

A Case Study of Head Teachers' Leadership and Management of Rural Schools in Kazakhstan

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Introduction

- “Kazakhstan-2050 Strategy”: entering the 30 most advanced nations by 2050 (Bridges, 2014)
- SPED (2010): the improvement of education management (Wilson et al., 2013)

Leadership and Management Definitions

- No approved leadership and management concept definitions (Bush, 2011; Leithwood et al., 1999)
- Leadership - vision, values, influence and establishing long-term goals (Bell and Harrison, 1995; Bush, 2011)
- Management - control of resource base, development of staff, carrying out agreed policy (Bolam, 1999; Huber, 2010)

Interest in Educational Leadership and Management

Influence of school leaders on the whole educational learning process:

- Teaching quality
- Pupil achievement
- School culture and climate (Bryk et al., 2010; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1999)

Educational Leadership in Kazakhstan

Leadership courses:

- CoE programme
- The NCPD “Orleu” (Yakavets et al., 2015)

Research objectives

1. What leadership activities do policy makers expect head teachers in remote schools to do?
2. How do head teachers interpret their leadership role?
3. What do head teachers actually do in rural schools of Kazakhstan?

Study Design

Research Questions	Data collection method	Data collection method
1. What leadership activities do policy makers expect head teachers in remote schools to do?	Documentary analysis	
1. How do head teachers interpret this leadership role?	Semi-structured interviews	Questionnaire
1. What do head teachers actually do in rural schools of Kazakhstan?	Head teachers' diaries	Interviews Questionnaire

Findings from the document analysis

- Requirements to leadership positions in schools mainly associated with management
- Higher pedagogical education
- At least five years of pedagogical experience in educational organisations
- Compulsory knowledge of the state documents
- Resource centres (CBR, 2014; OECD, 2015)

Findings from the document analysis

Ungraded schools (UGS):

- Low student achievement
- Remoteness
- Poor infrastructure
- Lack of basic equipment
- Outdoor toilets
- Old buildings (OECD, 2015)

Findings from Interviews

- Both *Leadership* and *Management* associated with motivation and supervising
- Problems: heating and water supply, school financial system, lack of facilities (outdoor toilets) and lower parents' literacy
- Financial management
- Resource centres

Findings From Diaries

Numerous duties and responsibilities (about 80%):

- Administrative meetings on the school and regional levels
- Management (controlling teachers' and students' activities)
- Teaching (five days per week)
- Solving operations and maintenance issues (heating, water supply, etc)

Findings From Diaries

- Participation in organising elections on the regional and state levels
- Visiting students at homes
- Cleaning of the schools and rural setting territories on a regular basis

Findings From Questionnaires

Leadership and Management concepts mainly associated with management and control

Key challenges:

- Lack of school facilities (35%)
- Lack of support from school administration (28%)
- Bureaucracy (19%)
- Poor motivation and atmosphere at schools (10%)
- Deficiency of individual approach to every teacher (8%)

Discussion

1. What leadership activities do policy makers expect head teachers in remote schools to do?
2. How do head teachers interpret their leadership role?
3. What do head teachers actually do in rural schools of Kazakhstan?

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