

Action Research as PD for Educators & School Leaders

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School leader, trainer,
currently running organisation-
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Action Research

Addressing a PD
conundrum in KSA
private schools

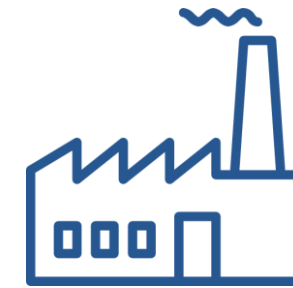
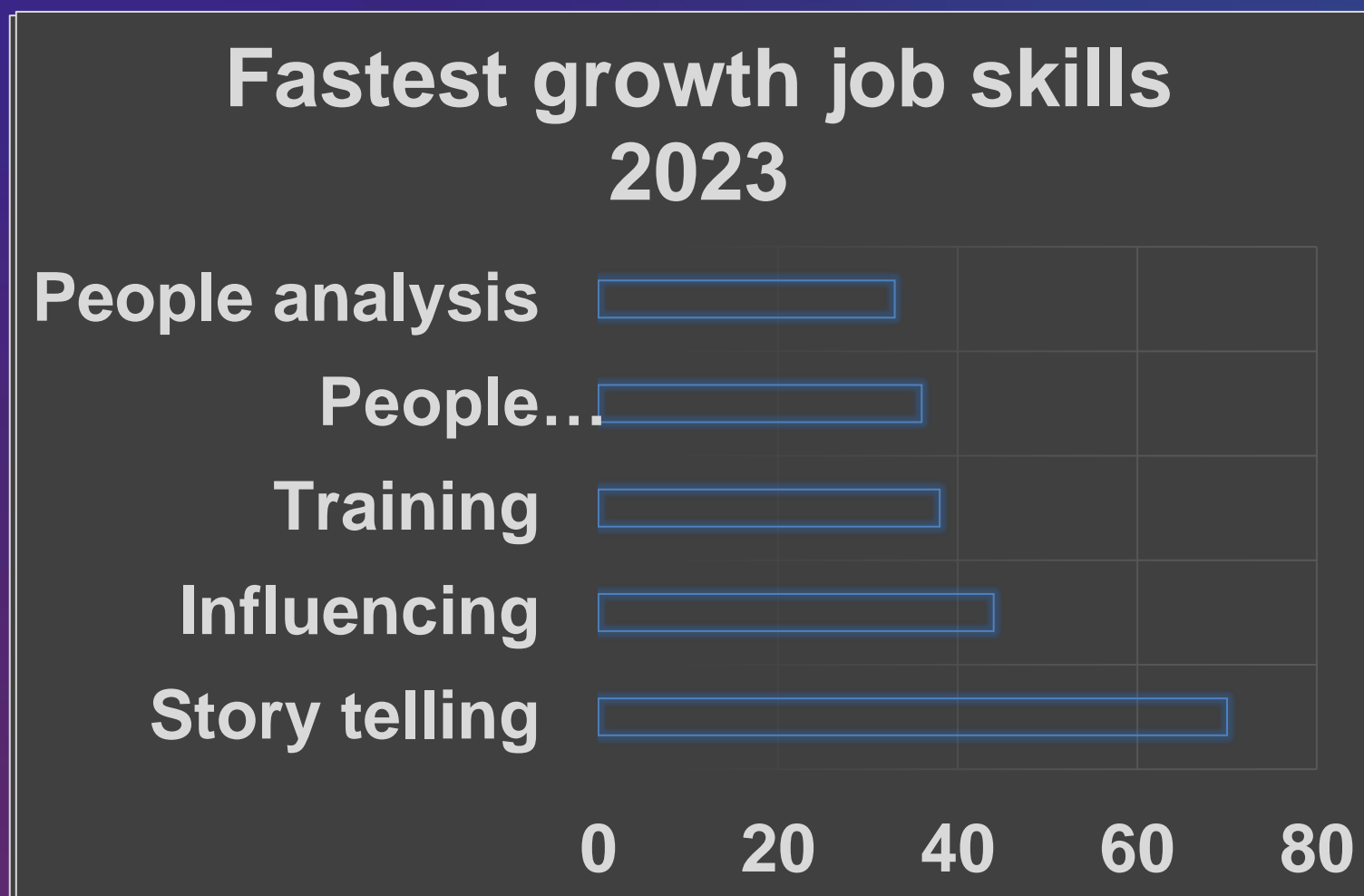
Schools need professional learning but not workshops and PD disconnected from work.

Educators and school leaders need professional growth – degrees outdate quickly and do not suffice to help educators teach learners.

Action Research offers a way forward.
What is Action Research and how can it resolve the conundrum?

Professional development embedded in work environment supplements Action Research and effectiveness of learning communities

Professional Development for educators can yield growth benefits to learners



Across industries

“Graduates need to upskill and adapt to a changing jobs market. Their degree will only get them in so far in a career that may span 50 years.”



Education

Digital skills in demand.
Generation gap. Less digitally literate than many students.

Coursera, 2022

Calonge, Shah, Riggs, & Connor, 2019)

All agree that school leaders & teachers need PD – but there is a conundrum



Companies often unwilling to fund external PD. Little impact and staff leave!



Teachers want return on PD & often cash-strapped.

School leaders need PD. Need to manage change, curriculum, people.



What trends are occurring in research re- impact of professional development?

PD Design



Reform-oriented PD preferred.
Involves mentoring, coaching.



Coherence – alignment to learner goals



Follow-up required, in action.

PD Impact



Measuring outcomes important



Measuring attendee satisfaction
less sought after.



Do school leaders read academic literature on education?

Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007 (primary and secondary citations).
Rebecca, Falkner, & Falkner, 2014

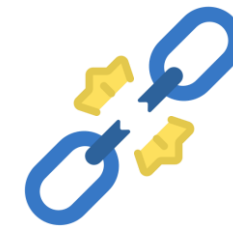
Where is the impact?

Have you ever attended a PD workshop unrelated to real world of your school or classroom?

Milton-Brkich, Shumbera, & Beran, 2010



Ever thought why?



PDs disconnected from work environment.



Teaching often involves decoupling and little affordance.

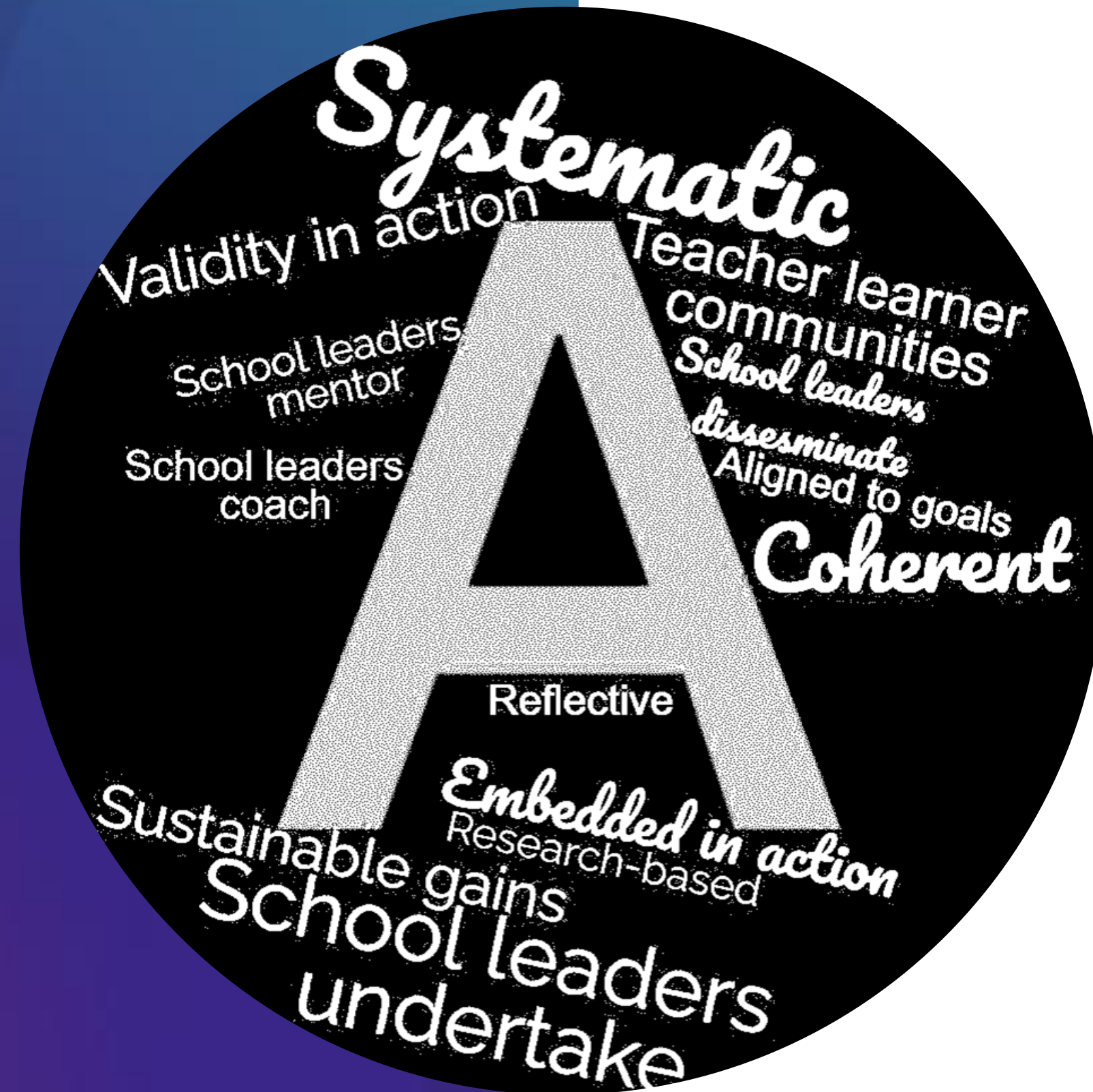


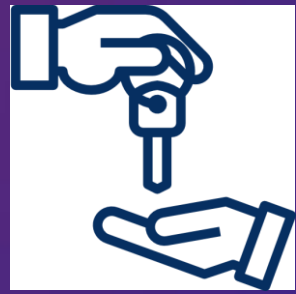
PD often focused on narrow aspect of school life.



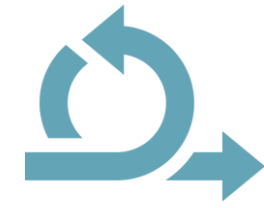
School leaders in int'l schools in KSA selected due to being good teachers. Not versed in managing people, curriculum or change.

Working through the conundrum

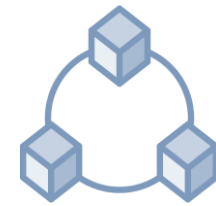




Key Elements of Action Research



Cyclical-iterative cycles - not one-off



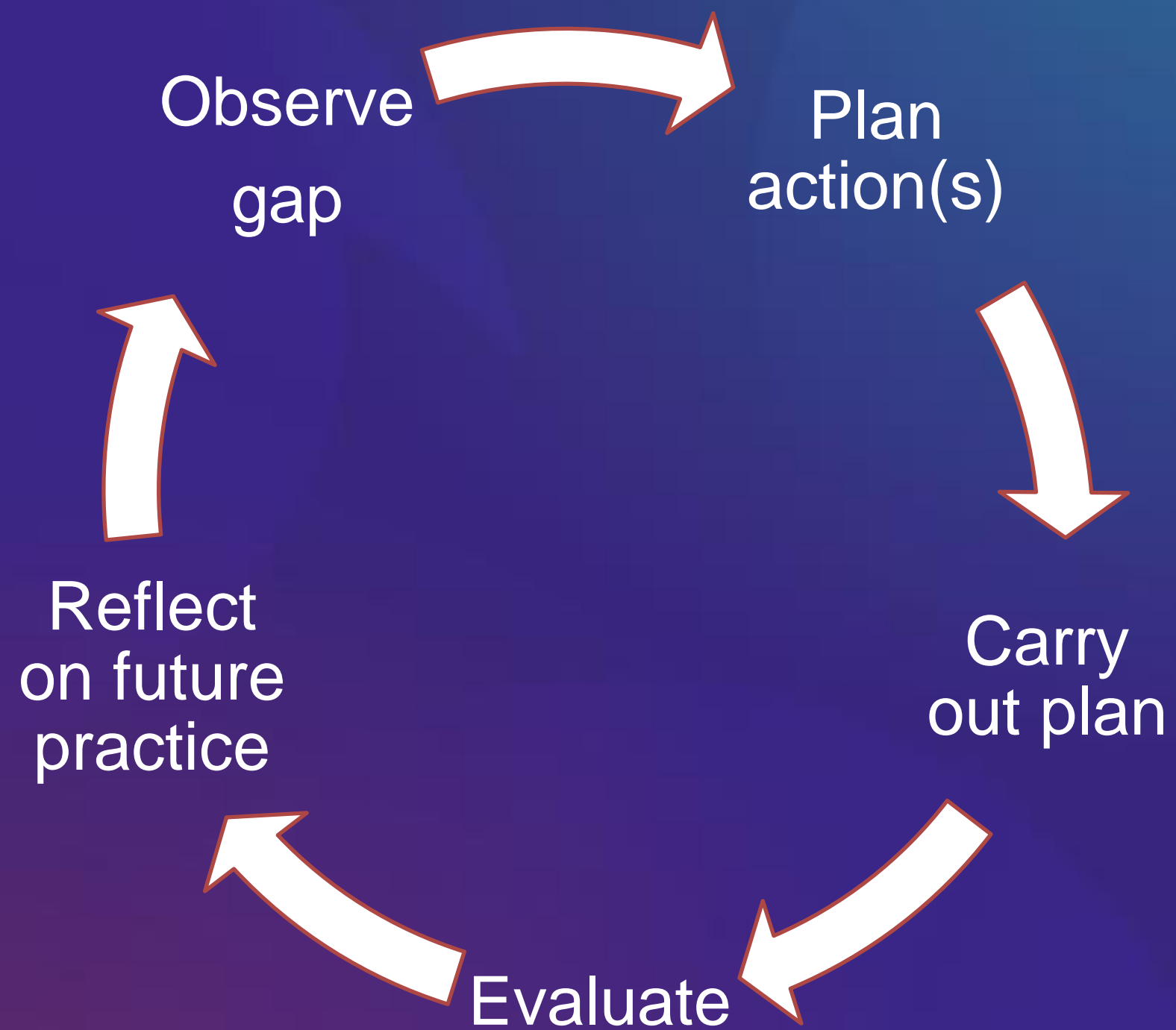
Systematic – ideas, actions build on each other towards goal



Reflective – journaling, analysing, coding



Collaborative – involves mutual trust, learning communities



Action researchers



work in teams.



systematically investigate own practice
through a reflective lens



in a cyclical, collaborative process



to modify own practice



and contribute to theory *in context*.

Adapted from Wang, Kretschme, & Hartman, 2010

Research supports use of Action Research for school leaders & educators as PD & instrument of change



Contextualized, research-based action to promote school change.



PAR leverages benefits of learning communities.



PAR 'related to group learning & data driven decisions'



PAR - 'tool for educational leadership' & means of PD.



PAR may have one research question but breeds more



Systemic long-term engagement with school-wide issues.



Credible PAR leads to positive results for community.

Adapted from James, Milenkiewicz, & Bucknam, 2008

A little look inside our own Action Research project





Action Research Report

Improving student performance at Kingdom Schools, January 2023

Our Demographics and Our Profile

Context

The Literature Review

Theoretical Models.....

Research Objectives

Research Questions.....

Data collection methods

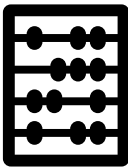
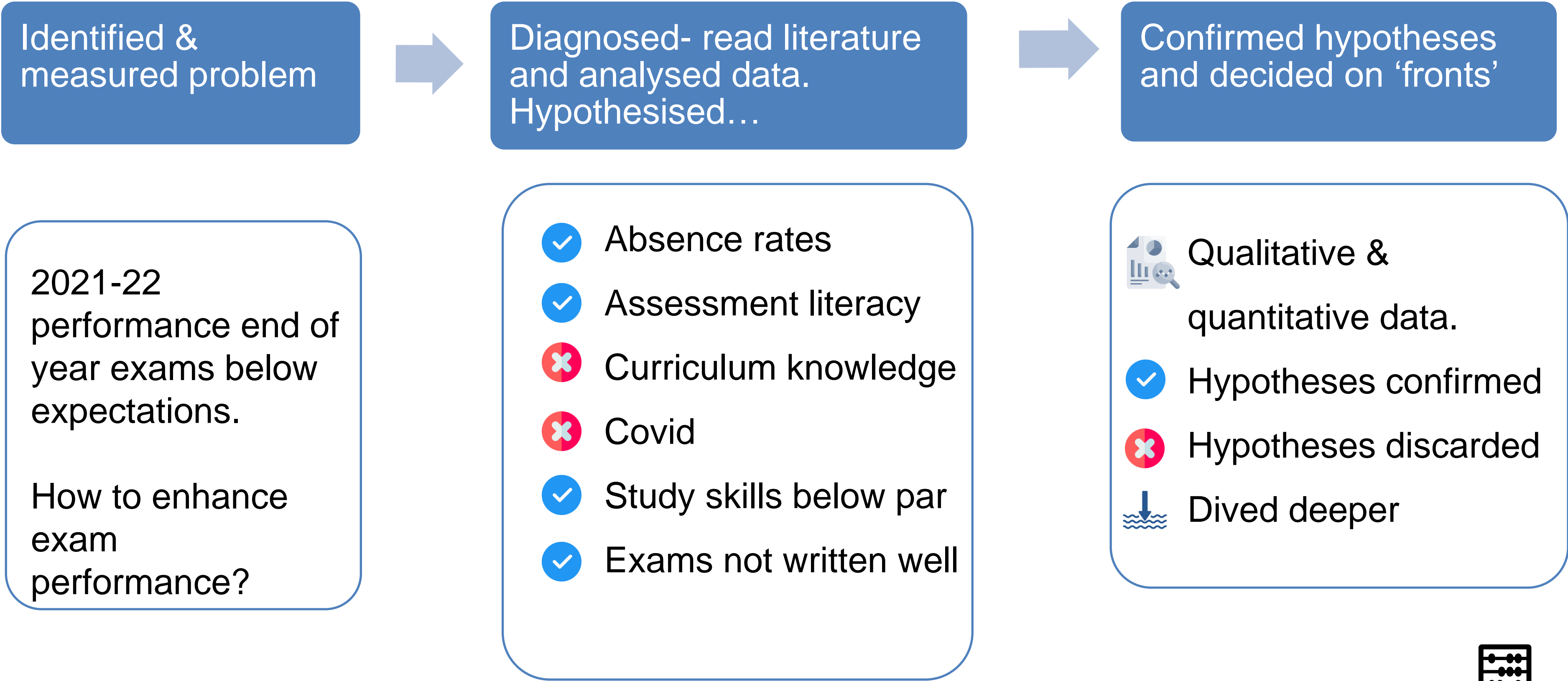
Analytical Process (and Results)

Our Findings

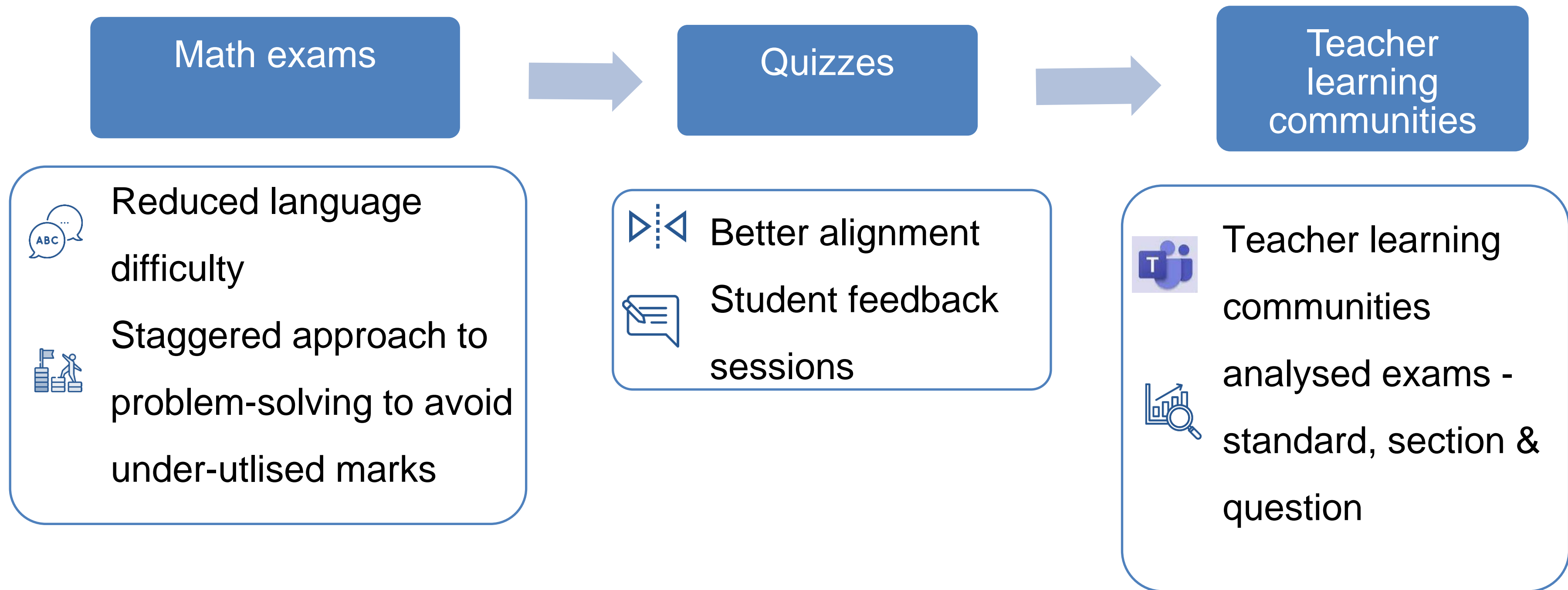
Discussion

References.....

Reflecting on critical aspects of school life provides research questions

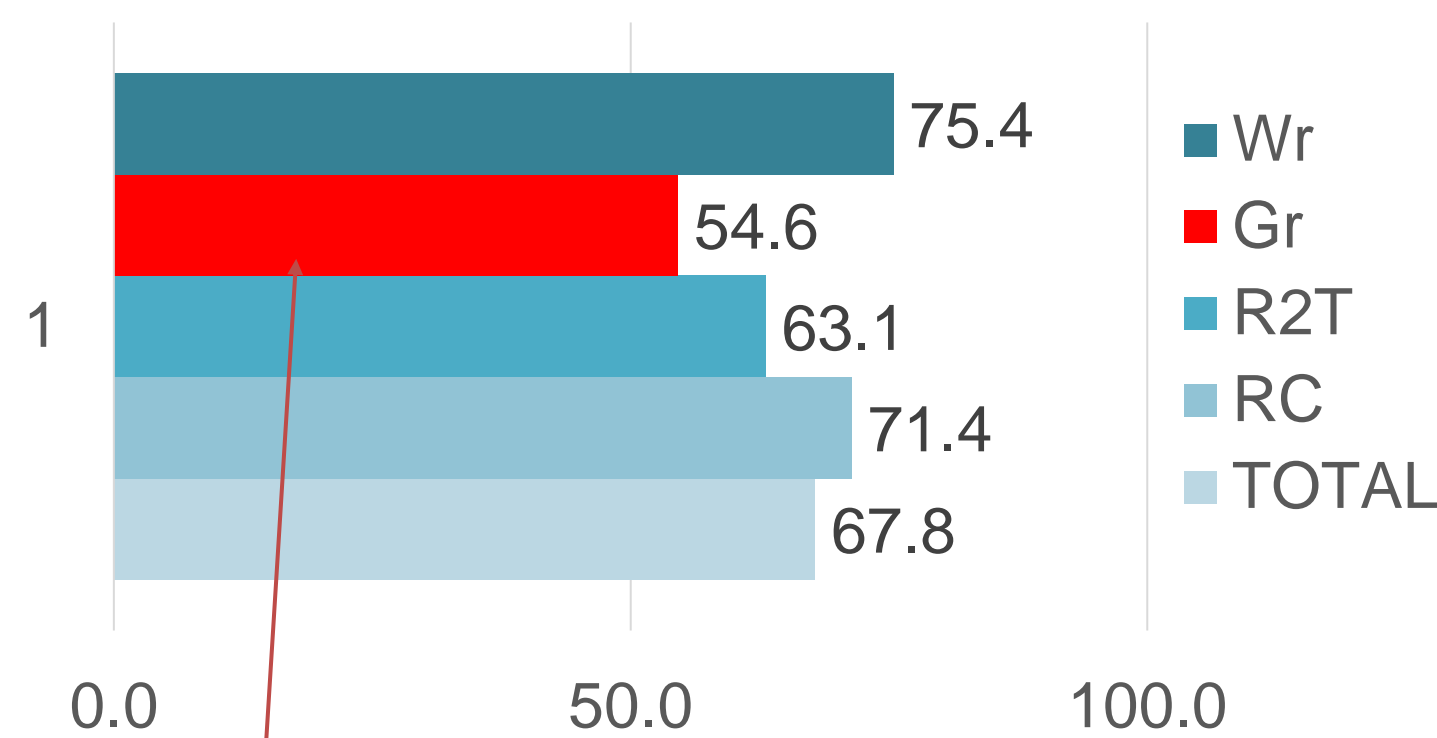


PAR team found ways to improve exam writing.



Learning communities analysed exam data (quantitative)

Analysis by section

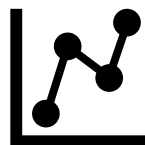


Teacher learning community planned strategies to change instruction for teaching grammar

Analysis by question (item analysis)

Type	%	Type	%
Analysis1	▶ 0.6	CT1	▶ 0.54
Analysis2	▶ 0.6	CT2	▶ 0.43
Analysis3	▶ 0.6		
Analysis4	▶ 0.7		
Analysis5	▶ 0.7		

Same learning community examined scores by question - why CT1 & 2 had such low scores – ambiguity in question?



Learning communities analysed interview transcripts (qualitative)

Professional standards in assessment

- Principled knowledge and skills
- Reflection on your own context
- Development of new insights
- Innovations in your practice

Cambridge Teacher Standards

Our own protocol - interviewing teachers & students

Reflection on own context

Compares and contrasts different assessments approaches in terms of their features.

- Identifies KS assessments - exams, quizzes, PBL checklists and in-class assignments - as being AfL, assessment as or of learning.
- Competently discusses aspects of KS assessments in terms of validity, reliability, mean score.
- Able to compare results between assessments for the same students and check for reliability and validity.
- Any checks on whether marks are underutilized for polytomous questions?

Evaluates assessment issues relevant to their practice.

- Highlights advantages of each KS assessment method – exam, quiz, in-class assignment, PBL checkpoint, lab report (as appropriate).

Transcribed, coded interviews with teachers & students provide wealth of info

Interviews were coded and analysed for inferences

and the students must be trained also how to respond on the paper to get the marks I me
advance that there is a mark scheme and how the mark scheme works what exactly we l
that's something for us to work on yeah

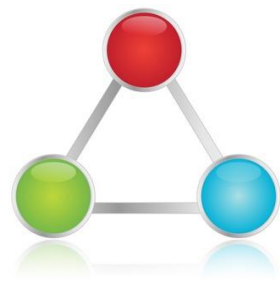
Fully informed student body

Mark schemes for assessments

Students need clarity in grading system

Transcript of
interview with
teacher

Coding as form of
analysis



Interview analysis helped school leaders understand the 'whys



Closer look at the process involved

School leaders need to analyse different types of data to understand, and solve problems

Evidenced impact of Action Research on school leaders, teachers and learners

So far, after (almost) one
cycle... before iteration 2...



School leaders more likely to predict impact of changes in decisions on assessments so better decision making.



Teachers seem more 'assessment literate' based on second round interviews



Learners appreciate and receive more enhanced feedback on formative assessments



Preliminary evidence of improvements in exam results – but need another cycle to confirm

**‘There is no such thing as a
free lunch’**

Issues around Action Research as Professional Development



Action Research benefits organizations by changing mindsets and practices. Some patience required for impact.

Cambridge
Assessment
Network

Relevant, embedded Professional Development courses for Action Research practitioners will certainly enhance the quality of the Action Research if satisfy conditions – refer to Cambridge Assessment PDQs and Cambridge Assessment Network for well designed programs.



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