

THE EXPRESSION OF A PRINCIPAL'S TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP DURING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF LITHUANIAN GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS

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Abstract

Transformational leadership is essential for school principals who desire to achieve school success and effectiveness, especially when determining a school's direction, creating a cohesive school community for collective activities, building relationships among all members of the school community, etc. The purpose of the research was to investigate a school principal's transformational leadership while implementing organizational changes in a school. A semi-structured interview with principals of eight general education schools in Lithuania was used to collect data. Categories and subcategories were identified in the data from which conclusions were drawn. Within the context of the research, the results suggest that the principals who embrace a transformational leadership during the initiation, implementation and institutionalization of change 1) reveal their personal determination to implement change; 2) express their concern for professional development; 3) demonstrate support for school values and a cohesive school community; 4) fosters achieved results by distributing leadership.

Key words: *implementation of changes, school principal's leadership, transformational leadership.*

Introduction

In the last decades expectations and requirements for a school and school principals have strongly changed. More often it is hoped that a school would be not only safe, clean, tidy physical space, in which education process would take place; however, it is required that there conditions for every child's self-expressions and self-education according to their vocation and abilities would be created. A school principal becomes responsible not only for management of the school as organization (activity planning, organising, managing and controlling), but also for fostering of the micro-climate positive for a change, for development of the school as learning organization, for students' achievements and ect. Marzano, Water, McNulty (2005) distinguish even twenty one field of school principal's responsibility and note that, namely, due to large variety of activities it is hard to work as school principal. Thus scientists more and more agree that a principal pursuing for successful school activity needs leadership, which manifests in principal's activities in choosing the direction of school activities, consolidating school community for corporate activities, creating relations among all members of school community and ect.

However, as Riley, MacBeath (1999), Harris (1999) state, it is impossible to create one model of leadership, which would fit all schools. Thus scientists analyse school principal's leadership by referring to different theoretic positions: Marzano, Waters, McNulty (2005), Re-

itzug, West, Angel (2008), Cunningham, Cordeiro (2009) state that a school principal has to distinguish in *instructional leadership*; Davies, Davies (2009) pays attention to the importance of *strategic leadership* for a school principal, Žvirdauskas (2006) point out that it is purposeful to analyse principal's leadership by appealing to *trait, situational* and *interactional* leadership theories that substantiate leadership expression; Marks, Printy (2003), Griffith (2004), Cerni, Curtis, Colmar (2008), Leithwood, Jantzi (2009) point out *transformational leadership* of a school principal; and Harris, Spillane (2008), Harris (2010) state that *distributed leadership* is characteristic to a school principal.

Despite the variety of leadership theories being applied at educational organizations, already for a few decades scientists have been investigating the influence of transformational leadership at different levels of educational organizations, i.e. school, school principal and teacher's leadership in different social contexts (Griffith, 2004; Pounder, 2006; Reitz, Carr, Blass, 2007; Karpinski, 2008) and also at schools operating in different cultures (Yu, Leithwood, Jantzi, 2002; Lam, 2002; Lam et al., 2002; Cheng, 2003; Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, Al-Omari, 2008).

The influence of school principal – transformational leader upon teachers' motivation, creativity and satisfaction with their work was investigated by Geijsel, Slegers, van den Berg (1999), Griffith (2004), Houghton, Yoho (2005), Walumbwa, Orwa, Wang, Lawler (2005), Ilies, Judge, Wagner (2006), Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, McKee (2007), Molero, Cuadrado, Naas, Morales (2007), Moss (2009).

The influence of school principal's transformational leadership upon pupils' achievements was investigated by Leithwood, Jantzi (2000), Žvirdauskas, Jucevičienė (2002), Marks, Printy (2003), Griffith (2004), Cibulskas, Žydžiūnaitė (2012).

The influence of school principal's transformational leadership upon school's culture and microclimate was investigated by Smith, Montagno, Kuzmenko (2004), Kelley, Thornton, Daugherty (2005), Song, Chermack (2008).

Žvirdauskas (2006) has also shown the influence of the school principal's transformational leadership upon the effectiveness of school activity.

Although the school principal's transformational leadership and its influence has been investigated in different ways, a school operates in a constantly changing environment and its activity is influenced by different internal and external factors. Consequently, there is episodic, short-term or continuous-flow, long-term changes occurring in every school. In the process of the changes school principal's transformational leadership is the important premise for school activity success. As a transformational leader, school principal can inspire others to raise higher requirements for their activity, reach more ambitious goals, helps others make courageous decisions, stimulates followers to improve themselves intellectually, develops subordinates skills and abilities, cares personally for each of followers, and assists, advises and mentors them (Bass, Riggio, 2006).

Though the change process in school and change phases are investigated by various scientists (Rashford, Coghlan, 1988, Jotautienė, 2003; Janiūnaitė, 2004; Cibulskas, 2006, Fullan, 2007), the school principal's transformational leadership expression during the implementation of changes in school is still new and inadequately researched phenomenon. Therefore the purpose of the research was to investigate a school principal's transformational leadership while implementing organizational changes in a school.

Methodology of Research

General Background of Research

J. V. Downton in 1973 was the first to mention the term of transformational leadership. However, transformational leadership as an important leadership theory started to form only in 1978 when the work of J. M. Burns 'Leadership' was published (Northouse, 2009). Burns (1978)

distinguished two types of leadership: transactional and transformational treating these concepts as opposite (O'Shea, Foti, Hauenstein, 2009). Burns (1978) defined that a transactional leader is the one who leads through social interchange – he changes one thing into another: suggests a financial reward for good results or punishes financially for unachieved results. A transactional leader changes valuable things with his subordinates for mutual agreement to pursue higher goals (Bass, Riggio, 2006; Schneider, Burton, 2008), outlines probable achievements, goals and ways by which the results have to be achieved and the reward, which will be given for the achievement of the results (Smith, Montagno, Kuzmenko, 2004; O'Shea, Foti, Hauenstein, 2009), observes the progress of his followers and corrects their activity if it is necessary (Burns, 1978). During the transformational leadership the intercourse between a leader and his followers, in the support of which both parties are interested, establishes (Denhardt, Campbell, 2006).

In the meantime a transformational leader, according to Burns (1978), stimulates and inspires his followers to strive both for peculiar results and for development of skills of his leadership. A transformational leader helps his followers to grow and develop considering their needs; engages others in his ideas by referring only to moral principles and internal motivation (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985, as cited in Northouse, 2009; Smith, Montagno, Kuzmenko, 2003). Transformational leadership is socialised, it cares for corporate wellbeing (Tucker, Russell, 2004; Yukl 2010). They attain conscious understanding of their followers why desired results of an organization are important and why appropriate ways to achieve them are chosen, they motivate their followers to change by refusing personal goals and committing to the organization's vision (Burns, 1978; Shivers-Blackwell, 2004).

Bass (2008), by developing the concepts of transformational and transactional leadership, considered the transformational leadership as the combination of idealized influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation and personal attention, and the author considered the transactional leadership as the leadership, which was based on the reward for his followers. As Bass (2008) states, a transactional leader is satisfied if he changes his status quo, and a transformational leader stimulates changes and innovations, motivates others to achieve more than they in general imagined to be able to achieve.

Leithwood, Jantzi (2009) state that definitions of transformational leadership by most scientists stress emotions, values and the main goal – to stimulate the development of the followers and their commitment for organization's goals. A school principal, being a leader, can also act as a transformational leader. Harris (2005), in summarising the researches performed by different authors, states that a school principal acting as a transformational leader not only manages a school systematically, but also purposefully initiates different changes within it.

The purpose of the research is to respond to the research question 'How is the transformational leadership used by principals when implementing changes at school?' The research is based on the qualitative research methodology.

Sample of Research

The research was completed in 2011. The method of experts sampling was applied. The following criteria were used to choose schools in order to form a sample: 1. The school principal is a potential transformational leader: a) the school community respects and trusts the school principal; b) the school has a clear vision, acceptable for all community members; c) the school principal is able to strengthen school employees' motivation and dedication to their work; d) the school principal ensures good working conditions to develop creativity at school; e) the school principal involves school community for problem solving and decision making; f) the school principal improves themselves professionally; 2. Certain changes had been implemented at school during the last five years.

The research sample consists of 8 Lithuanian general education schools directed by school principals with working experience as a principal from 8 to 24 years.

Instrument and Procedures

Semi-structured interviews with research school principals were conducted to examine a school principal's work experience gained during the implementation of certain changes and collect information that might help distinguish the expression of school principal's transformational leadership during each phase of the change (initiation, implementation and institutionalization).

According to traditions of semi-structured interviewing and arranging the research interview there are main questions the school principals are supposed to be asked: 1. Who was the initiator of the change at your school? 2. How did you, as a school principal involve yourself in the implementation of the changes? 3. How did you manage to 'freeze' the results of the change in every day work?

Each school principal of the research sample was asked all three questions. All interviews were recorded by voice recorder and transcribed. Each interview with a school principal lasted approximately 80 minutes.

Data Analysis

Qualitative fieldwork in the eight schools yielded a large amount of data, which was structured according to the questions of semi-structured interview. The interviews were transcribed and placed into transcribed files. Careful reading of transcribed interview texts revealed that it was possible to identify categories in responses. It was clear that these categories could be separated into key sub-categories. Each sub-category was made up of phrases that identified it. The next step in the data analysis was to identify all phrases that characterised different sub-categories. Once it was concluded that there was nothing more to be found in the data, the categories, sub-categories and statements illustrating sub-categories were interpreted.

Research Results

Background of Schools

School A is located in the country area. There are 98 7–16 years-old pupils, 14 teachers, a school principal, a vice principal and a social educator at school. During the interview with school principal the process of implementation of a 'Programme of Character Development' aiming to develop children's moral and social values, make them to pursue education despite their social status, and grow as honest, intellectual and respectable citizens of Lithuania was being analysed.

School B is located in one of the biggest cities of Lithuania. There are 622 7–14 years-old pupils, 42 teachers, a school principal, a vice principal, a social educator and a special educator at school. During the interview with school principal the implementation of the method of pupils' project activities and pupils' media skills at school were being analysed.

School C is located in the district centre. At school there are 513 15–18 years-old pupils, 43 teachers, a school principal, 2 vice principals, a social educator and 2 head teachers. During the interview with school principal the changes of school structure were being analysed.

School D is located in one of the biggest cities of Lithuania. At school there are 820 15–18 years-old pupils, 56 teachers, a school principal, 2 vice principals, a psychologist, a social educator and a head teacher. During the interview with school principal the changes of school structure were being analysed.

School E is located in one the biggest cities of Lithuania. There are 253 7–10 years-old pupils, 12 primary teachers, a school principal, vice principal, speech therapist and social educator at school. During the interview with school principal the process of building school community was being analysed.

School F is located in the district centre. There are 496 15–18 years-old pupils, 38 teachers, a school principal, and 2 vice principals, social educator and 2 non-formal education teachers at school. During the interview with school principal the process of establishing creative learning environment was being analysed.

School G is located in the country area. There are 133 7–16 years-old pupils, 17 teachers, a school principal, vice principal and social educator at school. During the interview with school principal the school experience gained by establishing the student oriented learning was being analysed.

School H is located in the district centre. There are 473 15–18 years-old pupils, 30 teachers, a school principal, a vice principal, a social educator and a psychologist at school. During the interview with school principal the process of establishing an International Baccalaureate class at their school was being analysed.

The Expression of School Principal's Transformational Leadership During the Initiation Phase of the Change Process

During the initiation phase school principals who expressed transformational leadership qualities expressed a strong personal determination to start implementing a particular change. First, they felt the necessity for change, searched for new ideas when studying for postgraduate degrees, and took part in projects, seminars, conferences and so on. As a transformational leader, a school principal demonstrates personal ambition to make changes while also exhibiting determination to make those changes at school. Also school principals as transformational leaders demonstrate the consistency of their activities, steady attitudes toward different possibilities provided by the external environment of schools as well as deference to the priorities of school activities or former agreements.

A school principal as a transformational leader also inspires positive attitudes in personal and school community toward professional development. A school principal recognizes that new activities require more knowledge or abilities and the process of learning begins with the principal. In turn, the principal encourages the professional development of the school community. It is also possible to notice that during the initiation phase, professional development of a school principal or school is a long process lasting for several years.

Table 1. The identified expression of school principal's transformational leadership during the initiation phase of the change process.

Category	Sub-category	Illustrating statement
A principal's personal determination towards a change	Personal belief in the future vision of the school	<p>„I decided that we should take part in this project. It was my personal decision because I believed that it would be useful for the school“.</p> <p>„It seemed to me that the project was really worthy of our attention, interesting“.</p> <p>„Together with my deputy we started to create such a school, where it would be good climate, where everyone would want to be“.</p>
	Personal ambitions, obstinacy and consistency	<p>„They used to say why it was necessary, what the principal thought about. I often heard this phrase, but I used to think that we would come to the point when everyone would feel pleasure“.</p> <p>„My stubbornness and the wish to prove that it would be better for the children“.</p> <p>„I myself had ambitions. I understood that we could try to pursue this vision, I began persuading others of my vision“.</p> <p>„We practically did not do anything what would not be related to our priorities, which we purified rather early“.</p>
Fostering of professional development at school	A principal's personal desire to learn and develop	<p>„I decided that I should start learning from myself and the deputy principal. Thus we to go to master's studies“.</p> <p>„Together with the head of the library I took part in different trainings“.</p>
	Principal encourages the development of school community members	<p>„We made the insight that, first of all, in order to pursue for something we have through the teaching of teachers and the personnel and as priority to distinguish the agreement of the school community on the development of appropriate values“.</p> <p>„It was the training for the entire school community. We had to learn for a long time. In fact, it took three years“.</p>

The Expression of School Principal's Transformational Leadership During the Implementation Phase of the Change Process

During the implementation phase school principals acting as transformational leaders take part in the activities of the changes being implemented through personal example and by participating in the corporate activities of the school community. Also during the implementation phase, the principal pays considers personal and school values and observes whether others agree with those values.

A school principal acting as a transformational leader strengthens and supports the school community. The principal takes pleasure and is proud of everyone's initiative, searches for the most suitable alternative to solving problems, and appreciates and the teachers working at the school.

During the implementation phase, a school principal acting as a transformational leader also raises new leaders at the school in order to distribute leadership with teacher-leaders, and encourage all members of the school community to participate in the changes taking place in order to learn and develop and acquire the knowledge and abilities necessary for the implementing the new changes. The principal also strives to involve teachers during the implementation phase, introduces them to the changes taking place at the school, and helps, consults, and creates possibilities and conditions for participating in different trainings.

Table 2. The identified expression of school principal's transformational leadership during the implementation phase of the change process.

Category	Sub-category	Illustrating statement
A principal's proximate participation in the change process	A principal's personal involvement during the implementation phase	„I got so involved into the activities of the change. I needed to take care of everything by myself. I used to look through every written task of a pupil according to all criteria“. „We hoped that everyone would do this. Not that I wanted – and I did; I worked by implementing innovations, and I – do not want“. „Even now I am happy that when we inspired teachers and acquainted them with the work, I succeeded to inspire them and their wish to have that iron piece (a computer – the remark of the author) as I call it“.
	Principal concentrates on the school community for the activity	„I found the way how to focus people for certain activities“. „We from old times understood that the director could not do anything without a team and vice versa. Any initiative group, a teacher or some part of teachers can do a lot, but they would not do as much if they did not have any support from the school administration or the principal“. „We try to negotiate. Our great success is in that we succeeded to agree with everyone“.
Referring to school values	Emphasis on principal's personal values	„I have come from such a family where humanity was important – a human being, humanity, democratic values“.
	Following agreements on values	„Always we – principal points out that a child is a personality“. „If we develop character and values, we all believe that encouragement and compliments much more influence a person than punishment“. „We did not flounce and fostered humanity in all projects“.
The principal's relationship with the school community	Being proud of the school community	„We discussed that we did not do a lot only because of showing off. We do everything for children, for ourselves, for the community in order that we as a family would feel well and pleasant. It is important that we would feel well“. „The team of the teachers is very good. I particularly am proud of the young people who come to the gymnasium. Young people want to work“.
	Personal attention of the principal to others	„Sometimes parents come angry. It seems like they can break windows and walls, but we separate them in a friendly way. I think that it is my achievement that I always listen to the people and offer them some solutions“. „I heard the suggestion of the founder it was necessary to dismiss all teachers and to form the personnel anew. But then I told the mayor that I would be the first to leave the school because I knew my people and knew that it would be possible to achieve a lot“.
Distribution of leadership	Principal's attention to teachers' qualification	„Of course, the teachers went to the Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education to attend training courses.“ „The seminars were very useful. All teachers attended perfect training courses and got some methodological material“. „Work-loads become less; thus it is important to allot finances in time and let a teacher train for re-qualification“.
	Involvement of new teachers into the change	„If a good specialist is being invited from another school and did not possess computer skills, first of all, we used to send him / her to receive the proper training“. „We teach and recommend observing colleagues' lessons. We have prepared methodical recommendations“.
	Development of leaders at the school	„The greatest incentive was teacher-leaders. So some feel uneasy because some succeed, and others – not“. „Not for the first year we have methodical groups and methodical council at the school. I sit with different methodical groups when it is necessary to speak. Eight methodical groups mean that there are eight leaders“.

The Expression of School Principal's Transformational Leadership During the Institutionalization Phase of the Change Process

During the institutionalization phase, school principals acting as transformational leaders fostered the achieved results during the implementation phase. They pointed out the vision agreed to during the initiation phase, led by their own personal example and demonstrated the changed behaviour, were proud of their school community, and constantly reminded parents of the achieved results.

A school principal acting as a transformational leader also distributes his leadership with the teachers, appeals to them, and assigns responsibility for certain activities to those whom he or she trusts.

Table 3. The identified expression of school principal's transformational leadership during the institutionalization phase of the change process.

Category	Sub-category	Illustrating statement
Fostering of the achieved results	Principal points out the school vision	„Now we ourselves are planning and thinking, but always we are considering the development of values“. „We always wish to start properly, but it is important to finish the creation process properly in order that the activity would not be only for appearance sake. Because then it would become harmful to pupils and teachers“.
	Principal demonstrates the changed behaviour by his example	„I work, I myself do everything. For example today I came and was asked – what I was thinking during the weekend. It seems it would be obligatory to think. But the people also thought, so they ask“. „I am responsible for pupils' project activity. All teachers are waiting when I will become not responsible, but I do not when it takes place“.
	Principal reminds pupils' parents about the achieved results	„Every September 1st, we remind them about the programme of Character Development and how it takes place further on. We write about it in the press and organize conferences“.
	Being proud of the school community	„Sometimes I think that I have not done enough, and my teachers have done a lot. They are very perfect people“. „Before September, we enjoyed very good results. I thank the teachers and express the joy in their work results“.
Distribution of leadership	Principal appeals to teachers leaders	„I am very proud that a good team of managers has crystallized“. „There is a group of the teachers who are interested and put all attempts, keep relations, and stay in contact with me. I am happy that they express certain interest. They willingly get interested in everything“.
	Principal distributes some of his responsibility to teachers	„People very willingly agree to participate in different work groups and teams. This year they suggested where they could work, where they would like certain activities“. Now I perfectly understand what the success was when constantly increasing responsibility – teacher's for individual achievement of a child“.

By summarising the research results, it can be stated that the expression of school principal's transformational leadership is possible in all phases of changes.

Discussion

Harris (2005) and Bush (2009), referring to their and other researchers' surveys, state that a school principal acting as a transformational leader, creates school vision, discusses the purpose of school activity, fosters and develops values, which agree with the school mission, hears all expectations, provides individualized support for the school community, and fosters good relations among all members of the school community.

Harris (2001), Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, Wahlstrom (2004), Geijsel, Meijers, Wardekker (2007), and Leithwood, Jantzi (2009) also point out that the school vision is the central component of transformational leadership at school. The school principal, together with the school community, has to create and communicate the vision to the school regarding its further development, and then lead the school towards its implementation. Barnett and McCormick (2003) note that the creation of the corporate vision initiates the collaboration processes of the entire school community and helps to focus on the activity.

Referring to the conclusions formulated by the above-mentioned scientists as well as the results of the performed research, it is possible to state that the creation of the school vision (i.e., the direction of the school activities) is the essential characteristic for school principals acting as transformational leaders, who performed the changes at school and participated in the research. The initiation phase is the time when the community focuses on the creation of the vision and makes decisions about future school activities. During the implementation and institutionalization phases, the principal directs the changes so that the school vision would be implemented and that the agreements made during the initiation stage would be followed.

Yet, Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko (2004) state that the vision of an organization is not enough for a transformational leader; he must know how to turn the vision into reality. Jucevičienė, Gudaitytė, Karenauskaitė, Lipinskienė, Stanikūnienė, and Tautkevičienė (2010) state that a school principal who tries to implement the school vision needs to give the organization power and the possibilities to influence people, communities, organizations, events, and processes by evoking a change. Distributed power increases the possibilities to act, encourages participation in decision-making, develops the ability to tolerate inter-difference, and increases self-confidence and constructive potential of other people. The possession of the power creates the conditions for the expression of the school principal's transformational leadership.

Currie, Boyett, and Suhomlinova (2005), Harris (2005), and Cunningham, Cordeiro (2009) state that a school principal acting as a transformational leader creates the school culture in which motivation is not encouraged merely by material reward. Decisions are made together and after the discussion of emerging problems. Referring to Jucevičienė, Gudaitytė, Karenauskaitė, Lipinskienė, Stanikūnienė, and Tautkevičienė (2010), such features of a school principal acting as a transformational leader are possible to be considered as educational empowerment. By distributing power, the school principal gives the possibility for school community members to create and control their activities, to take part in the decision-making process related to the school and its community activities, and to expand educational learning knowledge and competences. According to these scientists, empowerment takes place through a two-way dialogue, which enlarges the self-value of the participants and confidence in their power and induces the development of the possessed competences. The sense of the empowerment helps a person to tolerate or even speed up changes.

These features of educational empowerment performed by the school principal acting as a transformational leader induce the consolidation of the school community by personal involvement in the change process. As such, the school principal creates conditions for the school community to develop in professional fields that have been identified in the implementation and institutionalization phases of the research. However, in the initiation phase, these features have not been revealed. Thus the discussion emerges, namely why, during the initiation phase, a school principal acting as a transformational leader concentrates only on the agreement of the school's vision, but does not pay attention to planning change activities. Understanding the

change and its necessity and the degree to which employees will be or will not be involved, their motivation and qualifications, personal interest or personal goals, all depend on what extent separate community members agree to the changes being proposed or will be against them.

Jucevičienė, Gudaitytė, Karenauskaitė, Lipinskienė, Stanikūnienė, and Tautkevičienė (2010) consider the fact that educational power has to be distributed within the school in order that the entire school community feels empowered. Thus, as Harris (2010) states, distributed leadership is essential for a school principal acting as a transformational leader, especially when the school principal gives significant attention to the professional formation of the school community and the development of new leaders. The best schools invest in leaders development. The schools in which leadership is widely distributed are distinguished in the culture, to which professional trust and positive employee relations are characteristic. In such schools, decisions are made by the participation of teachers, other specialists, pupils, parents and the local community. In addition, as Geijsel, Slegers, and van den Berg (1999) point out, the school principal acting as a transformational leader also gives attention to each member of the school community when distributing his leadership. He cares for state of the community. Usually in schools, the principal manages everyone and is proud of the good relations with the school community.

When comparing the results of the empirical research to the statements of these scientists, it is possible to identify the distribution of leadership in these schools by the attempts of the school principal acting as a transformational leader to spread leadership responsibility in the school and to develop new leaders. This distribution of leadership only occurs during the implementation and institutionalization phases and not during the initiation phase.

The degree to which a principal manifests the transformational leadership may have been influenced by the construction of the semi-structured interview. At times, it was difficult to identify transformational leadership when the actual change was not present but only reflected upon because the change has already been institutionalized and has become the part of school everyday activity. As school principals reflected upon their changes, they could not remember or name all activities characteristic for the expression of the principal's transformational leadership. Also not all school principals reflecting on the process of change could distinguish the various phases of change as well as the activities that took place at the school. The change institutionalization emerged by itself after the change implementation for some school principals. Thus the expression of school principal's transformational leadership, especially in the initiation and institutionalization phases could be the object of further research.

Conclusions

A school is the space meant for education and self-education, which is based on the objective of all its members in order to expand possessed knowledge and abilities, i.e. to develop the person. The school principal's transformational leadership manifests itself in the choice of the direction of the school and helps to implement the mission of the school by consolidating the school community for corporate activities and creating relations among all its members and so on.

The changes taking place in the education system are complicated. Everyone hopes that a school principal will be the initiator of the changes in his or her school irrespective of what type changes will be initiated, or who / what will be the original source of the changes. Before starting to make changes, a school principal acting as a transformational leader has to upset temporarily the school balance and be able to inspire the school community for the activity, and later – to pursue the consolidation of the school community in implementing the settled results.

The research results have shown that in all phases of the change process a school principal acting as a transformational leader pursues the school vision and directs all activities towards its implementation. However, personal involvement of a principal in the change activities, the formation of his positive relations with the school community and distributing leadership are

essential for a school principal who desires to act as a transformational leader, especially only during implementation and institutionalization phases.

Limitations of the study

The main limitation of the study is the small sample. Clearly eight school principals provide a range of insights into transformational leadership expression during change process in school, but limit generalisation. These findings should be validated with another larger sample of school principals.

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