

The labour market's requirements profiles for higher education graduates

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Higher Education System

- More and more people of a cohort start a higher education study programme (Orr et al. 2011)
 - Higher education is in charge of preparing students for the labour market (employability), providing them with academic factual knowledge as well as with generic competences (learning outcomes) (Arnove et al. 2013)
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- (1) Can areas of generic job-relevant competences be identified across all graduates?
 - (2) Which activities do higher education graduates execute in their professional lives?
 - (3) Which activity profiles do graduates possess regarding their occupational status?

Existing Surveys of Employees

- No specific focus on higher education graduates
 - *Generalized Work Activities Questionnaire* (O*NET 2012; Peterson et al. 2001)
 - *UK Skills Survey* (BMRB 2006; Felstead et al. 2007)
 - *OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies* (Klauskien et al. 2013; OECD 2013a)
 - *National Educational Panel Study (E8)* (Matthes et al. 2014; Matthes & Christoph 2011)
- No sufficient integration of current labour market developments
- Often job-related requirements/competences are enquired via abstract descriptions (e.g. 'Analytical thinking') and self-rated levels of importance/competence

Job Requirements Approach

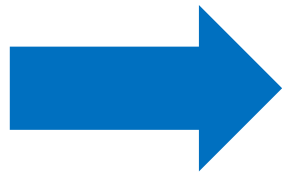
- Theory-based approach for the assessment of job-related tasks and activities
(Felstead et al. 2007; Klaukien et al. 2013; OECD 2011; OECD 2013b)
 - Asking employees what they do at work reflects work requirements.
 - Employees are in the best position to provide information about the executed activities at the workplace.
 - Employees are able to talk about *what they do at work* and *how often* in a more unbiased way than about *how important an activity is* or *to what extent capabilities are possessed*.
 - As a certain match between employees' activities and skills can be assumed, the assessment of activities/requirements can serve as an indirect assessment of competences.



Identification of job-relevant competence fields

Instrument for the Measurement of job-related Activities and Requirements

- Based on literature and (employer) interview analyses (Braun & Brachem (forthcoming); Prinz et al. 2014)

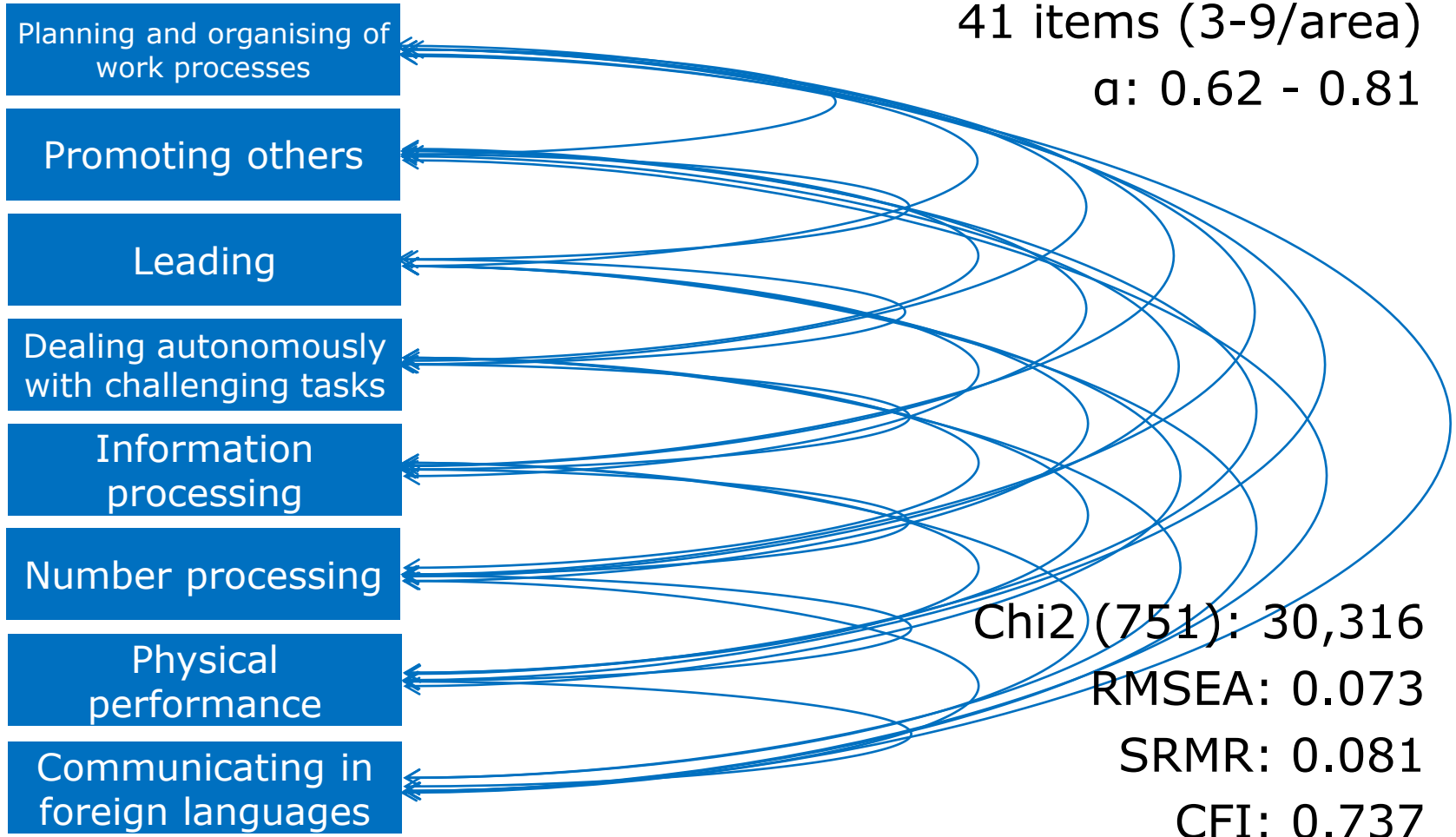


49 items, covering generic job-related activities and requirements of higher education graduates

- Online survey (2013/2014) with higher education graduates from the DZHW Graduate Panels 2001 (N=2,882), 2005 (N=3,707), 2009 (N=3,922)

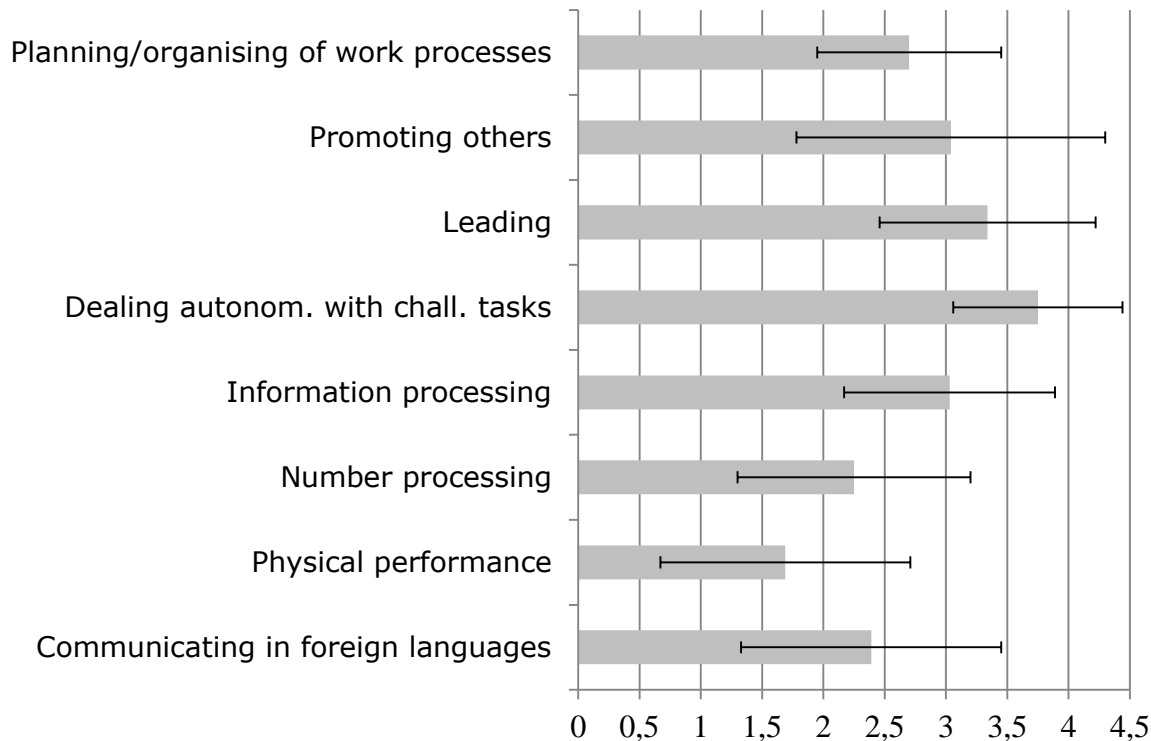
Can areas of
generic job-relevant competences
be identified
across all graduates?

Areas of generic job-relevant Competences



Which activities do
higher education graduates
execute in their professional lives?

Execution of job-related Activities



- Employed higher education graduates (N=10,511)
- 1 Never; 2 Less than once a month; 3 At least once a month, but less often than once a week; 4 At least once a week, but not daily; 5 Daily

Which activity profiles
do graduates possess regarding
their occupational status?

Occupational Status of Graduates

Occupational status	N
Executive function	909
Responsible function	6,026
Leading function	2,460
Self-employment	777
<i>Missing information</i>	339
Σ	10,511

Differences between occupational Statuses

Occupational status	Planning / organising of work processes		Promoting others		Leading		Dealing auton. with chall. tasks		Infor- mation processing		Number processing		Physical perform.		Communic. in foreign languages	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Executive function	2.32	0.77	2.36	1.41	2.90	0.97	3.37	0.83	2.45	0.89	1.95	0.92	1.57	0.96	2.10	1.00
Responsible function	2.60	0.70	2.88	1.23	3.23	0.87	3.71	0.66	3.09	0.83	2.21	0.94	1.69	1.00	2.42	1.05
Leading function	3.14	0.65	3.72	0.97	3.72	0.72	3.99	0.58	3.11	0.79	2.50	0.96	1.62	0.93	2.51	1.11
Self-employment	2.52	0.81	2.88	1.23	3.51	0.87	3.71	0.77	2.91	0.90	2.13	0.90	2.08	1.29	2.13	0.92

Note: Green: $\Delta \geq .50$ (higher frequency); Orange: $\Delta \geq .50$ (lower frequency); Blue: Any noteworthy differences

Resumee

- Empirical confirmation of **8 areas of generic job-relevant competences** of higher education graduates
- Across all graduates **autonomous** and **leading activities** are **most frequently executed**, in contrast to physical activities.
- Specific activity profile of graduates in **leading functions: Promoting, leading, and planning activities**
- Possessing these competences represents a significant factor for **successful transitions** from higher education **to the labour market**.

Forthcoming publications

Braun, E., Brachem, J.-C. (forthcoming). Requirements higher education graduates meet on the labour market. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 90 (4), 1-22.

Braun, E. & Brachem, J.-C. (under review). The labour market's requirements profiles for higher education graduates. In E. Kyndt, V. Donche, K. Trigwell & S. Lindblom-Ylänne (Eds.). *Higher Education Transitions: Theory and research*.

Discussion



Questions?



Remarks?

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Studies on Graduates

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Literature

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