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Assemgul Bukutova

Date: June 28th, 2019

**Educators' Perceptions about School Development Planning: A Qualitative
Case Study of One Kazakhstani School**

Assemgul Bukutova

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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in

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Signed: Assemgul Bukutova

Date: June 28th, 2019

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NU GSE Research Approval**GSE Research committee <gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz>**

Mon, Feb 4, 2:40 PM

Dear Assemgul,

The NUGSE Research Committee reviewed your study proposal and decided:

 To grant approval for this study

Approval: This approval is effective for the life of the study. However, any time you change any aspect of your project (e.g., recruitment process, administering materials, collecting data, gaining consent, and changing participants) you will need to submit a request for modification to the NUGSE Research Committee.

Sincerely,

NUGSE Research Committee

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Completion Date 10-Sep-2018
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1 - Basic Course (Stage)

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EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Educators' Perceptions about School Development Planning:**A Qualitative Case Study of One Kazakhstani School**

Abstract

This study aimed to explore how School Development Planning (SDP) is understood and implemented by school leaders and teachers in one Kazakhstani school. By exploring teachers' and school leaders' perceptions and experiences of SDP, this study also looked into the challenges which educators encounter in developing and implementing SDP in their school. Using a qualitative case study method, six participants including school teachers, a principal, a vice principal, and a department head were recruited for face-to-face individual interviews, applying stratified sampling method. The collected qualitative data was analyzed and the findings point out that the participants define, understand and interpret SDP mainly in three ways: SDP as a written document, as a process, as a combination of both. The major significant factors which affect SDP are the capacity of school leadership, collaborative atmosphere and having sufficient time for planning, according to the respondents. Overall, there are more advantages than disadvantages of SDP both for the school and individuals in the organization as ascertained by the participants. The evidence from the data reveals that implementation of SDP is attributed to the creation of the school development plan (SDp) and its' realization "by creating events". It turned out that SDP processes such as review and evaluation suggested in the reviewed literature tend to be neglected by the research site since these two stages were not highlighted and depicted by the interviewees. The noteworthy challenges in SDP implementation are linked to school culture, leadership skills of educators, insufficient time for the creation of the SDp, lack of trainings for school leaders. Further studies can look at students' and parents' perceptions of SDP processes and the influences of these processes on students' outcomes and learning experiences.

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Keywords: school development, planning, implementation

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**Восприятия педагогов о планировании развития школы:
качественный кейс стадии одной Казахстанской школы**

Абстракт

Целью данного исследования было изучить как планирование развития школы (ПРШ) понимается и внедряется лидерами и учителями в одной Казахстанской школе. Исследуя восприятие и опыт учителей и лидеров по внедрению ПРШ, данное исследование также рассматривало трудности, с которыми встречаются педагоги в создании и внедрении плана развития у себя в школе. Используя метод исследования качественный кейс стадии, шесть участников, включая учителей школы, директора, заместителя директора и руководителя методического объединения, были приглашены на индивидуальное интервью, с применением расслоенной (стратифицированной) выборки участников. Собранные качественные данные были проанализированы и выводы показывают, что участники дают определение, понимают и интерпретируют ПРШ, главным образом, в трех направлениях: ПРШ как письменный документ, как процесс, как сочетание двух элементов. Главные основные факторы, которые влияют на ПРШ – это лидерские качества, коллаборативная атмосфера и наличие достаточного времени для планирования, согласно мнению респондентов. В целом, существует больше преимуществ, чем недостатков ПРШ как для школы, так и для отдельных лиц в организации образования, по определению участников. Доказательства показывают, что внедрение ПРШ ассоциируется с созданием плана развития школы (пРШ) и с его реализацией «через проведение мероприятий». Оказалось, что процессы ПРШ, такие как пересмотр и оценка, предложенные в обзоре литературы, чаще пренебрегаются в исследуемой школе, так как эти два этапа не были освещены и описаны участниками интервью. Значимые трудности во внедрении ПРШ связаны с

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культурой в школе, лидерскими навыками педагогов, недостатком времени для создания ПРШ, отсутствием тренингов для лидеров школы. Последующие исследования могут рассматривать взгляды и восприятие процессов ПРШ учениками и родителями, а также рассматривать влияние данных процессов на результаты учащихся и их обучение.

Ключевые слова: развитие школы, планирование, внедрение

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Педагогтардың мектептің дамуын жоспарлау туралы көзқарастары:**Қазақстандық бір мектепті зерттеу байынша сапалы кейс стади**

Аңдатпа

Зерттеудің мақсаты - мектептің дамуын жоспарлау (МДЖ) қазақстандық бір мектептегі мектеп көшбасшылары мен мұғалімдерінің қалай түсінетінін және қалай іске асырылатынын зерттеу. МДЖ мұғалімдер мен көшбасшылардың пікірлерін талдай келе, сонымен қатар бұл зерттеу мұғалімдердің және көшбасшылардың өз мектептерінде мектеп даму жоспарын жасау мен жүзеге асырудағы тәжірибелеріндегі қиындықтарын қарастырады. Сапалы кейс зерттеу әдісін қолдана отырып алты қатысушы, соның ішінде мектеп мұғалімдері, директор, директордың орынбасары және әдістемелік бірлестік жетекшісі жеке сұхбатқа шақырылды. Қатысушыларды іріктеуде стратифицирленген үлгісі қолданылды. Жиналған сапалы деректер талданды және қорытындылардың нәтижесінде қатысушылар МДЖ-ды үш бағыт бойынша анықтап, түсіндіргендері айқындалды: жазбаша құжат ретінде, процесс ретінде және екі элементтің үйлесуі ретінде. МДЖ-ға әсер ететін басты негізгі факторлар бұл көшбасшылық дағдылар, бірлескен атмосфера және жоспарлауға жеткілікті уақыттың болуы болып табылады. Жалпы алғанда, қатысушылардың пікірлері бойынша мектепке де, сондай-ақ білім беру ұйымының жеке тұлғаларына да МДЖ-ның кемшіліктеріне қарағанда артықшылықтары басым. Дәлелдемелер МДЖ-егі бастысы мектеп даму жоспарын құруымен және оны «іс-шаралар арқылы» жүзеге асырылуымен байланысты екенін растайды. Әдебиеттерді шолуда ұсынылған мектеп даму жоспарын қайта қарау және оны бағалау секілді процестері жиі назардан тыс қалады, өйткені бұл екі кезенді сұхбаткерлер айтпаған және сипаттамаған. МДЖ жүзеге асыруда маңызды қиындықтар мектептегі мәдениетке, педагогтардың

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көшбасшылық қасиеттеріне, мектепті дамыту жоспарын құруға уақыт жетіспеуіне және мектеп басшыларына арналған тренингтердің өткізілмеуіне байланысты. Алдағы зерттеулер МДЖ туралы оқушылар мен ата-аналардың ұстанымдары мен көзқарастарын зерделей алады, сондай-ақ осы үдерістердің оқу тәжірибесі мен оқушылардың оқу нәтижесіне қалай әсер ететінін қарастыра алады.

Кілт сөздер: мектеп дамуы, жоспарлау, жүзеге асыру

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Since its independence in 1991, the Republic of Kazakhstan has been making efforts to join the world arena, with an emphasis on modernizing its educational system. The current educational reforms cover different aspects of schooling, and range from curriculum and assessment to teacher professional development and language policies. The ambitious goal is to bring the local educational system at par with international standards. With this purpose, Autonomous Educational Organization (AEO) “Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools” (NIS) was established in 2008. NIS in collaboration with Cambridge University was the first organization in the country to make an “introduction of a cycle of school self-evaluation and improvement planning” as a part of educational reform in Kazakhstan (Cambridge, n.d.). In “2020 Development Strategy” NIS aimed at receiving quality assurance from international organizations (NIS, 2013, p. 19) and it was planned in 2013 that 5%, 30% and 100% of network schools would get international accreditation by the years 2014, 2017 and 2020 respectively (NIS, 2013, p. 30). As a result, to date, eighteen out of twenty Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools have been accredited by the Council of International Schools, according to the official website (NIS, n.d.).

Council of International Schools (CIS) is a global organization which awards accreditation to those schools, which have achieved “high standards of professional performance” and have “a commitment to continuous improvement”. In particular, an accreditation status shows that the school “constantly seeks improvement in all areas of the school, plans strategically for the future”. The already accredited schools have to follow CIS accreditation cycle, according to which they should “provide an annual accreditation report which provides an update on school

improvement practices and substantive developments” (CIS, n.d.). Thus, one way to demonstrate commitment to school improvement (SI) as well as to prove sustained developments tends to be the creation of a comprehensible school development plan (SDp), its effective and timely implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and the reflection on how it works. Both sets of schools: those which have recently applied for accreditation; and those which have already gained an accreditation status are required to have clearly written and realistically working SDps. According to “The rules on the creation and approval of School Development Plans for Intellectual schools, their monitoring and evaluation of their implementation”, school development plan is “a document which is based on Development Strategy of the organization and which determines directions of activities in a school” (NIS, 2017).

However, the practice of creating SDps has not always been the case in our country. Before the creation of NIS network and their application for an international accreditation, Kazakhstani mainstream schools created their yearly school plans. These plans covered different school life areas such as upbringing process including monthly events and celebrations; educational academic activities including Pedagogical Council meetings’ dates, examination timelines; scientific and methodological work including teachers’ professional development and students’ projects, Olympiads and so on. However, several issues remained questionable in this planning. For instance, how were all the plans related to each other? What was one bigger goal behind smaller plans? Who created the plans? What was the role of the school community both in planning, implementation and evaluation of the school development (SD)?

Although the practice of writing yearly separate plans still exists in many mainstream schools, the situation now is changing. More recently some mainstream schools have started posting their SDps on school websites. Thus, for instance, one can easily download and view

SDPs from different regions in Kazakhstan such as Aktobe, Shymkent, Ekibastuz and Pavlodar. The available plans make it obvious that SDPs' formats vary from school to school. Also it is not clear which legal documents and requirements were followed in the creation of those SDPs as well as which process was applied in planning and what was the need and rationale for their creation. The search of prescribing procedures for SDP on the official governmental websites, e.g. Ministry of Education and Science (MoES), did not bring any fruitful results in this respect.

From the above discussion, I can conclude that Kazakhstani experience in SDP tends to be drastically different from how SDP is done elsewhere in the world. Some Kazakhstani schools have no SDPs and write separate yearly plans; some schools create SDPs which vary in content and formats and other schools create their plans in accordance with their best knowledge and abilities; some schools apply for and gain an international accreditation and follow international requirements in SDP. This was one of the reasons why I became interested in researching SDP. There are some other reasons as well. As a researcher I am eager to have a closer look at how educational reform on SDP is being implemented in one particular school. I have some experience in SDP as a practitioner in one public funded school in Kazakhstan. However, SDP processes have never been researched neither in a broader Kazakhstani schooling context nor at my own school, in particular. Moreover, since SDP was initiated as a "top-down" reform in response to the need to get the status of "an internationally accredited school" and this innovation was planned strategically by the top leadership of the organization, it is of vital importance to understand the perceptions and opinions of the educators who implement this reform locally, i.e. at schools, at the grassroots. I am interested to explore questions such as, how practitioners understand SDP; how they interpret SDP; what their experience was when creating the SDP; what the process looks like in the eyes of those who work "in the field"; what challenges teachers

and school leaders experience while implementing SDP; what value is attached to SDP by teachers and school leaders. Seeking answers to these questions brought me to my investigations.

Problem Statement

SDP is a broad and complex concept, first initiated in USA in the 1980s (Edmonds, 1982), followed by UK, Australia and Denmark in the 1990s (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1994). SDP is viewed and interpreted from many different perspectives. For instance, SDP is linked to “organization development” theory (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002), school improvement (Harris, 2002), building capacity and human power (Altun & Aydin, 2010). Some researchers claim that SDP can become either “a bureaucratic management strategy” or make “a positive difference” (Stoll & Fink, 2008, p. 79); while other educators state that SDP “is not a simple activity or approach but a powerful set of processes that can significantly enhance the quality of teaching and learning” (Harris, 2002, p. 5). Thus, there seems to be no single definition or a common understanding regarding SDP, both internationally and locally. Therefore, there is a genuine need to investigate how SDP is understood and done in Kazakhstani schools.

Being a complex phenomenon, SDP requires a rigorous consideration for many reasons. Firstly, every school is unique and operates differently. No two schools are identical. Slavin (2005) rightly emphasizes that “for some schools implementing change is like “trying to build a structure out of sand”, whereas in others “the soil is fertile and the seed...only needs time, nurturing and protection” (p. 269). Likewise the SDP processes are, in my mind. Being closely associated with implementing change at schools, SDP tends to go smoothly and hurtless at one school, while for the other school the same procedures can create challenges in implementation (Harris, 2002). Subsequently, researching the same processes at different schools can produce different results, when dealing with SDP.

Secondly, SDP is a relatively new concept for Kazakhstani educational system and like any innovation it creates challenges for educators in practice. From my personal experience as a school administrator, I can state that the first experience of SDP was challenging not only for me but for all members of the school leadership team, and teaching staff. The challenges were related to lack of experience in creating new types of plans, not fully understanding how creating a SDP is different from previous experience of writing yearly plans, no clear understanding of the requirements for crafting the SDP and no clear understanding of the processes for SDP. When trying to search for supportive literature, guidelines, recommendations or research related to SDP in our local context, our team failed to find resources of Kazakhstani origin. This can be justified by the fact that almost all Kazakhstani schools were in similar conditions since they all were going through SDP processes for the first time, without any official guidelines for the process. What we had to do was to rely on international guidelines in SDP which did not always fit our reality. We always had to critically analyze the sources and adapt them for application in our experience. Finally, being a new phenomenon implies that there was no research carried out in our local context by the moment, so not much was known about how effective the SDP was.

So, the practical problems raised here including lack of prior knowledge and experience in SDP, vague understanding of SDP processes, lack of supportive research and guidelines of Kazakhstani origin added to the complexity of SDP. The research in the area highlights some important findings about the process of successful school change (Harris, 2002). She summarizes that school improvement requires working with school culture and improving teaching and learning conditions. All the elements Harris enumerates (i.e. teacher development, leadership, school culture, teaching learning conditions, no “recipe”) appear to be broad and complex systems, which are strongly interdependent because, according to the “learning school” theory,

organizations (including schools) are “like living systems”, they are “not static” and have their own cycles and development phases (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. xvii). On top of that, there is “no one blueprint for action” (Harris, 2002, pp. 11-12).

Significance of the Study

While implementing substantial changes in Kazakhstani schools such as updated curriculum, new model for teacher appraisal and others, there is a scarce body of knowledge and research about ongoing reforms. For instance, there is almost no scientific investigation of SDP processes in the context of Kazakhstan. Although there is a growing body of educational research in Kazakhstan about teaching profession and different aspects of it, there is no scientific investigation of SDP. In addition, deeper understanding of how SDP is conceptualized by educators as well as figuring out the current practices in the creation of SDPs can help to create professional development programs for school leaders and teachers on how to conduct SDP. So, the current study can become a timely contribution to the scarce body of knowledge regarding SDP in Kazakhstani educational system. Hence, this study sets the following objectives:

- Producing empirical data on how SDP is understood by key stakeholders;
- Determining, describing and defining the processes which are followed by school members in implementing SDP;
- Identifying the main challenges which educators face and experience in practice when incorporating SDP into school life.

It is significant to investigate these aspects in order to better understand whether SDP is beneficial for schools or it creates extra work and burden for teachers and leaders, in their opinions. Only after revealing the educators' understandings of the processes and highlighting the current practices and challenges, it can be possible to work out the solutions for the relevant

support for those who will continue the implementation of SDP processes as well as to inform and increase awareness of those educators who plan or will be involved in SDP in their future career.

The study can be of benefit for many parties: individual educators including teachers, school leaders, educational researchers, schools, policy makers and other interested educational institutions. For instance, the research results can inform school leaders about the existing perceptions regarding SDP. It is advised that these perceptions are taken into account in subsequent SDP and decision-making processes. For researchers, the current study can become a basis for further investigations. Additionally, practical guidelines and policy documents can be created for schools, using the findings and conclusions of this research. This research can help practitioners to better understand SDP in local contexts and achieve a common understanding in the field along with the subsequent improvements of current practices.

Research Purpose

The purpose of the study is to explore how SDP is understood and implemented by school leaders and teachers in one Kazakhstani school. The research will help to identify the challenges which educators experience in their current SDP practices. This exploration can inform educators about how to further improve the process and effectiveness of SDP.

Research Questions

So, the following questions are guiding my research:

1. How is SDP understood by school leadership and teachers in one public funded school in Kazakhstan?
2. What processes are followed for developing and implementing the SDP at this school?
3. What challenges are faced in SDP at this school?

Structure of Thesis

The thesis consists of the following chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion. Chapter 1 discusses the background of the study, the problem statement, research questions, purpose of the study and significance of the study. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature relevant to the topic of my study. It also presents the theoretical framework that guided this study. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology used in this study. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study, whereas Chapter 5 provides an analysis and discussion on key findings in light of both empirical data and insights from literature. The last Chapter (6) talks about the conclusions and recommendations made in this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

At present times, many countries including Kazakhstan are faced with numerous challenges of providing quality education to their children. One of them is preparing learners for unpredictable and uncertain future, in times of a rapidly growing technological and digital era, where both adults and children receive a plethora of information to process and critically analyze on a daily basis. As a response to such a challenge, schools and education systems around the globe are initiating fundamental reforms. Such educational reforms range from school curriculum mapping being integrated in school improvement efforts (Mills, 2001) and modernization of teachers' professional development models through the establishment of professional learning communities (DuFour & Eaker, 2009) and digging deep into student data within "Data Wise" improvement processes (Boudett, City & Murnane, 2006). These are only to name a few. The educational reforms tend to be driven by the fact that schools have to adapt to change quickly and effectively. Although some educators claim that there is no blueprint for managing change (Harris, 2002, p. 4), one way to become adaptive to change and to effectively manage change and innovations at schools is learning to plan for their own development, or plan strategically (Davies & Ellison, 2003).

In this chapter, I review and discuss literature under the subheadings of "Unpacking the term and notions of SDP", "SDP process and steps", "School stakeholders' perceptions about SDP, and associated opportunities and challenges", "Theoretical framework", and "Conclusion".

Unpacking the Term and Notions of School Development Planning

In order to better understand SDP elements and processes, it is necessary to clarify the terminology. According to Hopkins (2001), the term school development (SD) appeared as a

result of “four major phases in the study of planned educational change” (p. 37) pointed out by Fullan: 1) “adoption of curriculum materials” (from mid 1960s); 2) “understanding the process of implementation” (most of the 1970s); 3) “school development” (the late 1970s - the late 1980s) and 4) “systemic reform” (throughout the 1990s). Hopkins (2001) states that during the SD phase the prevailing change strategy, namely self-evaluation, was mainly school-based (p. 36). At the same period the first Effective Schools research along with initial School Improvement (SI) projects were piloted. Thus, Hopkins (2001) follows Fullan’s interpretation, where SD is understood as one of the phases in educational change with the dominant strategy for change being a school-based self-evaluation.

Other researchers attribute SD to “organization development” (OD) theory, which has its roots in the business world and “has become an important strategy for building organizational capacity in many different kinds of organizations, including schools” (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 42). Some key elements of OD include the focus on people and structures’ development, a reflection of values, collaboration and self-determination, organizational self-renewal, an emphasis on rational planning, including goal-setting. OD, and subsequently SD, is considered to be “an ongoing process which reflects...experiential learning cycle of ongoing planning, action and reflection” (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 43). These main characteristics became the basis for a “learning organization” or a “learning school” concept, which implies that such a school is “able to understand and make sense of its own patterns and organizational reality” because it “has learnt how to learn about itself” (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 49). It means that the better the school knows itself, the more proactive and responsive to change and innovation it can become. The responsiveness results in a more efficient planning.

Dalin (2005) emphasizes that increased testing does not lead to quality development. What is most significant for SD is that “the dialogue can be established between internal and external interests and viewpoints” (p. 241). He explains that the process starts with an internal school evaluation, followed by the external inspectorate once every three or four years. SDp is created after the internal school evaluation and it is revised after the external inspectorate and school reflection but “before the final report is written and sent to the Ministry and the school” (Dalin, 2005, p. 243). During the next six months, the school head is contacted by the inspector “to determine whether anything can be done externally to assist in further school development (in relation to the revised development plan)” (Dalin, 2005, p. 243). It is obvious that an external evaluation performs the role of a development strategy, and it is provided for schools as a supportive and guiding tool. The SDP process as a whole, thus, is a longitudinal activity which takes place between internal and external evaluations, as well as after the external inspectorate.

Still another view on SD proposes that:

school development is a process that occurs as a result of the interacting influences of three sources of change - that which is deliberately planned; that which is naturally occurring in the life-cycle of organizations; and that which is unforeseen or unknowable in advance (Riley & Louis, 2000, p. 216).

This definition is mostly in line with the previous interpretations of SD in terms of close relationship to change concept and OD theory. The new element appearing here is “unforeseen and unknowable in advance” which means that change can hardly be predicted, that it is difficult to embed it and that it is difficult to plan for it (Riley & Louis, 2000, p. 216). Therefore, it is advised that a SDp is treated as a roadmap for the development and a “living” document which can be adapted and modified when need arises rather than a strict prescription of all actions.

Davies and Ellison (2003) believe that SDP is a “short-term planning” and it often becomes “over-prescriptive and reductionist in its approach” (p. 2). The authors believe that SDP is mainly used as the need to respond to the pressures of OFSTED inspections. Instead, these authors suggest a model for planning which consists of “three interactive strands to the process” such as “futures perspective” for 5-10 years; “strategic dimension” including a strategic plan up to 3-5 years; “operational dimension” or action planning for 1-2 years. Thus, there is a long-term, middle-term and short-term planning, according to this view.

There is no definition of what SD or SDP means in Kazakhstani educational context. However, there is a term “school improvement plan” derived from a typical cycle of school improvement planning by Cambridge International Examinations and used by Sekenova and Sadyk (2014) who apply it in the context of six Nazarbayev Intellectual schools’ experience when they first “piloted the project of self-evaluation” which “was conducted for the seven month period”. The terms “school improvement plan”, and “school development plan” seem to be interchangeably used by the authors and although not clearly defined, appear in “procedure 6” and “procedure 7” of the “first stage” of self-evaluation. Thus, “with identified areas for improvement and strong points, schools started to work on their school improvement plans” with the subsequent next step when “the schools are working on according to the cycle is identifying priorities for improvement and putting them down into the school improvement plan” (Sekenova & Sadyk, 2014). Overall, despite the fact that the article is not a representation of an educational empirical research, the authors claim that procedures such as improvement planning along with self-evaluation, and validation visits “are used as an assessment tool for the school improvement”.

School Development Planning Process and Steps

While acknowledging the importance of an “outcome” or a “product” of a SDp such as written goals, targets in a plan, most research emphasizes the significance of the “processes” which lead to SD (O’Hara & McNamara, 2001, p. 100). For instance, Ettinger (2015) suggests that Cambridge schools should move from a plan to a process. According to Ettinger’s investigations, there is little research about whether the existence of a SDp improved teaching and learning. Opposingly, the research “on the impact of ongoing improvement processes” is more promising. He concludes that “facilitating a structured process to reflect on those goals can begin to drive an ongoing process of improvement” (Ettinger, 2015, p. 7). His research reveals that creating a SDp was viewed as an exercise “in compliance”, meaning that it alone does not bring any change and improvements in quality of teaching and learning as opposed to the processes which tend to lead to SD.

Similarly, Government of Ireland in 1999 in “School Development Planning: An Introduction for Second Level Schools” stresses the importance of the process, stating that “SD planning is an ongoing process that helps schools as complex communities to meet the dual challenge of enhancing quality and managing change” (p. 9). The Irish view is that schools should have a systematic approach to planning for the sake of coping with complex changes. The Irish Ministry of Education advocates for “a process for integrating all ... planning activities into the coherent structure of an overall plan” (1999, p. 8). Thus, the extended definition for SDP is “...a process undertaken by the school community to give direction to the work of the school in order to ensure that all pupils receive a quality education in terms of both holistic development and academic achievement” (p. 12). The Irish education policy development related to the school plan rooted in 1967 with the introduction of Free education, gradually commenced by The Green

Paper in 1992, the National Education Convention in 1994, the White Paper in 1995, and Education Act in 1998. All these reforms included structural, cultural and curricular changes aiming at individual schools undertaking “their own initiatives in relation to whole-school development and school planning” (p. 10).

Although there seems to be a lack of a consensus as to the number, names of the SDP stages and their sequence from the literature reviewed, general steps and approaches remain very identical. For instance, Stoll and Fink (2008) conceptualize SDP as consisting of four stages: 1) assessment or audit, 2) planning where “assessment information is used to establish a plan with specific priorities or targets generated from results of the audit”, 3) implementation when all actions in the plan should be followed and carried out and, 4) evaluation being “the final stage of development planning” (pp. 65-66). These steps (assessment/audit, planning, implementation, evaluation) have very much in common with the Irish model of SDP processes (review, design, implementation, evaluation), although named slightly different.

Duke, Carr and Sterret (2013) suggest “seven important steps in the development and implementation of School Improvement Plans” such as 1) data gathering, 2) diagnosing, 3) assessing context, constraints and capacity, 4) focusing on goals, 5) determining strategies, 6) developing the plan, 7) managing and monitoring the plan (pp. 16-17). Although these steps were proposed in the context of SI planning, analogy with the SDP is obvious. What makes the approaches similar is the fact that improvement or development does not directly start with the creation of the plan itself. The greatest significance is attached to building and establishing processes and assessing the current state and conditions, or what is sometimes called audit, self-evaluation, or self-assessment.

Sekenova and Sadyk (2014) describe the procedures and experience of self-evaluation conducted by several schools in Kazakhstan. The process started with “agreeing upon a set of standards” against which the participating schools were to be evaluated; then, there was “a completion of the self-evaluation process”; followed by the external review. The comprehensive reports provided by international experts were preceded by the validation visits to schools. The reports contained areas for school improvement as well as identified strengths. From this point the schools “started to work on their school improvement plans”, according to the authors. So, self-evaluation is seen as “the catalyzer of the changes within a system towards a strategic planning of the school system and for the sustainable growth”, at the same time being a tool for school accountability and a tool for school development.

School Stakeholders' Perceptions about School Development Planning and Associated Opportunities and Challenges

SDP is a complex process and it involves challenges along with the provision of new opportunities for people involved and organization as a whole. For example, challenges in SDP are associated with coordination of the process, fundamental conditions of school culture, commitment to a few goals, engagement in an ongoing and dynamic process (Stoll & Fink, 2008) and some others. Along with the challenges, SDP provides opportunities for growth. Based on the results of the case study carried out in five schools in Virginia in the beginning of 1990s, Jones and Ross (1994) report that “...school personnel acknowledged that the process that gave them greater flexibility and provided them with new decision-making prerogatives did not necessarily make their work easier or their position more comfortable” (p. 20). However, this process “...stimulated them to think creatively about new ways to solve old problems, and to forestall or address new ones” (p. 20). Having gone through the cycle of SD, administrative and

instructional personnel also “acknowledged that their innovative efforts were not always totally successful. What was important, however, was that learning took place” (p. 20). For example, “they had learned better ways to assess programs and achievement and to make corrections that would lead to continuous improvement in the instruction and achievement of students” (p. 20). It is evident that while recognizing such advantages as flexibility, decision-making opportunities, promoting creative thinking in problem solving, and the new learning experience, the educators realized that their work became harder at times, and that failure was an inevitable part of new experiences.

School culture and leadership skills of educators while being involved in SDP processes can be considered both as a challenge and as an opportunity for development. On the one hand, going through the cycles of SD such as assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation may help in the establishment of cultural norms in the organization as well as become a “platform” for the reinforcement of leadership skills of both teachers and leaders. On the other hand, establishing new school culture which is expected to promote collaboration and reflection, and insufficient leadership on behalf of educators can cause serious obstacles on the way of SD. This could be one of the reasons why the learning school theory places the school culture at the centre as the core element of a school as an organization. Culture includes “the values, the underlying norms that are given expression in daily practice, and the overall ethos of the school” (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 22) and they are likely to be essential in SDP because, as described earlier in this chapter, creating a SDp as well as establishing the implementation and review of the plan would require particular values and norms, and visionary leadership. In this regards, important findings were pointed out by Harris (2002). Based on the research of Hopkins,

Fullan and her own studies, she summarizes that teacher development and school leaders who have vision and drive change forward are essential elements of successful SI.

Stoll and Fink (2008) note that SDP can become either “a bureaucratic management strategy” or make “a positive difference”, with the most complex challenge being a school culture (p. 79). The challenges which they figured out tend to be closely related to the importance of a strong leadership which is an obligatory attribute of any SDP. Similarly, Yikici and Altinay (2017) highlight the role of education and manpower as essential for the development of schools and strategic planning. This is in line with Stoll (2009), who associates SI with sustainability, which in turn can be addressed via “changing conceptions of leadership” (p. 122). He states that a single person cannot be capable of SI and developing leadership capacity, and including teachers, is crucial (p. 122). In general, Stoll (2009) supports the idea that SDP cannot be separated from the concept of capacity building and development of leadership skills.

Dunaway, Kim and Szad (2012) strongly believe that “the perceptions of the purpose and value of the process significantly affect its success” (p. 158). At the same time their study in the US revealed that “the principals and teachers possessed very divergent perceptions regarding all phases of the SIP process” (p. 158). As a result, the researchers emphasize the practical significance of “organizational coherence on basic aims and values before engaging in organization-wide school improvement” (p. 158). In other words, they claim that there should be an agreement and compromise regarding the reasons and goals of SD initiatives before getting on board and starting SDP processes at schools.

Theoretical Framework

My research study is guided by the learning school theory, where it is defined as an organization which constantly and systematically reflects on its own practice, and makes

“appropriate adjustments and changes as a result of new insights gained through that reflection” (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 41). The particular elements of a school as a learning organization consist of school culture at the centre, surrounded by identity (vision and core purpose), strategy, structures and procedures, technical support and human resources. “At the heart of a school life are leadership, management and governance” and school culture (p. 36). To better understand the school’s weaknesses and strengths, educators have to know better each element of the school system as well as to learn how these elements interrelate and function. It is essential that each element functions “healthily for the whole to be healthy” because “any unhealthy or malfunctioning element will have a negative ripple effect throughout the system” (p. 19).

While the learning school model depicts the elements of a school as an organization thoroughly, what seems to be less enlightened is the process of planning. That is why there seems to be a need for employing the Irish framework of SDP process comprising four key operations such as review, design, implementation and evaluation which revolve around a central core of the school's mission, vision and fundamental aims (Government of Ireland, 1999, p. 16). Based on the two concepts - the learning school theory and Irish SDP framework - SDP can be represented and depicted in a more detailed and comprehensive way. SDP then would include all the elements of a learning school and four main steps - review, design, implementation and evaluation - through which these elements will be considered.

The learning school theory and the Irish framework for SDP guided my data collection in the sense that during the interviews I explored the participants’ views and experiences of SDP in terms of the four stages: review, design, implementation and evaluation. Thus, for instance, my interviews aimed to reveal how the school identifies its priorities for development and inclusion of the priorities in the SDp, or which data is collected and how it is used in decision-making

(relates to Review); how the school plan is designed, who takes part in the process of planning (relates to Design); how the planned activities are conducted, whether there is any ongoing evaluation if the plan is working and assessing how well it is working, getting feedback on the appropriateness of the targets (relates to Implementation); how the school evaluates the success of the implementation (relates to Evaluation). In addition, the document analysis helped to identify which elements are in the main focus or covered in the SDp; and if there is any similarity of those elements to the learning school theory.

Conclusion

Many researchers agree that SDP is not a linear process (Harris, 2002; Hopkins, 2001); neither has it a certain unique order or steps for its realization. The literature summarizes that SDP is directly related to change concept and implementing innovations at schools. There are numerous factors and elements in a school which can affect SDP such as school culture, leadership, staff capacity, selection of priorities. These conclusions are applicable to the international research, whereas Kazakhstani SDP processes are not widely researched. While international research of SDP implementation started more than half a century ago, our country is making its first steps in the direction of implementing this educational “innovation”. The current study is an attempt to make a contribution to bridge that huge gap.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative research design was employed to explore educators' perceptions about the processes of SDP and the challenges they face in these processes because "exploring a problem is a characteristic of a qualitative research" (Cresswell, 2012, p. 63). Qualitative research is preferred because "the views of individuals" (Cresswell, 2012, p. 64) are central in this study. The central phenomenon under investigation is SDP, which is associated with understanding the processes through having in-depth discussions with the people involved in the processes. And the processes can hardly be understood through the lens of "mathematical analysis" or in a "numeric form" (Cresswell, 2012, p. 19). Qualitative research design where "the inquirer analyzes words" was more suitable, in my case. In turn, the words were grouped into larger meanings of understanding (Cresswell, 2012, p. 19) at a later stage.

Within qualitative research design a case study method was chosen to "investigate and report the complex dynamic and unfolding interactions" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 254) of the school community members about SDP implementation at one Kazakhstani school. Jones and Ross (1994) claim that "each school's state of readiness and approach to the improvement process would invariably differ, sometimes dramatically, from one school to another" (p. 11). This is why it was important to investigate one particular school, its' experience in implementing SDP, and the views of educators from this school formed the basis for making conclusions within this research study. It was expected that the case study participants would provide in depth insights into "a particular situation", "in its real-life context" (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 254). The research explored the participants' "lived experience of, thoughts about and feeling for a situation" of SDP practices (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 254).

A single case study design was employed (Yin, 2009, p. 46). The unit of analysis was the whole organization, namely one school in Southern Kazakhstan. Yin (2009) argues that one of the rationales for a single case is “where the case represents ... a *unique* case” (p. 47). The school under investigation can be referred to as unique because it tends to constantly work on the improvement of its practices. While doing so, the school has not researched its own SDP processes and the aim of the current study was to fill in that gap.

Research site

The research site was one public-funded school in the South of Kazakhstan. It is a new school led by the second principal for its' less than 10 years' history. The school has been implementing a number of reform initiatives among which are updated curriculum, new teacher appraisal model, teachers' professional development by utilizing action research and lesson study and others. This school was chosen as a research site due to its' openness to innovation and research. In addition, the school is led by the principal who has experience in carrying out educational research, which might mean that the head would be interested in the results of the research for the sake of improving the current practices. Also, it was convenient for me as a researcher to get access to the school due to its location.

Sampling

To “ensure that the range and diversity of different groups in a population are included” (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 57), stratified sampling was employed. Stratification in terms of representing different job positions and representing different lengths of experience at current school was applied. Thus, six positions were involved: a school principal, a vice principal (VP), one department head (DH), one teacher who has been working at school from its' opening, one international teacher, one novice teacher. Although the last three people belong to the same job

position (i.e. teacher), they were assumed to be able to provide differing perspectives either because of the number of years spent in the school and in the teaching profession or because of their previous exposure to international schooling systems. Undoubtedly, it was critical to listen to the school leadership (i.e. principal, VP, DH) because they are assumed to lead the whole process of SDP, set the vision for the school, build the culture and the capacity of school teachers along with many other important responsibilities on the way of SD.

Recruitment of the Participants

Recruitment of the participants for interviews was done by sending an advertisement (Appendix A) to 17 school members' corporate emails. A brief description of the research purposes and procedures was provided. Volunteers, for taking part in the interviews, were asked to email the researcher back or contact via mobile phone number attached to the advertisement. Out of 17 potential participants, eight people responded positively. The final decision regarding whom to invite for the interviews was made by me as a researcher, following the stratified sampling strategy described above.

Data Collection

Three data collection instruments were utilized. They are semi-structured interviews, document analysis and reflective field notes of the researcher.

Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews, "in which a person is interviewed for a short period of time" (Yin, 2009, p. 107). The interview with each participant took approximately 40 - 50 minutes. Every participant was interviewed once. Focused on the main topic, the interviews remained "open-ended and assumed a conversational manner", and I was "following a certain set of questions derived from the case study protocol" (Yin, 2009, p. 107). Sample interview

questions are provided in Appendix B. During the interview I probed through some more questions in order to gain more insightful and meaningful responses. During the interview, the participants had the right to skip any question, if they felt they did not want to or could not respond the question. The interviews were conducted in Russian or English language, depending on which language the participants were most comfortable with for taking the interviews.

Interviews were conducted in December, 2018 – January, 2019 (Appendix C). The interviews were conducted at a location which was most suitable and convenient for the participants. At times it was the leader's (principal's, or a vice principal's) office locked for the interview time or it was an empty classroom with the door locked for the interview time. The appropriate individual negotiations regarding the place and time for interviews were made prior to the process.

The purpose of the interviews was to figure out different stakeholders' vision for the process of SDP; to let them verbalize their experiences and challenges in SDP. Although the school seems to have gone through the same process, the perceptions and beliefs were assumed to be different due to various reasons: experience, personal beliefs, leadership role and capacity, involvement in school life etc. What was important for me as a researcher was to build one consolidated picture of SDP processes from all the responses. It was also crucial to see where the views differed and why they might have done so.

Interview questions were specified in advance and piloted with two teachers from the school who did not take part in the interviews. As a result, poorly formulated or confusing questions were eliminated and reformulated for final interviews. There were four main blocks of questions covered during the interviews:

- 1) General understanding of SDP

- 2) Implementation of SDP processes and implementation of the SDp at the research site
- 3) Challenges in implementing SDP and the SDp
- 4) Suggestions for improvement of SDP practices

All interviews were audio-taped, transcribed and coded. Upon the completion of coding, within and across analysis of codes was conducted with the subsequent categorization of themes.

Documentary analysis

The second source of evidence was documentary analysis which included the analysis of different versions of SDps covering the period of 2014-2020, and other relevant documents. From a thorough review of documentary evidence, some inferences regarding SDP processes were made. For instance, earlier versions of SDps compared to the latest versions demonstrated different understandings of SDP process. The documents were analyzed in parallel with interview analysis, i.e. January - March, 2019 (Appendix C).

Reflective Field Notes

Finally, field notes helped me to carry out a deeper analysis. The field notes include the researcher's reflections before, during and after interviewing participants as well as reflections and findings from school's documentary analysis.

Ethical Issues

Access

I scheduled the meeting with the school principal prior to the start of the research. During the meeting, the written letter (Appendix D) briefly describing the goals and the general procedure of the research, was provided to the principal. I asked permission for accessing the research site, staff, documents, and employees' corporate emails. Only after getting the school

principal's official written permission for carrying out the investigation, the participants were approached and all relevant data was collected.

Consent Form

All the participants were asked to sign the informed consent (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013, p. 91). This form (Appendix E) contained a brief description of the research project and purposes, the rights of the participants such as voluntary participation and their right to withdraw at any stage of the research, procedures for keeping anonymity and confidentiality of all information and the cases of disclosing information. The consent was signed freely and voluntarily. Upon request, the participants were allowed to have some time for making their decision regarding participation. Consent forms were provided in the convenient language for the participant: either English or Russian. After signing the form, the participants returned them to the researcher, who filed them and will keep for two years.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

For keeping anonymity of the participants, I did not name the participants or directly linked comments to individuals. For instance, a principal, a vice principal and a department head were labeled as Leader 1, Leader 2, Leader 3, where numbers did not imply the seniority of the position but helped to keep the participants not identifiable. Similarly, teachers were called Teacher 1, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3. No gender assumption could be made either, in this way. Notes for identifying personality were kept in my code book, passworded and available to me only. All interview verbatims and audio files were available to me only, password-protected electronically as well. The participants were informed that some data such as excerpts of interviews or documentary analysis could be made available to the broader audience through publications, final thesis, conferences and workshops, but no individual names or other

personally identifiable information would be used. The full confidentiality was not guaranteed to the participants, though. The participants were informed about the cases of information disclosure in their written consent forms.

Potential Risks and Benefits

There is no more than minimal risk to the participants. Some risks were associated with the participants' fears that their responses would be revealed to their supervisors, i.e. DHs, VPs, the principal, the supervising departments or the head office. This could have led to a situation when the participants would feel reluctant to provide honest responses and in-depth insights. To avoid such an unwillingness, I assured the interviewees about the strictly confidential character of conversations and about how the data would be treated, and in which form it might appear in public.

More broadly, benefits of the proposed research for the participants and the research site were related to making a contribution to the development of new knowledge in the field of SDP in Kazakhstani context. Locally, it is advantageous for the research participants to obtain the research findings and conclusions for improving their current practices. The participants were informed that there would be no financial benefits for them.

Position of the Researcher

It is important to note that although the research site was very familiar to me, I was performing purely as an outsider during the data collection period of this study.

Conclusion

This chapter describes and justifies the research design, data collection methods and instruments as well as where the research took place and how the participants were selected and invited for interviews. In addition, the chapter thoroughly outlines all ethical considerations as

prescribed by NU GSE such as providing anonymity and confidentiality, minimizing possible risks for the participants and the research site, position of the researcher.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents findings which emerged from analysis of the data collected in one public-funded school in Southern Kazakhstan. Three sets of data including semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and researcher's reflective notes are presented in this chapter in order to explore the participants' perceptions and experiences of SDP, the development and implementation of the SDP, as well as the challenges attached to SDP processes at this school.

The research site was a relatively new school, with 126 teaching staff, about 650 students, numerous support staff, and its' leadership comprising a principal, six VPs, and 12 DHs. The school has been implementing a number of educational reforms including SDP initiative. The research participants were six educators from this school, each participant representing different job positions or/and a different length of experience at this school. Thus, a novice teacher, an international teacher, a local teacher, a DH, a VP, and the principal were interviewed; each participant had different work experiences, ranging from four months to five and a half years at this school.

Interview questions were designed purposefully to determine participants' perceptions in four main areas: 1) understanding SDP processes, 2) implementation of SDP and the SDP, 3) challenges in implementing SDP, and 4) recommendations for improvement in SDP processes. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, individually. The shortest interview was with the novice teacher and it took 32 minutes only; while the longest one lasted for 75 minutes upon the participant's permission to go beyond the previously agreed time limit of 50 minutes. Other interviews took an average time between 45-55 minutes. All the interviews were transcribed and

coded. Based on the collected data and analysis of codes, a number of findings emerged and they are presented under the following headings:

- Understanding SDP and its' importance
- Implementation of SDP processes and the SDp
- Challenges in SDP implementation

In order to present each part in-depth, each heading contains several subheadings. Thus, under “Understanding SDP and its' importance” three subheadings describing the notion of SDP, advantages and disadvantages of SDP, and factors which affect SDP from the participants' perspectives are outlined in detail. For “Implementation of SDP processes and the SDp”, the subheadings depicting the format of the SDp, processes followed by the school in their journey of SDP, along with the steps and actions taken by the school community in the creation of the SDp are presented. In addition, the participants' views in regards to the involvement of the school community in SDP, how the revision of the plan is conducted, as well as the access to the SDp are revealed. Finally, there is the participants' interpretation about how the SDp is accepted by school members along with the resources and support available for SDP. The last part in this chapter, titled “Challenges in SDP implementation” does not contain any subheadings as it narrates the challenges by discussing and grouping them one by one, in sequence, as perceived by the research participants.

Understanding School Development Planning and its' Importance

The Notion of School Development Planning

The participants expressed different interpretations of SDP in their own language. They were not deliberately asked to give any particular definitions but rather were suggested to provide their own understanding of SDP, in general. This notion was depicted variously by the

interviewees and I gained comprehensive explanations. For example, one of the teachers perceived SDP as “a futuristic looking activity” of “where we want to be and how we shall get there”. This teacher tended to describe looking into the future and having a vision of where the school goes and how the school can get there. The teacher extended his answer by providing three “levels for SDP: strategic, middle level and operational” as well as specifying the resources required for SDP such as human resources (HR), technology, structure, and financial resources. The strategic planning was interpreted in a way that planning generally begins before the organization is established; that there should be “looking at how the organization should run and how it should be in the future”. This is “the strategic planning for education service delivery”. Then, there are “the middle levels of the school that also require planning in order for the objectives of the organization to be achieved and to ensure that every activity and process is running smoothly”. And then there are “the operational levels at which the work of teaching and learning happens. That must also have operational planning”. The teacher made a conclusion to what he understood as SDP: “SDP is a very comprehensive process for setting up the future of an organization and then working towards achieving that, based on something written”. The teacher provided a very detailed and meaningful explanation for the notion of SDP. While explaining the processes for SDP, the teacher emphasized the importance of a written procedure or a document for achieving the established goals.

Another teacher explained SDP as “a document based on the current problems, related to teaching and learning, students’ upbringing, providing safety and technological equipment of the school”. This view described SDP as a document which integrates different sections of school life and prescribes “our work”. This document helps “to follow the goals, reach results, analyze them”. This perception was described by an experienced teacher; she is aware that the SDP is an

“action plan where responsible people are assigned tasks, timelines are set, and expected outcomes are reflected”.

One of the leaders in this school explained SDP both as a process and a document (product). Thus, SDP is understood “as a process because certain processes need to be undertaken in order the document to occur” and “as a formal document with written goals that should be present and available to everyone”. The leader stated that there is a strong interrelation between these two terms, a process and a document. According to this participant, the SDp is considered as an “accountability tool”, and it is acknowledged that “the SDp gives clarity to people about what should we aim for and it allows to prioritize [school needs]”. Although the participant attempted to highlight the importance of processes in SDP, it was not clearly stated which particular processes should be in place. The leader preferred the formulation “certain processes”.

Leader Three directly dived into the steps for SDP claiming that: “First, analysis of the current situation in a school, generalizing and making conclusions” should be conducted; then there can follow several “discussions and identification of strengths and weaknesses”. The first step is understood as “diagnostic”. Then “in areas for improvement we need to identify the steps and actions; create a plan for sustaining the strengths and a plan for development, solutions for areas of improvement. This is the planning process”. The presented view tended to enumerate steps of the planning process such as analysis, identifying strengths and weaknesses, creating a plan for development.

Another participant in the leadership team perceived SDP as a way to analyze situation and then develop the SDp. She thinks that SDP should start with “analysis of the current situation and data”. She suggested that first the school should “analyze all available and existing data” in different school sectors and identify needs, e.g. financial needs, academic life of school,

teachers' needs in professional development etc. Although the first step seems to be identical with the previous view, the purpose of such analysis appears to be different: identifying strengths and weaknesses as opposed to identifying needs. Seemingly alike procedure such as identifying weaknesses and identifying needs has different implications for further steps. Leader One continues that after analysis "each responsible person should discuss the whole plan together and then compile one unified plan because, I think, there are overlaps". And then they [implies senior leadership] should "inform the whole school community". A strong reason for why the plan should be presented to the whole school faculty is provided, although not asked about these reasons: "...because maybe, as a part of a school community, I do not agree with the plan but it is already there, it is planned". After that for every action "some clear indicators and activities should be constructed. During the process, every time to control and change or help people to achieve those indicators". There are two important insights from this interview: first, this leader puts forward the idea that the plan and future steps should be negotiated with the school community; secondly, she communicates the necessity for monitoring and appropriate support on behalf of the responsible people in fulfillment of the tasks.

So, interviews revealed different interpretations of SDP concept. Thus, on the one hand, SDP is considered as strategic planning which can happen at three levels; on the other hand, SDP is understood as a written document where all tasks, responsible people, timelines, and outcomes are indicated. In addition, there is an "intermediary" position, according to which, SDP can be interpreted in two ways: as a process and as a document. Finally, steps such as analysis of the current situation and identifying strengths and weaknesses, working out the solutions for weaknesses are defined as SDP.

There is some important documentary evidence which, to some extent, conceptualizes SDP in the local context. For example, there is a definition of a SDp in one of the documents which were analyzed during the field work. There SDp is defined as “a document which is based on Development Strategy of the organization and which determines directions of activities in a school”. Although the interviewees did not directly refer to this definition from the official document and the official document itself, there is an understanding and appreciation of the fact that strategic directions have been set out for the school. For example, one teacher expressed his thoughts:

I have read in some policy documents what the school is supposed to be, what it is supposed to be doing. I understand that there is, shall we say “super policy”, above the SDp that is feeding into it. And largely the SDp is then able to achieve the goals of the organization;

and later in the interview he reiterated the same belief: “To my best knowledge, much of our plan is already dictated by” the organization, “...which has overriding power and requirements. Then the rest of what we can do in terms of managing here...” is carried out locally. Similarly the school leaders state that

priority number one are strategic aims; these aims, these goals should be present in the SDp by default, 100%. All other goals can be created by the school community itself but number one priority is that the strategic plan of the organization should be in the school’s plan.

The above-mentioned document contains a template for a SDp. This template coincides with what has been described by interview participants, who named such sections in a SDp as actions, responsible people, timelines, expected outcomes. This template will be later referred to when reporting findings regarding the perceptions of the SDp format.

Comparison of different versions of SDps revealed interesting findings. The available SDp versions were the SDp for 2015-17 school years, for 2016-17 school year, and for 2017-2020 school years. It is obvious that the plans were created for different time frames: 2 years, one year, and three years. It can be inferred that either the school was not fully confident about which time period they should have planned for or the school might have updated its' SDp and have made some adjustments at different periods. Another valuable insight from the documentary analysis is that the earliest version of a SDp (2015-17) contained references for books and authors in particular areas, e.g. "How to Help Your School Thrive Without Breaking the Bank", or "Test Better, Teach Better" etc. There are fewer or no references to literature in the latest versions of the SDps. This fact can tell that the school's earlier attempts on development were based on international research findings, thriving towards learning from others, learning from books; whereas the latest approaches in planning were more oriented on the achievement of organizational priorities without realization of what the research says in the area. Finally, one important feature of 2016-17 SDp is that it contains accreditor's recommendations, which can be due to the fact that the school reviewed and updated its' previous SDp and incorporated the recommendations before the start of the 2016-17 school year.

One of the documents revealed that there is a comprehensive description of the processes for creating a SDp. This document contained a visual graph for the process of development and approval. The document is of value because it offers the format for a SDp in the appendix and the format of the expected report on the SDp implementation. According to the suggested template, the report does not have to be an extended written piece but rather should include one more column for "Information on completion/non-completion". This seems to be very practical for schools because it would not require schools to spend much time on reporting. It is assumed that

the school would tick completion or non-completion box, provide some evidence or cross reference to other school documents. However, the fact that this document was approved in May, 2017 and presumably made available to the school at the same time, may explain why the school did not follow all the suggested steps for implementing SDP in full, according to the educators' views.

Advantages and Disadvantages of School Development Planning

Interviews smoothly turned to some important questions such as “What is the value of SDP? What are some advantages and disadvantages, benefits and drawbacks of SDP? Who can benefit from SDP? Why and how?” The questions were not particularly asking about the advantages and disadvantages of SDP at the research site but were targeted at identifying the value or possible shortcomings of SDP, in general.

The interviews revealed that the first beneficiary of SDP is the principal, according to one leader's view, because it can help in decision making at operational level, e.g. “who does what depending on the set goals [for the school]”. The leader seems to imply distributing responsibilities in accordance with the capacity levels, strengths and weaknesses of employees. Another advantage which was articulated by a teacher is that “analysis of current results allows to move forward” because “the SDp helps not only to solve problems but also to identify them”. “Better understanding of the school's goal and mission by every member”, “visualizing clear goals and analyzing actions” were among other advantages listed in relation to SDP. One vivid advantage of having a SDp for one teacher was that “you know what to do and when” and the “work is organized”. This is similar to the opinion that “the value of a SDp is that it guides and coordinates what will be done, how will be done and who will do it; it specifies the resources for

achieving the mission and vision of the school". Leader Three also reiterated the idea that SDP is significant in visualizing the goals, and that the plan guides and directs all school actions.

When asked about drawbacks of SDP, one educator mentioned that "some actions can remain not accomplished for various reasons. And this is normal because we can never achieve everything". Another negative side of SDP is that some actions in the SDP are "...given as orders. Although not planned by myself, I have to achieve that". This person elaborated that she feels like there is imposing from the top of school leadership hierarchy. The same feeling was articulated by a different educator who explained that "It comes like "Do this! Do that! Urgent!" Overall, there were not so many disadvantages in SDP listed by the interviewees: "I don't see the clear drawbacks about planning" as opposed to advantages. Some educators tended to turn this question into the conversation about challenges rather than disadvantages. Thus, one leader explicitly followed: "I wouldn't say drawbacks, I would say challenges we need to cope with"; while the previously mentioned teacher continued her thoughts: "I don't see the clear drawbacks about planning, however, may be some people struggle with the time, the timeframes, time limit".

In general, the conversation about advantages and disadvantages of SDP highlighted that the participants spoke in favour of SDP, being able to give clear reasons for why it is beneficial for the school to plan for its continuous development, rather than articulating the negative aspects of SDP. It is important to note that all participants spoke about the plan itself rather than the SDP processes.

The participants not only listed the possible advantages and disadvantages of SDP, they also clarified for whom SDP can become advantageous. For instance, one of the respondents articulated that SDP is beneficial for teachers and students. Leader Two included the principal,

VPs, DHs and teachers as the ones for whom SDP can be beneficial because the SDP contains indicators and the dates by which certain targets should be achieved.

Factors that Affect School Development Planning

The participants were asked about the factors which affect SDP, either positively or negatively. Some educators defined two groups of factors which affect SDP: “external and internal” (one teacher’s terminology), “micro level and macro level” (one leader’s terminology).

Among external factors Teacher Three named “the requirements of bosses” [meaning that the school has to develop and share its SDP with higher authorities]; while internal factors were attributed to the capacity of school leadership to handle the planning process strategically. “Are they trained for it? Do they know what to do? These are all important considerations because they are the main leaders of the process towards the achievement of the SDP”. In addition, “people in the school, changes in the law” and the image of Kazakhstan “to engage with the rest of the world” influence how the school should be planning and teaching, in the opinion of one teacher in this school.

Leader Three listed some similar factors but categorized them into different groups. So, “micro level factors are professional skills, human capacity of teachers”, “macro level factors include economic, political and financial condition of the country, educational system and Ministry of Education”. There is an awareness that some of these macro factors influence the school and SDP, not directly but indirectly because “we are a part of the society”.

Without any division, Teacher Two singled out such factors as “human resources, technical equipment of the school, environment, economic condition of the country because we receive finance from the government, quality of the lessons, level of preparation for lessons,

emotional atmosphere of the school". The teacher tended to enumerate a long list of factors and was not limited with the above mentioned ones. She followed:

For SDP processes there should be collaborative atmosphere, listening to each other, having a common understanding, making decisions together. People who make decisions should have a clear vision of their goals; if they can't see them, it's hard to plan any achievements.

This teacher was able to give deep insights into the factors which affect SDP, adding that "lack of personal motivation, job dissatisfaction including dissatisfaction with salaries, internal conflicts and bullying" can negatively impact SDP.

Leader Two named the only factor which was "having sufficient time for the creation of the plan". Leader One stressed "the human factor, his/her attitudes to work", along with "the way the planning is implemented: Is it "You must!" or creating conditions for achievement of the set goals and explanation?" Finally, "coordination and well-organized work" were named as key factors for effective SDP implementation. In contrast, "additional and unpredictable, not planned work from above; lack of time; postponements; poor time management" can inhibit SDP.

Implementation of School Development Planning Processes and the School Development Plan

Before introducing each subheading, it should be emphasized that all participants confirmed the existence of the SDp at the research site. Despite the fact that some participants honestly confessed that they either did not see the full document or they are not familiar with the plan, they know or at least heard from their colleagues about the SDp.

When asked about implementation of SDP, some participants mentioned that implementation is carried out "by events, creating policy documents, summative assessments'

results, both internal and external” or as one of the teachers noticed: “The implementation of the SDp is very strong. SDp gives coordination, we are all moving in the same direction. For example, recently there was a whole school meeting in the main hall to discuss the recommendations of the accreditors”. It is obvious that these two responses are similar in the way that they both discuss the events which are carried out, in accordance with the plan.

Format of the School Development Plan

Earlier in this chapter there was an introduction to the sections which exist in the SDp, from the participants' perspectives. These sections are actions, responsible people, resources, timelines, expected outcomes. These headings are identical to the ones which were found in all versions of the plan: actions, link to strategic documents, responsible person(s), resources, monitoring, progress/completion. These are the sections which are prescribed by the regulating policy (NIS, 2017) and which are given in the template for a SDp in the same document. It is evident that the school follows the regulations in this part. As for the participants, they were very close to the prescribed headings, and they all admitted that they might have forgotten some of the headings because they were retrieving the names from their memories.

When identifying the key element or the main focus of the current school's plan, the school members talked about different aspects of the plan. For instance, Leader Three claimed that “Student is the main focus”. Whereas Teacher Three said that “The key element of the plan is Guiding Statements”. Guiding Statements (GS) is a special terminology. GS include mission, vision and values of the school. The same teacher also added that “The main focus of the SDp is students' high achievements, high grades, performance at external and internal summative assessments”. From this statement, it is evident that academic performance is prioritized in the SDp. There is a similar perception from Leader Two, who said that “The key element is

outcomes”. Teacher Two, however, believes that “Key areas in the SDp are teachers’ professional development, development of language competencies, career guidance, students’ enrollment to universities, tech supplies of the school, safety measures”. There is a number of different school priorities included in this statement. Teacher One thinks that “The main focus of the plan is school objectives such as bring benefit to our country”. This statement belongs to the novice teacher who is likely not to know much information about the school and directions for the SD. And the last view of Leader One is that “The main focus of the plan is students’ results, teachers’ professional development”. Although there is some similarity in all responses, it appears that school members have various vision and understanding in regards to what they see as the main focus of the SDp.

Processes and Steps for the Creation of the School Development Plan

The respondents disclosed the procedures which were followed by the school in the creation of the SDp. Leader One described the desired process for SDP where there should be a lot of discussion, agreement or disagreement at a planning stage, drafting and communicating with the school community a couple of times for feedback, negotiations regarding the achievability of targets. The leader confirmed that this was not in practice when creating the final version of the current plan and concluded that “the process does not fully work. This is an official document which does not always work”. According to this leader’s perceptions, “plan is communicated and then individual work is done”. The participant continues that she hasn’t “seen the planning process. There is no assessment of the effectiveness of the steps in the SDp”.

Leader Two confessed that “due to time constraints SDp was created by senior leadership team. There was no discussion with teachers and DHs at that time. Later access to the plan was

provided by sending it to teachers' emails". From this quote it is hard to determine which processes took place for planning, although it is transparent who conducted the planning.

Leader Three depicted the planning process as follows:

There is a plan template, each VP completes his/her part. Then the principal or the responsible VP compiles all parts, it is discussed and the plan is designed. Discussions are held with the DHs, or relevant staff members. Teachers can voice their opinions which could be taken into account but for now I do not see the teachers' constructive participation.

The teachers position themselves as executors of the plan.

Again the process is not traceable from the response, it is more about who performs the planning.

Teacher One believes that SDp is not created by the school and at the school, she is hesitant that "may be, the school receives something from above [top hierarchy]". Teacher Two shares that "that the first plan was simple. Thanks to detailed analysis our plan changed drastically. In the latest plan all existing problems were figured out such as differentiation, work with the school alumni, work with the library and IT". This response seems to contradict the documentary analysis which revealed that the latest version of the SDp (2017-2020) either directly copied most priorities from strategic documents or reworded slightly the priorities from the earlier versions of SDps, instead of identifying school's priorities based on the school's actual needs.

Teacher Two sees the following "steps in SDP: 1) analysis of the past, 2) identifying the new problems, 3) creating the plan (problem, individuals who can solve it, resources, timelines, outcomes), 4) review of what has changed". Although not very confident about review intervals, i.e. every half year or every year, the revision step was listed as a part of SDP process.

Leader Three sincerely confessed that she does not clearly understand the processes for SDP at this school. She feels that SDP is perceived not as a part of the job responsibility but as something that is imposed by the governing organization:

It [SDP] happens not because we should plan, discuss it and achieve this plan, and from time to time to edit the plan but because from time to time it is required that we should submit the plan, and at that time, in a hurry, something is done and submitted. The planning must not be like that. In this case we do not ensure the outcomes. It turns out that there is no organized management and processes for planning.

This leader feels that planning had “a formal character because it should have been done as an evidence [for accreditors] and we had to submit the plan” to the governing organization.

Involvement of the School Community in School Development Planning

Teacher Two claimed that “all people take part in SDP, to some extent or in different parts of the planning process and in the implementation of the plan”. Then, an explanation of who writes the plan follows: “School administration then writes the plan and this is correct because they have more information, they know the reasons of the problems, they know human resources well”. She added that “students and parents can see the problems but how to solve them..., only administration knows how to solve these problems because they know more information”. This teacher seemed to give a contradictory response again because in the beginning she said that “all people take part in SDP”, whereas later when I probed further she stated: “the opinions of all stakeholders are not taken into account and they can never be all taken into consideration” for different reasons.

Although Teacher Two perceived the planning process as a participatory activity, other participants (Leader Two and Three) confirmed that there was no proper discussion with school

stakeholders, one saying that there is no “constructive participation from the teachers” and the teachers would rather “position themselves as executors of the plan”; whereas the second leader confessed that “there was no discussion with teachers or Department Heads at that time” since the current plan was created hastily. Teacher Three believed that “planning for the school should go to all stakeholders including parents, students and other people who support us”. So, this teacher emphasized the importance of involving all stakeholders into the planning process but he did not confirm whether this is practiced at this school. The teacher voiced that “idea gathering for SDP should be better managed” because currently “teachers’ ideas tend to be implemented half and ignored half” from his observations. Leader One criticized the current SDP process: “There is no discussion of the plan with our involvement. I would definitely wish if there was a discussion of indicators with us. Why 5, for example, why not 4 or 10? Which analysis these indicators are based on?” This quote reflects that certain indicators are set and given to schools by higher authorities and school-based leadership has no voice in setting those indicators but have to include them in the SDp. Thus, there seems to be a lack of understanding and a sense of discontent in this regard.

Revision of the School Development Plan

There seems to be no clear understanding about how and when the SDp is revised; what steps are followed for the revision and who takes the lead for that. The educators talked about different time intervals as revision periods starting from half a year and finishing with three years. At the same time, the participants always confirmed their uncertainty saying that they are either “not sure”, or may be “wrong”, or do not “remember” the exact time period. For instance, one leader said: “Every three years the school reviews its plan but analyzing results is carried out yearly”. Leader Three believed that there are yearly reviews of the SDp, however, “there were no

reviews including the whole school”. Teacher Two thinks that the school reviews its plan every year and “may be administration reviews the plan every half of the year, I don’t know”. Leader Two stated that the plan is revised “once a year, at the summertime”.

From the interview responses, it is not clear what is understood by revision: whether the participants mean changing and adapting the plan, or editing some actions or looking at and analyzing the achieved outcomes. It did not come out from the interviews who leads the revision, what particularly was revised, i.e. the actions, the resources, the responsible people, the strategies to achieve the goals, the timelines, the processes adapted or something else. The participants tended to only talk about the timeframe of the revision process in most cases.

Access to the School Development Plan

Teacher Two shared that “the plan is in the outlook (outlook is a shared drive folder). In the first Pedagogical Meeting the plan is presented, and discussed, the directions are identified, and then each VP coordinates his/her work, in accordance with their job descriptions”. “The plan is sent to emails” said one of the school leaders; whereas the other leader stated: “I did not see the plan in open access. I know, there is one drive, and may be it’s there but there is such a mixture of documents in there”. At the same time this leader admitted the fact that she did not know how, for instance, new teachers get access to the plan, whether at all this plan is presented to them and made available or not. This answer was confirmed by the novice teacher who was not sure but assumed that “may be, the SDp is available on the school website”. The other teacher claimed that

I have seen some of it a few times. I have not seen all of it. I think because some of it only need to know basis, although I would think that the SDp should be out there so that all of us are using it.

Acceptance of the School Development Plan by the School Community

The SDp is accepted differently: some teachers treat it negatively, some teachers understand the plan very well, according to Leader One. At the same time this leader claimed that “for some teachers the SDp serves as a message where to go, how to grow and develop, in which direction”. An experienced teacher believed that “the SDp is differently accepted by the school community: some people perceive it as a duty, some people ignore it, some people don't know about the plan but do everything as they should be doing”. The other teacher believed that “the teachers know about the existence of the SDp and the teachers do what has to be done as far as the SDp is concerned”; however, “the teachers need to be pushed”. It is interesting that on the one hand, this teacher criticizes the school leadership for “giving orders” but, on the other hand, he realizes that “the teachers need to be pushed” in some initiatives such as Action Research or self-led trainings. Teacher One said that she has “never heard about the SDp from the colleagues” and consequently she did not know how the SDp is accepted by the teachers.

Overall, all the responses tended to express a similar opinion that there is a mixed acceptance of the SDp by the school members.

Resources and Support Available for School Development Planning

Leader One believes that “training for SDP should be mandatory”. At the same time, she is not aware of “what documents the school refers to in SDP”. Some teachers listed the documents, regulations and policies prescribing the educational process as a support for SDP. For instance, strategic documents of the organization, yearly reports of the organization, accreditors' previous report, analytical reports from supervising departments. Leader Three indicated that there is support from the supervising departments, for instance, in the form of communication

and negotiations with them. There is an open channel for “discussions by phone, by emails, sharing documents”.

Neither did the school leaders nor did the teachers mention that there were any trainings to support them in SDP processes or guide through the creation of a SDp. The documentary analysis revealed the existence of one regulation dated May, 2017. This regulation prescribed the procedure for the creation and approval of the SDp, although the document did not contain any steps or procedures on how to work out the priorities for the SD, or how to work out the solutions to problems, for example.

Challenges in School Development Planning Implementation

The participants in this study alluded to a number of challenges being faced at different stages of SDP and in the implementation of the SDp. Leader Two enumerated challenges such as “time constraints, lack of skills, culture and commitment to work and SD”. The educator elaborated that “when the positive culture like commitment to the work is well established, then the SDP should go easier. And vice versa, if there is an appropriate SDp, then the culture would benefit from this”. Culture for change is described as “positive culture, culture of sharing, culture of not being afraid of making mistakes, being ambitious” which is “not widely spread in the school community that we are in”. Among all aforementioned, “trainings for senior leadership team” are required along with “sufficient time for planning”. Leader One also strongly believed that “training for SDP should be mandatory”. The new challenge is “staff’s motivation” as indicated by one of the interviewees. Although challenge with “time” is similar to other respondents’ views, “not planned activities” and “overlaps in the schedules of school events” were emphasized additionally. Leader Three identified leadership skills as the main and the only challenge because she believed that “the principal’s role is number one” in the SDP and in the

implementation of the SDP. There is a strong belief that “there must be training for school principals about setting priorities for the school”, “every responsible person should understand his/her work and should have a vision because that vision determines, leads, and guides”. One leader suggested that he needed more knowledge about how to create a positive culture at the school: “I realize that I need to increase my own understanding of culture and how to create positive culture”.

The leaders seemed to clearly express the challenges encountered in SDP implementation, whereas the teachers tended to struggle in identifying and explaining the challenges of SDP. This can be explained by the fact that, for instance, the novice teacher was not involved in SDP in any way and consequently, she did not have enough knowledge about what SDP is, how it is implemented. She did not provide any comments in this part. Teacher Two named “lack of relevant information” as the only challenge. Teacher Three, however, vividly described the challenges saying that: “...competitiveness among the teachers and the leaders ... tends to appear in the implementation of the process of the SDP”. This feature is described as “a very sad part of our school culture”. Apart from school culture, “a capacity issue” and “handling the SDP comprehensively” are labeled as challenges. Capacity was explained as both the capacity of teachers to perform their teaching duties at a high quality level as well as the capacity of school leadership for managing and leading SDP processes effectively.

Conclusion

This chapter revealed the key findings from the collected data:

a) SDP is understood and interpreted in many different ways by the research participants.

Nevertheless, there is a clear understanding that SDP is complex and broad as it can be affected by numerous factors both from within and outside of school. The research participants realize that

if implemented effectively, SDP can bring multiple advantages for the school and for people involved in the process and that advantages will prevail disadvantages.

b) However, implementation of SDP remains challenging for the school leaders and teachers since they lack knowledge about the steps for implementing SDP as prescribed in the literature and skills for making these steps, processes work and keep them sustainable. Since SDP is an ongoing and collaborative process, not a one-time event, the school educators do not always know how to identify corporate priorities for development, how to actively involve the relevant stakeholders, how to develop the organizational culture. At the same time, all the participants are aware of the SDp format and confirm the existence of the SDp at the research site, although there is a different degree of acceptance of the plan by the school community and there is a limited support for the creation of the SDp.

c) Challenges which inhibit successful implementation of SDP processes refer to time constraints, lack of appropriate knowledge and skills, school culture, capacity issues.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the key findings under the subheadings of “Participants’ understanding of SDP”, “Implementation of SDP”, and “Challenges faced in SDP implementation”.

Participants’ Understanding of School Development Planning

Major findings in the previous chapter revealed that SDP is understood as a process consisting of several steps, as a written document, or as a combination of both. This understanding is partly aligned with the definition of SDP applied in this paper which states that “School Development Planning is a process undertaken by the school community to give direction to the work of the school in order to ensure that all pupils receive a quality education in terms of both holistic development and academic achievement” (Government of Ireland, 1999). It is obvious that the definition advocates for “process” approach to SDP with the main focus on students’ achievement and development.

Analogically, “process” understanding was expressed by other participants of the research site. Thus, for instance, one participant’s interpretation of SDP was that of a process which consists of three levels: strategic, middle and operational levels. This interpretation is similar to what is described by Davies and Ellison (2003) who single out “three strands” that should be incorporated in a school improvement plan. The strands are futures perspective up to 5-10 years, strategic dimension up to 3-5 years, operational dimension or action planning up to 1-2 years (p. 5). The fact that this teacher gave an interpretation of SDP which is very close to international research can demonstrate that there is a deep understanding of SDP processes if not by every member of the school, then at least by some school representatives. This knowledge and understanding can be used for the benefit of an organization as “a within school variation”

(Reynolds, 2010, p. 596) which can be utilized because “every person is a change agent” as suggested by Fullan (1993, pp. 21-22). Or, more precisely, O’Hara and McNamara (2001) stress that “the goal is to improve schools from within by employing teachers as active agents of change within their own organizations” (p. 100).

The research participants who conceptualized SDP as a process agree on the fact that SDP should start with the analysis of the current situation. This relates to “the process of strategic analysis” described by Davies and Ellison (2003) as “three sequential processes: first, obtaining strategic data from a variety of sources; second, analyzing, interpreting and integrating these data to turn them into useful information; third, ... checking as to whether the organization’s context and culture make that option feasible” (p. 49). Although analysis in the quote is given as a second step, the authors clarify that “either a school can start with the analysis and write the plan or can have a planning framework and undertake the analysis to develop different courses of action within the plan” (p. 48). The perceptions of the research participants demonstrate a fairly deep understanding regarding how the process starts and what are the initial steps for planning.

Findings revealed an understanding that SDP should represent and involve collaborative efforts such as discussion, negotiations, reaching consensus on indicators and priorities of the school. This understanding is in line with most of the existing research and literature in the area which claims that SDP is a collaborative process (Government of Ireland, 1999; Harris, 2002, p. 5) and “direction setting as more of a shared responsibility” (Ylimaki, Gurr & Drysdale, 2011, p. 152) where all stakeholders are expected to not only take part in the process but to contribute meaningfully. Similarly, Altun and Aydin (2010) conclude that “it is necessary to appreciate the ideas of everybody taking part in the process” (p. 455).

The interviewees confessed that there is an external requirement for implementing SDP such as “bosses”, organizational goal, or accreditation. The data confirms the opinion that not only innovations tend to be imposed from outside, the schools have to implement them “within an unreasonably short time-frame” (Hopkins, 1994, p. 2). The same concern about time constraints was expressed by the current research participants and this is not new and characteristic of Kazakhstan only; this is what has happened in most educational systems worldwide when “multiple innovations have to be implemented simultaneously” (Hopkins, 1994, p. 2). The researchers proved that when educational change is externally pushed down, there is often “a great gulf between rhetoric and reality” (Sikes, 2013) because change threatens teachers. This contradicts the idea of the Learning school (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002), according to which, a school should develop from within because it knows itself very well and because the school “has learnt how to learn about itself” (p. 49). Similarly, Jones and Ross (1994) claim that SI is “not a process that can be implemented or sustained when imposed top-down” (p. 11) and “each school’s state of readiness and approach to the implementation process could not be hurried” (p. 12).

Evidence in this study proved that there are more advantages of SDP processes and the SDP such as coordination of activities, guidance, goal orientation and vision for an organization, than disadvantages both for the school and individuals in the school. Factors which affect SDP include leadership skills, human capacity of teachers, collaboration between colleagues and availability of time resources. These findings are important and were partly discussed above in this chapter and international research findings in this regard were argued in the Literature Review. What needs to be made clear here is that not only the qualities of a leader attain a significant importance, but also the concept of “sustained leadership”, according to which

“setting directions, developing people, developing the school, and managing teaching and learning are the key leadership areas of action that lead to improvement” (Ylimaki et al., 2011, p. 163).

Implementation of School Development Planning

The research site implements SDP in a way that it creates the SDP, although not all school members are involved in planning. The data revealed that there tends to be a selective involvement of school community members in SDP processes. Some teachers confirmed that they took part in SDP, as opposed to some leaders who are assumed to be involved but who said they were not engaged in planning. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1994) state that “school improvement often requires painful change in teacher practices, which is why their active participation in some form is a prerequisite for commitment to innovation” (p. 5). At the same time, the authors following Levine’s formulation that “little is known about how to shape and carry out the planning process” (p. 5), conclude that simply giving more authority and engaging teachers in decision-making “does not automatically improve schools” and “it cannot be assumed that all the appropriate skills are already held”. As data and findings proved in this study, it cannot be assumed in relation to the school leaders as well. Simply nominating former teachers to leadership positions does not guarantee the success in leadership roles. The educators were honest to say that they did not know how to prioritize their work, plan effectively, manage change appropriately and develop school culture as needed for SD. Learning is mandatory both in the perceptions of the participants in this study, in the Learning school theory where experiential learning cycle takes place (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002) and in the views of other researchers (Jones & Ross, 1994; Harris, 2002, p. 5).

There is no clear vision of the processes for SDP as suggested in the reviewed literature; processes are described as not fully working by the participants, or there is a different representation of the planning process steps. The evidence suggests that what is called design and implementation stages in the Irish model, they were described in depth; while review and evaluation stages were not highlighted by the participants. It can be concluded that either the latter two stages tend to be not appropriately implemented and are more likely to be neglected by the school or the participants, for some unknown reason, were not able to explain the two steps. Despite the fact that literature even proposes particular review instruments such as “surveys, questionnaires, interviews, checklists, evaluation grids, SCOT analysis forms” (Government of Ireland, 1999, p. 20) and scope of the review, the participants failed to describe the review stage in this light. The empirical research (Dunaway et al., 2012), including the current one, prove that “one critical aspect of organizational improvement was found to be consistently absent or vague - *measuring the effectiveness of the plan*” (p. 159). For example, there is a “sequential development process”, however, most of the US schools “stop short of including or explaining procedures for evaluating the impact of the plan” (p. 159). The same finding appeared to be true for the research site in this study, the review and evaluation stages were not depicted except for the attempts to articulate the frequency of the SDp review, which also varied, according to the participants, from every half-year to three years’ period.

The research revealed scarce information about the support available for SDP. It was restricted to formal and informal communications with the managing company, having templates and samples for a SDp. In addition, trainings for SDP were not listed as a support tool for schools. On the contrary, literature suggests that SDP is impossible without appropriate training and learning: “...assistance from the central office must be furnished primarily through technical

support from persons, not forms to fill out and deadlines to meet on paper” (Levine & Leibert, 1987, p. 407). Technical assistance is assumed from people who can help to develop agreements regarding priorities for change, who can help in identification of obstacles to change in practice and who can help in working out “solutions to complex problems” within particular school contexts (Levine & Leibert, 1987, p. 407).

Teacher One was not able to answer and comment most of the questions. This can mean that a) there is no formal introduction to the SDp, for example, during induction programs for novice teachers or b) the school does not prioritize the SDp and SDP in their daily regular work. The novice teacher had very restricted knowledge about SDP.

The participants appeared to express stronger confidence in regards to the SDp’s format to follow rather than explaining the processes which took place for planning. This can mean that there exists a more formalized approach to planning at the research site rather than a qualitative strategic view on planning. The leaders confirmed that planning was done as a compliance strategy and planning was treated and interpreted as an accountability tool.

The perceptions tended to depict SDP as a process for the creation of the plan mainly. Sometimes monitoring of the activities in the plan was mentioned. However, there is no vision of SDP processes as a cyclic process, consisting of four steps, as suggested in the literature (Government of Ireland, 1999).

SDP is described as fulfilling the events in the SDp. This perception is in conflict with international views and experience. For instance, Davies and Ellison (2003) propose that “instead of being the traditional school development plan “list of tasks to be done”, it would aggregate these numerous activities into a limited number of strategic areas” (p. 45). Therefore, instead of

planning a number of events, the school should focus on priorities and develop processes to address those priorities.

Challenges Faced in School Development Planning Implementation

Challenges which educators face appear to be universal. They include insufficient level of leadership skills of both teachers and school leaders (the principal, VPs, DHs), lack of relevant training and education for SDP, time constraints for planning, inappropriate school culture, including lack of collaboration among colleagues. Identifying priorities was described as an area of concern for school leaders because they felt that “everything in our school is a priority”. They reported about insufficient knowledge and skills in identifying the priorities for the SDP, likewise Davies and Ellison emphasize that “the important factor in this process is for the leader in the school to focus on aggregated strategic data and not to become involved in the detail of the action planning process” (2003, p. 45). The school leaders in the research site, according to the findings, were likely to be engaged more with day-to-day operational issues rather than focusing on global priorities.

Durrant and Holden (2006) identified three main elements in the “framework for school improvement” (p. 24) among which are “the givens”, “the strategic dimension” and “capacity building dimension”. The last element in this framework should not only address the development priorities but also “focus on internal, cultural conditions of the school”. Thus, SD is not merely “a technical matter of getting the job done, but an organic process that has as much to do with changing the culture of the school as with any specific pedagogical practices” (p. 24). It is believed that school cultures which are collaborative, have high expectations of students and staff who hold shared values, can form a solid foundation for authentic SD. This is in line with my research findings. Most of the participants as well as the practical guidelines (Government of

Ireland, 1999, p. 16) and research in the area (West, Jackson, Harris & Hopkins, 2000, p. 36) argue that school culture is the core for successful SDP. The learning school theory proposes the same vision, placing culture in the middle of school elements (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002). As a result, the data of this research agrees with the theory in this regard.

The research findings prove that there is restricted support for school teachers and leaders in implementing SDP processes. According to the data, support was limited to formal and informal communications with the Departments, having SDp samples or SDp templates to fill in. However, there was no substantial support in how to develop the school priorities, for instance, or how to create an effective plan. Although the documentary analysis revealed the existence of the official document prescribing the creation of the SDp, none of the research participants mentioned it or referred to it neither as a supporting resource, nor as a document clarifying the SDP nature. Whereas the reviewed literature describes that “each state provides school improvement planning guides and templates to assist schools in preparing school improvement plans” and “many states have support teams or specialists to help give advice to schools on the planning process” (Fernandez, 2011, p. 340). This means that internationally schools which are engaged in SDP and who are supposed to submit their SDps to the top management, e.g. Department of Education, tend to be supported in this process. They are likely to receive support in the form of consultancy, gaining guides and resources for planning, or having “inspectors” who provide external assistance to the school principal in SD by means of an open dialogue, when “representatives from the school and the inspectorate meet for a planning and negotiation meeting” (Dalin, 2005, p. 243).

Conclusion

Although there is no research of Kazakhstani origin about SDP and it was impossible to build an argument relying on and referring to the local contextual data and findings, what has been explored and proved in the international educational arena seem to match the current study's findings in terms of implementation and main challenges experienced in relation to SDP elsewhere in the world. Thus, interpretations of SDP and SIP vary from country to country, from institution to institution, from one author to the other. The same happened in this study. People from one school represented and interpreted the same concept of SDP differently, naming different factors which can affect it. Meanwhile, these diverse interpretations demonstrated a deep level of understanding of what SDP is. However, simply understanding cannot be sufficient for effective implementation of SDP because implementation implies the concurrent issues and challenges. In my case, the challenges were identical to the ones described in international research: capacity building, leadership skills, time constraints, reform being initiated "top-down".

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The research questions in this study aimed at identifying the educators' perceptions about how they understand and interpret SDP, how SDP is implemented in one public-funded school and what challenges are faced during its' implementation. The findings of this study, as discussed in the previous chapters, responded these questions. From analysis of the key findings, a number of conclusions emerged.

There is no single definition and understanding of SDP in one Kazakhstani school which proves the multidimensional character of the phenomenon under investigation. Whereas the stakeholders realize the significance of the processes, they struggle in implementing SDP effectively. Formal approach to planning seem to be dominating because the practitioners use the format of the SDp but, in terms of the contents, they experience challenges related to setting priorities, using and analyzing data for SD, building school culture appropriate for collaborative work and promoting further improvement. The two stages in SDP such as review and evaluation (Government of Ireland, 1999) tend to be neglected in practice at the research site. All findings in this study are in line with the international research. The experienced challenges appear to be quite universal.

Overall, according to the findings of this research, SDP is understood as both a document and a process by the school members who were interviewed. What tends to cause difficulties is implementation of SDP processes as prescribed in most literature sources, which can be because of no clear vision and knowledge of the logical processes for SDP which proved to be the case at the researched school. Furthermore, the participants in this study admitted that they lack the desired set of skills for leading SDP processes effectively and do not get the needed support from higher authorities in the form of practical trainings and resources, for instance.

Another conclusion that this study draws is that SDP is done more as a requirement to fulfill external demands than as a school-based initiative for SD. The school is accredited by CIS and therefore needs to comply with the regulations and demands of CIS, one of which is SDP. Therefore the SDP process involves mainly the school leadership and other members of the school community have only a little role in its development. To develop a shared understanding and collective vision as well as the required set of skills for SDP, it is important to involve all school community members, especially teachers, in the processes and all stages of SDP.

The last conclusion is that the quality of any SDP depends on the richness of data and in-depth analysis of the data covering all aspects of the school. Such a rich data requires the school to continuously examine its' structures, culture and processes, strengths and weaknesses. Based on such in-depth review, needs can be identified and prioritized and then fed into the SDP. At present, the school does not seem to having such a rigorous process of self-evaluation required to generate reliable data base for SDP.

Taking into consideration the findings and conclusions of this research, a number of recommendations arise.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

There are a number of recommendations for practice. If the reform is to be disseminated to mainstream schools in Kazakhstan, policy makers might think of providing:

- A deeper understanding of the nature, aims and strategies of SDP to school educators;
- Professional trainings and *constant* support for school leaders on how to develop and implement SDP;
- Clearly written guidelines and policies for Kazakhstani schools which would explain what SDP is and how it should be conducted in practice, describing each step of the SDP

process.

Both policy makers and school leaders might need to:

- Allow sufficient time for in-depth review of whole school activities, reflection and planning;
- Build the desired school culture and collaborative decision-making practices;
- Develop leadership skills and capacity of both teachers and leaders.

Limitations of the Study

My study revealed the perceptions of only a small group of people at one particular school. The perceptions of six educators described and analyzed in this research can represent a subjective view of the participants who took part in the study; the participants might have provided not a full picture of SDP processes. This might mean that the school does much more in reality than it was voiced during the interviews. Due to the fact that the study was designed as a case study, the results represent only one school and the views of a particular group of educators in this school. This does not represent a broader educational context of the country and other types of schools in Kazakhstan, i.e. rural school, lyceums, gymnasiums, mainstream schools in other regions. Since there is no “recipe” for SDP, the practices may differ from place to place and other schools might have applied different practices resulting in varying outcomes. So, if the same research was conducted in a different school, there is a likelihood of gaining different findings and results.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further research can explore the experiences of different types of schools, in different areas in Kazakhstan, as well as involve more and diverse population of participants such as parents and students. Employing mixed-method research design can contribute to including a

greater number of research participants and gaining broader and deeper insights about SDP processes.

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Appendix A

Invitation Letter to Participants

Dear school community member!

You are invited to kindly read this email carefully!

If you think this is not relevant to you, ignore and delete it.

My name is ----- . I am a second year graduate student at Nazarbayev University, Graduate School of Education (NUGSE). As part of my Master Degree Program at NUGSE, I plan to conduct a qualitative case study to explore the school leaders' and teachers' views and experiences of school development (SD) planning processes and associated challenges. This email is an advertisement for those who WANT to take part in this research!

The purpose of the study is NOT to evaluate the participants' knowledge or their performance of developing and implementing a SD plan but to explore their views and reflections on how they experience the process of SD planning, and the suggestions they may offer for improving the SD planning process.

Procedures: This email is an invitation to **voluntarily** participate in the study. Six participants will be invited to take part in ONE face-to-face individual interview. The purpose of the interview is to explore the participants' views, feelings and experiences of SD planning and any suggestions they may have for further improvement of this process. The interview will take approximately 40 - 50 minutes.

There are no risks for participating in this study and anonymity and confidentiality are fully assured. There is no compensation for participating in this study.

If YOU are ready to make a contribution to my research or if you need more explanation or have additional questions, please feel free to contact ME in person, or by email at (-----) or by phone number 8 701 XXX XX XX. Other important information related to confidentiality and anonymity, risks and benefits of the study will be provided in the consent form to those staff members, who will express their interest to participate in this study.

Please, make sure you keep all information strictly confidential!!! (e.g., make sure you DO NOT send an email to the WHOLE staff mailbox or DO NOT send it to the group's mailbox)

Sincerely,

Graduate student of Nazarbayev University,

Graduate School of Education

Приложение А

Письмо-приглашение участникам

Уважаемый член школьного сообщества!

Пожалуйста, внимательно прочтите данное письмо!

Если Вы считаете, что оно к Вам не имеет никакого отношения, удалите его.

Меня зовут ----- . Я - магистрант второго курса Высшей Школы Образования, Назарбаев Университета (ВШО, НУ). В рамках магистерской программы в ВШО, НУ я планирую провести кейс стади. Целью является изучение мнений и опыта лидеров школы и учителей о процессах по планированию развития школы и связанных с этим проблемами. Данное письмо - это приглашение для тех, кто ХОЧЕТ принять участие в данном исследовании!

Целью исследования НЕ является оценивание знаний участников или их деятельности по написанию и внедрению плана развития школы. Цель - исследовать мнения и рефлексии участников по поводу их опыта по процессам планирования развития школы, а также какие предложения по улучшению они могут дать.

Процедуры: Данное письмо - это приглашение принять участие в данном исследовании на **волонтерской** основе. Шесть участников будут приглашены на ОДНО индивидуальное интервью. Цель интервью - исследовать взгляды, убеждения и опыт по планированию развития школы, а также любые рекомендации для дальнейшего улучшения данного процесса. Интервью займет примерно 40 - 50 минут.

Участие в данном исследовании не несет никаких рисков, анонимность и конфиденциальность полностью гарантированы. За участие в данном исследовании не будет выплачена компенсация.

Если ВЫ готовы внести свой вклад в мое исследование или Вам необходимы дальнейшие разъяснения, либо у Вас есть дополнительные вопросы, пожалуйста свяжитесь со мной лично, либо по имейлу (-----), или по номеру телефона 8 701 XXX XX XX. Остальная важная информация об обеспечении конфиденциальности и анонимности, рисках и преимуществах данного исследования, будет предоставлена в форме-согласии тем сотрудникам, кто проявит интерес к участию в исследовании.

Пожалуйста, удостоверьтесь, что Вы сохраните всю информацию сугубо конфиденциально!!! (н-р, убедитесь, что Вы НЕ рассылаете письмо всему школьному коллективу или НЕ рассылаете письмо в почтовый ящик группы).

С уважением,

Магистрант Назарбаев Университета,

Высшая Школа Образования

Appendix B

Interview Protocol (contains sample interview questions)

Date: _____

Start time: _____

Finish time: _____

Location: _____

Interviewee's name: _____

Job position: _____

Number of years worked at this school: _____

- Arrivals and greetings
- Introduction to the research project and purposes
- Brief description of the interview procedures
- Checking if the consent form has been signed
- Reminding the rights of the participants
- Tech preparation and sound checks
- Starting the interview

Questions	Notes on the responses	Researcher's reflective notes
1) Do you have a SD plan at your school? Who creates it?		
2) In your own words, can you define SDP?		
3) Describe the steps which you follow for SDP at your school?		
4) What difficulties or obstacles do you experience in SDP? Enumerate three biggest challenges.		
5) How do you cope with or address these challenges?		
6) What support and resources are available to you for developing a SDp?		

Приложение В

Протокол интервью (содержит примеры вопросов)

Дата: _____

Время начала интервью: _____

Время окончания интервью: _____

Место: _____

Имя участника интервью: _____

Должность: _____

Сколько лет проработал в этой школе: _____

- Прибытие и приветствие
- Введение в проект исследования и цели исследования
- Короткое описание процедуры интервью
- Проверка подписана ли форма согласия
- Напоминание о правах участника интервью
- Техническая подготовка и проверка звука
- Начало интервью

Вопросы	Заметки по ответам	Рефлексивные записи исследователя
1) У Вас в школе есть План Развития школы (ПРШ)? Кто его создает/пишет?		
2) Своими словами, можете Вы дать определение понятию планирование развития школы?		
3) Опишите этапы, которым Вы следуете при планировании развития в Вашей школе?		
4) Какие трудности или препятствия Вы испытывали при планировании развития школы? Назовите три самые большие трудности.		
5) Как Вы справляетесь или как работаете с данными трудностями?		
6) Какая поддержка или ресурсы Вам доступны для создания ПРШ?		

Appendix C

Timeline of the Research Steps

Date	Actions
October 2018	Submit Ethics Application Form
November 2018	Gain permission from the gatekeeper (Letter) Recruit and select interview participants (Email) Negotiate with the interviewees (Consent form) Start document analysis
December 2018	Schedule interviews Conduct two interviews Start transcribing interviews Continue document analysis
January 2019	Conduct four interviews Transcribe interviews Continue document analysis Start coding interview transcripts
February 2019	Finish transcribing interviews Continue coding interview transcripts Start data analysis (rereading transcripts)

March 2019	Data analysis
April 2019	Write Preliminary findings
May – June 2019	Write Findings and Conclusions

Appendix D

Permission from Gatekeeper

Dear Principal!

My name is ----- . I am a second year graduate student at Nazarbayev University, Graduate School of Education (NUGSE). This letter is a request to conduct a research study at your school. As part of my Master Degree Program at NUGSE, I plan to conduct a qualitative case study to explore the school leaders' and teachers' views and experiences of school development (SD) planning processes and associated challenges. The purpose of the study is NOT to evaluate the participants' knowledge or their performance of developing and implementing a SD plan but to explore their views and reflections on how they experience the process of SD planning, and the suggestions they may offer for improving the SD planning process. Therefore, I request for your permission to conduct my study at your school. I would greatly appreciate your support in providing access to the location, school documents, staff members and their corporate emails! Upon your permission, I will also invite you to take part in ONE face-to-face individual interview as a research participant.

Procedures: Upon your permission, I will send out an email to teaching staff's corporate emails about the research purpose and procedures and will invite them to voluntarily participate in the study. After receiving expression of interest from the participants, I will select only six participants comprising school leadership and teachers. I will then invite them to take part in ONE face-to-face individual interview of about 40-50 minutes. The purpose of the interview is to explore the participants' views, feelings and experiences of SD planning and any suggestions they may have for further improvement of this process.

I will also request to have access to school documents for analysis. The documents can include different versions of SD plans, meeting notes, departmental plans or training materials as well as other prescriptive documents for SD planning processes.

Benefits and risks: There are no more than minimal risks to the research participants. The only potential risk is the possible breach of anonymity and confidentiality and I will ensure that this never happens by taking the measures discussed below. The benefits for the research participants and the site include making a contribution to the generation of new knowledge about SD planning in Kazakhstani context. Along with that, during interviews by verbalizing the processes followed and the challenges met, the participants will reflect on their own experiences and daily practices resulting in a deeper and better understanding of SD planning processes.

Anonymity and confidentiality: As the researcher from NUGSE, I will fully comply with the ethical protocols of Nazarbayev University and ensure that all obtained information will remain strictly confidential. I will not use real names of the school and participants in any part of this study. Instead, I will use codes or pseudonyms for the school and participants to protect their identity. However, I cannot guarantee full confidentiality for various reasons (e.g., access to corporate emails by third parties, breach of confidentiality by some of the participants etc.). All the responses from individual interviews will be kept anonymous and de-identified in the research report as well as in any publications and presentations from this study.

If you need more explanation or have additional questions, please feel free to contact ME in person, or by email at (-----) or by phone number 8 701 XXX XX XX. After granting permission, if you are not satisfied with the way the study is conducted, you can withdraw your permission or contact my supervisor at +7XXXXXXX or NUGSE Research Committee at -----

----- . If YOU are ready to make a contribution to my research, please sign and return this letter to me at your earliest.

Sincerely,

Graduate student of NUGSE

By signing this letter, I confirm that I give my permission for carrying out this research

Principal,

(write your name and surname)

_____ day / _____ month / _____ year

Appendix E

Informed consent form for participants

TITLE: “Educators’ Perceptions about School Development Planning: A Qualitative Case Study of One Kazakhstani School”

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY: You are invited to voluntarily participate in this research study, which will explore the teachers’ and leaders’ perceptions of the processes of school development (SD) planning in one Kazakhstani school. The aim of the study is to produce empirical data on how SD planning is understood by school leaders and teachers; the processes which are followed by school members in implementing SD planning; and the main challenges which educators face and experience in practice when incorporating SD planning into school life. This exploration can inform educators about how to further improve the process and effectiveness of SD planning.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: The interview will take approximately 40 - 50 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are no more than minimal risks to the research participants. The only potential risk is the possible breach of anonymity and confidentiality and I will ensure that this never happens by taking the measures discussed below. The benefits for the research participants and the site include making a contribution to the generation of new knowledge about SD planning in Kazakhstani context. Along with that, during interviews by verbalizing the processes followed and the challenges met, the participants will reflect on their own experiences and daily practices resulting in a deeper and better understanding of SD planning processes.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY: As the researcher from NUGSE, I will fully comply with the ethical protocols of Nazarbayev University and ensure that all obtained information will remain strictly confidential. For keeping your anonymity, I will not name the school and

participants or directly link comments to individuals. Instead, I will use codes or numbers, where numbers will not imply the seniority of the position but will help to keep you de-identified.

Similarly, no gender assumption can be made either, in this way. Notes for identifying personality will be kept in my code book, passworded and available to me only. All interview transcripts and audio files will be saved in password protected files on my own personal computer. All hard copies of transcripts and other data will be kept in a locked cabinet accessible to me only. Some data such as excerpts of interviews or quotes from document analysis could be available to the broader audience in publications, final thesis, conferences and workshops, but no individual names or other personally identifiable information will be attached. The full confidentiality will be attempted but I cannot guarantee it for various reasons (e.g., access to corporate emails by third parties, breach of confidentiality by some of the participants etc.)

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. During the interview, whenever you feel uncomfortable to answer any question/questions, feel free to let the researcher know about that. In such cases, you can skip the question or stop the interview or ask the researcher to go to the next question.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have any questions about this research, contact the Thesis Supervisor at, -----

If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns about your rights as a participant, please contact NUGSE Research Committee at

gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz

By signing this consent, you confirm that:

- You have carefully read the information provided;

- You have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- You understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researcher and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- You know that the collected data can be used in publications and presentations;
- You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, you agree to participate in this study.

Please sign this form and return to the researcher. One copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Приложение Е

Информированное согласие для участников

ТЕМА ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ: “Восприятие Планирования Развития Школы Педагогами: Качественное Исследование Кейс Стади Одной Школы в Казахстане”

ОПИСАНИЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ: Вы приглашены добровольно принять участие в исследовании, которое направлено на изучение восприятия процессов планирования развития школы (ПРШ) лидерами школ и учителями в одной школе Казахстана. Цель исследования - получение эмпирических данных о том, как школьные руководители и учителя понимают ПРШ; процессы, которым следуют члены школьного сообщества при осуществлении ПРШ; и основные проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются педагоги на практике при внедрении ПРШ в реальность. Данное исследование может информировать педагогов о том, как еще больше улучшить процесс и эффективность ПРШ.

ВРЕМЯ: Интервью займет примерно 40 - 50 минут.

РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА: Участие в данном исследовании не несет никаких рисков для участников. Единственный риск - это возможное нарушение конфиденциальности, но я предприму меры, описанные ниже, для предотвращения того, чтобы это не произошло. Преимущества для участников и школы включают внесение вклада в развитие новых знаний в области ПРШ в контексте Казахстана. Вдобавок, во время интервью через озвучивание процессов ПРШ и трудностей в их реализации, участники будут рефлексировать над своим опытом и повседневными практиками, что позволит лучше и глубже понять процессы ПРШ.

КОНФИДЕНЦИАЛЬНОСТЬ И АНОНИМНОСТЬ: В качестве исследователя ВШО НУ, я буду придерживаться этических норм протокола НУ и обеспечу полную

конфиденциальность полученных данных. Для сохранения вашей анонимности, я не буду называть своими именами участников и школу, либо напрямую присваивать комментарии людям. Вместо этого я буду использовать коды либо цифры, где цифры не будут подразумевать иерархию по занимаемой должности, а наоборот, помогут сохранить информацию обезличенной. Также, таким образом, невозможно будет определить пол участника. Заметки по определению личности участника будут сохранены в моей книге кодов, под паролем и доступной только мне. Все тексты интервью и аудиофайлы будут сохранены в защищенных паролем файлах, на моем личном компьютере. Все распечатанные транскрипты интервью и другие данные будут храниться в шкафчике под ключом, доступном только мне. Некоторые данные, такие как отрывки интервью либо цитаты из анализа документации могут быть доступны широкой публике через публикации, в окончательной версии диссертации, в презентациях на конференциях и семинарах, но имена участников либо личная узнаваемая информация не будут использованы. Попытки сохранить полную конфиденциальность будут предприняты, но я не могу ее гарантировать по различным причинам (н-р, доступ к корпоративной почте третьими лицами, нарушение конфиденциальности самими участниками и т.д.)

ПРАВА УЧАСТНИКОВ: У Вас есть право отказаться от участия в исследовании в любое время, не называя причину. Во время интервью, в случае нежелания отвечать на любой вопрос/ы, дайте знать исследователю об этом. В таких случаях, Вы можете пропустить вопрос, либо остановить интервью, либо попросить исследователя перейти к следующему вопросу.

КОНТАКТНЫЕ ДАННЫЕ:

Если у Вас есть какие-либо вопросы об исследовании, свяжитесь с руководителем исследования по _____.

Если Вы недовольны тем, как проводится исследование, либо у Вас есть сомнения о Ваших правах в качестве участника, пожалуйста свяжитесь с Комитетом по Исследованиям по gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz

Подписывая данное согласие, Вы подтверждаете, что:

- Вы внимательно прочли предоставленную информацию;
- Вам была предоставлена полная информация относительно целей и процедур исследования;
- Вы понимаете, как будут использованы собранные данные, а также то, что любая конфиденциальная информация будет доступна только исследователю и не будет раскрыта никому;
- Вы знаете, что собранные данные могут быть использованы в публикациях и презентациях;
- Вы понимаете, что Вы вправе в любое время отказаться от участия в исследовании без указания причины;
- С полным пониманием всего перечисленного, Вы согласны принять участие в исследовании.

Пожалуйста, подпишите данное согласие и верните исследователю. Одна копия данного подписанного и датированного согласия для Вас.

Роспись: _____

Дата: _____