School leadership and problem based school development

School leadership and problem based school development. The concept of school development refers to conscious changes taking place on a separate school and encompasses the whole or at least a greater part of the school. The focus of school development is to enhance the quality in the learning processes of the pupils. Local and central authorities have a great confidence in objectives, plans and evaluations in school development. School development from an actor perspective is about finding solutions on problems they encounter in the everyday teaching situation. In problem based school development sensemaking learning processes are organised in which teachers and school leaders can deepen their understanding about problems that are found to be important in helping the pupils to learn and develop. A learning and problem solving perspective of school development questions the idea of an organization as a rational goal strategic arena and put forward the idea of an organization as a sensemaking arena based on the curiosity of teachers from puzzling and ambiguous situations in the learning processes of the pupils.

School leaders mainly understand the organisation as an arena for sensemaking and mutual deep learning and not as an arena of instrumental actions in accordance with management by objectives. Teachers emphasize the importance of clarity with the pedagogical vision of the school and that it is important that school leaders both have a good knowledge and a deep understanding of the everyday life at the school. To be able to build up a deeper understanding of the daily pedagogical work at the school a school leader needs to understand the sensemaking conceptions that compose the whole from which teachers understand and handle the different daily situations they encounter.

Results from a research project in a network of 800 schools in 40 Swedish communes are presented.