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Dana Benedek

School Leadership and School Effectiveness in Kazakhstan: Perspectives from Principals and Teachers

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EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

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In dedication to Yeremia N. L.

who burst out in laughter

when I said that I would never do a PhD

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Abstract

School effectiveness is a key area of interest in educational research, focusing on the factors contributing to positive student outcomes and overall school performance. Leadership is back in fashion. Education policy agendas prioritise school leadership globally. It maintains its crucial role in the debate on school effectiveness and improvement. School leadership plays a significant role in shaping the school's function, impacting students' performance and organisational effectiveness. Nevertheless, as leaders, principals need to consider their roles in building effective schools, especially with the extremely high demands that modern society places on educational outcomes. This research aims to explore and understand what an effective school stands for and what the leader's roles are from the perspectives of principals and teachers. This doctoral research is developed as an exploratory qualitative study in the context of educational reforms and developmental interventions in Kazakhstan. Theoretically, effectiveness is a complex phenomenon which has been looked at from the prism of organisational theory, exploring the structure, functioning, and behaviour of organisations as a whole. The research attempted to develop a model for the school as a learning organisation, and its leadership is to produce a system with a sound theoretical foundation and practical applicability, which led to the Competing Values Framework. The Competing Values Framework is a tool that works as a map, an organising structure, a sense-making device, an inspiration for new ideas, and a learning. The data collection comprised school visits, interviews with principals and teachers, focus groups, shadowing observation of the principals, and interviews with educational experts and policy authorities. Qualitative content analysis was provided to present the results for further discussion. The results indicate that an effective school is one that functions and learns holistically, where every dimension has duties, responsibilities, and processes but works together in synergy. For the synergy to grow and flourish, the role of the leader is essential. Thus, the study concludes that it extended the knowledge of organisational effectiveness, particularly with corresponding directions of the principal's activity. The presented results make several noteworthy contributions to the dimensions of the Competing Values Framework, enhancing the understanding of the roles of the principals and applying it to the everyday functional performance of the school leader. The key strength of the study is merging challenging and vague notions of effectiveness and leadership.

Absztrakt

Az iskolai hatékonyság az oktatáskutatás egyik kulcsfontosságú területe, amely azokra a tényezőkre összpontosít, amelyek hozzájárulnak a pozitív tanulói eredményekhez és az általános iskolai teljesítményhez. Az oktatáspolitikai irányelvek az iskolavezetést helyezik előtérbe globálisan. Az iskolavezetés megtartotta meghatározó szerepét az iskola hatékonyságáról és fejlesztéséről szóló vitában. Az iskola vezetése nagy szerepet játszik az iskola funkciójának alakításában, befolyásolva a tanulók teljesítményét és a szervezeti hatékonyságot. Mindazonáltal vezetőként az igazgatóknak mérlegelniük kell, mi a szerepük a hatékony iskolák felépítésében, különösen a modern társadalom által az oktatási eredményekkel szemben támasztott rendkívül magas követelmények mellett. A kutatás célja annak feltárása és megértése, hogy mit jelent a hatékony iskola, és mi a vezető szerepe az igazgatók és a tanárok szemszögéből. Ezt a doktori kutatást feltáró kvalitatív tanulmányként írtuk meg a kazahsztáni oktatási reformok és fejlesztések alapján. Elméletileg a hatékonyság egy összetett jelenség, amelyet a szervezetelmélet prizmáján keresztül vizsgáltak, figyelembe véve a szervezetek egészének felépítését, működését és viselkedését. A kutatás megkísérelte az iskola, mint tanulási intézmény modelljének kidolgozását, melynek vezetése egy szilárd elméleti megalapozottságú és gyakorlatban alkalmazható rendszer létrehozása, amely elvezetett a Versengő Értékek Keretrendszeréhez. A Versengő Értékek Keretrendszere egy olyan eszköz, amely tervként, szervező struktúraként, értékes eszközként, új ötletek megvalósulási terepeként és tanulási céllal működik. Az iskolalátogatásokból, az igazgatókkal és tanárokkal folytatott interjúkból, fókuszcsoportokból, az igazgatók megfigyeléséből, valamint oktatási szakértőkkel és szakpolitikai hatóságokkal folytatott interjúkból állt össze az adatgyűjtés. A közreműködők kvalitatív tartalomelemzést adtak az eredmények további megvitatásával kapcsolatban. Az eredmények azt mutatják, hogy a hatékony iskola az, ami holisztikusan működik, ahol minden résztvevő tisztában van kötelességével, felelősségével és mindez szinergiában működik együtt. A szinergia növekedéséhez és kiteljesedéséhez elengedhetetlen a vezető szerepe. A tanulmány kibővítette a szervezeti hatékonysággal kapcsolatos ismereteket, különös tekintettel az igazgatói tevékenységre. A bemutatott eredmények több figyelemre méltó szempontot adnak a Versengő Értékek Keretrendszerének dimenzióihoz, segítik az igazgatók szerepének megértését, és alkalmazhatóak az iskolavezető mindennapi funkcionális teljesítményének

javítására. A tanulmány fókuszában a hatékonyság és a vezetés kihívást jelentő és homályos fogalmainak tisztázása áll.

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List of Acronyms

AEO – Autonomous Educational Organisation

CAS – Creativity, activity, and service

CIS – Council of International Schools

CiTO – Central Institute for Test Development

CoE – The Center of Excellence Programme

CVF – Competing Values Framework

DP – Diploma Programme

EBRD – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EDI – Education for All Development Index

EHEA – European Higher Education Area

ELTE – Eötvös Loránd University

EU – European Union

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulations

GOSO – State Compulsory Education Standard. Primary Education. Secondary Education

IB – International Baccalaureate

IELTS – International English Language Testing System

ISCEI – International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement

JSC – Joint-stock Company

Kazakh SSR – Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic

KKSON – Committee for the Inspection in Education and Science

MESRK – Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan

MIT – Massachusetts Institute of Technology

MoES – Ministry of Education and Science

MYP – Middle Year's Programme

NIS – Nazarbayev Intellectual School

NSCL – National College for School Leadership

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

PIRLS – Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study

PISA – Program for International Student Assessment

SAT – Scholastic Aptitude Test

SPED – State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan

STEM – Science. Technology. Engineering. Math.

TIMSS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

UGS – Ungraded Schools

UK - United Kingdom

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Leadership is back in fashion. Education policy agendas prioritise school leadership to a global extent. It maintains its crucial role in the debate on school effectiveness and improvement (Odhiambo & Hii, 2012). Despite the extensive research and practice to enhance school effectiveness, no coherently accepted set of guidelines concerning the school effectiveness assessment exists. Researchers in school effectiveness often aim to clarify dilemmas respecting learners' or students' education outcomes, which leads to calling the schools more accountable for being judged on the student's academic results in many cases (Botha, 2010).

In 1990, research on school effectiveness revealed that leadership is a crucial factor in the success of education (Sammons et al., 1995). Recent studies have advanced the search for a correlation between leadership-specific aspects and measurable learning outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2004; Mulford & Silins, 2003). Studies like this concentrate on how school leaders apply leadership, which cannot be seen in isolation but holistically as part of a broader pattern of leadership practice (Seashore et al., 2010).

As school leaders, principals encounter the challenge of improving teaching and learning to ensure students' successful academic performance. However, in this new educational era, the principal's role shifts from supporting teachers' efforts to leading teachers to achieve tangible outcomes (Lashway, 2003). Historically, possessing solid administrative and political skills was sufficient to be called an effective leader. However, the current school expectations involve different types of leadership skills from principals. This means that in addition to historically established skill pressures, principals face challenges such as budgetary cutbacks, school safety, contract supervision, data management, and marketing. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the principal is dependent on complex knowledge and skills related to organisational culture and management, and this needs not only innovative practices but also a different mindset (Elmore, 2000).

1.2 Problem statement

Kazakhstan as the country of research is defined by the fact that Kazakhstan is a country in transition. Since 1991, after declaring independence, the leaders have pursued transforming the country's economy, liberating it from the grip of central planners, and opening its potential market forces. The transition has not ignored the education system embracing educational reforms that aimed at opening educational provision to the free market and integrating the education system more closely with the international community. Given the country's economic and political ambitions in recent years, the rush to transform the education system has only intensified (AllahMorad, 2021).

The choice of Kazakhstan is particularly interesting because of its transition time of Kazakhstan, where the basis for these reforms in contemporary Kazakhstan can ultimately be found in the turmoil of the country's immediate post-independence social, political, and economic experience. The country had undergone ambitious transformations in a short period of time. It is noteworthy to observe the country's openness to brave ideas and innovations in the educational system as well as being open to Western concepts with the post-soviet experience of the past.

Transferring the effective practices of schools is one of the core objectives of Kazakhstan's educational system. This is the reason why identifying the characteristics of an effective school is an obligatory step in improving the quality of secondary education. Currently, one of the most accepted ways to collect information on effective schools is the results of final national testing and exams. They are used both officially and non-officially to evaluate the quality of schools and make the annual report (Davis & Winch, 2015; Koretz, 2002). The issue of the need for school leadership and school effectiveness research is emerging in Kazakhstan, which explains the limited published papers or almost absence of academic research in English.

The issue of the need for school leadership and school effectiveness research is emerging in Kazakhstan, which explains the limited published papers or almost absence of academic research in English. Notably, school leadership is a relatively new concept as compared with school management. The issue of approaches to rethinking the school leadership concept has been discussed at the Ministry of Education and Science level.

1.3 The purpose of the study

This research is of interest in terms of studying principals' and teachers' perceptions of leadership roles and practices and how they are related to school effectiveness. From the principal's perspective, this research is valuable because it digs up the existing literature on specific school leader practices to consider if leadership effects can be associated with particular practices and behaviours.

From the teacher's perspective, the study is relevant because it provides a starting point for exploring the importance of teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership and their relationship to school effectiveness.

The current research is targeted at finding out the successful patterns of leadership practices that make the schools effective in Kazakhstan. The study aims to gather data on school leaders' practices and explore how these practices address and conceptualise effectiveness. This work will investigate principals' and teachers' perspectives on leadership roles and school effectiveness to explain the relationship between these two notions.

1.4 Research aims and research questions

The main goal of the current research is to understand the phenomenon of the organisation's effectiveness and the school leader's role in the context of Kazakhstan. These goals are the heart of this study; accordingly, the following aims are pursued:

- To extend the knowledge on the nature of the term of effectiveness;
- To construct a potential framework regarding the school leaders' function;
- To enhance understanding of the impact of the leader that supports effectivity.

In order to fulfil the objectives of this ambitious research, several research questions were developed to find the analytical and conceptual framework:

1. How do principals and teachers understand the effectiveness of the school as an organisation?
2. What are the perspectives and beliefs regarding the roles of the school leader?
3. What is the school leader's role in improving school effectiveness?

The research questions are set to serve as a guide for the rest of the study and support the main objectives and the research problem statement. The questions will be the basis for developing the research design and the interview questions. Theoretically and empirically,

each question will be addressed in the following parts of the dissertation to construct the whole picture into a meaningful set of lessons and recommendations.

1.5 The organisation of the dissertation

This dissertation is organised following the requirements of the Eötvös Loránd University to pursue a doctoral degree and to support a respective presentation of the research work done within the scope of *School effectiveness and school leadership in Kazakhstan: Perspectives from principals and teachers.* The overall structure of the study takes the form of seven chapters, including this introductory chapter.

This paper first gives a brief overview of approaches to understanding school effectiveness. It encompasses literature on the complexity of the concept and key characteristics of effective schools. It further embodies readings on organisational aspects of effectiveness, incorporating segments of leadership. Next, the paper reviews the literature on defining leadership, comprising the dimensions of leadership and school leadership paradigms. The main issue addressed in the first chapter is developing the framework for the research that merges school effectiveness and leaders' roles.

The following part of the dissertation provides a brief overview of the case of Kazakhstan, namely past intervention in understanding effectiveness and leadership.

The third part presents the research findings, focusing on the three key themes set by the research questions in the context of Kazakhstan. By providing these results in the given context, readers will be able to examine the data structure, exploring the given themes from the perspectives of principals, teachers, and educational experts.

The fourth part of the dissertation begins by laying out the research design and methodology. It brings scientific theoretical theories along with the fundamentals of the qualitative research approach. This part also provides information on data collection procedures, participants, and data analysis. Importantly, this section of the dissertation offers an outline of ethical considerations and limitations.

The fifth part presents the findings of the interviews and focus group discussions, with quotes from principals, teachers, and educational experts underlying them.

The sixth part analyses the results of interviews and focus group discussions undertaken during the current study. It provides an overview of the knowledge gained from

the entire research. A deliberate discussion emphasises the concept of effective school as a complex phenomenon, and four quadrants of the Competing Values Framework of the analytical structure are considered. Furthermore, the chapter offers lessons learned for schools and recommendations for principals.

The final chapter draws upon the entire thesis, tying up the various theoretical and empirical strands to sum up the answers to the questions asked and includes a discussion of the implications of the findings for future research in this area.

PART 2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Conceptualising different approaches to the understanding of school effectiveness

2.1.1 School effectiveness as a complex concept

Studies on school effectiveness have dominated the education management and administration research area for some time. Despite extensive research and practice to enhance school effectiveness, no coherently accepted set of guidelines concerning school effectiveness assessment exists. Researchers in the area of school effectiveness often aim to clarify dilemmas respecting learners' or students' education outcomes, which leads to calling the schools more accountable for being judged on the academic results in many cases (Botha, 2010).

First, the term "effectiveness" has always been ambiguous, and it is essential to clarify to understand what "effective schools" mean. Effectiveness is presumed to be the ability to perform or produce a desired effect and the quality of the ability to accomplish a desired effect (American Heritage, 2000). The keyword 'desired effect' implies that it means the achievement of criteria based on the term of reference.

A robust definition of "effectiveness" was invoked during the 1930s as "an action is effective if it accomplishes its specific objective aim" (Barnard & Andrews, 1968, p. 45). Therefore, an effective school can be considered as "the school accomplishing its objectives". There is a consensus on defining the concept of 'effectiveness' as stated by Beare et al. (2018) and Ninan (2006), which refers to the organisation accomplishing its specific objectives. School effectiveness, therefore, means 'the school accomplishes its objectives'.

However, Scheerens (2000) argues that goal attainment is the literal meaning of effectiveness, and, therefore, the criteria for performance measurement reflect primary educational objectives. The concept of "school effectiveness" can bear different meanings beyond the direct explanation mentioned above, which has drawn a global debate around the notion (Mortimore, 2001b).

The research on school effectiveness developed into a global drive for school improvement through different phases. The first phase can be considered as the research of Edmonds Field (1979) and Rutter Field (1979), who conducted two seminal studies independently during the 1970s. Their main concerns were analysing evidence and making

the case about creating a difference in students' life chances with the potential power of schooling. Even though neither Edmonds nor Rutter were aware of each other's research until the works had been published, the conclusions were similar: 'Schools did make a small but highly significant difference to the life chances of their students' (Mortimore, 2001, p. 236). Both researchers presented to examine if schools in the national contexts displayed any effects when differences in student populations were considered. Hence, the research projects appeared independently in the United States and the United Kingdom, putting forward similar questions and drawing moderately on similar methodologies that showed the potential for further research.

The second phase encompasses the studies conducted during the 1980s, which were focused on improving the methodology and the research design (Bourdieu et al., 1997). The representative study of the more sophisticated approach of empirical research is the large-scale Lousiana study undertaken by Charles Teddlie and Sam Springfield (Teddlie et al., 1989) along with Louise Stoll and Pam Sammons who concluded that schools had different levels of effectiveness (Mortimore et al., 1988). These studies led to the identification of several essential factors concerning both the whole, and the classroom processes were described as well. The identified factors have been much debated since the publication of the studies mentioned above and have generally been replicated by international studies. More than 160 research studies were reviewed to generate the list of factors functioning at the school level (Sammons et al., 1995). The primary considerations of the school effectiveness research of the past two decades were discussed during the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ISCEI) at Cardiff in 1991 (Mortimore, 1991). The main directions taken in the research during this period comprise the development of theory, the application of methods and concepts to other parts of education like special schools, post-school colleges and universities, and the transfer of energy to the school improvement (Mortimore & Whitty, 2000). It is interesting to review now, almost two decades later, which areas have been followed and how different settings are now present.

Some new empirical effectiveness studies have been seen in the third phase of school effectiveness research. The studies on school subject departments were undertaken by Sammons, Thomas, and Mortimore Field (1997) and MacBeath with a team of researchers from Strathclyde University and the Institute of Education (MacBeath, 2007). The main

characteristic of this phase is that the focus has changed from school effectiveness research to action research of school improvement, resulting in the research communities playing second fiddle to the practitioners. In addition to this, according to Scheerens, “they have also had to resist their arguments being reduced to an oversimplified economic model of the education production process” (Scheerens, 1992, p. 3).

The fourth phase of school effectiveness research brought the importance of globalisation in studying schools and ways of enhancing learning at the individual, group school, national and international levels. This is an instance of the location of the ISCEI 2000 conference in Hong Kong. In many regards, the East meets the West, which is the most fitting. The National Institute of Education in Singapore and the Institute of Education in London commenced answering whether schools in the East and the West are so different that comparison is impossible. The series of case studies exemplifies how schools in various settings and operating within contrasting cultures can be compared and learn from each other (Mortimore et al., 2000). The research showed that the transformation of schools taken under the study emerged when the school acquired a new enthusiastic principal who believed everyone was capable of learning and knew how to impart staff and students with this ideal. The elements for longstanding change in each school’s improvement comprised motivating staff, focusing on teaching and learning, reinforcing the physical environment, and advancing the school's culture (Mortimore, 2001). The study showed the national differences in terms of national attitudes toward education, views of intelligence, the motivating effect of good career prospects, and the odds of examination success (Mortimore, 2001).

The main conclusions of this period of school effectiveness research include:

- Improvement techniques must fit with the grain of society rather than go against it.
- Indiscriminate borrowing from other cultures may not achieve the desired results.
- There is no “quick fix” for school improvement.
- Change has to be carried out by the school itself (Mortimore, 2001, p. 239).

Drawing attention to the development of school effectiveness research over the last 20 years, Hargreaves (2001) remarked that ‘since 1979 the outcomes that specify the effective school have been progressively narrowed and in many studies are reduced to test results of academic knowledge. These are important outcomes of schooling but not the only outcomes that matter’ (p. 488).

The current literature shows that the studies have two particular objectives: to determine aspects characteristic of effective schools and to recognise the differences between educational outcomes in these schools. Hereof, an effective school is "a school in which students progress further than might be expected" (Bennett et al., 2003, p. 56). Relevant to this view, the one that promotes high levels of student achievement for all students can be considered an effective school (Smith & Tomlinson, 1990). Therefore, it is pretty clear that academic emphasis and monitoring students' academic progress have been perceived as the vital correspondence of an effective school. Hence, an effective school is the one that reaches or goes beyond the expected educational goals. The consideration of prior students' achievement on the school entry and the value added (what pupils have gained from their years in school) scores need to be taken into account (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2002).

The view of an effective school as one that encourages high levels of student achievement is relevant here, where the achievement, in many cases, is directed to the student's academic accomplishment (Murphy, 1990). By drawing on the concept of educational attainment, it is no surprise that up to recent times, the considerable academic focus and regular monitoring of student academic performance have been perceived as substantial correlates of an effective school (Al Waner, 2005). Therefore, an effective school is argued to be one that can achieve or exceed its prior set goals (Iyer, 2008).

The term "school effectiveness" concerns the "ratio of output to non-monetary inputs or processes" comprising several textbooks, classroom organisation, professional development, teaching strategy, training of teachers and learning arrangements (Cheng, 1996). Educational output means the student growth and development that can be reasonably associated with the academic experience (Lockheed, 1988). Besides, based on the school's output nature, school effectiveness may be categorised as: "school's technical effectiveness" (or internal effectiveness) if the school outputs can be regarded as those that have happened in school or after schooling, like learning behaviour, skills attained, attitude change; and "societal effectiveness" if the school outputs have a life-long impact and happen at the society level or on the life of the individual like social mobility, work productivity, salary and so on (Cheng, 1993b).

These findings further support the idea of Benett et al. (1997), who highlight the political nature of school effectiveness by indicating the role of the government in regulating

the school's function due to the value-for-money idea. In contrast to this argument, however, to counteract the authority of the government perspective in school management, aspects like marketing and the school community's role, including parents, are also core factors. School effectiveness could indicate "how well the principal manages the school and how well parents and the community are involved (Botha, 2010, p. 607). Although researchers deal with the concept a lot, they are not always sure what category of school effectiveness to measure, and there is no consistent definition of school effectiveness as it may vary from one person or source to the next.

Another problem is that school effectiveness often needs to be clarified with an aspect such as school efficiency. To clarify the above, each term and category of school effectiveness should first be correctly conceptualised and defined.

By drawing the concept of "school efficiency" can be referred to as the "ratio between school output and monetary input". Furthermore, school efficiency can be classified as "school's technical or internal efficiency" and "school's societal or external efficiency" based on the nature of outputs (Cheng, 1996). What it means is that efficiency is when monetary input brings a successful output, where the ratio implies that you can produce the expected results in the way that the end results in minimal waste of time, effort, and resources. On the other hand, effectiveness is the competency to produce a better result that provides more value and achieves a better outcome. This means that effectiveness as a concept is a broader and more complex term that this study aims to explore and understand. Efficiency can be seen as a part of effectiveness, where one of the ways is that when effectiveness increases, the efficiency level is accordingly high, as well as the other way around.

Collectively, these studies give various perspectives on what establishes school effectiveness or what constitutes an effective school. However, the assorted views lead to the conclusion that "… while all reviews assume that effective schools can be differentiated from ineffective ones, there is no consensus yet on what constitutes an effective school." (Reid et al., 1987, p. 22)

This conclusion is further supported by Scheerens (2005), who noted that 'school effectiveness is a difficult concept to define and once defined is of a nature difficult to reason' (p. 19).

Accordingly, the concept of school effectiveness has diverse approaches. Hence, it should be noted that 'defining the effectiveness of a particular school always requires choices among competing values' and, furthermore, 'the criteria of effectiveness will be subject to political debate' (Sammons et al., 1995, p. 2).

2.1.2 Organisational Effectiveness

Organisational researchers have been involved with the 'effectiveness' of organisations, yet discrepancies persist regarding organisational effectiveness. It has been difficult to establish consistency in comparing effectiveness studies since a small number of them used standard criteria for specifying effectiveness, and effectiveness has been a concept pinned on a wide variety of organisational phenomena from multiple perspectives (Campbell, 1973; Steers, 1975). Therefore, organisational effectiveness has been a central concern of organisational theory as an area of inquiry since its outset.

The history of the research can be distinguished as varying between enthusiasm and dissatisfaction, resulting from a wave of new ideas (Zammuto, 1984). The problem of evaluating organisational effectiveness empirically has emerged because no ultimate criterion of effectiveness exists. Instead, organisations, including schools, may follow various and often contradictory goals (Dubin, 1976; Hall, 1978; Perrow, 1970; Warner, 1967). Appropriate criteria of effectiveness are subject to change over the growth of an organisation (Kimberly, 1976; Miles & Cameron, 1977; Yuchtman & Seashore, 1967); different units may have priority at one time or about definite organisational aspects and not others (Barney, 1978; Friedlander & Pickle, 1968; Scott, 1977), criteria at the organisational level may not be the same as those at another level (Price, 1972; Weick, 1977), and the connections among various effectiveness dimensions may be challenging to discover. Concisely, organisational effectiveness may be characterised as being 'mutable (composed of different criteria at different life stages), comprehensive (including a multiplicity of dimensions), divergent (relating to different constituencies), transpositive (altering relevant criteria when different levels of analysis are used), and complex (having non-parsimonious relationships among dimensions)' (Cameron, 1978, p. 604).

The major obstacles to the empirical assessment of organisational effectiveness are criteria problems. There are two general kinds: the first relates to selecting the type of criteria

indicating effectiveness, and the second concerns the sources of the criteria. Problems of criteria type generally focus on (1) the aspect of the organisation being considered, e.g., goal accomplishment, resource acquisition, internal processes, (2) the universality or specificity of criteria, (3) the normative or descriptive character of criteria, and (4) the static or dynamic quality of criteria (Cameron, 1978).

Regarding the *organisational aspects,* outputs and goal accomplishment are the most widely recognised criteria of effectiveness (Etzioni, 1976; Georgopolous & Tannenbaum, 1957; Hall, 1978; Price, 1972). Besides the fact that the earliest approaches to effectiveness were led by a rationalistic goal model, the following researchers have pursued to advocate the achievement of goals as the defining characteristic of organisational effectiveness (Campbell, 1973; Price, 1972; Scott, 1977).

Nevertheless, others have highlighted problems with specifying goal accomplishment as the criterion for effectiveness (Blau & Scott, 1962; Goodman & Pennings, 1977; Merton, 1996; Rice, 2013; Scriven, 1962; Warner, 1967). As a result, alternatives to the goal approach have been developed.

Yuchtman and Seashore (1967) developed the *system resource model,* or the natural system approach, as an alternative to the goal model. The model addresses the organisation's interaction with the environment and determines organisational effectiveness as the ability of the organisation to use its environment to gain scarce and valued resources. Organisational inputs and the acquisition of resources take over goals as the significant criteria for effectiveness (Kirchhoff, 1977).

Another approach to defining characteristics of effectiveness relies on *internal organisational processes*. In the same vein, Steers (1977) states, 'One solution that at least minimises many of the obstacles to addressing effectiveness is to view effectiveness in terms of a process instead of an end state' (p. 7). This view is supported by Pfeffer (1977), who suggests that it is necessary to consider the process by which organisations articulate preferences and perceived demands and make decisions to study organisational effectiveness.

Further studies suggest that effective organisations are characterised predominantly by the same criteria related to adaptivity, flexibility, sense of identity, absence of strain, capacity for reality, and capacity testing. Additionally, effectiveness research should include the appropriate universal indicators (Caplow, 1964; Duncan, 1973; Friedlander & Pickle,

1968; Georgopolous & Tannenbaum, 1957; Mott, 1972). The other researchers specify that organisations have different characteristics, goals, and constituencies and that each organisation involves a unique set of effectiveness criteria (Hall, 1978; Rice, 2013; Scott, 1977). In other words, researchers choose a specificity level for the criteria.

Another problem refers to the static and dynamic nature of criteria. Several studies on organisational effectiveness incorporate static views of inputs, processes, and outcomes (Hall, 1978; Mahoney & Weitzel, 1969; Negandhi & Reimann, 1973; Yuchtman & Seashore, 1967). On the other hand, a few studies use criteria indicating changes over time (Pennings, 1975, 1976; Webb, 1974). Whereas change criteria are included, however, research conducted by Kimberly (1976), Miles and Cameron (1977) are among the few examples of studies in which longitudinal data on effectiveness have been gathered and monitored over time. The passage of time affects the choices that constituents have for the performance of an organisation (Zammuto, 1984).

Based on the evolutionary perspective, an organisation's pursuits to satisfy constituent preferences at a given time influence changing constituent expectations for future organisational performance. The effects of this kind of change are similar to what Rittel and Weber Field (1973) refer to as a 'wicked problem' where organisational actions leave traces in the system, thereby changing it (p. 158). However, satisfying preferences can influence modifying those preferences or creating new ones that the organisation can achieve in the future.

Quinn and Cameron (1983) provided an example of this by exploring variations of the effectiveness criteria used by organisation members through an organisation's life cycle. The study established a life cycle model consisting of four stages and identified that the effectiveness criteria selected by members of the internal dominant coalition changed across them. For instance, organisation members gave priority to resource acquisition in the entrepreneurial stage. When an organisation mastered the acquisition of resources, the criteria focused on group cohesiveness and the precision of organisational functioning as being the most crucial amid the collectivity of the life cycle stage during the control and formalisation stage; criteria emphasising organisational control appeared to be the most important. The tendency showed a relatively greater balance among all three types of criteria

during the structural elaboration stage. It can be concluded that the fulfilment of constituent preferences at one time resulted in new preferences emerging later (Zammuto, 1984).

The findings show that since the concept of organisational effectiveness varies with different constituencies, different levels of analysis, different levels of organisation, and different approaches to research and evaluation processes, effectiveness not only maintains multiple dimensions, but it is not a unitary concept. It is a concept constructed by multiple domains, and therefore, it is used in different ways. Effectiveness in one domain is not necessarily related to effectiveness in another domain. In other words, if Argyris (1962), Likert (1967), and Cummings (1977) prioritised the domain of effectiveness of the satisfaction and growth of organisation members, it may be negatively related to high levels of subunit output and coordination, the domain of effectiveness for Goodman and Pennings (1977).

Taking the analytical research one step further, the conclusion concerning organisational effectiveness can be integrated into a definition: 'The construct of organisational effectiveness refers to human judgments about the desirability of the outcomes of organisational performance from the vantage point of the varied constituencies directly and indirectly affected by the organisation' (Zammuto, 1984, p. 614).

Fundamentally, organisational effectiveness is a value-based phenomenon in that the whole evaluation process requires the application of value judgments, from selecting constituencies and weighing their decisions to developing recommendations for future organisational performance. Framing the construct of organisational effectiveness in this manner raises a number of potentially interesting directions for research.

2.1.3 Key characteristics of effective schools

Although some exploratory ideas have been mentioned above, nevertheless, the conceptualisation and measurement of school effectiveness are controversial at this point. What category should be taken for measurement? What school inputs and outputs are to be chosen, and how can they be defined and measured appropriately and adequately? There can be various models for conceptualising and measuring school effectiveness from the organisational perspective (Scheerens, 2005). This can include the goal model, the system

resource model, the internal process model, the strategic consistencies model, the legitimacy model, the organisational learning model, and the ineffectiveness model (Cheng, 1993).

The goal model infers that a school is effective when it can attain the goals that are clearly stated and generally accepted with given inputs. In this case, school and program plans like those related to learning and teaching environment quality and academic achievements in the examinations may be taken as measurement indicators. However, this model is generally accepted. Its limitation is that it depends on clear and accepted goals, which is mostly impossible.

According to the system-resource model, a school is effective when it can obtain the valued resources and inputs needed. The indicators for effectiveness may be found in the facilities, resources, quality of students' input, and financial support acquired externally. The model's limitation is its overemphasis on input acquisition rather than the school's efforts to improve educational processes and outputs (Cheng, 1996).

The internal process model considers the school to be effective when its internal functioning is smooth and "healthy". The effectiveness criteria are based on internal activities and practices (Cheng, 1986, 1991, 1993). School leadership, communication channels, coordination, planning, decision-making and social interaction may serve as model indicators. The internal process model is limited in terms of difficulty in monitoring processes and collecting data. Moreover, the model enhances the means instead of ends (Cameron, 1978).

The model of strategic constituencies assumes the school to be effective if all its strategic constituencies are minimally accomplished. Strategic constituencies may stand for the needs of principals, teachers, school management boards, education authorities, parents, and students. The model assumes that fulfilling its strategic constituencies is the core task of the school, and it serves as the basic criterion for effectiveness (Keeley, 1984). The model's limitation is seen in the possibility of not being appropriate when the demands of constituencies conflict and cannot be satisfied simultaneously (Zammuto, 1982, 1984).

In line with the legitimacy model, school effectiveness depends on the school's ability to survive "due to engaging in legitimate or marketing activities. The indicators for effectiveness are related to the activities and achievements of public relations and marketing, the school's public image, accountability, reputation and social status. The model is limited

regarding the context, i.e., the model works only with schools that have to strive for legitimacy with external public recognition in a competitive environment.

According to the organisational learning model, it is based on environmental changes and the existence of internal barriers. It means that for school functioning, it is inevitable that the school can adapt and improve to its internal and external environment. This model aligns with the current focus of strategic and development planning in school effectiveness. The awareness of community interests, internal practices and activities, monitoring, evaluation of the program, environmental analysis and developmental planning are considered to be indicators of effectiveness in this model (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 2004).

The educational researchers of the UK have made a meaningful contribution to understanding the characteristics of school effectiveness. In the UK, the major research on secondary school brought the attributes of successful schools:

- Effective leadership and management by the headteacher, the heads of the departments;
- Teacher involvement in decision-making (in curriculum, methods, use of resources, organisation and school policies);
- Climate of respect between all participants (between teacher, pupil-teachers, teacher-parents);
- Positive feedback and treatment of students (Smith & Tomlinson, 1990).
- One of the fundamental views suggests seven key processes and positive characteristics of a successful school, which include:
- Leadership at all levels: strong, purposeful, adoption of more than one style.
- Management and organisation: clear and straightforward.
- Collective self-review: Involve all staff and lead to the development of new aims, promoting innovation and new practices.
- Staff development: consistent and systematic, which involves collective and individual needs.
- Environment/building/uplifting ethos: visually and aurally positive, promoting positive behaviour and high expectations.
- Teaching and learning: pedagogical debate within the school teachers about curricular and teaching methods teachers.

- Parental involvement emphasises parents as partners in the education (Brighouse, 1991).

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the characteristics of effective schools. These studies should not be regarded as independent of each other, and attention can be drawn to the various links between them, which provide a better understanding of possible mechanisms of effectiveness.

Almost every single study of school effectiveness has indicated *professional leadership* as a critical factor. Gray (1990) claims that 'the importance of the principal's leadership is one of the clearest of the messages from the school effectiveness research' (p. 206). He draws attention to the fact that no evidence of effective schools with weak leadership has emerged in reviews of effectiveness research. Reviews by Purkey and Smith (1983) conclude that leadership is necessary to initiate and ensure school development.

Nonetheless, the significance of the school principal's role can be sensitive to the context and specific patterns of school organisation (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994). Hence, the principal's leadership is a considerable focus of British (Caul, 1994; Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter, 1979; Sammons et al., 1995) and American (Brookover, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Stringfield & Teddlie, 1987) research. However, specific aspects like assertive principal leadership and quality monitoring have not been considered necessary in the Netherlands (Scheerens, 1992).

Leadership is not only about the quality of individual leaders but also about the role that leaders perform, their management style, their perspective on the school's vision, values, and goals, and their approach to change.

A large and growing body of literature investigating leadership has identified that different leadership styles can be associated with effective schools, and a range of aspects of the leader's role in school have been highlighted. Bossert et al. Field (1982) concluded, 'no simple style of management seems appropriate for all schools… principals must find the style and structures most suited to their own local situations' (p. 38).

Referring to the main criteria mentioned several times in the literature is student achievement and its impact on student development. It is the organisation of learning, the teacher's activity and the quality of the teacher that has a considerable influence on the development of students. Nevertheless, research into school leadership shows that school

leadership has a meaningful indirect impact and is the second most crucial factor (Caul, 1994; Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter, 1979; Sammons et al., 1995). In addition, the research of Mulford and Sillins, who approached the school as a learning organisation trying to link the leadership and the actual results, concluded that school leadership has an indirect and empirically justified influence on students' learning achievements. This impact system demonstrates itself through the learning organisation culture (Mulford & Silins, 2003).

2.2 Defining School Leadership

2.2.1 Dimensions of Leadership

The terms used to describe this field have transformed from ‘educational administration’ to ‘educational management’ and, more recently, to ‘educational leadership’ (Gunter, 2004). The question of whether changes like this are based on the semantic nature of the terms or the reflection of substantive changes in the nature of the field can be raised (Bush, 2008). The notable innovation, the opening of the National College for School Leadership (NSCL) in England, served as a ‘paradigm’ shift from focusing on leadership rather than management and attracted international educational attention (Bolam, 2004, p. 260). The different perspective argues that ‘the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective’ (Yukl, 2002, p. 4). However, Bush and Glover (2003) cover the major features defining leadership as “a process of influence leading to the achievement of the desired purpose. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share it. The school's philosophy, structures and activities are geared towards achieving this shared vision (p. 5).

The definition arises from three dimensions of school leadership.

Leadership as an influence. The definitions of leadership indicate the expectation of involving a social influence process by which one person utilises intentional influence over others to build activities and relationships in a group or organisation (Yukl, 2002, p. 3). The three main aspects can be discussed in these definitions. The core concept is not authority but influence. The two concepts are dimensions of power where the former refers to formal positions like principal, while the latter could be resided by anyone in the school. Management is precisely connected to positional authority, although leadership is

independent. Besides, the process is intentional as the agent targets to achieve specific purposes. The third aspect can be explained by the matter that the agent exercising influence can be an individual or a group. The idea supports the concept of distributed leadership (Bush, 2008, p. 277).

Leadership and values. However, leaders are associated with values to a greater extent; it does not determine the goals to be set or actions to be taken. "Good leaders are informed by and communicate clear sets of personal and educational values representing their moral purposes for the school" (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001, p. 53). Bush (2008) argues that the government sets the primary values, which can be 'imposed' on school leaders rather than 'chosen' by them (p. 277). The tension can be the obligation to implementation of the policies and the need for teacher professionals to feel optimistic about new interventions. Teachers largely report on positive emotional experiences of self-initiated changes, while mostly negative ones refer to mandated ones. The notion of 'influence' can be explained to be neutral as it does not indicate the actions to be pursued. Leaders are required to be restricted from acting based on clear personal and professional values (Hargreaves, 2004).

Leadership and vision. For over 20 years, vision has been considered an important component of successful leadership. Southworth (1993) indicates that the hard work of leaders is motivated 'because their leadership is the pursuit of their individual values'. On the other hand, organisations cannot always maintain a highly complex dynamic process of vision building (Fullan, 1992, p. 83). The other study refers to vision as 'adverse effects', which appear when principals do not involve teachers in the vision-building process. Building a coherent vision has the potential to improve schools, but the empirical evidence of its effectiveness is still blended.

Nowadays, there are a significant number of competing models of school leadership that consider the typology of leadership. However, after analysing the literature, the focus can be set on the main theories of leadership, which were drawn by Leithwood, Jantzi, Steinbach, and Bush (1999).

Instructional leadership increasingly focuses on managing teaching and learning as the primary activity of the educational organisation. Basically, this model presumes that leaders concentrate on the teachers' behaviour as their activity directly affects the outcomes of the students (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 8). There is not much focus on the influence process

itself, but the purpose of influence of the leaders targeting student learning through the medium of teachers.

Managerial leadership considers that in order to facilitate the work of others in the organisation, the leader's focus should be on the functions, tasks and behaviours. Because of the formal position of the leader, the influence occurs to a great extent. That influence cannot be assigned in proportion to the status of those positions in the organisational hierarchy. In addition, 'there is evidence of considerable support in the literature and among practising leaders for managerial approaches to leadership' (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 15). Moreover, 'positional power, in combination with formal policies and procedures, is the source of influence exercised by managerial leadership' (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 17). The relationship between organisational leadership and managerial learning is that of the functions of management to support teaching and learning, the core of the educational process (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005).

The model of leadership that determines the major focus of leadership on commitments and capacities of the organisation community can be considered to be *transformational*. Based on seven quantitative studies, Leithwood's (1994) research concludes that 'transformational leadership practices, considered a composite construct, had significant direct and indirect effects on progress with school-restructuring initiatives and teacher-perceived outcomes. The model is popular in the existing literature in terms of emphasising its provision of a normative approach to school leadership with a focus on the process where the leaders pursue the influence on school outcomes rather than the nature of those outcomes. Still, it can be criticised as a means to control teachers by demanding cohesion with the leader's values and expecting to be accepted by the leader rather than the led (Chirichello, 1999).

The models mentioned above are concentrated explicitly on individual (usually principal) leadership. Nevertheless, there have been a number of approaches to the leadership matter from the point of view of shared leadership to broaden the sense of the phenomena and widen the debate. Namely, the change from individual to shared leadership is attributed to the documented failures of high-level heads in England, giving way to scepticism about solo or 'heroic' leadership (Crawford, 2012).

In order to understand distributed leadership, it is important to mention that the concept should be detached from positional authority. Distributed leadership focuses on involving every existing expertise within the organisation despite the formal position or role (Harris, 2004). Another view refers to the normative change 'from heroics to distribution'; however, emphasising the matter that distributed leadership does not necessarily mean any reduction in the extent of the principal's role (Gronn, 2010, p. 70). Hartley (2010) cautions against "its popularity to be pragmatic: to ease the burden of overworked headteachers" (Hartley, 2010, p. 27). In addition, schools with the highest levels of student outcomes ascribed this to some extent to high levels of impact from all sources of leadership (Leithwood et al., 2008). It is also found that distributed leadership is essentially connected to change in academic capacity and, consequently, to progress in student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). These findings are essential; however, more research in this scope is needed before the attribution of distributed leadership can be established with confidence.

Basically, there are obvious links between teacher leadership and distributed leadership. The former can be characterised as engaging shared leadership, teachers' knowledge building, teachers' voice, and teachers' leadership in the developmental work (Frost, 2008, p. 337). Teacher leadership can be described by a range of formal and informal groupings usually promoted in external programs. Teacher leadership can be seen as teacher empowerment by contributing to school improvement and disseminating effective practices and teacher-generated initiatives (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 961). Helterbran (2010) indicates that teacher leadership 'remains largely an academic topic and, even though inroads have been made, teacher leadership remains more a concept than an actuality' (p. 363).

As mentioned earlier, the models show different approaches to seeing who a leader is and who the key performer is in implementing these models. Regarding shared leadership, there is a growing understanding of the role of middle leaders in professional discourse, putting forward their importance in school effectiveness (Adey, 2000; Grootenboer, 2018) in bridging the gap between the leader and the staff (Gurr et al., 2006). However, middle-level leaders' work heavily depends on how their roles are constructed and the leaders' capacities, abilities, and attitudes (Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). That causes the main research limitation, which is that middle-level school leaders need to be seen as key personnel in improving teaching and learning and developing leadership capacity needs to be prioritised (Gurr &

Drysdale, 2013). It can be concluded that in order to comprise leadership teams and provide teachers with leadership roles, active steps should be taken. It is vital to establish a culture of trust and collaboration as well as a shared vision of the school's target goals, consistent leadership management structures, and effective leadership development programs (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 126). Distributed leadership can hardly be imagined to be implemented in schools without teacher leaders. This implies that teacher leadership should be conceptualised as a shared rather than an individual model. The concept of shared values interconnects the two models (Bush & Glover, 2003).

The current study attempts to avoid sticking with a certain leadership model but to find a framework to comprise the main concepts together. Therefore, the study continues by looking into school leadership paradigms to uncover the framework to construct the research.

2.2.2 School Leadership Paradigms

The climate of global competitiveness and the growth of education internationalisation have made the language of school effectiveness a common currency among researchers and shaped the reasoning of policy-makers. The literature review shows that there is no universal package for school leadership; more than one model must be determined and practised in unrefined forms for all schools in different contexts (OECD, 2016a).

The concepts of leadership are fundamentally value-laden. They refer to national purposes, local context, as well as the skill of individuals, and the expectations and requirements of school communities. Expectations and requirements are changeable over time. A decade or two ago, the role of a school leader was to maintain a smooth-running organisation and harmonious staff relationships. Schools operated with a strong belief that teachers were competent and needed autonomy in teaching (MacBeath et al., 1995). In 1980, principals did not consider their role in improving their school's 'instructional effectiveness' as it was not a task they set themselves, nor were they expected to perform (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982).

In many national and state contexts, expectations of principals have changed or are in the process of changing. Moreover, the meaning of leadership is firmly connected with their culture and history (Dalin, 1995). It can be illustrated by some school systems that give

more significant focus on leadership than others, and education reforms raised issues of school effectiveness strongly to the forefront along with the accountability of principals for school performance. A notable example is Denmark's school system, which has perhaps felt the wind of change the most. The school system pursued a bottom-up approach, prioritising democracy and the focus on teacher autonomy. However, in recent years, school leaders have gained greater responsibilities for promoting the professional development of the staff and, at the same time, keeping the crucial task of giving freedom for teacher autonomy in establishing relationships with students and parents. This focus is not uncommon in Denmark but in the European context as well, including France and Switzerland, which have shared that perspective historically (Riley & MacBeath, 1998, p. 175).

The school leadership framework may differ; however, to a greater extent, it is the individual – the principal – who is emphasised and spotlighted (Riley & MacBeath, 1998). With all this focus on the individual, the question may arise of what an ‘effective’ principal looks like and if an ‘effective’ principal is also a ‘good’ principal.

This literature review does not extract the empirical correlation with student achievement from the use of the term ‘effective’ in connection to leadership. Effectiveness is determined to be a disputed notion that remains open to question, challenge, and clarify.

One of the school leadership paradigms comprises the capability of the school leader to maintain relationships, which is a model that emphasises the thinking of the school improvement (Stoll & Fink, 1992). The paradigm puts ‘the heart and emotions of teaching at the centre (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 280). The model is based on the assumption that schools are constantly changing, leading to the determination of the paradigm of mobility and fragility (Louis & Kruse, 1995). The main challenge is the ability to respond to the school’s inner processes and to the demanding external context, which is constantly changing. It demonstrates that schools are to handle internal and external constituencies, which are generally in a challenging relationship by themselves. This means that school leaders have to manage controversial notions about achievement and cope with multiple interests and demands. Because of this complexity, it is rooted in a deep understanding of context (national, local, and school-based). There is no single recipe that tends to work.

Another school leadership paradigm is shared leadership. It is basically not possible for one individual to manage every leadership task within a school. Effective school leaders

are the ones who can expand the diverse leadership qualities of the school community, empowering them to take on leadership within their areas of expertise (Pont et al., 2008). They lead by managing, motivating, and inspiring people through individual work with teachers, students, and parents or by creating a stimulus within the organisation that enables people to participate actively in school life (Riley & MacBeath, 1998).

In the same vein, Gammage Field (1985) indicated on his account that in good schools, good leaders recognise the importance of relationships, enrichment and an interactive community. Good leaders who manage this way realise that when more collaborative leadership models are the benchmark, teachers are more likely to engage in making changes within their schools.

As can be seen, in the sphere of educational research, many researchers have pursued to identify the connection between educational leadership and school effectiveness research. This tendency can be explained by the perception that educational leaders, namely school principals, affect school effectiveness (Cheng, 1994a; Cuttance & Reynolds, 1992; Edmonds, 1979; Fuller, 1987; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Lezotte, 1989; Mortimore et al., 1988; Pashiardis, 1995, 1998, 2004; Rutter, 1979).

The recognised and notorious meta-analyses conducted by Hallinger and Heck (1996, 1998) and Witziers, Bosker and Krüger (2003) prioritised at least two significant elements that differentiate the results among many studies. First, the various educational systems in different countries lead to different results (also in Pashiardis et al., 2003). Secondly, the lack of intermediate variables between school leadership and students' achievement tends to have no link between them (also in Reynolds & Teddlie, 2002).

Hoy and Miskel (1996) proposed the integrated model of school effectiveness, where the specific theoretical models were based on two main characteristics of leadership: *culture and effectiveness*. Up front, the concepts are multidimensional, as every single consists of many dimensions. For instance, integrated models of school effectiveness signify many criteria of inputs, outputs, and transformations (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Besides, these concepts are conferred at many levels in schools. As an illustration, leaders can be recognised at the school level (e.g. principal) or the classroom level (e.g. teachers) (Cheng, 1994b). In addition, there are a number of cultures in schools, such as organisational culture, teachers' culture, students' culture, and classroom culture (Maehr & Midgley, 1996). Eventually,

multilevel models reveal many levels of effectiveness, such as the student level, the classroom level, and the school level (Creemers, 1994).

Exploring the concept of school leadership includes many complications because of the multitude of its definitions (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). One of the theories that examines the multidimensional nature of leadership, and especially effective leadership, is Bolman and Deal's theory of leadership frames (1984, 1991, 2017). The core of this theoretical framework is based on four leadership dimensions involved in effective leadership:

1. The structural frame emphasises goals, planning, and coordination;
2. The human resource frame, which is sensitive to the human needs of others;
3. The political frame, which recognises the ways that people seek to advance their own interests and
4. The symbolic frame focuses on the rituals, myths and ceremonies that give meaning to organisational culture.

Evidence from many recent studies reinforces the theory's fundamental assumptions. The research also established new elements to complete the model, as Bolman and Deal (1991, 1992a, 1992b) discovered that leaders' ability to use many frames is highly correlated with their effectiveness.

Organisational culture was mentioned as the concept to be considered in this framework. The diversity and the large number of definitions also contribute to the complications of exploring this concept. Hoy and Miskel (2001), based for the most part on Schein's definition (1992), defined culture as 'the shared orientations that hold the unit together and give it a distinctive identity' (p. 129). Nevertheless, important debate arises about what is to be considered as 'shared', if they are norms, values, philosophies, perspectives, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, myths, or ceremonies. In addition, it is also substantial to consider the intensity of shared orientations of organisational members (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). The concept of culture is significant for an organisation as it affects the aspects of stability, cohesion, unity, and the ability for regulation in an organisation.

Furthermore, some studies link school culture and effectiveness (Cheng, 1993a; Edmonds, 1979; Fyans & Maehr, 1991). One of the approaches includes many dimensions like teamwork and cooperation, communication, decision-making, change and innovation,

responsibility and commitment, and vision and goals of organisational culture at the school level. This model is proposed by Feitler and Gudgel (1994).

The third concept mentioned in the integrated model of Hoy and Miskel (1996) refers to school effectiveness. Defining organisational effectiveness involves many difficulties, as mentioned in the previous chapter. It is not plentiful to evaluate the concept with the theories of organisational effectiveness and the list of criteria (Cameron, 1982). Besides, "the 'war' between the supporters of school effectiveness and the supporters of school quality strengthen the confusion" (Kythreotis & Pashiardis, 2006, p. 219). An integrated goal and resource system model of effectiveness was developed to fill the gap between effectiveness and quality (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). The model focuses on the influence of a social system's spheres, which comprises the effectiveness and quality of inputs, transformation, and outcomes.

2.2.3 Effective leaders and effective schools

Effective schools can be good schools, and good schools must be effective schools – but the two are not necessarily the same.
(Carl Glickman, 1987, quoted in Silver, 1994, p. 102)

The contiguity of the two words 'effective' and 'leadership' indicated the growing focus on school outcomes and the increasing recognition of leadership as a critical constituent in the 'effective' school (Sammons et al., 1995). Leadership is considered to be a crucial policy issue, an essential component of the drive for more effective schools, raised achievement and public accountability. From a policymaker's perspective, 'Effective leadership' can be determined as the key to resolving many of the problems that schools face. Questions may arise about what assumptions can be considered by the notion or if there are any generic and resilient features of effective leadership resistant to changes in time and place. Furthermore, it can be discussed whether there are common competencies and if leadership could be constructed from a set of components (Riley & MacBeath, 1998).

It is interesting to explore how school leaders conceptualise 'leadership', their expectations of the role, and how they coincide with the stakeholders' expectations. The international nature of the research brought into consideration the differences in context and culture and enhanced the awareness of how socioeconomic and political factors form school

leadership. The point came to the surface where cultural history meets contemporary politics and where globalisation confronts national identity (Macbeath et al., 1996).

Exploring leadership, effective schools and their inter-relationship, it is essential to acknowledge the fundamental questions:

- What do we understand by the terms 'effective' and 'good'?
- What is the relationship between effective leaders and effective schools?
- Are there models (of effective schools and effective leadership) which can be legitimately transferred?

The terms 'good' and 'effective" are not neutral but debated. The similarity of the two notions is that both of them, equally, are socially constructed and shaped by local aspirations and national expectations. One and the other reside on the belief that schools can make a difference, but what those differences are may be an issue (MacBeath, 1998).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the research literature on school effectiveness shows that distinctive schools can make a difference in student attainment. One of the preceding studies on school effectiveness questioned James Coleman's (1975) findings, which concluded that differences between one and another only rest on a small percentage of the variance in student achievement. The following researchers concluded that there were differences in the 'effectiveness' that were more remarkable than those identified in the Coleman study (Brimer, 1978; Rutter, 1979). These conclusions were supported by a further study that dealt with the primary schools in London and established several variables – including leadership style – that have positive effects on student performance (Mortimore et al., 1988).

The studies started 'to paint details into the portrait' of what an effective school or classroom should look like (Silver, 1995, p. 93). In one of the first such assessments, Purkey and Smith (1983) resolved that school effectiveness research seemed to ignore school culture and organisational change problems. They concluded that "the characteristics which school effectiveness research emphasised were unlikely to work in all schools, may not work as expected in many schools, and may in fact be counterproductive in some schools" (Purkey & Smith, 1983, pp. 440, 447).

Following these studies, critics have imposed the movement by ignoring the social and economic content (Stoll & Riley, 1999; Whitty, 1997). Other researchers criticised it for

being “platitudinous, re-inventing the obvious; missing the fine-grain reality of school life; appropriating language (e.g. ‘effectiveness’) misdirecting attention from broader structural issues; confusing correlations and causes; offering little to school management or teachers; ignoring the problematic of the curriculum; and limited in its focus on the school as an entity” (White & Barber, 1997, p. 144).

As can be seen, school effectiveness research, by the core of its development and structure, is vulnerable to such attacks. The findings appear to be most commonsensical. The concern for perceptible and reliable measures limits its boundary. The inner focus of school effectiveness research on school functioning, by definition, excludes community and broader political contexts (Riley & MacBeath, 1998).

Silver (1995) has claimed that schools function within three sets of realities:

- the community location (the social needs and neighbourhood context);
- the policy context (set at the national and state level);
- the internal workings (how the school perceives and acts upon its responsibilities) (p.102).

The consideration of individual schools is also a confining factor. The efforts of any individual school are influenced by the organisation of other schools in a local context (Benn & Chitty, 1996). In terms of contextual impact, effective schools are not only a result of social dynamics but also a product of the greater social dynamic of the local context and the larger political and economic processes in action (Benn & Chitty, 1996).

To understand what good schools are and how they came into being, the effective school is only one version of a good school and only one contributor. It should be kept in mind because of the danger that broader notions of schooling and good schools drop off the policy and improvement agenda (Riley & MacBeath, 1998). The British Psychological Society, focusing on school effectiveness, claimed the development of criteria on effectiveness from goal perceptions of education held by students, teachers and parents. It was argued that these give comprehensible measures for differentiating ‘more’ from ‘less’ effective performance of the roles (Raven, 1997).

As a matter of fact, there has been a growing agreement on school effectiveness and school improvement. The research of the National Union of Teachers (MacBeath et al., 1995) that derived effectiveness criteria from the stakeholders mentioned by Raven (1997)

identified a match between what students, parents and teachers expect from their schools and what the conventional effectiveness research had determined. The school 'insiders' brought to those criteria additional insight and elaboration of what good schools meant (Riley & MacBeath, 1998). Per Dalin, the Norwegian educator, mentioned the importance of the school culture. Good schools are those whose culture brings opportunities for growth, not only for students but for teachers and school leaders. In these terms, "the only way schools will survive the future is to become creative learning organisations. The best way students can learn how to live in the future is to experience the life of the learning school" (Dalin, 1995, p. 19). The study of Dalin and other school researchers owes to the effectiveness movement. It is more open to practitioners and needs to test its findings in school and classroom practice.

These are significant topics to keep in mind when exploring the relationship between effective leadership and effective schools. They are in part about terminology but more substantially about values and paradigms, ways of thinking, and ways of seeing (Riley & MacBeath, 1998).

The role of a school leader became pivotal to a greater extent as education systems took forward improvement strategies (Forde & Torrance, 2016). In the context of Scottish education as an example, it is to be carried forward National Improvement Framework, and the role of the principal is crucial in this reform: "Leadership is key to ensuring the highest possible standards and expectations are shared across a school to achieve excellence for all" (Scottish Government, 2016, p. 10). Thomson's (2009) study on principals in England showed the number of requirements made for principals, sometimes with unfortunate consequences for incumbents. Among many educational systems, it is broadly identified that there are raised demands on school leaders and limits on their ability to shape expectations (Gronn & Rawlings-Sanaei, 2003). A number of issues also can be crucial in consideration of the complexity of the role of a school leader in terms of recruitment of principals, including the pace of change associated with the position and the range of accountabilities and bureaucratic demands of the role (MacBeath, 2011). Bauer and Brazer (2013) made the point that there is also the factor of isolation of the role that mediates a range of other factors: "Isolation has to do with the principal's sense of feeling alone at work. It is less a structural

reality than an emotional response to one's experiences as a school leader. Professional isolation is embedded in the legacy of how principalship developed" (p. 157).

The complexity of the role of the principal is equally evident among all the different types of schools. Still, principals in other settings and contexts may implement various strategies to cope with this complexity. For example, Hayes (1996) and Southworth (2002) noted that principals in small schools tend to sacrifice their leadership activities when faced with the competing task of teaching and leading. However, Southworth (2008) found that while the external aspects like administrative demands, inspections, financial responsibilities, and swift policy changes were demotivating, there were many motivating factors related to the principal's role, especially related to teaching and student achievement. There is a paradox at the heart of leadership, with a tension between the range of demands to principals and their concern for teaching, learning and the students.

The literature review on school leadership presented in this chapter shows considerable tensions in thinking about models and dimensions of school leadership. Leadership is restrained by context, but although it does not give itself a formula about common ingredients to be helpful. The attempt to conceptualise school leadership presented here acknowledges instability, the quixotic natures of schools and their political and social location, unlike some of the school effectiveness literature, which has tended to deal with absolutes and to focus on quantifiable outcomes and measurements of performance. 'Effective' school leaders are also 'good' leaders. They are distinguished by their vision and passion and by their capacity to bring a critical spirit into the complex and demanding job of leadership, though at the same time focusing on staff and student performance and classroom pedagogy.

2.2.4 Effective school leadership according to the perspectives of principals and teachers

School leadership has been acknowledged as a critical factor in the improvement of schools across the board (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012) and in the school effectiveness regarding the school success and students' performance (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2009; Hopkins, 2003; Kythreotis et al., 2010; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marzano et al., 2001). Researchers in the field of educational leadership stated that a crucial component of an

effective school is an effective principal (Tzeni et al., 2019). Moreover, many studies conclude that two factors that considerably influence student achievement are classroom teaching and educational leadership (Coelli & Green, 2012; Hallinger, 2011; Robinson et al., 2008; Urick & Bowers, 2011). In addition, among the factors related to school effectiveness, school leadership comes after classroom teaching (Leithwood, 2006; Seashore et al., 2010). Convincing evidence shows that some leadership behaviours are more effective in promoting student learning (Bush, 2018). Moreover, the fulfilment of achieving the school's goals and purposes is a valid reflection of successful leadership practices in the school (Al-Jaradat & Zaid-Alkilani, 2015).

They acknowledge the crucial role of the principal in its influence on school effectiveness (Heck & Hallinger, 2014; Sammons et al., 2011; Seashore et al., 2010), including student achievement and factors related to the teaching staff (Hulpia & Devos, 2009; Taliadorou & Pashiardis, 2015). One of the Hungarian studies can be mentioned here, where respondents define the ideal leader as a professional who is democratically guided, autonomous, competent in decision-making, open and empathetic in human relations (Vámos, 2016). Numerous studies showed that the effectiveness of leaders depends on the way the environment perceives them as leaders and the way the principals themselves perceive their leadership role while holding their administrative duties (Pashiardis, 2001). The school leader has to cope with many complex roles because the leader is the single most important person who can transform the academic and other achievements of a school (Tzeni et al., 2019). In order to be successful, principals need to be self-reflective and know themselves well (Pashiardis, 1995).

Multiple surveys studied teachers' perspectives on the role of their principal (Hallinger & Liu, 2016; Hariri et al., 2016; Hauserman & Stick, 2013). However, not that many studies exist that explore teachers' perspectives on leadership style and roles of the principals and that consider the perspectives of the principals of effective school administration that one may highlight the areas of school leadership that may need improvements and the areas in which school principals are effective (Tzeni et al., 2019). This study recognises the administrative and educational skills that principals are compelled to have to be effective. In addition, it provides the opportunity to focus on the constituents that positively affect school management to build a more effective school. Notably, the study

tried to explore ‘the effective leader of the school unit from the perspective of the teachers and school principals and to examine the appropriate model of effective school leadership through descriptions of their self-referential experiences about it’ (Tzeni et al., 2019, p. 937). The study identified that principals play a crucial role in the school environment and that there is a common difference between teachers and principals referring to the frequency with which principals demonstrate effective leadership behaviours, as principals consider themselves higher in comparison with teachers in every factor expressing effective school administration (Tzeni et al., 2019). Furthermore, teachers perceived principals positively, moderately, and negatively (Tzeni et al., 2019).

Grissom et al. (2021) investigated teachers' perspectives where strong principals were rated more positively than average and weak, and average principals were rated more positively than weak. One of the factors that teachers identified as a positive influence on their job satisfaction is when principals are ‘warm and charming’ (Von Fischer & De Jong, 2017). A considerable number of studies also recognised positive relations between principals and teachers. This follows from the relationship between principals’ and teachers’ motivation (McGhee & Lew, 2007), principals’ leadership and teachers’ performance (Evans et al., 2012; Matsumura et al., 2009; Moreland, 2009), principals’ styles and job satisfaction, and principals’ styles and school learning culture (Bogler, 2001). As mentioned above, teachers' motivation, performance, and job satisfaction are fundamental issues in establishing positive relations between principals and teachers (Davis & Wilson, 2000). In agreement with Keiser and Sheen (2000), teachers have an inferior impact on decision-making in terms of ‘school budget, hiring teachers and evaluating teachers.’ Furthermore, this is exemplified in work undertaken as they also distinguished that ‘the aspect of instructional behaviour was weaker among the principals’ (Sabanci & Kasalak, 2013). These researchers debated argued that principals had challenges in implementing their role in the context of leadership decision-making especially exemplified ‘budget transparency, staff development, and teacher evaluation’ (Wang et al., 2021).

Effective school leadership practices improve school organisations, teaching, and student performance outcomes (Day et al., 2016; Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005). These practices involve constructing and delivering school goals and missions, creating shared expectations of high performance, establishing common expectations of high

performance, defining roles and objectives, and promoting professional development (Gurley et al., 2016; McCarley et al., 2016). The principal leadership quality is the second-most influential school-based effect on student achievement (Day et al., 2016; Gurley et al., 2016; McCarley et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, the study shows that teachers tend to determine principals lower on significant leadership practices than principals evaluate themselves, and this discrepancy in perception could have negative consequences. Several studies in the area of human resources and organisational management disclose that a leader's self-consciousness – when a leader's self-awareness is in accord with what the staff perceive – is directly related to leadership effectiveness (Tiuraniemi, 2008).

The level at which leaders rate themselves more highly than the staff corresponds with decreased organisational outcomes, including lowered teachers' job satisfaction and productivity (Moshavi et al., 2003; Sosik & Godshalk, 2004; Tiuraniemi, 2008; Yammarino & Atwater, 1993). Regarding the school sector, negative teacher perception of school leadership relates to teacher burnout and reduced collaboration (Hallinger et al., 2013; Owens, 2013; Park & Ham, 2016).

Principals generally admit that they communicate a clear vision for their schools, pursue high teaching standards, and set clear staff expectations for meeting instructional goals. This result is notably distinct, given that principals were asked to evaluate themselves 'relative to my ideal for my school and myself' (Tosh & Doss, 2019, p. 2). These perspectives were consistent across principals in schools of diverse demographic profiles (Tosh & Doss, 2019).

In the study mentioned above by Tosh and Doss (2019), teachers in the survey agreed with the statements when asked to evaluate their principals along the exact dimensions. 84% of teachers admitted that principals place high expectations for teaching. Fewer teachers acknowledge the other features of principals' school leadership, with 77% recognising that principals had clear expectations and 79% complying with those principals communicating clear visions for their schools. Despite these predominantly positive conclusions, there are considerable discrepancies in perceptions between principals and teachers regarding the principal's communication of a clear vision for the school, setting of high standards for teaching, and making clear the expectations for the staff for meeting instructional goals (Tosh

& Doss, 2019). These discrepancies indicate that a substantial minority of teachers' perceptions differ from principals' self-perceptions, displaying potential barriers to a cohesive school culture (Tosh & Doss, 2019).

The study input is consistent with existing findings that principals have higher positive self-perceptions of their own leadership practices. In addition to that, teachers consistently rate their principals positively, and notable gaps exist between teachers' and principals' perceptions. Considering the cruciality of principals' leadership practices in promoting a positive school culture, quality teaching, and student success, the discrepancy in perspectives - nonetheless, the principals and teachers cannot necessarily be from the same school – recommend the areas for improvement (Tosh & Doss, 2019). Principals consider taking in reviews to understand discrepancies in teacher and principal perceptions of leadership approaches and apply the results to lead reflective organisational development; reviews in the social welfare field have found that more self-reflective leaders can practice the review information to improve their overall performance (Goff et al., 2014).

The accessible language literature shows the gap in research on the perspectives of principals and teachers on effectiveness and leadership. The studies mainly focus on evaluating and rating principal performance and identifying the perceptual congruence between principals' and their teachers' ratings of leadership effectiveness.

2.3 Building the framework of the research

2.3.1 Leadership for Organisational Learning

If learning organisations are so widely preferred, why don't people create such organisations?

I think the answer is leadership. People have no real comprehension of the type of commitment it requires to build such an organisation.

(Bill O'Brien, quoted in Senge, 1990, p. 339)

Change is an integral component of the educational landscape. Educational leaders have embraced and reinforced practices designed to enhance teaching and learning that correspond to private sector attempts to promote organisational advancement.

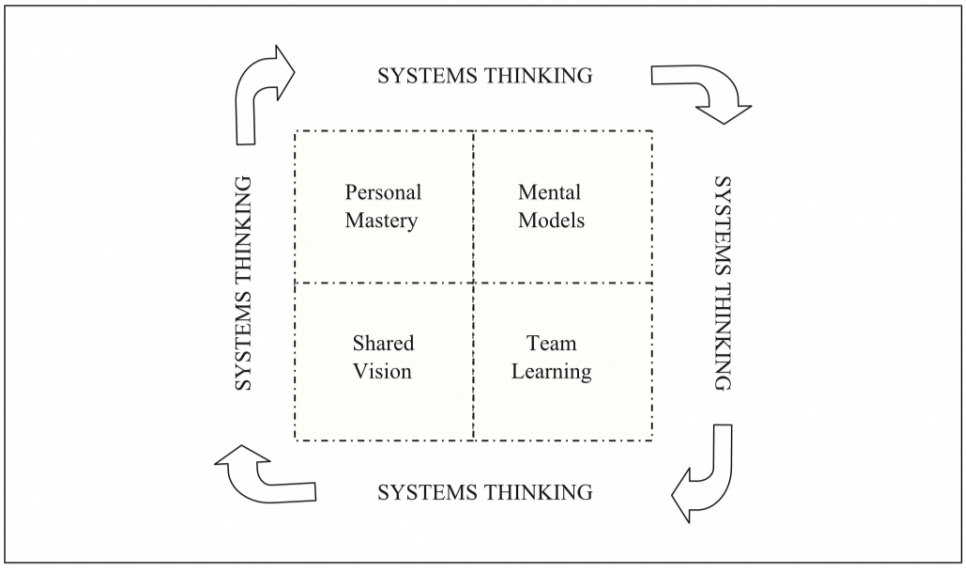
Learning organisations require a new perspective on leadership. The concept of organisational learning supports the foundation of the learning organisation. The notion of the learning organisation and its structure can be strongly connected with Peter Senge (1990), who accumulated that a new movement in corporate leadership could be the concept of the learning organisation. Senge criticises the traditional views on leaders – "as special who set the direction, make the key decisions, and energise the troops – are deeply rooted in an individualistic and nonsystemic worldview" (p. 340). Particularly in the West, leaders are heroes who "rise to the fore" during crises. This is a prevailing leadership myth that reinforces a focus on short-term events and charismatic heroes rather than systemic forces and collective learning (Senge, 1990, p.340). This traditional perspective on leadership, at its core, "is founded on assumptions of people's powerlessness, their lack of personal vision and inability to master the forces change, deficits which can be remedied only by a few great leaders (Senge, 1990, p.340).

The new view of leadership is vital as it focuses on skilful and significant tasks. In a learning organisation, leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers. Their principal task is to build an organisation where people continuously develop their competencies to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models – which means that they are responsible for the learning (Senge, 1990).

Studies and critiques of Senge's perception of the learning organisation have often centred on its status as a theory of organisational learning while typically underestimating its fundamental claims to identify leadership in learning (Driver, 2002; Easterby-Smith, 1997; Smith, 2008). The learning organisation appeared together with 'new leadership' discourses, which pursued the development of alternative models of leadership and organisational change (Bass, 1990, 2000; Berson et al., 2006; Senge, 1990b; Senge, 1996). In order to establish the sustainability of change through the new forms of organisational learning, it was crucial that these models were recognised with more inclusive and participative modes of 'distributed leadership' (Gronn, 2002, 2009; Harris et al., 2007). Senge's perspective on distributed or shared leadership was that it is a post-heroic mode of leadership and a new type of change agency (Senge, 1996). It was not about to be an aspect of individual leaders but a course of system learning that is mainly shared by many people. It follows that distributed leadership appeared to be learning-centred rather than leader-centred, as in learning

organisations, the leadership of the many would take priority over leadership by the few fields (Senge, 2006). However, Senge's combination of 'organisation' and 'learning' and implied identification of leadership and learning were profoundly vague (Elkjaer, 2001; Friedman et al., 2005; Örtenblad, 2007). Commenting on learning as a highly problematic concept in cognitive terms, Argyrys (2004) argues, "the complexity of the concept is compounded if 'agency' (the power to act) as an action-theoretic concept of intentionality, or the ability to act, is identified primarily with the capacity to learn" (p. 34). As an action, learning may appear quite straightforward; however, it brings up immense issues in specifying how individual learning can turn out to be 'rational' or 'effective' regardless of 'defence reasoning' and 'self-deception' (Argyris, 2004). The ambiguous nature of learning as action is undertaken by altering it from the individual to the organisational level as a cohesive concept (Contu et al., 2003; Marshall, 2008; Örtenblad, 2002; Weick, 1991). The question may arise here: If it is not known what organisational learning is and how it is shared, then how can it be distributed? By drawing on the concept of distributed leadership, Senge has partly addressed this point by approaching learning as a feedback process and leadership as a communication tool within a general normative system of shared meaning. According to this, learning is not an individual behavioural aspect but a 'double-loop' cognitive learning process that is shared; hence, everyone who is part of shared learning can lead (Senge, 2006). According to Senge, learning is not a challenging process of participative learning but a vision – a sense of shared learning develops within a normative system distinguished by leaders (Senge et al., 2007). Contradictorily, "the learning organisation idea only emerges to make sense if it is accomplished by leaders who have the power, knowledge or expertise to define what learning is, how knowledge is stored or transmitted, and how it is used to steer or set the direction of future learning" (Caldwell, 2012, p. 40). Eventually, distributed leadership is not successful in addressing issues of 'agency' or expertise. As a result, the learning organisation recreates a prescriptive systems model of normative consensus and 'concretive control' that recognises the power of shared learning (Barker, 2005; Driver, 2002; Grieves, 2008; Willmott, 2001).

Figure 1. A model of the essential components of Senge's learning organisation



Source: Senge (2006)

Senge classified five characteristics of a learning organisation that could provide assurance for the model to be effective, sustainable and functioning with reasonable effort (Figure 1). Senge studied five 'disciplines' in his initial formulation of the learning organisation: 'systems thinking' (the exploration of wholes rather than individual parts); 'personal mastery' (forms of self-development and individual learning); 'managing mental models' (cognitive models of system change and learning); 'building a shared vision' (creating a common sense of purpose); and 'team learning' (creating new forms of shared learning and knowledge) (Senge, 2006). The dashed lines in Figure 1 show that these components are interconnected and share elements with each other. The fifth component, systems thinking, relates to all of Senge's learning organisation model disciplines. The components are interdependent, meaning a learning organisation cannot exist without each component functioning (Senge, 1990a).

Nevertheless, there is a gap in his combining of 'systems thinking' with learning as 'the fifth discipline' rather than the other four supporting disciplines that made the learning organisation concept presume an immense appeal as a theory of personal change and organisational transformation: "Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things and patterns of change rather than

static ‘snapshots’” (Senge, 1990a, p. 23). It is the fifth discipline that “integrates the disciplines, fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice (Senge, 1990a, p. 12).

Senge’s synthesis came to integrate the hard and the soft traditions of system thinking into the practice-oriented proclamation of transformation and empowerment of a workplace (Senge, 1991). Senge blended the ‘practical problem-solving’ models of ‘system dynamics’ into his work, which reflects his legacy as a graduate in engineering with a master’s in social modelling and a doctorate in management. Furthermore, Senge selectively acquired knowledge from cognitive theories and the extensive organisational development tradition originating from Kurt Lewin’s (1999) classic work on ‘action research’ and group learning within reasoned dialogue (Burnes, 2004). It is unconventional to consider that the learning organisation concept first emerged, and it was Senge who reintroduced it to its intellectual routes in the general system theory (Argyris, 2003; Argyris & Schön, 1997; Easterby-Smith, 1997; Flood, 2010).

Senge’s ‘system’s thinking’ has a key perspective and theoretical foundation on the learning organisation, and he also makes it clear that learning is impossible without the ‘agency’ concept or a reassessing of the progress by which leaders lead change (Senge, 1990c). By the five disciplines of learning, it is implied that in organisational learning, people as agents can influence structures and systems to change them (Senge, 1990a, p. 69). Systems thinking and learning, leadership and change are integral: ‘Systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building a shared vision and team learning—these might just as well be called the leadership disciplines as the learning disciplines’ (Senge, 1990a, p. 359). Senge offered his ethical vision of change based on shared values within the workplace and a conceivably more distributive leadership model by integrating systems learning insights about organisations with the concept of ‘communities of learning’: “The leadership challenges in building learning organisations represent a microcosm of the leadership challenges of our times: how do communities, be they multinational corporations or societies, productively confront complex system issues where hierarchical authority is inadequate for change...Isolated heroic leaders cannot meet these challenges. They require a unique mix of different people, in different positions, who lead in different ways” (Senge, 1996, p. 58). Senge considered learning organisations to have an enormous capacity for constant

development and change not only through the transformation of learning but also through the redistribution of leadership (Senge, 2006, p. 367).

Despite Senge's creative and ambitious synthesis of systems thinking, learning and leadership, his work was criticised for being disadvantaged by systemic change and distributed leadership. 'Systems thinking' flaws a plausible theory of organisational learning and organisational change without a practice-based study of how learning organisations come into being and change through social processes and human agency (Flood, 1998, 1999; Raelin, 2007). Senge's (1999, 2001, 2006) following and more recent works partly deal with these issues when he attempts to withdraw from an expert-centred concept of 'system dynamics' and move towards a learning-centred and more practical theory that takes change agency and leadership as developing categories of reflective action (Giddens, 1984; Weick, 1991). Senge does not produce a theory like that, but what appears is a reshaping of conventional conceptions of leadership and change agency within the system framework (Senge et al., 2000). Senge's view on the learning organisation is mainly a restructured top-down leadership theory of systemic change instead of a theory of change, change and learning in organisations. Therefore, his work limits rather than professes new possibilities for shared knowledge, autonomy and transformation within the workplace (Caldwell, 2012).

Senge, in a strict sense, is not a 'theorist' none; nevertheless, his systems thinking vision is permeated with a theoretical legacy that served as an inspiration to practitioners because it pursues to render theoretical concepts and notions into practice (Senge et al., 1994, 1999; Senge, 2003). Practices lead the five learning disciplines in terms of 'theories-in-use' or learning by doing rather than theoretical knowledge. Despite this essential focus on practice as doing and learning, Senge approaches 'practice' as "a second order manifestation of knowledge and insight into how systems of social behaviour operate" (Senge, 2006, pp. 383-387).

Overall, the significance of systems lies in the ability to see and understand things and phenomena globally, together with their correlations. Personal mastery leads towards a coherent image of the personal vision, together with an objective assessment of the current situation and reformulation of the way of thinking about the future. The essence of the mental models is developing the awareness of attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs that influence behaviour and operation. A shared vision represents the organisation's members having a

mutual purpose, which reflects strong coherence among the members. The bottom line of team learning is to be found in transforming collective thinking towards common goals through dialogue and skilful discussion (Senge, 1996).

Together, these studies provide demonstrative examples of school adaptation of Senge's model that can be briefly explored. Systems thinking shows the wholeness of the school as an organisation and promotes the understanding of the individual and team processes and the learning complexity (learning processes providing applicable knowledge for students; its influence on individuals and groups, correspondence of school objectives and the operations taken on the daily basis, etc.). The concept of personal mastery can be followed by what an institution does for the self-awareness and development of the students and employees, how it accomplishes the maintenance and raising of students' commitment to learning and how the institution provides a clear vision of the team members in achieving common goals. In the context of schools, mental models can be seen in reflecting the school behaviour on the organisational way of thinking accumulated by individual thoughts; in other words, they reflect what is considered knowledge and accomplishment. At an institutional level, the shared vision can be illustrated in the documents establishing the school strategy, vision, mission, or values (Baráth, 2015).

2.3.2 Effectiveness criteria: towards Competing Values Framework

"It is the last lesson of modern science that the highest simplicity of structure is produced, not by few elements, but by the highest complexity."

(Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1850, quoted in Cameron et al., 2014, p. 3)

Systems thinking and organisational learning emphasise both personal mastery and team learning. They develop individual involvement, self-managed groups, and the use of building a level vision. However, both would need changes in organisational structures and shifts in traditional approaches to teaching and learning (Evans et al., 2012).

The fundamental goal of developing a model for the school as a learning organisation and its leadership is to produce a system with a sound theoretical foundation and practical applicability (Baráth, 2017).

For the purpose of developing the model, in the previous chapter, there was an attempt to explore the theoretical background of learning organisations and study the relevant

research on organisational learning by Argyris (1997) and organisational learning by Senge (1990a). Baráth (2017) depicts what factors are crucial as input for establishing a learning organisation model (Pol et al., 2011, 2013; Senge, 1990a; Silins et al., 1998; Watkins & Marsick, 1996) and what influences the efficiency of the link between leadership and school effectiveness (Day et al., 2009; Seashore et al., 2010). Marsick and Watkins (2003) proposed seven dimensions: "continuous learning, inquiry and dialogue, collaboration and team learning, people empowerment for the people dimension, environmental connection, embedded systems, and strategic leadership." A number of research projects confirmed that the schools characterised by the characteristics of a learning organisation tend to react to challenges more promptly: their effectiveness increased (Corcoran & Goertz, 1995); trust, collaboration and workplace learning became significant elements of the organisational culture (Horváth & Feketéné Dr Szakos, 2014), and the functioning network was considered vital (Hidding & Catterall, 1998; Huber, 1991). Based on the comprehensive organisational examination of the theoretical models, the organisational culture and effectiveness analysis can be built on the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) by exploring and analysing the behaviour competencies of the organisation's key players (Baráth, 2013). The learning organisation profile provides the empirical basis for developing the framework (Anka et al., 2015).

The quote stated above shows that simplicity and complexity can often be confused with one another. Intended for novices, as an example, a superficial and casual understanding of something leads to a simple explanation. In this case, simplicity comes from a need for more awareness, naivety, or underestimation. Complexity is avoided, and, in this sense, explanations are simple; in this sense, explanations have limited appreciation and value. On the other hand, experts are informed of the complicated elements; for that reason, they are knowledgeable of the complexity of an aspect. They determine understanding to a greater extent than the novice as they tend to explain in an elaborate and intricate way. Because their explanations are more complicated than novices', it is often difficult to grasp the meaning or understand them. Experts can bring intricacy to things, but not in simple terms. Masters comprehend in much greater depth and detail; their explanations also have much more value and appreciation. They formulate the complexity into profoundly simple terms. Their reasoning represents what Emerson described – the simplicity that lies at the heart of

complexity. Masters understand the phenomenon entirely so that they can explain complex things in simple terms. The discrepancy between the simplicity of novices and the simplicity of masters rests not on the surface but in the grounded depth of understanding that stands behind it. When a master is approached for explanations, people are influenced by what they say – not because of its complexity but because of its profound simplicity. Masters arrange the simple structure entrenched within complexity.

Establishing value is an exceedingly complex venture both for leaders and organisations. However, despite its complexity, creating value is the aim of every organisation and every leader. Initially, value creation is determined through financial means like profitability, income provision, and cost savings. However, experienced executives understand that value creation depicts much more complexity than obvious financial criteria – even though it is accurate but incomplete. The Competing Values Framework encourages leaders to see the levels of potential in the pressure of organisational life. Leaders have the capacity to become masters so that they can identify ways for value creation in a creative way. This skill to see profound simplicity in complexity is the core of the mastery (Cameron et al., 2014).

The Competing Values Framework has been one of the 40 most critical organisational frameworks in business and management history (Ten Have et al., 2003). For more than 25 years, it has been researched and tested in organisations by a group of leaders from leading business schools and corporations (Cameron & Quinn, 2011; Quinn, 1988; Quinn & Cameron, 1983; Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983). Nowadays, hundreds of organisations worldwide use the Competing Values Framework because of the factors that account for high organisational performance (Cameron et al., 2014). About the need for a practical model, this framework was developed to promote successful leadership, enhance organisational effectiveness, and foster value creation (Figure 2) (Cameron et al., 2006).

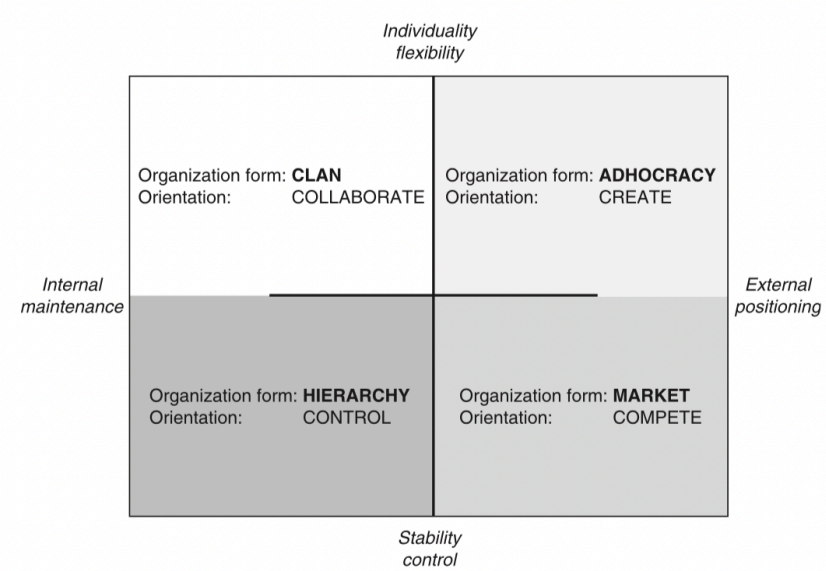
Figure 2. The relationship between leadership, effective performance, and value creation

Source: Cameron et al. (2006)

The Competing Values Framework is a tool that works as a map, an organising structure, a sense-making device, an inspiration for new ideas, and a learning system. Researchers have implemented it in many aspects of organisations, like value outcomes, organisational culture, effective leadership, core competencies, decision-making, and human resources (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). To put it another way, the framework aids leaders in working more consistently and more conscientiously to improve their organisations' performance and value creation (Cameron et al., 2014).

As mentioned earlier, the exact dimensions that emerged from research on organisational effectiveness also emerged when exploring a wide variety of other aspects of organisational activities, evolving approaches to learning, organisational culture, leadership competencies, organisational designs, organisational virtues, creativity, financial investments, and information processing. Figure 3 illustrates the fundamental dimensions that organise each of these aspects (Cameron et al., 2006).

Figure 3. Core Dimensions of the Competing Values Framework



Source: Cameron et al. (2006)

It is important to highlight that these four quadrants represent opposite or competing assumptions. Every continuum identifies value creation and critical performance criteria opposite from the value creation and performance requirements on the other end of a continuum, which follows flexibility versus stability and internal focus versus external focus. Overall, these dimensions construct quadrants that also compete on the diagonal. These competing fundamentals in each quadrant generate one of the essential characteristics of the Competing Values Framework, the existence and need of the paradox (Cameron et al., 2014).

The paradoxical nature of the framework can be approached through the prism of post-modernism. The nature of paradox can be disappointing and, at the same time, amusing in the sense that it is ultimately hard to wrap it up neatly in one framework. Quinn and Cameron, in *Paradox and Transformation: Toward a Theory of Change in Organisation and Management,* (1988) bring forward different perspectives and applications of recent organisational research, using a paradox framework to "introduce and explore the implications of paradox in organisations". The work considers organisational behaviour paradoxical and gives visions that could not be attained by restricted attention to the more comprehensive aspects of organisational life (Quinn & Cameron, 1988). Paradox is a problematic concept and has a deceitful nature, but Quinn and Cameron have structured the theory in a way that facilitates understanding. One of the dimensions of the Competing Values Framework produces a process ranging from adaptability and flexibility on one end

to consistency and endurance on the other end (Lawrence & Nohria, 2002). The second dimension of the framework differentiates the direction towards an emphasis on internal capability and the integrity of processes on the one hand, from the direction towards a focus on external circumstances and differentiation from encounters with outsiders on the other hand (Cameron et al., 2014). As a means to create value in organisations, it is effective to concentrate on expanding options, developing new ideas, self-organising, and collaborative learning (regarding Collaborate and Create quadrants Figure 3). In addition, the value may be pursued by focusing on sustaining objectivity, gathering and analysing data, and thoroughly monitoring progress (regarding the Control and Compete quadrants Figure 3) (Cameron et al., 2014). Similar to consistent change, it requires identifying stability to be effectively managed, so organisations also need predictability and reliability to create long-term value (Cameron, 2006). Organisations that constantly exceed the market over time are those that have stable cultures, rational visions, and dependable processes (Collins & Porras, 2005).

Furthermore, value can be created by concentrating on external opportunities like acquisitions, recognising future trends, following innovative ideas, and competing for improvement (regarding the Create and Compete quadrant). The emphasis is on the right side of the framework or opportunities discovered outside the organisation's boundaries (Tichy & Sherman, 2001). Otherwise, value creation may also happen by focusing on internal effectiveness or structure, culture, cost reduction, constant quality improvement, and human progress (the Collaborate and Control quadrants in Figure 3). The focus is on the left side of the framework or on aspects located inside organisational boundaries. These two core dimensions form four quadrants together where each stands for a particular group criterion – whether regarding leadership, effectiveness, value creation, structure, learning, or other relevant organisational factors. The developed framework serves as the way of organisation evaluation, the way to process information and learn about the culture, to organise and lead others, the types of values to be created, and to cluster organisational elements. The framework combines the fundamental values that exist in organisations (Cameron & Quinn, 2011).

It is very interesting to see the dynamics between the variables of paradoxes in evaluating and comparing the leader’s functional performance in all four paradox areas. It is

the most natural way to build the dynamics from where the leader is focused more on stability or flexibility, internal or external improvement in the organisation because the Competing Values Framework takes its development from business and management. However, the current study doesn't pursue the goal of evaluating and building paradox relations of the leader's performance. It can be considered as the next step for further consideration when the leader's roles are already pre-determined. Since the study aims first to conceptualise what school effectiveness is and construct the knowledge of that in Kazakhstani schools, the school leader's role is the framework used as an uninhabited territory to build in the meaning. The constructing approach to the developed framework can be further discussed in structuring the research design for the current study.

Every quadrant has a label to describe its most essential characteristics for creating value. The original formulation of the Competing Values Framework used terms acquired from the academic literature in organisational research to specify each quadrant – Clan (upper left), Adhocracy (upper right), Market (lower right), and Hierarchy (lower left) (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Nevertheless, addressing practising leaders and managers, the researchers substitute action verbs as labels, which can assist leaders in the primary activities relating to value creation in each quadrant – Collaborate, Create, Compete, and Control (Cameron et al., 2014).

One core function of the Competing Values Framework is to assist the progress of interpreting an unsettled and ambiguous environment in an effective and rational way. The framework makes it possible to coordinate different spheres in the situation in ways that create value rather than destroy value. In this regard, the Competing Values Framework is an approach to thinking which means interpreting or coaching a complex phenomenon. Moreover, the framework works as a tool to develop a set of competencies and strategies that involve complexities being taken into consideration. The Competing Values Framework can provide the intent point, as well as a defined and consistent interpretation system, enabling effective leadership in dynamic change conditions (Cameron et al., 2014).

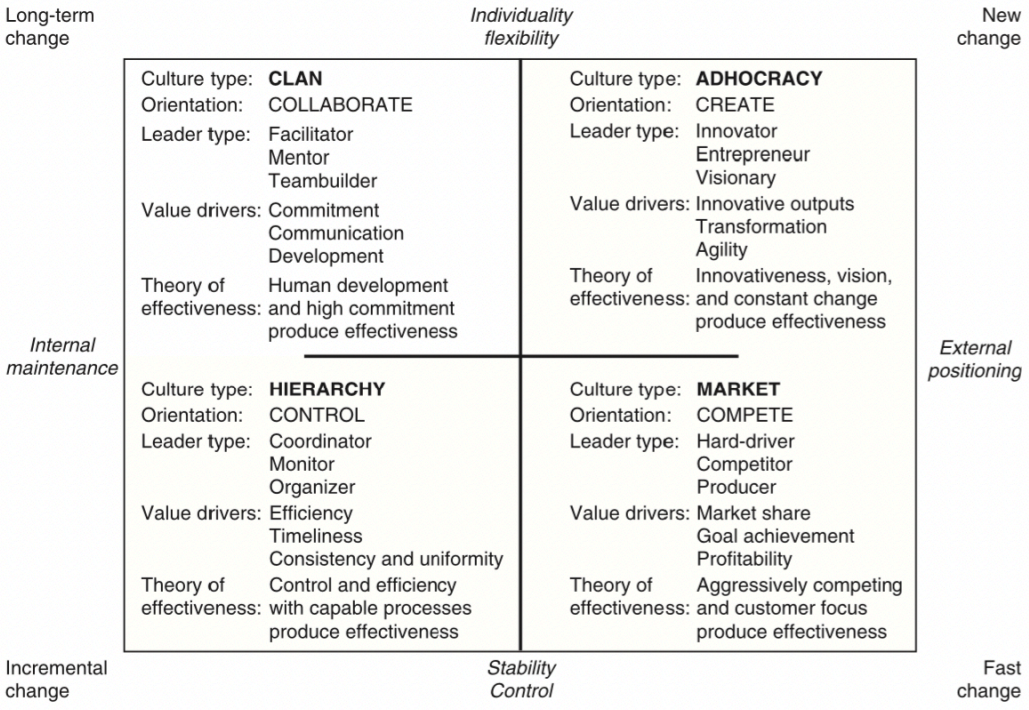
2.3.3 The leader's roles in building an effective school

As mentioned above, the Competing Values Framework is developed on groups of primary and secondary dimensions acquired from scholarly research and managerial practice.

These dimensions distinguish values opposing or portraying contradictory approaches to value creation. Four quadrants are formed by these fundamental and horizontal dimensions, where every dimension regulates and classifies a set of strategies, competencies, and perspectives that leaders may use to foster value creation (Cameron et al., 2014). Understanding these quadrants is the most substantial aspect of the Competing Values Framework.

The quadrants are labelled with an action verb implying the types of value-creating activities that describe it – Collaborate, Create, Compete, and Control (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983). Leaders and organisations that elaborate on specific value outputs establish high competency levels in one of these four quadrants. That means each quadrant stands for the mindset and outlook about challenges and opportunities, an approach to deal with them, and a set of strategies and techniques that pursue organisational value creation. Figure 4 below compiles some of the critical features of each quadrant.

Figure 4. The Competing Values Framework – culture, leadership, value drivers, and effectiveness



Source: Cameron et al., (2006)

Several studies have shown that leaders and organisations are drawn toward one or more of these quadrants in a certain period (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). This means that

leaders evolve a peculiar group of skills and areas of expertise. They establish mental models and behavioural competencies biased toward one or more of these quadrants. Also, one or more of these quadrants distinguish a strategic intent, a group of leading competencies, and develop a dominant culture in organisations. The Competing Values Framework encourages leaders and organisations to analyse and define these styles and to take advantage of them in value-creation processes (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983).

In the Control quadrant, value-enhancing activities involve pursuing improvements in effectiveness by enforcing better processes. The quadrant may be summarised as 'better, cheaper, and surer' (Quinn, 1988). One of the indicators of this quadrant is maintaining a considerable degree of statistical predictability. Organisational effectiveness is correlated with competent methods, evaluation, and control. The activities for the value creation of the Control quadrant comprise quality improvements such as statistical process control and other quality control processes like productivity development and effectiveness enhancement methods. Activities like these encourage organisations to perform more smoothly and effectively (Quinn, 1996).

Leadership strategies in the Control quadrant help eliminate errors and increase the steadiness and consistency of outcomes. The quadrant is focused on disciplined strategy, referred to as developing effectiveness as the broad use of systems, processes, and technology, which are major attributes of this quadrant (Cameron, 1980).

Enterprises involved in the Control quadrant build the most value when failure is impossible or in highly organised or stable environments. Value develops primarily from growing certainty, consistency, and predictability and by discarding anything that inhibits an ideal or flawless outcome. The control quadrant pursues maintaining an improved measurement system, curtailing and taking off unproductive units (Whetten et al., 1998).

"Leaders who are most competent in the Control quadrant tend to be organisers and administrators" (Cameron et al., 2014, p. 33). They concentrate on details, make conscientious decisions, are precise in determination, and concentrate on the best way. The leaders are primarily conservative, careful, and reasonable as decision makers where the actions are taken systematically, and perseverance denotes their style (Cameron & Whetton, 1983). The responsibility of a leader involves being often a technical expert, being well informed, monitoring specifics and acquiring power based on information control and

technical expertise. The leader actively pursues documentation and information management (Cameron, 2005).

In the Compete quadrant, value-enhancing activities encompass being aggressive and forceful when pursuing competitiveness (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Organisations that surpass in this quadrant give priority to and beget their competitive position. They carefully follow and look through the marketplace indicators and how to provide shareholder value consistently. Speed is a very crucial aspect in managing a competitive edge, so 'results-right-now' is an ordinary requirement (Cameron et al., 2014). The quadrant can be summarised as 'compete hard, move fast, and play to win'. Organisational effectiveness is identified with aggressive competition and fast response (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983).

In the Competent quadrant, the value-creating activities involve putting aggressive measures into action to develop working capital, outsourcing chosen aspects, and investing in service activities. The strategies in this quadrant support the organisations' strong position with investors by establishing a superior reputation for providing excellent financial performance in the instant term (Cameron, 2005).

Leadership approaches are intended to produce short-term profitability for stakeholders. In this framework, clients are of the highest priority, and they are characterised as the fundamental aim of being in the business (Cameron, 2006). Success is resolved based on signs such as revenues, meeting budget goals, and increasing profits. Swift response and pace of action are pillars of value-creating activities, and principles followed by successful companies like Chrysler and General Electrics like 'Lead, follow, or get out of the way' and 'Control your destiny or someone else will' are conventional to reflect the hallmarks and the core of the leadership approach (Cameron et al., 2014). Being in charge, taking action, moving fast, and being aggressive are ordinary values of the Competent quadrant.

In the Competent quadrant, actions build the most value when organisations must manage a selection of initiatives, financial acquisitions, or government agreements (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997). Extreme pressure levels to achieve and perform stimulate organisations to concentrate on the Compete quadrant. Leaders, in their aspiration for value creation, foster the orientation to building a profit emphasis, providing results, and making rapid decisions. They accept challenges, expand goals and have a higher degree of performance orientation (Friedman, 1996). In the Compete quadrant, the leaders are characterised as the ones with

confident behaviour and a strong will for their success to be judged based on results, not on their level of effort or the strategies used (Quinn & Cameron, 1983).

In the Create quadrant, value-enhancing activities address innovation in the services the organisation provides. For this quadrant, the mantra can be: 'Create, innovate, and envision the future' (Cameron et al., 2014, p. 36). Organisations that succeed in this quadrant effectively manage discontinuity, change, and risk. The leaders support freedom of thought and action among the staff so that rule-breaking and expanding beyond barriers are prevalent characteristics of the organisational culture (Cameron, 2006). The effectiveness of an organisation is related to entrepreneurship, vision, and constant change (Cameron, 1978). Value-creating activities in this quadrant may include innovative development, revolutionary new process discoveries, innovations in distribution that redefine entire management, and the development of new technologies (Miles & Cameron, 1977). Implementing the strategies of this quadrant allows organisations to vault their competitors and attain a breakthrough degree of performance (Cameron et al., 2011).

Compared with the Control and Compete quadrant methods, the Creative quadrant has a risk-return ratio that differs from the ensuing go-ahead strategies (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). When creating new value, the possibility of reward is high, as is the high chance of failure. Furthermore, the speed at which results are gained and the kind of success gained are also not predictable (Cameron & Whetton, 1983).

Leaders' perspectives are focused on developing new services and producing value by advancing the activities by which entrepreneurship can be improved in the organisation. The leaders of the Create quadrant face the challenges of developing the service portfolio through innovation and helping new ventures (Cameron et al., 1987).

Create quadrant techniques that generate the most value in fast-moving, changeable, and dynamic environments that require innovative ideas and solutions. Organisations that can adapt promptly and predict the future to arising dynamic conditions will prosper, while other organisations are looking forward to the ambiguity of the future (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983).

Create quadrant organisations that succeed as frontiers and forerunners of the given area or industry. It is typical for them to fail fast to succeed more quickly, not be afraid of failures, learn from mistakes, and experiment (Cameron et al., 2011).

In this quadrant, successful individual leaders tend to be gifted visionaries and innovators, inclined toward risk, and not afraid of uncertainty. The leaders can commonly create visions, dreams, and concepts for the organisation (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). The capacity to stay up-to-date on changes, remain imaginative, and engage in original actions makes Create quadrant leaders the favourites of fast-achieving, goal-oriented organisations (Quinn & Cameron, 1983).

In the Collaborate quadrant, value-enhancing activities are related to building human competencies, developing people, and strengthening an organisational culture (Tichy & Sherman, 2001). In this quadrant, the way to change is thoughtful and organised because collaborative and consistent measures are dominant (Quinn, 1988). This competence, in short, can be summarised as 'human development, human empowerment, human commitment' (Cameron et al., 2014, p. 37). The emphasis is on establishing coherence through harmony and unity through involvement. Organisations flourish by recruiting, hiring, developing, and retaining the human resource base. Organisational effectiveness is related to human development and high degrees of staff engagement (Cameron et al., 2014).

The activities of the Collaborate quadrant comprise defining and reinforcing organisational values, standards and expectations; planning employees' professional development and multifunctional work groups; enforcing programs to advance employee maintenance; and promoting teamwork and decentralised decision-making (Cameron & Lavine, 2006). The activities of the Collaborate quadrant promote maintaining and extending the organisation's effectiveness to create value (Cameron et al., 2011).

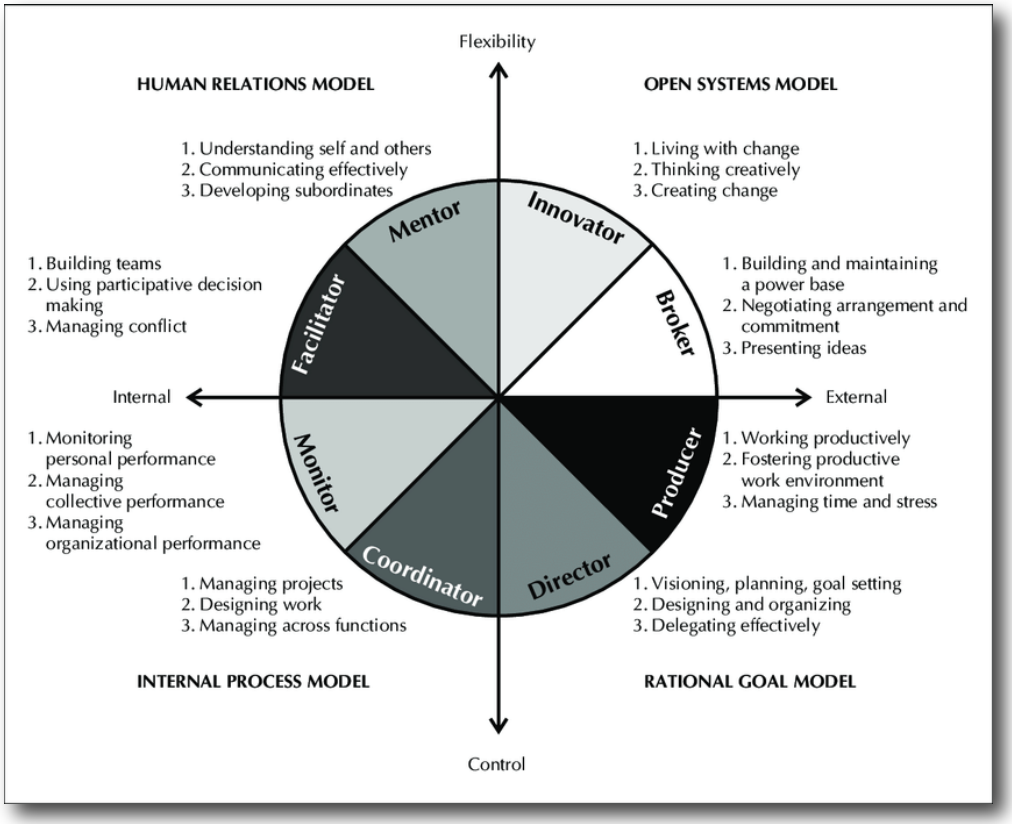
The main goal of leaders' strategies is to build the organisation's human capacity (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). Human and social capital become the main focus compared to financial capital as the former is considered to develop the financial capital (Cameron, 2006). In this quadrant, value creation depends on core qualifications like interpersonal skills and competent human interaction, so leadership strategies concentrate on developing effective relationships. The crucial outcomes of the Collaborate quadrant strategies are the perception of community, loyalty to culture, and eagerness to contribute (Cameron et al., 2011).

Collaborate quadrant strategies function effectively when organisations maintain stability in times of uncertainty (Quinn, 2003). The pathway to achieving long-term success is forming effective and long-lasting cooperation beyond organisational boundaries,

including inside and outside the organisation. Successful collaborate quadrant leaders foster the roles of parent figure, mentor, facilitator, and team builder (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). Leaders consider shared goals, mutual collaboration, and a sense of community necessary. They create working environments that are clear of stress and conflict; organisational staff tend to be devoted to the organisation and the team.

In summary, Collaborate quadrant leaders are responsible for the individuals' development of needed skills, ensuring a fit between job requirements and skills, and fostering life balance. The figure below shows the core roles of the leaders according to each quadrant's characteristics described above. It can summarise and aid in concluding the main concepts, notions, values, and behaviour (Figure 5).

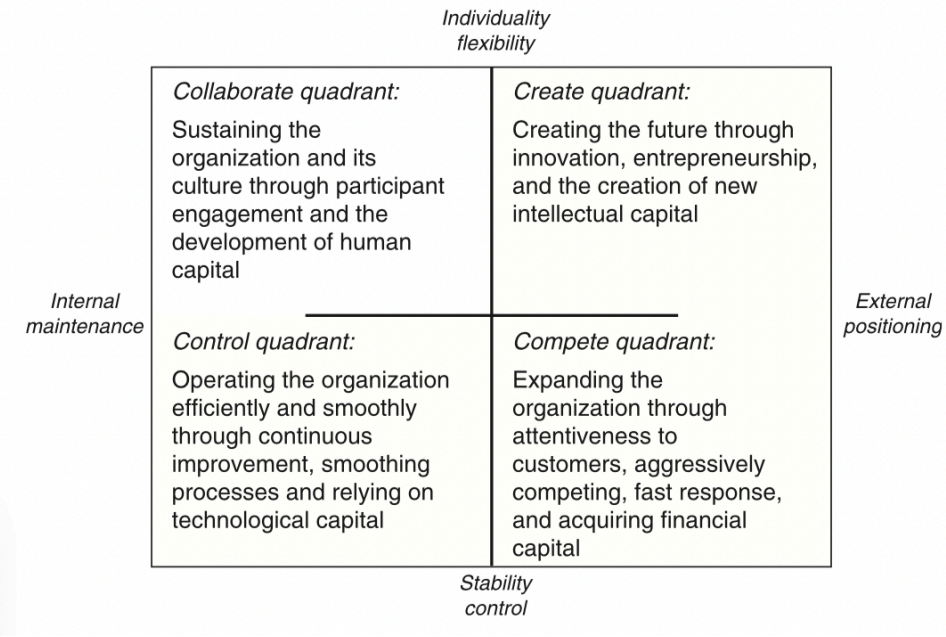
Figure 5. The Competing Values Framework – School Leader roles



Source: Cameron et al., (2014)

The figure below outlines the primary priorities of the four quadrants (Figure 6) (Cameron et al., 2014, p. 40).

Figure 6. Emphasis of the four quadrants in the Competing Values Framework



Source: Cameron et al., (2014)

Roles in each quadrant create value in different ways, and these differences can occasionally become a source of tension in organisations, given that the value produced in one quadrant can be underestimated when viewed from the perspective of another quadrant.

PART 3. THE CASE OF KAZAKHSTAN

3.1 From Post-Independence to the New Millennium

"The world is an ocean, time is a breath of wind, early waves are elder brothers, and late waves are younger brothers. Generation succeeds generation, even though things seem immutable in their quietude."

(Abay Kunanbayev, The Book of Words, Word Thirty-Seven, quoted in Leneshmidt Translations)

The history of Kazakhstan of the last century made is a part of the Soviet Union since 1920; the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (Kazakh SSR), as it was known from 1936 to 1991, was of all the Soviet republics "one of the most closely tied to the metropole" (AllahMorad, 2021). It is clear that the Kazakhstani economy had long depended on the continuous transportation of natural resources for further processing.

The independence brought many open questions regarding rebuilding the economy and establishing social spheres of life. Between 1990 and 1995, the country's GDP (gross domestic product) fell by 31%. The post-Soviet states introduced new customs and tariffs, creating a disruption of long-established supply chains that caused the economic crash of Kazakhstan.

The dissolution also caused gaps in the labour market in the sense that immense social dislocation, including 1.7 million ethnic Russians and more than half a million ethnic Germans, left the country between 1989 and 1999. These changes brought the loss of a large number of those previously holding skilled positions in the most prominent industries, leaving a gaping hole (AllahMorad, 2021).

The collapse forced the government to react fast and consider drastic economic reforms, which led to the creation of the Kazakhstan 2030 Strategy. Approved in 1997, "this strategy prioritised reducing government interference in domestic and foreign trade, improving tax and tariff administration, revising corporate governance structures, encouraging foreign investment and international ties, and privatising state-owned enterprises" (AllahMorad, 2021).

Notwithstanding that Kazakhstan's post-independence economic and social information was rapid and disruptive, its political system can be described by consistency. Nazarbayev, who had served as the prime minister of Kazakh SSR for years, transitioned

smoothly into the country's presidency. He became a chief figure in the country's further development, including the fundamental transformations in Kazakhstan's educational system, until his resignation in 2019.

These circumstances and events had a formative impact on Kazakhstan's later history and, inevitably, on its educational system. Although the situation in the new millennium changed drastically, the disturbances and hectic decisions of these crucial early years of regaining independence continue to shape the country today.

These initial challenges had an impact on different levels of the educational system. The most dangerous indicator was in the early 2000s, which showed declining enrollments across the board. Growing oil wealth enabled the government's reform capacity, empowering the series of immense educational reforms. The government presented measures to align the country's qualifications framework with EHEA standards and expand the secondary school cycle to 12 years (OECD, 2018).

The first recognition includes Kazakhstan being ranked worldwide on UNESCO's Education for All Development Index (EDI) in 2011 (UNESCO, 2011). The report measures elementary enrollment and completion rates, adult literacy levels, and gender parity in education and literacy (UNESCO, 2011). International organisations like the OECD have also stated the success of the Kazakhstani education system for its low repetition rates. Most Kazakhstani students progress smoothly from one grade to the next, with a low rate of holding back (OECD, 2018).

The Law On Education (2007) and its amendments of 2011 and 2015 state the current legal framework governing education in Kazakhstan (On Education, 2007). The education administration is the primary responsibility of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry Of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MESRK, 2012). The Office of the President brings forward high-level education goals and manages vital projects, launching special initiatives like the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) and Nazarbayev University. The fundamental documents of the past decade: the State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020 (SPED 2011-2020) and the State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016-2019 (SPED 2016-2019).

The reforms mentioned above will form on those of the past. At the beginning of the 21st century, expanding revenues have enabled the authorities to contrive ambitious reforms transforming education and improving teaching quality, increasing access to poorer students, and aligning the system with international standards.

In the latest report on the progress of Kazakhstan's transition to the market economy, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) identifies the need to "improve inclusion across regions and for vulnerable population groups" as one of the country's key priorities in 2021 (EBRD, 2020). In elaborating on how those improvements can be achieved, the report is unequivocal: "Reforms in education and vocational education need to accelerate" (EBRD, 2020). To transform and diversify its economy completely, the country will need to provide more support for its education system.

3.2 A Decade of change in the school system: towards effectiveness

"Those who seek learning should know certain essential conditions without which they cannot achieve their goal."

(Abay Kunanbayev, The Book of Words, Word Thirty-Two, quoted in Leneshmidt Translations)

New political, social and economic conditions have created a potentially new educational situation in Kazakhstan. Since the mid-90s of the 20th century, educational reform has been linked to several measures to radically change its institutional-economic, legal, structural and content components. Objective factors that determine the idea and direction of innovations in education are:

- formation of the Republic of Kazakhstan as an independent country;
- introduction of market relations into the economy;
- development of different forms of ownership;
- integration of national education into the global educational system.

The national education system of Kazakhstan consists of preschool, primary, fundamental (lower) secondary, upper (general or vocational) secondary education. Generally, 57% of the 7 696 public or mainstream schools (primary and secondary) in Kazakhstan are "ungraded" (UGS), which means there are not enough students to have their class every year and to teach students from different age groups together in one class.

The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan is committed to improving the education system by reforming the existing policy, identifying best international practices and implementing them in the Kazakhstani context. It can be observed that Kazakhstan's education performance has improved in recent years. In 2012, Kazakhstan moved ten positions up from 59th to 49th place in the ranking of OECD countries participating in PISA. The same year, Kazakhstan was ranked first on UNESCO's "Education for All" index, reaching 99% attendance for primary education and 92% attendance for secondary education (NCESA, 2013). However, the quality of learning outcomes is below the international average according to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). According to the Constitution and the Law on Education, preschool, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education are considered compulsory and provided free of charge (MESRK, 2012).

The present trends in Kazakhstan's education produce the need for reassessment of its role, functions, and place in the general education system and the elaboration of new plans and strategies for its further development (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018).

The highly effective education system is one of the core factors in the consistent rise of the national economy and Kazakhstan society. The objective of the educational system's new economic and social reforms is to ensure a high-quality transformation in the market economy within globalisation. Educational reforms require the creation of new legal, scientific-methodical, financial and material demands and reasonable employment to develop the process of preserving the positive potential (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018).

Development of education is determined by the need for changes in the organisational and economic, legal and social relations, considers the effectiveness of schools in achieving the reforms comprising trilingual policy, transition to 12-year compulsory education, and international recognition of the educational success of Kazakhstan, which can be measured by TIMSS and PISA test results (AllahMorad, 2021; Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018).

More recently, the government pursued a trilingual policy to attain the population's high proficiency in Kazakh, Russian, and English (Aksholakova & Ismailova, 2013). The recognition of English as the language of international business and trade dictates the expansion of the percentage of Kazakhstani citizens speaking English to 20% and the

percentage speaking all three languages to 15% in 2020 (Aksholakova & Ismailova, 2013). "Modernization of an education system in Kazakhstan is expedient on three main directions: optimisation of educational institutions; modernisation of teaching and educational process; increase of efficiency and availability of educational services" (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018, p. 111).

One of the strategically crucial directions of education modernisation in Kazakhstan is a transition to the 12-year training model. "According to the State Programme of Education and Science Development in 2016-2019, the transition to 12 years of education is the main priority. The complete transition process will include four stages: since 2016, the first classes; since 2017 – the second, fifth and seventh classes; since 2018 – the third, sixth, eighth and 10^{th} classes; since 2019 – fourth, ninth, 11^{th} and 12^{th} classes. In 2015, the necessary state standard of education (SOSE) of elementary schools was approved" (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018, p. 106).

Another measurement of school effectiveness in Kazakhstan is a large-scale international study, TIMSS and PISA, where Kazakhstani students demonstrate "high results at subject mastery level, but they are much less able to cope with tasks embedded in non-mathematical settings" (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018, p.106). These results may show that to solve PISA tasks formulated in the contexts of everyday life. It is necessary to have modelling, which is building a mathematical model of the proposed daily situation (OECD, 2013). TIMSS results show relatively similar results, showing students' difficulties in applying gained knowledge in a real context (OECD, 2013).

The gap in students' TIMSS and PISA results could be explained by how education is organised in Kazakhstan (Bolotov et al., 2012). It follows that the teachers do not get enough methodological support for the subjects to be taught in real-life contexts at school (Egupova, 2014; Tyumeneva et al., 2015). It should be noted that the problem highlighted in the TIMSS and PISA data is relevant to several disciplines, such as chemistry, biology, physics, and mathematics (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018).

The government's perception of high standards in primary and secondary school emphasises the growth of "a value of mathematics and computer science in the daily life of a person" (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018, p. 106). This means a student should be able "to model real-life situations in the language of algebra, to study the constructed models by using

the algebra conceptions, to interpret the obtained results" and "to apply the concepts, results, methods for solving practical problems and problems from related disciplines". The necessity of developing the ability of students to use school knowledge in everyday life is emphasised in the "Fundamental core of the content of general education" (Toybazarova & Nazarova, 2018, p. 106).

3.3 Past intervention in understanding leadership

"To attain your goal and be faithful to your duty, you should foster constancy of purpose, determination and strong will, for this help preserve the sobriety of your reason and the purity of your conscience."

(Abay Kunanbayev, The Book of Words, Word Thirty-Two, quoted in Leneshmidt Translations)

Effective school leadership positively influences student outcomes, teaching quality, and staff motivation. Research indicates that leadership is grounded on a common vision shared by staff, parents, and the local community, which is essential in school development and innovation. In some Member States, the main challenge is that school leaders often need to receive the preparation and consistent support they need to overcome different tasks (OECD, 2016b).

Different researchers in Kazakhstan have raised the issue's relevance. The research on organisational, social, and economic aspects of school leadership and the understanding of the meaning and practices carried out by Bekbayeva conclude that headteachers are aware of their potential and weaknesses (Bekbayeva, 2009). Another view shared by the experienced school headteacher on some strategies of leadership and monitoring within the school is that the types of monitoring are distinguished as classroom, general, thematic, and individual. In order to accomplish these activities, he suggests working collaboratively with deputies and teacher leaders of methodological unions of different subjects (Kozybak, 2009).

There are some other concerns raised in the literature about the critical role of the principal's activity in the Kazakhstani context: increasing the quality of education (Valieva, 2010; Milovanova, 2010; Tauirbekova, 2011), leading successfully without stress (Kondrashkin, 2010), effective organisation of school management, distribution of functional responsibilities (Dozortseva, 2011), correlation of leadership and gained achievements, and

leader's spiritual-practical activities in nurturing stuff (Dorozhkina, 2011). Apart from these perspectives, there is a claim that "the art of leadership can be attained by experience and success; high performance of a leader dependent on the ethical values of the headteacher." Additionally, "it is conditional for the leaders to be capable of building trust, be creative, be open-minded and respect different perspectives, be analytical, be ready for decision-making and take strategic actions" (Zhasylykova, 2010, pp. 13-16).

Five goals targeted school control and organisation: democratisation, administrative decentralisation, diversity, variability, and alternative schooling models. The others focused on curriculum and instruction: making schools more child-centred, differentiation of learning based on student interests and abilities, lifelong education, and emphasising active inquiry (Deyoung & Balzhan, 1997).

The legislation (e.g. the Standard Regulations for Operation of Educational Organisations, 2013) states that the school principal is accountable to local education authorities for:

- Compliance with state educational standards;
- The welfare of students and employees of academic institutions within the educational process;
- Financial and economic activities, including the misuse of material and financial resources;
- To prevent violation of the rights and freedoms of students and employees of educational institutions (Standard Regulations for Operation of Educational Organisations, Decree No. 499, 2013, p. 2–33).

Additionally, to be responsible for realising state educational standards and policy, the headteacher is in charge of organising and coordinating the educational (teaching, curriculum and discipline) processes in school by creating the needed conditions for the school community, including teachers, staff and students. The headteacher has the authority to represent the school, take action, make decisions on behalf of the school and sign the official documents with individuals and organisations. Therefore, the leader is responsible for hiring and dismissing staff members for health and safety issues and building maintenance. The new responsibility added to the current duties of a headteacher is managing

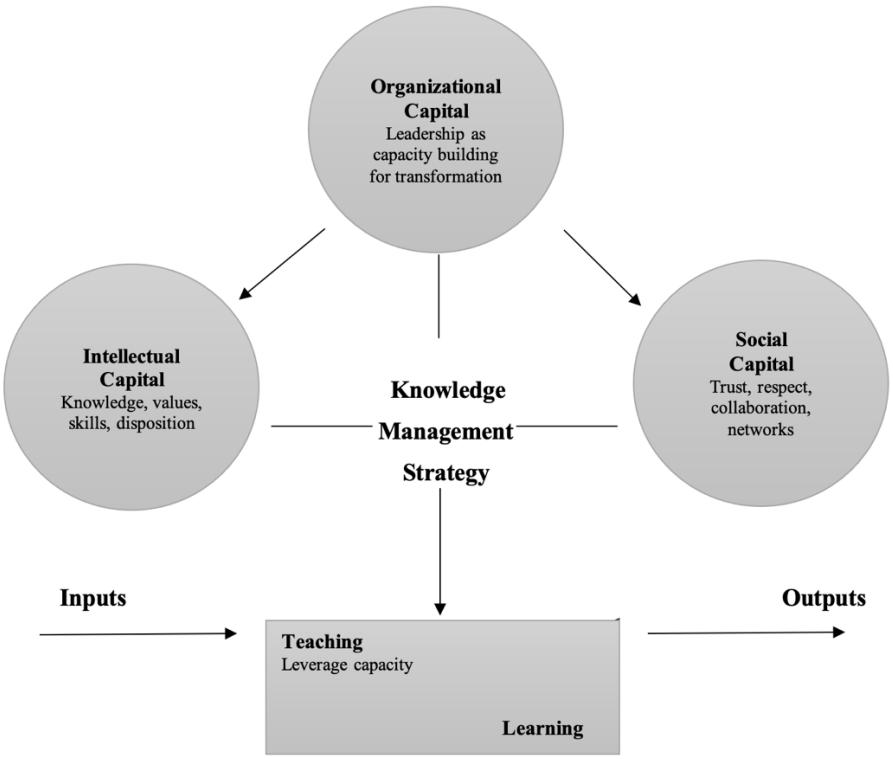
the financial activities, which are usually called “state purchases” (procurement) (Yessimbekova & Aitbayev, 2010).

As these requirements show, a considerable part of the principal’s role is to ensure compliance with state norms rather than focus on strategic school leadership. The current educational agenda in Kazakhstan elaborated in the State Programme of Education Development (SPED) is expected to significantly influence the practice leaders in the country, where the main objective is “the implementation of corporate governance principles”. Moreover, Frost, Fimyar, Yakavets, Bilyalov, and the latest international reports highlight the importance of enhancing leadership quality in Kazakhstani schools (The World Bank, 2013; Yakavets, Frost et al., 2017). In order to build interpersonal and organisational capacity, school leaders need to develop the organisation of their schools in terms of roles of responsibility, structures of accountability, patterns of collaboration, evaluation procedures and the activities that support professional development. It is clear that this is a particular challenge in the Kazakhstani system because of the lack of a tradition of school autonomy (Yakavets, 2017).

To form a concept of capacity in an alternative or at least correspondent way, the idea of capital is the most suitable (Yakavets, 2011). Hargreaves suggested a perspective of school effectiveness as crucial to the quality of school capital, which can be explored in three dimensions: intellectual, social and organisational (Hargreaves, 2001).

According to Figure 7, intellectual capital comprises individuals' knowledge, skills, values and expertise within the school community. Social capital consists of trust, respect, collaboration, and networks that enable people to engage with each other and share their knowledge and experience (Figure 7) (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Hargreaves states that organisational capacity is critical to school effectiveness and productivity (Hargreaves, 2001). This dimension falls into the responsibility of the school leaders’ apprehension of new forms to enable transformation in teaching and learning.

Figure 7. The conceptualisation of leadership as capacity building - utilising intellectual, social and organisational capital.



Source: adapted from Dimmock (2012)

The focus on school leadership in Kazakhstan shows that the concept requires further in-depth research to establish a modern theoretical framework. It is essential to mention that published papers attempt to integrate and categorise current specific school leadership issues. However, more than giving a constructive overview of the situation is required. Overall, school headteachers are discovering new practices and strategies for leading schools in a period of continuous changes happening in the education system. Thus, in Kazakhstan, the direction is taken towards improvement, and the Western-style culture of school leadership is considered (Mukhtarova & Medeni, 2013).

In Kazakhstan, the concept of quality of education is challenging to define and characterise. Recently, several attempts have been undertaken in the international arena to define and improve the quality of education. UNESCO specifies the education quality according to four areas:

1) learning to know emphasises the learners build their knowledge daily, combining indigenous and 'external' elements;
2) learning to do addresses the practical application of what is learned;
3) learning to be together focuses on the critical skills for a life free from discrimination, where all have equal opportunity to develop themselves, their families and their communities;
4) learning to acknowledge the skills needed for individuals to develop their whole potential (EFA, 2005).

Hence, education quality emphasises different areas of learning, covering the content knowledge of both external and local subjects, skills improvement needed in the labour market, qualities to create peaceful and equitable societies, and opportunities for individual development. However, these areas of education quality are difficult to measure. In Kazakhstan, one of the major international assessments, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), provides the assessment of education quality by considering the content of literacy, along with PISA the international evaluations of OECD like TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) and PIRLS (Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study) that illustrate the way of testing secondary school youth and educational quality comparatively across the world as well as Kazakhstan (Bokayev, 2016).

UNICEF states that the terms efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have frequently been used synonymously with quality of education. Quality education comprises:

a) Students who are healthy, well-nourished, ready to contribute and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
b) Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive and provide adequate resources and facilities;
c) Educational content that is created in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, particularly in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life;
d) Education processes through which qualified teachers practice child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and competent assessment to facilitate learning and decrease disparities;

e) Outcomes/results that contain knowledge, skills, and attitudes are relevant to national priorities for education and constructive participation in society.

This description sees education as a compound system embedded in a political, cultural, and economic context (UNICEF, 2000).

Transferring the effective practices of schools is one of the core objectives of Kazakhstan's educational system. This is the reason why identifying the characteristics of an effective school is an obligatory step in improving the quality of secondary education. Currently, one of the most accepted ways to collect information on effective schools is the results of final national testing and exams. They are used both officially and non-officially to evaluate the quality of schools and make the annual report (Davis & Winch, 2015; Koretz, 2002).

It can be seen that there is no particular agreement on which schools should be considered effective in the context of Kazakhstan. However, as has been mentioned, the Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) project was established with the aim of facilitating the modernisation of the secondary education system. The programme is to combine the best traditions of Kazakhstan education and international best pedagogic practice, providing profiled preparation for students and encouraging advanced study languages, i.e. 'the leading site for testing the polylingual educational model and educational innovations' (Nazarbayev, 2010). This shows that the NIS project was established in Kazakhstan as an effective and experimental platform to test innovative practices.

The effective organisation of school education is complex due to low population density, geographic isolation and a large number of small schools. More than 55% of schools in Kazakhstan are considered to be minor, with no more than 50 pupils, mainly located in rural areas (Access to a high-quality education: Opportunities and limitations of rural school children, 2008). Thus, to some extent, access to quality education depends on the children's domicile. Unfortunately, rural children have fewer opportunities to access additional educational services and information compared with their urban peers (MESRK, 2008).

The school inspection is a tool to check the quality of the way the school performs in different countries. In the UK, OFSTED has performed an obligatory school inspection for all schools without exceptions since 1992 (Education (Schools) Act 1992, n.d.). In Kazakhstan, the school inspection is provided by the KKSON (Committee for the Inspection

in Education and Science) MoES in compliance with GOSO (State Compulsory Education Standard. Primary Education. Secondary Education). Kopeyeva concludes that measuring the school's effectiveness is needed to improve any country's education system. However, one-sided measuring based on test results and school inspection is insufficient to see the accurate picture of school contribution to a child's development. Kazakhstani schools need an integrated analysis, case study and methodological support (Kopeyeva, 2017).

PART 4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction: Scientific theoretical fundamentals

"Research is seeing what everybody else has seen and thinking what nobody else has thought."

(Albert Szent-Györgyi)

If someone answers what 'research' means, the possible definition is 'finding things out' (Silverman, 2015). The response is nothing wrong, but the way of finding things out stays open (Silverman, 2015). "People have long been concerned about coming to grips with the environment and understanding the phenomena it presents to their senses" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 5). The ways to reach these results can be classified into three categories: experience, reasoning and research (Mouly, 1978). These categories can be seen as 1reciprocal and overlying but at the same time far from being autonomous and mutually exclusive, attributes in evidence where recommendations to complex modern problems are sought (Cohen et al., 2007).

It is crucial to remember that tools have limitations in searching for the ultimate truth. Personal experience limitations in the frame of common-sense knowing can be defined when compared with features of the scientific approach to problem-solving in terms of different ways theories are applied (Cohen et al., 2007).

Human beings try to learn about the surrounding world using three types of reasoning: deductive reasoning, inductive reasoning, and the mixed inductive-deductive method (Cohen et al., 2007). Even though deductive reasoning is established on Aristotle's syllogism – a significant contribution to formal logic – Francis Bacon criticised the model of deductive reasoning, considering that its main premises were often predetermined notions which imminently bias the conclusions. He proposed the method of inductive reasoning by virtue of which the study of some individual cases would bring to a hypothesis and subsequently to a generalisation (Mouly, 1978).

Mouly (1978) justifies it by explaining that Bacon's fundamental premise was that, with reasonable data, notwithstanding not having a predetermined idea of their meaning, significant relationships and regulations would be discovered by the observer. After Bacon's inductive method, the inductive-deductive approach was developed, which combined

Aristotelian deduction with Baconian induction (from observation to hypothesis) and deduction (from hypothesis to implications) (Mouly, 1978).

A further step in discovering the truth was set out to be research. Kerlinger defined research as the systematic, controlled, empirical, and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena (Kerlinger, 1970). Research bears three components that differentiate it from the first means of problem-solving described earlier, particularly experience (Kerlinger, 1970). First of all, if experience deals with events developing in a haphazard manner, the research is systematic and structured using the processes based on the inductive-deductive model defined above. Second, the research is empirical (Cohen et al., 2007). The researchers refer to experience for validation. Kerlinger (1966) justified that subjective and individual knowledge is required to be checked against objective, empirical evidence and inquiry. Third, research is self-correcting. The research prevents the researchers from inaccuracies not only with its scientific methods but also with the procedures open to public debate by fellow professionals. Inaccurate results are subject to be found in time and revised as a result (Mouly, 1978).

"Research is a combination of both experience and reasoning and must be regarded as the most successful approach to the discovery of truth, particularly as far as the natural sciences are concerned" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 24). As can be seen, educational research evolved a number of contending views of the social sciences, like the established, traditional, and interpretive views, as well as several other fields (Cohen et al., 2007).

The traditional view, as considered to be established, maintains that the social sciences are essentially the same as the natural sciences and are therefore involved with discovering natural and standardised laws to resolve and manage individual and social behaviour. In contrast, the interpretive view focuses on how people are dissimilar from natural phenomena and from each other (Cohen et al., 2007). These competing views within their reciprocal reflections in educational research stem from diverse conceptions of social reality and individual and social behaviour (Cohen et al., 2007).

4.2 Selection of the Approach

…many arrows, loosed several ways, Fly to one mark…

(William Shakespeare, Henry V)

The accuracy and precision of the methodological approaches determine the terms for the accomplishment of sound and reliable research within the world of academia. Therefore, the research methods demand to be solidly connected with its principles and goals. Exploring any aspect connected to effectiveness and leadership can be challenging from both perspectives of theoretical and empirical approaches, as the essential hallmark of effectiveness is its ambiguity and not consistency as a concept. Leadership is ever-emerging and prioritised, and the fact that it progresses continually requires thoughtfulness in how it is approached.

Qualitative research has a long-standing history of playing a part in understanding social structures, behaviours and cultures. Qualitative research developed over the 20th century as it responded to different challenges (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a).

Exploratory research is interested in why phenomena develop and the efforts and factors that drive their occurrence (Ritchie et al., 2013a). Because of its in-depth exploration of the phenomenon, qualitative research delivers a unique tool for examining what lies beyond or constructs a decision, attitude, pattern, or another subject. It also grants what is built in people's thinking and acting – and their meaning – to be identified. The approach enables the chance to describe 'the factors or influences that underlie a particular attitude, belief or perception, for example, the motivations that lead to decisions, actions or non-actions, and the origins of formation of events, experiences or occurrences" (Ritchie et al., 2013, p. 28).

The function of qualitative methods in recognising and providing a reason is extensively accepted within the scope of different epistemological approaches (Giddens, 1984; Layder, 1993; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The forward movement for the sphere of qualitative research was catalysed by reconstruction and reconsidering methodological concepts of different approaches, contributing to a more insightful theoretical foundation (Bohnsack et al., 2010). Research is seen as a comprehensive outlook of the world when a researcher perceives the research beyond implementing a method as a plain technical task (Cohen et al., 2007).

Considering this research, the qualitative approach is a reasonable choice as it enables us to dive deeper into exploring individual perspectives on leadership and effectiveness within the setting of Kazakhstan. Thus, it is the best fit to achieve an understanding of phenomena and their interrelations. The qualitative approach provides an opportunity to examine principals' and teachers' perspectives on school effectiveness and leadership with the sense of discovery and exploration rather than finite ideas and, therefore, is open-ended with arising empirical and conceptual conclusions (Baker & Edwards, 2012).

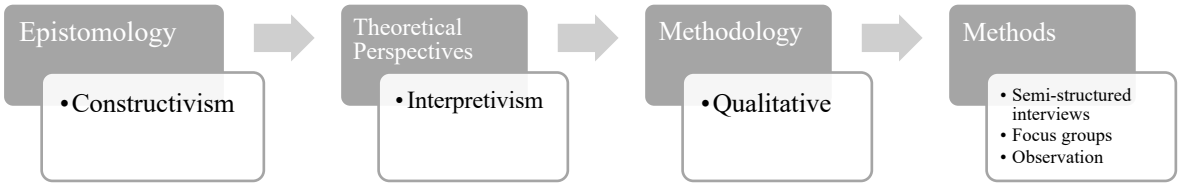
This study is designed towards *qualitative data, which will explore an* in-depth understanding of the respondents' experiences and personal stories as well as the meanings that they attach to their actions. It is crucial to mention that school leadership is a relatively new concept in the educational context of Kazakhstan. Therefore, qualitative research is needed to dive deep into the nature of the idea. The main strength of the qualitative approach is the possibility of exploring a roughly unknown topic, while the quantitative approach enables the evaluation of existing phenomena.

4.3 Theoretical framework

The given study will incorporate qualitative research design in the context of Kazakhstani secondary schools. There is a reasonable consensus that qualitative research is a naturalistic, interpretive approach to understanding the meanings people attach to phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs, values, etc.). In particular, 'how people being studied understand and interpret their social reality is one of the motifs of qualitative research' (Bryman, 2003, p. 8).

According to Crotty (2020), a research process can be grounded on four basic elements: epistemology, theoretical framework, methodology and methods.

Figure 8. Research Paradigm

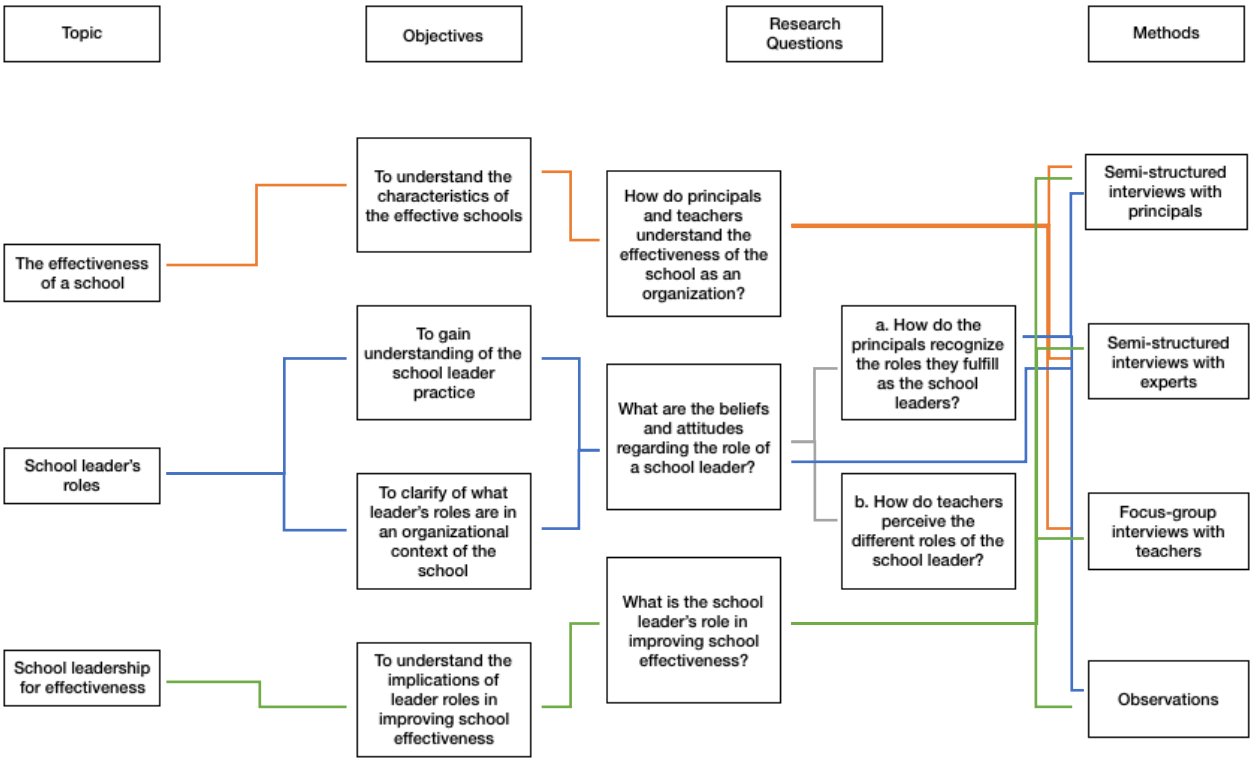


Source: author

Epistemology is the science of knowing and dealing with the systems of knowledge (Babbie, 2008). In terms of epistemology as a way of understanding and explaining how we understand and what we know, the given research can be placed in constructionism since the respondents construct the meaning in various ways, even referring to the same aspect.

Qualitative research theory constructs a guiding strategy for the data arranged in orderly patterns and determines the meaning and insight into the meaning-making (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The methodology is "the science of finding out" – a subfield of epistemology – that leads to scientific analysis (Babbie, 2008, p. 4).

Figure 9. The research outline



Source: author

The research outline represents an abstract and digested perception of the study framework and how the links have been composed. The outline is considered to be a basis and a starting point, as it is important to note that interrelation if the given aspects of the research are more compound than introduced.

4.3.1 Constructivism as the construction of meaningful reality, interpretivism as the making of meaning

"Before there was consciousness on earth of interpreting the world, the world held no meaning at all".

(Crotty, 2020, p. 51)

Regarding the epistemological stance, constructivism is an approach to follow regarding the study's view that there is no proper or valid interpretation. The approach leads to discovering new directions in educational research and can be considered as an invitation to interpretation.

Constructionism states that meanings are built by people as they interact with the world they interpret (Crotty, 2020). More precisely, "it is the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of the interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 2003, p. 42).

One of the founding fathers of the constructivist view, Nicholas Onuf, describes the main idea of constructivism as follows: "[…] social relations make or construct people – ourselves – into the kind of beings that we are. Conversely, we make the world what it is, […] by doing what we do with each other and saying what we say to each other. Indeed, saying is doing: talking is undoubtedly the most important way to make the world what it is. […] Constructivism holds that people make society and society makes people" (Onuf, 2015, pp. 58-59).

Approaching organisational theory from positivist, constructivist, and postmodern perspectives provides a vast comprehension of how organisations operate, evolve, and are perceived. A brief overview can explain the choice of approach. Positivism emphasises the use of scientific methods to study and understand organisational behaviour, with a focus on

quantifiable data, measurable variables, and generalisable findings that can be replicated in different settings.

The first contributions to organisational theory took a positivist approach. Therefore, references to positivism can be found even in the business models used in this work. In contrast to positivist contributions to organisational theory, this work aims to contribute natural terms and use the aforementioned business models as frames, not as positivist determinations.

This study is comitted to the organisational theory and aims to contribute using natural terms. The first contributions to organisational theory had a positivist approach in academic history. The chosen framework is taken from business in order to take a complete constructivist point of view and be considered the most useful for finding new ways to approach the case of Kazakhstan.

The postmodern perspective challenges traditional assumptions about reality, knowledge, and truth, suggesting that there are multiple competing realities and perspectives. Postmodernists emphasise deconstruction and the complexities of power dynamics and languages in organisational settings. Moreover, the Competing Values Framework has a dimension of competing quadrant dynamics that can be considered from this perspective. Such research will examine each quadrant and appreciate how they all create value when resource allocation is viewed from different vantage points of the organisation. However, the current study doesn't aim to evaluate and build competing paradox relations of the leader's performance. The next step for further consideration is to use a quantitative method when the leader's roles are already pre-determined. Since the study aims to first conceptualise what school effectiveness is and construct the knowledge of the school leader's role, it is the framework used as an uninhabited territory to build in the meaning.

In the constructivist approach, researchers focus on how individuals and groups create meaning, interpret information, and construct their reality within the organisations with a focus on multiple perspectives, interpretations, and meanings that individuals bring to their organisational experiences. From a constructivist point of view, the Competing Values Framework highlights the importance of understanding how individuals and groups within organisations construct and interpret leadership and effectiveness. The way in which different stakeholders perceive and interpret the values of flexibility, stability, and internal and

external focus shapes behaviours, interactions, and decision-making processes to wrap it in the leader's roles within the school. Constructivism is the best fit because it provides individuals the chance to bring their own unique perspectives, experiences, and interactions into the organisation and the leadership. This also explains the research as being qualitative by nature, with the core of interpretivism as the theoretical perspective.

Prominent researchers in the field of qualitative research, Guba, Denzin, and Lincoln (2011), have attempted to distinguish why constructivism is an approach to follow within qualitative research. They defined the qualitative research as follows:

> "Qualitative research, as a set of interpretive activities, privileges no single methodological practice over another. Qualitative research is difficult to define clearly as a site of discussion or discourse. It has no theory or paradigm distinctly its own" (pp. 6–7).

Denzin and Lincoln have drawn attention to the fact that qualitative researchers still need to develop a consistent theory or a distinctive paradigm. Because there are too many paradigms to be pinned down in qualitative research, there is no particular need for paradigms (Schwandt, 2014, pp. 247-249). The researchers frequently raise the problem of giving an unambiguous definition of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, pp. 7-8). The complication resides in the fact that qualitative research is permeated with a large body of methods and practices and passes through several disciplines. It can be concluded that "qualitative research is many things to many people" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 10). Ritchie et al. (2013) also support the view by saying, "The interrelatedness of different aspects of people's lives is a critical focus of qualitative research and psychological, social, historical and cultural factors are all recognised as playing an important part in shaping people's understanding of their world" (p. 7). For this reason, they adamantly promoted constructivism as the paradigm of delineating qualitative research (Lee, 2012).

Interpretivism is the accurate perspective within the delineating. The school of thought that emphasises the significance of interpretation and observation in apprehending the social world is known as 'interpretivism'. It is considered an essential part of the qualitative tradition (Ritchie et al., 2013b).

Interpretivism is taken as a theoretical perspective within the current study's framework. It should be noted that the 'theoretical perspective' stands for the philosophical

stance underlining methodology. The theoretical perspective provides a context for the activities engaged and a foundation for its logic and criteria.

The theoretical perspective of interpretivism can be described as “a group of methods of research that start from the position that our knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors and that this applies equally to researchers. Thus, there is no objective reality that researchers can discover and replicate by others, in contrast to the assumptions of positivist science” (Walsham, 2015, p. 5).

However, by drawing on the interpretive school, Geertz Field (1973) criticised the interpretive scientific method as oversimplified and not getting to the point of qualitative research. The interpretive perspective originated from hermeneutic tradition and is oriented to interpreting expanded meaning in disquisition illustrated in a collection of individual narrations or observed processes (Geertz, 1973).

Even though interpretivism was criticised for its limitations, “seeing interpretation as a making meaning does not condemn the researcher to subjectivism as it does not condemn to individualism either” (Crotty, 2020, p. 54).

Interpretivism has developed in opposition to positivism in efforts to comprehend and explain human and social reality. The strength of the interpretivist approach in comparison with the positivist approach - which is to pursue the natural sciences methods employing detached observation to establish universal laws of society - is that it seeks culturally derived and historically established interpretations of the social life world. Therefore, the interpretivism perspective, with constructivism as a driving force, is the way to approach the study as “interpretivism was conceived in reaction to the effort to develop a natural science of the social. Its foil was largely logical empiricist methodology and the bid to apply that framework to human inquiry” (Schwandt, 1994, p.125). This works as the key argument for the choice of an interpretive approach.

Qualitative research within interpretivism practice has reflected this in “the use of methods which attempt to provide a holistic understanding of research participants' views and actions in the context of their lives overall” (Ritchie et al., 2013, p. 7).

The study aims to understand and interpret the concept of leadership and effectiveness in education by school leaders and teachers. The aim is to understand the practical explanation of school effectiveness and leadership; therefore, the research will benefit from

an interpretive paradigm. The paradigm is based on the researcher's process and the social world's impact on each other. The nature of interpretivism is established on the fact that facts and values are not apparent, and the researcher's perspective and values consistently determine findings. Hence, it makes it difficult to provide objective, value-free research. This is considered to be the limitation of the paradigm, although the researcher can acknowledge and be transparent about declared assumptions. However, in the framework of this research, positivism with the methods of the natural sciences is not appropriate because the social world is not governed by law-like generalisations reduced to the simplest elements. Therefore, the interpretivism paradigm in the constructivist approach is the beneficial choice for the current study (Creswell, 2012).

4.3.2 Organisational theory

"Ein organisierter Arbeitsablauf ist effizienter als ein unorganisierter Arbeitsablauf"

(Witte, 1969, p. 20)

It is almost impossible to research modern society by studying organisations (Lune, 2010). Human beings generally affiliate together to perform activities that they could, in another way, not effortlessly achieve by themselves (Giddens, 1984). Aldrich and Marsden described it as "A principal means for accomplishing such cooperative actions is the organisation, a group with an identifiable membership that engages in concerted collective actions to achieve a common purpose" (Aldrich & Marsden, 1988, p. 361).

Organisational theory is a broad field, expanding from sociology, social psychology, anthropology, and philosophy Field (Morgan, 1986; Pfeffer, 1982) to explain the development of policy-making, leadership, management, restructuring and redesigning (Kuh, 2003).

Current research looks into the theory through a constructivist approach to construct the framework for exploring the organisation's behaviour and interpreting the competing values and roles in the context of Kazkahstani schools. The history of organisation theory can be investigated to explain the choice.

To understand the earliest organisational notions, it is necessary to refer to the questions the founders or so-called 'grand theorists' of the late nineteenth century set to

themselves to view the holistic picture (Lune, 2010). One of the founders of classic theories or conventional views of organisations, Max Weber, first acknowledged in the 1920s the trend towards formal organisations in Europe and North America (Giddens, 2010) and raised most of the questions that guide the study of organisations (Lune, 2010). A formal organisation is reasonably structured to reach its goals, usually through explicit rules, regulations and procedures. The modern bureaucratic organisation is an example of a formal organisation with the following bureaucratic limitations (Giddens, 2010).

The term bureaucracy came into being in 1745 when Monsieur de Gournay combined the word 'bureau', meaning both a writing table and an office, with 'cracy', a Greek derivative meaning 'to rule'. Thus, bureaucracy is defined as 'the rule of officials, ' where the term was first relevant to government officials but later gradually expanded to apply to large organisations (Giddens, 2009, p. 784).

The rational-bureaucratic organisation aims to routinise tasks, functions, and processes, which can be described metaphorically as an assembly line production (Weber, 2009). The guiding assumption is that routinisation "leads to improved organisational effectiveness and efficiency" (Kuh, 2003, p. 271). In order to deliver the expected outcomes, the rational bureaucratic manager has to:

- clarify values and set the goals;
- consider the tasks required to achieve the goals set and standardise them;
- designate responsibility for various functions;
- establish contingency plans (Chaffee, 1983; Kuh, 2003, p.272).

The core vision of a classic organisation theory resonates with official indicators of the educational norms of a school as an organisation. The legislation of Kazakhstan (e.g. the Standard Regulations for Operation of Educational Organisations, 2013) states that the school principal is accountable to local education authorities for:

- Compliance with state educational standards;
- The welfare of students and employees of academic institutions within the educational process;
- Financial and economic activities, including the misuse of material and financial resources;

To prevent violation of the rights and freedoms of students and employees of educational institutions (Standard Regulations for Operation of Educational Organisations, Decree No. 499, 2013, p. 2–33).

The view is quite relevant to Kazakhstan's view of school organisations as formal bureaucratic institutions where certain people evaluate the information for performance accuracy with official bodies like the concept of school inspection. Policy decisions are centralised; the senior authority makes decisions to pursue effective progress and performance in the direction of organisational goals (Kuh, 2003). Therefore, it shows the gaps and restrictions in the organisation of the leader's performance.

Like other organisational views, the rational-bureaucratic structure has limitations, mainly when applied in educational institutions. "Specialization, standardisation, routinisation, and repetition inhibit organisational flexibility (Hage & Aiken, 1970; Strange, 1983) and blunt change efforts (Morgan, 1986), and they discourage individual initiative, innovation, and risk-taking (Kuh, 2003, p. 273). Heydinger (1994) stated: '…education must become mission-driven, customer-sensitive, enterprise-organised, and results-oriented … We need a new organisational paradigm: one that will focus us on those we serve; allocate resources based on demonstrable success; provide flexibility that will permit timely responses to changing student and research needs; eliminate unnecessary layers of oversight by placing more responsibility with those we serve" (p. 1).

Postconventional organisational views look at educational organisations as open systems. Instead of being methodical, linear, and goal-directed, the post-conventional organisation distributes information synchronously in different directions and interactions across organisational boundaries to respond to developing assets (Kuh, 2003).

One of the advanced views is that the learning organisation continuously senses, monitors, and examines its internal and external circumstances to respond appropriately as an organisation. When the organisation learns to adapt and change its form, this complex change process is called self-organising (Caple, 1985; Prigogine & Stengers, 2018; Von Bertalanffy, 1973).

Organisations respond to external circumstances through learning – the process of recognising and correcting errors – in other words, they become learning organisations (Senge, 1990a). Learning organisations treat schools as open systems formed by both internal

and changeable external environments. In learning organisations, the community constructs reality together, and through mutually shaped communication, staff and students cultivate culture, which is a set of norms, beliefs, and practices. Postconventional views are focused on a systemic and fundamental perspective of organisational function. The learning organisation discourages from focusing on isolated problems. It suggests that "change can be triggered from anywhere, acknowledging that chaotic elements in contemporary organisations can make any member of the organisation a valuable source of information and influence for improving the organisation" (Allen & Cherrey, 2000, p. 106).

Organisational change researchers claim a systemic approach is required to accomplish the desired results, not just adjust to administrative structures. Systemic change involves reorganising core functions and the actions by which they are performed to recognise the desired success (Woodard et al., 2000). Tierney (1999) believes, "Paint the whole picture. Think big", which means that organisation-wide thinking and action need to be considered and to modify the institutional elements like an educational mission, vision, values, curriculum, and resources (p. 164). A core function of the Competing Values Framework is to reinforce the development of *constructing and interpreting* a changeable and uncertain environment in an effective way (Cameron et al., 2014). The structure enables the coordination of contrasting and dynamic factors in the environment in ways that create value. In this sense, the Competing Values Framework is a way to decipher a complex phenomenon of organisational culture. The structure arranges the development of competencies and strategies that comprise the complexities. The Competing Values Framework engages the resolved system, which empowers effective leadership in conditions of a changing environment (Cameron et al., 2014).

In this sense, the organisation theory of the Competing Values Framework is a window through which the current research can dive into the roles of principals in the context of a complex organisation (Kuh, 2003). Even though there is no detailed roadmap to successful organisational change, the Competency Values Framework gives a handful of organisational change principles that summarise the fundamental concepts (Brown, 1997; Frost, 1996; Levin, 1998).

4.4 Research methods

4.4.1 Interviews

The qualitative interview is a crucial ground for exploring the ways in which subjects experience and understand their world. It gives a unique access to the reality of people who, in their own words, describe their activities, experiences and opinions. It is a 'powerful method of producing knowledge of the human situation, as demonstrated by historical interview studies' (Kvale, 2008, p. 9).

As a distinguishing research method, the interview pursues several purposes. As a research device, it helps to convert the information from research subjects into data: "By providing access to what is 'inside a person's head', [it] makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)" (Tuckman & Harper, 2012, p. 244). Second, interviews can be applied to assess the research questions or hypotheses or to propose new ones; moreover, as an explanatory tool to determine relationships and variables (Cohen et al., 2007). Third, the interview is possible in conjunction with other methods the research is undertaking (Cohen et al., 2007). In the same vein, Kerlinger (1970) notes that the interview can be used to explore unexpected results, validate other methods, or analyse the motivations of the respondents and the reasons for responding the way they do.

As the current research lies in exploring and investigating the phenomena of effectiveness and leadership, the interview is an access to the meaning-making that evolves from the respondents' experiences. The scarcity of literature on school leadership and effectiveness in the context of Kazakhstan shows that the concept in the research arena of Kazakhstan is relatively new. This illustrates the importance of interviews advantage as a tool to explore current experiences, views and perspectives. The interview provides control over the process so the researcher can guide it in different directions.

The research method of semi-structured interviews offers exceptional benefits as it can fit many valuable tasks, especially when some open-ended questions require follow-up queries (Newcomer et al., 2015). A semi-structured interview is one of the most effective ways to collect data in terms of its flexible nature, with a prepared but not fixed set of questions and follow-up questions that can be asked during the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). That is why a semi-structured interview is 'flexible, accessible and

intelligible and, more importantly, capable of disclosing important and often hidden facets of human and organisational behaviour' (Qu & Dumay, 2011, p. 246).

The dialogue in a semi-structured interview can ramble around the topics on the agenda compared to a standardised structured survey where the conversation is stuck to precise questions. As a result, it may delve into new topics and unforeseen directions, which makes the method quite valuable in terms of becoming dynamic, vivid, and lively conversation to explore the phenomenon (Newcomer et al., 2015).

Kazakhstan is a country of interest. Schools are the right environment and will be the right place to find interviewees. Semi-structured interviews also allow the interviewee to intervene quickly and go deep into a topic, given the interviewee's context and expertise.

4.4.2 Focus group

The focus group context is different from an interview, basically because the interaction between group participants generates data. Participants not only present their own experiences, views, and beliefs but also hear from other people. The role of a researcher bears a hybrid nature: partly, it involves the role of a moderator who controls the agenda, and partly, it consists of the role of a facilitator who assists the process of discussion (Ritchie et al., 2013a). 'Focus groups … require the participants to give certain types of contribution, and they need the interaction to be organised in specific ways. In this sense, they are situations of formal interaction. However,… moderators attempt to generate a situation where interaction seems fluid and spontaneous' (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p.28).

Research interviews in both individual and focus group patterns have a purposeful intention of considering a communicative symmetry where the researcher can balance the expertise, knowledge, and experience of the interviewee's (Dilshad & Latif, 2013). A Focus group is used as a qualitative method that brings valuable insights within the group of people with a focus on a specific topic, which leads to various answers even in the most homogenous group (Dilshad & Latif, 2013).

According to Casey and Krueger (2000), a focus group provides "a more natural environment than that of the individual interview because participants are influencing and influenced by others – just as they are in real life" (p.11). Focus group interviews set a goal to collect high-quality data in a social context (Patton, 2014) that helps to explore a specific

issue from the point of view of the participants of the research (Khan & Manderson, 1992). The method has advantages in terms of being a valuable research instrument when there is a lack of substantial information about the topics. Focus group interviews provide "a rich and detailed set of data about perceptions, thoughts, feelings and impressions of people in their own words" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014, p.140). Moreover, focus groups are essentially favourable when the research aims to find out the individual's understanding and experiences about a certain topic and the reasons behind a particular way of thinking (Kitzinger, 1997).

Focus group interviews suit the current research for the group conversation dynamic where new topic fields can appear and develop in their flow. Because of group dynamics, the group individuals can feel the atmosphere and be more open, diminishing shyness and control.

4.4.3 Shadowing observation

Observation offers insight into interactions, processes and behaviours that go beyond understanding conveyed in verbal accounts. It can provide rich data in its own right and understanding that other forms of data collection would miss. Observation can also be used creatively with different forms of data in ways that make it 'crucial for research design, data collection and interpretation of data' (Mack, 2005, p.15).

As an observational technique, shadowing can be interesting for the given research. A qualitative shadowing technique evolved and significantly impacted the study of team leaders in a learning organisation. The main focus of the method is not to reveal the leader's day shaped by the actions performed but to discover the ins and outs of the perspective forming those actions in the context of the organisation (McDonald, 2005).

It involves a researcher closely following a member of an organisation over a set period (McDonald, 2005). Shadowing has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to organisational research through detailed data gathered in comparison with many other approaches. 'Coupled with the fact that shadowing research does not rely on an individual's account of their role in an organisation, but views it directly, means that shadowing can produce the sort of first-hand, detailed data that gives the organisational researcher access to both the trivial or mundane and the difficult to articulate' (McDonald, 2005, p. 457).

The literature review on shadowing shows that it has been used in the social sciences. Even though it is insufficient in the management literature (Bonazzi, 1998; Perlow, 1998, 1999), shadowing was adopted by other vocational disciplines like education (Polite et al., 1997), social work (Stanley et al., 1998), information studies (Hirsh, 1999; Orton et al., 2000) and (Vukic & Keddy, 2002). Shadowing has been used in combination with other research methods like in-depth interviews (Polite et al., 1997; Stewart et al., 1980; Walker et al., 1956) but also has been used in combination with other observation methods (Bonazzi, 1998; Perlow, 1998, 1999), diaries (Perlow, 1998, 1999) and telephone and postal surveys (Stanley et al., 1998). Even though the aim of using several methods is not triangulation, it is often a pluralistic and rich perspective on the research context (Bonazzi, 1998; Stanley et al., 1998).

Based on the purpose of the shadower, three forms of shadowing can be distinguished within the social science literature: "to learn for themselves or experimental learning, to record behaviour with a view to discovering patterns in it, and to investigate roles and perspectives in a detailed, qualitative way" (McDonald, 2005, p. 461). The most relevant approach in the current study is - shadowing as a means of understanding roles and perspectives.

The research that uses shadowing as a means to attempt to view the world from an individual perspective is close to the approach of experimental learning but differs in the significant aspect of the shadower's purpose (McDonald, 2005). The shadower who is trying to acquire insight into a role to enhance their practice pursues experimental learning. At the same time, the one who attempts to see through the eyes of another for research purposes is categorised as the understanding of the roles and perspectives (McDonald, 2005). There are few studies in this category; however, it is underpinned by a qualitative epistemology and has the greatest potential for extending the current organisational research.

What needs to be added in the majority of the papers is a consideration of the methodological implications of employing shadowing techniques. Moreover, many studies do not distinctly determine the epistemological viewpoint that supports the research design. This is in considerable comparison to the management of either the quantitative structured observation techniques communicated in the leadership literature (Hunt et al., 2013; Martinko & Gardner, 1985) or the more traditional participant observation techniques recognised in the social literature (Filstead, 1970; Taylor & Dunnette, 1976).

Shadowing observation has made a big step from being used as a neutral measuring and recording (quantitative) tool to the ways of generating a narrative first to develop and then share insight into a role (qualitative) (McDonald, 2005). As experts from a different (research) community, they are 'perspective taking' through their shadowing. They hope to appreciate and articulate the distinct roles, views and contributions of those they study (Boland & Tenkasi, 1995, p. 358).

4.5 Research Participants

The sample for the qualitative research views the school as an organisation in the context of Kazakhstan. The sample for this research includes the following educational representatives:

- Educational experts
- School principals
- School teachers.

The conceptualisation of school effectiveness is the first step in understanding the leadership roles within. Therefore, educational experts are important in collecting information that helps alongside the literature on school effectiveness and school leadership in Kazakhstan. As the concepts are relatively new in the country, educational experts, including policymakers, play an important role in revealing the current situation and the perspective on further development in the educational system. Educational experts are the ones who initiate the changes in the educational hierarchy. The question of the role of middle management and parents in schools may be raised. Middle management is not included in the impact of the social-political and historical background of the country, where the school system is seen as quite hierarchical. It means that the principal plays a central role in organising the leadership in the school. The long history of top-down management determines the middle management, and the principal's leadership directly influences teachers' performance.

School principals are essential in school development and are direct players in the school leadership concept. Interviewing school principals will show the elements of implementation of effective school development and the performance of school leader's

roles. Hence, it was crucial to interview the school and involve this category of professionals in the research.

The school teachers can also be considered the core of the research, and incorporating their voices on their development, practice, and challenges, as well as on their experience and leadership insights, was evident.

Additional categories were considered in the planning phase of the current research; those include students and parents, but they were not included in the current research. There are substantial rational justifications for the decision not to include these stakeholders, as the scope of the study targets principals and teachers on their views on effectiveness and leadership. At the same time, students and parents as a community are indicators for the achievements of schooling and teaching (OECD, 2016a). Moreover, the timeline and research framework enable the analysis that comprises a comprehensive understanding of the core of the issue, which in this case is effectiveness and leadership. Therefore, expanding the variety of participants within the framework of the research and rigid time settings would considerably restrain the general quality of the study.

4.5.1 Selection of research participants - the logic of sampling

Researchers in social sciences come across the reality that it is impossible to gather data from everyone in the researched category. Therefore, it is sensible to build upon getting evidence from a part of the whole with the expectation that the selected part will act equally to the remaining 'population' (Babbie, 2008).

The process of selecting observations is named sampling. First of all, the sample was deliberately chosen to ensure confidence that the findings from the sample were consistent with those of the rest of the population being examined. The key differentiation is made between probability and non-probability sampling (Arber, 2001; Bryman, 2016). Probability sampling is commonly considered to be the most accurate approach to sampling statistical research, but it is generally inappropriate for qualitative approaches (Ritchie et al., 2013b).

Qualitative research applies non-probability sampling for the selection of the subjects for the study. The non-probability sampling targets units to be consciously selected to mirror specific features of subjects within the sampled groups. The sample is not designed to be statistically representative because the subject's characteristic is used as a foundation of

selection. The feature that makes them suitable for small-scale, in-depth studies (Ritchie et al., 2013b)

The current research aims for non-probability sampling, which is selected in a way not suggested by probability theory. Based on the research, it is sometimes appropriate to choose a sample that considers the population's knowledge and the study's aim; that is why the research targets *purposive sampling* (Babbie, 2008). The sample subjects are selected since they possess particular characteristics and features that lead to a thorough examination and understanding of the core themes that the research targets (Mason, 2017; Patton, 2002).

4.5.2 Sample size

The research will focus on the following target groups: principals, educational experts in school management and teachers. The question may be raised about which schools are suitable for the research.

There is no particular agreement on which schools should be considered adequate in the context of Kazakhstan. However, Kazakhstan maintains a network of highly competitive, state-funded learning institutions named Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS). According to the founder, Nursultan Nazarbayev, the aim of NIS is to prepare "the next generation of global-minded leaders in Kazakhstan" to occupy key roles in Kazakhstan's government and major corporations and to perform as "platforms for testing and development of up-to-date academic programs" (WENR, 2021). The program combines the best traditions of Kazakhstan education and international best pedagogic practice, providing profiled preparation for students and encouraging advanced study languages, i.e. 'the leading site for testing the polylingual educational model and educational innovations' (Nazarbayev, 2010).

The program was established initially with the assistance of faculty members from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education (Randstadt: Teach Everywhere, n.d.). Afterwards, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools partnered with the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education on curriculum development, Cambridge Assessment on assessment system design, CiTO, Netherlands on the testing and measurement, and Johns Hopkins University on working with gifted children (Bartlett, 2012).

This shows that the NIS project was established in Kazakhstan as an effective and experimental platform to test innovative practices (Karabassova, 2015). Therefore, regarding the effectiveness, core values and experimental nature of the schools mentioned, they are targeted by the current research. In Kazakhstan, the research can be conducted only with the permission of an authoritative institution. Even though the government altogether provides the school's funding, NIS operate autonomously, free from government interference. The authority institution which implements management systems is the Autonomous Educational Organisation "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" (AEO).

The request for permission to conduct research in NIS was sent to the management company AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" research department by email, and a positive response was received officially.

The next question that can be considered is the appropriate sample size in qualitative research. It has been recommended that qualitative studies require a minimum sample size of at least 12 to reach data saturation (Braun & Clarke, 2016; Fugard & Potts, 2015; Guest et al., 2006). Creswell (2016) proposed a range between 20 and 30 participants as a recommended sample size.

This research will target 30-35 participants from the abovementioned schools, including principals and teachers.

4.6 Data collection and procedures

Qualitative data collection intends to structure and pursue the way participants take, with the researcher not setting any structure on the individual or group interview. To be specific, it will disclose to which extent the researcher may detail the topics to be explored in advance, how much benefit there is in topics to be expected, and how it is concerned with the ways the topics are raised, conceptualised and approached by the researchers.

An exploratory study aims to comprehend fundamental values, concepts, and norms. It tends to draw in several broad questions, stimulating the participants to get ahead and shape their narrative (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The task of the researcher is to explore in-depth, addressing the uncovering of values and core perspectives on the issue targeted. Even though the researcher will aim for vital research issues, the agenda, to a great extent, will be set, and the interview will be shaped by the interviewee (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

The procedure of data collection comprised three steps to follow. The initial phase consisted of gathering the existing information through the literature review. For this phase, information was also collected through educational experts and policymakers. The interviewees were selected based on their expertise and competence within the topic of school leadership and effectiveness in Kazakhstan. The plan was supported and encouraged by supervisors and permitted by the ethical committee. The collaboration with the experts and policymakers was done through semi-structured individual interviews.

The data collection from the experts included interviews with four experts, two of whom had international backgrounds and directly dealt with leadership in schools. One of the experts is the representative from the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, who was involved in current educational reforms and research on school effectiveness. It was consulted on what schools to choose for the research. The schools were mainly representatives of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and one State school under consideration. Before visiting the school, permission should be obtained from AO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" management company for Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and the Department of Education for the State school, respectively. Permission was given from the management company for two Nazarbayev Intellectual schools in two different cities. Still, unfortunately, the Department of Education did not grant permission for the advised state schools because the student from the local Kazakhstani university did not provide the current research.

The second phase included contacting the school principals via e-mail, providing thorough information on the purpose of the study, a brief overview and scope, permission to conduct the research and ethical considerations, including confidentiality and procedures. During the visit to the schools, first, the meeting with the principals took place. The principals introduced their schools to the time for conducting interviews, and focus groups and principal observations were planned. The principal provided information on the potential candidates for focus group interviews. Specifically, the ones who have been teaching for a long time already and the ones who also shared teaching and leadership positions at the same time, like the head of the department or coordinators.

The core of the third phase involved conducting school-based interviews, focus groups, and shadowing observations of the principal. After the initial visit, each school was contacted to arrange interview dates. The school provided emails to all the teachers for further

consideration of the concrete participants and contacted them to set the date. The interviews were appointed at times when all 6 participants could attend, and they were all conducted face-to-face—the translated interview questions, together with the purpose of the research and brief overview, respectively.

Once the dates were arranged, the visit to the school included an individual semi-structured interview with the principal and focus group interviews on the dates suitable for teachers. The individual interviews lasted 60-80 minutes, and the focus group interview lasted approximately 80-90 minutes. Data was audio recorded and transcribed, and the interviews were conducted in English, Russian, and Kazakh.

The complete picture of the data collection included three schools, and the number of individuals taking part in the research included altogether.

Table 1. Overview of research participants

Participant type	Number of participants
Educational experts and decision makers	4
School leaders	3
Teachers	28
Total	35

Source: author

The conclusive decision of the number of interviewed participants followed the core idea of a sample of around 30 is a competent medium-sized subject pool that can provide "the advantage of penetrating beyond a minimal number of people without imposing the hardship of endless data gathering, especially when researchers are faced with time constraints" (Baker & Edwards, 2012, p. 9). In this respect, Creswell (2012) suggests involving 20-30 participants for the qualitative research, disregarding the methodology.

4.7 Data Analysis Procedures

"Qualitative data are usually voluminous, messy, unwieldy and discursive - 'an attractive nuisance'" (Miles, 1979).

Data analysis is a challenging and exciting of the qualitative research process. It demands a blend of creativity and systematic dedication, a mix of inspiration and committed

searching. The whole research process will be a phase devoted to analysis; the procedure of shaping ideas to pursue and theories to apply begins at the start of the research study and ends while drafting up the conclusions. It is an essential and ongoing part of qualitative research (Ritchie et al., 2013b).

Unlike quantitative analysis, no coherent agreed principles or methods exist for analysing qualitative data. Based on epistemological presumptions on the nature of qualitative study and the status of researchers' records, approaches to analysis vary.

Kvale (1996) recognises three different frameworks of interpretation in qualitative analysis: self-understanding, which stands for the researcher trying to define in concise form what the respondents themselves mean and comprehend; critical common sense, which is where the researcher applies the compiled knowledge about the context of statements to place them in a broader realm: and theoretical understanding in which the interpretation is placed in a wider theoretical perspective.

Regarding data validation, the current research pursued several strategies for data triangulation, which are advised in the relevant literature (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). It can be noted that validity in qualitative data can be achieved through the truthfulness, depth, extensiveness and scope of the data collected, the participants addressed, the level of triangulation and the researcher's objectivity (Cohen et al., 2007). The triangulation is achieved in terms of the interview units of teachers, principals, and educational experts. Individual interviews, focus groups and shadowing observation research methods were set in place to acquire a spectrum of answers from different sources. Conducting the research aims to establish a natural setting that fulfils the naturalistic principles, consequently enabling an interpretive approach to the data (Cohen et al., 2007). The reliability was achieved by the research being enhanced with the elaboration of the researcher's position regarding the subject and the scope of the study, the selection of respondents and methods of data collection and analysis (Cohen et al., 2007).

A generally known procedure in qualitative data analysis is the recognition of key themes, concepts, and categories. However, the concepts by nature and how they are constructed differ to a greater extent, subject to diverse approaches. In order to organise and analyse qualitative data, labels and categories are used in two primary means: cross-sectional 'code and retrieve' methods and non-cross-sectional analysis (Mason, 2017). While dealing

with cross-sectional code and retrieval methods, the researcher discovers a standard system of categories that is applied – manually or through the software – throughout the data set and managed as a means of retrieving chunks of labelled data (Ritchie et al., 2013b). This approach enables a systematic overview of the data scope to help find themes and categories which are not noticeable in an orderly way in the data to assist in locating analytical and conceptual categories in the data and aids in addressing the data for making comparisons or connections.

Qualitative data analysis approaches vary in dealing with the context and emphasis on retaining the links to the original data. There is criticism for code and retrieve approaches mentioned above for grouping and comparing data blocks outside the context in which they exist (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). However, some researchers positively confer the fractioning and reconstructing of data as the only way to further analytical analysis. Possibly the strongest supporter of this approach is Ansel Strauss, who argues that coding "fractures the data, freeing the researcher from the description and forcing interpretation to higher levels of abstraction" (Strauss, 1987, p. 55).

Data analysis proceeded using two approaches: qualitative analysis, developing themes, and content analysis (Gubrium et al., 2012). Regarding the current research, the data was first handled manually, categorised and structured, and descriptive themes and sub-categories were developed following a thorough analysis using the latest Atlas.ti 22 qualitative data analysis software built solid two-cycled analysis. Observations were held in the form of field notes, which were classified in a separate table, and categorisation has evolved following common trends implied from notions found in literature and those interpreted as closely related to elements from the interviews and focus groups.

All completed interviews, including focus groups, were categorised and structured for each group category in order to generate data presentation for the case of Kazakhstan. The interview data was classified using notions deducted from theory and literature, including those recurring to be necessary during the interviewing process, although not mentioned in the literature. In cases of focus groups, notes on interaction and activities were added in the respective categories.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues in educational research are to be treated with thoughtfulness and gravity as they may caution against the validity of research to unplanned technical and administrative issues (Cohen et al., 2007). The central ethical dilemma that researchers face is balancing between demands placed on them in pursuit of truth and their subjects' rights and values. Ethical concerns may arise from the different spheres examined by social researchers and the methods used to achieve valid and reliable data (Cohen et al., 2007). This shows that every stage of the research sequence stems from ethical issues.

According to Cohen (2007) "ethical issues may arise from the nature of the research project itself (ethnic differences in intelligence, for example); the context for the research (a remand home); the procedures to be adopted (producing high levels of anxiety); methods of data collection (covert observation); the nature of the participants (emotionally disturbed adolescents); the type of data collected (highly personal and sensitive information); and what is to be done with the data (publishing in a manner that may cause participants embarrassment)" (p.51). By resolving these elements in the given research and reflecting on possible ethical problems, the research design was structured in a way that ensured the protection of the respondents without exposing the study's validity and reliability.

Before initiating the data collection, the methodological design, including the interview and focus group questions, was submitted to the Ethical Committee of Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) for approval to conduct. The request to access the research sites was made by the Research Department of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools Management Company. On receiving approval from both sides, the school principals were informed about the research, the data collection and analysis processes, and the ways in which personal data would be protected. The information was sent to the respondents by e-mail, and the GDPR form was signed in person before every interview and focus group. The respondents were asked if they understood and consented to participate in the research.

Informed consent has been defined as "the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions" (Diener & Crandall, 1978, p.156). This notion involves four elements: competence, voluntarism, complete information, and comprehension. *Competence* stands for qualified and responsible individuals who will make adequate decisions if they are

given relevant information. *Voluntarism* requires the principle that informed consent ensures the participants freely choose to participate (or not) in the research and grants that risk awareness is undertaken voluntarily. When the respondent is fully informed of the consent, it represents the entire *information* element. However, in practical terms, it is not realistic for researchers to inform their participants about everything, for example, when researchers are not fully aware of everything regarding the investigation. When subjects fully understand the nature of the research project and are aware of potential risks and complications, it enhances the *comprehension* element (Cohen et al., 2007).

At the analysis stage, the school data was completely anonymised, mainly by providing quotes from the interviews. Respondents and schools were numbered Teacher 1 and School 1. The data was stored as textual documents, audio files (voice recordings), and written notes on a personal laptop. After transcription, the audio files of the interviews were deleted.

It is unrealistic to identify and foresee all potential ethical issues or determine the moral code of the researcher's behaviour. Still, it is hoped that all these considerations will enable a greater awareness to approach the research project and secure the protection of research subjects at a maximum level.

4.9 Limitations

As with any other research, this one determines the possible limitations. The research limitations comprise limited contexts, contextual notions, and linguistic contexts.

The limitation regarding the data collection in this study was due to limited permission of the Kazakhstani part, resource restrictions, and the pandemic situation; the information was collected from the school contexts, which are considered effective. This determined an essential understanding of how principals, teachers, and educational experts perceive effectiveness and leadership.

The study involves schools from the network of highly competitive, state-funded learning institutions known as Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS). This can limit this research since the state schools are not autonomous in dealing with school leadership and effectiveness. NIS schools are different from other private schools in terms of the way they function in a general sense. However, NIS acts in accordance with the state curriculum

standards, as all other Kazakhstani schools do. What makes these schools exceptional for study is that they are far more flexible in innovation and adapting to student needs.
Moreover, the school facilities, funding levels, and teacher qualifications are superior. Even though the government exclusively provides the funding, NIS operate autonomously, which, in theory, allows them to pilot modern education trends, the most successful of which will be implemented nationwide. This is the main grounding that makes these schools an exciting subject to explore in the frame of effectiveness and leadership and a promising avenue for further research considerations.

The sample size targets the vital stakeholders of the school but does not cover students, parents, and middle managers. The choice of target groups is explained in the research design part. Students and parents are important players in a school system, and even though their perspectives on leadership and effectiveness are important, they are not considered under the theoretical framework. Students and parents as target groups can create a separate framework and have the potential for new research.

The research topic and contextual notions are some of the limitations as well. If leadership phenomena in Kazakhstan were investigated to some extent, in particular, school leadership and school effectiveness were explored quite scarcely, both theoretically and practically. Hence, the experiences in existing research are not subject to direct application and are in contrast with the current study.

Linguistic context was another limitation that had been handled during the study. According to Tsang (1998), “communicating in the respondent’s language is of paramount importance because the respondent may not be able to fully express their ideas in an unfamiliar language. Moreover, speaking the same language as the respondent helps to establish a good rapport. Second, the issue of cultural understanding comes into play” (p. 511). Consequently, the interviews were provided in the following languages: Kazakh, Russian, and English. That means that the interviews were translated into English to be quoted in the present study. This may cause language issues as translations always differ slightly from the original. Nevertheless, the translations were carried out with high quality and attention.

PART 5. FINDINGS

Chapter Preview

The following section provides findings of the teachers', principals' and educational experts' perspectives regarding the research questions based on their everyday experience and practice in the schools and how they conceptualise effectiveness and leadership. The structure is based on the concepts discussed during the interviews, including the complexity of the term itself, the features of the effectiveness of the school, student performance and the role of both teachers and the school leader that substantially contributes to learning.

5.1 Addressing the school effectiveness from the perspective of principals and teachers

5.1.1 Complexity of Defining School Effectiveness

The literature review showed that defining an effective school is a challenging task (Beare et al., 2018; Botha, 2010; Edmonds, 1979; Mortimore, 2001b; Ninan, 2006; Scheerens, 1992, 2005). While conducting the individual and focus group interviews, the respondents expressed the same difficulty in precisely defining the school's effectiveness. Principal 1 emphasised that all schools are different and each differs from the other with its speciality. *"For example, my former school, where I was a principal, was special because of its project activity. Every year, more than 100 students present their projects and enjoy their project interest. Teachers are also encouraged and interested in dealing with student project activities. In our school [current school], I did not see it; the school was proud to present around 30 projects. I found it quite laughable in comparison with my previous school. However, our school has its specialities. In our school, for example, we have a teacher who won the title of "Teacher of The Year" at the level of the whole country"* (Principal 1). That is why Principal 1 concluded that adjusting all the schools to one effectiveness criteria he does not support and find it sensible. The same thought of individuality of school effectiveness was also mentioned by Principal 2.

Regarding the quality of given knowledge, it cannot be a universal criterion for every school. *"In my school, I compare the results of the previous and current years, not with other schools but within my school. I think then we can see the effectiveness of the school with its own individual features. We will see the growth and progress in general. Also, it is important*

to see the work of the colleagues, the productivity and what is lacking too." Principal 2 explained the phenomenon *"to see the school",* which stands for the importance of not comparing the school with the other ones but focusing on the individual defining of own school effectivity and development trajectory setting based on the current state.

Several teachers have mentioned that academic achievement is not the sole indicator of the school's effectiveness. As the teacher points out, *"All students are different, all students have different interests, and all students have different needs. In my personal opinion, a school can only be effective when it meets all of those interests. It does not mean that we should count how many Altyn Belgi (graduation with excellence) the school has"* (Teacher 23). By *'all of those interests,' Teacher 1 meant* those students who are dancers, those students who are musicians, those students who are active, those students who are designers, and those students who are artists. The thought was expanded: "I think a better measure of the school effectiveness is how well-*rounded that student is"* (Teacher 23). In addition, as an example, the idea was explained in the sense that students may or may not be more mathematicians and artists. Still, I should at least have exposure to the arts and be able to recognise the value and goal of art in life, not just in education. By art, the teacher meant all of the performing arts and visual arts and the importance of design. The teacher concluded, "My personal opinion is that many schools are not on the artistic side, *and they do not recognise the arts to be valuable*" (Teacher 23). Another teacher alluded to this thought: "This year in our school, two students were accepted to *very prestigious American universities. We have one student accepted to MIT, and we have had another student accepted to George Washington. Only one of those students was praised. On the school website, the publications state that he is going to MIT because it is a mathematical boast. The student who is going to George Washington got a full-ride scholarship in performance arts; she is going to be an actor. The student was not mentioned even though it is a prestigious university. It is not seen as valuable or important"* (Teacher 25). The main conclusion that the teacher carried is that *"school effectiveness should not just be measured in terms of academics"* (Teacher 25). Moreover, several other measures can be put in place to measure students' ability to deal with problems, such as self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

This was reflected in several interviewed experts who reported that school effectiveness is impossible. *"I do not think that schools are effective. Different programs try*

to target effectiveness, and IB is one of them. Also, we have the Montessori system, which also tries to target that. Still, at the end of the day, schools are answering to the market of universities" (Expert 1). This has been a surprising moment in the study, pointing out that universities require a certain level of student achievement, which means that *"schools are not for the children to be children, the schools are more of machines to produce the university students, to produce the workers to join the workplace. So, for me, the schools are not effective. That will be my conclusion"* (Expert 1).

In the same vein, Expert 3 notes, "When it goes to secondary, either middle school or high school, the *pressure of the world wanting people to study in the universities and the pressure of universities it starts conflicting with the ideas"* (Expert 3). The expert explains that it is very impractical for all schools worldwide, with their standardised testing, to want students to go to university and become academics. The interviewee continued by saying that "the world needs dreamers, the world needs bakers, the world needs carpenters, *and if all the schools want to achieve the same model what other people may see as efficient schools producing good results, the world will not function"* (Expert 3). The expert also pointed out the improbability of school effectiveness from the other aspects. *"Sadly, in all the literature, you keep finding that people want teachers to fill out more paperwork. So, instead of empowering teachers, the power is being stricter with the teachers more and more"* (Expert 3). The expert carried on with emphasising the key idea that governments are deciding what standards should be. However, at the same time, the programmes' ideologies tell you what is important for the individual, but the individual is not important. *"So, students are not the real clients; the real client is the society, and the student is a product. That is why I cannot say the schools are effective if we keep going the way we are going"* (Expert 3).

As mentioned in the literature review, the interviewee's perspective showed that defining school effectiveness takes work. However, what is interesting about this data is that some of the respondents were quite radical about the phenomenon even to exist. Collectively, these perspectives outline the critical role of exploring the topic further.

5.1.2 School as an environment for personal mastery

"In my opinion, the fundamental function of the school is to give knowledge" (Teacher 10, Focus group 2). This is the first reaction of one of the teachers within the focus

group on the question related to school effectiveness. Many interviewees responded in the same direction, emphasising the importance of student achievement. *"In my opinion, the most effective, the first and foremost criteria is the academic performance. High quality of knowledge"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2). One of the experts said, "If high expectations and high standards for all students are expected, this really sets the vision and our aim on what we expect of *most students. Even if teachers have no expectations or set low standards, it just makes the lives of the students more difficult; it is more difficult for them to study and more difficult to achieve what they can achieve"* (Expert 4).

Similarly, one of the teachers mentioned monitoring as an essential part of knowing your school and setting the school goals: *"I have been here for five years. Every year, I see that we have meetings with the senior leadership team where we share stats and numbers of the student's performance compared to last year and other schools. In other NIS schools, there are 21 of them"* (Teacher 28).

Interestingly, Expert 4 stated that school effectiveness is known mainly from data: *"Data is one of the most important things. With data, I mean the statistics of students' results, students' achievements or not achievements, and what they have achieved or not achieved. The performance – the retention rates, the student retention rates. "How many of them actually stayed at school?" "How many of them have completed the whole study, and how many of them are left?" "How are our results compared to other schools?" "How do we know if we have achieved all our outcomes?" "What is the feedback on us by parents, students and teachers?". These questions can be asked to start to collect data"* (Expert 4).

Another expert brought up an interesting issue which takes root in the importance of students' performance but leads to problematic generalising. "*Testing changed schools… standardising, like PISA. Suddenly, the schools have to prove their quality with the same all over the world without paying attention to the local settings, not just national settings but personal ones. Comparing everybody with mathematics, with English, PISA is also about science, I think"* (Expert 2). The expert continues that the choice of subjects already makes a particular focus. Also, according to the experts, it makes everybody equal; everyone is measured with the same standards. *"Sorry, but standards are not the same because the circumstances are not the same, the needs are not the same"* (Expert 2). One of the teachers

also expressed the importance of the stats: “I think the effectiveness of the school is on the high percentage of university entrance of the students” (Teacher 15, Focus group 3).

The other teacher continued, “School is the first step which enables the students to *discover their talents at this stage”* (Teacher 7, Focus group 2). The school is a holistic environment for students’ development. “An effective school is *one which provides conditions for the children to try out different things. Someone can be good in pottery, someone in can learn to write poems, someone has an amazing mind for numbers… that is an effective school”* (Teacher 23). This interviewee expands, *“…and for that parents should have trust in high level towards the school and the teachers. This is like a circle; teachers should justify the trust respectively”* (Teacher 23). The statement is explained in the sense that the teachers justify it only through professionalism and mastery. It refers not to the subject but obligatorily to pedagogics and psychology (Teacher 23).

The expert who was quite critical towards the definition of school effectivity in the previous chapter stated, *“So in the imaginary world because of the pressures of reality, an effective school will be the school where the student can not only choose where the talents are but also encouraged; not forced but encouraged to study the things they are not good, not so that they become good at them, but they can experience other things, other skills, other styles of knowledge that may help in their talent development in the future”* (Expert 1).

Student’s holistic development, involving the development of their talents and skills, also impacts building an effective school. This materialised as evidence in several interviews, and the importance of promoting student skills was noticed in several focus groups. *“Nowadays, now, primarily the keyword would be “contemporary”, which is the school of learning, where there is an opportunity for both students and teachers to learn and develop. Moreover, where the students can apply their skills, life skills that will lead them to the real life and be useful in a real-life situation”* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1). In addition, Teacher 1, *“here I want to add when we talk about important moments, we talk about creating the conditions for learning. Our task is to develop the certain level of our students that they are in demand, 21st-century skills, etc.”* (Teacher 1, Focus group 1). Life skills and the real-life readiness of the students are determining factors for the school’s success. The teacher finds their roles with high responsibility, as the interview respondents point out: *“In such a school, we should help every child to find their place in real life. Teachers are also psychologists*

who can see their needs and try to help them in my opinion" (Teacher 10, Focus group 2). Teacher 6 from the same focus group stated, "We prepare students for real life *so that they tomorrow can solve the problems they can meet in their path"* (Teacher 6, Focus group 2).

However, it is not always easy, and teachers mention some lack of learning experience. Specifically, teachers face the problem of the students not being open to them and not knowing their students, which is an essential part of a learning environment. *"They do not open to us; maybe we put too many demands on the students, and it is possible that they can have fears. There can be a wall in between us, and we must destroy it"* (Teacher 18, Focus group 4). This view is supported by the other teacher in the same focus group, who says that the possible solution is to spend time outside of the school, like going to nature, hiking, or simply having a picnic in the park. *"We do teambuilding with colleagues, so why not have events with students too? Mainly, in an effective school, the connection between teacher and student is not lost"* (Teacher 15, Focus group 3). Similarly, one of the experts noted the importance of students feeling free in the classroom and required teachers to be well-trained. Expert 2 said, *"The teacher should be very capable of admitting to the kids 'I do not know, let us find out together" and be honest about it because teachers tend to be control freaks and to be an authority like 'listen to me I am a teacher here'"* (Expert 2). As it can be seen, student independence or autonomy is a significant aspect of personal mastery. As one of the principals mentioned, it should be respected, but it can also be lacking in school. *"Sometimes we are afraid to put learning responsibility on the student. Why? Because we are in the process, we are coming to this step by step. Maybe in 10-15 years, we adopt the Western model where the teacher is the facilitator and regulator who provides the differentiated knowledge. We also have the elements and process but are still on our way"* (Principal 2).

In order to achieve personal development and personal mastery of an individual – the student – learning conditions and learning opportunities are essential criteria for an effective school. As one of the teachers mentioned, *"Effective school is a synthesis of three components: first of all, of course, it for students it should be comfortable here and that they have a variety of opportunities to fulfil their plans"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2). As it is seen from the quote, learning opportunities are of great importance in NIS schools, and the teacher explains that in this sense, NIS schools do a lot. *"More specifically, students should dance,*

sing, do sports or maybe discover their own individual creativity, not only study the specific subjects like math, physics or the Russian language etc." (Teacher 9, Focus group 2). The teacher concludes that it goes without saying that in schools, ineffective schools, students should have opportunities to try themselves in different spheres. The theme of learning opportunities and a comfortable environment recurred throughout the dataset. *"Secondly, I think it is a comfortable environment both for children and teachers, for every member of the learning community… that all conditions are provided"* (Teacher 27). *"I think it is important to provide a variety of conditions to students and teachers"* (Teacher 24).

There was a sense of importance in the learning environment and learning conditions for students' high performance, holistic development, and finding their talents. A variety of perspectives were expressed throughout the interviews of principals and experts:

> *"Generally, the school ethos, I believe, has to be a nurturing and supportive climate for both students and staff. It has to be a learning environment there [in the school]. I have also seen learning environments that do not even look like schools; they look like business centres. Anything the students do, everything you know should be put on walls, and classes should be held inside and outside of classrooms. There have to be activities everywhere that support learning. Learners must feel involved and responsible for learning"* (*Expert 1*).

> *"To be able to answer that question [perspective on school effectiveness], I need to clarify what an effective school means to me. What is the purpose of the school? For me, the purpose of the school is to provide an environment that allows children to find what they are best at, to learn the joy of learning and to be able to be themselves"* (Expert 4).

> *"A learning environment is a learning school. Developing a learning environment means listening to your colleagues and what goals they achieve during the classes and reflecting on your performance. Next are different platforms and courses; some we send to participate, and some do voluntarily. The most important thing is non-stop learning. Learning school is a constant move, constant progress. We do not have a minute of calmness. Even during admin and department meetings, we analyse the topics; we provide feedback, and it is not saying, "I will give you feedback now"; it is through the discussion embedded in observations and expressing opinions. I think these moments are on a daily basis, steady process but unobtrusive"* (Principal 2).

As well as a learning environment, providing a healthy environment or, in other words, psychological comfort is also a feature of an effective school which promotes students' performance. Several teachers note in their focus group interviews the psychological aspect of the learning school. *"I think, in the effective school, there is*

psychological comfort for both teachers and students" (Teacher 6, Focus group 2) and then *"…and psychological climate, there should be a perfect psychological environment"* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1). In the same focus group (2), Teacher 3 also supported the colleague, saying, *"… learning the most important, the trust of the students helps to eliminate psychological barriers of the students"* (Teacher 3, Focus group 1).

The psychological climate was connected with the emotional atmosphere of the school by teachers from Focus group 4. Namely, *"To summarise, in an effective school, the role of the student is also not the last. The students should be emotionally healthy. For example, students can be overloaded with work and lack of time. I think the workload should be controlled"* (Teacher 21, Focus group 4). The emotional aspect was mentioned by teachers not only regarding the students but teachers as well. *"It is imperative to mention the emotional atmosphere of the school as it plays an essential role in building a healthy environment for learning. When you feel support not from colleagues and parents but from administration; when administration shows understanding, provides conditions to work, we are motivated to work formally and as a person"* (Teacher 18, Focus group 4). The emotional state, as explained above, is actually seen as a way to provide a healthy and effective learning environment for the students, as well as a way to gain further tacit expertise for teachers.

To provide a learning environment, stakeholders, teachers, and principals stated that the school's material resources were needed. From the principals' perspective, it ensures the productivity levels of teachers, and from the teachers' perspective, it ensures it raises the effectiveness of the lessons they teach. Principal 2 commented, "The effectivity increases with saving time for teachers, that they can simply print, have paper and stationary, have laptops, have internet, *etc."* Of no less importance is the fact that school must have technical safety as it was stated by Principal 3: *"The building of the school must be safe!".* As it has been mentioned above, teachers also point out:

> *"The resource base should be determined. The school should be equipped well, equipped with up-to-date resources. They should be functional, not covered by dust on the shelves but used"* (Teacher 12, Focus group 3).

> *"In order to work effectively, we must have resources including classroom equipment, the quality of the library and the accessibility to students and teachers, providing a variety of opportunities"* (Teacher 14, Focus group 3).

> *"Resources play a dominant role. As an example, we do not have resources. We spend much time finding them because it is time-consuming until you find, evaluate, and check reliability and relevance. Then it impacts the whole process; one variable affects another variable [workload and stress]" (Teacher 16, Focus G*roup 4).

The previous quote needs to be clarified due to the specifics of the International Baccalaureate school, as the programme does not provide a strict specific course book but a subject guide with learning outcomes and approaches to learning. Basically, teachers are autonomous in creating their own teaching and learning materials.

The discrepancy between intellectual (Nazarbayev) and traditional (public) schools mentioned in the previous segment was regarding the impact of material resources on many other spheres. Teachers were sensitive to this topic as their last experience occurred in public schools. They see and feel the difference in working in intellectual (innovative) ones. Teacher 1 commented, "In public schools, first of all, the number of students in one classroom is very high, and the quality of the material resources *is deficient. They are not equipped in short!"* (Focus group 1). The teacher was quite emotional about this topic and explained to what extent it is a crucial characteristic of an effective school, saying, "In this school [innovative/intellectual], *we have enough subject hours to fulfil our learning goals. We transmit our experience to public schools according to the national educational agenda, and it is very challenging. I led those workshops and talked with village school teachers. Even though the curriculum of public schools has been adapted to public schools, the number of subject hours stayed the same. If we take physics, I teach in grade 8 four times a week; public schools have only two hours per week in the same grade.*

Additionally, considering the number of students and material resource base, the situation can be pretty disastrous" (Teacher 1, Focus group 1). It also has an influence on differentiation in the classroom: "In the priority of the *school's further development in 3 years, we should focus on differentiation. Individual approach during the lesson, in other words, individual work with every student. That is why it is important to provide conditions for teachers: rich material resources, enough subject hours and time for planning, student number in a classroom and many other things, which I, as a principal, should find out with my administration and teacher feedback, and then, of course, implement"* (Principal 2).

Several teachers noted that the role of differentiation is also essential in providing learning opportunities. *"Meeting the students' needs in this respect means supporting all the*

student levels, not only focusing on successful students but students who are needed as well" (Teacher 15, Focus group 3). *"For example, we not only give knowledge but develop activities based on students' needs. Motivate not only for better marks but to pay real attention to the"* (Teacher 10, Focus group 2). The quotes above show that differentiation occurs in effective schools and how it is significant for pursuing a thriving learning environment. Experts also think in the same direction based on their responses. In fact, *"the school [effective school] that does not focus only on academics, allows students to have field trips and own projects. I really like CAS in IB; it links that way"* (Expert 2). Here to clarify what CAS in IB means: *"The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) is for students aged 16-19. Creativity, activity, and service (CAS) are three essential elements that every student must complete as part of the Diploma Programme (DP). Studied throughout the Diploma Programme, CAS involves students in a range of activities alongside their academic studies"* (IB organisation, 2021).

One of the principals mentioned some positive aspects of motivating a learning environment regarding celebrating success. *"Anyone successful, every achievement, every week we have celebrations or assemblies in our school, and all of our students gather around and celebrate success"* (Principal 1). Principal 1 also added that the students are announced during this assembly, where the whole school gathers and gives certificates with honours and celebration. *"I think that celebrating is something fundamental within the school. The school has to feel and live like a school. It has to … as a learning environment"* (Principal 1).

In addition to the learning environment, some aspects should also be considered in an effective school. *"I am going to have to give you a caveat here, and I will talk about pre-COVID and pre-distance learning. One of the things this school (NIS) does really very well and is very effective at is pastoral care of students. There is a system of curators and tutors whose sole job is to check on the student. Moreover, I think that is very effective because so many schools do not do that"* (Teacher 1, Focus group 1). In addition to pastoral care, the advantage of NIS school is the opportunity for adequate career counselling. *"I think the main mistake in the system of public schools is that they have the classrooms pre-categorised from grade 7 with certain subject focuses like humanities classroom or mathematics classroom. It is a big mistake because students do not know at grade 6 which specialization-based subject focus to choose. In NIS school, career counselling starts at grade 11 or 12. Unless the student*

goes completely through the main school, they cannot choose the career path" (Teacher 5, Focus group 1).

5.1.3 Teachers as a part of team learning

> *"The essence of organisational learning is the organisation's ability to use the amazing mental capacity of all its members to create the kind of processes that will improve its own"* (Dixon, 1994).

"Organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to learn together" (Senge, 1990a). As the previous chapter shows, the need to constantly learn in teaching is considered due to the changing world demands, and the students are the driving force for almost all the interviewees. As can be seen, many teachers mentioned that in the old school model, an effective classroom methodology was determined to be teacher-centred, where the teacher had an authoritative role. Nowadays, many teachers have highlighted that the situation is different. The future is fast-changing, and skill-based education needs teachers to observe social change critically and actively establish it. Therefore, in the words of one of the teachers regarding the school's success, *"It is directly connected to the teacher's mastery. Nowadays, teachers participate in many professional development courses and try to be flexible. In the past, the lessons were different; now, we try to make lessons diverse and different every day. Even though last year we had the same program to teach, the same program this year we teach differently. We implement a variety of strategies and methods, which is why the teacher's expertise plays a significant role"* (Teacher 10, Focus group 2).

In schools, many teachers emphasise the importance of teachers' non-stop learning to enhance their expertise. The following quotes within one focus group provide a concept of how essential it is:

> *"For that, teachers have to self-develop and create the atmosphere for the comfort of both students and teachers in the classroom and school in general"* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1).

> *"…and of course, the obligatory condition is the professionalism of the teachers"* (Teacher 5, Focus group 1).

"If I add here, to prepare students with highly developed skills, teachers have to be on a high level of expertise. The school in this direction I will call an effective school" (Teacher 4, Focus group 1).

"We cannot reach the level of success without the certain level of our teachers" (Teacher 3, Focus group 1).

Teachers all agreed on the importance of teachers' qualifications, expertise and mastery. The core of the teacher's profession is constant learning and staying up-to-date with the current trends in education. Some teachers noted that professional development is an inseparable part of teacher's activity.

"In order to fulfil the school mission, the high level of qualification of a key stakeholder group. The high level is from the point of the subject, from the point of psychology, and from the point of pedagogy. So that the teachers feel they are professional in the teaching subjects and the students will feel the same" (Teacher 9, Focus group 2).

"Professional development is also important; we should be open to new ideas and new methods, change our bias, and change our approaches to teaching" (Teacher 12, Focus Group 3).

"The most important thing is that in ineffective schools, there are teachers who fit the characteristics of the school. For example, if it is an IB school, teachers are trained within a certain teaching programme. The school where teacher professional development exists, which is not once or twice a year but on an ongoing basis, is precious. The school where teachers are not multifunctional because if there is multitasking the quality of teaching suffer" (Teacher 16, Focus group 4).

Concerning the teachers' effectiveness, the interviewed teachers also admitted that they do all they can to get to know their students in a more inclusive way. This conveys the shifting beyond students' bad or good performance and what students achieve in the academic framework. In contrast, teachers raise the problem of not having time to establish contact with students, the importance of understanding the children and their family situation, talents and skills, abilities to do different activities, and how they make social interactions with others. One of the teachers, based on her experience, said, *"I also wanted to add that it is very crucial to know and learn about children. In school, all the needs of the children should be considered. Sometimes, we can think that they are selected while going through the testing and that they are all the same, but this is not true. All children are absolutely different"* (Teacher 4, Focus group 1).

Moreover, one of the interviewees pointed out the importance of inclusiveness in the class: *"Realisation of inclusiveness is indispensable. For example, we have children who underwent heart surgery or children who have diseases we do not make public. Still, teachers must know and understand why the student acts a certain way. That is why teachers must know their students"* (Teacher 1, Focus group 1). One of the possible reasons for *"lack of contact"* (Teacher 16, Focus group 4) the teacher mentioned having tutors who care for pastoral care. Teachers are alienated from that part of the teaching and learning process. Precisely the same phenomena that was noted earlier by one of the teachers as an advantage of NIS schools for having tutors and curators.

Teacher effectiveness is a core factor of the school as a system and as a learning organisation, though work conditions impact effectiveness. *"I understand effectiveness when there are conditions to work"* (Principal 2). The principal says that school effectiveness is directly connected to human capital: "We have colleagues here, *local teachers and international ones. Without leaving the school, you can exchange your experiences with your colleagues and develop personally - it is important for both personal and professional development. At the workplace [school] planning together, even having lunch together with your colleagues, organising school events, you contribute and take knowledge which leads to the whole team learning and the school as one organism – one system"* (Principal 2). The interviews show that work conditions include a certain level of internationalisation, a high level of expertise of colleagues, both local and international, teacher rewards, teacher leadership and last but not least, teacher payment. *"Under these conditions, I mean a good salary, opportunities for professional development, the voice of the teacher, which means that the teachers can openly share their opinion, comments, recommendations and suggestions"* (Principal 3). As well as one of the teachers mentioned, "In addition, teachers can get salary bonuses for high results or external examinations" (Teacher 18, Focus group 4).

Along with salary encouragement, one respondent noted another way of reward: *"The last years they [administration] started to reward teachers with certificates and gratitude letters for even small achievements and different activities are celebrated and acknowledged"* (Teacher 16, Focus group 4). The single most striking response observation to emerge from the data is one of the participant's emphasis on the importance of trust to be

shown to teachers in the frame of teacher leadership: *"One of the important moments is to provide conditions for teacher leadership development. Trust should be given by the school leadership that the teacher is the leader in the classroom, not in the sense that the teacher is the one who tells students what to do, but that the teacher is respected and trusted by the school community. Only then can the teacher give the knowledge and can create a learning environment where all students are interested and involved"* (Teacher 1, Focus Group 1).

One of the principals emphasised the priority of time to the teachers: "In the role of the teachers, effectiveness as a teacher is *connected with time because every second counts. The teacher is also a human being, except in school, where there are many other things to do, and school is really time-consuming. There is little time for the teachers' personal time"* (Principal 3). When this question was raised during the focus groups, namely, how teachers can be effective, almost two-thirds of the participants said in the chorus that time for teachers is priceless, the following quotes can explain the reason why:

> "*Effective school is the school where teachers want to go to work because you cannot make students happy if teachers are miserable. Teachers need to have freedom. Teachers have their own style of teaching. Planning can be good, but when you spend too much time planning and assessing, like here in Kazakhstan, when is the time for your actual teaching? Because for you to be able to be an effective teacher, which means that you are a teacher who is happy to teach, you need time to read and learn about what you are teaching. If you teach what you love and do not have time to explore it, you must fill out the documents and plan many documents and minutes. All this curriculum thing, yes, you assess because it is necessary; you need to be able to give feedback to the people and how they are making progress"* (Teacher 24).
>
> *"Teachers have a large amount of paperwork like enormous. Suppose the schools lessen the paperwork and allow teachers to be teachers and reward teachers for being teachers, not for the results but, for example, for attendance and happiness in the classroom that the students learn. In that case, the results end up being good, but because of these other things happening, I think that will mark it"* (Teacher 17, Focus group 4).

The other teachers followed this idea in this focus group: *"Even reading a book helps the teacher understand this idea so that they can explore it with students, so it is planned already. If you ask to record all this planning, it will take my time from the actual reading that I need to do"* (Teacher 19, Focus Group 4). The stress levels were seriously affected by teachers, in the sense that they wanted to chat about their jobs with some ease. For example, another teacher: *"When you have free time, you can chat with the other teachers, so suddenly*

real collaboration ideas happen, interactive ideas happen, links between subjects because you are both relaxed and talking about what you are doing" (Teacher 20, Focus group 4). So, basically, the work is already happening quickly and flexibly, which leads to better effectiveness than being pushed and stressed.

Furthermore, the teacher added: *"We teachers have much in common when talking about our work. Many schools made the staff rooms into cubicles where teachers could go, sit, and work. There is also this thought that teachers should not relax because they waste their time"* (Teacher 20, Focus group 4). In this sense, students also benefit, as another participant added: "The teachers that are relaxing will talk with other teachers about the *only thing they have in common – students. That is the way they learn about their students' problems. The student who is probably acting in your class can be the best in the other subject. This is not an official meeting or pedagogical council where they give you the list, but you learn about students that way. In that way, they become data, not people. If you let teachers interact freely, that is how you learn about students, and the best ideas come from having lunch with my colleagues in a current setting or having a smoke outside. Because when teachers are relaxed, they become creative, and it leads to most effective teaching, you are happy"* (Teacher 17, Focus group 4).

The time and workload matters were mentioned by other teachers and experts as well:

> *"The workload in any school will be hefty. So, this idea of easing the teachers' workload is more of a myth. However, if you respect the teacher's time and allow them to make decisions on their time, the teachers will take a heavy workload and work with it. In the system, one thing that I do not like is that there is much pressure on the teachers. Nevertheless, there is no assurance of quality regarding deadlines because it does not matter"* (Expert 2).

> *"If you have to be in school from 7 in the morning pretty much because you need to be ready so people arrive earlier and you cannot leave earlier than 5, no matter what you do, why do you want to be effective? If you have to be here until the students are here, but if you have finished everything, and if everything you need to submit is done, go home! People should choose to overwork if they want to stay late. It should be their decision, their choice. You would like to choose overwork"* (Teacher 22).

An individual thought was brought by one of the teachers, which was not discussed that much: *"If a teacher is producing much work and a lot of good quality work, the best teachers are the ones that the school kills! The best teachers are the ones the students want to work with, the best teachers are the ones who care about quality, and the best teachers*

are the ones who will find time to make those connections even if they do not have it. So, they end up being burned out" (Teacher 26). The problem is that schools treat the situation wrong, as the teacher continued: *"...And the school is very unfair that when they identify a good teacher, they overburden the teacher as well as they see that the person is good. Moreover, a bad teacher is like, 'Or no, do not give that person a job because he will not produce good results.' Nevertheless, they are never given feedback, like 'this is your task, you are supposed to do this'"* (Teacher 26). The teacher shared the experience of one of the ways how it was solved in one of the previous schools: *"I have seen many different strategies in different schools I worked in, and there is the one that I liked the most was that you were entitled to have four lazy days. If you had everything on time, if everything the school was requesting was done and done properly, you could literally call and say that you are taking a lazy day and not tell anybody. They were paid. However, if teachers do not get a reward, the reward does not always get to be money. It is easy for the school, when there are not any students in the school, to say, 'Go home, have rest if you have done all the work.' People will start volunteering"* (Teacher 26).

Teachers are the fundamental part of an effectively functioning school. It goes without saying that their performance impacts the student's achievement and success and the accomplishment of the school as a learning organisation, as a teacher's learning is the learning of all the community members.

5.1.4 School leaders – building a shared vision

"Leadership is the capacity to transform vision into reality."
(Warren G. Bennis, founding chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California)

The majority of those who responded to this question, almost in every focus group, emphasised the importance of the role of the school leader. Among the respondents, the majority of teachers mentioned the importance of the school leader, while principals were more concerned about the attributes and roles of an effective school leader. An interviewee said, "First of all, *it is a school leader who is responsible for the school"* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1). Similarly, "The first thing is that the schools should have a strong head. Strong in the sense that of being capable of keeping the pressures out. The pressure could be from the

board or from the management company, they could be from the parents, from the government, principal or the headmaster whatever you call, should be capable of telling them *'You are not putting those pressures on us!'"* (Teacher 13, Focus group 3). In the same focus group, another participant continued this thought: "If the government wants to take standardised testing, it is ok. We cannot be free of that, but the principal is not going to measure our quality from the results. The school should decide on how to measure it. The principal should know what we are best at. As the teachers put it: "The school leader should be the person who knows the school very well, knows the needs of the school, not in comparison with others *but in comparison with itself. By the community, I mean students, teachers and parents who are happy and want to go there"* (Teacher 8, Focus group 2). In Focus group 4, one of the teachers also mentioned a similar thought: "If it is an effective school, people want to go there; *people do not want to miss out. The first strategy is to have a strong leader, the principal, who is not afraid to say no. Also, the one who understands what the purpose of education should be"* (Teacher 19, Focus group 4).

According to Rutherford (1985), four behaviours are characterised by an effective leader:

- have clear, informed visions of what they want their schools to become, visions that focus on students and their needs
- translate these visions into goals for their schools and expectations for their teachers, students and administrators
- not stand back and wait for things to happen, but continuously monitor progress
- intervene, when necessary, in a supportive or corrective manner.

It turns out that establishing a vision for your school is an essential part of becoming an effective leader of an effective school. Interviewed principals stated how significant it is to see the developing path of the school and the direction in which they are going. *"We develop the strategies for the school development, and I am responsible for organising the process. Based on the feedback from every department, I can see the strong and weak sides of certain aspects. We identify the development zones and write plans with strategies"* (Principal 2). Another principal said, *"I think reflecting on the work done continuously is important. To conduct an evaluation with a certain regularity to see the ups and downs of the progress and work with data. If something is going well, then administer questionaries*

to gather the opinions of students, teachers, and parents. After that, analyse and bring conclusions for the recommendations of the next year" (Principal 3). Stating visions and identifying goals requires monitoring, data collection, and nonstop reflection on the work of the school as one organism. The respondents emphasised that the one responsible for implementation is the principal, but at the same time, there is a responsibility for the whole process to function at everyone's level. However, the decision-making is on the principal only, who considers the opinion of his colleagues, parents and students. In the studies of educational systems to identify the improvement factors, it was detected that almost all school leaders say that setting vision and direction are among 'the biggest contributors to their success' (McKinsey & Co., 2010).

One of the principals stated that the school as an organisation has a "vision", which is an explicit declaration of what the school attempts to achieve so that all stakeholders – teachers, students, and parents – are working together (Principal 1). The vision requires capturing the goals of a school in its specific context and leads the development of the school plan. According to West-Burnham (2010), the vision is significant for schools considering that it:

- determines the focus for all aspects of the organisational process
- guides planning and the development of policies
- indicates and appreciates the work of individuals
- aids in articulating clearly shared beliefs and developing a comprehensive language to establish effective communication
- characterises the organisation to the external world (West-Burnham, 2010)

One of the principals stated the importance of the school vision: *"In a few words, vision represents the values of the community and is the basis for actions and strategies that will enhance the effectiveness of the school"* (Principal 3).

To summarise, most respondents talked about different aspects of school effectiveness but, at the same time, emphasised how the role of the school leader is essential. The roles of the school leader, their performance and their opinions will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.2 School leader roles and practice

5.2.1 Creating and sustaining commitment and cohesion

Creating and sustaining commitment and cohesion requires the leader to consider the individuals and groups within the organisation and allow flexibility to support the staff's growth and development. When the staff is provided with opportunities to develop their skills and abilities, they naturally contribute more effectively to the organisation's performance requirements.

One of a leader's most important competencies is understanding oneself and others. In order to be effective, a leader should be able to inspire others to action, and so leaders must have an understanding of how the role is seen by others.

In the first focus group, teachers mentioned, *"When the leader can connect to his staff, on his own example, when the leader does himself"* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1); *"By own example"* (Teacher 5, Focus group 1). One of the principals also commented on how leaders' examples inspire the school community: "There are many characteristics that I consider to be important: honesty, kindness, feeling *the boundaries, to be kind but at the same time to be tough. It is crucial to teach first and then demand. As an example, I should show myself first. I think it is essential to do things together collectively. Never sit in one place! If they are painting the walls, it means doing it together or moving some stuff. I can always give a hand"* (Principal 2).

The apparent reaction of teachers towards the effective principal notion was to emphasise the importance of emotional intelligence and the openness of the principal (Teacher 4, Focus group 1). The other teacher continued, "That is to say; there is so much trust in the leader when the staff's opinion is taken into consideration" (Teacher 3, Focus group 1). It can be considered that "the antidote to defensiveness is trust" (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 44). Paradoxically, the trust the person experiences with the community tends to develop and grow because it encourages all the employees to share what they value, what motivates them, and how they work the best (Quinn et al., 2015).

The principal's openness is associated with the principal being connected to the school community. One of the teachers mentioned, *"Informal communication is also important, for example, congratulate on the birthday"* (Teacher 5, Focus group 1). Shadowing observation notes highlighted that Principals in this research were kind and respectful to the staff.

Namely, Principal 1 stopped in the hallway to talk with one of the teachers, asking how his health was recently as the teacher was sick last week.

Also, one of the aspects of openness is the accessibility of the principals: *"Working with the collaboration with the colleagues not to be isolated from the community like an untouchable leader, to be equal with others, to learn and work with others and see "the kitchen" from inside"* (Teacher 13, Focus group 3). The comment followed, "Here we talk again about collaborative work and planning" (Teacher 12, Focus group 3). In the same vein, Teacher 18 *"... common, never puts himself higher than the staff, than the teacher"* (Focus group 4). Shadowed Principal 2 was taking part in the planning meeting with teacher colleagues. Observation showed the principal to be polite and respectful, contributing to the unit and lesson planning as the other teachers of the horizontal planning.

The teacher from the same focus group carried out the example: *"We had a disciplinary committee meeting. The principal wanted to expel the student, but the committee was against this decision. Today, there was the final meeting, and everyone expressed their opinion. We knew the principal's preferred decision, but in the end, the principal went with the decision of the teacher committee. He showed that he does not put himself higher than the teachers and there is no authoritarianism"* (Teacher 20, Focus group 4). The other teacher continued, "*Moreover, despite that, it is cool when the leader is in the process, in the situation, which means that the principal is aware of what is going on around and is involved. For example, in our school, the principal's door is always open"* (Teacher 19, Focus group 4).

Observation showed that all the principals in these studies tended to be easy to reach. The door was open; people could come if they had any questions or a piece of advice to ask from the principal. Principal 2 was open to all the stakeholders in terms of students who wanted to interview the principal for the school newspaper. Students could easily ask for time for the interview with the principal. Principal 3 was visited by teachers with the question of additional days off for the extra working days performed.

The concept of openness was discussed in the other focus group as well. "*One of the points is that the school leader and principals should be visible to the members of the school community: parents, students, and teachers. Fundamentally, as simple as a greeting in the morning and smiling, for us teachers, is inspiring, namely skills of effective communication*

where you encourage with a kind word, praise or visit the classroom and ask if everything is and if there are any problems. That means visibility in general and accessibility for every student, every teacher and every parent. Leaders do not mean to sit in a closed room somewhere in the school on the third floor. There is access!" (Teacher 5, Focus group 1).

Observation of Principal 3 showed that the principal goes downstairs every morning to greet teachers and students at the beginning of the day. Principal 1 also had a meeting with parents, where parents could openly come to discuss dormitory opportunities for their children for the current year. The observation displayed the principal being transparent about the numbers and capacity of the dormitory, considering the waiting list.

As indicated, research has shown that leaders with higher levels of self-awareness are more likely to advance in their organisations (Quinn et al., 2015). The interviews reveal that effective leaders use their self-awareness to identify areas of potential advancement or areas where they can grow to become more effective (Quinn et al., 2015). Referring to one of the teacher's comments about emotional intelligence and how it is essential for principals to have it, "as with emotional intelligence, the ability to manage relationships in the social environment should grow as the principal develops *greater social awareness"* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1). Social awareness includes empathy, organisational awareness, and service orientation (Quinn et al., 2015). Of particular importance, empathy comprises the heart of understanding others and involves 'sensing others' emotions, understanding the multi-sided perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns" (Goleman et al., 2002, p.39). The respondents shared their experiences on this topic as well:

> *"The steady reciprocal communication with the staff"* (Teacher 4, Focus group 1).
>
> *"It is pleasant when you get a compliment or a good word"* (Teacher 17, Focus group 4).
>
> *"I would say one of the most important things is that a good principal needs to be a good listener and understand what is behind the problem. Using good listening skills and, to an extent, questioning skills to understand the root cause of a problem. So, the school needs the principal who can listen and use this listening to identify the best'* (Teacher 24).

Eventually, empathic listening is an essential skill that leaders can cultivate as a way to demonstrate their empathy. This ability is a type of listening that tries to understand the situation or state in the same way the other person understands (Sparrow & Knight, 2009).

Interpersonal communication is perhaps one of the most significant and least understood competencies that a leader can have. Despite this difficulty, analysing communication behaviour is vital. Poor communication skills cause both interpersonal and organisational complications. Organisationally, weak communication often results in low morale and low productivity (Quinn et al., 2015). Considering that "organising requires that people communicate – to develop goals, channel energy, and identify and solve problems – learning to communicate effectively is key to improve work unit and organisational effectiveness" (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 49). The interviews highlight the importance of the principal's communication as well:

> *"Honesty is paramount; if the leader is honest with everyone, there will be no difficulties because when he is honest with teachers, he is honest with himself"* (Principal 2).

> *"Apart from high professionalism, the leader should have good communication abilities"* (Teacher 4, Focus group 1).

> *"The principal should be able to work with all the people of the school community. Treat everyone equally without dividing the attitude based on personal preferences or characteristics. To be able to organise everyone and work together"* (Teacher 14, Focus group 3).

> *"I think it is general 4s. The Leader of the school, first of all, is the one who possesses communication skills, for sure, the one who can set collaboration cooperation"* (Expert 3).

Effective interpersonal communication involves two elements. First, individuals need to convey to others what they are feeling, what they are thinking, and what they need from others to express themselves. Second, individuals must be good listeners. They must be open to genuinely hearing the thoughts and ideas that other people are expressing (Samovar & Mills, 1998).

As one interviewee said: "*I think the principal should spend time with the workers in his staff, and I am saying not the admin, but go all the levels including maintenance staff as well… A principal is a person who is a communicator, is a person who is talking to everybody, learning from everybody because the principal will have a full picture of the school"* (Expert 2). Talking about this issue, an interviewee said about the importance of communication skills in addressing the stakeholders: "I think that they have got to be clearer about what they want, *and I would say they have got to be clearer about communicating that to the stakeholders. In particular, I think one of the things that I would love to see, and that*

would benefit the entire community, is better education of the stakeholders as to what we want. That is, it is very, very challenging" (Teacher 28).

In addition to the above considerations, some respondents emphasised the importance of respectful tactical communication with the leader. For example, one of the teachers said: *"I remember the moments which came, maybe, soviet culture and style. The leader – that meant to call to account, to show an authority and to spread the word "from the top". It is like a chain, and I think it is an example of anti-leadership. It should be vice versa. You gain respect only the way you respect the others"* (Teacher 7, Focus group 2). In the same manner, another teacher supported this, commenting: *"There is a saying the higher you are, the lower your voice. And this low voice will be heard anyways. It is not acceptable that the leader raises the voice towards the colleagues"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2). In the same vein: *"Also, I wanted to add we should not mix the notions of leader and the "authority" who plays the power game by reproaching because people should not be afraid of their leader. It means the leader should make the teachers feel secure and easy to follow the leader"* (Teacher 12, Focus group 3).

Depending on the work setting, new teachers may be expected to have a high level of prior education and experience in the work performed in the organisation. Regardless of the knowledge and skills employees are expected to have when they are hired, your role as a leader is to mentor and develop employees (Quinn et al., 2015). As one of the principals put it: *"I think you must always be open with teachers, in other words, to create a comfortable atmosphere where teachers can share their problems, worries, recommendations, and wishes. Of course, you should guide them as there are a lot of young teachers now. It is important to mentor them"* (Principal 3).

Delegating tasks and responsibilities to the staff is an effective medium for developing employees. When leaders delegate duties to their employees and challenge them with tasks that encourage them to go beyond their ordinary functioning level and boost their skills and abilities, these opportunities help employees be more effective in their performance, therefore promoting better allocation of organisational resources (Quinn et al., 2015).

Documentation is an important part of it. During the shadowing observation, Principal 1 arrived earlier to check the emails and respond to urgent ones, distributing the

tasks across functions. Principal 3 starts the day by going through all the documents that were prepared for the next day.

Teachers mention this aspect in the focus groups as well. For example, *"In general, the quality of an effective leader is to delegate, any time to know how to delegate"* (Teacher 18, Focus group 4). *"An example of leadership distribution is when we work together on the school development plan or the preparation for CIS accreditation to form the creative groups who analyse strong and weak aspects in a certain direction"* (Teacher 1, Focus group 1). Regarding the distribution of leadership, there are some nuances which teachers mentioned: *"It is important to know how to distribute responsibilities, but at the same time, every member of the team should understand that in the end, it is the leader who carries the final responsibility of the result"* (Teacher 7, Focus group 2). *"If to distribute, then distribute among the different levels of teachers like experts, moderators, researchers, and interns. Then you will see the holistic picture in the sense that it promotes the work of the variety qualifications of the teachers with each other"* (Teacher 12, Focus group 3). Delegation of leadership can be mishandled, as one of the teachers commented: *"It can be a problem when in the school there is an unspoken agreement of people who work well. It means there is a division between those who work well, those who are usually quite overloaded, and those who do not want to be challenged and are not given an extra task. However, such workers do not grow, and the ones who are overloaded can burn out. If the leader delegates effectively, everyone will progress"* (Teacher 16, Focus group 4).

As Dyer (1995) noted, "The fundamental emotional condition in a team is not liking but trusting. People do not need to like one another as friends to be able to work together, but they need to trust one another" (p. 53). One of the roles of the school leader is to form and develop an effective team. To be noted, Principal 2: *"It is important, actually. We organise team building; when we go outside in nature, we can see people from the other side. Secondly, to organise events where people can talk, communicate and network to promote the team spirit".* Another principal emphasises the essentiality of teambuilding. *"I think, in my case, during such events, I try to be open with colleagues and always try to ask how they are doing, what difficulties they come across, and what their moods are. I observe the mood, and if something is wrong, I try to learn. It is a fundamental human relationship"* (Principal 3). Also, as an example of the teambuilding role: *"The principal can inspire the team spirit in*

the way of taking part in different school events like a theatre piece or musical together with students and teachers" (Teacher 4, Focus group 1). *"Collaborative work can be a solution. For example, by planting the seeds together in a school garden, we had fun talking and laughing and were inspired by the friendly atmosphere. Later, we discussed how it worked out with the garden"* (Teacher 5, Focus group 1).

Many teachers emphasised how one goal unites everyone as a team:

"One goal unites everyone" (Teacher 3, Focus group 1).

"When collective work is done, you feel like you are a part of the team" (Teacher 2, Focus group 1).

"Well… a common goal is when the team and the leader understand that they are one community sharing the same aim and the same tasks. The success of the leader depends on the success of the staff" (Teacher 4, Focus group 1).

"The team should work together" (Teacher 6, Focus group 2).

Last but not least is the ability of the principal to solve conflicts and mediate communication. Conflicts in organisations develop for different reasons. In many situations, conflicts develop because of individual differences, such as differences in values, attitudes, needs, or perspectives (Quinn et al., 2015). The principal is the one who can provide a constructive dialogue. When individuals learn to balance advocacy and inquiry, they can engage in "dialogue", which comes from the Greek "dia-logos… [or] a free-flowing of meaning through a group, allowing the group to discover insights not attainable individually" (Senge, 2006, p. 10).

"The healthy atmosphere in the school is a state to be maintained. There can be conflicts between the stakeholders, and the principal must mediate. The principal should not be afraid to face the conflict. People often find it difficult because it sometimes requires people to deal with aggression and hostility" (Principal 1).

"The effective leader is the one who can generate potential solutions in conflicting situations. It is very important that the principal have creative thinking techniques to increase the potential to find a solution that meets everyone's needs" (Teacher 14, Focus group 3).

Observation also showed a few occasions where the principal had to manage the conflict. There was a meeting of Principal 2 with parents, tutor, and vice principal for pastoral work. The students were caught smoking. The principal had to manage the conflict between parents and tutors where the principal had to be diplomatic and at the same time force the school policies. Another example is that due to the expert visit, Math teachers came to work

during holidays, and the head of the department negotiated with Principal 1 the possibility of a day off for those days. Managing conflicts is extremely challenging and can be considered as mastery of communication art.

Arguably, it is at the heart of all competencies to communicate effectively. Studies consistently find that leaders spend the majority of their time engaging in various types of communication – face-to-face, phone, e-mail, conferences, and presentations; organisational researchers see communication as central to the study of both managerial and organisational effectiveness (Tourish & Hargie, 2004).

5.2.2 Establishing and maintaining stability and continuity

Learning organisations allow working for significant outcomes that cannot be accomplished individually. In order to put the opportunity into action, members of the organisation should find ways to coordinate their activities and achieve flexibility without any control, which would result in chaos (Quinn et al., 2015). Control is the action comprising functions such as accounting, operations management, supply chain management, quality control, legal compliance, and manufacturing - all activities that promote standard operating procedures (Quinn et al., 2015).

Information is the lifeblood of the organisation, and handling information and data effectively is a critical aspect of an effective leader's job. The term data refers to facts with no specific context or organisation; consequently, data have no clear meaning. To make data meaningful, those facts must be organised and given context. This way, data is translated into meaningful and valuable information (Beard & Peterson, 2003). This includes the school leader's ability to analyse the data.

Principal 2, under shadowing observation, analysed the workload to see the teacher's actual workload to organise and design a disbalance of the work time. This problem has existed in this school for a long time. The workload between the teachers was not balanced, so some of the teachers were suffering from an extreme workload. This means that there were teachers teaching only grade sevens with one planning trajectory and teachers teaching three or four parallels, which required four times more planning. The principal created an Excel file to be submitted by every department to analyse the data himself.

The interviewed principal emphasised: *"...the ability to analyse. As I mentioned before, the leader from all big - for example, all heads of the departments give an enormous amount of information – you have to identify key issues that are why analysis is very important"* (Principal 2). There were some teachers who mentioned data handling as the principal's role; for example, these two mentioned:

> *"I think that a good leader should step by step be aware of not only the general information of the school but identify the current state of every department in depth in order to know his employees. A principal should know all the background information of every teacher. It is, of course, a tough job"* (Teacher 12, Focus group 3).
>
> *"I think, here, the principal's analytical work on every department will provide qualitative analysis"* (Teacher 13, Focus group 3).

One of the experts highlighted the way of analysing as evaluating: "As for me, a constant reflection of the job done, in the sense of, with a *certain period of time, conduct evaluation of the progress, which means to work with data. If there is an issue, for example, take a questionnaire on the opinion of teachers, students, and parents, and analyse all the data collected"* (Expert 4).

Effective organisations must be adaptable and flexible to succeed. What worked yesterday may not work today. Based on the competing values framework, flexibility must be balanced with stability (Anantatmula, 2008). Projects are assigned specific objectives, starting and ending times, and a predetermined budget to balance this flexibility. In this competency, some tools can be used when planning, directing, and controlling resources to meet the technical requirements, cost targets, and time constraints of a project (Quinn et al., 2015). The roles of the principal in the flexibility realm are comprised of organisational, coordinating, and facilitating competencies. Respondents reacted with the following comments:

> *"I think in contemporary realms, principals have to be organisers. Nowadays, not only in our school but in general in our country, there is a big question for principals: 'How do we organise?'. The principal must be an organisation man. In Kazakhstani realities, the principal has to be principal"* (Teacher 8, Focus group 2).
>
> *"In any situation, every leader plays the role of the facilitator because by any means the principal tries to create a group and monitors the work"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2).

Organisational skills are important in the wide range of where they are implemented. Namely, school maintenance, recruiting, scheduling, teaching and learning process, discipline, monitoring and evaluation, school policies, and other spheres to be named are endless. For example: *"For me, it is important to follow our policies. I myself try. I am not ideal, but I try to be a role model and not violate them. I should organise for teachers, students, and parents to understand and follow our school policies"* (Principal 2). *"Organising the work… Respect for teachers' time. For example, we get many notifications on a number of platforms, such as junk email documents. There is a new direction in project management, which deals with managing tasks. Maybe, it is even possible to invite an outer specialist, as for the leaders they are overloaded, but ideally, it is the task of an effective leader"* (Teacher 8, Focus group 2). It is not only principals who are overloaded but teachers as well. As one of the respondents mentioned: *"Our principal gathered us to collect data and insights on teachers' overload and the overload of students. This year, he puts the task of easing the workload for both teachers and students. This is also a big organisational goal to achieve"* (Teacher 19, Focus group 4).

Identifying the right people for the school staff is not an easy task. In addition to their professional skills, it is wise to consider interpersonal skills as well. In so many ways, and in the majority of the interviews, the need to be able to recruit the right people was mentioned as crucial. *"I think we are lucky. Our first principal recruited and formed the staff very effectively. He could feel the people and selected the best personally and professionally"* (Teacher 18, Focus group 4).

One of the experts said, *"You have to hire people who are passionate about what they do. You need to ensure that teachers here really want to teach. Nevertheless, it is not easy; it is not an easy thing. I believe the principal is positive and has a great vision. They can pass the enthusiasm throughout the school, and everyone else can follow. It is quite idealistic, really, but yes"* (Expert 1). Expert 1 also continued: *"If the leadership is not effective in a school, we will have problems. In my experience, such a situation happened in a Qatari school. In this school in Qatar, the whole leadership was brand new; they just hired everyone quickly. So, the principal was hired new, most of the senior leadership team some them were hired during the same year, and many teachers were hired during the same year. This shows that the retention of the teachers was not high. That caused problems because nobody was*

comfortable with the school, or they were new to the school; they needed to experience school, but everything was changing very quickly in the school. This had a great impact on the effectiveness" (Expert 1). As can be seen, not only picking up the right people but retention of an effective staff is crucial for an effective school. The following quote captures this and more:

> *"Stop requesting too many things. Work out whatever system the school has; what minimum do you need? From the managing perspective, I understand that you need to have an overview of the teacher's work and the student's results. That means paperwork! There will be some paperwork, which is the reality, but as minimal as possible, as user-friendly as possible, but with obvious goals and deadlines"* (Expert 2).

Expert 2 continued suggesting the possible solution:

> *"To devote time to educate their stakeholders. Because the biggest pressure I see for the principal is the outside, the principal needs to spend time with the people under pressure, explaining the reasons, explaining what the school is about, inviting them to participate in school life, and making them see what the school is about. That way, he can overcome it because suddenly, the board understands and supports the principal when the principal says no. However, if the board or management company do not understand, there will always be pressure, and some principals are weak and always going to bend to that pressure; therefore, schools do not have direction. Consequently, principals put more pressure on teachers, which usually turns into tons of paperwork. To overcome outside challenges is to educate your stakeholders"* (Expert 2).

Another problem was mentioned about preparing a reserve for certain positions in the admin team. For the coordinator positions, it takes much work to find a replacement immediately. *"Because there are many new teachers and the position has many specifics, it is difficult to find a replacement, for example, in the situation of maternal leave. We selected one colleague as an intern; I was integrating her step-by-step into the functionality of my coordinator position so that in case when I leave or go on maternal leave, she would be ready. What I mean is that we should prepare to reserve beforehand"* (Teacher 19, Focus group 4).

One of the innovative ideas was expressed during the focus group interview: *"I think rotation is needed. Rotation of positions between the departments, for example, rotation of the heads of department. Another option is to give a certain period to the position. You can be the head of the department for only 2-3 years, and during the next rotation, there is an opportunity for the others to try their skills and share their experience and visions. It will*

give an opportunity for technically everyone to be interchangeable when someone stops working" (Teacher 16, Focus group 4).

Establishing and maintaining stability and control depends on having effective measurement and monitoring systems. For example, counting inventory to know if there is enough on hand to meet anticipated demand and identify losses from spoilage or theft is necessary. It is required to observe employees to be sure their appearance and behaviour fit the professional norms. All the measures are relevant, but the leaders must find the answers to this surprisingly complex question (Quinn et al., 2015).

Principal 3, while being observed, had a meeting with working staff regarding the repair work. The wall had to be repaired in one of the study rooms. The principal was making suggestions and providing instructions regarding the maintenance of the room.

What happens when organisations fail to monitor the right processes and outcomes? Steven Kerr (1975) addressed this issue in his article and provided many examples of situations where organisations were measuring the wrong things. There seems to be an endless array of ways to measure organisational efficiency.

The importance of diagnostics as the monitoring tool was explicitly mentioned in Focus group 1. The interviewees did stress this in the following quotes:

> *"There should be diagnostics. We have questionnaires. Sometimes they are of a formal nature, and we answer automatically"* (Teacher 1, Focus group 1).

Another teacher supported the colleague in developing the idea further:

> *"Indeed, to gather opinions from all the stakeholders not about what they are happy with but what they are not happy with anonymously"* (Teacher 5, Focus group 1).
>
> *"Maybe even to create a research group. Anyways, diagnostics is always needed"* (Teacher 2, Focus group 1).

Not only in this focus group but in the other one as well, the teacher mentioned the significance of monitoring: "Monitoring should be developed. Overall monitoring exists, *but it is not detailed enough to give a holistic picture"* (Teacher 14, Focus group 3).

Interviewed experts both implicitly and explicitly indicated that monitoring is essentially keeping track of the progress that the school is performing. There are a couple of criteria that should be monitored: students' achievements, teacher performance, and, in general, discipline as well. This is pointed out in one principal interview but has also appeared

in other interviews: *"Of course, students' performance should be monitored. There can be different measurements for that like semester reports, marks in general and external tests like SAT or IELTS"* (Principal 3).

One of the experts points to it: *"In which sense monitoring… First and foremost, basic things like being late, following the school's regulations, internal policies, traditions and human relationship"* (Expert 4). The respondent highlighted the ways teachers' performance can be monitored as an example. *"Evaluating teachers is an ongoing process during the year, regularly observing the lessons and checking the students' results. Basically, the most effective monitoring tool is a lesson observation. Even 3-4 times a year is enough to understand the teacher's professional development dynamics. Student feedback can also be a powerful tool"* (Expert 4).

It is also important to see the teacher's perspective on lesson observation. When the teacher mentioned lesson observation, she specifically meant that the leader is not the one who dictates how to teach but the one who provides feedback in an informal way that there is no feeling of exam and sees the positive performance as well. This was very distinctively pointed out:

> *"Having those informal observations is the best way to get information about overall performance because we all know, any formal appraisal, whether it is a lesson observation or whether it is a work appraiser, system, whatever it is, changes the dynamic, you do not get the true nature. You know, everybody knows that an observed lesson has been polished to a high shine. So, while formal observations have their place, I think informal observations are another very, very valuable tool to understanding how well the teacher is working and how well they are meeting their objectives"* (Teacher 27).

In a focus group, a positive example was given of how the principal treats the lesson. Namely, *"In general, all the principals of our school were professionals. They did not only manage the school but understood it was a lesson. They understand that the lesson is a process that is not to be disturbed. They can observe lessons, but it is not an exam for teachers. The principal provides professional feedback. It is a good role model"* (Teacher 18, Focus group 4).

The principal expressed his experience regarding the monitoring process: *"There are tools. Let us say look after attendance and being late. We have a system, and we use it at this moment. Lesson observation can be done online. We opened an online platform and observed a couple of lessons this week. We provide feedback like time management or differentiation.*

The most important thing is that we should move away from punishment as it leads to no results. People will start to do for the sake of doing, not for effectivity" (Principal 2). Principal 2 also does informal lesson observation. During the observation, Principal 2 will walk in the hallways, observe and lesson the atmosphere in the classroom, the level of engagement and the teacher1s raport.

The Principal 1 shadowing observation showed that the principal monitors the school by checking whether the classes have begun on time and whether the teachers are in the classrooms. Following the monitoring the canteen after first class how children are eating, the quality of the school and the discipline in general.

Organisations use a variety of tactics to encourage compliance. Experts emphasised that basic strategies for compliance management are financial proficiency and performance consistency.

> *"I think, from my experience, consistency. There must be consistency, higher expectations and ambitions for the learners' and the people's success. Some schools have financial problems, and this happened in my experience. We did not have enough resources and equipment to teach"* (Expert 1).

> *"If we talk about public schools, regarding school maintenance, the principal has many tasks, and they do not have enough time for the teaching and learning process and for pastoral works. The existential questions like repairing works of the schools, furniture and other material base"* (Expert 3).

As a leader, it is crucial to understand that organisations can be penalised for failing to comply with countless norms and regulations. Regardless of the type or size of the school, it is crucial to recognise that compliance is significant to support the learning process. An organisational culture of encouraging and enabling compliance and ethical conduct requires that appropriate values and behaviours be integrated into the daily activities of the school (Teicheira, 2008). As a leader, you can make a significant contribution by playing a part in building a culture of integrity (Quinn et al., 2015).

5.2.3 Improving productivity and increasing profitability

Compared to the human relations and internal process models, which take an internal focus, the rational goal model takes an external focus. "It is similar to the internal process quadrant, however, in its emphasis on control and its connection to early management theories. …Reflecting the external focus of this quadrant, Compete is the action imperative.

Key activities focus on goal clarification, rational analysis, and action taking" (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 170).

Today, many schools in Kazakhstan have statements of vision, mission, and values, which, in many cases, have been developed as a part of the strategic planning process. "The elements of vision answer the key questions of organisational identity: who are we, what are we doing, what are we doing and what we do?" (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 173). The research proposes that vision appears as a leader surveys the situation, finds ideas that await a champion Field (Nanus, 1992), and then synthesises those ideas into a central, compelling, and enduring message about organisational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985).

According to Quinn et al. (2015) states that a good vision creates at least three effects that help an organisation process. First, framing and defining a vision creates a focus for the organisation because a clear focus identifies what the organisation should not be doing. Peter Senge (2006) describes this effect using the metaphor of a rubber band. Imagine holding the rubber band between two hands so that it can be stretched with one hand away from the body and the other hand close to the body. The hand that is close to the body represents the current reality. The hand that is away from the body represents a future vision. The rubber between the hands creates tension between the two hands that can be resolved only by closing the distance between them. Ideally, the vision should draw the current reality forward (Senge, 2006a).

The respondents mentioned the vision of the principal across the interviews. One of the principals emphasised the importance of vision: "Everyone should, on his or her level, understand the goals and develop them. Every member of the school should have a clear understanding of *where we are going, which goals and what to do for this"* (Principal 3). At the same time, the principal underlined: "The principal is *responsible for the implementation, but every person on every level carries a certain amount of responsibility. Nevertheless, the decision, of course, is taken by the principal. However, he considers the opinion of his colleagues"* (Principal 3).

In addition, a vision should help members understand how they fit with the organisation's purpose. No matter how many individuals are involved in shaping a vision, community members expect the leader to have the "picture". A leader has many options for gathering the perspectives needed to frame and define a vision. The leader can collect insights

as one way of spending time in the trenches of the organisation, talking with a variety of stakeholders to develop an understanding of how they see the identity and purpose of the organisation. Another principal shared the school experience about the values being set by the school community: *"We have the values which we identified with the whole community: teachers, students and principals. Values like respect are fundamental; respect for everyone, not only for teachers and the maintenance personnel. Other values we find important are life-learning, tolerance, and patriotism. The value of health is quite essential. There is a lot to list"* (Principal 2).

Another approach can be to create focus groups or discussions where the leader can sit down and listen to the employees about their thoughts and feelings about focus, future and fit. As observation data shows, Principal 1, on Mondays, had a meeting with vice-principals in a respectful manner, setting the tasks for the week based on the current 'school breath'. The topics considered the urgent matters that need a solution, student projects, room adjustment, students' presidential elections, teacher attestation, and planning lesson observation. These showed the principal the current picture of the school and to view the path through setting goals and planning steps.

Regardless of the approach, the leader must find the language to connect to stakeholders. Interview data indicated: *"The leader should lead the way and spread enthusiasm into the community. Also, the personal characteristics of the principal must include the ability to work with colleagues to inspire enthusiasm and motivation. Otherwise, no one will see how the leader sees the "picture". Moreover, it is not given to everyone to see the whole picture and the result as the leader does, but the leader can motivate and inspire the team"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2).

The visionary leader's effect surpasses defining the organisation's direction; it positively impacts employees and inspires them to engage in extra effort; as a result, firm performance is likely to be improved (De Luque et al., 2008). Establishing a vision is usually the first step in the strategic planning process. Typically, organisations will design goals for several years into the future to set a precise, well-defined, and measurable benchmark of progress (Quinn et al., 2015). Goal-setting theory and research emerged when the rational goal model – the theoretical precursor of the Compete quadrant of the competing values framework – held influence as the dominant model of organisational effectiveness. Goal

setting takes place at all levels of school. At a senior leadership level, goal setting focuses primarily on what Latham and Wexley Field (1994) call the organisation's vision.

One of the teachers shared an opinion through the interview: *"An effective principal has to know, number one, has to know what they want. We are back to that idea of the goal, the idea of mission"* (Teacher 28). Then, they continued, "Good principals should also understand their place in the school; it is their job *to give direction to the school on a strategic long-term basis. On a more day-to-day basis, they should know how today's activities contribute to getting the school where it wants to be in 5- or 10 years. Furthermore, maintaining that strategic perspective, I think, is another very, very important trait"* (Teacher 28).

In the Kazakhstani context, it was also mentioned that school autonomy, whether the school has it or not, impacts goal-setting and goal-achieving conditions. Expert 2 clearly stated: *"You cannot have that level of freedom if the school is not allowed to be what it is. Because the students in one school, even if a school has the same goals as the school next door, the students and teachers make the needs of the day-to-day different; as I said, it is not data. It is people. Schools should be autonomous, but that does not mean they cannot have a common goal; we can have a common goal being autonomous, yes, absolutely"* (Expert 2).

Furthermore, the expert added: *"Yes, if you apply this from the maintenance staff team to the principal, everybody in the school is happy to be there. When you know what the job is, you know what your expectations are, and you find ways of being creative because if you are free to do things the way you want to do them, you are happy, and they do more. You want to work more, and you want to research more. Moreover, creative ideas are well accepted in the community; people take them and make them grow, which makes them feel successful. That can only happen with autonomy. You also need a successful principal, so the principal is autonomous; the whole thing is a successful school is an autonomous school"* (Expert 2).

The motivation for competitive character is to win. For organisations, including schools, winning has been traditionally characterised as being productive and profitable, with the focus on the Compete action imperative and the rational goal quadrant of the competing values framework. In today's environment, winning compels setting lofty goals, working intensely with an emphasis on quality, and responding quickly to possible challenges.

"Productivity is a key concept for measuring individual, group, and organisational effectiveness" (Quinn et al., 2015, p.194). In today's economy, however, where intellectual capital has taken the place of natural resources and other forms of capital and technology as the primary source of competitive advantage, measuring "productivity" is complicated and often controversial, especially when talking about schools. The nature of schools and the competitive setting within which they function have made high productivity and compelling performance imperative at all levels in a school. As a result, leaders have to create an environment where such productivity, empowerment, and commitment are possible, plausible, and acceptable (Quinn et al., 2015).

Principal 1 expressed his thoughts regarding competitiveness: "Competitiveness is important not only for the school but also for the principal. We have to be competitive. For example, the courses for leaders can be taken in different directions. This is not only theoretical knowledge but practical, like psychological, in solving conflicts, building dialogues, and doing something in these directions. Not only management. Management is a global competence, but generally, our people see only academic direction. The leader should not see only the academic side but other spheres as well". The principal continued: *"Even right now, giving this interview, I am answering the questions and doing self-reflection and self-analysis simultaneously, and I like this process. In addition, school is like a living organism that always moves and always moves. You cannot be confident that you have found it because the situation can change tomorrow. That is why it is important to be competitive, flexible and up-to-date. The world changes quickly; we do not even know which equipment will be needed for the school in 5 years"* (Principal 1).

Observation showed that principals should try to consider the demands for productivity. Principal 3 has professional development time to learn the English language. As the principal states, learning is important for effectiveness in terms of accreditation, international conferences and connections, and publication opportunities. Principal 2 had a meeting with a videographer about the main points of the school's strengths for marketing in order to be able to show competence.

There is no single answer as to what motivates people. However, this theme came up, for example, in discussions of focus groups:

"I want to say that the leader must motivate teachers, motivate them, and show appreciation for the work done. For example, promotions, giving rewards, or extra days off. It means the teacher knows her or she has been seen" (Teacher 12, Focus group 3).

"The real-life example is that our principal was awarding, so involuntarily, you compare the awards to which projects were awarded. Many functional activities were awarded, too, the ones we do not even notice in our everyday routine. However, they were noted. I concluded that good work was done in evaluating and rewarding teachers" (Teacher 11, Focus group 3).

"Motivation. Not only the olympiads, even some sports events outside of everyday functionality, but some social projects were also rewarded; I liked it as well" (Teacher 14, Focus group 3).

One of the principals discussed this point, saying, "The role of the principal is to motivate and inspire the staff. It can be through salary or other means of motivation. To inspire, remind the goals of teaching and learning and create the environment where everyone feels a part of the team and understands their role in making school effective" (Principal 3).

The teacher shared a vital opinion regarding the question: "*First of all because people are different, they are motivated by different things. However, one of the things I do know is that it is not often that money is a motivator. I mean, it is to the extent that if people are underpaid, money may motivate them to take on more work. Nevertheless, for me for me, I think recognition. It is being recognised as making a difference! In my experience, what drives teachers is that feeling that they are making a difference, that the people they work with are being affected positively by them, and that the students are being affected positively. You are changing things for the better".* Then the teacher carried on mentioning a significant motivation tool: *"I would say, you know, for a principal to motivate me personally, number one, I have got to, I have got to find out, I am interested in it and get my buy-in. Moreover, number two is that there is some recognition behind it"* (Teacher 25).

Most interviewed agreed that being a role model is a solid motivational and inspirational tool. The interviewees highlighted this in the following quotes:

"To show on his example at the first place. Teaching, teambuilding, sports events, etc." (Expert 4)

"One of the students characterised our principal "He is an akim (mayor) who will paint the fence". This metaphor is quite on point!" (Teacher 4, Focus group 1)

"When we celebrated the end of the year, the principal came out in jeans and a t-shirt like everyone else, danced and sang with children; it is very inspirational" (Teacher 3, Focus group).

"As it was said, good connection, the principal on his example, when he does himself as well, you automatically will do as well. Being role model, I think at a first place" (Teacher 2, Focus group 1).

"By example, literally by example. If the principal listens to my needs, sits down, listens to words, understands the needs of the teachers, specific teachers, and specific subjects, and acts upon that, makes decisions that help them solve that motivates teachers, then makes teachers believe in this person. When there is an event like an intercultural fest, and you see the principal is there talking to students, also dressed up and participating and dancing with students and competing with students in an Olympiad, saying like "Hey, let us play, I bet I am going to beat you and try to win", or you see playing chess together or football – that what I find motivating" (Expert 2).

Overall, these results indicate that being a leader responsible for productivity, success, and effectiveness takes work. Reaching results is an everyday hard work of making decisions, taking risks, and creating strategies.

5.2.4 Promoting change and encouraging adaptability

Organisations do not exist in a vacuum. Schools function and perform in a complex and dramatically changing world. In contrast to the internal process model, which seeks to buffer the organisation from the environment by implementing a tight control system, the open system model accepts the demand for flexibility and creativity (Quinn et al., 2015).

The core expectation of the open systems model is that constant adjustment and innovation are essential to acquire the external resources needed by the organisation to be successful. Consequently, the goals associated with the open systems model are concentrated on adapting to environmental changes rather than resisting changes. With Create, action vital key activities within the given quadrant lead to the target of reaching external support through adaptation, innovation and creative problem-solving (Quinn et al., 2015).

The majority of those who responded that principals have to be creative nowadays due to the changing educational world. A conversation with an educational expert reveals this: *"Creative, critically thinking. The principal can form creative groups and work with them. Should bring creative ideas, think positively and promote brainstorming"* (Expert 3).

"In the organisational world, innovation goes a step beyond creative thinking. Creativity refers to an ability to imagine new possibilities, envision original ideas, or develop novel uses of existing ideas and technologies. Innovation refers to a longer process of development and implementation" (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 272). Through innovation, new opportunities are highlighted, chosen, registered and integrated to adapt or improve functional performance. Innovation is now seen as "the single most crucial ingredient in any modern economy (The Economist, 2007) and as essential to the long-term sustainability of an organisation (Davila et al., 2012).

In focus group interviews, one focus group raised an essential issue of certain obstacles and barriers in implementing creative solutions due to the system of regulations of Kazakhstani schools. The quotes below demonstrate the reasons for this:

> *"For example, the principal addresses the staff about proposals regarding the school leadership. Suggestions for the principal: "What would you like me as a principal to do?"* (Teacher 6, Focus group 2)

> *"There are certain frames, certain functional duties and opportunities written; in such conditions, some things are allowed, and some are not. That is why showing the creativity role is quite difficult. More often. The principals follow the orders and instructions coming from the upper authorities, having fewer opportunities for creativity"* (Teacher 7, Focus group 2).

> *"I have a positive example from my prior experience. In our school, the environment was multiethnic. The new principal from the other city was the teacher of physical education. After a couple of years, there was a musical in this school, and there was an organisation that deals with fighting drug use; they got an international grant, and for this money, they hired a psychologist. They started to grow seedlings and sell them to other schools, getting first place in skiing"* (Teacher 8, Focus group 2).

> *"I want to add here that we had Global Friday, and I read them a quote: "All people know that it is not allowed, except one, who does not know it". That is how he makes the discovery, not following the limitations"* (Teacher 7, Focus group 2).

> *"There should be more freedom and autonomy in the school. We should not be trapped in certain frames, to take only one program and learn; there should be more freedom, more responsibility taken by the school, and more responsibility given. In the same way, responsibility should be given to the teachers. You can teach however you want, not in standard ways; the result is important, and there will be conditions for creativity. When everything is written by every minute what to do, it kills creativity"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2).

Most people think that innovation is the creation of brand-new ideas – new things that have never been thought of before. An innovation often results from "importing" an

existing idea from one setting or context into another. In the book Borrowed Brilliance, David Kord Murray (2009) claims, "The farther away from your subject you borrow materials from, the more creative your solution becomes" (p. 69). Murray (2009) said, "First you copy. Then you create" (p. 71).

A conversation with a teacher brings out precisely this:

> *"I will reiterate my opinion that leaders' roles are two things. Number one is to identify what you are already doing well; if you are not broke, do not fix it. Secondly, identify what you need to do better and find ways of achieving that. Moreover, be creative about that!"* (Teacher 28).

As an example and reason why to do it, the teacher explained:

> *"I will give you a recent example. Most schools require an acceptable level of English. This year's cohort does not achieve the minimum IR score. Combination of lack of exposure to the language, shortened classes, and distance learning, there were several factors that went into this. The leader's reaction to this, or I should say the leadership team's reaction to this, was what I consider to be a "knee-jerk reaction": "Oh, we are gonna bring in IO dedicated classes!" How do you think that is going to work? Who is going to do it? Do the students want this? So, it needed, I feel it needed a more creative approach, not just "Oh, we are going to have IO classes". Thus, I think that is the leader's role, to identify the root cause of the problem and then come up with creative solutions to fix that problem"* (Teacher 28).

Most innovations are accomplished by people working in collaboration. The complexity of the school service is often beyond the capability of one person to deliver. Innovation is a team sport or at least a group sport. The core skill in the innovation process is the ability to bring people together and help them "harvest" their best thinking. A leader who can foster even minor improvements in innovation can add immense value to the school's effectiveness.

The interviewed principal expressed his opinion: *"What I really see is that when I do together with people, people are motivated. Another option I do not know. When I started to run with them, I came down from my office and advised people; I saw that people were contaminated with inspiration. If I sit in my office and give orders, my colleagues will not even understand themselves why it is effective. I just walked around, shared my ideas, developed them, got inspired, and did the way I was already needed for them. I find it an innovative way to motivate".* It was valuable that the principal shared his innovative approach from his experience in the former school: *"In my former school, I implemented the tool*

helping for differentiation. We know that differentiation in teaching is quite challenging. The individual relationship is between the teacher and the student. When you have 60 minutes and there are more than 15-16 students, it is not that easy to find an individual approach to everyone. A platform should be created for teachers. I implemented it in my former school, and it was successful". The principal continued explaining the platform: "On the platform, there was, first, a psychological portrait for every child. Psychologists fill in the information based on different pieces of training, such as medical information like eyesight or individual health conditions. Third are the children. Number four is the points gained on their selection exams. So, it is a big database that serves to help the teacher build an individual approach for every child. It can also aid in academic effectiveness". The principal shared the future plans to be implemented in the current school: *"I want to revive the school with students' projects. Also, I want to see our school as an eco-green school. I want to develop the school in this direction"* (Principal 2).

Another principal emphasises the role of planning and how strategically it is to plan so that there is a space for innovation. *"I think it is important to plan. If you plan all the evaluations and receive feedback and questionnaires not just for the sake of doing so but directed to get a meaningful overview, I understood that I should strategically look forward for 3-4 years. Of course, it still can change, but at minimum, I must have it for two years. Then I can see the direction, then I have space for new creative ideas"* (Principal 3).

In this sense, teachers coincide with the idea above regarding planning the primary activities in the school's work. *"In developing the plan, everyone is involved, including the principal, the admin team, teachers' work, and students' feedback. All the opinions should be counted that the feeling of being a part of the team is created"* (Teacher 17, Focus group 4). Furthermore, in this focus group, one of the teachers shared: *"We talked with the colleagues and had an idea. We gather as a department for professional development. I offered that one time in the semester, two times a year, one of the teachers carried out training on different skills, not academic but something they like to do or are good at. Everyone has some talent or skill they can share with colleagues, like drawing or sewing"* (Teacher 19, Focus group 4).

One of the bright examples from the shadowing observation was when Principal 1 faced the enormous challenge of creating a fab lab project, which stands for adjusting the

dormitory part for the science lab and craft workshop space. The problem was that the building was on the edge of its space capacity, and Principal 1 had to be creative. It was almost an art to make that project come true, including architectural and design skills. Principal 1 visited the dormitory to see how the project could be set up.

Principal 3 wanted to make a radio channel and have a school radio regularly with current news and achievements of the students, stating the school's mission, vision and values.

Using creative thinking in problem-solving allows organisations to reach often untapped human resources. Beyond the overall organisational advantages, leaders should recognise the individual assets of encouraging creative thinking among their employees. Creative thinking can increase the effectiveness of the unit through better problem-solving. In addition, creative thinking can be used as a motivational tool. "When individuals are encouraged to be creative in their thinking and problem solving, they are more likely to feel unique, valued, and affirmed as important employees' good ideas, but the employees themselves are more likely to be engaged and to contribute their best to the organisation" (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 280).

5.3 Integrating ideas about leadership and the road to effectiveness

Being an effective leader is the never-ending road to mastery. Is it appropriate to use the notion of mastery in effective leadership? The leaders progress through stages and can become increasingly effective in their performance through development. In this sense, "mastery is a lifelong learning journey, rather than a destination. The notion of becoming a 'master' understands that there are always more things to learn and new ideas that will challenge the leader to enhance their skills and abilities. The earlier the leader recognises the need for continuous learning – the earlier the leader learns to value the process of becoming- the more effective the leader will be (Quinn et al., 2015).

The majority of participants, the interviewers, used a metaphor of the school leader being a captain of the ship, implying the captain is the principal and the school is the ship.

> *"It is the same as a captain of the ship. The captain should know where to sail and how to steer the ship, which means an effective leader should predict, see, and look a few steps forward. The leader must see it bigger, the whole picture"* (Teacher 9, Focus group 2).

"The principal should meet what is expected of them. In this situation, the team will work effectively, and then the leader will lead everyone" (Teacher 7, Focus group 2).

Another teacher from the individual interview continued with a negative example:

"I am going to give a negative example as well. There is a system here in Kazakhstan that allows a formal opening of the school known as the First Bell. It interacts with the students, teachers, and parents, which is a very good mechanism for formally opening the scope. Moreover, it has many performance aspects. The theme for the First Bell ceremony just before the lockdown was a nautical theme. There were many dances in sailor uniforms, costumes, and other things. As a figurehead, the school created the front end of a ship for people to speak from as a podium. So, the speeches all happened from the front end of the ship. To my mind, one thing that everybody could see was that it had no steering; there was nothing to steer the ship. Furthermore, to me, that was the perfect emblem of the leadership challenges of this school. There is, you know, if you think about the principal as being the captain of the ship, setting the overall direction, and then dealing with the challenges of how to get to the objective, having no steering, having a rather less ship, that is what we mean by the rudderless ship" (Teacher 28).

However, one of the teachers shared one of the positive experiences. Namely, the teacher said: *"But the other thing that the two of my former principals here have done well is they have questions and directives coming from stakeholders, rather than just open and automatically agreeing to it. So, when parents raise questions or issues, the principals try to get to the root of the problem and do not spontaneously react. Both of those principals also questioned directives coming from the governing body to the benefit of the school, that you know what, one of the things about the whole, the whole system should be differentiated; it is not that one size fits all. So, when the governing body tries to send out one-size-fits-all directives, these principals were ready to stand up and say, "That is not going to work for us". Fortunately, that was the undoing of one of the principals"* (Teacher 24).

Approximately half of those interviewed commented that being a principal is a life-learning process and that certain preparation programmes should support being a teacher. It is also crucial that the principal educates himself. Namely, the following quote explains this: "Learn about the school you arrive at before you make any decisions. Do not start making decisions before understanding the school first. Every principal I worked for said that, *but almost nobody did"* (Expert 2). Another expert critically commented on the impact of the principal appointment system in Kazakhstan: "Mainly, in the Kazakhstani school system, *principals are appointed by the authorities. In my mind, people making decisions should*

invite people as well. There is a chance for people to apply to an open position and to invite people who will feel they have the potential to perform effectively. However, inviting a person does not mean that the person will have an advantage and will be treated fairly. So, the chosen person will be the best among those who applied" (Expert 3). Another expert expressed a similar thought: *"In many cases, the leaders are chosen because they are good teachers, but a good teacher does not necessarily make a good leader. Furthermore, you harm both things. However, how do you make fair decisions? It is not to identify the person who is the best teacher. It is to identify the person who has these features: empathetic, puts students' needs first, and is ready to sacrifice personal time for the benefit of the students or the benefit of the project of other teachers. There can be the messiest teachers you have ever seen, which does not mean that the teacher is bad, but they can be amazing at networking; if the teacher jumps, the whole school jumps, and that can be a good leader. I will say, in general, focus more on skills, aptitudes, talents and values, and when you find that person, give that person an opportunity"* (Expert 4). Another perspective: *"I would say it should be a joint thing that involves all the stakeholders. It would be best if you had a teacher representative there, a student representative, and one of the leaders who will work directly with the principal; some schools call it deputy or vice-principal. Also, one person from admin support deals with the practical day school. The board of these representatives, so all the possible perspectives are considered. That also makes me feel the responsibility of not to let down all those people"* (Expert 1).

Regarding the learning and professional development of the leader, principals have expressed their opinions that it is not easy for them to meet the stakeholders' expectations and get over the challenges of the changing current world, which means that they need support. One of the respondents said, *"I think there should be some guide for leaders and professional learning minimum for 3 or 6 months. The principal can learn basic skills like planning, organisation, building relationships, emotional intelligence and problem-solving. Also, it is an excellent idea to have a mentor who will provide feedback and from whom you can ask a piece of advice"* (Principal 3). Another opinion focused on a challenge the principal encounters nowadays: "Maybe it is a society that only has *expectations. Authorities have one, teachers another, parents have other expectations, and the principal is the one who mediates and balances between these stakeholders, and it is becoming more and more difficult. The*

learning and teaching program changes, evaluation system changes and meeting all those expectations are important. There is also no big financial stimulation; I mean teacher salaries. Parents are quite demanding nowadays, and students are too. Social media opportunities have a big impact on society, so one post and everything can dramatically change" (Principal 1).

One of the teachers said quite straight about the impact of the principal on the school's effectiveness: *"Most schools I have worked at, it is the principal, the actual principal. Then, this person's job was set. So, I think in all but one school, it is the principal. One of the things I noticed, particularly with the number of changes in principles that we have had, in number one, is the importance of the good principle; just differences in good principles make old in all sorts of ways. Number two is how difficult it is to be a good principal. You need a whole world of skills. You have to see them in action. Very few people are born good principals"* (Teacher 28).

In general, the majority of respondents agreed that an effective school is a healthy environment for learning and teaching. School should be a positive experience in the life of teachers and students, and the leader should create an effective environment. Namely, the quotes below emphasise this:

> *"I think it is the place where teachers and students go every morning with a positive mood and happiness. Every day you want to go to school, sort of"* (Expert 4).
>
> *"But if you want to define effective schools as the schools that produce good results, I would ask you what good results you discuss. The students who are getting top marks, whatever the system is, or students who are happy. For me, an effective school produces happy adults. Adults who are happy to be themselves, that are useful to society, that have compassion and empathy and who cares if they are going to be a carpenter or a doctor"* (Teacher 5, Focus group 1).
>
> Teachers and experts also shared an interesting opinion:
>
> *"I would say an effective school will be a school where the graduates are always happy to go back to school, their children will go to the same school, and that will be one marker for me when there are many generations of the same family will go to the same school. That will tell you that people were happy in that school"* (Expert 2).
>
> *"When the student remembers the school with gratitude where he or she was happy"* (Teacher 7, Focus group 2).
>
> *"For example, I have many good memories despite many aspects of the school. So that could be a marker on effective schools"* (Expert 3).

To conclude, leaders need to be more technically adept at using different competencies at different times. “Rather, master leaders see the world differently, think about possible courses of action in more sophisticated ways, and then integrate and blend apparently competing competencies in innovative ways that meet the needs of the situation at hand” (Quinn et al., 2015, p. 313). Also, it can be concluded that these findings showed the importance of the developmental process and the need for lifelong learning.

PART 6. DISCUSSION

Chapter Preview

This chapter brings together all the knowledge collected from theoretical and empirical aspects of this research, generates discussions and contributes to providing answers to the research question in the context of Kazakhstan. As a beginning point, the chapter provides the main focus of interview groups (teachers, principals and educational experts) and suggests an analytical framework for further discussion. It develops the thread of thought step by step based on theoretical and practical insights. The chapter looks into perspectives of what effective schools are and the role of the school leader in Kazakhstani schools. The research discusses the values, issues and challenges regarding the research questions.

6.1 Arranging ideas about school effectiveness

Understanding school effectiveness is a big ambition of this research. The literature review and interview data show that the concept of effectiveness is multifaceted and has different dimensions to approach in practical terms. The literature review also indicated the importance of understanding the differences between effectiveness and efficiency. In terms of language, effectiveness and efficiency are two words in Kazakh, so it was essential to clarify what effectiveness means. The difficulty of differentiating these terms follows this. Therefore, effectiveness was the main topic to explore and investigate.

Principals stated that effectiveness does not have a universal criterion, but they mainly focus on looking at school results based on two approaches:

- to compare the school with the other schools or
- to compare the school within.

On the one hand, an organisation can define the criteria to be compared with the other schools based on the principal's previous experience or networking with other schools. As an example, there can be subject Olympiads (regional, city and country level), student-teacher project activities, teacher professional development, and a variety of student or teacher awards like “The Teacher of the Year”, “Altyn Belgi” (graduation with excellence). On the other hand, all schools are individual organisations. The school achievement can be compared, reflected, and planned based on the results and activities of the previous years.

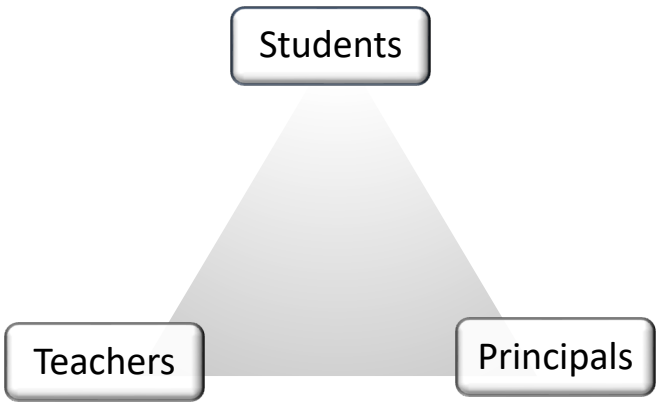
What worked out well, what goals were achieved, which strategies should be changed, what aims are still to be done, etc.

Experts touched upon the educational tendencies regarding the global context, which mainly considers education as a business. The experts were critical regarding the definition of school effectiveness. The core concern was that an effective school could be regarded as one that meets global requirements. For example, many handcrafting professions are out of fashion, so they are not promoted in school. The philosophy of the school system is not student-centred but directed to supply the workplace and human capital. In the same vein, literature also shows similar ideas. Hargreaves stated that school effectiveness is as important as the quality of school capital, which is comprised of intellectual, social, and organisational (Hargreaves, 2001). Moreover, Hargreaves states that organisational capacity is critical to school effectiveness and productivity (Hargreaves, 2001). Yakavets, in Kazakhstani contexts, mentioned that forming the concept of capacity or building an intellectual capital is the most suitable (Yakavets, 2011).

Teachers' perspectives on the effectiveness of the school are fundamentally connected directly with students. They stated that student achievement can come first but should not be simplified as it has nuances and complexities. As mentioned in the literature review, the view of an effective school encourages high levels of student achievement (Murphy, 1990). By drawing on the concept of academic attainment, it is no surprise that up to recent times, considerable academic focus and regular monitoring of student academic performance have been perceived as substantial criteria for an effective school (Al Waner, 2005). In Kazakhstan, standardised indicators for students' accomplishments are TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS, and national standardised tests. Existing socially accepted indicators in Kazakhstan of standardised test grades and higher emphasis on STEM subjects rather than arts do not indicate a student's potential, abilities and holistic development. It was well said by one of the teachers that school effectiveness should not be just measured in terms of academics.

As one of the principals said, "Learning environment is a learning school". School as a learning organisation, an effective learning organisation, provides the environment for holistic development not only for the students but for every stakeholder of the school community (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Learning school as a holistic development environment



Source: author

The fundamental function of the school is to give knowledge. As mentioned above, teachers emphasised academic performance as the most widespread criterion for measuring school effectiveness. There are possible explanations for this result. Prior studies have noted the importance of personal mastery – one of the five disciples of learning organisation – which forms self-development and individual learning (Senge, 2006). New political, social and economic conditions created after mid of the 90s in Kazakhstan pushed the country to rebuild the educational situation and focus on the success of the students, which led to some brave measures at a secondary school level like founding NIS schools, giving opportunities to private school establishment, developing "Center of Excellence" that provides educational services in the field of advanced training and professional development of teaching staff (Karabassova, 2015; MESRK, 2012; Moldasheva & Mahmood, 2014). The collected data suggests that the high quality of knowledge and student achievement are the most obvious to mention when the question of school effectiveness is raised.

Moreover, the importance of data about statistics of students' performance was emphasised, comprising student retention rates, grades, testing results, and university enrollment numbers. However, the criticism of testing and standardisation is that it leads to too subject-oriented education and, as a result, weakens the effectiveness of the school. This

idea follows from the previous criticism, which laid out the significance of the learning environment for student's holistic development concerning talents and skills. This finding has important implications for developing student-centred learning and teaching and encouraging differentiation in ineffective schools. To provide a learning environment, the role of material resources and safety is not the least.

Another relevant finding was the impact of psychological climate or so-called organisational climate that influences the learning environment's effectiveness. From an organisational perspective, organisations are recognised for having an environment that has a crucial effect on workplace behaviour. This means that the air in the room, with its organisational, environmental, social-emotional, structural and linguistic climate, has a robust effect on the student and the learning environment (Freiberg, 1999). The collected data notes that the core of a healthy learning environment is to build trust between all the stakeholders: students, teachers, parents, and the principal. Teachers emphasised that teachers should know their students in all the terms, starting from their health, skills, hobbies, interests and many others. Principals were more focused on building a rapport with teachers and creating a workplace where teachers feel appreciated and encouraged to provide high-quality teaching. This also includes reconsidering their workload and paperwork. This is also in accordance with observations where schools celebrate the success of both the students and teachers. To support the psychological climate, pastoral care in the school is essential in ensuring the students' physical and emotional welfare. It is an integral part of the educational system.

Differentiation, as mentioned previously, is a component of teaching and learning that enables meeting the diverse needs of the students. Students receive various skills that help them adapt more quickly to the changing world; holistic development helps them find their career and life path and encourages lifelong learning.

The teaching concept, in general, has evolved due to educational transformation and innovation. Teachers admitted that in the past, teaching was mainly teacher-centered. It worked following the particular hierarchy following the soviet school model: the teacher is correct, the teacher knows, the teacher says, and the student does. Since those times, many things have changed. Teachers received new roles like facilitator, coordinator, organiser, mentor, developer, etc. Teaching comprises many dimensions, and it is a complex process

by itself, a research theme to explore. The findings demonstrate that an effective model for teaching should focus on a student-centred approach. However, it should not be mixed with the teacher's leadership. It is characterised by being involved in shared leadership, teachers' knowledge building, teachers' voice, and teachers' developmental work (Frost, 2008). It can also be seen as a teacher empowerment tool that contributes to school improvement and the transmission of effective practices and teacher-generated initiatives (Muijs & Harris, 2007).

The core finding implies that in order to get high results and high student achievement, teachers should meet those high standards and should have a sufficient level of expertise. Based on the data collected, the following elements can be mentioned which are deeply interconnected with each other:

- self-development and self-initiation;
- collaboration;
- continuous professional development.

Self-development and self-initiation take the source from the fact that the teacher, first of all, likes the profession and is ready to invest time and effort and even sacrifice for their students. In Kazakhstan, teachers' jobs are underpaid. That is also one of the reasons why teaching is a calling. Only some have the will and stamina to make an almost sacred commitment.

Collaboration at all levels and in all possible ways. The fundamental forms are vertical and horizontal planning in schools, subject planning, mentoring, formal and non-formal learning, lesson observations, taking part in educational conferences and developing a network, providing feedback and more, as the data collected suggests.

Continuous professional development occurs in schools regularly, including internal and external forms. The schools provide subject-based and non-subject-based professional development courses where teachers can improve teaching methodology and learn new forms and techniques. The importance of it is explained mainly by principals, who say that every school is individual, and for teachers to fit into the school, it is the school's responsibility to provide adequate training and guidance.

The main conclusion based on the above-mentioned is that teachers are part of team learning. Senge's system of thinking discusses the school as an organisation and promotes understanding of the individual and team processes and the complexity of learning. This

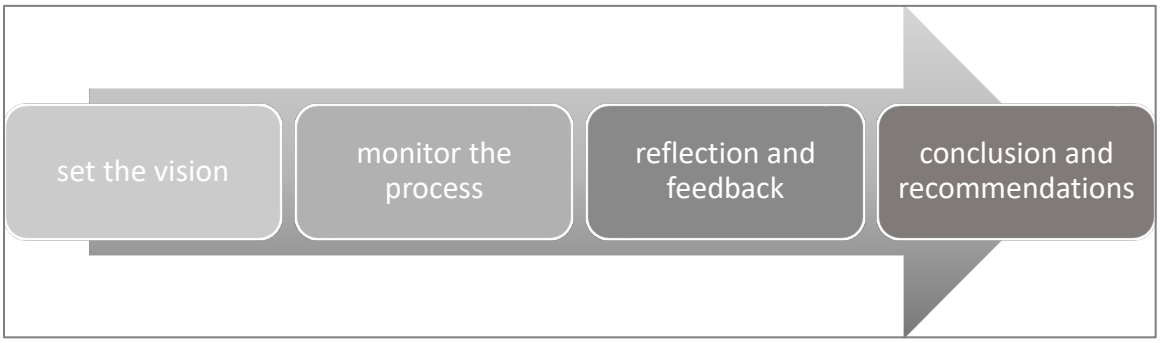
means that learning processes transfer practical knowledge and correspond to the objectives concerning its influence on individuals and groups (Senge, 2006a). Senge classified it into managing mental models of system change and learning and team learning for creating new forms and knowledge (Senge et al., 2007). In practical terms, teachers stated how it is crucial that teachers give and receive feedback, learn in a team, plan with other teachers and constantly learn.

However, the conditions are to be provided for the team learning. The major hindering factors that were highlighted are inadequate workload and paperwork. Most teachers interviewed mentioned that paperwork killed creativity and emphasised that effective distribution and organisation are the school leader's tasks. The principals' perspective was similar in that it is one of the main challenges to organise the conditions for teachers effectively. A series of studies also report the importance of positive affiliation between principals and teachers. It is a composite of the relationship between principals and teachers' motivation, principals' leadership and teachers' performance, principals' styles and roles, as well as principals' delegation skills and school learning culture (Bogler, 2001; Evans et al., 2012; McGhee & Lew, 2007; Moreland, 2009).

When the question of the effectiveness of the school was raised, most of those interviewed indicated the following phrases regarding what makes a school effective: "a strong head", "captain of the ship", "a strong leader", and "the one who sets the direction". The data collected suggested that the person responsible for setting a vision is the school's principal. However, the principal is not the only one who is responsible for the whole process. The school as one organism works at all levels; therefore, all the stakeholders are a part of the implementation and success of the vision set.

Together, these results provide important insights into the fact that the school leader is the one who delegates and shares the vision with the school community members, including teachers, students, and parents. The one who organises the process, starting from planning and ending with feedback (Figure 11). A strong leader is aware of the needs of the school of all the stakeholders and, based on that, can develop an effective strategy. Based on the findings of the research, the following building vision trajectory can be suggested:

Figure 11. Building vision trajectory



Source: author

According to West-Burnham (2010), the vision considers the direction for all aspects of the organisation, serves as a guide for planning, demonstrates the work of individuals, is a bridge for effective communication and announces the organisation to the external world.

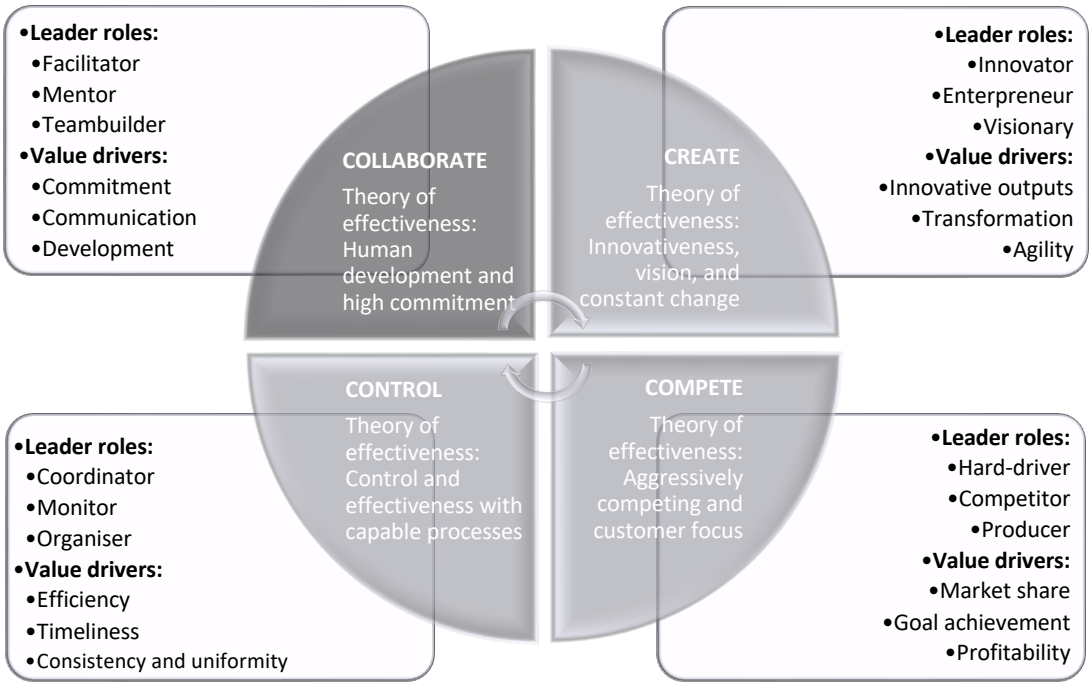
In short, an effective school knows what it is and where it goes. To be so, it needs a strong leader. The leader with a clear vision based on the school leads at all levels, transfers these needs into goals, monitors how it works, and intervenes in a mediate and corrective manner.

The results in this chapter indicate that an effective school functions and learns holistically, where every dimension has duties, responsibilities, and processes but works together in synergy. For the synergy to grow and flourish, the leader's role is essential. The next Chapter, therefore, moves on to discuss effective leadership roles.

6.2 Reflections related to the school leader roles

The Competing Values Framework was used as the conceptual framework for structuring the leader roles and functions. Four quadrants are formed by the fundamental effectiveness theories and horizontal dimensions, where every dimension establishes a set of roles, strategies and competencies that leaders may use to foster value creation (Figure 12).

Figure 12. The Competing Values Framework and Leader Roles - Collaborate



Source: adapted from Cameron and Quinn (2011)

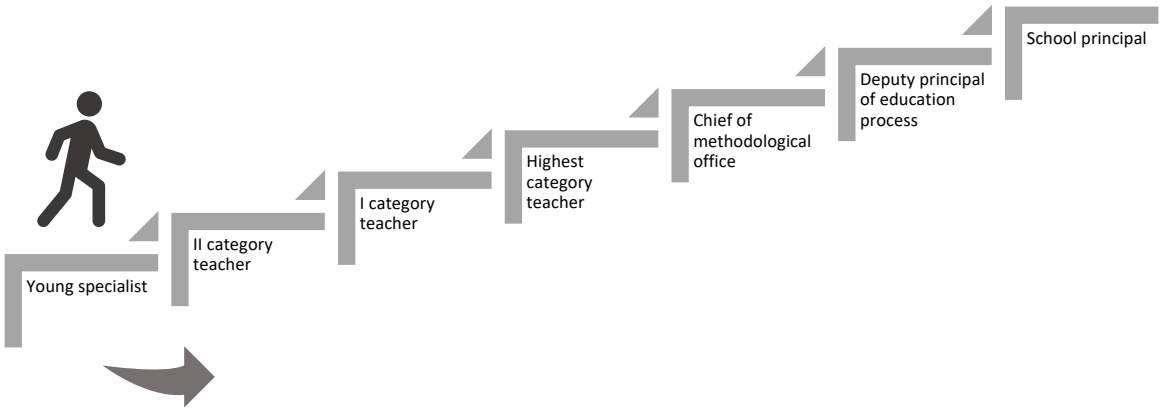
The Collaborate quadrant focuses on creating and sustaining commitment and cohesion, where the leader promotes the school community's growth and development together in a union (Figure 13). The leader value drivers comprise commitment, communication and development, and relevant competencies and skills.

Figure 13. Collaborate quadrant: Value drivers and relevant competencies

Source: adapted from Cameron and Quinn, 2011

In Kazakhstan, becoming a principal is usually the peak of a teacher's career. This means that a teacher starts their career as a young specialist, then gets higher qualifications, becomes the head of methodological unity or office, later goes into the admin team, and, at a peak, becomes a principal of the school. The following Figure 14 demonstrates the way to the principal.

Figure 14. Stages of a teacher career



Source: JSC "Information-Analytic Center," (2014)

It is important to mention that not every teacher achieves 'the highest category' of teaching qualification level throughout the entire teaching practice. However, for the appointment to the principal position, possessing every career step is not obligatory (JSC "Information-Analytic Center," 2014).

The principal position requires commitment as a driving value. School principals are not a specific profession to be chosen at the university to study, and in Kazakhstan, the preparation system for future school principals has not been developed (Mukhtarova & Medeni, 2013; Nurmukhanova, 2020). Usually, as it can be seen, the school's principal is a former successful teacher, but it is not a universal law. According to the OECD, the number of school leaders who participated in school management programs or leader preparation

courses is relatively low, around 25%, and 25% of principals who have undergone an education leadership program before the position appointment (OECD, 2019).

The Ministry of Education and Science aims to attract the best candidates to leadership posts and eliminate local 'bad practice'. For this purpose, the selection procedure for school leaders has been changed and is currently conducted on a competitive basis (MoES, 2012).

The key requirements are as follows:

- Higher pedagogical education;
- Not less than five years of experience working in an educational organisation;
- The first or highest teaching qualification;
- Not less than three years of experience in administrative work;
- A supporting recommendation from the regional Department of Education;
- No criminal record (Nurmukhanova & Muzafarova, 2019).

A school leader is a principal responsible for joint management and control over an educational organisation's performance (JSC "Information-Analytic Center," 2014). The principals should understand themselves and others to become effective school leaders. The findings show that the following components can be considered:

- identity of the principal;
- identifying the style;
- learning about the school.

First of all, the principals interviewed emphasised the importance of finding the so-called principal identity, which stands for being able to inspire others to action. Hence, the leaders understand their role and how others see it. Leaders can understand themselves by exploring leadership models to identify their leadership style. The current study has mentioned the managerial, instructional, and distributed leadership models in the literature review. Last but not least, is that the leader does not only understand himself but others as well; therefore, the principal learns about the school, learns about the people and learns about the environment.

Turning now to the Communication value, the literature and findings suggest that a leader's honest and effective communication comprises openness of the principle, emotional intelligence, and empathy. A leader who is ready to listen and to hear the school community's

needs can build a trusting relationship. Interview respondents described that in the past, the principal was someone who was in a closed office somewhere upstairs, and for the students, it was the worst punishment: “Going to the principal’s room”. It is the legacy of the post-Soviet Kazakhstani educational system, where the principal’s authority was enforced. This factor may explain the relatively good and positive feedback from the teachers, who emphasised that the role of the leader changed and that open communication between the principals eliminated the principal's alienation from school life. The principals also do not close their doors and try to stay open and transparent.

School life is a whole of interactions on an everyday basis. Methodical association meetings, methodic meetings, teaching councils, and internal and external scheduled meetings are only a small part of the communication streams. Besides, the school activities are intense, including meetings, project coordination meetings, and school lineups where the principal performs on different levels of communication – face-to-face, phone, email, conferences, and presentations (Tourish & Hargie, 2004). The performance of the leader should include conflict management. The intensity of communication and activity in a secondary school can bring conflicts between the stakeholders or staff members or even between the school and government authorities. The principal is the one who mediates and is responsible for protecting the healthy environment for a school that is successfully performing. It concludes that the school leader is the one who provides constructive dialogue.

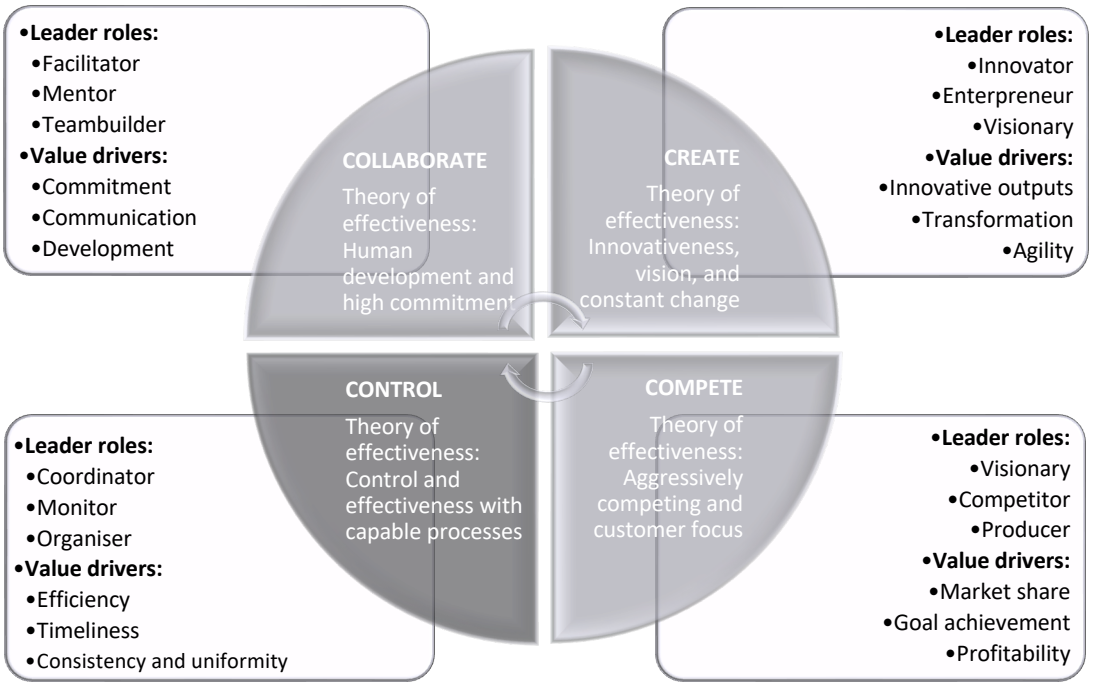
It is encouraging to stem literature and data analysis that conveys the developing role of the principal. The school leader mentors the school staff by delegating tasks and responsibilities. The effective medium of challenging the staff with higher expectations and responsibilities promotes going beyond the ordinary level and boosts the abilities and skills (Quinn et al., 2015). The leader manages the teams and groups in the school. According to the Standard staffing schedule approved by GD RK No.77 as of January 30, 2008, for general secondary education organisations, the principal has deputies; these can be deputies for training, methodology, educational and economic activity, profile education, social protection, HR department, etc. (Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2008). Each of the deputies is in charge of their work area, which is managed by the school leader (JSC “Information-Analytic Center,” 2014). Data analysis discusses the principal’s role in forming and developing an effective team. It includes teambuilding activities where

staff can learn beyond the formal framework. The school leader unites the team with a common goal and inspires them to work together.

The discussed Collaborate quadrant is a flexible asset driven by versatile communication and human development. In contrast, the Control quadrant stands for a robust tool facilitating stability in the context of school effectiveness. It has been mentioned that for successful performance, schools must be adaptable and flexible. However, flexibility must be balanced with stability (Anantatmula, 2008).

Here the Control quadrant comes to establish and maintain stability and continuity (Figure 15). To look again at the Competing Values Framework, the following features can be noted:

Figure 15. The Competing Values Framework and Leader Roles - Control

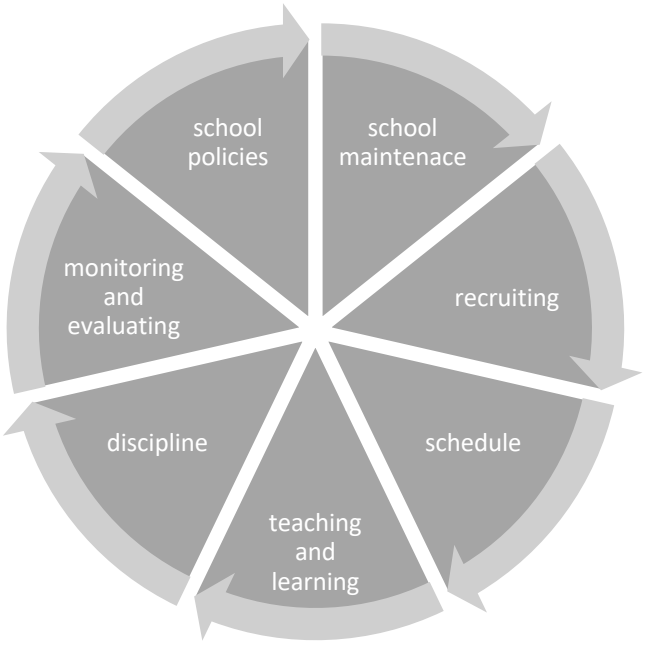


Source: adapted from Cameron and Quinn (2011)

According to the Competing Values Framework, the Control quadrant considers the organisation's functions to be consistent and stable; in short, the organisation does not end up in chaos. It includes standard operating procedures and tasks like accounting, operations management, quality control, legal compliance, and manufacturing (Quinn et al., 2015).

The collected data suggests that in the Kazakhstani context, the following fundamental activities of maintaining stability can be seen in the following operations in the following Figure 16:

Figure 16. Standard operating activities



Source: author

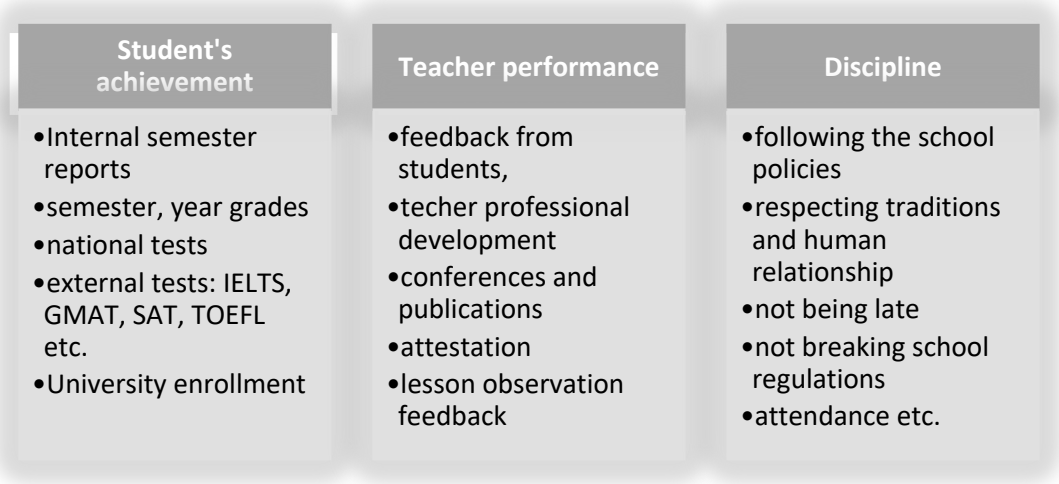
In addition, it is clear that information is the lifeblood of the organisation. It has been mentioned that successful communication is necessary for the school leader to build the team and to keep the organisation working effectively. Moreover, information and data handling are crucial parts of the leader's work. This explains that the leader, through analysing, quantitative and qualitative analysis, translates the data into meaningful information, which leads to strategies, solutions, and actions. The interviewers stated that data handling could be challenging because it may need a new direction of project management skills. It not only helps to translate the data but also manage tasks throughout the process. That is why the principal may need a person responsible for that or manage by himself. The principals mentioned such challenges as balancing the teachers' workloads, equitably distributing the tasks, creating reserves for certain positions, etc. Basically, staff management needs good data analysing and managing skills.

One of the significant things to reveal is that maintaining stability also needs financial compliance. Many opportunities depend on funding and resources. The schools that participated in this research have relevantly more autonomy than public schools. Experts mentioned that public school principals have too many tasks and insufficient time. This is, in general, the problem for the majority of public schools. Establishing monitoring and measurement indicators needs time for development and implementation.

Establishing and maintaining stability and control relies upon an effective monitoring system. In Kazakhstan, there is no established standard measurement and monitoring system, and diagnostic procedures are needed. However, there are accepted criteria that should be monitored: student achievement, teacher performance, and discipline.

Based on the data collected, the following activities can be seen in Kazakhstan's schools on a regular basis in practical terms (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Control quadrant: Monitoring and measurements



Source: author

The interview respondents emphasised the importance of developing further the notion of measurements and monitoring tools. Principals especially need a guide for monitoring criteria as they state that overall monitoring exists. Still, it needs to be more detailed to see the holistic picture and, as a result, needs to be improved to implement further adjustments and changes.

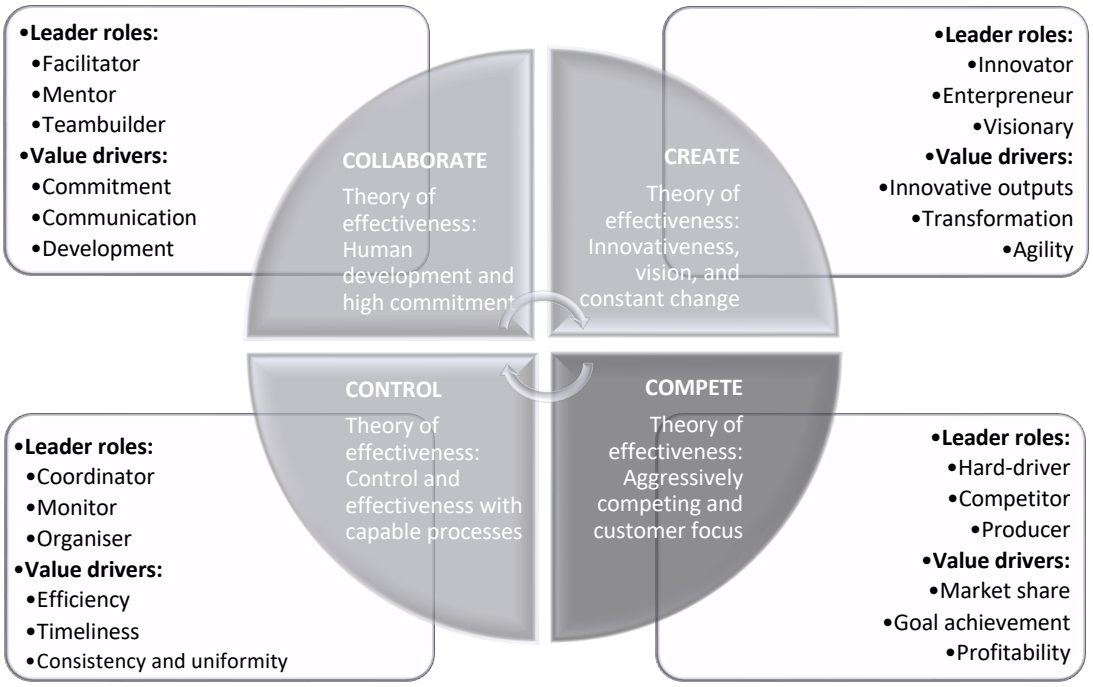
In the Kazakhstani context, the notion of Control seems to be understood differently than in the Western perspective. Due to the cultural and social background of the country,

which includes the Soviet system's past and post-Soviet countries' legacy, it is understood in its denotational meaning, which considers the principal to be at the top of the hierarchy. The narrative comes from the political, social, and cultural issues that countries of the former Soviet Union had to face over the last 30 years, which was the so-called collapse of the Soviet system. Kazakhstan inherited the educational system from the Soviet Union, a highly centralised and unified system, where the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education USSR established the curricula, textbooks, and methods to be taught in all the Union republics (Yakavets, Bridges, et al., 2017). It makes sense that the school leadership was expected to obey the regulations of the Ministry, and the activities and performance were highly controlled.

Furthermore, the control meant control at all the levels and all the spheres. It can be explained that since the country's independence in 1991, educational reform in Kazakhstan has been labelled a 'post-socialist education reform package' (Silova & Steiner-Khamsi, 2008). This period of time was encouraged by a set of policy reforms which symbolised the adoption of Western education perspective and values like student-centred teaching, curriculum standards, decentralisation of educational finance and governance, standardisation of student assessment, innovations in methodology and textbook publishing and many others (Silova, 2011).

In the case of the Control quadrant, the value framework targets operating the organisation smoothly through continuous monitoring and evaluation. In the Compete quadrant, the value is to expand the organisation by focusing on the client, competing and selling, and acquiring goal achievement and recognition (Figure 18). The former effective value quadrants took an internal focus, balancing flexibility and stability, and the latter now takes an external focus to acquire stability. "Compete is an action imperative. Needs a confident and decisive leader. Core pursuits comprise goal clarification, rational analysis and action taking" (Quinn et al., 2015, p.170).

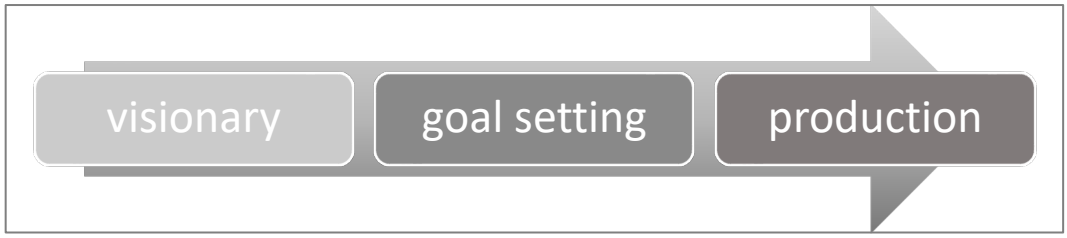
Figure 18. The Competing Values Framework and Leader Roles - Compete



Source: adapted from Cameron and Quinn (2011)

The data demonstrates that the following components in Figure 19 are considered to be a path to the organisation's competitive state.

Figure 19. Building trajectory of competitiveness



Source: author

Establishing a vision is the preliminary step in the strategic planning or goal-setting process. Usually, in the Kazakhstani context, the schools under this research will internally design goals for one year, sometimes for several years, along with external governmental expectation benchmarks. The data collected shows that schools have statements of vision, in many cases developed as a part of the strategic planning process.

The principals, teachers and experts stated several opinions of what it means to have a visionary and why it is crucial (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Visionary functions

Source: author

In the Kazakhstani context, no matter how many individuals are involved, the community members expect the leader to shape the vision—the 'picture'. The leader can organise the process, collect feedback and insights, and interact with all the stakeholders to evolve their understanding of how they see the values that set the organisation's identity.

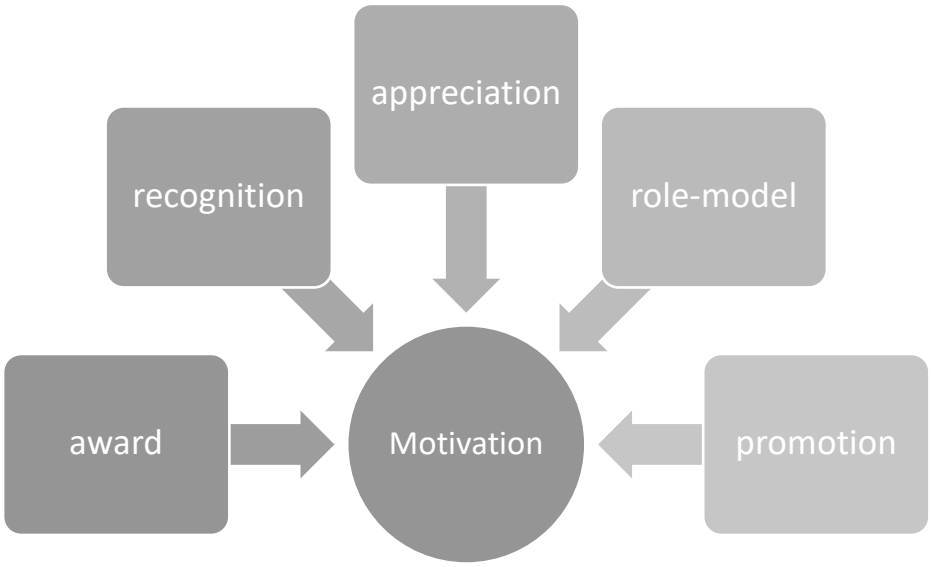
To 'sell' the school in the educational market, the schools set the goals to be recognised by the international indicators. The schools under this study discussed the accreditation of the Council of International Schools (CIS), International Baccalaureate (IB) authorisation and teachers' professional development levels. A school with CIS accreditation meets high-performance standards in international education and is committed to consistent improvement. The accreditation status also shows that the school is devoted to its vision for students (Council of International Schools, n.d.). The IB's authorisation procedure thoroughly evaluates and prepares a school to teach one or more IB programmes. In order to

become an IB World School, a school must be authorised by the IB to provide one or more IB programmes. The process demands commitment and devotion as authorisation is not a one-day decision and needs the school community to work hard in the long run. (IB organisation, n.d.) As mentioned earlier, a new skills-based curriculum was introduced into 'pilot' schools in a specialised network of schools under the Autonomous Education Organisation Nazarbayev Intellectual School patronage – AEO NIS (Shamshidinova et al., 2014). One of the sources for constructing teachers' professional knowledge developed a major initiative led by AEO NIS. The Center of Excellence (CoE) Programme was designed by AEO NIS in Collaboration with the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education (Wilson et al., 2016, p. 26). The CoE Programme established a three-level training process, where Level 3 focuses on the teacher's role of leading learning in the classroom, Level 2 on the teacher leading the knowledge of others in the school (i.e., mentoring, coaching) and Level 1 on the teacher leading the strategic development of the school (Yakavets, Bridges, et al., 2017). Along with the CoE Programme, the National Development Institute 'Orleu' is under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science. The schools set the goal of teachers participating in these professional development initiatives. A more considerable number of teachers possessing the level mentioned in earlier courses is preferable to ineffective schools, according to principals, as well as higher attestation levels of teachers (Figure 14).

To sum up, the school's competitive marketing power depends on international organisations' recognition level and internal evaluative values of teachers' and principals' education and professional development achievements. In addition, internationalisation also plays a significant role in why educational clients choose particular schools, as international teachers are credible for quality education.

The competitive character's end goal is to win, and that is why it is imperative to take action. Productivity is another core concept for the rational goal quadrant. The research shows that the idea is vague in understanding the levels and measurements of productivity. However, the data confidently demonstrates that productivity is highly dependent on the motivation level of the school community. The respondents have mentioned many motivation tools. The following ones in Figure 21 are fundamental for inspiring the teachers to go beyond the regular activities in the school.

Figure 21. Motivation tools of the school leader



Source: author

Most teachers admitted that although payment and promotion are the most encouraging drivers to stay in the profession, be productive, and pursue higher results, other driving forces should be considered. For example, internal and external awards include giving certificates or thank you letters in a big school meeting where the names are mentioned ceremonially and awarded publicly. It goes along with recognition where teachers' extra work and achievements are mentioned, for example, students' success in Olympiads, high performance on tests or exams, and other competitions. Appreciation was noted when the leader "sees the teacher." The leader can give a cheer and a kind word in the hallway, show empathy, and be aware of personal situations where the teacher can have difficulties.

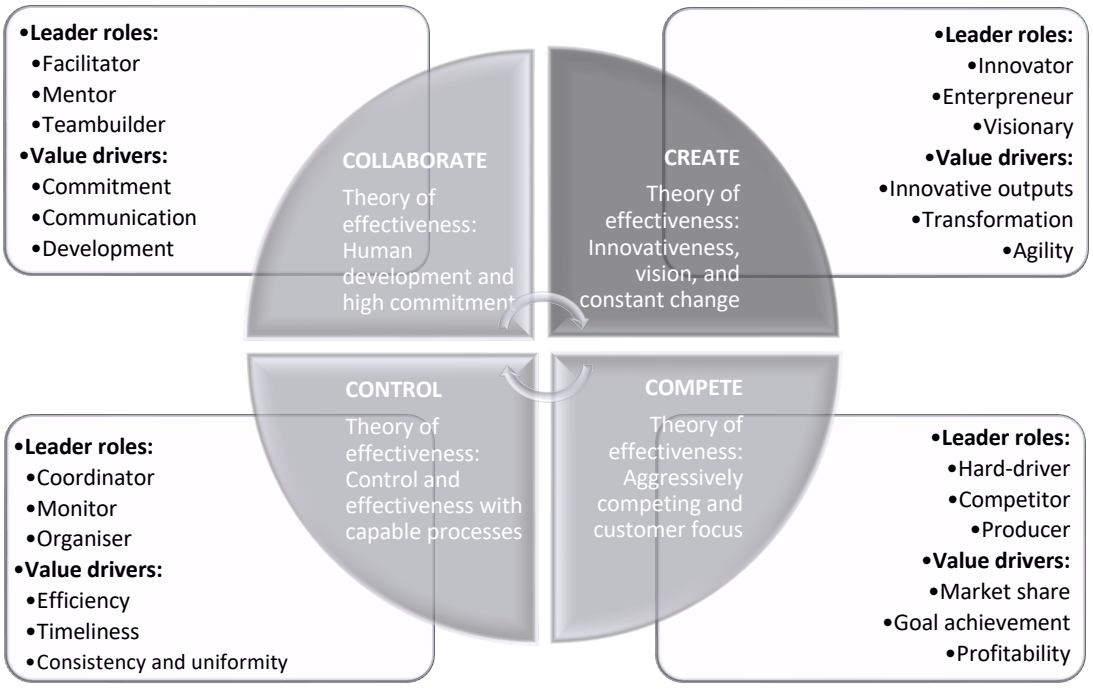
The most powerful motivation tool for teachers is the leader's being a role model, showing the way through their example. According to one of the teachers, the leader is an akim (mayor) who will paint the fence with others. The leader is proactive and takes the initiative without alienation from the school unity.

What is seen is that the school's competing activity towards the external scope is concentrated on the leader's abilities and skills. Both principals and teachers know the leader's role is crucial in obtaining recognition and success for the school. Here, the Compete and Control quadrants blend in the sense that they are leader-centered realms. This again

shows the hierarchical relationship due to the legacy of the post-Soviet educational system, where the processes are power- and hierarchy-driven.

The dimension of external flexibility focuses on creating. It takes the basis from an open system model and requires adaptability and creativity. The aim that Create Quadrant pursues is adjustment towards the changing environment (Figure 22). Being resistant to the external world requires adaptation, innovation and creative problem-solving.

Figure 22. The Competing Values Framework and Leader Roles - Create

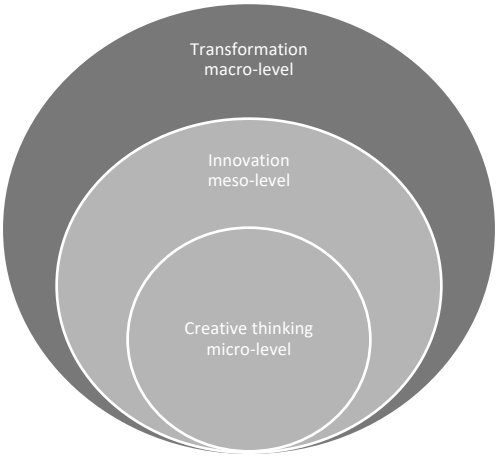


Source: adapted from Cameron and Quinn (2011)

In the Kazakhstani context, this research shows that there are scarce resources or almost none of the literature on school creation activities and the leaders' role. The theoretical part of the current research shows that for schools, it is needed to follow the instructions and expectations set by the authorities. However, along with standard norms, creativity nowadays is becoming a must in the changing educational world. Throughout the collected interviews, quotes like "creative groups", "creative ideas", "brainstorming", and "creative thinking" come across a few times.

The main structure can be constructed based on data following the three levels that can be seen in Figure 23.

Figure 23. The levels of creativity



Source: author

Creativity is the ability to imagine new opportunities and to see new ways of existing ideas and is not restricted by time. It can happen anytime, anywhere, like brainstorming, mapping or taking notes. While creative thinking is more focused on an individual micro-level, innovation in the organisational world goes a step beyond creative thinking and enters the meso-level. The school service is complex by nature; therefore, it is beyond the ability of one person to deliver. That is why innovation is a team sport. A leader capable of implementing even trivial improvements contributes not only to the value of school effectiveness but to the level of transformation entering the macro-level of society. What it means is that innovation that is successfully implemented and recognised becomes a trend and inspires other schools to do so, which, in a sense, leads to a transformation that impacts society.

"Kazakhstan is among the countries to pursue innovation in school education for continuous modernisation and reformation with the advent of globalisation. Kazakhstan, which set the goal to enter the top 30 developed countries in the world, is having huge changes in the education system, in particular, in school education policy" (Nurmukhanova & Muzafarova, 2019, p. 153; Yelbayeva & Mynbayeva, 2017). However, in the Kazakhstani context, the majority expressed difficulties in creating innovations. The existing challenges include:

- functional duties are predetermined;

- nor everything is allowed;
- not every school is autonomous;
- mental frames.

The importance of school autonomy has been mentioned many times within the current research. Regarding mental frames, the respondents explained the existing limitations in mentality constructed by the cultural and historical background of the country where people have fear towards new brand ideas and changes. This is again explained by post-Soviet times when stability was reinforced as an ideology for effectiveness and productivity.

Nowadays, however, the educational structure looks to promote change and encourage adaptability, which in turn develops the resilience of the schools.

Since this century began, Kazakhstan has undergone fundamental educational transformation and change. To enter the competitive economic market, the quality of education is essential (Nurmukhanova & Muzafarova, 2019). Concerns have been raised by the literature on leaders' roles in promoting and reinforcing effective school service. In the Kazakhstani context, in particular, improving the quality of education (Milovanova, 2010; Valieva, 2010), leading resilience to stress (Kondrashkin, 2010), school management organisation, responsibility distribution (Dozortseva, 2011), and many other topics for discussion and further research. Moreover, "the art of leadership can be attained by experience and success; high performance of a leader dependent on the ethical values of the headteacher" (Zhaksylykova, 2010, p. 13). This leads us gradually towards the next part of the lessons learned and further recommendations.

6.3 Principles of principals: lessons and recommendations

The society of Kazakhstan is currently undergoing exponential change. Change appears from various sources, including political and governmental strategies, economic projects, social values, and evolution in technology and knowledge. For example, although any of these sources of change can influence how people work and live, changes in technology have the most apparent impact on the way they operate in general. Common digital tools that are used nowadays are taken for granted even though when they were invented, they were seen differently. For example, the first mobile phone was presented in 1983 and cost around $4000. PowerPoint became available in a Windows version in 1990.

The breaking invention of Wi-Fi in 1991 led to a world where coffee shops became workplaces, and people became mobile.

Moreover, the 2000s made it possible to find coffee shops using online maps and create a path using GPS (James, 2009). Kazakhstan has undergone these technological innovations like the rest of the world. Technological development continues evolving at an extreme pace, with essential implications for communicating and learning.

This history of technological evolution demonstrates that the things done today may be totally unlike those that will be done tomorrow. To successfully implement and sustain change, leaders must understand the forces, resources and resistance to change (Quinn et al., 2015).

Leading change effectively demands that leaders understand the assets and emotions behind the resistance just as significantly as they understand the reasons for implementing the change. The changes involve a big responsibility and resilience from the school leaders as the school also undergoes the change. The leaders significantly impact how the school develops and evolves within the time and relevant trends.

The main point that the research has delivered when it discusses the work of the principals at the individual and school levels is that the principal has an impact on the effectiveness of the school. The data and the literature prove that principals and teachers are responsible for providing high-quality education, and their primary interest is to do so. Teachers' work and students' achievements, as a result, are connected to the principals' awareness of the necessity of being a successful leader and considering the roles for effectiveness. Educational leadership plays a colossal role as it helps in delivering new ways of practice, social aspects and organisational effectiveness.

The metaphors used include the school's leader being a captain of the ship, the leader's role being to promote an effective school, and principals needing support and preparation programmes. Throughout interviews, respondents, including principals, teachers, and educational experts, emphasised the principal's leadership as crucial in granting effective school performance. In the Kazakhstani context, the principal is seen as the school's leader. The metaphor of being a captain of the ship, showing direction, foreseeing the trends and being able to see the whole picture is not stated only several times.

The study noted that a healthy, safe, motivating environment should be provided for a productive teaching and learning process. Lessons that the current research brought forward are plentiful, and there is evidence of how the school as an organisation and with competent leadership means producing support for teachers' development and learning and, moreover, students' learning. Both teachers and students want to come to school as a safe and motivational environment for holistic development and achieving targeted goals. It is the way to attain better results not only in terms of success and achievement but also in satisfaction and fulfilment.

Therefore, the study suggests that the school, as an organisation that provides educational services in terms of learning, needs to be a learning organisation for the purpose of being effective. The collected data shows that school leadership plays a key role. The leader's effectivity is not determinant by leadership styles or leadership theories but by leaders' value drives, which are proposed by competing values framework to:

1. Collaborate – to create and sustain commitment and cohesion, understanding how the teacher community works and what motivates and inspires them.
2. Control – establishing and maintaining stability and continuity; understanding the educational system with referring policies, reforms and laws.
3. Compete – to improve productivity and increase profitability; see the school holistically and clearly envision where the school heads.
4. Create – to promote change and encourage adaptability, being ready to react to the fast-changing world (Quinn et al., 2015).

Finally, the research brings an important lesson: The leader is under high pressure to perform. So, the principal needs support, training, a professional development program or mentorship. The possible recommendations may include:

- To reconsider the principal appointment system and attractive career development;
- To give attention to the advantages of the school's autonomy, which provides the principals more space to be creative;
- To consider mentorship programmes for principals;
- To arrange a guide on principals' roles focusing not only on normative expectations;

- To reinforce the importance of collaboration, the school works as an organisation, as one organism, to break from hierarchical ideology as a legacy of the past Soviet perspective.
- Developing precise and basic measurements for evaluating and monitoring the school's performance.

PART 7. CONCLUSIONS

The final concluding thoughts serve to highlight the study's main points, indicate the learning results from theoretical and practical parts, and emphasise the value of the current research and further implications for the research.

The core of any research is to ask valuable questions and find the answers. The current study put forward quite ambitious questions to be answered and perhaps raised more questions than preliminary have been planned. However, by researching the three questions, the study tried to elaborate on the core concepts of school effectiveness and school leader roles in Kazakhstan. The deliberations developed many valuable points for the discourse of what is considered an effective school, including approaches for conceptualising this phenomenon. Returning to the question posed at the beginning of this research, it is now possible to state that an effective school is a learning school that develops as an organisation in all spheres and layers. The study has shown that the school leader is indeed the principal and impacts the school's learning and development.

Already in the literature review, the dissertation was challenged by complex theories of effectiveness, namely the development of educational effectiveness research and different approaches to defining the characteristics of an effective school. This is made evident by the higher value and novelty of the current study and potentially be a tool for creating further guidance for school principals. Additionally, a significant element of the organisational learning context has brought the Competing Values Framework as a lacking puzzle for the complete analytical framework in studying principals' roles and value drivers. The findings are all climaxed by the fundamental empirical notion that school principals' activity is a specific field of study, which can be perceived from individual, teacher and policy perspectives. The results by itself stand for the argument that effective school leadership is a complex phenomenon.

The research extends the knowledge of organisational effectiveness, particularly with corresponding directions of the principal's activity. The presented results make several noteworthy contributions to the dimensions of flexibility and stability, and an internal and external focus. In all four directions, the present study enhanced the understanding of the Competing values framework and applied it to the everyday functional performance of the

school leader. The key strength of the study is merging challenging and vague notions of effectiveness and leadership.

Finally, no research goes without limitations, and this research is no exception. Limitations of limited contexts, contextual notions, and linguistic contexts were initially stated. The biggest challenge was due to the permission to access public schools. As a consequence, only Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and the private segment were accessible for the research, as well as the pandemic situation, which provided restrictions on resources and movement. Contextual notions are, at the same time, a strength and a weak point of the research. Hence, the research has value and novelty, but at the same time, the research topic needs to be investigated in the Kazakhstan context. Therefore, the experiences in existing research are not subject to direct application. Linguistic context comprises three-language data to be analysed and cannot fully express the ideas due to language specifics.

The study meaningfully contributes to the necessity of gaining a qualitative understanding of the specific principal's work in the context of the organisational effectiveness of the school. Nevertheless, this research has thrown up many questions that need further investigation. While the scope of the study has been Kazakhstan's, investigating this phenomenon in other countries would add a further understanding of different contextual realms and similarities.

This includes implications for further research:

- More broadly, research is also needed to be conducted in public schools, possibly a comparative study between so-called effective schools and public schools;
- Considerably more work will be needed to consider the quantitative or mixed method approach for the current research topic;
- A natural progression of this work is to analyse other stakeholders' opinions: students and parents;
- Another possible area of future research is the individual motivational factors of the principals;
- What is needed is a cross-national study involving other countries;
- More information on social and historical aspects of the educational system could produce interesting findings;

- It would be interesting to assess the effects of gender, age, and experience on leadership.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Guide for Teachers

This interview is part of my doctoral research at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. My dissertation topic is "School Leadership and School Effectiveness in Kazakhstan: Perspectives from Principals and Teachers." I am collecting opinions and views from teachers, principals, and educational experts about school effectiveness and effective leadership in Kazakhstan.

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions. This semi-structured interview is, in a way, a conversation where you can share your opinions and experiences. Please feel free to answer in your language; if the question is unclear at any point, do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

The interview usually lasts 30-45 minutes, depending on your time and how comfortable we feel about discussing these questions. Your answers are confidential, and I will not use any names or other identifying elements. If you have any questions at any point, please feel free to contact me directly.

Interview Questions

1. Could you tell me about your experiences with schools and your current work?

2. Describe your vision of an effective school.

    2.1. What are the most essential characteristics of an effective school? Could you describe such a school in as much detail as possible?

    2.2. What are the outcomes for effectiveness for the principal and school that will come out of management?

    2.3. How can outcomes be measured?

    2.4. According to you, what can be the ideal (effective) school environment/culture?

3. How would you characterise an effective school leader?

4. What do you see as the significant role of the principal?

5. How would you describe how these roles can be performed?

6. What are the leading challenges school principals/teachers face now (in school improvement)?

7. How can school leaders help teachers overcome challenges?

APPENDIX 2

Interview Guide for Principals

This interview is part of my doctoral research at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. My dissertation topic is "School Leadership and School Effectiveness in Kazakhstan: Perspectives from Principals and Teachers." I am collecting opinions and views from teachers, principals, and educational experts about school effectiveness and effective leadership in Kazakhstan.

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions. This semi-structured interview is, in a way, a conversation where you can share your opinions and experiences. Please feel free to answer in your language; if the question is unclear at any point, do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

The interview usually lasts 30-45 minutes, depending on your time and how comfortable we feel about discussing these questions. Your answers are confidential, and I will not use any names or other identifying elements. If you have any questions at any point, please feel free to contact me directly.

Interview Questions

1. Could you tell me about your background in education? (Career path, experience in education)

2. For how long have you been holding the position?

3. What motivates you the most to be the school leader?

4. How would you characterise an effective school?

    4.1. What are the criteria for effectiveness?

    4.2. What strategies can be used (goals set) to meet the criteria you have mentioned above?

    4.3. Who is responsible for setting the goals and planning the strategies? Who is involved?

    4.4. In what ways schools can develop?

    4.5. According to you, what can be the ideal (effective) school environment/culture?

5. Who is the school leader?

6. How would you describe an effective principal?

7. What do you see as the significant role of the principal?

7.1. How will you motivate teachers so they will want to try new ideas?

7.2. What is your philosophy of discipline? What actions would you take to monitor staff members' performance at our school?

7.3. How do you build a team within your staff?

7.4. What specific steps will you take to build rapport with staff?

7.5. On what basis do you believe school goals should be established?

8. Could you give examples/describe the situation of these roles to be performed?

9. How would you emphasise/describe the preferred improvement of the school to be effective?

10. What are the steps in initiating a successful change in the school?

11. What primary challenges do school principals face now (in school improvement)? What can hold you back?

12. What can help principals overcome these challenges?

APPENDIX 3

Interview Guide for Educational Experts

This interview is part of my doctoral research at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. My dissertation topic is "School Leadership and School Effectiveness in Kazakhstan: Perspectives from Principals and Teachers." I am collecting opinions and views from teachers, principals, and educational experts about school effectiveness and effective leadership in Kazakhstan.

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions. This semi-structured interview is, in a way, a conversation where you can share your opinions and experiences. Please feel free to answer in your language; if the question is unclear at any point, do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

The interview usually lasts 30-45 minutes, depending on your time and how comfortable we feel about discussing these questions. Your answers are confidential, and I will not use any names or other identifying elements. If you have any questions at any point, please feel free to contact me directly.

Interview Questions

1. Could you tell me about your experiences with schools and your current work?

2. Describe your vision of an effective school.

    2.1. What are the most essential characteristics of an effective school? Could you describe such a school in as much detail as possible?

    2.2. What are the outcomes for effectiveness for the principal and school that will come out of management?

    2.3. How can outcomes be measured?

    2.4. According to you, what can be the ideal (effective) school environment/culture?

3. How would you characterise an effective school leader?

4. What do you see as the significant role of the principal?

5. How would you describe how these roles can be performed?

6. How would the school leader amplify and facilitate the roles?

7. How do you view school development?

8. What roles does the leader play in school development in your perspective?

9. What are the leading challenges school principals/teachers face now (in school improvement)?

10. How can school leaders help teachers overcome challenges?

11. What are the perspectives on developing effective school leaders?

12. What can help principals to overcome the challenges?

APPENDIX 4

Interview Guide for Focus Group

This interview is part of my doctoral research at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary. My dissertation topic is "School Leadership and School Effectiveness in Kazakhstan: Perspectives from Principals and Teachers." I am collecting opinions and views from teachers, principals, and educational experts about school effectiveness and effective leadership in Kazakhstan.

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions. This semi-structured interview is, in a way, a conversation where you can share your opinions and experiences. Please feel free to answer in your language; if the question is unclear at any point, do not hesitate to ask for clarification.

The interview usually lasts 50-60 minutes, depending on your time and how comfortable we feel about discussing these questions. Your answers are confidential, and I will not use any names or other identifying elements. If you have any questions at any point, please feel free to contact me directly.

Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, define the characteristics of an effective school. Why do you think so?

2. How would you characterise the leader of such a school?

3. What roles does this leader perform?

4. Can you describe a situation in which this role is evident?

5. What difficulties do you encounter in your work at your school?

6. How can school leaders help and support teachers?

7. How do you think the school can be improved?

8. What is the leader's role in improving the school?

APPENDIX 5

Principal Shadowing Observation grid

Site location:

School name:

Date:

Observation start time:

Observation stop time:

Time	Activity	Leader roles	Context	Observation Notes

APPENDIX 6

Informed **Consent and Description of Research (offline study)**
IN CASE PERSONAL DATA ARE COLLECTED

You are about to participate in a research carried out by Dana Nurmukhanova. Highly qualified professionals and their assistants carry out the research. This study aims to discover the successful leadership practice patterns that make the schools effective in Kazakhstan. My research objectives are to gather data on school leaders' practices and explore how these practices address and conceptualise effectiveness.

Participation is voluntary. Performing the various tasks and completing the questionnaires is harmless without any foreseen risks. It is possible to suspend participation so that it should be manageable. It is also possible to withdraw consent and terminate participation without any reason or consequences. Monetary compensation is due/not due for participation.

The results of this study may later be used in publications and presented at scientific conferences. If requested, written or verbal information will be provided on these events.

All information (including video and audio material, if it was part of the research) collected during this research will be handled with strict confidentially. Data obtained during the research is stored as coded information on a secure computer, and paper-based material is kept in a safe or a locked office in a coded format. The assistant in charge provides the individual codes, which are accessible and known only to her/him. Data from the research are analysed statistically, and no personal identification is possible. The document with the rules regulating personal data processing (General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR) is attached with its enclosures.

Please sign the agreement below if you agree with the conditions outlined above and endorse participation in the study. We thank you for your collaboration.

I……(undersigned) declare that I was given thorough information regarding the circumstances of my participation in the present research. I agree with the conditions and to participate in the study. I also give my consent to use the anonymous data collected during this process so that these may be accessible to other researchers. I reserve the right to terminate my participation at any time, in which case the data belonging to my person should be erased.

ELTE FPP, as a data processor, handles my above personal data confidentially and does not allow access to it for other data processing or data analysing organisations of any kind. Details of this statement are found in the "Information of Processing of Data (GDPR)," which I agree with, as proven by my signature.

Kokshetau/Astana, …….
date signature