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## **Leadership Skills Training for Teachers as Leaders: Research Report on the Erasmus+ CBHE Project *Development of Skills and Teachers Training for Leadership/DeSTT***

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### **Abstract**

The DeSTT concept of teacher training for leadership examines the importance of non-formal education, i.e., training for teachers. The monitoring study revealed the urgent needs of Kazakhstani teachers in training their leadership skills. The paper analyzes two sets of research questions (each consists of 6 sub-questions), which we defined as follows: 1) What are the challenges of teacher training/upskilling for leadership and their involvement in the local community? This group of questions was studied at the stage of preparing the project proposal. 2) What are the impacts of DeSTT training on teachers' leadership skills and experiences? This group of questions was studied during the 2nd year of the project lifetime. The purpose of this paper is to indicate the findings and implementation of the concept of preparing teachers for leadership from the project proposal launch to the execution of pilot trainings. Research methods employed in the study are interviews of universities specialists and analyzes of the State data/reports for the project proposal. Observations of training participants and post-training interviews were used to study the 2nd group of research questions. The findings of the study confirm the data obtained in both groups of interviews and observations.

Participants were enthusiastic and interested in the pieces of training, aware and confident of the need to continue learning, share experiences, and develop leadership skills achieved in DeSTT training. The reflection on the central terms of leadership and training has proved to be crucial for teachers. Further research is to survey the implications of the DeSTT project for all its consumers. The dissemination and sustainability perspective of the project is to collaborate with the National Center ORLEU for training leadership skills to the instructors from 17 regional branches who, in turn, will train teachers for leadership.

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**Key terms:** leadership, teacher-leader, leadership skills, teacher, training.

## Introduction

Launched in 2020, the Erasmus+ CBHE project “Development of Skills and Teachers Training for Leadership/DeSTT” is a joint initiative, developed in the consortium of 11 universities from Italy, Spain, Poland, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Mongolia with shared goals to: transfer knowledge and experiences from EU country to the others; develop programs for professional development of teachers for leadership in integrated formal and informal educational formats; establish Education Centers for Leadership as platforms for the design, development, and promotion of socially significant ideas of the local community, for networking of educators with local community. The countries involved in the DeSTT share the same challenges in training teachers for leadership and might share common solutions. Moreover, the variety of countries becomes an added value in a global system (Project DeSTT, 2020).

The problem of training and professional development of teachers for leadership, extending their capacities and leadership competencies, becomes a relevant issue. It happens due to the growing need for citizen involvement in local democracy, the specifics school teachers' work who play a decisive role in the dissemination of knowledge, and the impact on the population of their urban and rural

communities. Traditionally, teachers have a significant social force in Kazakhstan. They are respected, trusted as people who are responsible not only for the education and development of children but also for the future of their countries (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the status of a teacher", 2019; Project DeSTT, 2020). Currently, it is not enough for a teacher to demonstrate only deep knowledge in a teaching subject. The most significant task of educational institutions is to educate citizens who are constructively active in transforming their own lives, the lives of others, their local community, and society (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). In general, teachers and educators can become the initiators of community development by implementing the idea of socially responsible education (Pevzner, Petrikov, Shirin, 2020). However, there are no educational components in the programs of professional formal/informal training/retraining of teachers toward updating the competencies necessary for effective leadership at the school and community level.

Teachers need a variety of skills, including leadership skills. By mastering and applying leadership skills, teachers will be able to convert schools, professional colleges and universities into civic, cultural and social resource centers. They can create an environment for interaction, promote public participation in the development of society and encourage socially significant activities (Frost, 2012).

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### **Literature Review**

Currently various models and concepts of teacher leadership are known. The "International Teacher Leadership" model was elaborated in the United Kingdom (HertsCam network) in order to develop and support teacher leadership as an education reform strategy (Frost, 2012). The project was tested in 15 countries and launched in Kazakhstan in 2019. However, there are no scientific publications and results on this project, except rare announcements on the Internet (The program

"Non-positional Teacher Leadership", 2020; Leadership of teachers in Kazakhstan: results of the second year, 2021).

Other models and concepts suggest that teacher leadership is a key component both for the success of schools and for improving the professionalism of teachers, not necessarily the authorities. Teachers should be given the opportunity to leave the isolation of their classrooms to collaborate with others and share best practices in order to develop leadership skills (Cosenza, 2015).

Huang (2016) conducted a study of the leadership development of teachers in Taiwan. This model is considered as a long process from the key leader to the main members, and then to the followers, as a process of assembly from the private leadership resource of teachers to public resources. In other words, for instance, from recognizing the complexity of internal experience and the needs of other teachers to educational creativity and reforms. This model has a conceptually and practically integrated private-state model.

Campbell and co-authors (2018) share the results of the "Teacher Training and Leadership" program in Ontario in 2017-18. The principles of this program are to support authentic, collaborative, integrated learning that benefits the program, participating teachers, students, colleagues, the school and the community. The model also encourages the deprivatization of practice and the exchange of knowledge, as well as it helps to spread innovation and best practices in Ontario and beyond. Graduates of the program become increasingly active in supporting new cohorts of teachers-leaders who apply leadership and receive recognition for their knowledge, skills and practices.

Pevsner and Petryakov (2020) developed the concept of preparing future teachers for leadership at the university, as a theoretical basis for preparing students and undergraduates of pedagogical profiles for leadership. The concept is the basis of the DeSTT project. The authors define the purpose of the concept in revealing the main approaches to leadership in education, to determine the range of competencies, professional and personal qualities that a teacher should have in

order to become a leader in school, in the classroom, in the local and international community, in the real and virtual world.

These goals correspond to the educational standards of the Republic of Kazakhstan, indicated in the OECD Country Review "Education policy outlook: Kazakhstan" (OECD, 2018; UNESCO Education sector ED/PLS/EDP, 2016). The educational process of the Republic of Kazakhstan has a multilateral, multi-vector nature, covering economic, political, social and other spheres. Moreover, it includes the development of the concept of "Leadership in Education" in the program of advanced training of teachers of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Teacher Leadership in the pedagogical community" (Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, 2016).

In the recent scientific literature, the characteristics of a teacher-leader are indicated (Ziyadin et al., 2018; Kanayeva, 2019; Erkan, 2020; Li et al., 2020). Generally, it is a teacher who is capable of leading a team of students/parents/colleagues, as well as arousing their activity and interest (Nappi, 2014). The teacher-leader is able to impact team interactions by regulating relationships and organizing specific activities in the group and society (Hunzicker, 2017).

Nowadays, a teacher-leader acts as an important strategic resource for the transformation at all levels of society, who can generate and perceive innovations, and is ready to be active and creative (Harris & Jones, 2019). Mostly, the key characteristics of a teacher-leader are similar to the main competencies of a company leader (Poekert, Alexandrou & Shannon, 2016; Ferguson et al., 2021). An additional and important requirement for a teacher-leader is the need to consider the peculiarities of pedagogical and school/student groups (Wilson, 2016).

Within the framework of the Teacher-Leader Concept of the study, it is necessary to present the teacher's competencies for the internal and external leadership implementation (Pevsner, Petryakov, 2020). The group of competencies of internal leadership, classroom and school management includes the ability to analyze, develop their leadership qualities; the ability to diagnose, identify the leadership qualities of students; the ability to develop the leadership qualities of students via self-management in an educational institution through their involvement in

socially significant projects and civic initiatives; the ability and skills of building and managing a team; the ability to act as a mentor for young teachers.

The group of competencies of external leadership in the local, territorial and international community includes the ability to interact with the leaders of local territorial communities and manage public projects that are significant for the territory; the ability to provide methodological support to the local professional community; the ability to provide information and methodological, advisory and organizational support to youth public associations, civil society institutions; the ability to create and develop international professional educational communities; preparedness to interact in international virtual teams, ICT competence, effective distance learning, leadership in the digital world.

These competencies were taken for the monitoring study on teachers' leadership issues in Kazakhstan (Tazhina et al., 2021)

### **Research Questions and Methods**

This section provides an overview of research questions and methods. The DeSTT project's proposal began from the following research questions (RQ) in January 2019.

RQ 1: Training of teachers in Kazakhstan. International and national models of teacher training. The gender and age landscape of teachers in the country.

RQ 2: Challenges in training novice teachers in Kazakhstan. Is the profession of a teacher popular and respected in the country?

RQ 3: Challenges to upgrade the skills and knowledge of teacher workforce. Optional or compulsory professional development of teachers.

RQ 4: Teachers' new competencies that are in greatest demand.

RQ 5: Challenges for organizing schooling in remote rural areas. The teachers' specialized training to work in classrooms with children of different ages and grades.

RQ 6: The teachers' participation in local community life. The teachers' need for additional training to enhance their leadership competences. The reason for passive leadership role of a teacher.

Interviews and analyses of the State data/reports have elevated the arguments for the project's proposal.

Within the DeSTT project, in 2020, we conducted a survey of Kazakhstani school teachers on their understanding, accepting, and promoting values of teachers' school, professional, and societal leadership. According to the monitoring study of the needs and requests of Kazakhstani secondary school teachers and the results obtained, the following topics of non-formal education, i.e. trainings for the development of leadership skills of school teachers are recommended: Emotional intelligence and leadership; Improvement of public speaking skills; Inclusive education of Kazakhstan; Digital tools for effective management in education; My leadership potential; Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.

Pilot trainings, One ECTS each, were developed and tested with teachers from University of International Business and Master Degree students of pedagogical majors who work as teachers at secondary schools, gymnasiums and educational centers. Post-training interviews were taken from 25 participants, including 3 men and 22 women, aged 25-50 years, and with 3-20 years of teaching experience at school.

The overarching research questions for that stage of the study were:

1. What are the influences of DeSTT trainings on teachers' leadership skills and experiences?
2. How does the trainings change participants?
3. How to implement these changes so that they become sustainable?
4. What benefits have you found after taking this training?
5. What challenges during the training did you encounter? And how can they be lessened?

6. What is unique about the DeSTT concept for developing teachers' leadership skills?
7. In this research we used observations during training sessions and post-training interviews of participants.

## Findings and Discussion

Turning to the background of the DeSTT project, it began from interviews on research questions and analyses of the State data in January 2019 (Indicators of government programs, 2020).

RQ 1: Training of teachers in Kazakhstan. International and national models of teacher training. The gender and age landscape of teachers in the country.

*Since The Kazakhstani education system follows the Bologna Convention, then there are three levels in the preparation of teachers with higher education degree: bachelor, master and doctoral. In addition, primary school teachers are trained in a system of secondary vocational education, so-called the colleges. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education for the 2017-18 academic year, there are 296960 teachers in Kazakhstan in total, including 69059 primary school teachers. A gender imbalance in the profession is very clear, women teachers make up 81.3%. The total number of young teachers with work experience up to 3 years is 12.2%. The annual teacher recruitment rate is 2,6%. The age of teachers is distributed as follows: teachers of up to 25 years are 25464/8,57%; 25-29 years old are 33369/11,2%; 30-34 years old are 44082/14,8%; 35-39 years old are 40036/13,5%; 40-44 years old are 41041/13,8%; 45-49 years old are 39596/13,3%; 50-54 years old are 36565/12,3%; 55-59 years old are 27728/9,34%; over 59 years old are 9079/3,06%, including 11% male and 89% female.*

RQ 2: Challenges in training novice teachers in Kazakhstan. Is the profession of a teacher popular and respected in the country?

*In recent years, there has been an annual increase in the number of schoolchildren: in 2015, 336,000 children enrolled in the first grades, and in 2017 - 370,000 children. However, the number of students entering pedagogical specialties remains at the same level. If in 2011, 118000 students were studying in pedagogical specialties at*

universities in Kazakhstan, in 2016 this number grew only by about 3000 students. To address the shortage of teaching staff, the Ministry of Education is increasing the number of scholarships for teaching majors. The 5,000 scholarships were allocated for pedagogical specialties in 2016, 6385 grants were allocated in 2018. The Ministry's strategic plan for 2017–2021 states that for the last 3 years there has been a tendency to increase teaching staff in secondary education by 10%, which shows a growth in interest for teaching specialties.

Experts also consider it obvious that in Kazakhstan the teaching profession is still not considered prestigious, primarily due to low wages. At the parliamentary session in the Senate, the chairman of the chamber, Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev, said that the low status of the teaching profession remains a limiting factor in the development of school education. "The salary level of educators is kept among the lowest - 66% of the national average."

Formation of a positive image of the teacher is an issue of today in the country. The State Program for the Development of Education of the RK for 2011–2020 has a special section "Teacher Status" for strengthening state support and motivation of teachers (The State Program, 2010). One of steps in this is that the salary of teachers is determined by their qualification category. In the 2017-18 school year, 45782 teachers passed certification, including 6114 teachers who received the highest category, 9558 teachers have got the 1st category, and 11,507 teachers - the 2nd category.

RQ 3: Challenges to upgrade the skills and knowledge of teacher workforce.  
Optional or compulsory professional development of teachers.

National Center for Retraining in Professional Qualifications "Orleu" and its regional divisions carry out additional and mandatory professional retraining of teachers.

So, one of its divisions, the Republican Institute for Retraining (Almaty city), since 2013, has been implementing the State order for advanced training of teachers and educational managers from all regions of the country. Here, per year retraining involves 810 educators in Almaty and 390 teachers in foreign partner universities, such as Academy of Management and Technology (Düsseldorf, Germany), University of Newcastle (United Kingdom), Norwich Institute for Language Education (United Kingdom), Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain), Higher Technical Institute of Lisbon (Portugal), University of Tsukuba (Japan).

*Statistically, 366574 teachers completed advanced training courses nationwide in 2016.*

*Retraining programs include certified short courses, leveled and distance courses, various conferences, symposia, training, seminars, master classes. The certificate confirms the appropriate level of the program and is valid for 5 years from the date of issue.*

*In the light of rapidly evolving technologies and the younger generation Z entering schools, it is obvious, the most effective and innovative systems of teacher development are required. Moreover, these innovative systems can be seen as the motivation of teachers in the Digital Age.*

RQ 4: Teachers' new competencies that are in greatest demand.

*The Kazakhstani education system is entering multilingualism. Within this framework English is adopted as the “language of successful integration into the global economy”. Therefore, communicative competence in the use of English is a priority. Newly required competencies are as follows: general knowledge of the English; knowledge, and understanding of a subject terminology and academic language; knowledge of integrated teaching methodology on the subject and language.*

*Social competencies that are most in demand among teachers indicate an ability to build teamwork, to design and implement students' creativity, aiming at achieving a specific learning goal, social responsibility for a younger generation.*

RQ 5: Challenges for organizing schooling in remote rural areas. The teachers' specialized training to work in classrooms with children of different ages and grades.

*According to research, teachers in rural schools can be divided into three categories (Indicators of government programs, 2020): immigrants from the area (have strong close ties/relatives with the school and the local population); “temporary” people (usually young people who view their place as a forced step in their careers); immigrants from the city (usually coming after the spouses who have changed their place of work).*

*Thus, the following problems exist: an unwillingness of young teachers to remain in the village (staff turnover); the lack of a mechanism for motivating the attraction*

*of the best teachers for permanent work in the countryside; a wide range of professional duties; personal and professional isolation.*

*The 2015 study (OECD/The World Bank, 2015) showed that over the past 15 years, the number of basic small-class schools (SKS) has increased by 2 times in Kazakhstan. Almost every fourth teacher works in the conditions of SKS, that is a comprehensive school with a small number of students, with combined class-kits and with a specific form of organization of studies and a small number of children to complete the class.*

*The uneven population distribution in the country has led to the regional aspect of this problem: the majority of SKS are located in North Kazakhstan (88.1% of the total number of schools in the region), Akmola (81%), Kostanay (77.5%), Pavlodar (76.5% ), West Kazakhstan (72.9%), Aktobe (67.5%), East Kazakhstan (67.9%), Karaganda (58.9%).*

*The survey suggests that the overwhelming majority of schools have, as a rule, one teacher who teaches math, physics and other natural science disciplines.*

*Also, it revealed the lack of specialized teaching methods in classes with low occupancy and in mixed-age classes; evaluation of learning outcomes in classes with low occupancy leads to hyper-control, and, as a result, a high level of anxiety of students; limited use of information communication technology in remote schools, as there is no/low access to the Internet; the teacher's unpreparedness to the peculiarities of the educational process in SKS; low level of teachers' motivation, due to the inadequacy of their payment and their social support for teaching at SKS.*

*Resource centers have shown themselves to be one of the most effective forms of organizing the educational process and ways to ensure access of children from remote rural schools to quality education and modern educational and informational resources. However, the coverage of SKS by resource centers is insufficient (only 10%), resource centers do not support key learning stages, because they cover only 8th and 9th-grade students.*

*Training and retraining of teachers for small schools should be totally different from the usual training of teachers for rural schools; special video lessons should be developed for different classes in all subjects, and especially for those where there is a shortage of teachers (for example, foreign languages, natural sciences).*

RQ 6: The teachers' participation in local community life. The teachers' need for additional training to enhance their leadership competences. The reason for passive leadership role of a teacher.

*Teachers take part in their local communities. There are no statistics on this. However, we meet pieces of news in Mass media about teachers who are local or government deputies, initiators of social projects for their communities, etc.*

*Thus, training to improve teachers' leadership competencies is necessary for these professionals.*

*In the above-mentioned study, elementary school teachers from rural areas expressed an almost unanimous desire to increase training in the social-psychological and pedagogical disciplines at universities and colleges.*

*Probably through the disclosure and development of the leadership potential of teachers, their civic engagement will increase, as well as their attitude to their professional and social role in the classroom and society will rise.*

Analyses of interviews on research questions and of the State data/reports on Educational policies became the basis of the project for the Kazakh partnership in the consortium. Thus, innovative interdisciplinary modules for Magistracy, 2st cycle of Higher Education have to integrate formal and informal education approaches to training teachers for leadership and promote practice-oriented skills learning. Multidisciplinary curriculum for six courses has been developing since 2020 to meet the national and regional level priorities in the field of education, information and communication technologies, business and administration, social and behavioral sciences.

As it was noted, within the DeSTT project, in 2020, we conducted a survey of school teachers on their values of teachers' school, professional, and societal leadership (Tazhina et al., 2021). Pilot trainings, One ECTS each, were developed and tested. Post-training interviews allowed us to improve the training programs with getting the copyright form the State organization Kazpatent (©19960)

This report is to present findings drawing from research on trainings observations and post-training interviews to examine the development and influence of the

DeSTT. We present post-training interviews of four trainings' participants: Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership; Digital tools for effective management in the field of education; Strategic interpersonal communication; Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout. The interviews of the remaining trainings participants will be covered in another publication.

We summarized the answers of the interview participants from various trainings on research issues and presented them in tables 1-6. Each new sentence is an answer of separate interviewees.

Table 1. What are the influences of DeSTT trainings on teachers' leadership skills and experiences?

Name of training	Selective interview answers
Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.	I used to understand intuitively that a leader and a teacher-leader should be stress-resistant, in this training I was convinced how important it is to develop self-regulation skills. The training showed how to manage your psych emotional state. I learned what emotional burnout is and how to identify it in myself and others; I liked the exercises on how to overcome stress and recognize the burnout syndrome – these skills are necessary to lead others.
Strategic interpersonal communication and  Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership.	I absolutely agree that public speaking skills are necessary for everyone, and especially for teachers, if the teacher is motivated to be a leader.  Role-playing games help to prepare for various situations in real life. The training is well developed, the audience is involved in the process.  I learned the algorithm of public speaking from practical exercises. I realized and learned that the ability to analyze and evaluate my speech and my opponent's one is important for a teacher-leader. Over coming the stress associated with public speaking.

<p>Digital tools for effective management in the field of education.</p>	<p>The main result is that improving digital literacy is a necessary leadership skill of a modern teacher and leader.</p> <p>I will definitely use all the tools in my work, especially in mentoring young teachers. The latest research in the field of digitalization of education was interesting and useful.</p> <p>For a teacher, and especially for a teacher-leader, this training is necessary in interaction with the social environment.</p> <p>I got a lot of interesting sites and learned how to use them. This is a relevant issue in educational services and society.</p>
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As shown in the Table 1, interviewees have acquired positive experiences from the trainings, refreshed their vision on teacher-leader issues, upskilled their stress coping strategies. These phenomena correspond to previous studies (Poekert et al., 2016; Campbell et al., 2018; Ferguson et al, 2021).

Table 2. How does the trainings change participants?

<b>Name of training</b>	<b>Selective interview answers</b>
<p>Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.</p>	<p>I'm excited! I learned my level of emotional state. I understood the ways of preventing emotional burnout. Very interesting! I received a lot of informative things, new experience, and knowledge. I learned how to analyze the problem of stress; how to let go the situation and not be offended by people.</p>
<p>Strategic interpersonal communication and Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership.</p>	<p>We were able to openly express our opinions, share and discuss them. Nothing is impossible, videos and exercises helped to believe in it. I'm going to analyze topics about how to set goals and achieve them, how to avoid failures. I understood how to build communication properly, how to communicate with parents.</p> <p>I took for myself new, useful information, especially exercises - how to make speech more interesting, made a great impression.</p>
<p>Digital tools for effective management in the field of education.</p>	<p>Python is a very convenient program, I learned how to connect several programs at the same time.</p>

	<p>I got acquainted with new platforms and resources for training.</p> <p>The training made a huge contribution to my professional development, increased my computer skills and knowledge in IT tools for creating methodological material.</p> <p>The training inspired us, we immediately trained, registered and visited websites, created tasks and documents. Thanks to this and handouts, our accounts are active and we will be able to use them further.</p>
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Feedback of participants (Table 2) demonstrates encouraging changes they receive from trainings. Learners perceive a huge contribution of the trainings to their professional development, new ways of increasing stress tolerance and preventing emotional burnout. The same ideas and responses are given by researchers in different cultures (Frost, 2012; Wilson, 2016; Salmanova & Yeshil, 2020).

Table 3. How to implement these changes so that they become sustainable?

<b>Name of training</b>	<b>Selective interview answers</b>
Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.	<p>Conduct regular trainings for teachers to develop their positive self-perception. I recommend trainings for the teachers' disclosure of the personal potential.</p> <p>The topic is relevant in our time of globalization, digitalization, pandemic – we need similar trainings. I got a solution to my problem, and there are a lot of people like me; I advise my colleagues to conduct retreat trainings in teaching teams.</p> <p>I learned a lot of new things for myself. I think that theory and practice were well and evenly represented, so practical exercises and knowledge of the theory will help my changes become sustainable.</p>
Strategic interpersonal communication and	The insight that I must constantly maintain in myself is that I need to give in, and not compete everywhere and in everything.

Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership.	<p>I am a psychologist and familiar with the theory and practice of public speaking, but I liked the structure of the training and improved my existing skills.</p> <p>A unique training, you need to attend it from time to time and promote your skills to a higher level.</p>
Digital tools for effective management in the field of education.	<p>If you want to keep up with technology, then you need to promote this training in the schools where we work and in social networks.</p> <p>Now more than ever, we need this</p> <p>ICT skills and the ability to use different educational platforms, so I will recommend your training to teachers, parents, school management.</p> <p>All the information was interesting and useful, I heard for the first time about many sites, I need to share this training in my accounts. And I recommend that the coaches and the project contact the school management and the Department of Education of Almaty.</p> <p>There is a desire to master new sites, I will come again if you organize such a training.</p> <p>I would like to participate in such trainings, I advise you to organize cycles of such trainings.</p>

Trainees state (Table 3) that teachers need systematic such trainings to develop their positive self-perception and upheld their self-esteem. Some of them recommend teachers' trainings to disclosure the personal potential and get a solution to their problem. All these responses are in parallel with precedent studies (Nappi, 2014; Harris & Jones, 2019; Kanayeva, 2019)

Table 4. What benefits have you found after taking this training?

Name of training	Selective interview answers
Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.	I understood how to deal with stress. I started using methods of preventing emotional burnout from the first day of the training. I was surprised at how many manifestations of stress exist, and

	realized that I had to master the techniques of self-regulation, relieving tension and fatigue.
Strategic interpersonal communication and  Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership.	I am more confident when speaking; exercises in public speaking helped.  The techniques of listening and hearing skills work for me. I personally discovered my favorite behavior in interpersonal communication and conflict situations. I realized that I could overcome my shyness in such trainings, since I enthusiastically participated in the exercises.  I am proud that I was able to positively resolve the conflict situation in the role-playing game, all participants were satisfied. I overcame my fears since this was my first Russian-language training.
Digital tools for effective management in the field of education.	I liked the training, especially since I belong to the digital generation.  Interesting training and sites. I learned how to make a presentation in PowToon, and use Learnis, Edmodo.  I learned about new interactive e-platforms, about creating and processing online tasks, web quests, video lessons.

Participants satisfied (Table 4) with their and others' personal successes, surprised on several stress manifestations. As well many of them recognized helpful techniques for public speaking, listening, typical behaviors in interpersonal communication and conflict cases that proves the studies from these field (Zyadin et al., 2018; OECD, 2018; Erkan, 2020).

Table 5. What challenges during the training did you encounter? And how can they be lessened?

Name of training	Selective interview answers
Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.	Colleagues shared their experience of negative stressful situations at school, with parents, with colleagues - these are familiar situations. To reduce them, teachers themselves must learn to be tolerant and master the techniques of self-regulation, and then teach students, their parents, and the community. I liked the rules of the group

	<p>adopted at the beginning of the training. Perhaps such rules of interaction in a group will help any group to avoid or reduce conflicts and stress.</p> <p>I will use these rules in future classes and parent-teacher meetings.</p>
<p>Strategic interpersonal communication and</p> <p>Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership.</p>	<p>Fear of the public and strangers disturbed at the beginning of the training, but the principle of "learning through doing", games, exercises, exchange of experience brought a great mood, communication, emancipation, and relief. I can share this experience with others so that teachers become open.</p> <p>Perhaps discussions on the "hot topics" of teachers will help overcome such fears.</p>
<p>Digital tools for effective management in the field of education.</p>	<p>The difficulty was in the duration of the training with a huge amount of material.</p> <p>I recommend devoting each training to 1-2 platforms, especially since Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan standards require a certificate for 72 hours of training</p> <p>divide into separate ones</p> <p>There was little time, I advise a more in-depth study of individual applications.</p> <p>It was informative and entertaining, but for the stability of our skills, I recommend offering trainings based on interests, because different participants want to study and use different applications and software programs.</p>

The trainings' participants believe (Table 5) that the sessions were overloaded with materials in comparison with the time allocated for the assimilation of new knowledge. In their viewpoint, the sustainable development of new skills requires deeper learning and hands-on immersion. Especially these comments related to digital technologies in education training. Again, it can be repeated that other researchers note the same findings (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Cosenza, 2015; Harris & Jones, 2019).

Table 6. What is unique about the DeSTT concept for developing teachers' leadership skills?

Name of training	Selective interview answers
Development of teachers' stress tolerance and prevention of psycho-emotional burnout.	What is unique is that the training increases mutual understanding and creates a team of like-minded professionals. When we shared our experience of stressful situations, we understood each other very well, we have similar experience working in schools. The concept of "teacher-leader" became very close at this training. Only we, teachers, developing our leadership skills, will be able to influence students, colleagues, parents, and the community to change and constructively overcome stressful and conflict situations.
Strategic interpersonal communication and  Improvement of public speaking skills of teachers for leadership.	<p>For the last year, we have been receiving requests, instructions from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan on how teachers' leadership is manifested in school. Apparently, this project is timely.</p> <p>The idea of developing teachers' leadership skills is a present era of globalization request and democratization of society, so I believe that society and teachers support the concept of the project. We know from the media and our daily life that many professionals are ready for changes in our own practice and want to contribute and innovate in public life. The concept of teacher leadership is unique in this trend. I think startups, social movements, volunteering, all this is proof that the project is vital, especially for teachers, because this is the professional group that trains, motivates and facilitates the next generations of society to innovate and change.</p> <p>The project is important in the involvement of the teacher and the formation of his worldview as a citizen of society and the entire professional community.</p>
Digital tools for effective management in the field of education.	I consider the trainings to be relevant; many teachers, participants of the trainings shared their impressions and said that they would be happy to attend these trainings again. The trainings allowed us to expand the network, get acquainted with complete strangers.

	<p>Teamwork in the exercises allows you to find reliable members of future projects, including for teacher leadership on a city and national scale.</p> <p>Increases the motivation to be a good modern teacher and grow into a leader teacher. Self-development of teachers for professional growth, as teachers will put into practice the acquired digital and other skills.</p>
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The selected responses in Table 6 show that participants support the DeSTT concept. They are sure the DeSTT concept promotes mutual understanding and creates a team of like-minded people, brings together phenomena of a “teacher” and a “leader”. The trainings' participants admit that over the past year they passed surveys by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan on how the teachers' leadership is manifested in the country. Also, recent reports and studies indicate that the idea of developing the leadership qualities of teachers is the modern requirements of globalization and democratization of society (Cosenza, 2015; Hunzicker, 2017; Indicators of government programs, 2020; Program “Non-positional Teacher Leadership”, 2020; Tazhina et al, 2021.\_\_\_\_\_

The trainings were conducted by experienced trainers-facilitators. After analyzing the results of the interviews, the trainings' programs were improved in the light of the comments and requests of the participants. Participants were encouraged during the trainings, willing to continue learning and share experiences with colleagues, and develop the leadership qualities and skills achieved through participation in the DeSTT trainings. All responses indicate increasing the need for teachers' leadership and improvement of participants' leadership skills.

## Conclusions

The paper analyzes two sets of research questions (each consists of 6 sub-questions), which we defined as follows: 1) What are the challenges of teacher training/upskilling for leadership and their involvement in the local community? 2)

What are the impacts of DeSTT training on teachers' leadership skills and experiences?

A limitation of this study is that in-depth interviews of training participants and a larger number of pilot training learners are needed. Subsequent trainings on updated programs will minimize these shortcomings.

Based on the objectives of the project and the results of the study, further research prospects are to survey the project consumers / stakeholders of educational services, namely, parents and families. Also, authors tend to study the learning outcomes of the DeSTT project in the training of Master Degree students.

The prospect of dissemination of knowledge and the sustainability of the project is to cooperate with the National Center for Professional Development ORLEU (National Center ORLEU, 2021) to train their instructors from 17 regional branches, who in turn organize training/retraining according to our programs for school teachers. There is an agreement to conduct online training on the MS Teams platform. It is noted above that the copyrights of the training developers are protected.

Furthermore, we will conduct trainings for project partners, trainers from the North Kazakhstan University. We agreed on this event at the Project's Information Day in May 2021 and it will act as additional indicator of the knowledge dissemination and the sustainability of the project.

Thus, the participants of the trainings become facilitators who gain first-hand experience from local and regional teachers. The knowledge and ideas exchange, changes in policy or "board" practice can be a powerful factor of social and professional changes.

The Education Leadership Center created at the UIB and the project website serve as a bridge and platform for the exchange of opinions and experiences ([destt.info](http://destt.info); [destt.uib.edu.kz](http://destt.uib.edu.kz)). Another perspective for the project sustainability may be the following. The webpage must design and launch reflective journal of learning – log

or blog to monitor teachers' learning/feedback from the DeSTT formal and informal education.

The DeSTT project is very impactful in terms of developing our own leadership skills as well. Following the analysis of the post-training interviews, we conclude from that study: The reflection on the central terms of 'teachers' and 'leadership' have proved to be important. The process of dealing with this significant aspect will be discussed in more detail at the end of the project lifetime.

The research demonstrates the trainings' participants will be more creative in their activities and school teams. They will continue to train themselves, teach others, initiate, innovate, implement and share a wide range of social and digital leadership skills that can contribute to the improvement of professional training practices and the development of civil society. These teachers will achieve tangible results as leaders of their community and the DeSTT project's history and achievements serve as a proof of that.

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