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Instructional Leadership and Mechanisms for Assessing Management Efficiency in Modern School Management

Sherzod Nurmukhamedovich Mukhamedov

1. Independent Researcher, A.Avloni National Institute of Pedagogical Skills

* Correspondence: -

Abstract: This article analyzes the priority areas for improving the management efficiency of general secondary education institutions through the prism of international experience and national practice. Within the framework of the research, the specific features of global assessment programs such as TALIS, VAL-ED, and WMS are studied, and the mechanisms of their integration into the educational system of Uzbekistan are comparatively analyzed. Furthermore, the pedagogical potential of the KPI (Key Performance Indicators) system introduced in secondary schools is highlighted in terms of enhancing the professional competence of school leaders and establishing data-driven proactive management.

Keywords: Educational management, instructional leadership, KPI, TALIS, VAL-ED, WMS, management efficiency, digital education, 360-degree feedback.

1. Introduction

In recent years, enhancing the efficiency of the management system in general secondary education has become a cornerstone of state educational policy. This process necessitates the implementation of comprehensive reforms aimed at modernizing the educational system, optimizing governance mechanisms, and improving performance and quality indicators within educational institutions. From this perspective, introducing modern management approaches, extensively utilizing digital technologies, and developing strategic planning mechanisms in institutional administration hold paramount importance.[1]

Evaluating the performance efficiency of leaders plays a pivotal role in the educational system. According to the European scholar D.Hargreaves, assessment is considered a driving force behind any activity, serving to enhance the professional efficiency of school principals [2]. The functions of evaluation are not merely confined to certifying the level of preparedness. Instead, evaluation represents one of the most effective instruments for understanding personality, fostering positive motivation, and stimulating personal development. It is precisely under the influence of objective evaluation that self-assessment and a critical perspective toward one's own achievements are formed among school directors. Consequently, the significance of the evaluation process and the multifaceted nature of its functions create a vital necessity to develop comprehensive criteria that fully encapsulate the performance of school leaders and encompass all facets of their managerial activity.[3]

Globally, a number of scholars have proposed diverse criteria and indicators for evaluating the management efficiency of school leaders based on their respective approaches. In his research, the US scholar James H.Stronge outlined several standards for assessing general secondary school principals, including leadership, school climate, human resources management, organizational management, communication and

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community relations, and professional professionalism [4]. Similarly, the Nigerian scholar Mercy Obianuju Nwogbo asserts that 'the role of principals as supervisors and managers occupies a central place in effective school management' [5]. Furthermore, researchers R.Khaliq and A.Iram encompass teaching, learning, professional development, and collaborative decision-making with parents within the scope of a principal's managerial activities [6].

Robert Marzano developed the Focused School Leader Evaluation Model, which comprises 6 domains and 21 elements and is recognized as one of the most systematized and scientifically grounded approaches in the field of educational management. In his work *'Measuring Leadership: A Guide to Assessment for Development of School Executives'*, L.Lashway proposed the 'Educational Leadership Assessment (ELA)' model to measure leadership competencies [7]. The core essence of Lashway's approach lies in aligning the evaluation process toward identifying the leader's 'blind spots' and addressing them through systematic development.

Among scholars from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), V.Zvereva proposes measuring the management efficiency of an educational institution by the creation of conditions that foster the personal development of each learner, whereas G.Abdрахmanova emphasizes the degree of achieving qualitative and quantitative benchmarks based on established norms [8]. On the other hand, E.Yu.Malevanov considers it appropriate to evaluate a principal's effectiveness through their skills in methodically managing the pedagogical staff and creating a continuous professional growth trajectory for teachers. In her research, T. I. Pudenko analyzes the school as an integral part of the socio-municipal environment, stressing the necessity of measuring managerial efficiency within the specific socio-economic context in which the institution operates. Meanwhile, I.Gorbunova suggests analyzing the management activities of school leaders based on a structural-functional approach at the intersection of such factors as analytical competence, communicative openness, and innovative orientation [9].

2. Materials and Method

In this study, systematic-structural approach, comparative-pedagogical analysis, content analysis, and modeling methods were employed. The research objects comprised the methodological guidelines of internationally recognized programs, such as TALIS (OECD), VAL-ED (Vanderbilt University), and WMS (World Management Survey), alongside the criteria for school principal management certification and KPI-based evaluation introduced by the Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan.[10]

The performance indicators of global assessment systems were categorized, and their level of operationalization with data from the national Educational Management Information System (ERP - erp.maktab.uz) and the kundalik.com / emaktab.uz platforms was examined through comparative-logical analysis. Additionally, the 360-degree feedback methodological framework was applied to investigate the interaction model among school management subjects, including the principal, teachers, and parents.[11]

3. Results and Discussion

Results

Globally, several prestigious programs currently exist to evaluate the effectiveness of educational institution leaders, focusing not only on academic outcomes but also on the principal's management quality and impact on the school's social environment. Within the TALIS program conducted by the OECD, the concept of instructional leadership occupies a central place [12]. The system determines a leader's management efficiency directly through the quality of teachers' instruction and the overall academic capacity of the staff. Conversely, the VAL-ED system analyzes the leader's impact on the school environment and the learning process through a 360-degree feedback method, incorporating the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents. Meanwhile, the World Management Survey (WMS) systematizes school governance using precise quantitative

metrics, specifically the Management Score based on a 1-to-5 scale. Driven by these global trends, a comparative analysis was conducted to examine the specific characteristics of international assessment programs and their counterparts, or areas requiring adaptation, within the national evaluation system of Uzbekistan (Table 1).[13]

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of International and National Systems for Evaluating Educational Management Efficiency

Evaluation System	Core Concept	Evaluation Methodology and Instruments	Emphasis on the Leader's Role	Relationship and Integration with Uzbekistan's National System
TALIS (OECD)	Instructional Leadership	Systematic surveys administered among teachers and school principals	A guide who directly steers the educational process, monitors teaching quality, and organizes methodical collaboration	Fully aligned with the national requirements for principals to conduct lesson observations, provide constructive feedback, and foster staff development
VAL-ED (USA)	360-degree feedback (Multi-stakeholder feedback)	Anonymous questionnaires conducted among parents, students, teachers, and the leader's self-assessment	An executive who establishes high academic standards and manages the socio-psychological climate within the school	Intrinsically linked to the social surveys used in determining national school rankings and the "school-neighborhood-family" framework
WMS (UK / USA)	Strategic management (Management Score)	Structured interviews and precise quantitative metrics rated on a 1-to-5 scale	A professional manager who optimizes resources (finance, time, technology) and monitors ultimate performance outcomes	Serves as the conceptual foundation for the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and the managerial certification system used to appraise school principals
National System (Uzbekistan)	Integrated management model	Key Performance Indicators (KPI), state accreditation, school rankings, and managerial certification	An executive who bears direct responsibility for both administrative-financial management and spiritual-educational processes	Currently in the phase of integrating and automating international best practices via digital technologies (the ERP information system and emaktab.uz)

The implementation of the KPI (Key Performance Indicators) system in Uzbekistan's schools has marked a new quality-driven phase in educational management. This system

was found to systematize administrative leadership across five distinct pedagogical and managerial dimensions:

1. **Managing Teachers' Professional Growth.** The principal's accountability for educators obtaining international certificates and the results achieved in science olympiads.
2. **Digital Monitoring of Educational Quality.** Systematically analyzing academic achievement and graduates' higher education institution (HEI) admission rates based on data from ERP and *emaktab.uz*.
3. **Collective Collaboration and Mentorship.** Developing the "master-apprentice" framework and fostering Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within the school.
4. **Optimizing Educational Resources.** Strategic financial literacy aimed at attracting extra-budgetary funds and enhancing the school's material and technical infrastructure.
5. **Controlling the Socio-Educational Environment.** Indicators regarding student attendance, spiritual-educational activities, and the creation of a safe and inclusive environment.

Discussion

A comparative analysis of international assessment programs indicates that the performance of a modern school leader is no longer measured solely by bureaucratic administration, but rather through a synthesis of instructional leadership, collective feedback, and strategic resource management. The fact that a leader's success within the TALIS, VAL-ED, and WMS frameworks is predicated on their direct impact on the educational process and digital governance skills reinforces the vital necessity to fundamentally reform evaluation criteria within the educational system of Uzbekistan.

According to the 2026 strategic recommendations of the OECD and UNESCO [14], an innovative set of indicators is emerging for evaluating the performance of school leaders. In the future, a key benchmark will include the integration rate of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into the educational process for pedagogical purposes, alongside the leader's ability to foster student psychological well-being and an inclusive environment, as well as the degree of ecologically sustainable utilization of school resources.

Compared with the experiences of the United States and Singapore, it can be observed that the administrative burden within Uzbekistan's national KPI system remains relatively high. For instance, in US models, 57% of a leader's activity is directly channeled toward observing teacher performance and providing methodical assistance [15]. Conversely, in our national system, the share of operational-administrative indicators remains dominant in evaluating principal efficiency. However, the launch of the school principal management certification system is expanding the traditional responsibilities of leaders in educational management, bringing corporate governance principles and digital competencies to the forefront.

4. Conclusion

To enhance the management efficiency of general secondary education institutions in Uzbekistan and elevate the national KPI evaluation system to international standards, the implementation of the following strategic directions is proposed:

1. **Increasing the Share of Instructional Leadership:** Reducing the weight of criteria evaluating purely administrative and operational duties within the KPI framework, and increasing the proportion of points allocated to teacher professional mentorship and lesson quality analysis (akin to the TALIS model) to at least 40–50%.
2. **Integrating a 360-Degree Evaluation Mechanism:** Relying not only on upper-level institutional statistics or ERP data to appraise school principals, but also

- incorporating anonymous digital feedback from teachers, parents, and the community, modeled after the VAL-ED framework.
3. Transitioning to Proactive and Digital Governance: Automating the evaluation of school leaders through seamless integration with the national ERP system (erp.maktab.uz) to completely eliminate bureaucratic paperwork, while launching a transparent rating platform for administrators.
 4. Introducing Innovative and Humanistic Indicators: Expanding future evaluation benchmarks to incorporate the leader's performance in establishing digital infrastructure (including Artificial Intelligence resources), supporting inclusive education, and ensuring the stability of the overall psychological climate within the school.

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