The Holistic Model of Capability of Lithuanian School Heads: Theoretical Framework and Empirical Evidence

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Abstract

School heads play a vital role in setting the direction of school success but current knowledge about the most efficient ways of training and developing highly competent candidates is scarce in Lithuania. The content of training and development programs for school heads should be aligned with certification requirements. The question whether school heads are appropriately prepared and trained for the education reform and requirements is relevant. Clear understanding what school heads should study in professional training and development courses is lacking, there are debates over how school leadership development should be changed. It is a personal matter how school heads prepare for the certification procedure. The issue was approached by analyzing what competencies and capabilities contemporary school heads need. School leadership development programs should focus on the development of personal, social, instructional, educational, self-management and management competencies, constituent parts of holistic capabilities. Qualitative research was conducted to identify the inventory of competencies Lithuanian school heads should develop, the findings were compared with the requirements for competencies in certification documents.The research findings might serve as guidelines and recommendations while designing development programs for school heads.

Keywords: school leadership development, capability model.

Introduction

School leadership development[1] is the priority issue of global education policy. National education policies are aimed at aligning their education systems to the needs of contemporary rapidly changing society. Requirements for schools and school leaders[2] are continuously changing. School leadership practices are under the influence of changes in education management and depend on the school context. Researchers (Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2003; Huber, 2004) claim that the quality of school leadership is vital for school success; the education reform has raised requirements for leaders. Under these circumstances, attention should be paid to professional training and development of school

leadership, knowledge and skills they should have nowadays to be able to manage schools successfully.

The quality of education is the priority issue of the education reform in Lithuania (National Education Strategy, 2003-2012). In accordance with the Law on Education of 2003, a school is service providing institution what has changed requirements for school heads – to be not only an experienced and advanced teacher but also a manager and leader of a school as an organization. That brought changes in the professional activities and behaviors of school heads and school management. Such factors as decentralization, school autonomy, effective activities of schools have raised requirements for school heads and they need professional support to develop and handle these changes effectively. School heads perform the function of a school manager and ensure competitiveness of the organization in the labour market. In 2007 the Ministry of Education and Science introduced and approved a new inventory of competencies and certification requirements for school heads and deputy heads of county schools (excluding higher education institutions and vocational schools). School heads prove their competencies by preparing a self-assessment report on their competencies, knowledge and skills, activities and activity outcomes. Standard requirements for school leadership encompass 4 areas: understanding of education policy and strategic planning, management of the education process, human resource management, finance and property management. Each of the areas should be assessed against particular criteria and proved by relevant documents. School heads should also asses their transferable skills: life-long knowledge, communication, ICT, change management by ticking "have" or "do not have". The aim of this self-assessment is: to evaluate management competencies and management outcomes, to promote efficient and effective implementation of national education policy, to ensure the quality of education. The certification procedure, conducted by a group of experts who make a site visit, observe, analyze relevant school documents (financial statements, development plans, etc.) is completed by awarding a school head one of three pay-related qualification categories.

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[1] Leadership development is the term used to describe any form of preparation or training for leadership
[2] School head, school principal, school leader or head teacher - the educator who has executive authority for a school.

The Law on Education (2011) lays down that school leadership formulates strategic goals, manages changes in the education process, responds to changes in the school context, etc. The quality of school leadership is the key issue in Lithuania and calls for reforms. School autonomy and innovativeness draws on professional leadership. A considerable progress has been made in the leadership development system since 2003, leadership development programs have been updated. However, attention to the development of professional competencies of school heads, the structure of these competencies, certification requirements is still lacking. No empirical research of preparation and training of school heads, their competencies, requirements for leadership, leadership standards has been conducted in Lithuania. Kucinskiene, Kucinskas (2002), Zelvys (2003) analyzed some aspects of professional development of school heads. Lithuanian scientific literature on the issue is lacking.

The issue has been extensively analyzed in foreign scientific literature. Researchers on education management (Avolio, 2005; Brundrett et al., 2006; Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2003; Huber, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2004; Lindstrom, Speck, 2004) stated that the development of school heads' competencies has an impact on the results of school activity. Brundrett et al. (2006) claimed that leadership development is a *strategic necessity* because school heads play a key role in the times of rapid changes. Avolio (2005) analyzed the case of systematic leadership development and proved that *leaders are made, not born*. Hallinger (2003), Huber (2004; 2008) emphasized the link between leadership development and the quality of school leadership. Lindstrom, Speck (2004) stated that school leadership development is the key driver seeking to improve education. Leithwood (2009) emphasized the link between leadership development and the results of school activity.

Works on leadership education (Bush, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2004; Scott, 2010) re-examined some aspects of school heads' competence standards and development trends. A school leader of today must be able to initiate and implement changes, leadership development must be linked to the new concept of a school as the centre of changes which builds a learning community and learning culture (Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2003; Huber, 2004; Leithwood et al., 1999). Under the conditions of system changes it is necessary to develop holistic competencies of school heads, their ability to foresee problem situations and implement changes successfully (Scott, 2010).

It is laid down in the strategic documents from the European Commission (A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (2000); EC Communication Improving Competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools (2008); Work Programme Education and Training (2010)) that well prepared and continuously developing school heads ensure the quality of school activities. It is laid down in the documents from the European Council (The Professional Development of Teachers and School Heads (2009)) that: *considering that school heads have a significant impact on educational environment as well as on the motivation of personnel, work results, teaching practices, the believes and needs of students and their parents, sufficient opportunities for school heads to retain and develop skills for effective leadership should be ensured.* This provision in the documents on professional development of teachers and school heads is aligned with OECD, ETF, CEDEFOP recommendations as well as the Bologna Process. The main regulatory documents on education policy in Lithuania (Law on Education (2011); Education Guidelines (2002)) also state the significance of competent leadership and competence development of school heads under the conditions of changes in the education system. These documents emphasize a direct link between the quality of school leadership and successful implementation of reforms. School autonomy and innovativeness also draws on professional leadership.

The paper deals with the key competencies of school leaders, provides empirical evidence on the need for the holistic model of competence of Lithuanian school leaders.

Research tasks;
- To design the holistic model of competence of Lithuanian school leaders;
- To identify opinions of Lithuanian school leaders about their competencies, competence develop-ment system, leadership development programs in Lithuania.

Research methods: analysis of scientific litera-ture, opinion survey in writing, content analysis.

Research findings may be used as guidelines for designing professional training programs, compe-tence development programs, promote self-manged competence development.

Holistic model of competence: theoretical framework

Leadership development is very diverse and depends on the national context, regulations, requirements for positions. It is under the influence of various factors: political, economic, social, cultural, historical, professional and technical, which are rapidly changing and specific for a particular country (Bolam, 2004).

The functions of management and leadership are complex and interrelated. The concepts of

competence and *capability* of school leaders needs in-depth analysis. *Competence* refers to the ability to perform professional work, *capability* refers to the foundation for competence development, the ability to perform professional work in the future (Juceviciene, 2007; Mazeikis, 2007; Eraut, 1994; Scott, 2010; Stephenson, 2000; Trotter, Ellison, Davies, 2001). Capability is related to competence development and, consequently, to the development of organizational *capacity* (Fig. 1).
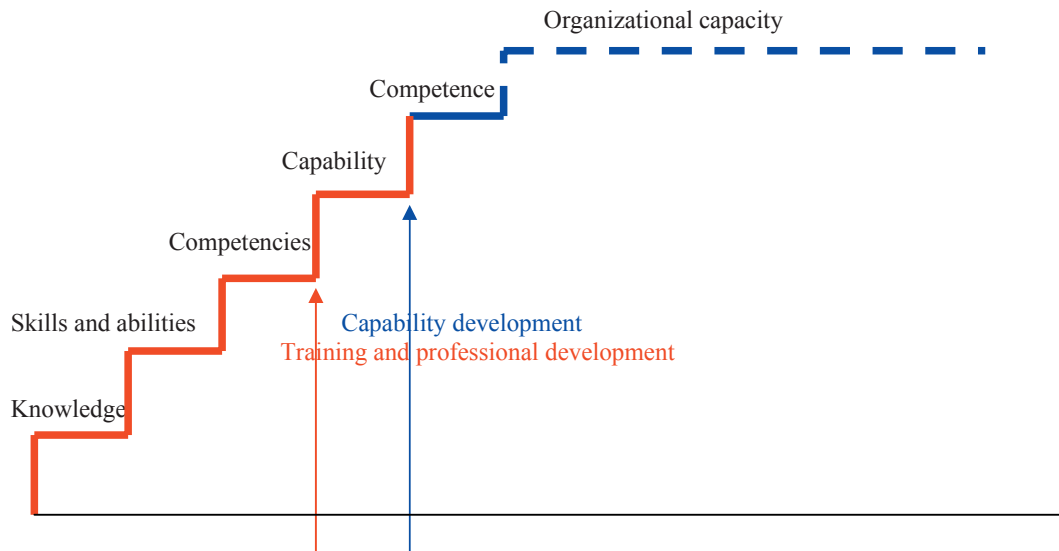

Fig. 1. Pathway to organizational capacity
(compiled by author)

The holistic model of capability is the cluster of management competencies that an individual needs to effectively perform professional activities under new and changing circumstances and achieve success in the future. *The holistic model of capability* comprises general professional competencies, specific professional competencies, skills, knowledge as well as competencies of higher rank: emotional intelligence, critical thinking and diagnostic skills; all that is needed to respond to the challenges of systemic changes. Literature analysis showed that the holistic model of capability requires changes in professional training programs the aim of which is to provide professional knowledge. Competence development, leadership programs should focus on the development of meta-cognitive abilities, how to apply new skills to professional activities.

On the basis of theoretical analysis (Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2003; Huber, 2004; Leithwood et al., 1999; Scott, 2010) the holistic model of capability of school leaders was designed. The holistic model of capability combines six competencies: personal, social, instructional, educational, self-management and management.

Personal competence is understood as self-cognition, self-analysis, the ability to analyze one's strengths and weaknesses as a precondition for the development of a mature personality and successful self-realization. **Social** competence is linked to communication culture within the organization, the ability of a school leader to build, maintain collaborative culture, mutual respect and understanding. In a wider context, it is building partnership with(in) the community. **Instructional** competence of a school leader is the ability to effectively manage the education process, design curricula, monitor academic achievements, etc. School leaders demonstrate expert knowledge of the teaching-learning process, are able to provide information, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate school activities, monitor the curriculum, create environment conducive to learning, develop and maintain a learning community. **Educational** competence is demonstrated through self-education. Changes in education and modern society should motivate school leaders to engage in life-long learning therefore educational competence has gained importance nowadays. **Self-management** competence is the ability to plan one's development and carrier. School leaders ground school activities, their own actions on scientific knowledge, draw up effective plans, evaluate consequences of their actions. **Management** competence is the ability to seek effective functioning of a school as an organization, apply the principles of modern management: quality management, human resource management, management of a learning organization, etc. School leaders demonstrate their expert knowledge of legal matters, draw up and monitor curriculum, formulate policy, set up and monitor effectively functioning staff and activity management structures, develop

strategies, adopt and monitor procedures, comply with regulations, procedures and requirements, perform functions delegated to them.

Competencies in six domains are necessary but school leaders need other competencies as well so as to be able to effectively and professionally perform their functions under the conditions of system changes. Equally important are the following high rank skills: **emotional intelligence, critical thinking, diagnostic skills** (Scott, 2010). Emotional intelligence means that school leaders have developed interpersonal skills, are able to empathize, constructively interact with others, work in teams. Critical thinking helps school leaders foresee problem issues, deal with difficulties, handle various situations. Diagnostic skills mean that school leaders are able to identify, understand cause-and-effect relationships, foresee further actions in each new situation.

This theoretical framework shows the main areas that are evaluated during the certification procedure. Management competence is evaluated against the criteria laid down in certification regulations. Transferable competencies are grouped into personal, social, educational, self-management. Thus this competence inventory is aligned with certification requirements, supplements, simplifies them, draws on international perspectives on leadership. It also encompasses high rank skills that competent school leaders must demonstrate while performing their management function under the conditions of system changes.

Empirical research

Qualitative research based on the *Framework for individual rethinking of competencies* (Trotter, Ellison, Davies, 2001) was conducted with the aim to identify competencies of school heads. Content analysis of obtained answers identified the inventory of competencies and competencies that school leaders need. Obtained answers were compared with competence descriptors and requirements for certification laid down in legal documents on education in Lithuania.

Respondents were school heads and deputy heads of qualification categories III-I. Survey sample: 47 secondary school leaders, 36 secondary school leaders from the districts in 10 counties of the Republic of Lithuania. Both groups of respondents were asked to fill out questionnaires with 20 open ended questions, e.g., how they asses the certification procedure, what problems they face while preparing for it, how they asses leadership programs, what competencies, according to them, are important for school heads nowadays, what drawbacks they find in leadership programs, etc. Content analysis of obtained answers was performed. Similar answers were grouped into categories. Analysis stages: 1) categories of answers were identified; 2) sub-categories were identified; 3) categories were interpreted by referring to provided answers. Category frequencies, opinion distribution were computed, common and discrete opinions were identified. Answers to open ended questions were not provided, respondents were given freedom to expand their answers. Heuristic content analysis was employed, obtained categories disclosed attitudes and beliefs of respondents.

Survey findings

School heads nowadays are responsible for effective functioning of their organizations and face the challenges of changing education policy. They should be competent managers, pedagogues, administrators and understand what competencies are really important for modern school leaders.

Respondents were asked to name key competencies of school leaders. Content analysis was performed and answers were grouped into 6 categories (see Table 1). They make up the framework of holistic capability.

Table 1

Competencies of modern school heads

Category	%	Sub-category	%
Management competence	76%	Facilitate development, develop, implement, promote, share the school vision, support the school community	24%
		Develop, implement a clear strategy, identify contexts, manage information, foresee problems, manage processes, achieve common goals	19%
		Manage activities, resources, ensure safe, efficient, effective functioning of a school	13%
		Create work, learning favorable environment	12%
		Create, foster, maintain collaborative environment	9%
		Monitor school activities effectively	9%
		Build, support positive school image	8%
		Ensure effective staff communication	6%

Instructional competence	64%	Organize, maintain, monitor the education process, draw up relevant curricula, instructions, regulations, evaluate outcomes	50%
		Coach staff on didactic matters	37%
		Demonstrate political awareness, compliance with legal, statutory requirements, relate public policy to student needs	13%
Social competence	64%	Build, support a positive school culture, fulfill student, staff needs, ensure professional growth	55%
		Create a positive school climate	45%
		Manage decentralized processes, procedures	
Educational competence	57%	Engage in continuous professional development	57%
		Promote staff professional development, provide conditions for continuous professional development	43%
Personal competence	36%	Strong leadership	37%
		Humanism	26%
		Tolerance	16%
		Versatility	11%
		Criticism	10%
Self-management competence	36%	Proficiency in ICT	57%
		Accept challenges, respond to changes in education	43%

The majority of respondents (76%) stated that management competence of school heads was the most important: the ability to develop a clear vision, mission, effective strategies, set clear goals, manage financial and intellectual recourses, recruit professional staff, build positive school image, etc. The importance of management competence is also highlighted in certification requirements. 64% of respondents noted instructional, social competence of school heads. Instructional competence was important seeking to create a learning environment and properly organize the education process; social competence – to build and support school culture. Educational competence, the ability to engage in life-long learning, was emphasized by 57% of respondents. Personal competence was understood as effective school leadership and encompassed leadership, humanity, tolerance, etc. 36% of respondents highlighted self-management competence as one of most important.

The survey identified the most important competencies of modern school leaders: management, instructional and social. Management competence within the new paradigm allows school heads to manage a school as a service providing organization. School heads need instructional competence to perform their key activities, organize the education process; social competence – to apply democratic principles of modern management. It should be noted that no aspects of holistic competence, e.g. emotional intelligence, diagnostic skills, etc., were mentioned. A likely explanation is that respondents were more concerned about certification requirements than the challenges of continuous changes.

Respondents were asked to self-rate their own competencies. Their answers were grouped into 5 categories (see Table 2).

Table 2

Self-rated top competencies of school heads (N = 39)

Category	%	Sub-category	%
Instructional competence	89%	Manage the teaching-learning process	35%
		Monitor the curriculum	25%
		Fulfill students needs, respond to demands	25%
		Engage in project work	15%
Management competence	76%	Draw up strategic plans	55%
		Manage school development	45%
Social competence	54%	Build a collaborative culture	50%
		Fulfill school community needs	50%
Self-management competence	48%	Manage resources	65%
		Monitor school activities, analyze data, self-reflect	35%
Educational competence	46%	Engage in professional development	60%
		Build a learning community	40%

Analysis showed that respondents had: instructional competence (89%), i.e. the ability to manage the education process, respond to students' learning needs; management competence (76%), i.e. the ability to engage in strategic planning and school improvement; about half (54%) – social competence, i.e. the ability to build human relations; self-management competence (48%); educational competence (48%), i.e. the ability to engage in life-long learning. It should be noted that modern school heads gave highest rating to their instructional, management, social, self-management and educational competencies. The evidence of that is the results of their own and school activities.

Answers to the question *What competencies do school heads need to acquire nowadays*? were grouped into 3 categories (see Table 3).

Table 3

Competencies that school heads need nowadays

Category	%	Sub-category	%
Social competence	86%	Maintain a positive school climate	38%
		Build a collaborative culture, the school community	24%
		Collaborate with the community members, families, fulfil community diverse needs, accumulate community resources	21%
		Integrity, fairness, ethical norms	17%
Management competence	71%	Plan, organize, monitor, control activities	36%
		Manage school related information	29%
		Manage time	20%
		Build school image	15%
Self-management competence	43%	Proficiency in ICT	56%
		Manage time	44%

Interpretation of obtained answer led to the conclusion that respondents were lacking: social competence (86%), management competence (71%), i.e. the ability to plan, lead, monitor, manage information and change, self-management competence (43%), i.e. the ability to use ICT for school related matters. School heads nowadays should develop social, management, self-management competencies.

Answers to the question *What competencies do you think should be included in certification requirements?* were grouped and are provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Competencies that should be included in certification requirements (N = 35)

Category		Sub-category
Personal competence	96%	Oratory skill
		Time management skill
		Optimism
		Self-presentation skill
		Charisma
Self-management competence	86%	Leader team building
		Responsibility sharing and delegation
		Project management
		Positive relations building
		Decision making
		Image building
Social competence	82%	Conflict management
		Staff motivation
		Collaborative relations building
		School-family partnership building
		Flexible management
		Cross-cultural communication
		Social problems solving

Management competence	64%	Goal, priority setting
		Information management
Emotional intelligence	32%	Emotions management
		Tolerance
Educational competence	28%	Knowledge sharing
		Reflection

Respondents named competencies that should be included in current certification requirements. It should be noted that some aspects of holistic competence, e.g. emotional intelligence, was mentioned. That shows relevance of the capability framework.

Respondents were asked to evaluate their theoretical preparation. Obtained answers were grouped into: theoretical preparation is sufficient, depends on a situation, theoretical preparation is insufficient. The majority of respondents (58%) were lacking theoretical preparation, preparation of 42% of respondents depended on a situation, no respondents stated that their theoretical preparation was sufficient.

Answers to the question *What forms of competence development do you use?* were as follows: 93% of respondents said that self-education was the most effective competence development form (*I spend quite a lot of time. Nowadays it is very important to keep up with time, you must know recent development trends in education, the best source of information is the Internet. Self-education is vital nowadays if you don't want to drown in information);* 86% preferred competence development in seminars and courses, it was rated as a popular and effective form; 57% preferred studies at higher education institutions (*To my mind Master education management programmes are very useful. I am going to continue studies at the university);* according to 36% of respondents, practical work, experience helped develop competencies (*You develop competencies doing daily tasks, when you face and deal with problems, overcome obstacles, seek to work effectively);* for 21% of respondents experience sharing was one of the forms of competence development (*I highly appreciate the activity of the Lithuanian School Heads Association because here we share knowledge, experience, discuss problems, foresee outcomes, defend our rights. The best way to develop competencies is to communicate with colleagues).*

Self-education, seminars and courses were the main forms of competence development. It should be noted that studies at higher education institutions were not highly rated as a form of competence development.

Answers to the question about competence development opportunities in Lithuania were grouped into 3 categories. 58% of respondents said that competence development opportunities were in place and they used them (*Many various seminars for school heads are offered, you have to choose what you really need and sometimes it is quite difficult. There are enough ways and forms to develop your competence. You simply should accept novelties and continuous changes in education. Various institutions offer competence development seminars and courses, the problem is time. Routine tasks take up much time.).* 48% of respondents said that many various seminars were offered so it was quite a task to select the ones they really needed (*Actually, leadership programs should meet the needs of school heads, be aligned with qualification requirements. That's not an easy task. A school head should be able to draw up his competence development plan, develop his competencies systemically and continuously).* Another point noted by 42% of respondents was linking theory and practice in leadership programs (*Institutions mostly focus on theory but ignore practical aspects).*

It should be concluded that school heads were offered many competence development opportunities but faced some problems. Firstly, leadership programs were not fully aligned with qualification standards, did not meet their needs for both theory and practice. Secondly, the competence development process was lacking consistency and monitoring. Finally, school leaders were not offered help while drawing up their individual competence development plans. All that might save their time and make the development process more purposeful and focused.

Answers to the question *What competencies do various seminars and courses focus on?* were summarized and are provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Competencies that various seminars and courses focus on

Category	%	Sub-category	%
Instructional competence	93%	Education process management	53%
		Education policy analysis	34%
		Market research	14%
Management competence	93%	Strategic planning	26%
		Finance management	23%
		Organizational behaviour	18%
		Quality management	23%
		Human resource management	10%
Self-management competence	57%	ICT management	58%
		Information analysis	42%
Social competence	42%	Correspondence skills	62%
		English language skills	22%
		Conflict management	16%

Analysis showed that leadership programs were oriented to the development of instructional (93%) and management (93%) competencies. Survey findings proved that leadership programs tended to focus on the development of instructional and management competencies. The respondents noted that they mainly acquired theoretical knowledge which was hardly applicable. Another noteworthy point was that leadership programs did not cover all certification areas.

Respondents were asked to evaluate certification requirements. 76% of respondents noted that certification requirements were complicated (*New requirements are quite tricky, differ from the previous ones, no help is offered. It is not clear how to prove competencies, what documents to submit*); 60% needed help while preparing for the certification procedure (*I would welcome instructions how to fill out tables and prove competencies*).

Answers to the question *How do various leadership programs help prepare for certification?* were as follows: 55 % of respondents were not fully prepared for all the challenges of the certification procedure, 40% said that personal experience or colleagues' advice was more helpful than leadership programs preparing for the certification procedure, 67% – that typical leadership programs offered by education institutions were not linked to certification requirements, 33% – that education institutions paid little attention to certification requirements, did not include them in their leadership programs, 25% – that certification requirements were not aligned with the content of leadership programs. It was found out that school heads were not fully prepared for the challenges of the certification procedure, typical leadership programs offered by education institutions were not linked to the certification practice, education institutions paid little attention to certification requirements, did not include them in their leadership programs.

Conclusions

The concepts of school heads' competencies, holistic capability were analyzed theoretically. School heads under the conditions of systemic changes should develop holistic capability that includes instructional, management, social, educational, self-management competencies as well as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, diagnostic skills. Each competence comprises particular skills. The inventory of skills defines school heads' management competence.

The main function of school heads is to ensure competent management. The survey identified that the most relevant competencies were: management, i.e. strategic planning, the ability to organize, monitor the education process, share knowledge within the school community, build school management on the principles of modern management, ensure effective and efficient functioning of the school, build positive school image, represent the school community; instructional, i.e. the ability to ensure organization of the education process; social, i.e. the ability to apply democratic principles of modern management; educational, i. e. the ability to build a learning organization.

School heads achieve results in their professional activity because they have some competencies. Self-rated top competencies were as follows: instructional, management, social, self-management and educational.

According to respondents, they were lacking social, management and self-management competencies. Leadership programs were more oriented to the development of instructional and management

competencies and did not address social, personal, educational competencies. Self-education was identified as the main form of developing information management and professional competencies.

The survey identified that personal, self-management, social, management, educational competencies and emotional intelligence should be included in leadership standards. Although school heads more focused on certification requirements than the challenges of professional activity they identified some aspects of holistic capability, high rank skills, e.g. emotional intelligence, critical thinking, diagnostic. That means that they understood the need for more specific skills than good management competence alone. School heads understood that their management should create competitive advantage.

The survey identified the following forms of competence development: self-education, courses and seminars. However, school heads rated competence development programs offered by higher education institutions not high. The survey also identified some problems school heads faced. Firstly, leadership programs were not aligned with qualification standards, school management practices and did not meet school heads' needs for both theory and practice. Secondly, leadership programs were lacking consistency and monitoring. Finally, school heads did not get help while drawing up their individual competence development plans. All that might save their time and make the development process more purposeful and focused.

Respondents noted that they were not fully prepared for the challenges of the certification procedure, typical leadership programs offered by education institutions were not linked to the certification procedure, education institutions paid little attention to certification requirements, did not include them in their leadership programs.

The designed theoretical holistic model of competence of leadership may serve as the basis for creating relevant leadership standards, define competencies needed by school heads, make training and professional development more focused and vision oriented. Theoretical analysis of the concepts of competence and capability may serve as the methodological background for designing leadership programs.

Qualitative research identified the inventory of competencies:

- *Management competence:* the ability to plan school development, monitor school activities, build image, manage information, cooperate with the stakeholders, manage human resources, finances, other resources, monitor school activities, ensure the quality of education.

- *Instructional competence:* the ability to organize and evaluate the education process, fulfill students' needs, cooperate with the community.
- *Educational competence:* the ability to draw up individual competence development plans, foster staff professional development.
- *Self-management competence:* the ability to self-manage, leader, plan time.
- *Social competence:* the ability to build school culture and climate, cooperate with staff.

Qualitative research identified the following competencies that should be developed:

- *Social competence*: the ability to manage conflicts, motivate staff, cooperate with it, delegate responsibilities, maintain relationships with students, families, communicate across cultures.
- *Management competence:* the ability to monitor school activities, make decisions, manage information, changes, share leadership, build school image.
- *Educational competence:* the ability to share knowledge, reflect.
- *Emotional intelligence*: tolerance, the ability to manage emotions.

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Lietuvos mokyklų vadovų holistinės kompetencijos modelio sukūrimas: teorinis pagrindimas ir empirinės įžvalgos

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojamos bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų vadovų kompetencijos nuolatinės švietimo kaitos sąlygomis. Teoriškai apibūdinamas bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų vadovų holistinės kompetencijos modelis. Empirinio tyrimo metu siekiama atskleisti, kokiomis kompetencijomis disponuoja šiandienos bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų vadovai ir kokių kompetencijų jiems dar reikia išsiugdyti. Daugiausia dėmesio skiriama teoriniam vadovų pasirengimui: aptariami jų kompetencijų įgijimo ir tobulinimo būdai.

Straipsnio tikslas – teoriškai ir empiriškai atskleisti aktualias šiuolaikiniams Lietuvos mokyklų vadovams kompetencijas ir pateikti holistinės kompetencijos modelį nuolatinės kaitos sąlygomis.

Straipsnio uždaviniai:

1) teoriškai apibrėžti holistinės mokyklų vadovų kompetencijų modelį;

2) atskleisti Lietuvos mokyklų vadovų nuomonę apie holistinės kompetencijos aspektus ir kompetencijų ugdymo galimybes Lietuvoje.

Tyrimo metodai: teorinė mokslinės literatūros analizė, kokybinio tyrimo duomenų rinkimo metodas – atvira apklausa raštu, kokybinių duomenų analizės metodas – turinio (angl. *content*) analizė.

Mokslinės literatūros teorinės analizės pagrindu (Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2003; Huber, 2004; Leithwood et al., 1999; Scott, 2010) nustatyta mokyklų vadovų holistinės kompetencijos struktūra, kurią sudaro asmeninė, socialinė, profesinė, edukacinė, savivaldos ir vadybinė kompetencijos. „Kaitos paradigmoje" holistinė kompetencija apima emocinio intelekto, gnostinių gebėjimų, kritinio mąstymo konstruktus. Kompetencijos holistinė idėja akcentuoja žmogaus savybes ir vertybes, požiūrį į save kaip į profesionalą, o tai įgalina veikti neapibrėžtose veiklos situacijose. Pristatytas kompetencijų modelis integruoja kompetencijas, aktualias sisteminės kaitos sąlygomis. Mokyklų vadovų kompetencijos – jų profesinio kompetentingumo prielaida. Todėl svarbu empiriškai ištirti kompetencijų modelio struktūrą.

Empiriniame tyrime dalyvavo 47 bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų vadovai. Tyrimo būdas sudarytas remiantis Trotter, Ellison, Davies (2001) individualios kompetencijų permąstymo metodikos (angl. *Framework for individual rethinking of competencies*) pagrindu. Ši metodika skirta mokyklų vadovų veiklos aspektams ir kompetencijoms atskleisti. Tyrimo instrumentas – atvirų klausimų anketa, kurią sudaro trys diagnostiniai blokai: klausimai, skirti mokyklų vadovų veiklos sričių analizei; klausimai, skirti būtinoms kompetencijoms apibūdinti; klausimai, skirti būtinoms išsiugdyti kompetencijoms nustatyti. Atsakymų į klausimus turinys buvo nagrinėtas taikant kokybinės kontentinės analizės metodą kaip kokybinės diagnostikos priemonę. Taikant kokybinės diagnostikos metodologinę koncepciją, gauti rezultatai leidžia nustatyti konteksto, proceso ar veiklos ypatumus ir numatyti tobulėjimo kryptis. Atkreiptinas dėmesys, kad vadinamuosiuose atviruose klausimuose tiriamiesiems NĖRA primetamas konkretus atsakymų turinys. Tiriamieji turi principinę galimybę savo atsakymuose įžvelgti, iškelti, akcentuoti pačius įvairiausius jiems teikiamo klausimo ir už jo slypinčių problemų aspektus.

Tyrimo išvados. Mokyklų vadovų holistinės kompetencijos struktūrą sudaro asmeninė, socialinė, edukacinė, profesinė, savivaldos ir vadybinė kompetencijos. „Kaitos paradigmoje" holistinė kompetencija apima emocinio intelekto, gnostinių gebėjimų, kritinio mąstymo konstruktus. Pristatytas kompetencijų modelis integruoja kompetencijas, aktualias sisteminės kaitos sąlygomis.

Pagrindinis mokyklos vadovo veiklos tikslas – kompetentingai vadovauti mokyklai. Šiuolaikiniam Lietuvos mokyklos vadovui turėtų būti aktualiausia vadybinė kompetencija. Vadovas turi išmanyti planavimo, organizavimo, kontrolės sampratas ir gebėti tai išaiškinti personalui, organizuoti mokyklos veiklą, atsižvelgdamas į šiuolaikinės vadybos reikalavimus, ištekliais pagrįstus bendruomenės poreikius, reprezentuoti savo organizaciją visuomenėje, rūpintis teigiamu jos įvaizdžiu. Profesinės kompetencijos poreikį sąlygoja prioritetinė šiandieninio

vadovo veiklos sritis – ugdymo proceso kokybės užtikrinimas. Socialinės kompetencijos poreikis nulemtas demokratiniais šiuolaikinės vadybos principais. Nemažiau svarbi edukacinė vadovo kompetencija – tai vadovo atvirumas pokyčiams ir prielaida mokyklos bendruomenei tobulėti.

Bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų vadovų nuomone, šiandienos vadovui dar reikėtų išsiugdyti socialinę, vadybinę ir savivaldos kompetencijas. Šiuolaikiniams vadovams taip pat aktualios emocinio intelekto dimensijos – tolerancija, emocijų valdymo gebėjimai. Tuo tarpu įvairių kursų, seminarų, paskaitų tematika daugiausia orientuota į profesinės ir vadybinės kompetencijų plėtojimą, mažai dėmesio skiriama socialinės, asmeninės, edukacinės kompetencijų aspektams. Matyt, ši situacija lemia aukštą savišvietos reitingą kaip alternatyvos, užtikrinančios šiuolaikinio vadovo informacijos poreikius.

Svarbu pabrėžti, kad šiandienos vadovas suvokia savo misiją (dauguma informantų pabrėžė vadovavimo svarbą užtikrinant efektyvią mokyklos veiklą), todėl jaučia poreikį kompetencijoms įgyti. Atkreiptinas dėmesys, kad šiuolaikinis vadovas kompetencijas įgyja savišvietos būdu arba kursų, seminarų metu. Reikia pabrėžti, kad šiame kontekste menkai vertinamas aukštasis mokslas kaip kompetencijų įgijimo būdas; tobulinimosi galimybių šiandieniniam vadovui pakanka, svarbu rasti laiko ir mokėti jomis pasinaudoti.

Holistinės kompetencijos modelis, pristatytas straipsnyje, galėtų būti pagrindas mokyklos vadybos standartams kurti. Mokyklos vadybos standartai apibrėžtų šiuolaikiniams mokyklų vadovams būtinas kompetencijas ir profesinį vadovų tobulinimąsi paverstų kryptingu procesu. Teorinė kompetencijos ir holistinės kompetencijos sampratų analizė galėtų tapti metodologiniu pagrindu mokyklų vadovų kompetencijų ugdymo programoms plėtoti.