

## The Content of School Principal's Innovative Activity: Relationships between Legislative Framework and School Practice

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### Abstract

The principal of a contemporary school must be one of the most active participants of education change. His/her actions, innovatively performed, can determine successful activities of an education institution and its change. However, the activity of a school principal as well as other education subjects is governed by different level structures of education management through specific documents; they might, or might not, involve the premises for accomplishing innovative activity. As a matter of fact, regulations can also determine certain content of innovative activity. With this in mind, the paper aims at answering the following questions: what are the premises allowing (or hindering) the implementation of school principal's innovative activity and its adequate content; what is the relationship between school principal's innovative activity content and the statutory regulation, reflected in the reality of school activities. This relationship is investigated in the context of a particular country, Lithuania, because the regulation of school principal's activity and its practical expression can differ, subject to education policy of a certain country.

**Keywords:** school principal's activity, content of innovative activity, content of school principal's innovative activity.

### Introduction

As society changes, the school also changes together with the activities of subjects, working in it. In the change context, innovative activity of all education subjects and a school principal among them becomes particularly important, as a school principal has to be one of the most active participants of educational change. Thus, his/her activity, performed innovatively, can determine a successful process of education change as well as its results. However, the opposite variant, when a non-innovative principal can become an obstacle in pursuing successful change of education, is also possible.

Scientific literature sources have analyzed school principal's innovative activity in different aspects. As a matter of fact, it has been only treated through the prism of innovativeness or innovative behavior (Dorenbosch et al., 2005; Janiunaite, 2004, 2007; Munshi et al., 2005; Hong

and Lu, 2006; Perillo, 2007; de Jong and Den Hartog, 2007; Zahra and Sidhartha, 2009).

The above-mentioned aspects allow stating that a school principal can possess innovative potential which determines innovative activity. However, the activity of a school principal is particularly regulated by the structures of education management of a different level by means of specific documents, and they might not cover the premises for performing such activities. Moreover, the opposite instance, when a school principal and his/her team act, or wish to act, much more innovatively than the legal framework defines, can emerge. The current paper aims at answering the questions: what premises are made, or not, to implement school principal's innovative activity and provide its appropriate content; what is the relationship between school principal's innovative activity content and the statutory regulation which is reflected in real school activities. This relationship is researched in the case of a particular country, Lithuania, as the regulation of school principal's activity and its practical expression can differ, subject to the education policy of that country.

The *aim* of the paper is to disclose the relationship of school principal's innovative activity content in the context of statutory regulation and practical reality.

The following *methods* are applied in the paper: scientific literature analysis and document analysis. The data have been processed applying the method of descriptive content analysis.

The paper consists of three parts. The *first part* substantiates the concept of school principal's innovative activity content; the *second part* ground research methodology for investigating the expression of school principal's innovative activity content; the *third part* discloses the premises for school principal's innovative activity in the context of Lithuanian legal framework and reveals school principal's innovative activity content in a document of a school principal, namely, his/her competence portfolio.

### The content of school principal's innovative activity: the concept and possible levels of its expression and objects

The definition of school principal's innovative activity content has not been widely analyzed in scientific literature. Therefore, the innovative activity content

definition is coined referring to the concepts of content, activity content, and the definitions of innovative activity. Innovative activity can be regarded as a process (Munshi et al., 2005; Hong and Lu, 2006; Zahra and Sidhartha, 2009, etc.), when innovation is being implemented in certain cycles, involving the search, generation, taking over, modification, creation, and dissemination of the idea. That is, school principal's innovative activity can also possess the content aspect. According to Jezerskyte and Janiunaite (2010) and Juceviciene (2010), innovative activity, in general, also contains the content aspect. As Jovaisa (2007) states, activity content consists of the aim and motives of the pursued goal; he considers the aim to be one of the elements of activity content and a supposed and pursued result of person's activity. Janiunaite (2004) treats the content aspect as the encoded essence of innovation, the understanding of what this innovation is and what its influence object is. Lassak and Haskova (2006) also point out motives, goals, perspectives, process terms, methods, and means in the definition of activity content; however, they do not envisage the result of successful innovative activity. The content of innovative activity, according to Jezerskyte (2010), reflects what innovation is being implemented during innovative activity. Thus, it is evident that the *content of innovative activity reflects what education subjects, a principal being among them, implement during a particular innovative activity and towards what (towards what object) these activities can be oriented. Innovation content is determined by motives, is encoded in the formulated aim, and can be evaluated in the results of innovative activity.*

According to Janiunaite (2004), Bruggencate et al. (2012), the content of innovative activity is assigned to the levels of innovations' influence and their objects. Educational innovations can be implemented at different levels of influence (didactic, pedagogical system; school as organization; education system levels) and they can be oriented towards certain objects (curriculum, teaching/learning methods; monitoring of teachers activity, etc.).

## Research methodology

When performing the current research, the strategy of qualitative research has been coordinated with the model view because, referring to scientific sources, the topics of research analysis (research elements) have been distinguished. The expression of research elements is investigated in essential documents which regulate the activity of a school principal in Lithuania. The documents have been reviewed, searching for an innovative activity expression through the features of different activity manifestation as well as fixed innovative activity. When substantiating research elements, the principle of an ideal type has been referred to. In this research, the application of the ideal type (standard) manifests itself in selecting such research elements which characterize the expression of school principal's innovative activity. Six topics of the analysis have been formulated: implementation of education policy, management of teaching/learning

process, human resource management, initiation of change, educational empowerment of human resources, and development of leaders. The topics have been further divided into subtopics of the analysis (inducement of continuous changes and their management; relationship management in pursuing innovations with the School Board, school community; innovative promotion of services provided at school; establishment and maintenance of new relations with stakeholders; empowerment of innovative collaboration among different institutions; information dissemination by applying mechanisms of innovative dissemination among different structural units at school; project preparation and organization on school, national, or international levels; the search for innovative measures and ways to observe and support the learning process; innovative work environment, necessary for learning; improvement of planning and support ways in school's structural units; designing effective learning programs in school's structural units - the School Board, Teachers' Board; enabling innovative collaboration among parents and different institutions; information dissemination among school community by applying modern technologies of innovative dissemination and carrying it out; improvement of the human resource development activity; search for new possibilities of school activity development and its systematic improvement; innovative resource planning, search and distribution of resources according to school activity priorities; formation of teams and group work in pursuing innovations in the organization; search for new/innovative spaces of school activity; innovative involvement of employees into the processes of change; creation of new/innovative structures or processes; community empowerment for innovative and creative action; planning and organizing school community's learning to acquire new competences; leadership dissemination at school (principal's attempts to spread leadership at school and develop new leaders)). Those subtopics have served as a basis for document analysis.

The above-mentioned subtopics of analysis are referred to when analyzing documents on the national level and, in part, limited private documents (competence portfolios of school principals) while performing a descriptive analysis of their content. The most important documents regulating the activity of a school principal have been analyzed. However, the paper presents the analysis of only a limited number of documents: laws – the Law of Education of the Republic of Lithuania (2007) and by-laws: Minister's order 'On the Inventory of Qualification Requirements for Principals of All Types (except Higher Education Institutions)' (2005); 'The Regulation for Accreditation of Municipal School Principals, Their Deputies for Education, Directors of Departments Organizing Education' (2009); general plans for education of the academic year 2012-2013.

In order to identify the expression of school principal's innovative activity content, *partly limited documents* (for example, private diaries, competence portfolios, etc.) are analyzed. Public internal documents (necessary only to internal goals of the organization) and *private documents*

(serving to meet the needs of private individuals) can be assigned to this group. In order to get such documents, researchers have to get the permission of their owners. In terms of time and material costs, the documents of this group are more expensive than freely available documents (Charmaz, 2006; Bitinas, Rupsiene and Zydziunaite, 2008).

In Lithuania, the activity of a school principal is regulated by *The Regulation for Accreditation of Municipal School Principals, Their Deputies for Education, Directors of Departments Organizing Education* (2009). Every school principal substantiates his/her competences by preparing a competence portfolio, which is assessed by groups of education management experts. When forming his/her competence portfolio, the principal follows the criteria of assessment, i.e., the principal has to possess competence in the main fields of educational managerial activity: in the field of education policy and strategic planning, management of education / self-education process, human and material resources. Professionalism and efficiency of managerial activity are assessed according to the implementation of the most important education priorities. The principal verifies his/her competence by forming his/her competence portfolio and producing a report on principal's competence substantiation and self-assessment. When preparing this report, the principal refers to the assessment criteria and supports the competence components in a relevant managerial qualification category which he/she intends to acquire with the facts to prove this and to reveal the result, achieved by the fact of this activity, i.e., achieved vivid results of the school activity. The documents, substantiating the results of a school principal and school activity, are specified. The results of principal and school's activity are substantiated by using the regulative legislation, the documents of school activity, the reports of external audit on secondary education program accreditation and/or school activity quality, and other materials. Transferable competences which are assessed according to two criteria (communication competence and competence of information management) also have to be verified in principal's competence portfolio.

Referring to accreditation regulations, Lithuanian school principals can acquire three qualification categories: the third, the second, and the first qualification category. Competence portfolios of 30 innovative school principals, who have outstanding achievements, constantly grow and develop, and are civically active, have been chosen for the analysis of their competence portfolio (10 portfolios in the 1<sup>st</sup> managerial qualification category, 10 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> managerial qualification category, and 10 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> managerial qualification category).

When analyzing school principals' competence portfolios in all the three categories, the research aims at detecting and disclosing the content of school principal's innovative activity according to the topics and subtopics singled out. That is, the facts of innovative activity, detected in competence portfolios of school principals, are systematized and analyzed according to the characteristics of the expression of school principal's innovative activity.

Further, the detected innovative activity content is assigned to the levels of innovation impact and to their objects.

### **Premises for school principal's innovative activity: the context of Lithuanian legislation**

*The Law of Education of the Republic of Lithuania* indicates that a school principal (2007): 1) supervises the preparation of school strategic plan and of annual Action programs, school education programs, approves them, and guides their performance; 2) according to the procedure, appoints and dismisses teachers, other people taking part in the education process as well as service personnel, confirms their job descriptions; 3) takes the responsibility for making public the information, specified in Article 26, and for the democratic management of the school. He/she ensures relations, based on collaboration, the observance of teacher's ethics, transparency in decision-making, informing community members, professional development of pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff, sound and safe environment preventing any manifestation of violence, intimidation, and formation of hazardous habits; 4) analyzes the status and resources allocated to school activity and management, initiates the implementation of school's internal audit and is responsible for the results of school activity; 5) performs the functions prescribed by the school founder which are defined in school regulations and the job description. The law defines school principal's functions of planning (Clause 1), organizing (Clause 2), managing (Clause 3), and controlling (Clause 4). The premises of the innovative activity can be envisaged in certain activities of a school principal, for example, in the preparation of the school strategic plan and annual programs of the activity; in organizing the methodical activity and accreditation of the teachers and other pedagogical employees as well as in initiating the activity of the school autonomy institutions by collaborating with pupils' parents.

When analyzing by-laws, related to school principal's activity, for example, the order of the Minister '*On the Inventory of Qualification Requirements for Principals of All Types Schools (except Higher Education Institutions)*', No. ISAK-2001, October 7, 2005, it can be pointed out that the description of school principal's position is approved by the founder. This Law also defines principal's activities, such as computer literacy, independent planning, preparation of reports, communication, collaboration and consulting, fluent expression and argumentation in oral and written forms, knowledge of the orders of the Minister of education and science (the Republic of Lithuania) and other legal documents as well as the ability to apply those in practice; also, the ability to perform the functions defined in principal's Job description. The Order of the Minister '*On the Regulation for Accreditation of Municipal School Principals, Their Deputies for Education, Directors of Departments Organizing Education*', No. 1192, August 3, 2001, presents requirements for the person who applies for the position of a principal. For example, he/she is to know how to organize the main activity of the organization, to know the

financing of budgetary institutions, legal labor relations, regulated by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, government regulations and orders of the Minister of education and science as well as other legal documents. The Law defines the role of a school principal as a manager – administrator who is able to consolidate all structural school units into a general entirety, to create favorable conditions for the employees to pursue mutual goals and to carry out the main functions in school activity: planning, organizing, managing, and controlling. No sources speak about the innovative activity of a school principal and its development. However, school principal's innovative action can manifest itself in activity planning, in preparing the annual action program, in formulating school goals, important for attaining the school vision, in collaboration with other institutions, and in the ability to influence the results of school's effective activity. For example, when a school is transformed into the status of a pro-gymnasium, collaboration with gymnasiums, coordination of programs and plans, and the creation of attractive all-day schools which meet customers' needs, take place.

Another important document for school principals is *The Regulation for Accreditation of Municipal School Principals, Their Deputies for Education, Directors of Departments Organizing Education* (2009). In this document, a school principal is treated as 'a professional who has acquired management competence in the main fields of contemporary managerial activity: education policy and strategic planning, learning process, and the management of human, material, and financial resources'. The main purpose of school principal's activity is professional school management by ensuring its successful activity and effective development, directed towards pupil's learning. According to the accreditation regulation, school principals can be conferred three qualification categories. *The third qualification category* applies to a school principal who has to implement qualitative state education policy which develops the education process and culture of an education organization. *The second qualification category* points out that a school principal enriches curriculum, teaching/learning forms and methods, child's social experience, develops self-expression and creativity. Educational innovations are implemented by means of team formation, in addition to qualitative implementation of the state education policy. *The first qualification category* emphasizes that a school principal creates a modern school with distinct features, ensures education quality, stimulates comprehensive development of child's personality, and consolidates the attempts of all the community members in order to develop education and school culture.

In *General Plans for Education for the Academic Year 2012-2013* the functions of a school principal are emphasized in the aspect of curriculum formation: '16. By his/her order, a school principal approves: 1) school's educational plan (until September 5); 2) perspective plan of pre-school education; 3) thematic plans of subjects; 4) thematic plans of subjects in depth training; 5) programs of electives, if there are any, approved by the Minister of

Education and Science; 6) program of purposeful arts education; 7) thematic plans for early foreign language teaching; 8) control work schedules (not less than for a month); 9) educational programs for the children with special needs; 10) thematic plan of elementary school subjects according to the chosen variant of integrated education plan; 11) pre-school education pedagogue's Job description according to the chosen model of pre-school education organization'. It is evident that by his/her order, the school principal has the right to approve a school education plan, thematic plans, programs of electives, and many more. Summarizing the functions for school activity, determined in general plans for education, it is possible to state that the functions of a school principal have been defined here most accurately. He/she is entrusted to manage the creation of education programs, to form a work group to prepare the education plan, to approve school education plans, programs, to ensure democratic management and collaboration. The general requirements of the education plan leave a possibility for the principal to innovatively adapt the curriculum (considering pupils' needs) from the number of the hours distributed by the school itself. What it is especially important for school principal's innovative activity, is the management of learning process, because the learning outcomes of school pupils and school ratings among other schools depend on the quality of the education process. Only the school, open to change, possessing peculiarities (for example, in-depth teaching of English, purposeful arts education, etc.), and implementing innovations suitable for that school, can compete among other schools.

Having performed document analysis and having revealed the premises for the manifestation of principal's innovative activity and for the unfolding of its content, the paper further presents the analysis of portfolios of school principals in different managerial categories, which allows disclosing the content of their innovative activity.

### **The expression of school principal's innovative activity content in competence portfolios**

Competence portfolio analysis of principals in the 1<sup>st</sup> managerial category allows stating that the expression of principal's innovative activity content is particularly evident through the innovative propagation of the services, provided at school (for example, the *electronic diary 'Fox Cub Chronicle', the school newspaper, drawings calendar*). In school principal's activity, an important place is also given for the management of learning. The expression of the innovative activity content most strongly manifests itself through the preparation and organization of projects. School principal's innovative activity is also closely related to human resource management. The innovative activity content becomes particularly evident through enabling innovative collaboration among parents (for example, the *independent organization 'Parents' Club' functions, the system-model of communication with parents*). When analyzing competence portfolios, innovative principal's activity along the educational empowerment of human resources becomes evident. The

empowerment of community for innovative and creative activity is particularly vivid when successful change cases are provided with long-term structure, the change team is supported, and the conditions for its further innovative activity are created. Taking the responsibility for change results and the conditions for innovative activity are made possible. In the expression of school principal's innovative activity content, the development of leaders reveals itself through principal's activity when planning and organizing learning to acquire new competences for the school community (for example, *school teachers are the participants of 'Teachers – Innovators' forums*).

In competence portfolios of the 1<sup>st</sup> category principals, the expression of innovative activity content is oriented towards school as an organization (the objects: school culture, communication ways and forms, competence development, monitoring teachers' activity, learning environment, development of pupils' competences, and so on). In the content of school principal's innovative activity the level of didactic pedagogical system innovations' impact becomes evident only in the field of the management of education/self-education process (the objects: teaching methods, ways, means; educational methods, ways, means, etc.). It is possible to explain such situation so that in school principal's innovative activity the competence of the principal as a manager, but not as a teacher becomes vivid. In the 1<sup>st</sup> managerial category, a modern school is characterized by original features (different innovations), created by the school principal, ensuring education quality, inducing comprehensive development of child's personality, and concentrating efforts of all community members for the development of education and school culture.

Having analyzed competence portfolios of the principals in the 2<sup>nd</sup> managerial category, the researchers can state that the content of principal's innovative activity reflects itself through the innovative propagation of the provided services (for example, *the gallery of science glory, the edition 'School Culture and Experience'*). In school principal's activity, an important place is given to the management of learning. Innovative activity content is reflected in preparing and organizing projects (for example, *a national project 'Virtual Travelling in the Classroom' by the Ministry of Education and Science and Microsoft Lietuva, project 'The European Parliament and the School of European Languages at Close Quarters', etc.*). School principal's innovative activity is closely related to human resource management (for example, *the implementation of personnel management system 'PMS; legal education of the community; awarding the most initiative and most creative teachers with 'The Golden Sun', 'The Silver Sun', distinctions established by the parents committee and the gymnasium*). In the aspect of leadership, school principal's innovative activity has been disclosed by the innovative management of change in concentrating teams and groups. When analyzing competence portfolios, activities of a school principal in the sphere of educational empowerment of human resources (for example, *implementation of the 'Art Hive' program, of sustainable development program; publishing*

*'The Family Tree' book with teachers' good experience in applying active teaching methods*) becomes evident. Community empowerment for acting innovatively and creatively is especially vivid. The 2<sup>nd</sup> managerial category principals make attempts to initiate change. In the aspect of leadership, school principal's innovative activity through his/her attempts to spread leadership at school and develop new leaders has not been identified in the 2<sup>nd</sup> managerial category portfolios. However, the principals pay a lot of attention to the creation of school professional's community. Still, emphasis is not given to the development of school leaders.

In competence portfolios of principals within the 2<sup>nd</sup> category, the innovative activity content is the most evident on the level of a school as an organization (objects – communication ways, forms, school culture, competence development, development of pupils' competences, collaboration within the school, teams and groups of the school activity, and so on). In the expression of school principal's innovative activity content, the level of innovation impact of a didactic pedagogical system is vaguely observed in learning process management (objects – educational methods, ways, and means) and in educational empowerment of human resources (the object – assessment).

The analysis of competence portfolios, possessed by school principals in the 3<sup>rd</sup> managerial category, allows stating that the expression of innovative activity content is particularly vivid through innovative propagation of the services provided at school (for example, *annual School Book, films created at school*). School principals, pursuing school acknowledgement, spread the information about successful organization of the education process; they attempt to create and disclose the originality and particularity of the school. In school principal's innovative activity, an important place is given to managing the learning process. The innovative activity content is reflected in organizing and preparing projects, such as *The Programme of European Schools' Virtual Partnership 'eTwinning School'*. This shows that a school principal is not only a planner, but also a designer. Innovative activity of a school principal is closely related to human resource management as well. The innovative activity content particularly reveals itself through empowering innovative collaboration among parents (for example, *lectures for parents, advice booklets, recommendations 'When Children do not Obey', etc.*). In the aspect of leadership, school principal's innovative activity discloses through innovative management of change by forming teams and groups (for example, *a work group of teachers' qualification renewal and innovation implementation in education processes; a work group for dissemination of school image; a work group for assessing pedagogical activity, and so on*). Principals create trust relations and help concentrate school community, are able to select suitable tasks for teamwork. During the analysis of innovative school principal's competence portfolios, the activities of educational empowerment of human resources through the creation of new / innovative structures or processes (for example, *the commission of ethics*

representing all members of the school community, operating personnel) stand out. However, in the expression of the 3<sup>rd</sup> managerial category school principal's innovative activity content, the development of leaders through principal's planning and organizing the learning of the school community to enable new competences, principal's attempts to spread leadership at school and to develop new leaders are not evident.

Among the principals in the 3<sup>rd</sup> category, the innovative activity content is most vivid through the level of innovation impact at school as an organization (objects – school culture, external collaboration, communication ways, competence development, development of pupils' competences, educational environments, development of teachers' competences, etc). On the level of a didactic pedagogical system innovations' impact, the content of school principal's innovative activity manifests itself only in the management of the learning process (objects – parts of curriculum, etc.). This activity is more characteristic to a teacher, but not to a principal.

Summing up the document analysis which regulates school principal's activity and the investigation of competence portfolios, it can be stated that in Lithuania a school principal, first of all, should be a manager. Essential documents clearly distinguish four main functions of school principal's activity, allowing envisaging the premises for his/her innovative activity. Also, accreditation regulations clearly point out the competence of a school principal as a manager and emphasize his/her innovative activity. However, a school principal as a manager should be estimated in a broad sense: he/she can perform different roles and can involve different aspects of administration, leadership, and innovative activity. Document analysis allows stating that the most strongly revealed premises of school principal's innovative activity are the following activities: *formation of working groups to attain school's innovative goals; maintenance of relations, in pursuing innovations, with the School Board and school community; establishment and maintenance of new relations with stakeholders in education; empowering innovative collaboration; information dissemination by applying innovative mechanisms for information dissemination among different structural units at school; enhancement of human resource development activity; search for new possibilities to develop school activity and to systemically enhance it; search for new / innovative spaces of school activity.*

In competence portfolios, the expression of school principal's activity is revealed in the following activities: *innovative propagation of school services; project preparation and organization; facilitating learning program effectiveness in school structural units (School Board, Teachers' Board); enabling innovative collaboration among different institutions; enabling innovative collaboration among parents; enhancement of human resource development activity; formation of teams and group work in pursuing innovations; empowerment of community to act innovatively and creatively (only in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> managerial category); dissemination of leadership at school (principal's endeavor to disseminate*

leadership at school and to develop new leaders) (only in the 1<sup>st</sup> category). In competence portfolios, school principal's activity agrees to principal's innovative activity, regulated in major documents. However, competence portfolio analysis discloses that principal's innovative activity is more varied than the one regulated by documents which involves a lot of activity fields and becomes particularly evident through project-based activity and collaboration with parents. Competence portfolios, different from the regulating documents, provide clear premises of school principal's innovative activity through the expression and dissemination of leadership at school.

## Conclusions

- The content of innovative activity reveals what an education subject, a principal among them, implements during a particular innovative action, towards what (to what object) those activities can be oriented, which of them are determined by internal and external factors, influencing school principal's activity in pursuing a particular result.
- Document analysis (the legislation framework) allows stating that, most strongly, school principal's innovative activity is reflected in the following activities: concentrating work groups to achieve innovative school goals; in pursuing innovation, maintaining relationships with the School Board and school community; establishing and maintaining new relations with the interested parties; empowering innovative collaboration; spreading information among different structural units at school by applying innovative dissemination mechanisms; enhancing human resource development activities; searching for new possibilities to enhance school activity and its systemic development; searching for new / innovative spaces for school activity.
- The analysis of school principals' competence portfolios allows stating that school principal's innovative activity content is most clearly reflected in the following activities: innovative propagation of school services; project preparation and organization; facilitating the effectiveness of learning programs in school's structural units; empowerment of innovative collaboration among different institutions; empowerment of innovative collaboration among parents; enhancement of activity in developing human resources; formation of teams and work group facilitation in pursuing innovations; community empowerment to act innovatively and creatively (only in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> managerial category); dissemination of leadership at school (principal's attempts to disseminate leadership at school and to develop new leaders) (only in the 1<sup>st</sup> managerial category).
- In real activities of a school principal, the expression and content of his/her innovative activity is 'broader' than in the regulating documents; also this activity and its content vary subject to the managerial category of each school principal.

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## Mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinys: įstatyminės bazės ir praktinės veiklos santykis

### Santrauka

Keičiantis visuomenei, keičiasi ir mokykla, o kartu ir joje veikiančių subjektų veikla. Kaitos kontekste ypatingai svarbi tampa visų švietimo subjektų inovacinė veikla, tarp jų ir mokyklos vadovo, nes mokyklos vadovas turi būti vienas iš aktyviausių švietimo kaitos dalyvių, todėl inovatyviai atliekama jo veikla gali sąlygoti sėkmingą švietimo kaitos vyksmą ir jo rezultatus, tačiau galimas ir priešingas variantas, kai novatoriškas vadovas gali tapti stabdžiu siekiant sėkmingos švietimo kaitos. Mokslinėje literatūroje mokyklos vadovo inovacinė veikla buvo analizuojama įvairiais aspektais, iš esmės ją traktuojant tik per

inovatyvumo, inovacinės elgsenos prizmę (Dorenbosch et al., 2005; Janiūnaitė, 2004, 2007; Munshi et al., 2005; Hong, Lu, 2006; Perillo, 2007; de Jonh, den Hartog, 2007; Zahra, Sidhartha, 2009; Hargreaves, 2009) ir pan.

Anksčiau pateikti aspektai leidžia teigti, kad mokyklos vadovas gali turėti inovacinį potencialą, sąlygojantį inovacinę veiklą, tačiau mokyklos vadovo veikla iš esmės yra ypač reglamentuojama skirtingo lygmens švietimo valdymo struktūrų per įvairaus pobūdžio dokumentus, o juose gali nebūti prielaidų tokio pobūdžio veiklai atlikti. Tačiau gali būti ir priešingas variantas, kai mokyklos vadovas ir jo komanda veikia arba nori veikti žymiai novatoriškiau nei tai reglamentuoja teisinė bazė. Todėl straipsnyje siekiama atsakyti į klausimą: kokios prielaidos sudaromos ar ne mokyklos vadovo inovacinei veiklai ir atitinkamam jos turiniui realizuoti; koks santykis tarp realioje mokyklos veikloje atsispindinčio mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinio bei įstatyminio reglamentavimo. Šio santykio ieškoma konkrečios šalies – Lietuvos – atveju, nes mokyklos vadovo veiklos reglamentavimas ir praktine raiška gali skirtis priklausomai nuo konkrečios šalies švietimo politikos. Straipsnio tikslas – atskleisti mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinio raiškos santykį įstatyminio reglamentavimo ir praktinės realybės kontekste. Straipsnį sudaro 3 dalys: *pirmoje dalyje* grindžiama mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinio samprata; *antroje dalyje* - pateikiama mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinio raiškos tyrimo metodologija; *trečioje dalyje* – atskleidžiamos mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos prielaidos Lietuvos įstatyminės bazės kontekste bei mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinio raiška privačiame mokyklos vadovo dokumente – kompetencijos portfelioje.

Atliekant tyrimą taikoma kokybinio tyrimo strategija, kuri derinama su modeliniu požiūriu remiantis mokslinės literatūros analize, buvo išskirtos tyrimo analizės temos (tyrimo elementai). Tyrimo elementų raiškos ieškoma esminiuose Lietuvos mokyklos vadovo veiklą reglamentuojančiuose dokumentuose. Pagrindžiant tyrimo elementus remtasi idealiojo tipo principu. Suformuluotos konkrečios analizės temos (vadovavimas ugdymo(si) procesui, žmogiškųjų išteklių valdymas, kaitos inicijavimas, žmogiškųjų išteklių edukacinis įgalinimas, lyderių ugdymas), kurios skaidomos į analizės potemes. Analizuoti svarbiausi mokyklos vadovo veiklą Lietuvoje reglamentuojantys dokumentai, tačiau straipsnyje pristatoma tik kai kurių dokumentų analizė: įstatymai - Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymas (2007); poįstatyminiai aktai: ministro įsakymai „Dėl visų tipų (išskyrus aukštąsias mokyklas) mokyklų vadovų kvalifikacinių reikalavimų aprašo“ (2005); „Savivaldybių mokyklų vadovų, jų pavaduotojų ugdymui, ugdymą organizuojančių skyrių vedėjų atestacijos nuostatai“ (2009); 2012-2013 mokslo metų bendrieji ugdymo planai. Kompetencijos portfelių analizei buvo pasirinkti inovatyvių mokyklų (tai mokyklos, turinčios išskirtinius pasiekimus, nuolat tobulėjančios, pilietiškai aktyvios) vadovų kompetencijos portfeliai (I vadybinės kvalifikacinės kategorijos, II vadybinės kvalifikacinės kategorijos, III vadybinės kvalifikacinės kategorijos). Analizuojant visų kategorijų (I, II, III) mokyklos vadovų kompetencijos portfelių, siekiama aptikti ir atskleisti mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos raišką ir turinį pagal išskirtas analizės temas; aptiktas inovacinės veiklos turinys priskiriamas prie konkrečių inovacijų poveikio lygmenų ir jų objektų.

Remiantis teoriniais ir empiriniais tyrimais, galima daryti išvadas, kad:

- inovacinės veiklos turinys atspindi, ką švietimo subjektas, tarp jų vadovas diegia konkrečios inovacinės veiklos metu, į ką (į kokią objektą) tos veiklos gali būti orientuotos; *veiklos*, siekiant konkrečiau rezultato, yra sąlygotos įvairių mokyklos vadovo veiklą įtakančių vidinių ir išorinių veiksnių;
- atlikus dokumentų (įstatyminės bazės) analizę, galima teigti, kad stipriausiai mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos raiška atsispindi šiose potemėse: telkiant darbo grupes mokyklos novatoriškiems tikslams pasiekti; palaikant santykius su mokyklos taryba, mokyklos bendruomene siekiant inovacijų; užmezgant ir palaikant naujus santykius su interesuotomis šalimis; įgalinant novatorišką bendradarbiavimą; informacijos sklaidoje taikant novatoriškos sklaidos mechanizmus tarp įvairių mokyklos struktūrinių grandžių; tobulinant veiklą ugdant žmogiškuosius išteklius; ieškant naujų galimybių mokyklos veiklos plėtrai bei sistemiskam tobulinimui; mokyklos veiklos naujų/inovatyvių erdvių paieškai;
- atlikus mokyklos vadovo kompetencijos portfelių analizę, galima teigti, kad stipriausiai mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinio raiška atsispindi šiose veiklose: novatoriškai propaguojant mokykloje teikiamas paslaugas; rengiant ir organizuojant projektus; efektyvinant mokymosi programas mokyklos

struktūrinėse grandyse; įgalinant novatorišką bendradarbiavimą tarp įvairių institucijų; įgalinant novatorišką bendradarbiavimą tarp tėvų; ugdant žmogiškuosius išteklius; telkiant komandas siekiant inovacijų; įgalinant bendruomenės inovatyviai, kūrybiškai veikti (tik I ir II vadybinėje kategorijoje); lyderystės sklaida mokykloje (vadovo pastangos skleisti lyderystę mokykloje ir auginti naujus lyderius) (tik I vadybinėje kategorijoje);

- mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos raiška ir turinys realioje mokyklos vadovo veikloje yra „platesnė“, nei reglamentuojančiuose dokumentuose; taip pat ši veikla ir jos turinys įvairuoja priklausomai nuo mokyklos vadovo vadybinės kategorijos.

*Reikšminiai žodžiai:* mokyklos vadovo veikla, inovacinės veiklos turinys, mokyklos vadovo inovacinės veiklos turinys.

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