Identifying linchpin Components for School Principals: A Qualitative Study

Soheila Mokhtari[1], Hossein Abbasian[2*], Hamidreza Arasteh[3] & Hasanreza Zeinabadi[4]

Abstract
The current research aimed to identify the linchpin components for school principals. In the current study, the researcher used the qualitative method of cornerstone content analysis based on the research objective and problem. The research field was formed by all schools' principals in Tehran. The purposive sampling method was used to select research participants. To collect data, non-reactive measures (various documents such as articles, books, research results of others, reports, etc.) and semi-structured interviews with key informants were used. At the beginning of the interview, general explanations about the research and its objectives were presented to the interviewee and then the interview was started. The purpose of the researcher conducting these interviews was to identify the development's linchpin components and their symptoms. The duration of each interview was between 30 and 45 minutes; the ideas raised during the interview process were noted down. Qualitative data were analyzed by using the three-step inductive thematic analysis method of Clarke and Braun (2006). In the inductive thematic analysis where there are logically no pre-defined themes, patterns are revealed during the analysis by placing open codes or similar sub-themes within a main theme. Also, to check the validity of the obtained findings, qualitative validation criteria of "validity" and "reliability" as well as "external audit" were used. The findings showed the 13 components to develop the linchpin components of school principals: network communication; strategic planning; collaborative/interactive/ leadership and management based on collective wisdom; expertise and deep knowledge; critical thinking and problem-solving; creativity and innovation; developmental thinking (self and others); (boundary) breaking structure; ethics/professional ethics; insight and inspiration; acceptance of differences and the uniqueness of humans; generosity and the art of work and emotional connection.

1. Ph.D. student in Educational Management, Faculty of Management, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran
2. Associate Professor, Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Management, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran.
 * Corresponding Author: Email: h_abbasian@khu.ac.ir
3. Professor of Educational Administration Department, Faculty of Management; Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran
4. Associate Professor, Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Management, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Introduction

Education has a significant impact on the level of development of societies. This is done by creating a skilled workforce and increasing the quality and quantity of human resources; so it has an important role in creating suitable conditions for the development process. It is on this basis that it is said that Education plays the most important role in the development of a nation and it brings all the solutions to the economic, political, social, and cultural problems of the society (Tolo, 2019). Therefore, in different countries, the Education system has assumed great responsibility for the realization of individual and social goals, and it has been considered the best opportunity for the flourishing of human talents desired by experts and those involved in education and training (Pahang, Mehdiun & Yarigholi, 2016).

In the last two decades, the success of the educational system, in different countries, is evaluated depending on the academic performance of schools (Sezer, 2018). Therefore, it can be said that schools play an important role in any educational system and they are actually the foundation of the system. The school is a safe place enriched with educational programs for all students; and its role, in addition to improve the knowledge and skills of the students, is to prepare them according to the present and future expectations of the society (Ahmadbeigi, 2018). Therefore, schools have a special position as a sensitive and important social system (Judki et al., 2018). Nowadays schools are facing various internal and external challenges that directly and indirectly affect the overall performance of schools. The cultural, social and economic changes and developments, the increasing costs and problems related to school financing, the low motivation of teachers, the spread of harm caused by students' free access to information and communication technology, and the insufficient academic motivation of students are among those issues. They emphasize the important mission of the school as the main element to achieve goals in the education process (Asari et al., 2019).

Nowadays school conditions have naturally caused school principals to have problems in order to improve the school's effectiveness (Judaki et al., 2018); the main goal of classical educational management was to facilitate and promote education and learning, and educational managers had to perform the tasks of planning, organizing, leading, and monitoring and controlling but today, school managers are facing issues in their management field that Education has not faced these emerging challenges before (Schrik & Wasonga, 2018). The statements of today's school principals also indicate the need to seriously revise the preparation programs for school principals (Wise, 2015). Therefore, schools today need managers who apply the latest and most appropriate school leadership theories and methods in terms of guiding schools to success for every student. Due to the fact that there is significant research that provides a clear connection between the leadership abilities of a school leader and the impact of this leadership on student achievement, planning for the preparation of school principals and empowering current school principals has special importance for educational system policy makers (Webster & Litchka, 2020).

Various studies about the leadership skills have been carried out for a long time, and scientists are still trying to define and understand it (Keskinkilic-Kara & Zafer-Gunes, 2017). The main goal of classical educational management was to facilitate and promote education and learning, and they had to perform the tasks of planning, organizing, leading, and monitoring and controlling. However, in the modern literature of educational management, in addition to classic tasks, words such as successful management, effective schools or managerial competencies are also mentioned (Assari et al., 2019). One of the important features and outstanding features that should be considered for managers and leaders of organizations is the training and development of linchpin component among managers, leaders and decision makers of organizations (Godin, 2016: 8). The term "linchpin" was first used by Godin (2010). He considered the linchpin as someone who is essential for an organization because with all the disruption in the economy, organizations, countries, markets and even in interpersonal and organizational relationships, we need to think and act differently from the ways we have been doing (Bartlett, 2019). According to Godin (2010), the linchpin elements are the people whose presence is necessary in the work and basic structures of the organization; they have the capacity to make a huge difference in the success of organizational efforts; without them, everything can fall apart quickly. Also, the managers who are the linchpin have the ability to greatly influence the ability of the members; they maximize the working capacity of each member of the organization in different ways, and they

can guide and strengthen organizational performance (Sherman, 2019). In fact, linchpins have two unique features: 1. doing emotional work, and 2. building a road map (Godin, 2010); therefore, to become a linchpin is a gradual process. The path, through which characteristics should be developed and trained in people to make them irreplaceable, requires moving from technical (hard) skills to emotional (soft) skills and the development multiplies the former values. Technical skills are those related to a specific job. Soft skills are individual and social skills (Cigercii, 2020). Managers, having soft skills, become linchpin for the organization.

In general, if we want to compare an ordinary or normal manager to a linchpin one, we can say that: ordinary or normal managers have these characteristics: 1. they keep their heads down; 2. they follow instructions; 3. they work hard; 4. they arrive on time; 5. they are easily replaceable by the others; 6. they are a commodity; 7. they have no objections. While a linchpin manager has these characteristics: 1. he/she creates his/her own group; 2. he/she helps generously; 3. he/she creates great art; 4. he/she is remarkable; 5. he/she is unique; 6. he/she is essential; 7. he/she expresses ideas and opinions (Sukhraj, 2016). According to what was mentioned, the linchpin component is a person who can bring together the necessary competitive characteristics and make a fundamental difference in the organization. Unfortunately, one important thing has been neglected in organizations: organization needs a manager with those mentioned character, not an ordinary organizational employee. In other words, to manage and lead organizations today, people need to

communicate with the internal and external environment, to carry out the basic activities of the organization, to create innovative activities that are significant and meaningful for the organization (Bartlett, 2019).

Some of the researches that reveal the importance of this issue for school principals are:

Triakov et al. (2019) in a research entitled 'development of standardized skills to strengthen immunization' found that competency characteristics can be divided into a visible part and an invisible part. Often people focus on the visible part because it is easier to observe, understand, measure, train and develop and improve them. The usual external part includes the basic requirements to adapt to the job position, while the internal part is about personal behavior and is critical to the individual's performance, and the training process is also complex.

Hillman et al. (2018) in a study entitled 'the future training of managers for the development of flexible organizations: the role of the planning scenario', managers play an important role in creating organizational flexibility; they must have a long-term view of the issues so that they can improve the organization. The study shows that managers should first analyze continuously in terms of strategy process (structure and result), performance results (accuracy, reliability, creativity and transferability) and learning results to develop and increase organizational flexibility capabilities such as (anticipation of conditions and familiarity with organizational sensitivity and coping with the environment of uncertainty).

Thomason (2017) in a research entitled 'managers of organizations:

psychological aspects' points out that managers as forces seek to integrate activities such as planning, organization, motivation and control. Managers play a decisive role in the entire management process. They determine goals, planning and organizing activities, motivating people and monitoring activities are among the main duties of managers, in this regard, psychological aspects such as soft skills should also be paid attention to.

Linska, Platonova, Smirnova (2016) in a their study entitled 'examining qualifications in professional communication' concluded that professional qualification is considered as a multi-dimensional and interdisciplinary phenomenon, not only a linguistic term, but also including cognitive, social, behavioral and cultural aspects that it should be studied on a wider level.

Bayar Stonova (2013) in a research titled 'management of managers' professional growth and education system" defined the dimensions of managers' professional growth including four areas of personal characteristics (such as intelligence, creativity and self-management, etc.); professional abilities (such as interactive, competitive and organizational leadership, etc.); specific characteristics (such as professional knowledge, risk management, entrepreneurship, etc.) and personality type (such as social compatibility, being active and sociable, emotional stability, etc.).

Gutman and Shon (2013) in a study titled 'identifying non-cognitive skills' reached the conclusion that soft skills or non-cognitive skills are considered as processes that drive success in professional education.

According to what has been said, nowadays' organizations in general and schools in particular should pay attention to the training and development of the linchpin component at the school level because despite the fact that the exact criteria for the appointment of school principals or the technical skills considered for principals have been defined, many school principals do not have the ability to lead and manage efficient and successful schools (Naidoo, 2019). As a result, it is necessary to revise the training of managers based on the traditional methods of school management, as well as to revise the requirements of knowledge and specialized skills (technical skills). Therefore, it is the linchpin component who can bring together all the skills needed by managers and make a difference in organizational effectiveness (Sukhraj, 2016). The general and specialized activity of schools and the distinctive feature of the school principals' jobs require that to become a linchpin school principal component, and one should focus on identifying the characteristics and indicators of it in school principals but the activities of schools are different from other organizations and of course the characteristics of a linchpin component in schools are different from the others. The necessity of this point becomes doubly important nowadays according to what was said about the changes in the work space and environment of schools. Therefore, in this research, we seek to identify the components of the linchpin components for school principals.

Research Method

In this study, the researcher used the qualitative method of cornerstone content analysis based on the research objective and problem. The field of research consists of all schools principals in Tehran. Purposive sampling method was used to select research participants. Patton uses the term purposive sampling to describe a type of sampling in which the cases that contain rich information in terms of qualitative research objectives are selected. In purposive sampling, the goal is to ensure the use of a non-biased sampling method (Gal et al., 2013: 389-396). According to the theoretical saturation rule, the number of samples was 15 people. To collect data, non-reactionary measures (various documents such as articles, books, other people's research results, reports, etc.) and semi-structured interviews with key informants were used. At the beginning of the interview, general explanations about the research and its objectives were presented to the interviewee and then the interview was began. The purpose was to identify the development's linchpin components and their symptoms. The duration of each interview was between 30 and 45 minutes. The ideas raised during the interview process were noted down. Qualitative data were analyzed using the six-step inductive thematic analysis method of Clarke and Braun (2006). In inductive thematic analysis that there are logically no pre-defined themes, patterns are revealed during the analysis by placing open codes or similar sub-themes within a main theme. Also, to check the validity of the obtained findings, qualitative validation criteria of "validity" and "reliability" as well as "external audit" were used.

Data analysis

In order to get the answer to the research question, after converting the content of the research interviews into a

text format, we started to read the interview and at the same time to refer to the questions and their answers related to the purpose of the research so the sentences and phrases could be used as a sign or identify verbal evidence. By noticing to the research questions and reading the text of the interviews several times, the data was coded while extracting speech marks. In fact, this step is the open coding of qualitative data. After extracting the codes from speech signs in the next step, similar and related codes were identified and placed in a category. Then, the analysis was focused on a broader level of codes; according to the identification and classification of similar and related codes for all the codes that had a related concept, the basic theme was defined. Therefore, various codes are arranged in the form of themes and all the coded data related to each of the themes are identified and collected. In the next step (third step), the extracted basic themes were combined in the form of organizing themes while refining and revising in a reciprocating process. These steps are mentioned in the following three main steps.

First step: identification of verbal evidence and open coding

At this stage, the verbal evidence obtained from the interview was coded. While analyzing the research interviews and considering the main question of the research, verbal evidence was identified and then by reflecting on each of them, the basic themes were identified or defined. For example, according to a verbal evidence, "If we accept that people are different from each other and to the extent determined by the morals and common values of the members of the society, the difference is their natural rights, we will no longer expect everyone to act according to our wishes and tastes." Every human being has a different world and he/she has a special talent (code 1)." Considering the concept expressed by the interviewee, the themes of "acceptance of individual differences" and "uniqueness of human beings" were assigned. And to quote "I try to search and explore in relation to the whole dimensions of that subject. I break down the issues and examine them one by one. With this work, I get to the conclusion more easily (code 3)", the themes of "decomposing the topic and issues into smaller parts" and "reading school-related materials and topics part by part" were assigned. It should be noted that more than one code, such as the mentioned, has been extracted from some of the verbal evidence. Finally, by examining the verbal evidence of the interviews in relation to the main question, a total of 102 basic themes about the development's linchpin components of school principals were extracted.

Second step: categorizing similar basic themes and extracting organizing themes

The basic themes extracted, while reviewing and revising, were categorized according to semantic similarity; then based on the hidden theme in them, the organizing theme was defined for each category of similar basic themes. In this stage, 102 themes extracted in the previous were organized in the form of 47 categories or organizing themes.

Third step: extraction of overarching themes

After extracting the basic and organizing themes, overarching themes related to the first research question have been extracted. Table 1 shows the results of combining organizing themes

and extracting overarching themes. The 47 themes extracted in the previous stages were organized in the form of 13 components or overarching themes.

Table 1: The Obtained Results from Three-step Coding.

Overarching Themes	Organizing Themes	Basic Theme	Code of Interviews
network communication	communication with external institutions and organizations	communication with institutions outside schools to facilitate the developments of the programs	4, 5, 6
		positive interaction with other organizations outside the school	
		communication with related organizations and institutions outside the school	
		holding numerous meetings with charities and related officials	
		taking advantage of professors and teachers outside the school and the ability of members outside the school	
	relationship between members of the school community	creating and maintaining relationships between colleagues	3, 8, 12
		creating and strengthening bonds between colleagues	
		interface between colleagues in solving possible conflicts	
		strengthening relationships between teachers, students and parents	
	communication with members of the school community (teachers, staff, students, parents)	the principal's relationship with the implementation and educational staff of the school	4, 5, 6
		communication between the manager and the executive staff with the students	
		communication of the manager and executive staff with parents	
		holding periodical meetings with staff and also parents in making correct decisions in different situations	
		involving members of the school community in the promotion of programs	
		taking advantage of all factors and facilities in order to advance educational goals	

strategic planning	resource allocation	providing the necessary tools and resources to increase the quality of teaching-learning giving priority to equipping the school in terms of educational aids and up-to-date through unforeseen resources division of work to move things forward adaptation between internal and external school conditions	5, 6, 7
	planning (short and long term)	developing plans to achieve better results putting short-term and long-term plans on the agenda accuracy and planning in doing things having coherent moving programs detailed educational planning	2, 5, 6, 7, 15
	trying to improve the condition of the school	continuous effort to achieve better results trying to improve and upgrade the hardware and software status of the school	2, 5
	feedback	feedback to teachers and staff feedback to colleagues feedback to parents feedback to students	1, 6, 12
collaborative/interactive/collective wisdom based on	participatory decision making	involvement of school colleagues satisfying school stakeholders constructive interaction with parents and holding regular meetings to correct the approach and attitude of parents towards education and dealing with teaching staff and students collaborative, consultative decision-making in the interest of the school obtaining the opinions of colleagues on a continuous basis consulting with colleagues and obtaining their opinions in programs environment with participation and consensus	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15

leadership and management		using the consensus of all members of the group	
		decision making through councils	
	collaborative, consultative and interactive decision making	creating an effective management discourse in the school environment	1, 6, 12, 14
		participatory management, interaction-oriented, collaborative strategic consulting and role model	
		participatory management through school councils	
		collaborative management style and consultation with colleagues	
		decision-making with the consultation and consensus of colleagues	
		involving parents in various areas of decision-making	
	management availability	management availability to all school members	4, 13
		regular attendance at work	
		manager availability	
	delegation of authority	delegation of authority to deputies	7, 11
		delegation of authority in work	
	relying on collective wisdom	collective decision making	8, 11, 12, 13
		focus on collective goals	
		taking advantage of collective wisdom	
		adhering to school goals collectively	
deep expertise and knowledge	familiarity with psychology	knowledge and mastery in psychology	5, 11
		the benefit of a specific managerial and psychological model in controlling staff performance and behavior	
	knowledge and mastery of financial affairs	expert familiarity with financial issues and personal handling of accounting and financial matters of the organization	5, 11
	supervision and guidance (educational, research, etc.)	monitoring the correct and scheduled implementation of the included items	5, 6
		supervising the educational, educational, administrative and social affairs of the school	
		supervision and guidance for the correct performance of the executive, and educational staff	

		playing an educational role instead of colleagues when needed	
		creating cooperation and coordination between the group	
	dominance at educational and research matters	being dominant on educational and legal issues	5, 6
		dominance at educational and welfare issues of teaching and executive staff and students	
		etting to know the goals of the school and its merits and demerits	
		using all school facilities to achieve goals	
		dominance at educational and administrative rules and regulations	
	recognizing the problem and trying to solve it	defining problems and focusing on solving them	6, 7, 10, 13
		holding continuous meetings to solve school problems	
		pathology and diagnosis of school problems and challenges	
		dealing with students' issues and problems individually and in groups	
		pathology of problems and formulation of solutions	
critical thinking and problem solving	analysing	breaking down the topic and issues into smaller parts	3, 5, 8
		reading school-related materials and topics part by part	
		breaking down and categorizing general issues for proper understanding	
		categorizing issues and axes of work in school	
		categorizing information related to school subjects to make correct decisions	
	continuous search for information	searching for information related to a topic or issue	3, 5, 10, 13
		exploring information related to school work and its axes	
		getting complete information from different sources related to the problem	

		updating information	
	differentiation between topics, issues and situations	recognizing differences and similarities in relation to the topic, issues and audiences	4, 7, 9
		grouping of educational and research axes	
		separating issues, prioritizing and ranking them	
	logical reasoning and predicting results	conclusion based on the obtained evidence	4, 5, 11
		logic, the basis of reasoning and conclusions	
		predicting events, consequences and results	
	continuous self-assessment	continuous self-assessment	3
		short-term and long-term evaluation of the output and achievements of the organization under school management	
	being open to criticism	being open to criticism	1, 11, 12, 15
		having the spirit of being criticized	
creativity and innovation	creativity and innovation	trying not to repeat the programs	3, 4, 6, 7
		innovation and creativity in programs and how to do things creativity in implementing instructions	
		compilation and implementation of creative programs (planning for classes in astronomy, language, puppet making, art of expression, etc.)	
		using your creativity and that of school members to solve problems	
		creative, collaborative decision making	
		creativity and dynamism in work and program	
	discovering and recognizing potentials and	creating conditions for the development of the abilities of teachers and employees	4, 6, 11, 15
		paying attention to the potential of colleagues and considering it in doing the job	
		taking advantage of the potential of suitable school members with their	

developmental thinking (self and others)	emerging capabilities	talent, taste and scientific and experimental ability	
		taking advantage of the abilities of teachers and staff to fix damages and solve school problems	
		taking advantage of all capacities	
		identifying and nurturing the talent of students	
	designing, implementing and evaluating the self-made (management) model and recreating the desired model based on existing theories	dominance on the fundamental theories of organizational management	1, 7
		ability to analyze and criticize existing management theories	
		the ability to combine existing theories and create a management model that fits your environment	
		destructuring of classic and modern management areas	
		using the combined management of X and Y in the control and guidance of educational staff and students	
		contingent management according to the conditions of using a combination of different methods	
	knowledge sharing and knowledge enhancement	sharing new experiences in the field of educational and research achievements	5, 6
		sharing knowledge and experiences with members of the school community	
	keeping up to date and developing colleagues	training and development of colleagues to improve skills, including life skills	4, 6, 11, 12
		conducting educational needs assessment and holding in-service training courses for their development	
		strengthening the scientific foundation and increasing knowledge	
		trying to update the members of the school community to increase the quality of learning and teaching	
breaking structure (boundary)	acting beyond the duty	going beyond instructions to achieve goals	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11
		acting beyond the limits of specified tasks (time, place and case).	

	not being limited to regulations and instructions	not being limited to the regulations issued by the General Office Administration	2, 5, 9, 13
		not being limited to administrative rules	
		not being limited to regulations	
		not being limited to the content of books	
	flexibility	flexibility to the law according to the situation and conditions	4, 11, 12, 13
		being flexible in decision making and planning	
		flexibility in program development	
ethics/professional ethics	professional ethics	being a as model for the school principal in terms of behavior and actions	6, 7, 12, 15
		having professional ethics	
		responding to clients	
		paying attention and respect for clients	
	ethics in the workplace	honesty in working with staff and teachers	3, 4, 6, 8, 12
		being patient and tolerant	
		acting based on moral principles	
		having the characteristics of perseverance, self-confidence, good character and determination	
		fulfilling the promises made by the school principal	
		being patient in advancing programs	
insight and inspiration	being open to attitude and receptive to opinions	obtaining the opinions of school members (staff, teachers, students, parents, etc.)	1, 2, 9, 10, 12, 15
		overcoming resistance through obtaining opinions and participation of school members	
		listening to the opinions and ideas of school members	
		creating a situation for suggestions and criticisms from school members	
		using the comments and suggestions of colleagues	
		continuous survey of school members and parents	

		giving colleagues the opportunity to express their opinions	
	recognizing, understanding and monitoring the needs of colleagues	continuous monitoring of mental and psychological condition and health of school members correct understanding of employee concerns (welfare, education, etc.) being committed to the physical and mental health of school members	5, 6, 15
	active listening	effective listening and thinking about the words of school members giving importance to the role of educational officials, parents and students and listening to them listening to colleagues listening to the opinions and ideas of school members	2, 6, 14
	having impact on the school community	having an idea to influence the school community (teachers, students, staff, etc.) inspiration to colleagues persuading colleagues at school creating a safe mental and emotional environment for both students and parents	2, 10, 13
	encouraging, appreciating and motivating colleagues	encouraging effective activities in school valuing the work done by teachers appreciating the efforts of colleagues, students and parents to increase motivation and desire in the work environment recognizing and encouraging worthy and serving employees developing and implementing incentive programs to improve motivation encouraging the best teachers continuous encouragement of colleagues to improve motivation	2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15
accepting the differences and	accepting individual differences	considering the individual differences of teachers and students in school	1, 2, 4, 7, 13, 15

uniqueness of humans		accepting individual differences	
		understanding the different values and thoughts of the others	
	the uniqueness of humans	accepting the uniqueness of each person	1, 4, 7, 10, 15
		not comparing people with yourself	
		accepting each person with a different world and a special talent	
generosity (benevolence)	respect and trust	creating an atmosphere of trust and respect in the school	4, 6, 7, 11, 13
		respecting for the rules of the school	
		making school culture based on respect and trust	
	mutual understanding and empathy	having empathy with school colleagues	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14
		understanding the situations and problems of colleagues	
		creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding in the school environment	
		creating an environment based on mutual understanding in the school	
		correct understanding of employee concerns (welfare, education, etc.)	
		cooperation and sympathy with the staff	
		mutual understanding between the school staff	
		cooperation and empathy with parents of students	
		empathy and cooperation between school colleagues	
		understanding the difficulty and challenges of colleagues	
	preservation of human dignity	focusing on the humanity of the audience	1, 3, 12
		avoiding robotic management in the target society (school)	
		creating a human-oriented organizational culture	
		relying on respect for human dignity creating a human-oriented organizational culture based on interaction and two-way communication	

art work and emotional connection	altruism	friendly and collaborative relationship	1, 4, 10
		benevolent attitude	
	positive thinking	creating a positive spirit in the school community	6, 7, 12
		creating an open space for teachers to work	
		emphasis on a positive and encouraging atmosphere	
		keeping the atmosphere of learning positively	
		creating a friendly atmosphere to strengthen the morale of colleagues	
		giving special importance to the cheerful spirit of students and executive staff while enforcing the rules	
	management of emotions and feelings	influencing by arousing emotions	1, 4, 6, 13, 14
		a balance between emotion and logic	
		understanding the feelings of others	
		managing affairs by managing emotions	
	loving people and work	creating a space to love work	2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14
		commitment to work	
		loving students	
		love to manage and organize	
		loving colleagues	
		love and interest in doing work	

According to Table 1, in response to the research question that what are the linchpin components of developing the management skills of school principals in Tehran, it could be argued that there are 13 components as the linchpin components for the development of school principals: network communication; strategic planning; collaborative/interactive/ leadership and management based on collective wisdom,; expertise and deep knowledge; critical thinking and problem solving; creativity and innovation; developmental thinking (self and others); (boundary) breaking structure; ethics/professional ethics; insight and inspiration; acceptance of differences and the uniqueness of humans; generosity, and the art of work and emotional connection.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of the research was to design the pattern of developing linchpin components for school principals in Tehran. For the purpose, while interviewing 15 successful school principals in Tehran, this issue was investigated by using semi-structured interviews. As a result of analyzing the data from the interviews, 13 components are the linchpin

components for the development of school principals: network communication; strategic planning; collaborative/interactive/ leadership and management based on collective wisdom,; expertise and deep knowledge; critical thinking and problem solving; creativity and innovation; developmental thinking (self and others); (boundary) breaking structure; ethics/professional ethics; insight and inspiration; acceptance of differences and the uniqueness of humans; generosity, and the art of work and emotional connection.

The first component is network communication which consists three organizing themes: communication with external institutions and organizations, communication with members of the school community (teachers, staff, students and parents), and acting as a liaison between members of the school community. Having good relations with parents and members of a school and community can mainly benefit the principal in various fields. A manager with high public relations can have parents' trust easily which reduces disciplinary issues in the school. The principal's public relations with other members of society can help the school in a fantastic way (Ben Arabiya, 2018). In this regard, the interviewee by the code of (6) says: "The successful manager gives importance to the role of fathers, mothers and educational officials and he/she uses all the forces outside the school to improve and advance educational, construction and equipment matters of the school".

School principals and staff spend a lot of energy to build relationships with students, teachers, and the others staff. Powerful communication tools such as discussion forums, chat, messaging, and social media will have a positive impact on the community, institution, and promotion of collaborative learning (Alida et al., 2018). One of the important components of education is communication competence. High-level and exemplary principals have high communication skills because communication skills increase the quality of a principal's professional skills (Gharashanko, 2019). In this regard, the interviewee by of code (8) states: "I usually gather colleagues to get to know each other better and establish a good relationship between them. Communication between teachers and other staff and students makes them intimate and close to each other. This is very good for the school because they feel like they are part of a family."

Today, for the management and leadership of organizations, those people are needed who communicate with the internal and external environment, carry out the basic activities of the organization, create innovative activities that are significant and meaningful for the organization (Bartlett, 2019). One of the biggest frustrations faced by school principal is that there is little parental involvement to support the institution's efforts to improve student achievement. Using real-time status notifications for events, meetings, grades, fee collections, attendance, and discipline via web and mobile devices can improve interactions between teachers and parents and reduce the gap (Anyali and Akenflarin, 2019).

The results of this part of the research are in line with the study of Tiken and Metgomori (2021) that educational managers should know how to cooperate with other school principals to increase educational effectiveness.

Also, it is consistent with the study of Pinda Biz and colleagues (2019) who showed that the complexity of the educational contexts in their school requires focusing on the communication dimensions of the staff. Relationships with teachers and parents based on trust and communication are essential to strengthen social justice.

The strategic planning component includes these themes: planning (short and long term), allocation of resources, trying to improve the school situation and feedback. A good principal must be balanced in all his roles and work hard to ensure that his plans are executed well. Time is a major limiting factor for any school principal. He/she should be very efficient in ways such as prioritization and planning (Derrick Moder, 2019). Developing, implementing, and evaluating in-school programs is a large part of a principal's role in dealing with today's issues. A principal should always be looking for ways to improve the student experience at school. Developing effective programs that cover even schools in different districts is one way to ensure that a school is performing well among other schools. A principal must evaluate school programs annually; if necessary, delete some programs; if a program shows that students have not developed well, it should re-examine the program and make changes if needed to improve it (Derrick Moder, 2019; Abu Shakra, 2021). In this regard, the interviewee by code of (10) states that "according to the expectations of a particular school, the programs in such schools should be implemented and followed up accurately and regularly. In general, using all capacities to improve the current situation is on the agenda, and every opportunity is used to achieve it."

Having strategic thinking is one of the characteristics of a manager that can create new knowledge and strategies. The strategic thinking plays an essential role in professional competence, professional development and the linchpin component (Zenito et al., 2018). In this regard, Thomason (2017) points out that managers, as forces, seek to integrate activities such as planning, organization, motivation and control. Managers play a decisive role in the entire management process. They set goals, plan and organize activities. Also, the research by Ng and Chan (2014) highlights this component and refers to the correct management of resources by school principals. The research of Warren Hout and Hume (2011) also acknowledge that a manager must structure his abilities in accordance with the goals to achieve competence, as well as implement plans compatible with the long-term interests of the organization. The manager can invest in any opportunity for the future by using competencies and strategic thinking.

The third component of the linchpin component of school principals was collaborative/interactive leadership and management based on collective wisdom which its themes includes: attracting the participation of school colleagues, consultative and interactive decision-making, accessible management, delegation of authority and reliance on collective wisdom (Derrick Moder, 2019). Fletcher et al. (2019) thus argue that the interpersonal domain includes competencies related to collaboration and leadership. Also, school principals should negotiate and provide solutions regarding the existing methods and the methods that would be used in the future (Hillman et al., 2018). In this regard, the interviewee by code

of (4) says: "The management style is collaborative. We respect and consult the opinions of colleagues and parents, and the result is extracted. And I tried to involve all the employees in all the activities." Also, the interviewee by code of (10) says in this case, "Each of the teachers and staff has a special talent, and accordingly, the participation and use of the opinions of all the elements of the school in different meetings such as the school council, the teachers' council, the parents' association and the student council will move our job towards our goals.

In connection with accessibility of school principals, Isamoun and Isamoun (2010) point out that being an effective leader, they have to be accessible to teachers, staff, parents, students, and community members. He/she is calm in difficult situations and thinks carefully before every action and, puts the needs of the school before his own desires. An effective principle to fill the gaps of school issues is to pay attention to the needs of the school before paying attention to your own desires (Isamoun, 2010).

The results in this dimension are in accordance with Ganaden's (2020) study which emphasizes educational leadership as one of the essential competencies. Also, it is in line with the study of Allen et al. (2018) which emphasizes the leadership skill in mediation (social skill). Bayarystanova's study (2013) also emphasizes interactive leadership in line with the results obtained.

Expertise and in-depth knowledge as one of the overarching themes include: dominance over educational and research matters, familiarity with psychology, familiarity and dominance over financial affairs, supervision and

guidance (educational, research, etc.). Today's managers must play the role of effectiveness in facing the current issues. These issues include determining the teacher's educational practices, the role of a consultant for teachers and students, creating an effective happy learning environment, enhancing one's professional development, and the coherence of educational programs (Grissom et al., 2019). A highly competent principal can sustain school improvement, increase student achievement, and foster student talent (Simon & Johnson, 2015). In addition to the role of accounting and financial manager of a school, the school principal must be able to learn this task professionally. The role of the principal in the field of accounting and finance provides financial transparency in the school. This clarification leads to a beneficial relationship between the principal and other staff and helps in the financial activities of the school (Babiami, 2006). In this regard, the interviewee by code of (5) refers to "performing various tasks at the level of the regional management and the general administration, and therefore familiarity with macro and strategic issues, as well as specialized familiarity with financial issues and personal handling of accounting and financial matters of the organization."

In a school, all educational issues should not be considered as the responsibility of the teacher, and it requires the continuous visit of the principal as a curriculum planner and educational supervisor and the investigation of students' problems (Arsem & Giverso, 2018). Principals' decisions and strategies are very important for organizational performance; they are responsible for

achieving high level of student achievement. To achieve high expectations, principals must analyze data through dashboards to identify factors associated with student enrollment, retention, and student success. There is clear evidence through reports that institutional characteristics such as admissions, enrollment, attendance, discipline, grades, fee collection, etc., determine these outcomes (Roger, 2014).

The word "linchpin" is the vital key to pay attention to specialization and becoming a skilled, expert and efficient manpower. A principal as a linchpin component is only looking for expert personnel. Regarding the importance of specialist and manager, it is enough that the industrialized countries of the world attract thousands of creative and innovative manpower from the developing countries every year, and the scientific and research centers of the industrialized world of the West benefit from the thoughts, ideas and art of experts from all over the world that it could be considered as disaster for the developing countries. Among the main factors for the survival of any organization is the existence of expert, efficient and knowledgeable human resources. These forces can improve the situation of the organization with significant role-playing and increase the effectiveness of the organization with a significant level of initiative and creativity. Specialization is included in professional competences. A manager or human resource with high professional competence must have professional and specialized skills to perform their duties; so they must have sufficient motivation to solve existing problems and have high responsibility and work conscience. However, in professional competence, expertise and skill are among the manager's innate characteristics; but a manager possess a critical skill when he himself seeks to increase his skills to become an expert one which according to this characteristic, the manager would be as a linchpin component is in line with the definition of professional development (trying to improve the performance capacity of managers as effective professionals by making them learn new knowledge, attitude and skills) (Wilt, 2019) and he gets the benefits the specialist to deal with the shortage. The principal uses knowledge and strives to create a specialized database and promotes employees according to their skills and specialties (Klein et al., 201).

In addition, in the supervisory activities of principals, Egwunyenga and Atekira (2005) believes that supervisory procedures such as classroom visits and evaluation, school visits, seminars and teaching methods are generally carried out by school principals. In addition, the main supervisory functions of training have been performed by school principals which include monitoring the presence of teachers in classes and ensuring adequate preparation of lesson notes, verifying and ensuring the adequacy of work plans, and documenting records in schools (Ayeni, 2005). The interviewee by code of (5) mentioned that "monitoring the correct and scheduled implementation of the included items was one of the main factors affecting the success of the school". Based on studies conducted in Finland, the concepts of supervision and practical implementation, which is one of the most challenging issues for managers and supervision methods, educational supervision has a significant impact on

the way students learn and increase the quality of teachers' work (Alila et al., 2016). Anshiya Dakun Wafo (2018) concluded that educational supervision is widely used today to improve teacher motivation, including orientation of new teaching staff, review of teachers' work files, provision of in-service training, observation of lessons, and close control. Accordingly the study of Bitra et al. (2014) showed that school leaders should have the competence to create and develop an effective learning environment for students, distribute and show areas under control and areas of responsibility, and show the competence of educational guidance.

Critical thinking and problem solving, as one of the linchpin components of school principals, refers to the problem recognizing the and solving it, issues and problems analyzing, differentiation between issues, problems and situations, continuously searching for information, logical reasoning and predicting. It also refers to continuous self-evaluation and criticism. To address the complexity of modern societies, political documents and educational reforms around the world, we need to learn the necessary 21st century skills in the new educational environment (Fletcher et al., 2021). Fletcher et al. (2019) emphasize on the cognitive domain including competencies related to cognitive processes and strategies, knowledge and creativity, for example thinking, reasoning and critical reasoning as essential skills for school principals. Such skills and competencies include the ability to participate in discussions and their reasoning, understanding content, and applying and transferring information among students to solve these problems (Bosley et al., 2018).

The interviewee by code of (3) states: "I try to search and explore in relation to all the dimensions of that subject. I break down the issues and examine them one by one. With this activity, I can easily come to the conclusion that I should definitely act beyond the scope of my duties to achieve my goals."

Another problem faced by a school principal is the assessment of the skills of the teaching staff at the time of recruitment (Stone and Lewis, 2012). Recruiting skills that should be considered by the principals require critical thinking skills. The support of soft skills of students by their principals increases the self-confidence and creativity of students. These skills include critical thinking and problem solving that increase the employability of students at the future (Milar, 2018; Piper and McGress, 2019). Godin believes that every person can consolidate his position in the work process by strengthening his knowledge and abilities in such a way that without him the whole operation would collapse. According to Godin (2010), this person has skills such as the ability to solve problems that others are unable to solve. One of the most important responsibilities of a principal is how to solve problems. Finding answers to difficult situations that sometimes become a source of discomfort for the organization and managers is very important; it is one of the characteristics of a successful principal who can respond quickly in any situation. The success of an organization or even an educational system depends on solving management issues; whether these issues are minor or at the level of a crisis, it is important to address them (Van Merinbur, 2013). Managers who have the ability to assess the

environment in conditions of uncertainty through forward-looking thinking always recognize the situation and find a precise solution so that the business grows and does not cause the decline of an organization (Shiot et al., 2016). Principals, as a vital part of problem-solving power, are always eager to solve problems without wanting to run away from them. When the conditions of an organization are in crisis, these principals will solve the problem automatically; a manager must have four characteristics to have problem solving skills (Yu et al., 2014).

Vigilant principals are constantly paying attention to the signals, signs and symptoms that may arise in the current situation. When they see a potential problem, they think about whether it is a problem and whether it will have a significant impact on the team or the organization. (Robert Sun, 2016). In line with the results obtained in this component, the study of Secher et al. (2011) titled "competency modeling in education development, integrating the scientific model of education development with the human resource development model" (in the Ohio State University Organization) focused on problem solving as one of the competencies.

Creativity and innovation, due to its importance and the direct mention of it by the interviewees, was extracted as another linchpin component of school principals. Principal looks at the creation of knowledge and new strategies in a different way as a linchpin component. Considering that many organizations in their environment are facing many problems in terms of competitiveness and these problems are due to the high speed of changes in the environment, especially

technological changes, principals and employees should use the power of creativity and innovation to adapt and coordinate to rapid changes by implementing new management practices (Caldwell et al., 2016); a school principal with more innovation and more creativity acts agiler in response to changing environments and leads to the better performance (Gabro, 2019). In this regard, the interviewee by code of (11) says that "a successful manager should always be creative according to the conditions and do new and innovative activity".

Paying attention to the creation of knowledge and new strategies, in the linchpin component, makes the communication of knowledge and innovation processes easy; the more attention is paid to knowledge in an organization, the more innovation there will be. Therefore, having an innovative and creative manager in the organization causes opportunities to be hunted for the organization (Abersabgar et al., 2021). It is important to include creativity and innovation in the educational system of any country, and the paths that stimulate creative thoughts and the process of generating ideas should be included in the educational system. Considering the inclusion of innovation in the educational system, the principal cannot support creativity and innovation with only an academic degree; he/she must have an innovative mind and be able to support creative students and arrange the educational environment in a way that stimulates innovation and creativity (Vitayakhum and Piryaswang, 2020). School principal are a linchpin component of learning and creating an effective educational process that expands creativity and innovation. In

the school management, these school principals should provide learning opportunities for staff by using structure planning and strategy and have the ability to create, acquire and transfer knowledge (Mestri, 2017; Trekker and Kadin, 2003).

Another component identified in connection with the linchpin component of school principal is developmental thinking (self and others) which includes these organizing themes: designing, implementing and evaluating the self-made (management) model and re-creating the desired model based on existing theories, discovering and recognizing the potentials and emergence of capabilities, keeping the school community up to date, sharing knowledge and increasing knowledge and developing colleagues. In this regard, the interviewee by code of (4) says: "I put a lot of emphasis on myself and my colleagues being up-to-date to increase the quality of teaching-learning". In relation to the need and necessity of designing and implementing a management model that is suitable for the changes and suitable for the human society of the school, Deward and Robert (2021) argue that there are three practical ways for establishing a new military system (modern schools):

1- To meet the need, it was completely modeled on the current existing systems.

2- Regardless of the existing systems, he created a completely new system.

3- He examined the current systems and by recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, by changing the weak points and emphasizing the strong ones, he created a system compatible with the emerging needs.

In relation to his own development as well as that of others, i.e. other staff of the school (teachers, staff, etc.), when the principal seeks his professional development, he creates an educational atmosphere in the school where students can learn better and faster and have enthusiasm, and their desire for learning is more (Ozdemir, 2016). On the other hand, managers of organizations should develop the flexibility capacity to meet challenges, face issues and problems, environments with high uncertainty and risk taking (Lengik Hall et al., 2011). This capacity development includes organizational capabilities identified by the manager that anticipate opportunities and threats and direct the organization to facilitate strategic goals (Artiz and Bansel, 2016). If managers develop these organizational capabilities, they can achieve dynamic organizational capabilities appropriate to today's environment (Penkuntch et al., 2016). Although in relation to the development, the research literature is rich but this dimension has been less discussed in other researches as it indicates the development of oneself and others as one of the components in relation to school principals. On the other hand, considering the role of knowledge management, or in other words, the creation of new knowledge and strategies in professional development, it is more prominent and vital, in the way that professional development is the sum of all formal and informal learning that has been tested and convincing by the principal in a blended learning environment (including theory and practice) carried out in the conditions of complex and dynamic changes (Li and Dervi, 2018). The interviewee by code of (6) also mentioned: "The successful manager

tries to identify the training needs of the employees and provide the basis for knowledge enhancement and participation in retraining courses in the possible ways. He pays attention to the use of educational aids in teaching and provides these tools as much as possible."

Due to the fact that today's environment is constantly changing, a principal with a traditional mindset cannot be responsible for these changes and guide organizations. A school principal's goal, as a linchpin component, is no longer material necessity, but his goal is the success of a group which requires the cooperation of all employees; he/she always feels this cooperation, the employees need expert people to complete their knowledge gap in such a way that in addition to how to learn, how to learn, absorb and distribute new knowledge according to today's needs, create and produce new information and knowledge and can continually change and improve the performance of oneself and the staff to leave a positive performance in the implementation of educational policies (Prestone, 2018).

Breaking (boundary) the structure, based on these themes: acting beyond the call of duty, not being limited to regulations and instructions, and flexibility is defined. Managers of organizations must develop the capacity of flexibility to meet challenges, face issues and problems, environments with high uncertainty and risk taking (Lengik Halbeck, 2011). Based on the study of Rioli and Savaki (2003), paying attention to individual flexibility in the organization is important for today's managers. To equip future managers with flexibility capabilities, organizations need training programs

and sharing experiences and practical training sessions instead of theoretical training (Baker and Bakker, 2012). These training programs increase the self-confidence of managers in the future and develop the skills of a manager (Lovelis et al., 2016). In this regard, the interviewee by code of (5) states that "correcting the approach of the educational executive staff and parents and students requires that every school principal acts beyond the limits of the specified duties (time, place and case)". In line with the results of this section, Hillman et al. (2018) admit that long-term planning and strategic management training are needed for the flexibility of the organization; that the structure of the educational system should be appropriate to today's organizations that are undergoing many changes.

On the other hand, in relation to not being limited to instructions and playing a role beyond the task, Godin (2010) argues that the linchpin components, instead of waiting for clear and direct instructions, draw up maps that other people are not also able to follow (Gadin, 2010). Accordingly, Robert Sun (2013) argues that when the problem is defined as a priority, school principals should create a clear and quantitative statement that describes a specific situation in specific and objective terms without making assumptions or jumping to conclusions; they do not wait for predetermined instructions (Robert Sun, 2016).

It can be said that in the reviewed studies, this component has not been addressed so much, and in the current study, it has been extracted according to the importance of school principals and according to interviews with principals. Godin also emphasizes this importance

as one of the characteristics of linchpin components. The importance of turning a principal into a linchpin components is that he/she will be able to prepare human resources to participate in today's modern world and their efforts to compete in the stressful business environment of the future (Sharma and Jain, 2013). First of all, a principal needs to reach to the degree of competency and understanding of professional development and familiarity with hard and soft skills to be able to think beyond today's written procedures and rules and be able to train successful human resources as a successful person (Preston and Barnes, 2017; Thapa, 2020)).

Another extracted theme is ethics/professional ethics which itself refers to the ethics of people in the role of managers and their professional ethics in the workplace. Andred et al. (2020) consider moral development and spiritual growth as one of the main competencies of school principals; achievements of personal and social development include values and ethics, civic participation, independent learning, contribution to the well-being of society, and a sense of spirituality as sub-categories of principals' competencies (Andred et al., 2020). The interviewee by code of (11) states "a successful manager must be faithful, pious, patient, good-natured, listening, thoughtful". Taqipour et al. (2020) also mentioned in their study the framework of legal and ethical standards as professional competencies required by school principals. To achieve success, principals in today's schools are not only supervising today's complex mind students in a society that is ever changing, but they must also be the best as a successful leader with more

emphasis on students' success in both moral and academic areas' performance (Wallace Foundation, 2013). Obviously, to achieve this goal, it is necessary for school principals to have moral characteristics and professional ethics in the school environment.

Insight and inspiration, as one of the important components in relation to the linchpin components of school principals were defined by these themes: recognizing, understanding and monitoring the needs of colleagues, having open attitude and being receptive to opinions, active listening, influencing the school community, appreciating and encouraging colleagues. Today, the position and role of management has changed. They, instead of traditional planning, organizing, measuring and controlling, must create vision (insight) and empowerment, coordinate the website and relationships; they must have the role of inspiration and coach and focus on creating values (Thomasin, 2017). Carpenter, Bureau Erdoğan (2012), while referring to the interpersonal roles of managers, acknowledge that managers have social and legal responsibilities. They are a source of inspiration. The staff look at the manager as a powerful person, as an important figure. Mamche et al. (2020) point out this importance and argue that soft skills are less tangible and harder. Working with others, listening well and participating in small discussions are soft skills. Interviewed by code of (3) states that "the manager's room is always open and we invite you to talk, it is very important to be a listening principal".

Despite pointing to listening as one of the soft skills, this feature along with recognizing, understanding the needs of colleagues, open attitude and receptive

to changes, and encouraging colleagues, reflects the concept of insight and inspiration which influences the school community. Ajio Ani in Bebayani (2006) refers to this role of the school principal as "an educational stimulus" and asserts that the school principal, in addition to having a management role, he/she should be periodically trained to control and lead a school and learn psychological skills. To achieve educational goals, through the process of educational learning, it is necessary to change the attitude of employees and motivate them because this positive attitude changes the teachers' views and creates a better educational environment for students (Ekandi, 2010).

The acceptance of differences and the uniqueness of humans as another extracted theme refers to the acceptance of differences on the one hand and the uniqueness of humans on the other hand. Fletcher et al. (2019) in connection with the necessary skills for school principals in the 21st century refer to the familiarity with the intra-personal and interpersonal domain and argue that with the development of modern societies, there is a need for a skilled manager who is informed about the intra-personal domain; they help all students to acquire these competencies so the students can be well prepared to know themselves in the future. Based on the results, this is not possible except by accepting the differences and the fact that humans are unique. This is the same belief that Godin (2010) emphasizes in such a way that every person can strengthen his knowledge and abilities in such a way that the entire operation collapses without him. In this regard, the interviewee by code of (1) mentions that "if we accept that people are different from each other and to the extent that the

morals and common values of the members by the society norms, the difference is their natural right; we will not expect that all students behave according to our wishes and tastes. Every human being is a different world and a special talent. By accepting this issue, we will have a better world besides schools"; or the interviewee by code of (6) states that "a good manager should know each and every staff of his school and be aware of their characteristics and even their problems. They have to respect to each person according to their talent, taste and scientific and experimental ability in the educational and affairs of the school.

Talent means natural readiness (intrinsic factors) or acquired (environmental factors) to do some activities; according to Edward Parde, a Swiss psychologist, when we put people in the same educational conditions, there are differences between them in terms of efficiency which are the factors of these differences ,and we call it talent. Each person's talents are his/her own which means that a person may have a good talent for one field but not have the ability for another field (James and Brown, 2012). Godin (2010) argues that if you accept that people are difficult to change and accept the uniqueness of each person, you will bless the world more. You will also make better decisions. Despite the emphasis of researches on considering individual differences, in the researches related to this field, including the competences and qualifications of school principals, this matter has been less addressed; but paying attention to individual differences and its management is a long-term strategy, and valuing it in the administrative environment as well as in educational institutions, improves and

expands creativity, realizes the rich talents of people and increases intelligence and correct understanding of reality among employees, and significantly helps the organization in achieving its constructive goals. (Rashidi et al., 2018).

Another theme extracted is called generosity which includes these themes: maintaining human dignity, respect and trust, mutual understanding and empathy. In powerful organizations, employees have more ways to solve their problems. In these organizations, empowerment is actually the practice of trusting each other in the field of education, exchanging opinions and respecting each other. Empowerment should be considered a recognition process and used in growth and leadership; and this is the art of a manager to plan the developing of employees and get benefits out of expert ones (Adamanbert et al., 2014, 2019).

Preservation of human dignity, respect and trust, empathy and mutual understanding form the shape of generosity as one of the linchpin components. Interviewee by code of (3) mentions that "appreciating employees and noticing to their work is very important in motivating and demotivating employees". Although less studies have dealt with this component and with this title, Arat (2014) in his study emphasizes healthier relationships, empathy and a healthier approach as essential skills. Soft skills for empathy are how to communicate with others (AlHouli et al., 2020). One aspect related to empowerment refers to the aspect that trust and understanding are to ensure these actions aligned with the company's goals. (Netvarens, 2018). While many companies may grow from the hard work and dedication of one or

two entrepreneurs, real growth is the outcome of many people working together. No matter how capable, expert and creative a manager is, he needs capable staff to achieve the goals of the organization sooner. Developing the staff is a culture. It Increases trust, clear communication and strategic decisions (Hauld, 2011).

The art of work and emotional connection was extracted as the last overarching theme that includes these organizing themes: positive thinking, management of emotions and feelings, altruism and love for work and people are in his heart. A school principal is the primary leader in a school building. A principal should be positive and enthusiastic in carrying out programs; he/she should be in the forefront of the daily activities of the school and should be able to listen to the school staff and students; he/she should be available as an effective leader to teachers, staff, parents, students, and community members. He/she is calm in difficult situations and thinks carefully before every action and puts the needs of the school before his own desires. An effective principle to fill the gaps of school issues has to pay attention to the school's needs before paying attention to its own desires (Isamoun and Isamoun, 2010). In this regard, the interviewee by code of (1) mentions, "Accepting the idea that school principals will manage the school as human beings, and not as a robot, and the target audience of their management are all human beings, it affects naturally mind and heart as two parallel lines of his/her management. Robotic management will not be effective in structures where humans are there. Therefore, understanding the feelings and emotions of teachers, students and parents and managing them

based on the balance between feelings and logic is one of the requirements regarding the human society of the school". The interviewee by code of (7) also mentions that "I try to keep the field of learning positive. I motivate students and teachers. They need a sense of security (educational, psychological, and physical) and I will create it".

Although Godin (2010) considers emotional labor to be one of the unique characteristics of linchpin components, this component can be called the missing link in the research that has been done in relation to soft skills. However, emotional labor is not a new word. The term emotional labor was coined by sociologist Arlie Hochschild in his book (1983), The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Emotions. At that time, Hochschild defined emotional labor as an event that occurs at work. But in the following decades, emotional labor has come to be used in society to describe the unpaid and often invisible work done by an individual to satisfy the needs or wants of others, both at work and in social and domestic situations. In this context, studies such as Cropanzano, Rupp & Byrne (2003), Grandi (2000) investigated the effect of emotional work on job performance and concluded that emotional work has a positive and significant effect on job performance.

Wolters and Gonzalez (2008) argue that the emotional climate of the workplace has a significant impact on the growth of employees and managers. In addition to acquiring scientific knowledge and skills from their managers, employees are increasingly influenced by their emotions as a part of social emotional growth and according to their understanding from these emotions; they react to them (Konishi,

Hymel, Zumbo & Li, 2010). But in this component, besides emphasizing on the management of emotions and feelings, positive thinking, altruism, and loving work and people are also emphasized. Positive thinking in the form of an approach in positive psychology is the sense that people hope that in the future, good events will happen more than bad events; it can affect their behavior and help them to cope with problems, and consequently this confidence in the future causes a person feels positive. Of course, positive thinking is not only superficial positivity, but optimistic people solve problems and design plans for activities and then act accordingly which in turn makes a person more successful in solving problems (Shamsaei, Akhundzadeh and Hojjati, 2018).) This is the same concept that Godin also emphasizes for the linchpin components: while loving people and work, and benefiting from the art of emotional work, they make the plan to solve the problems.

Implication:

According to the identification of the linchpin components of the management of school principals, it is suggested that the Ministry of Education and the schools principals should implement it based on the compiled components to play the role of school principals as linchpin components. Other suggestions are as follows:

Considering the identification of the principals training components and the role of linchpin components, it is suggested to base the identified components on the recruitment and employment of teachers as well as their appointment as school principals.

In Farhangian University, which is in charge of the education and training of teachers in the country, while

emphasizing on the education and training of soft skills, the identified components should be placed in connection with the linchpin components as a framework for their training.

The need to revise the structure of the education system has been extracted as one of the strategies needed to cultivate linchpin elements, so it is suggested to consider the decentralization of the education system based on the comparative study of education in other sectors.

It is suggested to change the approach and training methods in in-service courses and use methods such as mentoring and coaching in the education system in line with the training of school principals as linchpin elements.

References

Abu shaqra, R. K. Y (2021). The role of Jordanian school principals in achieving the fourth goal of the sustainable development goals. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Science.* 16(1), 167-186.

Abu Shaqra, R. K. Y (2021). The role of Jordanian school principals in achieving the fourth goal of the sustainable development goals. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Science.* 16(1), 167-186.

Adomßent, M., Fischer, D., Godemann, J., Herzig, C., Otte, I., Rieckmann, M., & Timm, J.-M. (2014), "Emerging areas in research on higher education for sustainable development: management education, sustainable consumption and perspectives from Central and Eastern Europe", *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Vol. 62 No. 1, pp. 1-7.

Adomßent, M., Grahl, A., & Spira, F. (2019). Putting sustainable campuses into force: Empowering students, staff and academics by the self-efficacy Green Office Model. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education.*

Ahmadbeigi, Shahriar. (2018). Designing a conceptual model to promote the role of the school in creating the social capital of elementary school students. *Quarterly Journal of New Approaches in Educational Management*, 10(40): 148-172.

AlHouli, A. I., & Al-Khayatt, A. K. A. (2020). Assessing the soft skills needs of teacher education students. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(3), 416-431.

Allen, S., Williams, P., & Allen, D. (2018). Human Resource Professionals' Competencies for Pluralistic Workplaces. *The International Journal of Management Education*. 16(2): 309- 320.

Allida, V., Olela, M., Ogwari, P., & Minja, O. (2018). Best practices in instructional supervision: A study of adventist secondary schools in Ranen conference. *Baraton Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, 8, 1-7.

Allida, V., Olela, M., Ogwari, P., & Minja, O., (2018). *Best practices in instructional supervision: a study of Adventist secondary schools in Ranen conference. Baraton Interdiscipl.* Res. J. 8, 1–7. Retrieved from. https://www.ueab.ac.ke/wp-content/ uploads/2019/04/Vencie-Michael-Peter-Onesmo.pdf.

Andrade, M. S., Westover, J. H., & Westover, A. (2020). Student Professional Competencies as Perceived by Community Service-Learning Partners. *Journal of Community Engagement and Higher Education*, 12(3), 19-32.

Arat, M. (2014). Acquiring soft skills at university. *Journal of Educational and*

Instructional Studies in the World, 4(3), 46-54.

Asari, N., Siadat, Seyyed A., Abedini, Y., & Astrologer, A.H. (2019). Determining the hierarchy of school principals' competence criteria based on the Fuzzy Delphi method in Isfahan province. *Quarterly Journal of New Approaches in Educational Management*, 11(41): 159-190.

Ayeni, A. J. (2005). *The effect of principals' leadership styles on motivation of teachers for job performance in secondary schools in Akure South Local Government.* An Unpublished Thesis submitted to the Department of Educational Administration and Planning. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

Babayemi, A. (2006). *Principalship in educational management: Thoughts and Practice.* Ibadan: Codat Publications. 242-261.

Baker, D. F., & Baker, S. J. (2012). To "catch the sparkling glow": A canvas for creativity in the management classroom. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 11, 704-721. doi:10.5465/amle.2010.0003

Bartlett, C. (2019). *Are you a Linchpin? A person who is vital to an organization in the 4th Industrial Revolution.* Published on April 14, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/you-linchpin-person-who-vital-organization-4th-chad-bartlett

Bayarystanova, E., & et al. (2013). *Education System Management And Professional Competence Of Managers. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 140 (2014). 427. 431. Retrieved from: www. sciencedirect.com.

Ben Arabeya, M. (2018). The role of quality higher education in achieving sustainable development, *Journal of Economics and Law,* 1 (3): 145-166.

Bitterová, M., Hašková, A., & Pisoňová, M. (2014). School leader's competencies in management area. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 149, 114-118.

Boselli, A., Cuillandre, J. C., Fossati, M., Boissier, S., Bomans, D., Consolandi, G., & Toloba, E. (2016). Spectacular tails of ionized gas in the Virgo cluster galaxy NGC 4569. *Astronomy & Astrophysics,* 587, A68.

Caldwell, C. A., Cornish, H., & Kandler, A. (2016). Identifying innovation in laboratory studies of cultural evolution: rates of retention and measures of adaptation. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: *Biological Sciences*, 371(1690), 20150193.

Carpenter, M., Bauer, T., & Erdogan B. (2012). *Principles of Management*, p. 15. Retrieved from: https://2012books.lardbucket.org/pdfs/management-principles-v1.0.pdf.

Ciğerci, F. M. (2020). Primary School Teacher Candidates and 21st Century Skills. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 16(2).

DeWaard, H., & Roberts, V. (2021). Revisioning the potential of Freire's principles of assessment: Influences on the art of assessment in open and online learning through blogging. *Distance Education*, 42(2), 310-326.

Egwunyenga, O. A., & Ataikiru, D. P. (2005). Soil-transmitted helminthiasis among school age children in ethiope East local government area, delta state, Nigeria. *African Journal of Biotechnology*, 4(9).

Esa, A., Padil, S., Selamat, A., & Idris, M. T. M. (2015). SoSTeM Model Development for Application of Soft Skills to Engineering Students at Malaysian Polytechnics. *International Education Studies*, 8(11), 204-210.

Fletcher, E. C., Jr., Warren, N., & Hernandez-Gantes, V. (2019). The high school academy as a laboratory of equity, inclusion, and safety. *Computer Science*

Education, 29(4), 382–406. https://doi.org/10.1080/08993408.2019.1 616457.

Gabora, L. (2019). Creativity: Linchpin in the quest for a viable theory of cultural evolution. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 27, 77-83.

Ganaden, A. R. (2020). Managerial Competency of Laboratory High School Principals of State Universities and Colleges in Region III, Philippines. *Online Submission*, 8(3), 112-122.

Godin, S. (2010). *Linchpin: Are You Indispensable? How to drive your career and create a remarkable future*. Piatkus; Digital original edition.

Grissom, J. A., Bartanen, B., & Mitani, H. (2019). Principal sorting and the distribution of principal quality. *AERA Open*, 5(2), 2332858419850094.

Gutman, L. M., & Schoon, I. (2013). *The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people*. A literature review.

Hald, M. (Ed.). (2011). *Transcending boundaries: How CEMUS is changing how we teach, meet and learn.* Centrum för miljö-och utvecklingsstudier i Uppsala (CEMUS)

Hillmann, J., Duchek, S., Meyr, J., & Guenther, E. (2018). Educating future managers for developing resilient organizations: the role of scenario planning. *Journal of Management Education*, 42(4), 461-495

Hillmann, J., Duchek, S., Meyr, J., & Guenther, E. (2018). Educating future managers for developing resilient organizations: the role of scenario planning. *Journal of Management Education,* 42(4), 461-495.

James, F., & Kenneth, B. (2002). *Learning based on individual differences.* Translated by Nemati, Majid and Heyder Torani, Tehran, Nash Qo.

Jodki, A., Mohammad Khanif K., & Mohammad Davodi, A. (2018).

Presenting a conceptual model of professional growth of secondary school principals: a foundational data theory. *School Management Quarterly*, 7(2):251-272.

Keskinkilic-Kara, S., & Zafer-Gunes, D. (2017). Relationship between Implicit Leadership and Proactive Behaviors of School Principals. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(3): p78-88.

Kline, M. A., Shamsudheen, R., & Broesch, T. (2018). *Variation is the universal: Making cultural evolution work in developmental psychology.* Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences, 373(1743), 20170059.

Lengnick-Hall, C. A., Beck, T. E., & Lengnick-Hall, M. L. (2011). Developing a capacity for organizational resilience through strategic human resource management. *Human resource management review*, 21(3), 243-255.

Li, Y. D., & Dervin, F. (2018). *Continuing professional development of teachers in Finland.* Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95795-1.

Lovelace, K. J., Eggers, F., & Dyck, L. R. (2016). I do and I understand: Assessing the utility of web-based management simulations to develop critical thinking skills. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 15(1), 100-121.

Mameche, Y., OMRI, M. A., & Hassine, N. (2020). Compliance of accounting education programs with international accounting education standards: The Case of IES 3 in Tunisia. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 20(85), 225-246.

Meador, D. (2019). *The role of the principal in schools.* ThougtCo, Jan, 14, 2019.

Mestry, R. (2017). Empowering principals to lead and manage public

schools effectively in the 21st century. *South African Journal of Education*, 37(1), 1-11.

Naidoo, P. (2019). Perceptions of Teachers and School Management Teams of the Leadership Roles of Public School Principals. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(2), 1-14.

Netzwerk-n E.V. (Ed.) (2018), *Zukunftsfähige Hochschulen Gestalten*. Beispiele Des Gelingens Aus Lehre, Forschung, Betrieb, Governance Und Transfer, 2nd ed., Berlin.

Ng, S. W., & Chan, T. M. K. (2014). Continuing professional development for middle leaders in primary schools in Hong Kong. *Journal of Educational Administration,* 52(6), 869- 886

Pahang, N., Mahdiyun, R., & Yarigholi, B. (2016). Examining the quality of schools and identifying factors affecting it: a combined research. *School Management*, 5(1): 173-193.

Pepper, I., & McGrath, R. (2019). *Embedding employability within higher education for the profession of policing.* Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning.

Pina e Cunha, M., Vieira da Cunha, J., & Cabral-Cardoso, C. (2016). Looking for complication: Four approaches to management education. *Journal of Management Education,* 28, 88-103. doi:10.1177/1052562903252518

Pineda-Báez, C., Bernal-Luque, R., Sandoval-Estupiñan, L. Y., & Quiroga, C. (2019). Challenges facing novice principals: A study in Colombian schools using a socialisation perspective. *Issues in Educational Research,* 29(1), 205-222

Preston, J., & Barnes, K. E. (2017). Successful leadership in rural schools: Cultivating collaboration. *The Rural Educator*, 38(1), 6-15.

Rashidi, M., & Timuri, N. (2008). Investigating the application of managing individual differences in the recruitment, utilization and promotion of human resources in the oil industry. *Quarterly Journal of Management and Human Resources in Petroleum Industry*, 7(3), 19-42.

Riolli, L., & Savicki, V. (2003). Information system organizational resilience. *Omega*, 31, 227-233. doi:10.1016/S0305-0483(03)00023-9

Robertson, I. S. (2016). *Problem solving: Perspectives from cognition and neuroscience (2nd ed.).* Hove: Psychology Press.

Scheer, S. D., Cochran, G. R., Harder, A., & Place, N. T. (2011). Competency Modeling in Extension Education: Integrating an Academic Extension Education Model with an Extension Human Resource Management Model. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 52(3), 64-74.

Schrik, P., &Wasonga, T. A. (2018). The Role of a School Leader in Academic Outcomes: Between Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectations. *Athens Journal of Education*, 6(4): 291-306.

Sezer, S. (2018). School Principals' Administrative Characteristics And The Effects On The Development Of Students. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 4(10).

Shamsai, P., Akhundzadeh, G., & Hojjati, H. (2018). The effect of positive thinking training on the adaptation of parents of thalassemic adolescents. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 8(1), 29-35.

Sharma, M. K., & Jain, S. (2013). Leadership management: Principles, models and theories. *Global journal of management and business studies*, 3(3), 309-318.

Sherman, R. (2019). *Nurse Managers are the Linchpins.* https://www.emergingrnleader.com/nurse-managers-are-the-linchpins/

Shute, V., Wang, L., Greiff, S., Zhao, W., & Moore, G. (2016). Measuring problem solving skills via stealth

assessment in an engaging video game. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 63, 106–117

Simon, N. S., & Johnson, S. M. (2015). Teacher turnover in highpoverty schools: What we know and can do. *Teachers College Record*, 117(3), 1–36.

Sukhraj, R. (2016*). How Indispensable Are You to Your Team?* [Insights from Seth Godin's Linchpin]. February 1st, 2016, https://www.impactbnd.com/blog/how-indispesnable-are-you-to-your-team-insights-from-seth-godins-linchpin.

Taghipour, A., Ghasemizad, A., & Koofigar, H. R. (2020). Compiling a Model of Managers' Professional Meritocracy Based on Islamic and Iranian Teachings. *Propósitos y representaciones*, 8(3), 24.

Thapa, S. (2020). *Assessing intercultural competence in teacher education: a missing link.* In Visions for Intercultural Music Teacher Education (pp. 163-176). Springer, Cham.

Tieken, M. C., & Montgomery, M. K. (2021). Challenges Facing Schools in Rural America. *State Education Standard*, 21(1), 6-11.

Tolo, A., Lillejord, S., Teresa, M., Petour, F., & Hopfenbeck, T. (2019). Intelligent accountability in schools: A study of how school leaders work with the implementation of assessment for learning. *Journal of Educational Change*

Tovmasyan, G. (2017). *The role of managers in organizations: Psychological aspects.* Business Ethics and Leadership.

Traicoff, D., Pope, A., Bloland, P., Lal, D., Bahl, J., Stewart, S., & Sandhu, H. (2019). Developing standardized competencies to strengthen immunization systems and workforce. *Vaccine,* 37(11), 1428-1435.

Tucker, M. S., & Codding, J. B. (Eds.). (2003). *The principal challenge: Leading and managing schools in an era of accountability*. John Wiley & Sons.

Van Merriënboer, J. J. G., & Bruin, A. B. H. (2013). *Research paradigms and perspectives on learning*. In J. M. Spector, et al. (Eds.), Handbook of research on educational communications and technology (pp. 21–29). New York: Springer.

Webster, K., & Litchka, P. (2020). Planning For Effective School Leadership: Teachers' Perceptions Of The Leadership Skills And Ethical Behaviors Of School Principals. *Educational Planning*, 27(1): 31-47.

Wise, D. (2015). Emerging Challenges Facing School Principals. *Education Leadership Review*, 16(2): 103-115.

Yu, K., Fan, S., & Lin, K. (2014). Enhancing students' problem-solving skills through context-based learning. I*nternational Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 13, 1377–1401.

Zaninotto, L., Rossi, G., Danieli, A., Frasson, A., Meneghetti, L., Zordan, M., et al. (2018). Exploring the relationships among personality traits, burnout dimensions and stigma in a sample of mental health professionals. *Psychiatry. Res* 264, 327-33

Author1 Name: Soheila Mokhtari (Corresponding Author)
Email: soheilamokhtari67@gmail.com
Ms. Soheila Mokhtari is a PhD student in Educational Management at Kharazmi University. She received a master's degree in educational Management from Alzahra University of Tehran, Iran. He has published numerous articles in the field of educational management.

Author 2 Name: Hossein Abbasian (Corresponding Author)
Email: h_abbasian@khu.ac.ir https://khu.ac.ir/cv/368/
Assistant Professor of Educational Administration, Faculty of Management, Kharazmi University and his research background is educational leadership, educational evaluation

Author 3 Name: Hamidreza Arasteh
Email: arasteh@khu.ac.ir
He received his PhD in Higher Education Administration from the University of Houston in the United States and has worked in the field of higher education management indifferent positions. Since 2015, he has been the Dean of the Faculty of Management at Kharazmi University. Since 1996, he has supervised many graduate students in the field of higher education research at Kharazmi University and other Other Institutions. Professor, Department of Educational Administration, faculty of management, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Author 4 Name: Hasan Reza Zeinabadi
Email: zeinabadi_hr@khu.ac.ir https://khu.ac.ir/cv/361/
Associate Professor in Education Administration of Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran