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Differentiation in Educational Leaders' Approaches to Student Psychosocial Support: A Latent Profile Analysis

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Abstract:

Purpose: *The purpose of this study was to identify and explicate differentiated approaches adopted by educational leaders in organising systemic psychosocial support for students, with particular attention to both direct student-focused interventions and indirect strategies aimed at strengthening teachers' professional capacities. Additionally, the study sought to examine how specific configurations of leadership practices differentiate schools in terms of the degree of institutionalisation of psychosocial support, and to identify leadership characteristics conducive to coherent, proactive support models.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *The study employed a quantitative research design and was conducted on a sample of 474 principals and deputy principals representing primary, secondary, and vocational schools. Data were collected using a standardised questionnaire encompassing five dimensions of institutional practice: the presence of systemic psychosocial support structures, collaboration with psychological and pedagogical counselling services, teachers' access to specialist counselling, participation in external professional development initiatives, and the implementation of internal professional development activities. Data analysis was carried out using Latent Profile Analysis (LPA), with model selection guided by the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and entropy indices.*

Findings: *The latent profile analysis revealed qualitatively distinct school profiles differing in the scope, coherence, and level of integration of psychosocial support activities. The identified profiles demonstrated significant variation in the intensity of collaboration with external support institutions, the availability of specialist support for teachers, and the degree of systematic professional development. Schools characterised by integrated and proactive leadership exhibited a markedly higher level of sustainability and institutional embeddedness of psychosocial support than schools operating within fragmented or predominantly reactive frameworks.*

Practical implications: *The findings provide an empirical basis for designing differentiated support strategies tailored to distinct leadership profiles. They offer valuable guidance for leadership development programmes, the strategic planning of teacher professional development, and the formulation of educational policies aimed at strengthening schools' systemic capacity to support students' psychosocial well-being.*

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Originality/Value: *This study contributes a novel perspective to research on educational leadership by applying latent profile analysis to identify patterns in the organisation of psychosocial support within schools. Its originality lies in conceptualising psychosocial support as a durable, systemic school capacity rooted in leadership practices, rather than as a set of ad hoc responses to crisis situations.*

Keywords: *Educational leadership, psychosocial support, student wellbeing, latent profile analysis, school principals, teacher professional development.*

JEL codes: *I21, I28, I31, I12, C38.*

Paper type: *Research paper.*

1. Introduction

The growing scale of psychosocial difficulties among children and young people makes the issue of mental health support in schools one of the most important challenges in contemporary education. Research conducted around the world—including Poland and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries—indicates the growing burden of academic stress, anxiety, digital overload, and limited access to professional support systems.

These trends have been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has demonstrated that student well-being is a key prerequisite for effective learning. Consequently, schools increasingly serve not only as teaching institutions but also as complex psychosocial environments where students expect support, safety, and an adequate response to their needs.

In this context, the role of educational leaders, who create the organizational framework for school functioning, establish priorities, and are responsible for implementing evidence-based solutions such as PBIS, MTSS, and SEL, is particularly important.

However, existing research indicates that their approaches to psychosocial support vary significantly—from active, systemic well-being management to limited, reactive measures.

This diversity has significant practical implications, as it influences school climate, the quality of relationships, and the availability of interventions, yet remains poorly identified in the literature. Research identifying typologies and latent patterns of

leadership orientations in the area of student psychosocial support is particularly lacking.

This study attempts to fill this gap by employing Latent Profile Analysis (LPA), which allows for the identification of undisclosed, qualitatively different profiles of educational leaders. This method captures subtle differences in beliefs, actions, and organizational preferences, making the study innovative and timely from an international perspective.

The primary goal of the study is to determine the structure of variation in leadership approaches to student psychosocial support and teacher professional development. Specific goals include: (a) analyzing leaders' self-reported actions and beliefs, (b) identifying the underlying organizational orientations, (c) interpreting profiles within the context of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and (d) identifying implications for educational policy and practice.

The study is based on quantitative data analyzed using LPA, which allows for a precise description of heterogeneity within the leader population and avoids simplistic classifications. At the same time, the authors acknowledge the limitations of the study, connected with, among others, the self-report nature of the data, the potential for declarative bias, and limited access to international comparative data, particularly from the GCC countries, where reports highlight the scarcity of primary sources. The issues discussed constitute a theoretical background for the undertaken analysis and justify the need for deeper research on the role of educational leadership in the area of students' mental well-being.

The results of this study have the potential to significantly contribute to the development of the discipline, providing a better understanding of how schools function as psychosocial environments and demonstrating how differences in leadership approaches impact the quality of support provided to students. They also provide a foundation for designing more appropriate training, policies, and educational practices that address the complex needs of young people nowadays.

2. Students' Psychosocial Difficulties – Global, Polish and Kuwaiti Context

Modern schools operate under conditions of rapidly increasing psychosocial stress, which significantly exceeds the traditional understanding of educational stress. Numerous studies have observed that academic pressure—formerly considered a natural element of socialization—is increasingly taking the form of a chronic burden, leading to disruptions in the mental well-being of students and youth.

As Barbayannis and co-authors (2022) point out, "academic stress can reduce motivation, hinder academic achievement, and lead to increased college dropout rates" (p. 3), as well as "negatively impact mental health in students" (p. 4). These two

dimensions—reduced educational effectiveness and worsening mental health—intertwine into a complex web of difficulties for which schools in many countries are inadequately prepared.

One significant phenomenon that contributed to the difficult psychosocial situation of children and youth was the COVID-19 pandemic. It revealed the fragility of the traditional model of student functioning, accelerating and exacerbating stress, anxiety, and overload. Research by Pérez-Jorge *et al.* (2025) showed that the primary stressors of the post-pandemic period included "homework overload, assessment pressure, and difficulty reconciling academic and personal life" (p. 3).

Students struggled with both an excess of schoolwork and difficulties maintaining a balance between school and personal life, and the need to adapt to hybrid forms of learning proved an additional barrier (p. 4). In this perspective, school proved to be a place where institutional requirements, technical limitations, and young people's emotional capabilities collide. Córdova *et al.* (2023) observed similar relationships, emphasizing that "stress and emotions are the main disturbances that condition the learning process" (p. 2). This means that students' mental health is not an addition to the learning process, but one of its key conditions.

Polish research confirms these trends, adding important themes related to the digitalization of youth life. The Teenagers 3.0 report (NASK, 2023) shows that the Internet is becoming a real social world for young people, shaping norms, values, identities, and relationships. The average time spent online on weekdays (5 hours and 36 minutes) promotes not only intense online socialization but also risks such as isolation, FOMO, cyberbullying, and information overload, which are linked in the literature to rising levels of stress and mood disorders.

HBSC research also indicates a significant level of peer violence – 23.5% of teenagers experienced it at least once in the last two months (Mazur and Małkowska-Szkutnik, 2018). This violence is both physical and psychic, reducing a sense of security and intensifying anxiety, withdrawal, and secondary aggression.

Data from the Empowering Children Foundation also show that as many as 74% of psychiatric hospitalizations of children and adolescents are emergency (Szredzińska, 2022), which indicates the weakness of early intervention systems and the shift of the response burden to schools, often with limited human resources and organizational resources.

Similar phenomena are observed in Kuwait, forming a part of a broader picture in the GCC countries. Buabbas, Hasan, and Buabbas's (2021) study of secondary school students shows a clear link between excessive use of digital devices and levels of stress, anxiety, and depression: students using devices for more than 4 hours per day scored significantly higher on scales of addiction, stress, anxiety, and depression.

The authors demonstrate a linear relationship between the intensity of device use and decreased well-being, which corresponds with themes present in Polish and international studies.

The UNICEF MENARO report (2023) also reveals a dramatic scale of suicidal behavior among students aged 13-16 in Kuwait – 20% of respondents report suicidal thoughts, 14% plan to, and 18% attempt suicide. UNICEF also highlights the "lack of primary data […] in Kuwait" (p. 24), which hinders the design of evidence-based MHPSS (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Systems) services. The literature therefore highlights a dual gap: growing psychosocial burdens coupled with a simultaneous lack of consistent, reliable data and systemic solutions.

In summary, a review of global, Polish, and Kuwaiti studies indicates that schools are the first place to confront well-being issues and the most overburdened link in the system. This creates a clear context for analyzing the role of educational leadership in providing psychosocial support to students.

3. The Role of a School Principal in Shaping the School's Emotional and Psychosocial Climate

In contemporary educational literature, the role of a school principal is defined much more broadly than just in administrative terms. It is increasingly emphasized that the principal serves as an educational leader, tasked with creating an environment conducive to learning and the well-being of the entire school community. In this sense, they are responsible not only for teaching processes but also for the emotional and psychosocial climate of the school.

Two key approaches dominate research on educational leadership: transformational leadership and distributed leadership. Transformational leadership assumes that the principal inspires and motivates teachers to exceed their own limitations, creating a vision for school development (Leithwood and Jantzi 2005, p. 32). The "4I" concept is most frequently cited in the literature, constituting a key model for describing transformational leadership. This approach distinguishes four fundamental dimensions that together constitute the essence of this type of leadership.

The first dimension, known as idealized influence, refers to the way a leader's behavior inspires respect, trust, and identification with their values among followers. The second dimension, inspirational motivation, emphasizes the leader's ability to articulate a compelling vision and mobilize others to achieve it. The third dimension, intellectual stimulation, encompasses the ability to initiate new ideas, encourage innovative thinking, and challenge established patterns of action.

Finally, individualized consideration emphasizes the importance of empathy, attentive listening, and concern for the individual needs of team members. These four components form a coherent model that provides a normative framework for

analyzing effective transformational leadership in the context of contemporary organizations. Research shows that transformational leadership is positively associated with teachers' well-being and their engagement in prosocial activities (Day and Gu, 2013, p. 27).

Distributed leadership, on the other hand, views leadership as a distributed process in which the principal delegates tasks, strengthens teacher competencies, and creates conditions for shared responsibility for school development. Empirical research demonstrates that schools with a culture of distributed leadership achieve higher results in maintaining staff stability and loyalty, as well as community well-being (Harris 2013, p. 41).

International research also consistently indicates that the well-being of teachers and students is not solely an individual matter but depends largely on the principal's leadership style. Kwatubana (2024, p. 90) emphasizes that the principal's role in this regard is multidimensional – it encompasses creating a positive school culture, developing a physical and emotional environment, and strengthening teachers' adaptability. Similarly, Leksy (2024, p. 5) notes that principals are crucial for co-creating a healthy school environment, and their actions can protect the community from emotional crises.

Research indicates that educational resilience largely depends on the principals' personal resources and their ability to build a support network. Persson (2025, p. 3) believes that preventive actions undertaken by principals, focused on their own well-being, provide the foundation for improving working conditions and mental health in schools.

From a theoretical perspective, the school principal is a multidimensional actor whose role extends far beyond traditionally understood administrative functions. The source literature indicates that the principal is a transformational leader, inspiring and mobilizing the school community to change and creating a shared vision for development (Madalińska-Michalak, 2015, p. 44).

At the same time, they serve as flexible leaders, able to delegate tasks and build a culture of shared responsibility that fosters collaboration and participation in decision-making processes (Spillane, 2006, p. 11). The principal also acts as a guardian of well-being, responsible for creating conditions that support the mental and emotional health of both students and teachers (Ertem, 2024).

Finally, the principal can be described as an architect of educational resilience, preparing the school to function in crisis conditions, ensuring its adaptability and the continuity of its educational mission. This understanding of the principal's role transcends administrative functions, making them one of the most important factors in the quality and sustainability of educational institutions in the 21st century.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Study Objectives and Purpose

The starting point for the adopted methodology is the assumption that student psychosocial well-being is a systemic challenge for contemporary education, not merely an individual problem. One in five adolescents experiences symptoms requiring professional psychological intervention, as well as research findings on the increase in depression, anxiety, cyberbullying, and hate speech in schools (Klingbeil and Renshaw, 2018; Harding *et al.,* 2019), justify the need to analyze the role of principals as coordinators of psychosocial support systems.

Against this backdrop, the main objective of the study was defined. The aim of the study was to identify types of schools differing in their level of activities regarding student psychosocial support and teacher professional development, and to determine factors that facilitate effective educational leadership.

4.2 Justification for the Methodology

Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) has been used primarily to describe student well-being or the resilience of educational leaders. However, there is a lack of research that:

- combines the perspective of student psychosocial support with the parallel professional development of teachers,
- and then embeds these findings within the framework of educational leadership theories (including transformational and distributed leadership).

The adopted methodology is quantitative, based on advanced statistical modeling, and integrates sociological and pedagogical perspectives. LPA was deemed the most appropriate because it allows for the identification of qualitatively different, latent school types, enables modeling of complex configurations of leadership practices, and promotes a shift from simple divisions (e.g., "high vs. low support") to richer organizational profiles.

This approach addresses the identified research gap and allows for a two-level approach: analyzing both direct forms of student support and indirect actions that strengthen teacher competences.

4.3 Sampling and Research Procedure

The study was conducted on a sample of 474 principals and deputy principals of primary schools, secondary schools, and vocational schools. These were educational leaders responsible for organizing school work, including decisions regarding student psychosocial support and teacher professional development. Data was collected using a standardized questionnaire made available to respondents (e.g., in electronic or

paper format, depending on the organizational capabilities of the schools examined).

Research Tool:
The questionnaire covered five key dimensions of institutional practices describing systemic psychosocial support and staff development:

1. Existence of systemic psychosocial support.
2. Collaboration with psychological and pedagogical counseling centers.
3. Teachers' access to specialist counseling.
4. Participation in external training programs.
5. Implementation of internal professional development (IPD)

These indicators were treated as observable manifestations of the school's systemic capacity to provide psychosocial support, rooted in the principals' leadership practices. Statistical analysis involved the use of Latent Profile Analysis in Mplus, with model selection based on BIC (Bayesian Information Criterion) and entropy values, defined as ≥ 0.80 as a criterion for good classification quality (Asparouhov and Muthén, 2014).

In this study, an entropy score of 0.9999 was obtained, indicating near-perfect classification accuracy. Comparative analyses between the identified school groups were conducted using the Mann-Whitney U test for ordinal variables and the chi-square test (or Fisher's exact test for small sample sizes) for qualitative variables.

4.4 Specificity and Innovation of the Approach

The specificity of this study was that psychosocial support was treated not as a reactive intervention in the face of crises, but as a systemic school capability rooted in everyday leadership practices and implemented for both students (direct support) and teachers (indirect support through competency development).

4.5 Methodological Limitations

The adopted methodology, although advanced, has its limitations:

- It relies on self-report data from principals and deputy principals, which may pose a risk of responses being consistent with social expectations;
- It is cross-sectional in nature, therefore preventing inferences about changes over time;
- It does not include student perspectives or full triangulation with qualitative data.

Despite these limitations, the use of LPA on a large sample and the embedding of the results within a comprehensive theoretical framework make the presented methodology a solid foundation for formulating conclusions and recommendations for educational policy.

5. Results - Latent Profile Analysis

To create profiles of the participants based on the activities undertaken by the school in connection with professional development of teachers in terms of supporting students with psychosocial problems, a latent profile analysis was conducted. The following differentiating variables were included in the study:

- Creating a system of support for students with psychosocial problems.
- Collaboration with Psychological and Pedagogical Counseling Centers in supporting students with psychosocial problems.
- Providing teachers with access to professional counseling in this area.
- Providing teachers with access to external training to enhance their competencies in the studied area.

Organizing internal training within the framework of the Internal Professional Development to enhance teachers' competencies in supporting students with psychosocial problems.

Responses were standardized, and analyses were conducted assuming equal variances and zero covariances for the identified classes. Initially, models with between two and four profiles were tested. Ultimately, based on the BIC and entropy values, a decision was made to adopt a solution consisting of two profiles.

In addition to the measures of fit and entropy, the sample sizes of individual profiles were also considered, assuming that the minimum sample size should be greater than 1% of the sample or contain more than 25 observations (Lubke & Neale, 2006).

When selecting three profiles, one of them contained only five participants. When dividing the profiles into four, the minimum assumed sample size was also insufficient (one profile contained seven participants and the other 10).

Therefore, a solution with two groups of participants was analyzed. Table 1 presents the goodness-of-fit measures and entropy for the analyzed solutions.

Table 1. *Model goodness-of-fit measures with entropy*

Class	LogLik	AIC	BIC	SABIC	Entropia
2	-3098	6227	6294	6243	0.9999
3	-3083	6210	6302	6232	0.9949
4	-2681	5419	5535	5446	0.9961

Source: *Own study.*

Table 2 presents standardized means for the responses to the questions, while Figure 1 visualizes the profiles created. The first group comprised 39.9% of the respondents (n = 189), while the second group comprised 60.1% (n = 285).

Table 2. *Standardized means for responses to questions related to teachers' professional development*

Variables	Profile 1 (n = 189)	Profile 2 (n = 285)
Creating a system to support students with psychosocial problems	-0.38	0.25
Collaborating with psychological and pedagogical counseling centers to support students with psychosocial problems	-0.40	0.27
Providing teachers with access to professional counseling to support students with psychosocial problems	-1.14	0.76
Providing teachers with access to external training to enhance their competences in supporting students with psychosocial problems	-0.48	0.32
Organizing internal training within the framework of the IPD to enhance teachers' competences in supporting students with psychosocial problems	-0.31	0.21

Source: *Own study.*

A comparative analysis of the distinguished profiles showed that in the first group the respondents agreed less with the analysed statements – schools created student support systems to a lesser extent, cooperated with PP counselling centres, provided less access to professional advice and training for teachers, and organised internal training within the framework of IPD to a lesser extent than in group 2. The greatest differences between the groups occurred in the scope of opinions on access to professional advice by teachers (Table 3).

Table 3. *Comparison of profiles in terms of professional development issues*

	Profile 1 (n = 189)			Profile 2 (n = 285)					
Dependent variable	Mean rank	*Mdn*	*IQR*	Mean rank	*Mdn*	*IQR*	*Z*	*p*	r_g
Creating a system to support students with psychosocial problems	196.57	5.00	1.00	264.65	5.00	0.00	-6.91	**<0.001**	0.32
Collaborating with psychological and pedagogical counseling centers to support students with psychosocial problems	201.78	5.00	1.00	261.19	5.00	0.00	-7.30	**<0.001**	0.34
Providing teachers with access to professional counseling to support students with psychosocial problems	95.00	4.00	0.00	332.00	5.00	0.00	-21.61	**<0.001**	0.99
Providing teachers with access to external training to enhance their competences in supporting students with psychosocial problems	184.94	4.00	1.00	272.35	5.00	0.00	-8.67	**<0.001**	0.40
Organizing internal training within the IPD framework to enhance teachers' competences in supporting students with psychosocial problems	201.46	4.00	1.00	261.40	5.00	1.00	-5.42	**<0.001**	0.25

Source: *Own study.*

5.1 Profiles and Metric Variables

Table 4 presents the results of a comparative analysis of the profiles in terms of the metric variables. Profile 2 showed a higher percentage of deputy principals and a lower percentage of principals than Cluster 1. No differences were observed for gender or school type.

Table 4. *Frequency analysis with the χ^2 test of independence for the relationships between profiles and metric variables*

Variables	Categories	Profile 1		Profile 2				
		n	*%*	*n*	*%*	χ^2	*p*	φ/V_C
Gender	Women	155	82.0	225	78.9	0.67	0.413	0.04
	Men	34	18.0	60	21.1			
School type	Primary	171	90.5	239	83.9	6.24	0.182	0.11
	Vocational school	1	0.5	4	1.4			
	Professional/ technical secondary school	7	3.7	23	8.1			
	Secondary school	10	5.3	17	6.0			
	Other (artistic)	0	0	2	0.7			
Status/ role in school	Principal	169	89.4	217	76.1	13.25	<0.001	0.317
	Deputy principal	20	10.6	68	23.9			

Source: *Own study.*

6. Discussion of Results

The resulting school typology reveals a clear dichotomy between institutions that consider psychosocial support as an integral element of their organizational strategy and those whose activities are reactive and fragmented. The high precision of the classification (entropy = 0.9999) and the clarity of the profiles – from "low systemic support" (39.9%) to "integrated support" (60.1%) – confirm that these differences reflect real organizational and cultural diversity.

This result aligns with broader international observations regarding the ability of educational institutions to incorporate psychosocial well-being into their daily practice (Day and Gu, 2022; Sahlberg, 2023).

In the Polish context, the gap between strategic planning and operational practice is particularly evident in teachers' access to specialist counseling (–1.14 vs. +0.76; difference 1.90 SD). The Supreme Audit Office (2024) indicates that "as many as 90% of schools did not fully implement the recommendations of psychological and pedagogical counseling centers contained in their rulings and opinions" (p. 4), which directly confirms our empirical observations. Such results reflect not only deficits in the support structure but also the lack of an organizational culture based on shared responsibility and monitoring of outcomes.

There is a growing consensus in the international literature that teacher well-being is a prerequisite for quality education. Dreer (2023) emphasizes that "teacher well-being is significantly related to classroom interaction quality and student outcomes" (p. 2), and this relationship persists even after controlling for contextual variables. At the same time, research from the UK shows that teacher well-being is not solely an individual category, but rather the result of systemic interactions between school culture, leadership, and social support (Collie *et al.,* 2022).

In this sense, the results of this study confirm that schools with integrated support create an environment in which concern for well-being is the foundation of school organization, not a crisis intervention.

From an educational leadership perspective, providing structural conditions for collaboration and reflective learning is crucial. Rainey, Hill, and Lake (2023) note that "staff shortages and challenges associated with providing additional training made recovery plans difficult to implement" (p. 2). This phenomenon is not limited to the pandemic—it reveals a persistent deficit in capacity building, i.e., developing institutional competencies.

Similarly, Daly and colleagues (2025) proved that "principals' supportive leadership behaviors are positively associated with teacher well-being and professional learning" (p. 12), confirming the importance of leadership based on resilience and goal congruence. These results align with the analyses of Hall, Bierman, and Jacobson (2022), according to which "A central feature of MTSS models is the use of systematic assessment and referral processes to identify students in need of Tier 2 intervention.

The goal is to address social maladjustment early, to provide the intervention necessary to build social skills, reduce problem behaviors, and enhance peer relationships." (p. 268) In this sense, our data confirms that a key factor differentiating school effectiveness is the ability of principals to create collaborative networks and organizational learning (Fullan, 2021; Pietsch, Tulowitzki, and Cramer, 2022).

Polish research also indicates that the effectiveness of preventive measures and psychosocial support depends on the quality of leadership. Baka and Chirkowska-Smolak (2019) note that effective psychosocial risk management in schools requires not only measurement tools but also the decision-making readiness of management staff (p. 17).

Walęcka-Matyja and Napora (2022) emphasize that a school's social capital serves as a significant buffer in crisis situations, strengthening trust and a sense of purpose. In practice, this translates into the difference observed in our data between schools with high and low integration of the support system.

Our results also confirm that in schools with low systemic support, management actions are reactive in nature, which is consistent with the observations of Ligęza and

Tempczyk-Nagórka (2022) that the lack of systemic procedures often results in principals' actions being reactive, not strategic (p. 92). This management model leads to the phenomenon of "implementation fatigue", described in more detail by Fullan (2020) in the context of British schools after the curatorial reforms.

Internationally, the belief is gaining traction that educational leadership requires a shift from a reactive logic to a learning logic, both at the individual and systemic levels. As Sahlberg (2023) notes, "the future of education depends on our ability to create schools where collaboration, trust, and collective responsibility replace control, competition, and compliance" (p. 72). The results of our study indicate that Polish schools that built lasting collaborative structures were characterized by higher levels of teacher well-being and greater coherence of preventive measures.

Finally, post-pandemic analysis reveals that psychosocial support in schools should be understood not as a cost but as an investment in the quality of education and social capital. Hargreaves and Shirley (2021) stated that "well-being was no longer at the back of the school building. It was in the driver's seat" (p. xi), suggesting that student and teacher well-being is becoming a central element of educational strategies, not an add-on.

This approach seems particularly important in the context of the Polish education system, where activities related to the mental health of students and teachers often compete for resources with teaching tasks.

7. Conclusions and Implications

This study provides empirical evidence that not only organizes the landscape of school practices but also demonstrates the fundamental importance of lifelong learning as an interpretive framework for contemporary education.

First, the lifelong learning model allows us to view psychosocial support not as an ad hoc intervention, but as a systematic process, rooted in the everyday organizational practices of schools. Schools belonging to the "high support profile" operate within the logic of a learning organization – teacher development and concern for student well-being are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

Secondly, the study results indicate that developing psychosocial competencies should be considered on a par with developing academic skills. Meta-skills are becoming a fundamental asset for individuals in a world of accelerating technological and social change. In this sense, schools serve not only as educational institutions but also as ecosystems preparing for lifelong learning.

Thirdly, the implications for teachers include the need for continuous professional development, which goes beyond one-time training and is embedded in a culture of ongoing development. High-support schools create conditions in which teachers

become participants in a lifelong learning cycle, not merely recipients of occasional development opportunities.

Fourthly, educational leadership emerges as a strategic element in creating learning schools. Through institutionalizing support practices, leaders set the tone for an organizational culture in which learning is a shared value for the entire community. Leadership in this approach is not about crisis management, but about building systemic resilience based on anticipating challenges and preparing school communities for adaptation.

Fifthly, in terms of educational policy, lifelong learning should be the overarching criterion for designing support systems. This requires stable funding, the creation of regional and national structures, and the implementation of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that allow for reflection and long-term improvement.

In summary, the study's findings clearly indicate that schools that consider lifelong learning as the foundation of their operations more effectively integrate concern for student well-being with the professionalization of staff.

As a result, they gain not only greater resilience to crises but also the ability to adapt in the face of dynamic social and cultural changes. This is where three dimensions of contemporary education meet: student well-being, teacher professional development, and strategic principal leadership – all embedded in the logic of lifelong learning.

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