

The impact of School Inspections on School Improvement

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www.ioe.ac.uk/lc11

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School inspection overhaul proposed by Ofsted



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Ofsted inspectors 'lack key skills' required for job



Ofsted inspectors have to have five years' teaching experience

Many Ofsted inspectors do not have the skills needed to make fair judgements of schools, a think tank report says.

Related Stories

Outline

- Current research on effects and side effects of school inspections
- EU-study: design and results

Effects of school inspections

Current research indicates:

Effects of school inspections on behavioural change among teachers, school improvement and student achievement results:

- Intentions of teachers and schools to change
- School improvement (in general and of failing schools)
- Improved student achievement

See literature review: Klerks (2013) and Nelson and Ehren (2014),
posted on:

www.schoolinspections.eu

Effects of school inspections

Side effects of school inspections:

- *Unintended strategic behavior:*
behavior of schools is influenced by assessment
- *Intended strategic behavior:*
schools try to improve their status on the measures
- *Unintended consequences*

Source: De Wolf and Janssens (2007)

Effects of school inspections

Conditions in schools:

- Performance of schools in relation to threshold (Hanushek and Raymond, 2002)
- Acceptance of framework, Innovation capacity

Effects of school inspections

Conditions in school inspections/Inspectorates:

- **Threshold** (Hanushek and Raymond, 2002)
- **Frequency and intensity of visits** (Luginbuhl et al, 2007)
- **Sanctions, rewards, interventions, follow-up visits** (Heubert&Hauser, 1999; Stecher, 2001)
- **Framework** (reliability/validity of assessment; tick and flick approach)
- **Age, stature, credibility of Inspectorate**
- **Inspection style (feedback/communication, etc)** (Ehren, 2006)

Effects of school inspections

What type of school inspections are effective?

Why are they effective, and in which context?

Realist evaluation: understanding context-mechanism-outcome in evaluation of programmes/interventions (see Pawson & Tilley, 1997)

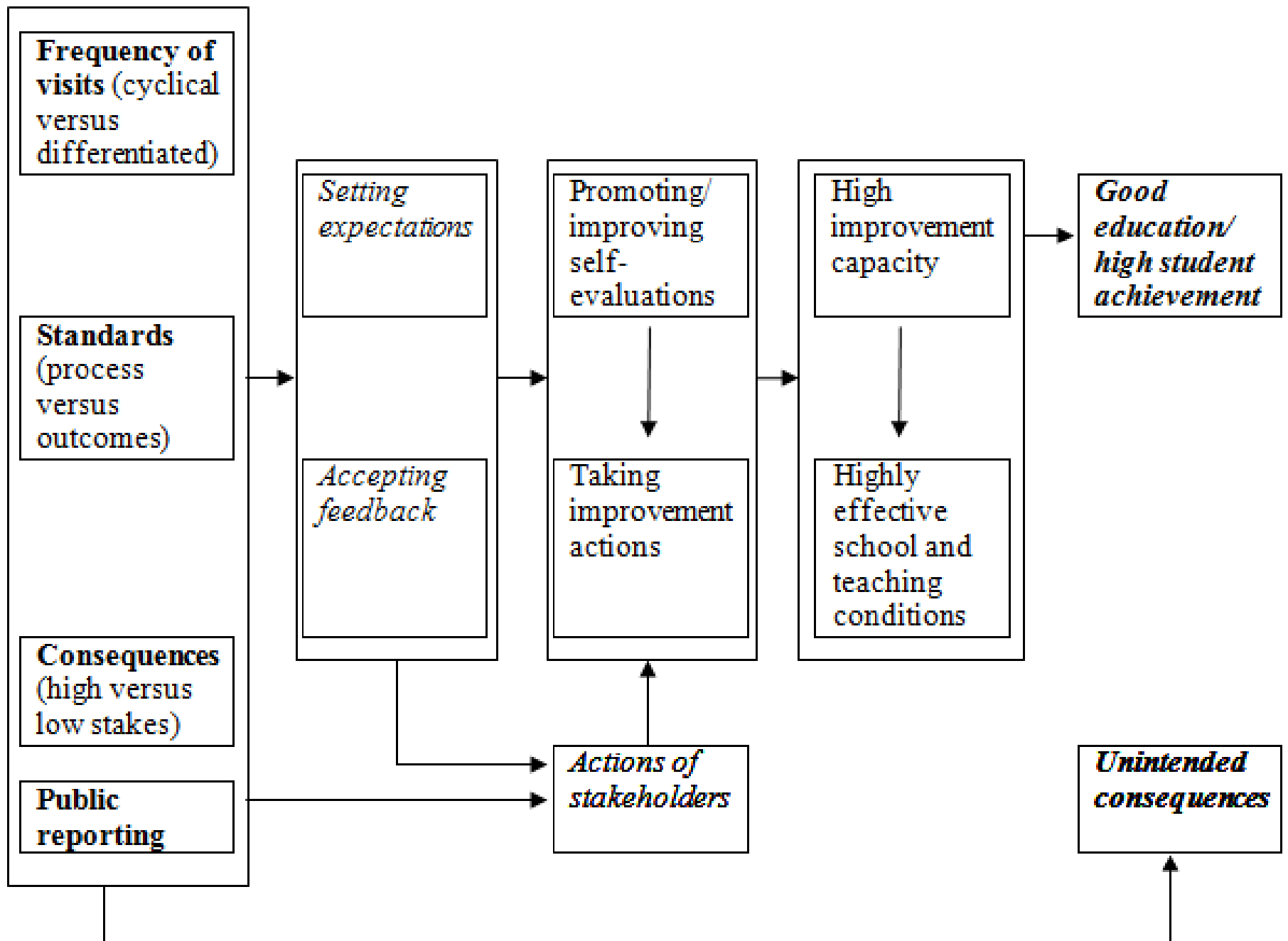
EU study

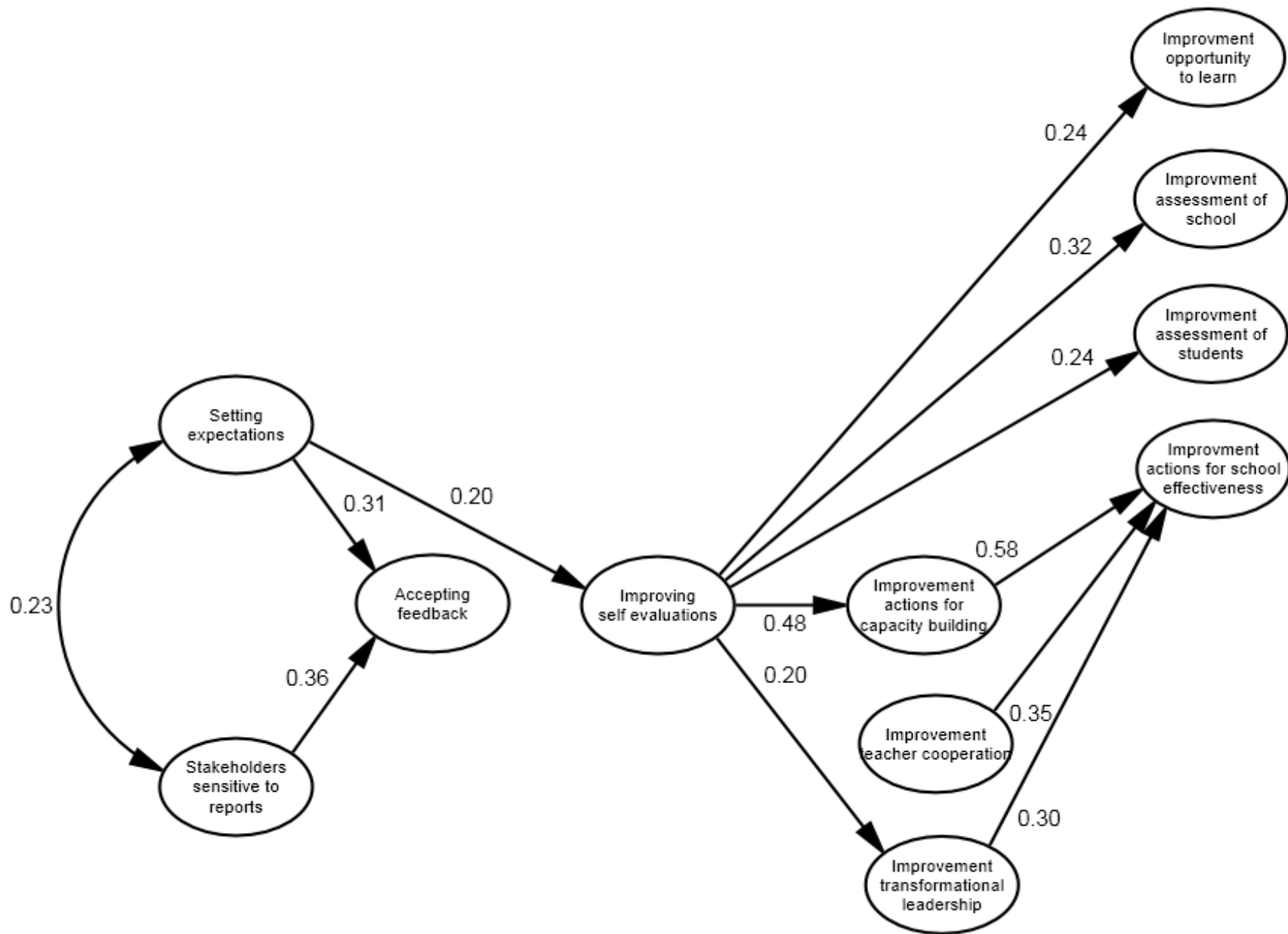
- Comparative longitudinal study (2011-2013)
- 6 countries with different inspection models: England, the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden, Czech Republic, Austria
- Reconstructing program theories of national Inspectorates to inform theoretical framework
- Annual survey to principals in primary and secondary education in 2011, 2012 and 2013.
- SEM: path models (testing relations in model); MIMIC models (testing differences between countries), repeated measures ANOVA and autoregressive models (analyse change)

EU study

How and why are school inspections
effective/ineffective?

This is what the 6 Inspectorates of Education think:





Results

Inspection drives change indirectly, through:

- setting clear expectations for schools and stakeholders on good education which
- encourage improvement of schools (self-evaluations, capacity-building) but also have
- unintended consequences (narrowing of curriculum, and discourages experimentation)

Feedback seems less important

Results

Which inspection models are most/least effective?

Inspection models

- Regular visits versus also differentiated inspections
- Evaluating processes versus also outcomes
- Low versus high stakes: consequences for failing (e.g. increased monitoring, fines)
- No reporting versus reporting individual school results to the general public

Results

- Substantial differences between England/NL and Austria, CR, Sweden, Ireland in:
- Setting expectations and sensitivity to stakeholders (England/NL: 1 SD higher)
 - Improving self-evaluations (England/NL: 0,80 SD higher)
 - Accepting feedback (England/NL lower)
 - Changes in capacity-building (England/ NL lower)

Results

Differentiated inspections lead to more changes in:

- Capacity-building
- School and teaching conditions
- Unintended consequences

(via)

- School self-evaluations
- Stakeholder awareness of inspection reports

Back to theory

Performance feedback: inspection feedback does not meet criteria of effective feedback (too far removed in time, too general in addressing performance on standardized indicators, no clarification of cause and effect etc)

Neo-institutionalisation: schools seek legitimacy and therefore try to conform to inspection standards and regulations (e.g. through mimicking successful others)

Voice/choice/exit of parents (stakeholders) is not linked to school quality (different choice sets of low/middle/high income groups)



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Accommodation

The changing face of school inspections; theories and practices

Invited European inspection symposium 3-4 June, 2014

Venue: Department of Education and Special Education, University of
Gothenburg, Sweden

More information and contact

**Questions about the
registration and other practical
matters? Please contact**

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<http://www.ips.gu.se/english/isi-tl>