by the participants, and thereby contribute with knowledge on how it can be designed according to the needs of the teachers themselves. It suggests that great efforts should be made to include all participants in the planning and the implementation, and that the participation should be as thorough as possible. It also suggests that participation should be voluntary, in order to avoid resistance from the participants.

As part of the structure, it highlights the importance of allocating both time and space for the collegial reflection, and suggests that management should present a set time for it, and not leave the timing up to the groups themselves. It also points to the importance of supporting the teachers with regard to prioritizing among work tasks, when introducing collegial reflection as an additional task. Furthermore, it points to the importance of appreciating the parallel experiences of the participating teachers, e.g. regarding the purpose of the collegial reflection, as well as its leading to the adding of stress or the release of it.

The intervention context has an impact on how the collegial reflection is perceived. In order to use this method in other places and among other professions, it needs to be re-contextualized.

In conclusion, it is important to acknowledge the potential barriers to collegial reflection, but equally important to appreciate the possibilities it entails, as a way to support teachers' professional development, and as a salutogenic resource in a supportive environment.

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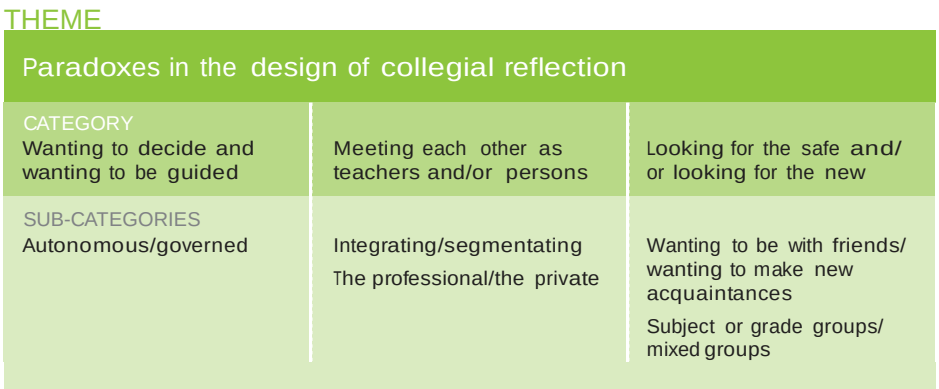
Fig. 1. ”The wheel of reflection”, i.e. the collegial reflection process.

Fig. 2. Data extract, with codes applied, and sub-category

Data extract	Coded for	Sub-Category
Because we hardly ever talk about the personal stuff… […] and I believe it to be quite important really, to know your… you don’t have to know them a lot, but a little, I think. (Interview 2)	Not talking about personal issues, which is important	The private
Together, we could then discuss, for example, the new action plans and such, and that was good. (Interview 2)	The new action plans can be discussed with colleagues	The professional

Fig. 3. Analytical process and findings.



Paper IV

Promoting teachers' learning and their well-being through collegial reflection

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Abstract

This paper addresses a workplace health promotion intervention of recurrent collegial reflection among Swedish teachers. Data was generated by means of digital recordings of collegial reflection meetings, open mail questions, and individual interviews. Findings suggest that collegial reflection gradually contributed to promote teachers' aptitude to adopt different perspectives regarding work (increased learning) and to improve their possibilities to give and receive collegial support (enhanced well-being). We conclude that collegial reflection is a way for school management to promote and support teachers' professional development, and enhance their well-being. By embedding the collegial reflection in the work structure, and considering contextual factors, collegial reflection can be a way to create a supportive school environment.

Keywords: reflection, teachers, workplace health promotion

Introduction

Although considered as a crucial element in teachers' professional development, reflection has increasingly become less evident in their work day (Day, Hadfield, & Kellow, 2002; Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). A development, in which assessment, documentation, and administration are taking its toll of teachers' time and energy, can be seen internationally as well as in Sweden (Bridges & Searle, 2011; Carlgren & Klette, 2008; Lambert & McCarthy, 2006; Rhodes & Houghton-Hill, 2000). A result of this work intensification is, among other things, less time for preparation and reflection (Ballet, Kelchtermans & Loughran, 2006). This is unfortunate, since reflection, both individual and collegial, is essential to avoid a work environment which is characterized by routines alone, and reflection is thereby an important part of professional development. In addition, the changing work situation has consequences for teachers' health and well-being, such as stress and burnout (Gu & Day, 2013; Hultell, Melin, & Gustavsson, 2013), making it a public health issue. Consequently, there is a need to address teachers' possibilities for collegial reflection as a way to improve their work situation as well as their well-being.

Theoretical framework

Health promotion in a setting

Since 1986, when WHO presented the Ottawa Charter for Health promotion, the settings approach has been an important part of health development. Settings can be described as "the context in which people engage in daily activities and in which environmental, organizational and personal factors interact to affect health and wellbeing" (Scriven, 2012, p. 1). This implies a holistic perspective, and views the setting, e.g. the workplace, as a system (Hodgins & Griffiths, 2012). Health is perceived as being developed through the interaction between the individual and his/her environment (Bauer, Davies, & Pelikan, 2006), and the contextual factors are thereby important to take into account, when implementing a health promotion intervention.

Health promotion has been defined as the process of enabling people to take control over, and to improve, their health, which is seen as a resource of everyday life, and not the object of living (WHO, 1986). Health promotion is based on a salutogenic perspective on the

development of health, i.e. to focus on resources for maintaining or improving health and wellbeing. The concepts of health and wellbeing are, however, complex and difficult to define. They are interrelated, and sometimes integrated in that one may be perceived as part of the other. In this inquiry we have preferred to use the concept wellbeing, albeit not exclusively. We define wellbeing as a subjective, and cognitive as well as affective, evaluation of one's life, and as such it is a constant ongoing process in people's lives.

Sense of coherence

The salutogenic perspective is an important feature of sense of coherence theory (SOC) (Antonovsky, 1987). While all people experience stressors in life, some people seem to cope with them more successfully than others. Antonovsky (1987) suggested that these people have a stronger sense of coherence. SOC has three contributing components: understanding the stressors (comprehensibility); the ability to use resources at hand (manageability); and the personal commitment and engagement to meet life's stressors (meaningfulness). Having a strong SOC is believed to be related to health and well-being.

Learning

In order to evaluate whether collegial reflection leads to a learning, we need to establish what we consider as learning. One way to look at learning is with Illeris' (2015) model, in which learning has three fundamental dimensions: the content; the incentive; and the environment dimension. The content dimension relates to what one learns, and can be exemplified by knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and behavior. The incentive dimension concerns "the mental energy that is necessary for the learning process to take place" (Illeris, 2009 p. 10), e.g. motivation, feelings, and will (Illeris, 2015). Lastly, the environment dimension, exemplified by action, communication, and collaboration, relates to the interaction between the individual and his or her environment. This environment embraces both the immediate situation, in which the interaction takes place, and the more comprehensive and societal context, also known as the environment's double nature (Illeris, 2015). In addition, these three dimensions are integrated in two different processes. In the interaction process, the individual experiences impulses through interaction with the environment. These impulses activate an acquisition process within the individual, a process in which previous experiences are integrated with the new impulses. This acquisition process involves both the content

dimension and the incentive dimension (Illeris, 2009). Learning is thereby both an individual, psychological phenomenon, as well as a social and interpersonal phenomenon.

Illeris' environmental dimension points to the relevance of the context, in which learning takes place. Lave and Wenger (1991) use the concept of situated learning to address this issue, and view learning as participation in the social world, rather than a cognitive process within the individual. All learning takes place in a specific situation, and this has implication for the learning.

Consequently, the theoretical framework, guiding the present inquiry, is based on an appreciation that wellbeing is created in an ongoing interaction between the individual teacher and his/her social and organizational environment. We use a settings approach, and with that we include a salutogenic and participatory perspective. With regards to learning, we view this as an individual and psychological phenomenon as well as a process that takes place in the interaction between the individual and his/her environment.

Literature review

Teachers' work situation

As part of contemporary society, teachers are experiencing social acceleration, a feeling that everything is moving faster (Rosa, 2003), and that it is not possible to finish one's work tasks within ordinary work time (Sveriges Företagshälsor, 2015; Nilsson, Blomqvist, & Andersson, 2017). Previous research has also indicated that teachers are experiencing time constraints (Kokkinos, 2007). In combination with a high work load, time pressure has been found to lead to negative health consequences such as psychosomatic symptoms like neck and back pain and headaches (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015), stress and burnout (Kokkinos, 2007), as well as other consequences, such as the sacrifice of social lives, and increasing sick leave (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Yet another consequence of the work intensification is teachers' having less time for reflection (Ballet et al., 2006). When the contextual work conditions are characterized by time pressure, it encourages "non-analytical decision processes" (Ellström, 2006, p. 51) and acts as a barrier for reflection. As Ellström argues: "More deliberative and reflective activities focusing on the content, processes and outcomes of actions require time –

time to observe, time to think and time to exchange ideas with others" (Ellström, 2006, p. 51). However, the social acceleration is a reality in contemporary society, which makes it important to find ways to meet these changes and still have time for reflection.

The workplace as a health promoting arena

Consequently, the workplace is an arena which, under certain circumstances, may cause ill-health. This type of circumstances require a preventive approach to ill-health, in which focus is placed on eliminating risk factors. Teacher resilience is a relevant response to challenging circumstances, and has been found to contribute to retention (Gu & Day, 2007). It focuses on traits, and protective factors and processes that sustains teachers (Beltman, Mansfield, Price, 2011; Gu & Day, 2007). Examples of factors contributing to resilience are motivation (Kitching, Morgan, O'Leary, 2009; Flores, 2006), a sense of vocation (Gu & Day, 2007), self-efficacy (Hong, 2012), collegial support (Le Cornu, 2009), professional reflection (Goddard & Foster, 2001), and having a commitment to ongoing professional learning (Mansfield, Beltman & McConney, 2012; Patterson, Collins & Abbot, 2004; Sumsion, 2004).

However, besides responding to challenging circumstances and preventing ill-health, the workplace is also a setting which can be health promoting, i.e. maintaining and improving resources with the individual and his/her environment. Previous research has identified a number of circumstances, which have been found to be resources to well-being. Job satisfaction is an important factor influencing the health of workers (Faragher, Cass & Cooper, 2005). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) described four different resources for job satisfaction among teachers: working with children; variation and unpredictability; cooperation and teamwork; and autonomy. Teachers' relations with the children has been emphasized in other studies as well as a salutogenic resource, and it is often related to feelings of meaningfulness (Noddings, 1984; O'Connor, 2008). Other examples of resources within the work context are social support (Noblet, 2003), creativity (Schmid, 2005) and recovery (Sonnentag, 2003).

Teachers working in a supportive work environment are more likely to stay in the profession (Moore Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Weiss, 1999). There are a number of studies showing examples of circumstances contributing to a supportive work environment. Collegial

interaction is such a circumstance and opportunities for growth is another (Moore Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). As teacher attrition is a widespread problem (Borman & Dowling, 2008), the importance of creating a supportive work environment is evident. However, the approach of focusing on the work context has not always been obvious. Previously, workplace health promotion focused on individual lifestyles as part of preventing diseases using a pathogenic perspective (Torp, Eklund, & Thorpenberg, 2011). However, these approaches have been insufficient and the need for a more comprehensive settings approach has been raised (Arnesson & Ekberg, 2005). Characteristics for workplace health promotion interventions which have been suggested as important are e.g.: participation regarding tasks, goals and methods; social support, which may be facilitated in groups; individual and organizational learning; and a systematic model on a continuous basis over time, enabling learning and reflection (Arnesson & Ekberg, 2005; Noblet, 2003).

Reflection, learning and professional development

Professional development can be described as "teachers' learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth" (Avalos, 2011, p. 10). Professional development is emphasized as vital in order to meet the changing work conditions of teachers (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000). However, to make professional development occur, each school needs to create favorable conditions for it to happen, and not leave it to the individual's responsibility (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000).

Traditionally, professional development has focused on fragmented activities such as workshops and seminars (Desimone, 2009; Borko, 2004). However, newer concepts of professional development go beyond these discrete activities, and acknowledge it as being embedded in the everyday lives of teachers (Desimone, 2009). More recent views on professional development assume a situated perspective, and as such, it can just as well happen as "a brief hallway conversation with a colleague" (Borko, 2004, p. 4). Some core features have been recognized as important to professional development: content focus; active learning; coherence; duration; and collective participation. Activities that focus subject matter content and how pupils learn that content, seems to be influential on professional development. Active learning, as opposed to passive learning, also seems to be important, just as the experience of coherence, i.e. that the learning is consistent with both one's own

knowledge and beliefs, and with the comprehensive school reforms and policies. Furthermore, professional development seems to call for a sufficient duration of time, as well as participation of teachers from the same school or grade (Desimone, 2009; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001).

Previous research has shown the relevance of continuous reflection in teachers' professional development (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000). Schön (1983) stated that teachers need to reflect in order to meet the demands of their work and improve their teaching, and research shows there are numerous forms in which reflection may take place. Examples of individual reflection are portfolios (e.g. Jones, 2010), and reflective journaling (e.g. Reagan, Case & Brubacher, 2000). Examples of collegial reflection are in discussion groups (e.g. Schwartz McCotter, 2001), collegial dialogue (e.g. Simoncini, Lasen & Rocco, 2014), mentoring (e.g. Harrison, Lawson & Wortley, 2005), peer observation (e.g. Yiend, Weller & Kinchin, 2014), through the use of electronic journals (e.g. Killeavy & Moloney, 2010) or video-mediated microteaching (e.g. Kourieos, 2016).

Consequently, there are links between reflection, learning and professional development. Reflection can be "seen as an integral component of work, a necessary element in evaluation, sense-making, learning and decision-making processes in the workplace"(Boud, Cressey & Docherty, 2006, p. 6). The link between teachers' learning and their professional development can be illustrated by the following quote: "teachers' professional development is conceptualized as a learning process that is embedded within the context of the school" (Runhaar, Sanders, Yang, 2010, p. 1154).

Given the contemporary realities of teachers work situation, with increased time pressure and less reflection time, a workplace health promotion intervention of collegial reflection was implemented in a school in southern Sweden. The collegial reflection was embedded in the organizational structure, as a means to create conditions that are conducive to teachers' professional development. The present study examines if the collegial reflection influenced the participating teachers' work-related learning, and in that case, in what ways. As the current work situation for teachers is affecting their health and well-being, it is also relevant to examine whether the collegial reflection may enhance their well-being.

Aim

To examine how recurrent collegial reflection may promote teachers' work-related learning, and how their well-being may be experienced as enhanced.

Methods

Design

A qualitative approach was used in the inquiry in order to assess the participating teachers' experiences of the collegial reflection intervention.

The intervention started in September 2014 and ended in December 2015 (Table 1). Before implementing it, an introduction meeting was held with the participating teachers, and practical and ethical issues were discussed. Topics for the collegial reflection were discussed and prioritized by the teachers. Approximately two months into the semester, an additional meeting took place, in order to discuss the design and the process, and also to clarify questions. After the first semester, the researcher (first author) withdrew and the responsibility for the intervention was hereafter in the hands of the principal and the teachers.

During the three semesters that the intervention took place, several changes in the design were made, due to the needs and wishes of the participants. This led to having two different models for collegial reflection. Initially, three groups for collegial reflection were formed, two groups with teachers from pre-school classes to third grade, and one group with teachers from fourth to sixth grade (the first model). The groups met once a week for thirty minutes. The reflection followed `a wheel of reflection´, a pre-determined process consisting of three phases. In the first phase, the situation/problem was described and valuated. In this phase, negative aspects were allowed. In the second phase, the positive valuation of the issue were reflected upon, and in the final phase the aim was to find solutions or creative ideas to improve their situation. As a support for the reflection, the teachers were given the list with topics, identified as relevant in a previous inquiry in the same school (Nilsson, 2012), and prioritized by the teachers at the introduction meeting. The first semester, each meeting was digitally recorded, and the teachers were jointly responsible for keeping the meetings as intended. The second semester, the design of the reflection meetings remained the same, except that they were not recorded.

Prior to the third, and final, semester, several changes were made. Instead of three groups, there were two groups, one consisting of teachers from pre-school classes to third grade, and one with teachers from fourth to sixth grade (the second model). The duration of the meetings was prolonged so that they now lasted for 1 hour 45 minutes each week. A facilitator was assigned among each group, with the responsibility of assuring the process of the reflection. While the first model of collegial reflection was characterized by reflection of more general work-related topics, this second model combined more tangible and practical issues, such as planning of assessment, with the process of reflection. The participants enjoyed considerable autonomy regarding the structure and content of the reflection meetings.

Data generation

Data was collected by means of three different methods: recordings from the collegial reflection meetings; open mail questions; and individual interviews. In all, 42 meetings took place during the fall of 2014, and 36 of these were recorded digitally, while the remaining six were missing on account of technical issues. These technical problems were found in all three groups. Each week, the researcher (first author) collected the recordings. The recordings from the group that had most recorded meetings were transcribed (n=14), and the rest were listened to and notes were taken. Both the written transcriptions and the digital recordings were used in the analysis. In addition, during the fall of 2014 the participants were asked on three occasions to answer six questions in a mail survey. In all, 31 questionnaires were answered out of 63 possible responses. Finally, individual interviews were conducted on two occasions: three participants in January 2015, and four participants in January 2016. On the first occasion, unintentionally, one from each reflection group was interviewed, while on the second occasion the groups had re-formed, and both groups were represented in the interviews. All interviews were conducted by the first author.

Setting and participants

The intervention took place in a municipal school, with pre-school classes up to sixth grade, in southern Sweden. There are approximately 300 pupils attending the school, and 20-25 teachers working there, depending on the timing. All teachers at the school participated in the intervention (n=21, female teachers n=15).

During the first semester of the intervention, there was a major rebuilt of the school. This meant that the classes temporarily had to move to different classrooms, and the refectory was at times unavailable and the pupils had to eat their meals elsewhere.

In addition, during the first two semesters, there was a national educational drive, called the Mathematics Boost, being implemented at the school. This meant that a large part of the teachers were involved in it, resulting in even less time for collegial activities.

Data analysis

Data analysis was done with a qualitative approach, as the aim was to examine the intervention by gaining an understanding of it from the perspective of those experiencing it (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Thematic analysis, a method for identifying and analyzing patterns in qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2013), was chosen as method. It includes six phases: familiarization with the data; coding; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and writing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013). After having read and listened to the data, the second phase involved organizing meaning units into meaningful groups, i.e. categories. In the next phase, themes were identified, and subsequently reviewed, defined and named. The final phase included writing the paper, which also was part of the analysis. Table 2 shows an example of the analysis process.

Ethical considerations

All participants signed an informed consent form before implementing the intervention. At the introduction meeting, the participants and the first author also raised the issue of respecting each other's integrity, and the importance of not revealing anything said during the reflection meetings unless explicitly allowed by the group participants. This issue of confidentiality was discussed again at an additional meeting when different opinions as to what in meant in practice were raised. All measures have been taken to ensure anonymity when presenting the intervention and its results.

An ethical consideration has been addressed in the research process about the fact that all teachers in the school were compelled to participate in the intervention, as it was a decision made by the principal. However, each teacher had the opportunity to decline to participate in

the research project, and their anonymity would not have been revealed on account of it. All teachers took part in the research project.

The study was conducted in agreement with the Swedish Law of Research Ethics, SFS 2003:460. This law is in line with the ethical guidelines of the Helsinki Declaration (World Medical Association, 2013).

Findings

The findings suggest that the current work situation, with the collegial reflection, the Mathematics Boost, the rebuilt, and the overall work intensification, influenced the teachers' experience of stress and their opportunities for recovery in a pathogenic manner. The immediate environment, with the rebuild of the school going on during the first semester, affected the teachers' experiences. The rebuilt involved moving around both people and things, and together with the additional work tasks, the whole work situation seemed to affect the teachers' well-being detrimentally. The teachers described a work situation which meant being pressed for time, and the collegial reflection became an additional task. The total workload was thus increased, and it influenced the way the collegial reflection was experienced. Besides the collegial reflection, the Mathematics Boost also claimed time from the teachers during the first two semesters of the intervention. The teachers who participated in the educational drive needed to attend meetings and prepare for them, but also for the rest of the staff, the Mathematics Boost meant less time for collegial work. Hence the work situation for the participants was experienced as pressed. However, there were also those who reflected that maybe it was in strained situations such as these, that reflection time was needed the most.

> [It has been a way to pause and have a chance to reflect] absolutely, I think so. […] Perhaps when you need to sit down and relax the most, that is when you value it the least (interview 2, 2015).

Despite the strained situation, the analysis shows that teachers' work-related learning and their well-being were promoted by collegial reflection. Two themes were identified:

Teachers' experiencing new perspectives and *Teachers' giving and receiving support*. Our analysis resulted in four categories within each theme:

Teachers' experiencing new perspectives:

- New ways of thinking
- Orientated towards development
- To question the taken-for-granted
- Common goals and consensus

Teachers' giving and receiving support:

- Sharing thoughts, ideas and experiences
- Sharing one's vulnerability
- Acknowledging and supporting
- Collegial community

Teachers' experiencing new perspective

New ways of thinking

The participating teachers spoke of the collegial reflection as a forum for discovering new ways of thinking, ways that were different from their usual thinking. Meeting with more colleagues than the usual colleague/s offered an opportunity to look at things from different angles. Often the teachers had a close collaboration with one or two colleagues, and they expressed that at times they ran the risk of thinking in similar ways as the other, and not really consider alternative ways. By meeting in a group instead of two and two, but also meeting other teachers than the usual co-partners, the collegial reflection provided them with both more and new perspectives.

> A way these talks affect my everyday could be that we come up with ideas how things can be handled and solved in an easier way. Otherwise it's easy to get stuck in the same ways of thinking as you're used to (open mail answer).

As a consequence of being in a group and jointly look at situations and phenomena from different perspectives, the teachers' understanding seemed to increase. This understanding regarded both the situation, as presented above, but also an understanding of one's colleagues.

> Your closest colleague you know inside and out, […] but if you don't work so much with the others… but to listen to other people's ideas and thoughts and… yes, the way you look at each other changes a bit (interview 2, 2016).

Consequently, the collegial reflection seemed to result in an increased understanding of both work-related issues, as well as one's colleagues and how they think and function.

Orientated towards development

The collegial reflection seemed to raise the awareness of having a development-orientated approach. This was visible in the actual reflection process, which included both an initial part which allowed for negative valuations of the situation being reflected upon, and a final part that was targeting strengths and solutions. The participants were clearly aware of their inclination towards focusing on the problematic aspects, but also made obvious efforts to leave the problem-orientation in favor of a more solution-orientation. The digital recordings of the collegial reflection showed, that even though the teachers at times focused on things they experienced as problematic, they often made efforts to move on to focus on solutions instead.

> Our discussions have often been about how easily one focuses on the negative, and how easily one forgets everything that is good. Actually, normally I don't get stuck in the negative, and our meetings have definitely helped me hold on to a positive approach to both work and free time (open mail answer).

It seemed that the positive approach was something the teachers continued to use even after the reflection meetings. They spoke of the collegial reflection as a way to discover solutions to problems, and that these were accompanying them during the rest of the week. They also stated that they had become more conscious of looking for the positive aspects to things. Even an increased positive consciousness of one's colleagues was brought up by the participants.

The ambition to develop was an important part of being a teacher, as pointed out by the participants. It was this ambition that kept them going forward, and made them aim to improve their teaching. However, there was a back-side to it, as it counter-acted their need for feeling content. The teachers' reflection showed that they were aware of it.

- We want to change.
- […]
- But at the same time we can't change too much because then we don't have time to just sit down and take it easy for two minutes either.
- No, you need to change a little bit each year.
- Yes, enough so that it feels inspiring.
- […]
- But not too much so you take on more than you can manage.
- […]
- Mmm. Yes well, but itsn't it tiring to feel that things always have to improve. Isn't it ok to be good enough at times (digital recording, 2014)?

-

To question the taken-for-granted

A finding, mostly seen in the digital recordings of the reflection meetings, was that the collegial reflection included a questioning of different aspects/elements. One example was when the teachers questioned their role as a teacher, and whether it should or should not include different assignments.

Related to the teachers' work role is their work situation. The participating teachers questioned if their current work situation was sustainable in the long run, and noted that the reflection meeting was the only time when they sat down and actually talked to their colleagues. The work intensification had effects on their possibilities to recover, and they questioned if their situation could continue like that.

- Here I come, all out of breath, and we're supposed to talk about…
- Recovering
- …taking it easier
- That's right!

- […]
- But what's most important to me about recovery is that in your free time, after work, it's not a problem. But the days are so damned intense that it is absurd.
- Yes
- But are we actually supposed to recover during the day?
- Yes, well, you must be allowed to have some short break.
- […]
- But can you… I mean, can you claim that a workplace should include recovery…Because you go to work to perform a job…
- You do have the right to have breaks.
- Yes, the breaks of course, but more than that….
- I mean, the work should… after all, there should be a moment in your work when you feel… well, that you sort of have time to breathe, and turn your thoughts around to the next thing and not just run … (digital recording, 2014).

The teachers not only questioned their work situation, but also asked themselves if maybe their demands were unreasonable. They reflected on the issue from different angles, and tried to see more than one perspective. They also questioned the way they responded to their work situation. They asked themselves if it is their work that has changed or maybe if the change lied within themselves.

Hand-in-hand with the questioning of their way to respond to the changing work situation was a consciousness of their own responsibility regarding this situation. They questioned whether they did their best to actually improve it. One of the interviewed teachers expressed that with the second model for the collegial reflection, the questioning of things had increased. This was experienced as positive and developmental, and also great fun.

> Now [with this second model] we are actually discussing: How do we work? Why do we do it in this way? What would happen if we do it that way instead? What sort of change would it involve for the children?... In other words, that we

> constantly question ourselves and our jobs, in order for it to become better. And it's so much fun (interview 1, 2016)!

Common goals and consensus

After the third semester of the intervention, when the second model of the collegial reflection had been implemented, the interviews showed an aspect, which had not been present previously. This aspect regarded having common goals and a consensus among colleagues. The teachers expressed that the collegial reflection resulted in them having a possibility to reflect together on common issues, and that this contributed to a shared perspective on things. It seemed that they were allowed to have different opinions on how to reach the goals, but the goals themselves were the same for all. The teachers expressed sharing a holistic perspective on their school, instead of looking at benefits for their own grade or subject. By sharing a holistic perspective, the meaningfulness also seemed to increase, and their work seemed to feel more worthwhile.

> So everybody feels like… interested. I mean, take the preschool class, which is going to have an open house in a couple of weeks. And it feels like half of the entire staff is going to be there to present the school… It's not about choosing the preschool class, it is about choosing the school. So we're kind of going to show everything we do here, to sort of tempt people… And it wasn't like that before, on the contrary, it was the preschool class alone that took care of it. And it's really cool (interview 1, 2016)!

Teachers' giving and receiving support

Sharing thoughts, ideas and experiences

The findings showed that the teachers shared ideas, experiences and opinions with each other during the reflection meetings. The collegial reflection offered a forum where they had the time to share their thoughts, and also to listen to each other. They gave each other feedback, and these meetings contributed to an increased understanding of one another, but also an

understanding of why pupils acted in certain ways. As a result of this sharing of thoughts, and the increased understanding of each other, the feeling of safety within the group was also increased. When they needed a colleague's help and support, they were more inclined to ask for it. Their personal feeling of being safe in their role as a teacher was also enhanced.

> And you can tell, that when you say something the others seem to be interested and they think that you have good ideas and so […] so you could say, that in some way it has increased your feelings of safety [as a professional teacher] (interview 1, 2015).

Yet another benefit from the collegial reflection was the sharing of practical issues, information that for some reason not everyone had taken part of. The reflection meetings also resulted in the teachers' giving each other tools for their own teaching. They heard about how colleagues handled certain situations or problems, and made comparisons with their own situation.

Teachers also experienced the second model of the reflection meetings as an efficient way to spend time. They treated many common issues when seeing each other, and appreciated this forum instead of discussing the issues on several occasions with different people.

Sharing one's vulnerability

The digital recordings of the collegial reflection showed that the teachers were not afraid of letting their colleagues see vulnerable sides of them. They seemed to open up and admitted to feelings of confusion, doubt, and anxiety. Another example was when they felt guilty because other colleagues appeared to be working during their private time, and they themselves wanted to prioritize things other than work. They also expressed feelings of failure when they feared they hadn't exerted themselves enough in relation to their pupils.

- But then there are the demands.
- […]
- Yes, it's always like that, you always do your best and you end up with some middle course.

- Because you can never reach everyone…every minute and lesson… I mean, there's no way.
- But then when you maybe shall have a follow-up, "so how did it go, have you done it…?" "No I haven't had the chance" then you feel like a huge failure.
- I agree with you, you have such great hopes about doing things, and you set goals for having dialogues and so, and then you notice that no, I haven't... I mean, it's when you add these special things that are out of the ordinary, it's… You often feel that "Oh I haven't done what I should have." And it's not because you don't want to, but… (digital recording, 2014).

The feeling that they hadn't made sufficient efforts, or that they should have acted in another way, affected their well-being. They expressed it as draining and was also causing sleeping problems.

- But when you start to mull over a situation like that, "Damn, did that go wrong?" and like that, it's kind of hard to stop it.
- Mmm.
- Because if you do something, then it often comes back to you when you go to bed…"now what was it that happened" and "why did I say that, why didn't I say this instead". Because it usually comes on to you afterwards, that "yes but why did I say it like that, I could have just turned the words around and they would have had another meaning" or "what did they think I said".
- Mmm. And it wears you down.
- […] I mean, you can say to yourself "damn it, don't lie here and brood over that now, I mean, you're off work" and like that, but it doesn't work like that.
- No it doesn't.
- And it drains you (digital recording, 2014).

Acknowledging and supporting

Related to the issue of sharing one's vulnerability was the reaction of one's colleagues when one did show vulnerability. The findings indicated that the participating teacher

acknowledged the feelings of vulnerability, and supported the person letting his/her guard down. They confirmed that they too felt in similar ways, and they also acknowledged the normality of the feelings.

- Oh, now they're thinking that maybe you haven't really made an effort, because it's always that, what is enough?
- I mean, you feel it yourself.
- I think we all have that feeling.
- Yes.
- We sure do.
- In some way you would like to do even more (digital recording, 2014).

The teachers also supported each other in putting things in different perspective, and affirming their efforts. It was a way of saying that good is enough.

- You have to experiment and see how it would…
- Yes, but that's what I do every single day.
- Yes, I know, it feels…
- Experiment and experiment and experiment…
- Do you know what?
- No.
- Sometimes… even if it feels awful… you just have to accept that you're doing your best.
- I know.
- And feel that it is good enough (digital recording, 2014).

Collegial community

The findings indicated that the collegial reflection provided the teachers with a moment when they could take a break from their ordinary work, and socialize with colleagues. It was a time when they didn't feel any pressure or demands to perform. They felt stronger because of the collegial reflection, both during the reflection meeting, but also afterwards. It was a time for many laughs.

> Just to sit and talk like that, it's… I've felt… that it's… well, very nice, we've laughed so much (interview 3: 2015).

The teachers emphasized it as a way to get to know each other better, not only as a professional teacher, but as a private person as well. The reflection meeting offered them an opportunity to share their private lives, which led to "getting to know one's colleagues on a deeper level" (open mail answer).

They also stated that since these reflection meetings had enhanced their feeling of being safe among the colleagues, it also improved their recovery. They spoke about being present in the moment during the reflection, and also about "feeling relaxed" (open mail answer) when they left the meetings.

After having had the second model of collegial reflection, a teacher spoke of it as being revitalizing.

> It's fun and you… I mean, we work until 4:30 these days and the days are long. But when you leave those meetings, you feel sort of… you feel full of energy and you feel positive and you feel that everyone has been participating and is interested. It's not like you just sit and "ah, can't it soon be over now" and "I have to leave early". Instead everyone is really interested in the conversation, so it feels really good (interview 1, 2016).

Consequently, it seems as the collegial reflection influenced their well-being, both by giving them recovery and by revitalizing the teachers.

Discussion

The findings suggest that while both themes were related to work-place learning, the well-being was more evident in the second theme, *Teachers' giving and receiving support*. Findings also indicate a process among the participating teachers during the three semesters of the intervention. Even though there were only four teachers interviewed on the last occasion of data collection, it was noticeable that their experiences of the collegial reflection were different, compared to the other occasions of data collection. The collegial reflection was much more appreciated after having implemented the second model for reflection. While the first model was appreciated for bringing relaxation, support and allowing for new perspectives, it also brought stress as some teachers felt that it took time from other, more important, tasks. The second model contributed with the same positive aspects as the first model did, but it added new aspects. It added a feeling of working together towards a common goal, and that this goal was not just a paper product, but a means to guide their work. It added a feeling of sharing the responsibility, and that everyone did their part of the work. Lastly, it added a feeling that the things they accomplished during the reflection meetings, were things they could use in their work. Since they could use the reflection time to facilitate their work, their meaningfulness and motivation was enhanced. This is important in relation to teacher resilience, since motivation (Kitching et al., 2009) but also collegial support (Le Cornu, 2009), a desire to have ongoing professional learning (Mansfield at al., 2012) and professional reflection (Goddard & Foster, 2001) have all been shown to contribute to resilience.

Enhancing the teachers' learning

The collegial reflection contributed to a number of ways of learning among the teachers. An example was when the teachers described discovering new ways of thinking. By collectively looking at a situation from different perspectives, as offered by the group members, the individual teacher acquired a broader perception of the situation. Each person in the group had his/her image of the situation. When the teachers collectively reflected on it, several images were presented, and there occurred an exchange of images. Each teacher's image became in that way larger than before. Hence, the individual teacher could perceive the situation from different perspectives, and consequently gained an increased understanding of it. Using Illeris (2015; 2009) words, a learning took place through the interaction process.

Another example of the teachers' learning was when someone needed help in some way, as in knowledge information, practical tools, or as in needing advice. Colleagues provided with this support, and consequently, the collegial reflection contributed to make work comprehensible. This supports previous research, suggesting that collegial reflection is a resource in making work comprehensible (Nilsson, Andersson, Ejlertsson & Troein, 2012). If we look at it through the lens of Illeri's (2015; 2009) learning model, the teacher's needs and motivation was the incentive dimension. This need and this motivation contributed to an acquisition process within him/her, leading to a learning.

Still another example was the teachers' learning about each other, both as professionals and as private persons. The collegial reflection offered both time and a forum for sharing thoughts and experiences, and it contributed to a chance to see other sides of one's colleagues than the usual ones. Because they learnt more about each other's private lives, they got to know each other "on a deeper level", as one of the teachers said, and this made them more inclined to discuss problem. It seemed to increase their feeling of safety among colleagues.

The teachers also expressed an awareness of their own way of behaving, and questioned not only their work situation but their own ways to respond to this situation. Through the collegial reflection they scrutinized their own actions and their expectations, and collectively questioned things that were sometimes taken for granted. This questioning of things that may be taken for granted can be seen as a form of critical reflection (Brookfield, 2012).

Research has suggested some core features for teachers' professional development: content focus; active learning; coherence; duration; and collective participation (Desimone, 2009; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001). In the presented models for collegial reflection, much of the focus was placed on different aspects of teaching. It included active participation in that all teachers were responsible for the reflection process. Coherence seemed to increase with the second model, and was emphasized as a strength of the reflection. Regarding duration, the teachers met each week, and as for the collective participation, the reflection groups all consisted of teachers from similar grades. Previous findings indicates that such grouping is important to teacher learning (Desimone, 2009; Borko, 2004).

And the well-being aspect?

The analysis showed that teachers' work-related learning and their well-being were interrelated, and sometimes influenced each other in a reciprocal manner. The collegial reflection resulted in an increased understanding of each other, and this, in turn, increased their feeling of safety among colleagues. Reciprocally, the feeling of being safe among one's colleague contributed to a willingness to show oneself as vulnerable and in need of support. Opening up to each other led to an increased understanding of each other, and so the circular process was reinforced. Feeling safe among colleagues has been found to contribute to employee's motivation to work, and thereby to meaningfulness (Nilsson, et al., 2012), which is an important salutogenic resource (Antonovsky, 1987). The collegial reflection also contributed to increasing the teachers' comprehensibility of their work. As Antonovsky (1987) proposed, comprehensibility is considered as health promoting, in that it is part of experiencing a sense of coherence.

The collegial community that was created within the collegial reflection was emphasized by the teachers as a resource. They described it as a time for socializing, enjoying themselves and taking a break from the ordinary work. Research has indicated that having both time for conversation and a comfortable atmosphere contribute to manageability (Nilsson et al., 2012), which is an important part of experiencing sense of coherence. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) has shown that cooperation and teamwork are an important resource for teachers' job satisfaction, which affects teacher absenteeism and attrition. The reflection meetings were a time when they could recover and revitalize their energy. Previous research has shown the importance of recovery as a salutogenic resource (Trougakos, Beal, Green & Weiss, 2008). Since teachers are at risk of not experiencing sufficient recovery (Aronssson, Svensson & Gustafsson, 2003), the relevance of finding opportunities for recovery is obvious. The aspect of social support, which was described by the participating teachers as a benefit of the collegial reflection, has also been found to be salutogenic (Greenglass, Burke & Konarski, 1997; Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999). Social support has been found to promote resilience (Le Cornu, 2009) and it is seen as an important characteristic of workplace health promotion interventions (Arnesson & Ekberg, 2005).

The findings reveal that the second model of the collegial reflection contributed to the teachers' having common goals and a feeling of consensus. It was described as developing a

sense of being `one school´ and of creating a whole together. This was interpreted as enhancing their feeling of pride. They also described it as enhancing their sense of meaning about their work. Meaningfulness is an important element in the incentive dimension of learning (Illeris, 2015; 2009), and as previously noted, an important salutogenic resource (Frankl, 1999; Antonovsky, 1987; Persson, 2006).

The importance of the context

The findings show that the context influenced the way the collegial reflection was perceived by the teachers. The work intensification, which sets a more comprehensive frame for the teachers work situation, affected their feelings of time constraints. This, in turn, made them feel stressed when the collegial reflection was added to their other work tasks. The more immediate environment also affected the way the teachers experienced the reflection meetings. The Mathematics Boost and the rebuilt of the school both affected the teachers' overall experience of their workload and time pressure. Since many of the teachers were involved in the Mathematics Boost, it limited their time for collegial planning. When also the reflection meetings limited this collegial planning, it made them feel that the collegial reflection would have benefited by being implemented at another time. However, as one teacher observed, maybe it was in stressful times such as these, that the collegial reflection was most needed.

In line with the settings approach, a holistic perspective is useful in order to understand the way collegial reflection fits in the teachers' everyday work. As Hodgins & Griffiths (2012) point out, the workplace needs to be understood as a system, and consequently the collegial reflection needs to be understood as part of the workplace system. The findings of this inquiry confirm the need to consider teachers' whole work situation, in order to understand a health promotion intervention, such as this one. As health and well-being is developed through the interaction between the individual and his/her environment (Bauer, et al., 2006), there is a need to consider the context when introducing collegial reflection. As a means to facilitate the implementation and support the teachers, school management needs to relieve teachers' total workload and support them by prioritizing among their work tasks.

Previous findings suggest that teachers are more inclined to stay in the profession if they work in a supportive work environment (Moore Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Weiss, 1999).

Examples of support are opportunities for collegial interaction as well as growth. Collegial reflection is a way to offer both, and consequently, it could be a way to contribute to a supportive work environment.

Methodological considerations and limitations

The intervention was implemented with a participatory approach as it is in line with health promotion (WHO, 1986), and the settings approach (WHO, 2017). The intention was that it would lead to actual changes in the everyday work of the teachers involved, and make these changes sustainable, and not dependent on the research project. The desired changes were twofold, both an increased work-related learning and actual changes in their work situation. There was also a hope that their well-being would be enhanced.

Given that the intervention was intended to be sustainable, it was decided not to have an outside facilitator, since that would have made the participants dependent on external support. Instead the responsibility for the reflection process was left to the groups themselves. After the second semester, the teachers and the principal decided to have a facilitator in each group, and these were appointed from the groups. Looking at it in hindsight, it may have been better to appoint a facilitator among the participants from the start. However, it offers an example of how the participatory approach may work.

The role of the researcher (first author) changed during the process of collegial reflection. In the initial part of the process, the researcher was substantially influential regarding the design of the intervention, and as a promoter. During the first semester, the collegial reflection was digitally recorded, and the researcher handled these recordings continuously. After the first semester, the recordings were concluded, which meant that the participants no longer were reminded about their being part of a research project. During the final semester, the school handled the collegial reflection entirely on their own. This process, of the researcher's having a continuously lesser role in the intervention, was part of the participatory approach, and aimed to make the intervention owned by the participants themselves. Thereby, the possibilities for the collegial reflection to be sustainable even after the end of the research project, may have improved.

Stringer (1999) stated that participatory action research needs to prove rigor in order to be trustworthy, i.e. to minimize the possibility that the research is superficial, biased, or superficial (p.176). To assess rigor, the criteria by Lincoln and Guba (1985) are suggested: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Prolonged engagement with participants is a way to strengthen the credibility of the findings, in particular in action research (Stringer, 1999). In the present inquiry, the teachers influenced the process of the intervention during an extended period of time. A previous inquiry in the same school (Nilsson, 2012) contributed with a need assessment among the teachers. This showed the need for collegial reflection, and it also revealed the issues, which were subsequently used as topics for the collegial reflection. Two months into the intervention, feedback was given from the participants to the researchers, and vice versa. Allowing participants to verify the accuracy of the findings is also a way to strengthen credibility (Stringer, 1999). After the second semester, the participants and the principal changed the design of the collegial reflection, according to their needs. This prolonged process, from the need assessment in 2012 to the end of the intervention in December 2015, is a strength of the intervention.

During the intervention, the research procedures were reflected on by the researchers and their colleagues, also known as peer debriefing. This is another way to strengthen credibility (Stringer, 1999).

Transferability was strengthened by thoroughly presenting and discussing the context. It was perceived as important to present the occurrences that took place during the intervention. This enables readers to identify similarities with their own contexts, and assess its relevance for their setting. Dependability was strengthen by using the same open mail questions and the same interview questions for all participants, and example of the analysis process and quotes were presented as a means for readers to asses confirmability.

A possible limitation of the inquiry, was that the open mail questions were sent to the researcher (first author), and the interviews were conducted by the same. Thus, participants were asked to assess the intervention to the same researcher that was involved in the implementation of it. A potential risk of this procedure was that participants may avoid

negative critique. However, given that their experiences and opinions contained many critical views on the intervention, it would seem that they did not feel restricted by the procedure.

Another limitation was that only the digital recordings of one groups were transcribed, and not of all three groups. However, all recordings were listened to, and notes were taken. In the analysis, these notes were also included, and they confirmed the findings from the transcriptions.

Conclusions

Teachers' work situation is increasingly becoming more intensified, and simultaneously their well-being is reported as deteriorating. They lack reflection time, an important element in professional development, and consequently, the issue of implementing collegial reflection among teachers, is highly relevant. The present inquiry suggests that collegial reflection can be a way to increase teachers' work-related learning and enhance their well-being.

Increased learning was manifested, for example, in attaining new ways of thinking and creating a holistic perspective on one's school and colleagues. The teachers' well-being was enhanced by e.g. giving and receiving social support, a stronger feeling of safety, an increased feeling of meaningfulness and an opportunity to both recover and to be revitalized.

The importance of the context is highlighted. Learning is situated in the social world as it takes place in the interaction with the context. Before implementing a workplace health promotion intervention it is important to consider both the comprehensive environment and the local setting. School management needs to consider the contextual factors, and relieve teachers' total workload when adding new work tasks. We consider collegial reflection to be a feasible way for school management to create a supportive school environment and contribute to a health promoting workplace.

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Table 1. The intervention of collegial reflection

Timing	Grouping	Responsibility	Structure
1st semester Fall 2014	3 groups: Pre-class-3 grade (2 groups) 4-6 grade (1 group)	Joint responsibility among all participants	- 30 min./week -`wheel of reflection´ -Reflection on topics previously identified by the teachers. -Meetings digitally recorded.
2nd semester Spring 2015	3 groups: Pre-class-3 grade (2 groups) 4-6 grade (1 group)	Joint responsibility among all participants	-30 min./week -`wheel of reflection´ -Reflection on topics previously identified by the teachers.
3rd semester Fall 2015	2 groups: Pre-class-3 grade (1 group) 4-6 grade (1 group)	A facilitator was assigned in each group	-1 h 45 min./week -Reflection in combination with practical issues

Table 2. The analysis process

Quote	Category	Theme
- How do you do when you document? - Currently, or mapping? - Currently. - [...] - Do you have one of those documents that you write into? - No, I make my own notes. - For each pupil, or? - Yes. - How do you think it works? - Well, I think it works fine. - [...] - And then you do one of those formative assessment as time goes on? - Mmm. Yes, that is, while they are working.	Sharing thoughts, ideas and experiences	Teachers' giving and receiving support