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Coping with the pandemic and the school lockdowns: The perspective of Lithuanian school principals

Abstract: The article presents the findings of research conducted during the lockdown among school principals in Lithuania. The research aimed to analyse how school principals organised distance education, the challenges they faced, examples of good practice they developed, and how these practices could be used to deal with similar situations in the future. The research sample included 406 school principals in Lithuania. The study was conducted in May 2020 after two months of school lockdowns. The research indicated that during the first two weeks of the lockdown, school principals first focused on organising the training of the teaching staff and technological preparation for distance education, while two months later, their concern shifted to the responsiveness of the students and assessment of the students' achievements. The study also revealed that school leaders with more work experience cooperated less with national authorities and were mainly supported by their school communities.

Keywords: school principals, education in lockdown, distance education

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Scientific article

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Introduction

Many educational systems experienced a lockdown of schools in spring 2020. Lithuania was no exception. The lockdown announced on the March 16, 2020 was very disruptive and unexpected for many organisations and institutions, including education providers. It required a very quick reaction and readjustment of educational activities and management of educational institutions, despite the fact that the government allowed for two weeks of preparation for the transition to online education by announcing an extra two weeks of holidays for general education students. The leadership of the principals of general education institutions has been one of the key factors in dealing with these circumstances and in adapting to the new conditions of work for teachers and students. The research aim was to analyse school principals' actions in response to the pandemic situation. The research objectives were:

- To analyse how school principals responded to the pandemic situation.
- To identify key challenges of distance education from the perspective of school principals.

The research was based on a survey of school principals of general education institutions and vocational education and training providers in Lithuania, which was conducted after the lockdown in spring 2020.

The next section will review the theoretical aspects of leadership in the management of educational organisations in the context of disruptive change. Afterwards, research methodology, findings, discussion and conclusions are presented.

Literature review

School principals establish the culture and organisation necessary for schools to provide quality teaching and therefore have an indirect but crucial effect on quality student learning (UNESCO 2018). Nowadays, strong school leadership—or

a more proactive transformational leadership—is inevitably what drives strategic innovations and structural reforms through the communication, implementation and evaluation of institutional strategies. While it is the function of leadership to inspire innovation, quality leadership is also about unleashing the potential in one's team through practical guidance by focusing on ways to influence how others think, feel and act, which in turn improves teaching and learning outcomes. In general, successful school leaders are seen as »the critical determinant in the quality of the psychological, physical and social environments and conditions in which teaching and learning take place... and [effective leadership] requires a combination of cognitive and emotional understandings allied to clear sets of standards and values, the differential application of a cluster of key strategies, and the abiding presence of a passion for people and education« (Day et al. 2016, p. 18). However, school leadership has been shaken by how Covid-19 has affected the concept and implementation of schooling.

The impact of Covid-19 is currently disrupting educational institutions globally, with more than 1.6 billion students having been removed from their regular classrooms in the spring of 2020. Teaching and learning have been interrupted in every country, and many refer to this as an educational crisis. However, as »crisis« carries the meaning of »confronting, intrusive and painful experiences« (Smith and Riley 2012), various definitions of »crisis« also imply the expectation of upcoming »turning point« moments, for better or for worse. This concept of the turning point can be used to understand the contemporary discourses around Covid-19 to be highly polarised and places school leaders in a new definitional and executive dilemma. From a practical point of view, it is understandable that there are calls for a rapid return to the »old normal« and for re-engagement from where the schools left off, as well as calls to dismiss education-in-crisis practices or to blend them back into the previous education order. From an optimistic perspective, some encourage the creation of a post-pandemic new normal—a re-imagined, realigned, re-positioned and re-modelled education globally. Face-to-face schools are indeed considering the idea of schooling itself being reorganised in various ways by the incorporation of new tools and the encounter of unthinkable challenges. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that current school leadership can take this opportunity to revise conventional practices so that more long-term and permanent changes may be implemented, rather than looking for quick fixes to merely survive the pandemic turbulence (Zhao 2020). School principals have therefore been forced to apply new leadership strategies to cope with immediate problems (such as discourses around shared leadership or distributed leadership), while the traditional understanding of their leadership roles still holds them accountable for any unforeseeable consequences of decisions made during such uncertainties (Leithwood et al. 2020).

During the time of Covid-19, school principals must provide certainty and redirect focus, nurturing enduring hope, building resilience and ensuring flexible communication, both reflective and reflexive, to and for all school community members. Leading through ambiguity means that school principals are asked to be reactive to immediate needs while remaining focused proactively on the future,

transitioning the community between changes and achieving the best possible outcomes for teaching and learning. Kerrissey and Edmondson (2020) suggested four characteristics that differentiate exceptional leaders from those who act in a way that is deemed more instinctive when facing uncertainties: acting with urgency (not waiting for additional information); communicating with transparency (instead of downplaying threats and withholding bad news); taking responsibility and focusing on solving problems (rather than doubling down to explain actions more clearly); and engaging in constant updating (as opposed to staying the course).

Harris (2020, p. 9) suggested that »there is no neat blueprint for leadership in such times, no predetermined roadmap, no simple leadership checklist of things to tick off«. Some critical attributes of school principals in times of crisis include: 1) the ability to cope with and thrive on ambiguity, 2) decisive decision making and an ability to respond flexibly and quickly and to change direction rapidly if required, 3) a strong capacity to think creatively and laterally and question events in new and insightful ways, 4) the tenacity and optimism to persevere when all seems to be lost, 5) an ability to work with and through people to achieve critical outcomes, synthesising information, empathising with others and remaining respectful, and 6) strong communication and media skills (Smith and Riley 2012). Meanwhile, a way to help leaders cope by breaking down borderline problems into implementable phases may be offered, namely, the 3Ts Framework: Triage, Transition, Transform (Lenhoff et al. 2019). »Triage« refers to the initial sorting process based on the level of urgency, where decisive actions with immediate effects, updates and decisions are proactively implemented for the school community. »Transition« means ensuring learning continuity by increasing stability and reducing uncertainty for the school community members during times of change. Jacobs and Zmuda (2020) suggested methods such as establishing a crisis management team, identifying key common technology platforms for communication, and using talents within the school community. To transform while recovering the school community may require school leaders to balance returning to normal routines with making space for schools to act as »community drop-in and re-bonding centres, pastoral care and agency hubs for staff, students, and families; frontline screening to identify community members experiencing severe effects and facilitators of appropriate recovery services« (Mutch 2014, p. 18).

While school leadership is stressful in times of crisis, Fernandez and Shaw (2020) suggested three best practices that can be emphasised during times of change: 1) connecting with people as individuals and establishing mutual trust, 2) distributing leadership throughout the organisation, and 3) communicating regularly, clearly and transparently with all stakeholders. Other researchers have also agreed that in a crisis, conveying the accountability, trustworthiness and integrity of community members is all the more important, as emotional intelligence and stability will allow leaders to place the interests of those whom they serve above their own. This concept of servant leadership—a leadership style that emphasises empowerment, involvement and collaboration (Doraiswamy 2012)—has been proven an effective form of leadership in schools, colleges and universities (Wheeler 2012).

Academic leaders who are humble, considerate and intuitive can best regulate the stress on all stakeholders, and in return, they will receive the full support of these stakeholders during the crisis and beyond. The leaders who are best able to leverage the benefits of diversity and establishing mutual trust and maintain institutional morale through the crisis are the ones who communicate to all levels of their institution with deliberate calm (Garcia 2006); lead with tough empathy (Goffee and Jones 2000); inform the community with utmost transparency about what they know and do not know and what has been done to learn more (Edmonson 2020); offer both personal and professional support on a human level; and build person-centred relationships by inquiring, advocating and connecting (Ancona et al. 2007).

Research methodology

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in Slovenia by researchers from the University of Ljubljana (Kalin et al. 2020) and modified in Lithuania by researchers from Vytautas Magnus University. The questionnaire included three pages with one more page for open-ended questions. The expected time for providing answers was 5–10 minutes per respondent. Statistically, data from the questionnaire consisted of 57 variables.

Several variables were single-choice nominal variables: gender, school type, school area (urban or rural), and the teaching approach used by most teachers in the school. There was one multiple choice question: *How did your school organise distant education?* There were a few quantitative questions: *Years of work experience*, *Years of being a principal*, *Number of students*.

There were four questions, which were multiple choice; however, the number of choices was fixed in advance: *Which three activities engaged you most as a principal during the first two weeks of the school lockdown?* (3 answers), *Which four activities engage you most in this moment?* (4 answers), *How do you monitor teachers' work?* (3 answers), *Which aspects of distant education do you find most challenging?* (3 answers). Data inside of the each of four questions are ipsative because the sum of the responses must be the same for every respondent in every question. The last six questions were about collaboration, cooperation and communication of principals with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (and other similar institutions, like the National Education Agency), with principals from other schools, and with colleagues from the respondent's own school. Five possible responses to each question fell on an ordered scale from *completely disagree* (1) to *completely agree* (5).

Statistical methods

In the statistical analysis presented in this article, the usual descriptive characteristics were first used: frequency tables and bar charts for qualitative variables, and means, standard deviations, and minimal and maximal values for quantitative variables. For the two-way analysis, crosstabs with chi-square test and in some cases Spearman rank correlation coefficients were mostly used. Comparisons of quantitative variables in two independent samples were done via the Mann-Whitney U-Test. When comparing nominal variables in the two samples, the difference of percentages of a single category was tested via z-test, which is based on normal approximation.

In order to determine variables possibly influencing the cooperation between principals and the Ministry of Education (or National Educational Agency, etc.), multiple ordinal regression was used. The proportional odds model of ordinal regression (McCullagh 1980) was used, which is standard in the SPSS Statistics package. IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 was used for all statistical analyses.

The statistical results are presented following American Psychological Association style (Apa Style 2020), e.g., results of a chi-square test are presented as χ^2 (*degrees_of_freedom*, $n = \text{sample_size}^1$) = *statistics value*, $p = p \text{ value}$ (Social Studies Statistic 2021).

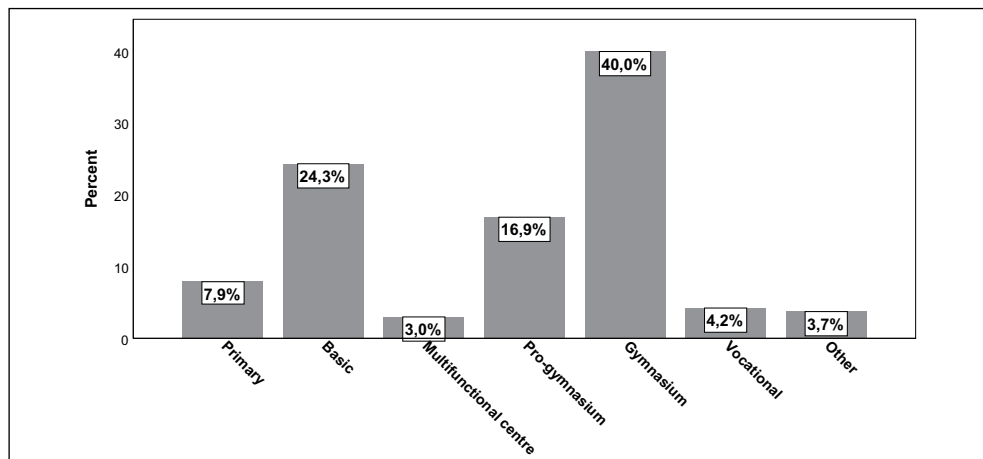
Research sample

Researchers conducted a study in May 2020 on the management of educational institutions during pandemic challenges, in which 17 vocational school principals and 388 general education school principals of gymnasiums, pro-gymnasiums, basic, primary and other schools were interviewed. At the beginning of the school year, there were 71 vocational training institutions and 1,056 general education schools in Lithuania.²

The study received 408 responses. After data cleaning, 406 respondents were left in the research sample: 295 (73.8%) women, 105 (26.3%) men, and 6 respondents who did not indicate gender. The distribution of participants by gender reflects a situation in the Lithuanian educational system, which is dominated by women. Average work experience was 30.8 years, ranging from 3 to 47 years. Work experience as a school director was 14.9 years on average, from 0 to 38 years. There were 257 schools (63.8%) from urban areas, 146 (36.2%) from rural areas, and 3 that did not indicate their area.

¹ We omitted sample size if it equalled the total number of respondents in the research sample.

² In Lithuania, compulsory primary education starts at the age of 7 and lasts 4 years (primary school), followed by 4 years of basic education (*progimnazija*: lower-secondary). Upper secondary education includes 4 years of general education (*gimnazija*) and vocational training programs, which lasts 1 to 3 years, depending on the requirements of the national modular VET curricula. Vocational programmes may be obtained after the completion of lower-secondary education or after graduating a *gimnazija*.

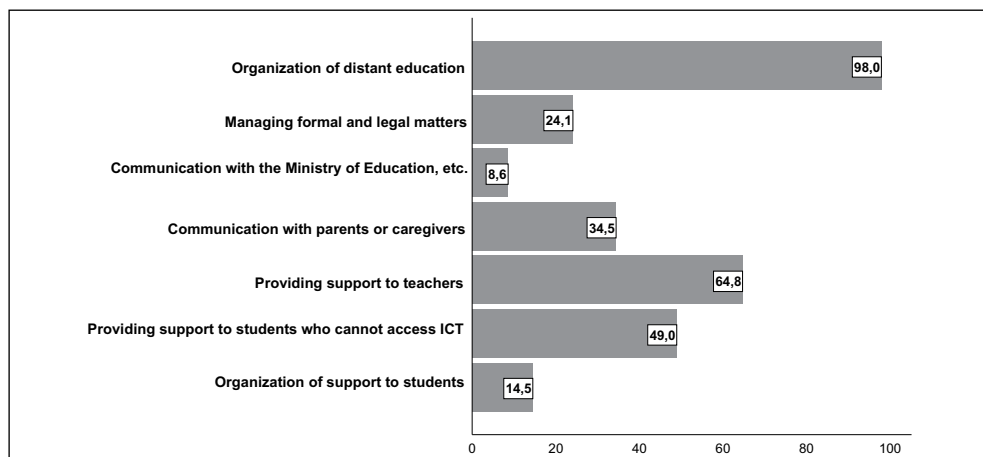


Graf 1: Types of schools which participated in the study

The majority of the respondents (40%) represented the gymnasium sector, as they make up the largest group of schools in Lithuania (there were 354 gymnasiums in 2017–2018, according to the data provided by the Ministry of Education 2018).

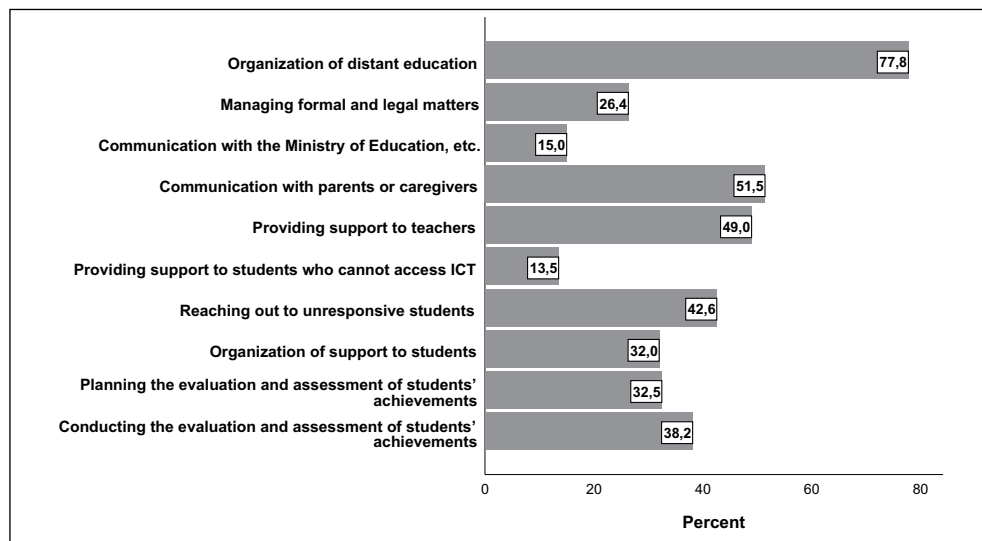
Research results

The majority of the study participants (98%) agreed that the organisation of distance education was among the three main activities during the first two quarantine weeks. Two-thirds of the surveyed principals (64.8%) noted that they provided support to teachers during this period, with less than half (49%) helping students who were unable to use information technologies. About a third of executives (34.5%) noted that interaction with parents and caregivers was also among the priority activities.



Graf 2: Activities during the first two weeks

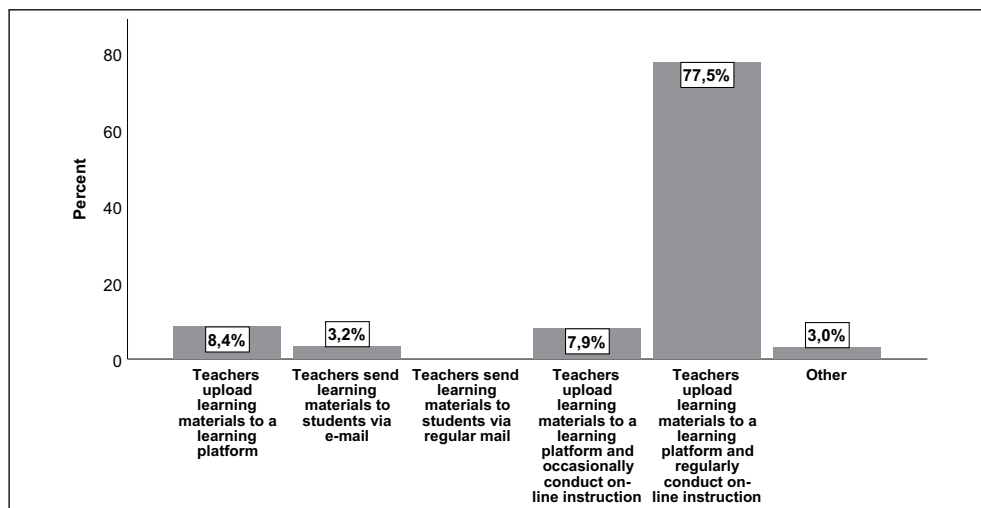
When asked about school activities after two months in lockdown, principals still emphasised the organisation of distance education (77.8%) and support for teachers (49%) but also paid more attention to communication with parents and caregivers (51.5%) and efforts to establish contact with unresponsive students (42.6%), as well as monitoring and implementation of students' learning progress and assessment (38.2%).



Graf 3: Activities by the end of April (after two months in lockdown)

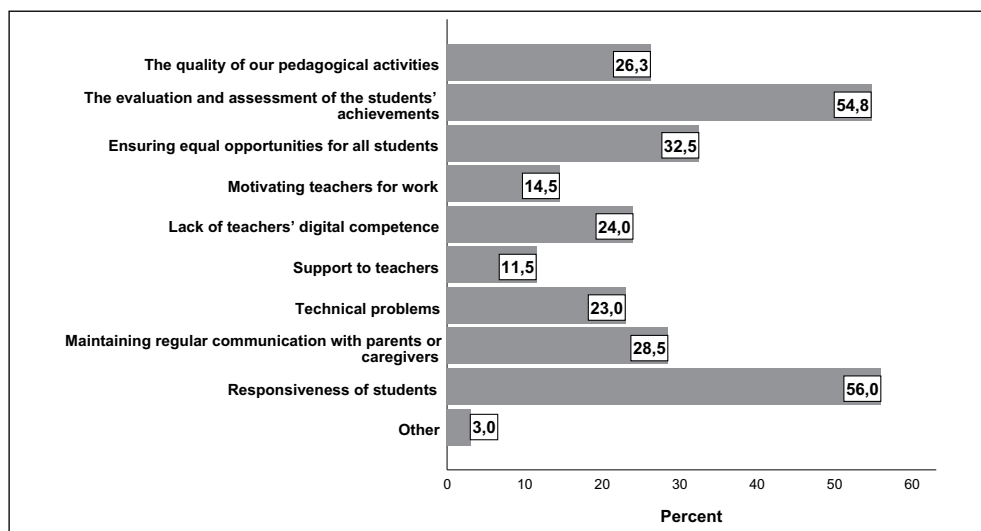
Preparation for the educational process in the lockdown situation required coordinated efforts from school communities. Of the respondents, 81.6% of the principals said they had conducted short trainings for teachers on the use of various online tools and platforms. Two-thirds of the principals said that the teachers' technical ability to work from home was checked and they were provided with technical assistance regularly. About half of the respondents noted that teachers from their school chose teaching methods and methods of cooperation themselves (53.4%), and subject teachers agreed on common teaching methods and techniques (52%). Less than half of the principals said they had prepared instructions for teachers on the use of online tools (45.6%) and general didactic guidelines (41.1%).

According to the school principals, the majority of the teachers most often used a combined teaching method during quarantine: uploading material to the platform and teaching regularly online (77.5%).



Graf 4: Teaching approach used by most teachers

Among the biggest challenges of distance education, respondents most often mentioned the assessment of students' achievements (54.8%) and communication with students (56%).



Graf 5: Challenges of online education.

The research shows that the professionalism of teachers remains the main factor in the implementation of distance learning, but the support of school principals is no less important. Principals monitored teachers' work in video conferences, which were usually held weekly, where they planned and evaluated teachers' activities (81.4%), and many also said they were trying to address teachers' problems on a regular basis (77.7%).

School principals provided considerable help to each other (53.0%). However, the principals received the greatest support in the conditions of quarantine from their teachers (94.2%). This shows that in critical situations such as the lockdown, the features of shared leadership become apparent.

Assessing the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports during the pandemic, the surveyed school principals were quite positive—more than half of them agreed that the Ministry had developed useful guidelines for distance learning (54.4%) and responded appropriately to school needs during the crisis (50.0%). Of the principals, 39.5% said they regularly collaborated with the Ministry of Education, the National Agency for Education and other government agencies.

It should be noted that quite a few statistically significant differences occurred between general education schools and vocational schools. Teachers from vocational schools more often indicated that they sent teaching/learning materials to students by e-mail (11.8% vs 2.8%, $z = 2.06$, $p = .039$), uploaded teaching/learning materials to the learning platform and sometimes provided online teaching (23.5% vs 7.2%, $z = 2.43$, $p = .015$). Generally, online instruction as a teaching method was less common in vocational schools than in the other schools: 52.9% vs 79.2%, $\chi^2(1, n = 388) = 6.57$, $p = .017$.

An important difference was the larger number of students in an average vocational school vs an average general education school, highly significant with the Mann-Whitney U Test: $U = 4855.5$, $n = 386$, mean ranks were 295 vs. 189, $p < .001$, median values of numbers of students were 486 and 300 respectively.³

Other notable differences between vocational schools and general education schools were the following: principals of vocational schools were more often male: 58.8% vs 25.9%, $\chi^2(1) = 8.87$, $p = .005$.⁴ They communicated with the Ministry of Education (or National Educational Agency, etc.) in the first two weeks of the school lockdown much more: 52.9% vs 6.7%, $\chi^2(1) = 43.4$, $p < .001$. Principals of vocational schools rarely included communication with parents or caregivers in the three most important activities in the first two weeks of the school lockdown: 5.9% vs 35.0%, $\chi^2(1) = 6.18$, $p = .015$.

As to current activities, principals of vocational schools also communicated with the Ministry (or National Educational Agency, etc.) much more: 64.7% vs 13.2%, $\chi^2(1) = 33.0$, $p < 0.001$. They still communicated with parents or caregivers less than principals of general education schools did: 23.5% vs 52.6%, $\chi^2(1) = 5.48$, $p = .024$.

There was one notable difference in the methods of organisation: principals of vocational schools all said that constant technical support was provided to teachers, whereas only 63.6% of principals of other schools said this: $\chi^2(1) = 9.49$, $p = 0.003$.

Only one significant difference emerged among challenges of distance education: only 11.8% of principals of vocational schools included »The evaluation and assessment of students' achievements« in the three greatest challenges vs 57.0% of principals of general education schools: $\chi^2(1) = 13.4$, $p < .001$.

³ Generally, Mann-Whitney U tests the hypothesis that one distribution is *stochastically greater* than the other, that is, $P(X > Y) \neq P(Y > X)$ where X is a random value from one population and Y is a random value from the other population. In our case, the same conclusion is also suggested by comparing means or medians.

⁴ The gender of a respondent could influence responses to some questions because of differences in psychological traits, communication style, etc.

Cooperation and collaboration between principals and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (or National Educational Agency, etc.) was expressed by an ordinal variable with five answers. In order to determine variables possibly influencing this cooperation, multiple ordinal regression was used. For the regression, the answers *completely disagree* and *disagree* were combined, as well as the answers *agree* and *completely agree*.⁵ Explanatory variables (predictors) were gender, years of work experience, years of work as a principal, type of school (vocational vs general), area of the school (urban or rural) and number of students. Due to some missing responses, the sample in the regression analysis consisted of 367 principals. Of these, 17 were from vocational schools and 350 represented general education schools. Of these 350 schools, 44% were of upper secondary level, 47% of lower secondary, and 9% of primary level.

The model is highly significant with $p < .001$. However, the relationship is rather weak, as pseudo- R^2 coefficients show: Cox and Snell coefficient = .064, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .073$. Parameter estimates are presented in the following table:

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Years of work experience	.006	.014	.661	-.022	.034
Years of work as a principal	-.031	.013	.019	-.057	-.005
Number of students	.000	.000	.805	-.001	.001
General school	-1.82	.670	.007	-3.134	-.507
Gender male	-.024	.239	.920	-.492	.444
Urban school	.338	.228	.139	-.110	.786

Table 1: Parameter estimates of ordinal regression

There are two interesting findings: more years of work as a principal decrease the probability of agreement to the question; that is, younger principals cooperate with the Ministry of Education (or other similar state institutions) more; principals of vocational schools have a considerably higher probability of cooperating more than principals of general education schools. Both these findings are also confirmed by simple Spearman correlations: Spearman's $\rho = -0.13$, $p = 0.01$ for the first relationship, and $\rho = 0.21$, $p < .001$ for the second. The longer school principals have been working, the less they cooperate regularly. In other words, those who have worked as principals for a shorter time are more likely to collaborate.

Discussion

The research revealed that school principals, who have taken on a great deal of responsibility to streamline the whole learning process, have received support from their teachers during the covid-19 crisis. The education process has proven

⁵ Because of the numbers of the answers completely disagree and completely agree were too small.

to be not just a matter of individual teachers. Educational challenges need to be addressed collectively, with teachers and principals helping each other. The overall digital competence of teachers has improved during the pandemic outbreak as school principals have organised intensive trainings for teachers and within the short time they had to apply new knowledge about e-platforms and e-tools in their daily practice. Both the preparation and adjustment for the lockdown situation's educational processes have required coordinating efforts from school communities. This correlates to what Cabaj and Weaver (2016) referred to as a »collective impact«, which emerges as an approach to address complex social circumstances. Lithuanian school principals were able to mobilise teachers for a new challenge and organise distance education within a two-week period. It is apparent that school principals were able to mobilise and empower their teams in discovering, experimenting with and implementing solutions that best serve the collective priorities (D'Auria and De Smet 2020).

During the Covid-19 crisis, schools became increasingly aware of how technology can help to organise education. School communities' ability to choose platforms and learning environments that are most suitable for them to teach, communicate or interact with children in different subjects and age groups has improved. This shows that in situations requiring concentration, the features of shared leadership became apparent. Jensen et al. (2017) also pointed out that the need to lead through complexity requires drawing on collective wisdom by increasingly recognising the effective solutions that may come from professional networks or other collaboration. It is worth noting that the trust and involvement required for shared leadership is not merely a coping mechanism to bypass a crisis but is also crucial for the overall individual wellbeing of principals, teachers, the school community and beyond. Hence, an area for further investigation may explore how the leaders themselves have been supported through the crisis, both from within their community and via relevant governmental institutions. As »supporting the supporters is a key element of a school's emergency management and recovery plan«, (Whitla 2003), exploring the expertise and influencers in the parent body, local networks and governmental institutions in supporting the school's leadership team can offer valuable structural insights into the other side of the Covid-19 educational turbulence.

Furthermore, the pandemic situation revealed that principals' concerns after a few months working online were related to children's involvement and participation in the educational process, lack of feedback and objectivity in formative assessment. Schueler's (2020) suggestions can be drawn upon here, which indicate that a possible solution requires a philosophical shift in teaching and learning within the current online schooling schedules. First, more time can be flexibly devoted to small-group and one-on-one support for students who need it the most when effective online tools and flipped classroom strategies allow for accurate differentiation between learning levels (Schueler 2020). Where data indicate student lagging—in both engagement and progress—instead of applying the problematic tracking approach, teachers may consider strategies that will allow them to free themselves to work directly with students most in need. Second, distance schooling is an opportunity for school schedules to be used more effectively. Where multiple

and immediately feasible tactics are applied, seat time and student progress can be reconsidered to allow learners' progression at the best rate they can achieve. For instance, Best (2020) suggested eight online assessment strategies for distance schooling which may offer more effective ways of evaluating learning outcomes: peer assessment, independent projects, jigsaw projects, self-assessment, portfolios and learning journals (examples of variations include challenge journals, success journals, visual journals and question journals). Recent studies on this matter are worth considering in terms of probable solutions.

Interestingly, this study also shows that Lithuanian school principals who had more work experience were less willing to cooperate and communicate with the Ministry of Education. Borrowing Goleman's (2000) analogy of leadership as expert golfers who can select the best golf club to play with to best meet the conditions under which they are playing—a skilled golfer is more capable of drawing on their knowledge, skills and experience in choosing the most suitable club for their situation. School principals may have various tools available to them but require practice for the most accurate choice and precise application to form the best approach to dealing with a crisis. This can explain why younger school principals, who have less work experience, may feel as if they need more guidance, thus being more cooperative and willing to collaborate with the Ministry of Education. This may also indicate that younger principals are more amicable, more energetic, have higher career expectations, and therefore are more active in corresponding with the Ministry—for the crisis may be perceived as an opportunity for principals to familiarise themselves with alternative approaches, styles and skills for the preparation of future reapplication.

The research also indicates differences in instructions among vocational schools and general education schools. Online instruction appeared to be less frequently used by vocational school teachers, which might indicate that vocational schools, maybe because of their smaller number and greater diversity, were worse prepared from the beginning to use specific vocational distance education materials as compared to general education schools. These differences seem important; however, additional research would be needed to highlight the differences and their causes better.

Covid-19 is not the first crisis in humanity and will not be the last to disrupt educational institutions. Therefore, it is essential to note that leading through uncertainty requires flexible and adaptable leadership, incorporating team collaboration and mobilising a diverse range of skills from the broader school community to meet challenges collectively. Extraordinary times like this one present many challenges, but they also offer opportunities for reflection and growth. This paper hopes that by inviting Lithuanian school principals to reflect on their leadership roles and leadership strategies in the journey of the Covid-19 crisis, the crucial role that school principals play—more than ever—can be highlighted in order for schools to navigate their way through a safe, principled and collective passage so that every school community member will see better days.

Conclusions

The research discloses that disruption of the normal teaching process by Covid-19 requires principals of general and vocational educational establishments to focus their leadership on several key fields: organisation of the educational process in the new conditions, provision of support to teachers and constructive communication with the different participants and stakeholders in the educational process in seeking to cope with the related uncertainty and lack of information.

The shared leadership demonstrated by the principals of general and vocational education and training establishments seems to be highly dominant in the disruptive context of the lockdown. However, it has been enabled mainly by the teachers' autonomy and expertise to deal with the methodical and organisational challenges of the transition to online education.

School principals have also had to rely on guidance and support from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, but here it seems that the Ministry has played a mobilising role, which has not precluded the autonomy of action and initiative of the principals of schools in handling the crisis. Research data also show that a significant share of principals have noticed some significant gaps in the support of the Ministry to schools, which could raise awareness of the need to develop more open, bottom-up and involving approaches in the governance of schools' transition to online education in lockdown conditions.

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SOOČANJE S PANDEMIJO IN Z ZAPIRANJEM ŠOL: POGLED RAVNATELJEV LITOVSKIH ŠOL

Povzetek: V članku so predstavljene ugotovitve raziskave, opravljene med ravnatelji v Litvi v času zaprtja šol. Cilj raziskave je bil analizirati, kako so ravnatelji organizirali izobraževanje na daljavo, izzive, s katerimi so se soočali, primere dobrih praks, ki so jih razvili, in kako bi lahko te prakse uporabili za reševanje podobnih situacij v prihodnosti. V vzorec raziskave je bilo vključenih 406 ravnateljev iz Litve. Študija je bila izvedena maja 2020, po dveh mesecih zaprtja šol. Raziskava je pokazala, da so se ravnatelji v prvih dveh tednih zaprtja najprej osredotočili na organizacijo usposabljanja učiteljev in na tehnološke priprave na izobraževanje na daljavo, medtem ko se je dva meseca pozneje njihova pozornost preusmerila na odzivnost učencev in ocenjevanje njihovih dosežkov. Študija je tudi pokazala, da so vodje šol z več delovnimi izkušnjami manj sodelovali z nacionalnimi oblastmi in se povečini opirali na svoje šolske skupnosti.

Ključne besede: ravnatelji, izobraževanje v času zaprtja šol, izobraževanje na daljavo

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