## ПСИХОЛОГИЯ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКАЯ ПСИХОЛОГИЯ
### EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND PEDAGOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

# Psychosocial Profiling of "Successful School Principal" in Russian Metropolis

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Researchers all over the world are studying principals from different perspectives attempting to draw a successful school principal psychosocial profile. The authors used a qualitative approach which comprised focus groups with principals and deputies to unveil leadership practices and their perceptions of key characteristics essential for "a successful leader". The study revealed five domains of the psychosocial profile of a Metropolis principal (building relationships, leading the organization, behaving in urgent or uncertain situations, school management, and school improvement). The authors highlighted similarities and differences in characteristics of a Russian Metropolis principal driven by specificity of the context while comparing with international profiles. "Successful principal" is expected to be an effective communicator and possess such personal traits as honesty, fairness, and empathy in Russia as well as in other countries. The peculiarity of the Russian Metropolis school principal profile is a focus on administering skills (operational-visionary, procedural, delegation competence) which were not identified in the international bulk of studies. Moreover, solving conflicts and being assertive are also key characteristics of the Metropolis principal.

*Keywords:* school principals, school leadership, psychosocial profiling, competences, Russian metropolis.

# Психосоциальный портрет успешного директора школы российского мегаполиса

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Исследователи во всем мире изучают директоров школ с разных сторон, пытаясь составить психосоциальный профиль успешного директора школы. Авторы использовали качественный подход, который включал проведение фокус-группы с директорами и заместителями школ мегаполиса для выявления

управленческих практик и представлений о ключевых характеристиках успешного лидера. По результатам исследования авторы выделили пять доменов психосоциального профиля директора школы мегаполиса: выстраивание отношений, ведение организации, управление в ситуации неопределенности, менеджмент и улучшение школы. Авторы выделили сходства и различия в характеристиках директора школы российского Мегаполиса, обусловленные спецификой контекста, при сравнении с профилями других стран. Результаты исследования выявили, что успешный директор, как в России, так и за рубежом, должен быть эффективным коммуникатором и обладать такими личностными характеристиками, как честность, справедливость и эмпатия. Особенностью профиля директора школы российского мегаполиса является акцент на навыках администрирования (операционное видение, управление процессами и способность к делегированию), которые не были выявлены в международных исследованиях. Более того, умение решать конфликты и проявлять решительность также являются ключевыми характеристиками директора школы мегаполиса.

***Ключевые слова:*** директор школы, управление школой, лидерство, психосоциальное профилирование, компетенции, российский мегаполис.

## Introduction

The significance of constructing a psychosocial profile of personality is confirmed by various research and practices [4; 9; 11 36; 37]. A psychosocial analysis may highlight the interrelationship between the psychic and social, demonstrating an in-depth analysis of the situated nature of an individual's experiences in different job roles. This is particularly crucial in the leadership context as leaders are responsible for influencing, inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and nurturing their staff [19; 30].

When discussing the concept of a psychosocial profile it is important to note that this term is predominantly found in medical research. However, there is a growing body of studies attempting to develop psychosocial profiles of pre-service [9] and music teachers [11], students etc. The definition most aligned with our study was proposed by Roslan, Sharifah (2012) who described a psychosocial profile as a set of psychosocial characteristics, typically shaped by professionals` background and environment [41]. Additionally, the psychosocial characteristics of a leader's personality work as factors forming his communication style and management practices [17], and also shape its well-being and workability [23; 24; 34; 45].

Researchers have endeavored to create profiles of leaders across various fields [1; 6; 14; 41], but most of these studies are framed within the contexts of leadership theory or management practices [22; 31], often neglecting the psychosocial aspects of personality. Information regarding the psychosocial and emotional characteristics, viewing these traits as competences [37], is also getting special attention from companies who want not only to consider knowledge and professional background of the candidates but also possess comprehensive information [8]. A similar trend can be observed in the assessment of school principals' psychosocial profiles that are used to evaluate future candidates for

these roles [37] and prevent a global crisis of recruitment and retention of school leaders [15; 17; 43].

A school principal today is a key figure in general education responsible for building relationships among various participants in the educational process, establishing a schoolwide vision committed to high standards and the success of all students, and steering the organization towards achieving these goals [25; 35]. The preparation of a successful leader requires not only extensive knowledge but an exploration of the traits and skills that shape their psychosocial profile. Zaccaro et al. (2004) highlighted the importance of psychological attributes and advocated for a broader analysis of personality traits working together. They argued that leadership is best predicted by a mix of cognitive abilities, personality orientations, motives and values, social judgment skills, problem-solving competencies, and general and subject-specific experience [48]. Moreover, psychosocial profiling of prospective principals helps in understanding their psychological readiness for principal's role [2; 14], and facilitates the development of psychometric tools for assessing the competencies of both future and current principals [18; 28; 37].

It is important to note that psychological profiling of school principals varies within different contexts. In American and British educational leadership assessments, the focus is on the transformational and instructional aspects of leadership. Both constructs are reflected in various indicators of principals' behavior. For instance, transformational leadership emphasizes an ability of the school leader to positively influence school climate and culture through their actions [32], requiring them to demonstrate charisma and the ability to intellectually stimulate their staff. In Indonesia the social aspect of the country demands from the principal to be not only objective, democratic, friendly, honest, disciplined, assertive, able to control emotions, appreciate, motivate, fair and strong but also reli-

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giously observant and considerate of religious peculiarities in policy implementation [44]. In South Africa, competences for school leaders include agility, communication, expressiveness, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving, and creativity [10].

Russian researchers have also attempted to profile a successful principal. However, none have specifically addressed the unique demands of the Metropolis education system which requires particular psychological traits and competencies due to the specific principals' responsibilities [2]. The need to study Russian metropolises' school principals separately has been emphasized in other studies [3; 33]. Nevertheless, the existing research on Metropolis school leaders' profile mostly focuses on leadership practices and decision-making styles of principals [3; 33].

Thus, this study aims to profile a Russian Metropolis school principal defining their psychosocial characteristics and examining them in the context of international experience. In fact, creating a distinct psychosocial profile of a Russian Metropolis principal is crucial as it reflects a unique context with a centralized system where school principals manage large educational complexes. The findings of this research can be utilized to develop various assessment tools for measuring the competencies of Metropolis school principals and comparing their profiles with international views. Additionally, they provide a foundation for enhancing school leadership practices that contribute to overall school performance and give some possible explanation why some current principals can leave or do not effectively enough do their job [43].

## Literature review

Researchers all over the world have been attempting to establish a successful school leadership profile using various approaches over the years [10; 21; 26; 27; 38]. The bulk of studies portraying leadership profiles is based on the analysis of "successful" leadership practices [21; 26; 27]. The characteristics defining "a successful principal" often include instructional, transformational, distributed leadership. Kilag et al. (2023) propose that a school leader should be an effective communicator as it is crucial for a principal to build relations inside and outside the school [16]. Strategic planning, problem-solving and decision-making, motivation and proficiency are other characteristics highlighted by the authors [16]. Similarly, Gurr (2015) draws the profile on the theories of instructional and transformational leadership, but also highlights personal traits essential for a successful school principal, such as trustworthiness, honesty, heroism, empathy, openness etc. [27].

Significant research has also been focused on analyzing principals' reflections and perceptions of what constitutes leadership and their professional development needs [29; 38]. In this way, Aydin et al. (2021) identified the skills school principals stated they need to develop (leadership, problem solving, empathetic communication etc.) [38]. Kara and Ert rk (2015) profiled school leaders comprising personality traits (honesty, fairness, trustworthiness etc.), behavioral characteristics (innovativeness, taking risks, solution-oriented etc.), skills (communication, management, empathy skills etc.), physical characteristics (charismatic) [29].

A vast array of research is focused on the competences required for school leaders to ensure quality education and school improvement [10; 12]. Thus, recent studies emphasize the importance of continuous professional development for principals to keep pace with the Fourth Industrial revolution and face the challenges it poses [10]. In fact, it is vital that school principals upgrade their skills to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving environment. The authors draw a new portrait of a South African principal listing essential skills due to the emergence of AI and other technologies: agility, information management and evaluation, communication expressiveness, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity [10]. The authors argue that developing these skills is crucial for principals to integrate innovative approaches into school leadership.

A separate part of literature review involved analyzing professional standards worldwide, as these documents encapsulate expectations set by the context and define leadership directions. Professional standards for school principals in various countries (Australia, Germany, UK) encompass key tasks and directions for leadership practice but often do not focus on profiling. However, the professional standard in the Netherlands stands out because, in addition to leadership practices, it defines personal traits of a school principal such as extraversion, humanity, conscientiousness, determination etc [40].

School leadership profiles can also be identified when analyzing existing psychometric tools for assessing principals' traits. For instance, the Caring School Leadership Questionnaire (CSLQ) [46] that measures school leaders ' emotional intelligence. The CSLQ contains structured Likert-type items with four response options ranging from "not at all" to "to a large extent", divided into three determinants: psychological, workplace/organizational and management. The questionnaire demonstrated good psychometric properties with reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) for all three determinants above 0.9, and validity confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Psychological determinants of caring leadership include emotional intelligence, interest in the person by displaying, meeting psychological needs, intrinsic motivation etc.

Another instrument aimed at measuring different competences of school principals is the online-based Competence Profile School Management (CPSM) tool [28]. The instrument combines several self-reflection scales to measure 24 key characteristics (tab. 1). The CPSM tries to integrate different perspectives of cognitive abilities and personality dispositions such as assertiveness, achievement motivation, ambiguity tolerance (tab. 1). The items from existing scales were reworded to fit the school context. This instrument demonstrated high reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) mostly between 0.70 and 0.86. However, it is important to consider the relatively small sample size (n=396), which may bias the results.

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Overall, finding valid instruments for assessing school leaders' personal traits in the research world is more complicated compared to the business sphere, where there are many more psychometric tools available. Even schools have begun employing services from HR companies. One example is the "School Principal Test" [42] designed to select candidates with strong intellectual skills capable of handling large amounts of information and making decisions. This test was created by "Creative Organizational Design", Canada's largest independent supplier of pre-screening assessment tools. The test battery contains three parts: a 171-question personality inventory, a 44-item test of mental ability (about equal number of items for verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, and abstract reasoning), and 46 open-ended statements to which the candidate must type in short answers. It aims to measure conscientiousness, strong moral code, agreeableness, intelligence among others.

The mentioned literature was further systemized so that we can see the palette of characteristics and competencies relevant and crucial for school leadership. In Table 1 we demonstrate all the characteristics which appeared and collided across various studies, instruments and standards. It must be mentioned that the list of characteristics which appeared in only one of the studies or did not collide with other studies are not presented in the table (such as analytical thinking [28], competitiveness [42], perfectionist [29], idealist [29], altruism [47] etc). Such a systematization revealed that empathy, fairness, honesty, and firmness are the most common personal characteristics met in the leadership profiles. Meanwhile, only a few countries expect a leader to be solution-oriented, innovative, rational, curious, industrious, agile, resilient, democratic, committed, people-oriented, stress-resistant or have humanity. This highlights the necessity for drawing school principals' psychosocial profiles as they are context specific and are influenced by existing educational systems, cultural peculiarities and approaches to leadership.

## Sample

The study took place in one of the largest Russian Metropolises which comprises over 500 schools. A unique feature of this Metropolis is that schools are organized into large educational complexes. Thus, 80% of the schools have five and more buildings, which can be located in different districts.

The sample included seven principals and five deputy-principals from 12 different schools (4 males) within the metropolis from 5 different districts, primarily from the southern part. On average, the respondents had M=16.91 (SD = 4.38) years of teaching experience. Ten participants had between 12 to 18 years of teaching experience, while two had over 20 years. The average managerial experience among the respondents was M=6.55 (SD=2.73) years with a range from 1 to 9 years. This diverse range of experience allowed for a well-rounded assessment of the traits that contribute to a successful school principal.

The focus group sessions were facilitated by two moderators. All respondents verbally agreed to be recorded.

## Methods

We are following the behavior analysis methodology proposed by Feldman and Valenty (2001) which consists of three steps: collecting o qualitative data on the behavior of principals in a Russian metropolis through focus groups, categorizing this information into content categories, and analyzing to identify the key competencies of successful principal [39].

To carry out the research we used the conceptual framework of a school principal matrix developed by the Laboratory for School leadership at the Institute of Education, HSE University. The matrix was created based on the School Principal Professional Standard [5], certification requirements for principals, interviews with school principals and deputies of the Metropolis, and analyses of professional profiles and dimensions of successful school leadership in other countries. In this way, the matrix encompasses key leadership directions, tasks, and focuses specific to principal in the metropolis context. The matrix comprises four main leadership directions: educational process, school administration, school improvement, and interaction and collaboration with stakeholders.

The school principal matrix served as a foundation for our focus group sessions with principals and their deputies enabling us to unveil leadership practices. Overall, we carried three focus group sessions with experienced principals and deputies of a Russian Metropolis. Each session was divided into two parts and lasted five hours with a 30-minute break:

**1 part.** Respondents were asked to uncover the components within the matrix directions. For instance, "educational process" direction which includes elements such as defining school mission, educational program development etc. should have been presented by real-life behavioral manifestations of leadership. The procedure was carried out in several steps:
- individually;
- in pairs;
- in a group of four.

This approach allowed a detailed examination of the leadership practices in the Metropolis.

**2 part.** The respondents were asked to share the issues and challenges they faced within particular directions of the matrix:
- each respondent developed their own list;
- the respondents lists were combined;
- respondents were asked to rank the issues;
- respondents were asked to develop solutions in pairs and to create a list of leadership characteristics needed to address the issue.

The results of the discussions were recorded using the iPhone 12 audio recorder "Voice Memos" app and transcribed manually by the authors of the article afterwards. The mean of the overall volume of analyzed transcripts is 47299.67 (SD=7068.06).

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T a b l e

**School principals' psychosocial profiles across studies**

| Required leadership skills | | Conceptual framework | School principal standards | Principals' perceptions of Leadership | Successful principals' characteristics | | Scales to measure competencies | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boshkovska (2022) [6] | Awodiji, Naicker (2023) | Fernandes, Wong, Noonan (2023) | | Kara, Ertürk (2015) | Kilag, Heyrosa-Malbas, Ibañez, Samson, Sasan (2023) | Gurr (2015) | The Competence Profile School Management (CPSM) (Huber Hiltmann (2011)) | School Principal Test | The Caring School Leadership Questionnaire |
| Macedonia | South Africa | International study | Netherlands | Turkey | Philippines | International study | International study | Canada | South Africa |
| Honesty | | | Honesty | Honest | | Honesty | | | Honesty |
| Fairness | | | Conscientiousness | Fair | | Fairness | | Conscientiousness | Fairness |
| Trust | | | | Trustworthy | | Trust | | | Trust |
| | | | Courage | Courageous | | Heroic | | | |
| | Creativity | | Creativity | Creative | | | | | |
| | | | Determination | Resolved | | | Assertiveness | Assertive | |
| | | | Openness | Frank, Open | | Openness | | Openness to new experience | |
| | | | | Coherent | | Persistent | | | Consistency |
| | | | Wisdom and insight | Intelligent, Knowledgeable | | | | Clever | |
| Warmth | | Empathy | Empathy | Empathy | | Empathy | Empathy | | Empathy |
| | | | | Innovative | | | Active pursuit of innovation | | |
| | | Self-regulate | Reserve | Modest | | Humbleness | | | |
| Firmness | | | | Principled | | Ethics of care | | Strong moral code | Morality |
| | | | | Solution oriented | | | Achievement motivation | | |
| | | | | Rational | | | Recognizing feasibility limits | | |
| | | | | Industrious | | | Readiness to work | | |
| | | | Transparency | High moral standards | | Transparent | | | |
| | | | | Tolerant | | Tolerant | Ambiguity tolerance | | Acceptance of others as they are |
| | | | | Inquisitive | | Curiosity | | | |
| | | | | Democratic | | Democratic | | | |
| | | | | Takes initiative | | | | | |
| Enthusiasm | | | | | | | Work motivation, enthusiasm | Work motivation | |
| | Critical thinking & problem solving | | | | Problem-solving & decision-making | | | | |

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| Required leadership skills | Conceptual framework | School principal standards | Principals' perceptions of Leadership | Successful principals' characteristics | Scales to measure competencies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communi-cation expressiveness | Social skills | | Communication skills | Effective communication | |
| | Self-aware | Reflection | Recognizes accomplishment | | Self monitoring |
| | Ability to change | | | | Readiness to criticism |
| Collaboration | Collaboration | tact and listening | | | Collaboration |
| | | Extroversion | | | Agreeableness |
| | | | | | Extroversion |
| | Adaptability | Flexibility, adaptability | | | |
| Agility | Flexibility (agile) | Systems thinking (conceptual skills) | | | Process thinking |
| | Self-regulation | Self-regulation | | | |
| | Quick thinking and action | | | | Speed of thought |
| | | | | Motivation | Leadership motivation |
| | | | | | Intrinsic motivation |
| | Work within an uncertain environment | | | Optimistic | Optimistic |
| | | | | | Cheerfulness |
| | | | | | Stress resistance |
| | Handles complexity well | | | | Handles complexity well |
| | | Alertness (social skills) | | Alertness | |
| | | Friendliness (personality traits) | | Benevolence | |
| | | | | Resilient | Avoiding influence of others |
| | | | | People oriented | Interest in the person by displaying |
| | | | | Respectfulness | Respect |
| | | Humanity | | | Love for others |
| Humility | | | | | Commitment |
| | | | | | Affiliation motive |

The research employs content analysis methods as part of its qualitative methodology approach. We are following the schemes suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) which includes six steps: familiarizing yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searches for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report [13].

## Results

Both authors read all the transcripts to familiarize themselves with the full scope of the data containing various cases from Russian Metropolis principals' daily routine. After that, we systematized the findings of the study into groups representing different principal practices according to the matrix used for data collection: educational process, administration of school, school improvement, and interaction and collaboration with stakeholders. The matrix itself and the focus group approach enabled us to develop a collective profile of a successful school principal in the Metropolis considering not only context-specific requirements but also principals' perceptions, experience, and practices. The focus group sessions allowed us to observe different leadership situations and challenges across various activities which were then analyzed to identify and classify the key competences of a successful principal.

In the process of the analysis, it became clear that matrix titles did not explain the usage of specific behavioral characteristics and personality traits, thus we renamed and enlarged the list of identified domains. As a result, we got a psychosocial profile of a Metropolis principal consisting of five domains: **building relationships, leading the organization, behaving in urgent or uncertain situations, school management, and school improvement**. Each domain comprises skills which can be intertwined between the domains (fig. 1). The focus group session data analysis revealed that when exercising one operation principals can use several competences at once, for instance the importance of delegation skills was highlighted in school management and behaving in urgent or uncertain situation domains.

After identifying the domains, we searched for and reviewed the themes using a table for the inductive coding [7]. This table has two columns: one for transcribing the fragments divided into sentences and another for the codes to each fragment based on the competences titles listed in Table 1. Below are some excerpts from these quotations.

The Russian Metropolis principals emphasized that they spend most of the time building relationships, including communication with educational authorities, teachers, students, co-workers, etc. Based on their behavior patterns in this domain, competences such as **communication, adaptability, and emotional intelligence — including its components like self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management** [20] — were identified:

*"This is communication, the ability to build communication in conditions of certain conflict".*
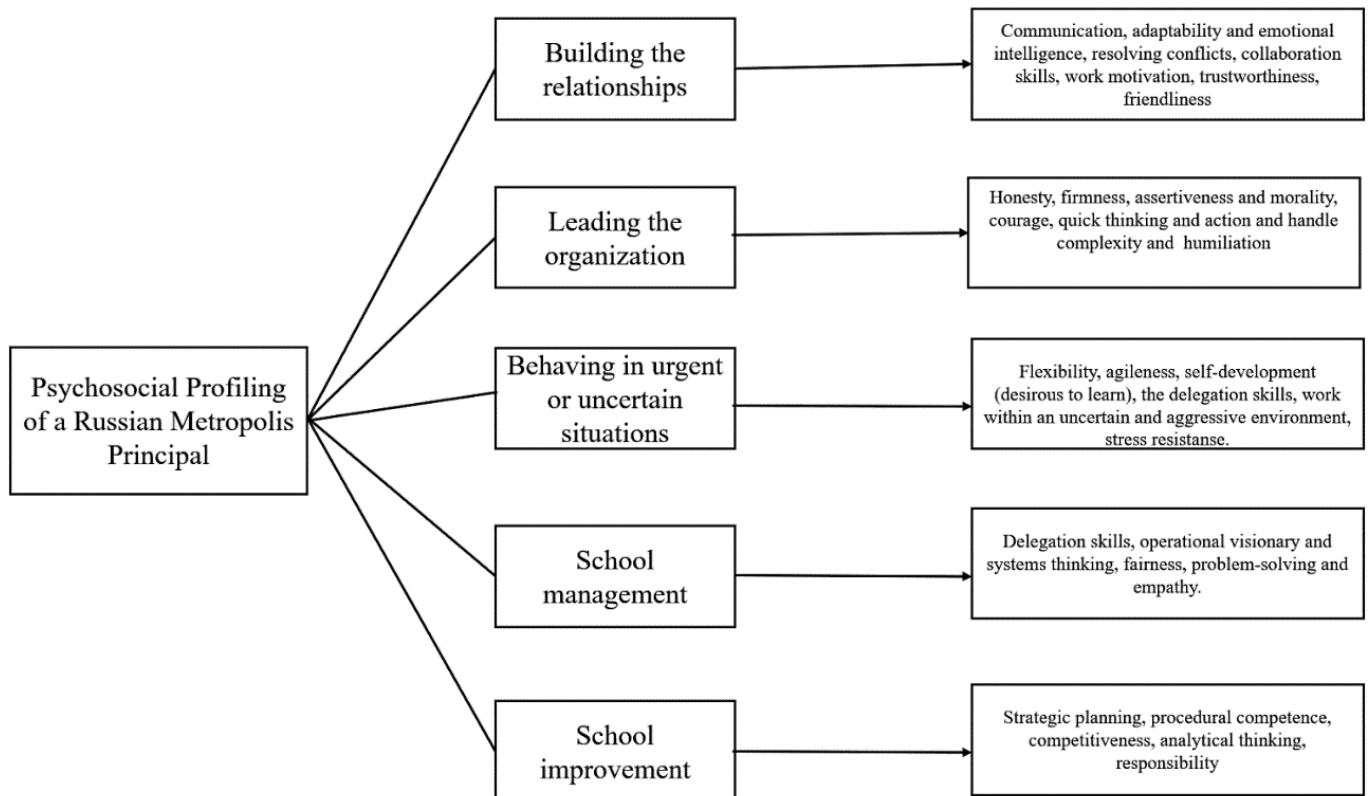*"These are our external partners [...] with whom the principal can help everyone".*



*Fig. 1.* The scheme of psychosocial profile of Russian Metropolis principal

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*"[The main responsibility is] to build communication logistics"*

Finally, the school principal must build general climate at school where he has to demonstrate **collaboration skills, work motivation, trustworthiness, friendliness**:

*"Communication with children, in my opinion, is a very correct story regarding the formation of your image in their eyes."*
*"He (successful principal) must train in his management team those people who can easily replace him at the stage of this communication and conflicts, and so on."*

The competencies related to building relationships are intertwined with the domain — leading the organization. The principal is expected to embody the same qualities that he expects from his subordinates. In this block the respondents insisted on the importance of demonstrating **honesty, firmness, assertiveness and morality**:

*"If you say to the stage that, colleagues, we are professionals, but at the same time we must be honest, objective and something else, you need to demonstrate the same qualities with your behavior".*
*"Ability to organize and lead".*

The Metropolis principal also should exercise **courage, quick thinking and action and handle complexity and even humiliation well**. Moreover, he should be ready to admit his incompetence in some questions and **collaborate** with partners and co-workers to find the way out of any problem situation as soon as possible.

*"The principal here is not "almighty", and, unfortunately, he does not know the answers to all the questions and will not know. And one of the tasks is precisely set in such a way that the principal can [...] ask for help if he's incompetent in solving something".*

The next domain is related to the permanent urgent or uncertain situations where the principal must demonstrate its **flexibility, agileness, self-development (desirous to learn), and also the delegation skills**:

*"Operational (tasks), they postpone all current ones. Strategic. From a management point of view, it looks like this. Received information, I definitely read it, I understand to whom I am delegating this".*
*"Flexibility, yes. <...>, self-development, this is a very important quality".*

Moreover, work in **an uncertain and even aggressive environment requires from the principal resist stress and demonstrate creativity resolving different situations**:

*"As they say, stress resistance".*
*"It is creativity. This is real, every time there are new approaches to resolve this situation".*

At the same time, the principal also should be able to focus on one thing if the urgent situation requires his personal attention:

*"Focus on one thing at the right time".*

Another domain which defines Metropolis principles' practices is related to school management itself. Unlike principals of other countries, presented in literature review, who typically oversee just one school, a principal of the Russian Metropolis is responsible for a large educational complex. This unique context necessitates competences such as **delegation skills, operational visionary and systems thinking**:

*"And when we all met, I realized, after working for a year, that if I don't start to at least visually introduce people to each other, so that they understand who works with whom <...> our school is located in two districts".*

*"A specific school building is a disparate organization... That is, this is one team, the second is another team, which did not interact with each other even before the pandemic. And here, naturally, there was very direct manual control [by principal]".*

In fact, the Metropolis context puts impediments on the way of principal to actively participate in all aspects of school life, as it is impossible to present everywhere at once. Nevertheless, the respondents confirmed that if the situation involving teachers or students require their personal attention, they must demonstrate **fairness, problem-solving and empathy**:
*"Well, I know that she is a good teacher. And here she [the student's mother], writes such (negative) letters".*

**Strategic planning, procedural competence, competitiveness, analytical thinking, and responsibility** play a key role in another principals' practices domain — school improvement. In fact, school improvement is primarily implemented via analysis of school data as school principals have to ensure they meet the systems' requirements. A Metropolis principal controls school-wide efficiency indicators set by the accountability system. Furthermore, school leader carries the final responsibility for school results before the government structures that affect the salaries of his subordinates, financial support, school rating:

*"We say that we have made changes to the educational program <...>. My role in the future is to see if our changes have somehow affected the results and outcomes of a large school or not".*
*"If we talk about the olympiads, strategic planning, the story goes there about how to develop these movements, how to increase them".*
*"Willingness to take responsibility and these risks, this also, it seems to me, is a very important quality.".*

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## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to develop a comprehensive profile encompassing the psychosocial characteristics and personality traits of school principals, providing a holistic view of educational leaders in the Metropolis. The research demonstrates how these characteristics align with or diverge from global trends in educational leadership.

An examination of the findings related to the psychosocial profiling of Metropolis principal indicates that, despite contextual influence, some categories of school leader profile appear to be universal. In both international and Russian Metropolis contexts, "successful principals" must demonstrate high communication and collaboration skills that also imply specific psychological traits such as honesty, empathy, trustworthiness, fairness and friendliness. However, the characteristics such as openness and optimism, often highlighted in foreign research, are difficult to identify in respondents' answers. Moreover, respondents emphasized the importance of resolving conflicts and assertiveness. The analyzed situations confirmed that a "successful Metropolis principal" should be able to effectively communicate with various parties involved (educational authorities, deputies, teachers, parents etc.) and resolve arising issues.

The trend is observed in other domains as well. Some personality traits and behavior characteristics completely coincide in most of the observed profiles, including those from the Russian Metropolis, for example, stress-resistance, flexibility, strategic thinking, system thinking, problem-solving and firmness. Nevertheless, certain competences derived from the school management domain, such as procedural competence, operational visionary, and delegation skills, seem unique to Russian Metropolis school leaders. In fact, the profile of a Metropolis principal emphasizes administering skills, and we assume these competences are specific not only to the particular Metropolis principals but also to Russian principals in other metropolitan areas. Several studies carried out in Russia have demonstrated that Russian principals spend one-third of their time on administrative tasks [33; 3]. Additionally, the respondents also outlined that they receive operational tasks daily, thus, although they acknowledge the importance of instructional leadership, the time they can dedicate to such tasks is limited.

The analysis of literature as well as our research have highlights that the psychosocial profiles of principals from various countries share some similarities and differences. We suppose that considering these differences is crucial as they help illustrate peculiarities of the approaches of different educational systems to defining "a successful principal". These traits are context driven and emphasize the varying challenges faced by principals and the focuses of educational systems. In this way, such studies allow us to analyze the multifaceted nature of educational leadership.

However, the results of this study should be considered in light of certain limitations. Firstly, the study does not aim to generalize its results to other Russian metropolises. Given the vast cultural, socio-economic, and educational diversity across Russia's numerous metropolises, findings derived from this limited cohort may not fully capture the broader spectrum of principals' practices and competencies required for success in varied educational contexts within the country. Secondly, we suppose that it is essential to replicate the study to refine the list of psychosocial characteristics, as the presented study has a relatively small sample size and lacks demographic data on the respondents. To strengthen the conclusions and increase the credibility of the study, it is worth expanding the sample and validating the findings using quantitative methodology, which the authors plan to do in the near future. Additionally, the respondents acknowledged that the psychosocial profile of a principal in Metropolis might exhibit variations across different educational settings. The qualitative methodology employed in this research facilitated the construction of a generalized profile of a "successful principal," applicable across a broad spectrum of school contexts. However, further segmentation of schools could enhance this profile's applicability and help develop more targeted leadership development strategies.

## Conclusion

The educational context, cultural peculiarities, and school environment significantly influence the leadership's psychosocial characteristics, underscoring the need for leaders to possess a diverse array of traits tailored to facilitate school improvement. This study aimed to synthesize a unified portrayal of an effective leader, specifically focusing on the essential attributes for a principal in Metropolis. This was achieved through analyzing the perceptions and experiences shared by principals and deputy principals.

Future research should aim to validate the identified competencies through quantitative methods and establish a comprehensive competency framework. Such a framework could then be recommended to governmental or corporate entities to refine the selection and development processes for school principals in Metropolis. Additionally, there is potential to expand the identified psychosocial profile by incorporating a wider range of behavioral patterns and personality traits of principals. This expansion would enrich our understanding of effective school leadership and contribute to developing leadership models that are both adaptive and context specific.

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## Краткое изложение содержания статьи на русском языке

### Введение

Важность создания психосоциального профиля личности подтверждается различными исследованиями и практиками [36; 37]. Психосоциальный анализ может выявить взаимосвязь психического и социального, позволяя провести глубокий анализ ситуативной природы опыта отдельного человека для различных показателей профессиональной деятельности. Особенно это важно в контексте лидерства, поскольку лидеры несут ответственность за влияние, вдохновение, интеллектуальное стимулирование и развитие своих сотрудников [30]. Исследователи предпринимали различные попытки создать психосоциальные профили лидеров в различных областях [1; 6], однако большинство из них опираются на теории лидерства или управленческих практик и не фокусируются на психосоциальных профилях личности. Информация о психосоциальных и эмоциональных характеристиках, которые часто воспринимаются как компетенции [37], также привлекает внимание компаний, которые хотят не только учитывать знания и профессиональный опыт кандидатов, но и располагать информацией о личностных качествах кандидата [8]. Такая же тенденция может быть замечена и в изучении психосоциального профилирования директоров школ, которое используется при оценке будущих кандидатов на их роли [37].

Директор школы сегодня является ключевой фигурой в общем образовании, ответственной за выстраивание отношений между различными участниками образовательного процесса, формирование общего видения школы, ориентированного на высокие стандарты и успех всех учеников, обеспечение качества и ведение школы к достижению результатов [25; 35]. Подготовка успешного лидера должна включать не только учет его/ее знаний, но также личностные черты и навыки, формирующие его/ее психосоциальный портрет. Заккаро и др. (2004) доказали важность психологических атрибутов и призвали к более широкому анализу черт личности. Они утверждали, что лидерство лучше всего предсказывается комбинацией характеристик, включающих когнитивные способности, ориентацию личности, мотивы и ценности, социально-психологические навыки восприятия, решения проблем, общего и специфического опыта. Более того, психосоциальное профилирование потенциальных директоров используется для понимания психологической готовности будущих директоров [2; 14]. Наконец, четкое психосоциальное профилирование позволяет создавать психометрические инструменты для оценки компетенций будущих и текущих директоров [28; 37].

Следует отметить, что психологическое профилирование директоров школ различается в различных контекстах. Американская и британская оценки школьного лидерства концентрируются на его трансформационных и педагогических сторонах. Оба конструкта отражены в различных показателях поведения директоров. Таким образом, трансформационное лидерство направлено на способность школьного лидера влиять на школьный климат и культуру своими действиями [32], следовательно, им нужно демонстрировать харизму и способность интеллектуально стимулировать своих сотрудников. В Индонезии социальный аспект страны требует от директора быть не только объективным, демократичным, дружелюбным, честным, дисциплинированным, уверенным, способным контролировать эмоции, ценить, мотивировать, справедливым и сильным, но также быть религиозным человеком, который адаптирует управление с учетом религиозных особенностей страны [44]. В Южной Африке компетенции успешного школьного лидера включают такие характеристики, как гибкость, творчество, ораторские навыки, сотрудничество, критическое мышление и способность решения проблем [10].

Российские исследователи уже предпринимали шаги к составлению портрета успешного российского директора. Однако они не учитывали специфику требований системы образования Метрополиса, контекст которой требует определенных психологических качеств и компетенций от директора школы [2]. Более того, важность изучения директоров школ российских мегаполисов отдельно подтверждается и в других исследованиях [3; 33]. Тем не менее существующие исследования профилей руководителей школ мегаполиса в основном сосредоточены на управленческих практиках и стилях принятия решений директорами [3; 33].

Таким образом, целью данного исследования является профилирование директора школы российского Мегаполиса, определение его/ее психосоциальных характеристик и рассмотрение их в срезе международных исследований. Фактически, создание отдельного психосоциального профиля директора школы российского мегаполиса имеет решающее значение, поскольку представляет собой уникальный контекст с централизованной системой, в которой директора школ управляют огромными образовательными комплексами.

### Методы

Участниками исследования стали 7 опытных директоров и 5 заместителей (4 мужчины) из 12 школ одного из самых больших российских мегаполисов. Специфика данного мегаполиса в том, что школы представляют собой огромные образовательные комплексы. Так, 80% школ имеют пять и более зданий, которые могут быть расположены в разных районах.

Сбор данных происходил в формате фокус-групп с участием двух модераторов. Все участники дали вербальное согласие на аудиозапись. Анализ данных был проведен с помощью методологии поведенческого анализа, предложенной Фельдманом и Валенти (2001), включающей три основных этапа: сбор информации о поведении директора школы мегаполиса с помощью качественных данных (фокус-группы), классификация

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по категориям на основе содержания и анализ (выявление ключевых компетенций успешного директора) [39].

Для проведения исследования мы использовали матрицу директора школы — концептуальную рамку, разработанную лабораторией управления школой Института образования НИУ ВШЭ. Матрица была сформирована на основе профессионального стандарта директора школы [5], требований к аттестации на должность директора, интервью с директорами и заместителями школ мегаполиса, анализа профессиональных профилей и опыта успешного школьного руководства в других странах. Таким образом, матрица, с учетом контекста, охватывает ключевые направления управления и задачи директора школы Мегаполиса. Матрица включает четыре ключевых направления управления: образовательный процесс, управление школой, развитие школы, построение отношений и сотрудничество со стейкхолдерами.

Матрица директоров школ служила основанием для проведения фокус-групп с директорами и их заместителями и позволила нам раскрыть поведенческие паттерны, проявляемые управленцами. Всего мы провели три фокус-группы с опытными руководителями и заместителями российского мегаполиса. Каждая сессия была разделена на две части и длилась пять часов с 30-минутным перерывом.

**В первой части** респондентам предложили развернуть каждый из блоков, включенных в матрицу. Например, внутри направления «образовательный процесс» респонденты должны были предложить реальные поведенческие проявления и действия, осуществляемые директором школы мегаполиса. Процедура проводилась в несколько этапов, что позволило детализировать разнообразие управленческих практик директоров школ в мегаполисе:

• индивидуально;
• в парах;
• в группе из четырех человек.

**Во второй части** респондентам было предложено поделиться вызовами и сложностями, с которыми они столкнулись в конкретных направлениях матрицы:

• каждый респондент составил свой собственный список;
• списки респондентов были объединены;
• респондентам было предложено ранжировать проблемы;
• респондентам было предложено разработать решения в парах и составить список лидерских качеств, необходимых для решения проблемы.

Результаты обсуждений были записаны с помощью приложения для записи звука «Диктофон» на iPhone-12 и впоследствии расшифрованы авторами статьи вручную.

Анализ и обработка данных были произведены с использованием метода качественного контент-анализа, а точнее методологии, разработанной Брауном и Кларком (2006), которая предусматривает шесть ключевых этапов: знакомство с данными, генерация исходных кодов, поиск тем, обобщение тем, их определение, наименование и составление отчета [13].

## Результаты

Оба автора принимали участие в анализе транскриптов и были знакомы со всем объемом данных, содержащих различные случаи из ежедневных практик директора школы мегаполиса. После этого результаты исследования были систематизированы на группы, представляющие различные практики, соответствующие матрице, используемой для сбора данных. На основе анализа полученных данных были выявлены ключевые компетенции «успешного директора» мегаполиса и произведена их классификации.

В процессе анализа выяснилось, что названия блоков матрицы недостаточно четко описывают использование конкретных поведенческих характеристик и личностных качеств, поэтому они были переименованы. В результате мы получили психосоциальный профиль директора школы мегаполиса, состоящий из пяти доменов: выстраивание отношений, ведение организации, управление в ситуации неопределенности, менеджмент и улучшение работы школы.

Анализ данных сессии фокус-группы показал, что при решении задач в рамках одного домена директора школ могут использовать несколько компетенций одновременно, например, была подчеркнута важность навыков делегирования в процессе управления школой и в ситуациях неопределенности.

После определения доменов мы осуществляли поиск и анализ тем с помощью таблицы индуктивного кодирования [7] с двумя столбцами, в которой брали фрагменты транскрипта, разделенные на предложения, и присваивали каждому из них коды, в том числе опираясь на названия компетенций, которые встречались в зарубежных исследованиях.

Руководители школ российских мегаполисов подчеркнули, что бо́льшую часть времени они тратят на выстраивание отношений, в том числе на общение с органами власти, внешними партнерами, преподавателями, учащимися, коллегами и т. д. Согласно их моделям поведения в этом направлении, наиболее значимы такие компетенции, как *коммуникативность, адаптивность и эмоциональный интеллект, который включает в себя самосознание, самоуправление, социальную осведомленность и управление отношениями* [20].

Наконец, директор школы должен создавать общий климат в школе, где он должен продемонстрировать *навыки сотрудничества, трудовую мотивацию, надежность, дружелюбие*. Компетенции, связанные с построением взаимоотношений, переплетаются с доменом ведения организации. В этом блоке респонденты настаивали на важности проявления честности, твердости, напористости и нравственности.

Директору школы мегаполиса также следует *проявлять смелость, быстроту мышления и действий, а также хорошо справляться со сложностями и даже с унижением*. Также он должен быть готов к сотрудничеству с партнерами и коллегами.

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Следующий домен связан с управлением в ситуации неопределенности, когда директору приходится демонстрировать свою *гибкость, ловкость, саморазвитие (желание учиться), а также навыки делегирования*. Более того, директор школы мегаполиса должен *уметь работать не только в неопределенной, но и даже в агрессивной среде и быть устойчивым к стрессу*.

Другой домен, определяющий управленческие практики директоров школ мегаполиса, связана с менеджментом организации. В то время как, проанализированные в обзоре литературы директора школ других стран управляют одной школой, директор школ российского мегаполиса отвечает за образовательный комплекс. Такой специфический контекст определяет потребность в таких компетенциях, как *навыки делегирования, операционное видение и системное мышление*. Фактически, контекст мегаполиса затрудняет участие директора в школьной жизни, поскольку невозможно появляться во всех местах одновременно. Тем не менее респонденты подтвердили, что если возникает ситуация с учителями или учениками, требующая их личного внимания, они должны продемонстрировать такие качества и навыки, *как справедливость, умение решать проблемы и сочувствие*.

*Стратегическое планирование, умение следовать определенному алгоритму, конкурентоспособность, аналитическое мышление и ответственность* играют ключевую роль в другом домене деятельности директоров — улучшении аботы школы (school improvement). Фактически, улучшение работы школ в первую очередь осуществляется посредством анализа школьных данных, поскольку директора школ должны гарантировать, что они соответствуют требованиям системы. Директор школы мегаполиса контролирует общешкольные показатели эффективности, установленные подотчетное системой. Кроме того, директор школы несет ответственность за результаты работы школы перед государственными структурами, что влияет на заработную плату его подчиненных, финансовую поддержку, рейтинг школы.

Таким образом, анализ результатов, касающихся психосоциального профиля директора школы мегаполиса, показывает, что, несмотря на влияние характеристик контекста, некоторые категории профиля школьного руководителя кажутся универсальными. Как в международном, так и в контексте российского мегаполиса успешные директора должны демонстрировать высокий уровень коммуникативных навыков и выстраивания отношений, которые также подразумевают наличие определенных психологических качеств, таких как честность, сочувствие, надежность, справедливость и дружелюбие. Однако некоторые характеристики, такие как открытость и оптимизм, прослеживающиеся в зарубежных исследованиях, не встречаются в ответах респондентов. При этом респонденты уделяли большое внимание разрешению конфликтов и напористости. Проанализированные ситуации подтвердили, что успешный директор мегаполиса должен уметь донести свою точку зрения до всех вовлеченных сторон (органов управления образованием, заместителей, учителей, родителей и т.д.) и решать возникающие проблемы.

Подобную ситуацию можно наблюдать и в других доменах. Некоторые черты личности и поведенческие характеристики совпадают в большинстве наблюдаемых профилей, в том числе в российском мегаполисе, например, стрессоустойчивость, гибкость, стратегическое мышление, системное мышление, способность решать проблемы и стойкость. Тем не менее некоторые компетенции, вытекающие из домена менеджмента, такие как умение действовать согласно алгоритму, оперативное видение, навыки делегирования, по-видимому, не являются специфичными для директоров школ, представленных стран, в отличие от российского мегаполиса. Действительно, отдельный фокус в профиле директора школы мегаполиса сделан на навыки администрирования. Мы предполагаем, что эти компетенции характерны не только для конкретного профиля директора школы мегаполиса, но также справедливы и для российских директоров в целом. Ряд исследований, проведенных в России, продемонстрировал, что российские директора тратят 1/3 своего времени на выполнение административных задач [3; 33]. Респонденты также отметили, что они получают оперативные задания каждый день. В связи с этим несмотря на то, что они подтвердили важность управления образовательным процессом, время, которое они тратят на такие задачи, ограничено.

Анализ литературы, а также наши исследования еще раз подчеркнули, что психосоциальные профили директоров школ разных стран имеют как сходства, так и различия. Мы полагаем, что учет таких различий имеет важное значение, поскольку они помогают отразить особенности подходов разных образовательных систем к определению и понятия «успешный директор». Такие характеристики задаются контекстом и подчеркивают различия в вызовах, с которыми сталкиваются директора, а также подчеркивают фокус образовательных систем.

Результаты данного исследования следует анализировать, учитывая следующие ограничения. Во-первых, исследование не преследует цели обобщения результатов на другие мегаполисы России. Во-вторых, мы считаем необходимым реплицировать результаты исследования, используя количественную методологию для уточнения и обоснования валидности полученного списка психосоциальных характеристик, поскольку результаты исследования характеризуют относительно небольшую по размеру выборку и не содержат демографических характеристик респондентов. Несмотря на то, что качественная методология, использованная в этом исследовании, облегчила построение обобщенного профиля успешного директора, который может быть использован в широком спектре школьных контекстов, важно признать, что дальнейшая сегментация школ внутри мегаполиса может способствовать дальнейшему развитию этого профиля, повышая его применимость при разработке программ профессионального развития и способствуя более целенаправленным инициативам, направленным на развитие лидерства.

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