

## MODERN CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT PARADIGM

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**Abstract** : *Managerial reform in the educational system as a fundamental pedagogical concept implies a rigorous epistemic construction based on the development of a paradigm able to detect the malfunctions in the system and to control the prerequisites, principles and operational notions that determine the development of innovation in the field. Educational management presents itself as a fundamental psychosocial activity, designed according to some finality elaborated at the level of the macrostructure of society in order to accomplish its specific central function of valuing the individual and his abilities, evaluating in the direction of a superior system of humanization - towards self-management. The paradigm identifies managerial activity in an era of change, guides the direction managers must follow, provides a deep understanding of how the various elements and principles apply and link together, provides the ability to act, to accomplish what needs to be done in a new conceptual and situational context, renouncing the old concepts and skills.*

**Keywords** : *paradigm, reform, alternative, principles, capitalization*

### 1. MANAGERIAL PARADIGM OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Conceived as an ensemble of beliefs and values, schema, model, the paradigm becomes indispensable in situations of "anomaly" or crisis of a system that calls for new concepts, revolutions or conversions in the faith of the scientific community and psychological and social factors, oriented towards a change of mentality and sensitivity, "which makes us live in a new world."

The experience of the transition years towards a new education system, as well as the results of investigations into leadership practices under these conditions, indicates that not all the levers of change have been used to support the new educational goals and objectives. The replacement of the traditional teaching and non-curricular with the curricular system has not integrated the management system, which has remained centralized, without changing the essence of the mission of the school organization in the context of social transformations, the environment, strategy and structure, relationships and networks, the information and communication system, the motivation and stimulation of staff, etc.

The results, quality of implementation of new guidelines and educational content depend directly on the judicious, competent implementation of planning-organization, guidance, regulation-self-regulation functions in the education system, appropriate to the changes in the field. It is clear that education reform needs not only an administrator but requires a real manager. The leadership crisis calls for the ability to "tackle larger issues," to "have a global and creative vision," to "positively influence" the functioning of the system as a whole. The managerial structure thus designed can establish a "new administrative constellation".

It appears as a reforming alternative to "anonymous and blind administration that has, over time, reinforced the bureaucratization of the education system and its hierarchy in a network of relationships in which the teacher does not have the power of an individuality."

The evolution of general management after St. Covey refers to four management paradigms presented in the figure below:

| NEED                                      | METAPHOR                             | PARADIGM   | PRINCIPLE                       |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Physical / Economic<br>Social / Affective | Stomach<br>Heart                     | Authoritarian, scientific<br>Human relations<br>(benevolent authority) | Correctness<br>Kindness         |
| Psychological<br>Spiritual                | Mind<br>Spirit (the whole<br>person) | Human Resources<br>Leadership based on<br>principles                   | Use and develop talent<br>Sense |

The principle-based leadership paradigm (complete person) says: "Let's talk about vision, goals and roles. I want to make a significant contribution." Expressing our attachment to the cultivation of the principle-based paradigm, we mention the need to promote a proper educational paradigm from a democratic perspective in the specific conditions of society. In this context, the managerial reform in education, to be achieved on the basis of the new managerial paradigm, as well as the reform of the general education, "falls within the category of fundamental concepts and targets the following prerequisites:

- Relating the managerial reform to the existing and prospective situation of the Romanian society, which launched objectives for joining the values of democracy, the functional market economy and the culture of a computerized society.
- Relating to the existing situation in education and, in particular, to the evolution of the management system with an indication of existing dysfunctions, requiring "profound restructuring rather than simple renovations".
- Relating the management system in education to a modern, democratic-participatory management by promoting a new paradigm of educational management.

## **2. CHANGING THE PARADIGM OF THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN EDUCATION**

Pedagogical innovation on change of leadership is determined by changes in the global social system and the educational system. This involves putting management leadership in the foreground, expressing the values of science and politics in the respective field of activity. From this perspective, on the basis of the investigations undertaken and taking into account the managerial theory and practice, it is necessary to implement in the education system a new paradigm of educational management from a democratic perspective and of European integration, a paradigm that signifies a major change of the education management at level of system and school unity, the struggle between tradition (in the sense of the old stereotypes) - training the executing man through the promotion of authoritarian-bureaucratic management - and innovation - training the decision-maker through the implementation of a modern and autochthonous, democratic-participative management.

It is the proposed strategy that offers the opportunity of a unifying vision of the school system and organization.

The strategy is to value the individual, his abilities, to train the decision-maker, a strategy that is in line with the vision, the mission of the contemporary school, the targets of the democratic society.

Starting from the thesis that "education itself is a goal" and considering the "two complementary dimensions of the educational ideal: the social dimension - the psychological dimension", the strategy conceived as a description of the mission-related decisions and the desired results provides at the system level and school unity - training the full personality, able to make independent decisions, the capitalization of the individual and his capacities, the finality which "synthetically expresses the correlation between the society and the educational action, namely the fundamental demands of the society towards the educational action". The orientation towards training the decision-maker, capable of making independent decisions, signifies the level of self-management, individual self-government, the degree of freedom in education and the assumption of responsibility towards the results of this action, consolidates and facilitates the self-determination, self-accomplishment of the individual. These increase personal efficiency, determined by the paradigm of the seven success stories of St. Covey (to be proactive, to begin with the ultimate goal, to give importance to priorities, to think gain/ gain, to first understand and then to be understood, to act synergistically, self-renewal), strengthened by valorisation of endowments of one's human knowledge: self-knowledge, imagination and consciousness, power of will, mentality of abundance, courage in balance with respect, creativity, continuous improvement/ innovation.

From the point of view of the educational ideal and the approach of human development (philosophical, sociological, psychological), the paradigm of managerial reform aims at training the decisive man in the context of redefining his national, social and cultural-spiritual identity, able to make independent decisions in a democratic perspective, which implies the establishment of specific relations of interdependence of the individual with society, relations that "express the primacy of the individual and his interests in the social life, transposed into the political, economic, moral, legal, theoretical, aesthetic and religious values reflected in the norm of social and cultural behaviour". In this perspective, human-centred management, competence management, value management, and quality management are the main drivers of "integrative leadership" claimed by modern society. Valorising the individual and its capabilities as a major objective of the educational management requires a new strategy in the spiritualization and axiology of value-based competencies. The subjective approach of competences leads to lowering the determination of man by the institutional structures and to the increase of the role and weight of the individual elements, of personality, i.e. subjective. Competencies predominantly involve voluntary actions, free personal decisions and, therefore, responsibility, imagination, energy, innovation, exiting from habit, approaching art management. Thus, a shift from a logic of power to a logic of competences is required, a situation that is particularly necessary for the learning society and specific to the school organization that teaches and produces learning.

The overall managerial goals at the system and school unit level correlate with the new orientations and realities, proper to a democratic and open society, with the directions of the education reform, the strategy of the conceptual model of managerial goals. They are organically linked to the value system and indicate the direction of development of education in general and the formation of personality, in particular, values that ensure socio-human progress. Managerial goals aim at the same general pedagogical goals, being aligned with society's demands on education, but it specifies the key aspects of support, educational management, and support in achieving the intended outcomes.

General management objectives aim at changing paradigms and attitudes, managerial professional training and implementation of new leadership technologies, motivation, engagement/ participation, ensuring equity and quality in education.

The overall management objectives ensure the transition from the macrostructure finalities (goals) to the microstructure ones, from system to process. At the level of the managerial process, the general and specific managerial objectives aim at reconsidering the content of managerial activity, the diversity of the "conceptual" managerial leadership approach, the complex application of management functions, the ways of manifestation of management and leading styles in situational context, involvement of educational actors, community, advisory boards, informal leadership organizations.

The complex management model is in line with the educational values and goals promoted by the reform of education and should be conceived only as an integral part of this process of social change. The orientation of changing the finalities of managerial action in the sense of reforming implies mastering the "sources of divergence" and their valorisation in the direction of shaping the pedagogical ideal determined by the finalities of education. Thus, a strategy of changing the management system, specific to the national character of this social phenomenon, is initiated, in parallel with the "universality" of management. This creative product corresponds to the context of the model of managerial social rationality, which determines a functional hierarchy from a pedagogical point of view and participatory from a social point of view. This opening pledges, in essence, "to achieve the leap from traditional pedagogy to contemporary pedagogical sciences". But modern trends reflect the managerial evolution of the institution at the post-industrial, socio-cultural levels of society.

### **3. THE MATRIX OF INNOVATIVE MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is obvious the great importance of examining the correlation of managerial areas with the systems indicated and the managerial tools applied in each particular case, which elucidates the leap from the bureaucratic leadership to the conceptual management leadership. One-sided application of only one system is possible, but it does not produce the expected change in organization. From this perspective and on the basis of the researches carried out and described above, we have developed the matrix on the technical, political, cultural, existing and future fields, applying the respective management tools. The methodological assemblage of the three technological, political and cultural perspectives provides an integrative and open paradigm of the scientific community that builds the prerequisites - the principles - the operational concepts of managerial reform similar to the global reform of education, which creates credibility and veracity.

The future-oriented matrix reflects the application of the conception/ strategy of the educational management, which is of a community type, provides the involvement/ participation of educational actors in the life of the organization and is a creative management, its actions are producing ideas, solutions, projects that come to capitalize on the essence of the educated. Such an approach based on the three perspectives - technological, political, cultural - ensures a creative process in changing the conception of leadership from a static state to an evolutionary one, of progress, innovation, from a leadership dominated by inertia and inflexibility to a leadership dominated by activism and initiative, from a leadership focused on constraining the behaviour of members to focusing on empowering them, from reactive leadership to proactive leadership.

The paradigm expresses in this sense a new way of thinking and working, a new direction of leadership, conceived as complex assemblies of phenomena concerning "how leaders think about their own leadership activity, their tasks, the ways to achieve their concrete relationship with their subordinates, peers and superiors. This involves a new mentality of teachers with leadership functions, new attitudes, opinions, skills to act.

|                      | Mission and strategy   | The organizational structure   | Human resources management  |
|----------------------|--|--|---|
| Technological system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promoting an own educational policy</li> <li>▪ learning community oriented towards egalitarianism, cooperation, success</li> <li>▪ establishing your own budget</li> <li>▪ pay according to of the work results</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ network structures, emphasis on individual valorisation</li> <li>▪ determining own structures, appropriate to the predetermined objectives</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ competence-based activity</li> <li>▪ selecting staff according to their own/ competency criteria</li> <li>▪ appropriate reward</li> <li>▪ (self) training</li> </ul>   |
| The political system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ school autonomy, voluntary actions, personal decisions</li> <li>▪ medium and long term planning</li> <li>▪ particularism, the need to adapt the conditions of change and specific relations to concrete situations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ decentralization</li> <li>▪ the delegation of power and authority</li> <li>▪ supporting informal structures</li> <li>▪ effective leadership styles</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ decentralization of decisions</li> <li>▪ empowering people, making decisions through consensus, and deploying them jointly</li> <li>▪ involvement/ participation in organizations' lives</li> <li>▪ independence, emphasis on results and process</li> </ul> |
| The cultural system  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ high organizational culture</li> <li>▪ vision, beliefs and common values</li> <li>▪ responsibility, imagination, fantasy, out of habit, approaching art management</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ open communication</li> <li>▪ open climate</li> <li>▪ relationships of collaboration, respect and trust</li> </ul>  | <p>the human resources system shapes and forms the culture "without borders"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ collaborative peer relationships</li> </ul>   |

The new paradigm of educational management, being applied, facilitates the promotion of an adapted and effective leadership style, participative and open to innovation and truth. Practicing it will strengthen the school organization, contribute to its development and its tasks.

Thus, the approach of leadership, as well as the phenomenon of education in general, has long been closely related to a philosophical and political conception of man and society. The development of education as a science involved the creation of a descriptive, explanatory approach that facilitates the evolution of human conception on the school, which puts into practice the valorisation of human resources, ensuring the transition from the vision of "a group of individuals to an assembly of groups in interaction".

The innovative approach to the new educational management paradigm converges towards the development of the "innovative school" as a moment of change in the evolution of education with the definition of the characteristic elements for the functioning of the innovative education, which employs all the managerial structures of the school organization:

- the intensive innovative development of the institution, the application of advanced experience regarding full participation of the educational actors in the design and realization of the educational finalities;
- integrating innovation from conceptual and methodological points of view by "training a data bank in school", sufficient to apply the advanced experience in forming the becoming personality;
- the reconstruction of the educational process according to the established objectives (social, political, pedagogical, psychological) in the perspective of education in the spirit of democratic values;
- appropriate selection of didactic technologies, intensification and optimization of the instructive-educational process;
- individualizing and differentiating training to create the conditions for the most complete and useful development;

- continuous teacher training to keep up with the new tasks required by a renewed pedagogy based on the requirements of the society and student and community choices;
- revealing the potential of each student by establishing a psycho-pedagogical assistance system;
- streamlining the inverse connection, through which individualized adjustments can be made to ensure higher school returns.

The new paradigm can be achieved on the basis of the following principles deduced from the results of the researches carried out, reflected in different bibliographic sources:

- the principle of empirical substantiation and of "scientific centralism" provides for consideration of the previous state of the management system, eliminating all its malfunctions, and its alignment with the management of science.
- the principle of philosophical orientation implies that the new leadership model should be based on a thorough philosophy of education centred on man and his fulfilment.
- the principle of realism requires the new management system to relate to the current and future trends of the development of society and to the individual choices.
- the principle of balance implies actions according to the three perspectives/ management areas, which must be correlated, adjusted to produce a quality change.
- the principle of the efficiency of managerial activity, based on the application of information and decision-making methods, the involvement of people in the decision-making process, the stimulation of the initiative, the optimal use of all resources.
- the principle of democratic character and participatory leadership promotes the unity of action of all factors that cooperate in achieving the objectives and tasks set.
- the principle of dynamic leadership is based on an effective style and compliance with rules of conduct, promotion of responsibility, prestige, authority, order, discipline, reflection, moral and financial incentives, etc.
- the principle of organizing and rational programming of all managerial activities in relation to the objectives set is to ensure efficient and effective management.
- the principle of permanent innovation of managerial methods and technologies, of teaching-learning-evaluation methods, of scientific-methodological research.
- the principle of ensuring the implementation of the new paradigm of leadership in education requires legislative, normative, material, financial, human support and competent managers.

The paradigm of the educational management reform is correlated with the principle-based paradigm, initiated by St. Covey, which is focused on the Complete Man. Thus, people are viewed not only as economic, social and psychological beings, but also as spiritual beings, they want significance, they want to be accomplished, they want goals that raise them, they want the work to fulfil them. St. Covey sets four levels of leadership based on principles: personal, interpersonal, managerial, organizational. At all levels, in order to be successful, it is necessary to work on principles such as the quality of being trustworthy, trust, empowerment, alignment.

St. Covey believes that the constituent elements of the organizations are: the staff, the skills, the shared principles, the self, the style, the structure, the systems, the strategy.

Thus, the need to move from "bureaucratic leadership" to "conceptual" managerial leadership implies a globalist, integrative, structural-generative, transparadigmatic and synergistic thinking. Such a "pattern of thinking" becomes imperative in a period of crisis of leadership and uncertainty that demands reforming solutions.

This system of statements as an "integrative and open" model provides a "qualitative synthesis", capable of attracting most researchers and practitioners through "conversion" to "a promise of success." Pedagogical innovation is determined by two types of transformation at global, structural and functional levels:

a) "Managerial pedagogical change" in conjunction with similar processes triggered in political, economic, cultural and, above all, administrative plans, which are the choices of a democratic society, a change that affects the functioning and structural relationships of the entire education system;

b) "Managerial pedagogical change", aimed at improving the quality of management practices at the level of school unit, adequate change to the new educational policy of training the free man, who able to make independent decisions in social and individual life.

The educational management paradigm launches a new system-wide strategy aimed at implementing a modern and autochthonous management designed to ensure the development and functioning of a prospective, competitive educational system, the transition from sociocentrism, a paradigm that maintains the training of the man-executor, at the paradigm of the curriculum, centred on training the decision-maker, able to opt for a certain state and social construction that will help and encourage it in determining its own path of individual development and career in accordance with its aspirations and the demands of society, local community. But precisely authentic educational management comes to support and stimulate by all means and possible ways the democratization of education in its essence with reference to content, structure and process, which naturally and logically implies the democratization of the education management in the hierarchy of all its structures, methods, techniques and tools, as well as modern managerial practices.

This fundamental change to be achieved in our educational system will ensure transition from the "administrative" to the "management" leadership, taking into account the new educational objectives and the expected results in the formation of the personality. As mentioned above, in the case of the "administrative" type of leadership, the main emphasis is placed on the functioning of the organization, its procedures and its efficiency in the determined structures, while in the case of the management the emphasis is on results, these being obtained due to the conception of the necessity of carrying out the tasks of the organization and the aspirations, the choices of its members through development and optimization of the organization, the effective application of management functions. Moreover, the new conditions of managerial activity, determined by the changes in the external and internal environment, require not only a performance manager, but the presence of the leader regarded as a driver of transition, who is visionary and pragmatic, communicative, possessing the sense of consensus in addressing the problems and taking decisions. Motivated, it guides the direction to be followed and animates people to noble actions. The manager conceives, develops and optimizes through performing functions within formal organizational structures, strives to limit risks, while the leader is an innovator who takes risks, transforms by changing roles and mobilizing people. If the manager usually works formally, exercising his or her authority as a leader in the organization, then the leader usually has an informal social influence.

Or, this issue is not given the proper attention nowadays when we are in a transition period, which maintains the administrative leadership, retains the implementation of management and leadership, "leaderism", which, in fact, is conquered within the group and is not "preassigned".

Raising to these three levels of leadership (administration, management, leadership) will be produced successively as favourable conditions are created that will, to some extent, require acceptance of management and leadership levels. For example, decentralization of education creates, first of all, these prerequisites.

Promoting the idea of school autonomy, the director will have more and more opportunities to manifest itself in the role of manager. In this context we refer to the possibility of designing the curriculum at the school's decision, the right to engage in work, to procure resources, to create a strong partnership with the local community, etc.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Extensive changes in education with regard to the implementation and development of the curriculum, pedagogical teaching-learning-assessment technologies require appropriate managerial skills from the director, who in the future can and must become a true leader-manager. At present, our society as a whole and education in particular need leader-managers to promote a leadership style appropriate to the new orientations and realities of a democratic and open society. Applying innovative principles implies mastery of theory, methodology in the field, a new mentality and own ways, a guiding art, which will outline the characteristics of the educational management paradigm. The implementation of a modern and native management in education is intended to contribute to enhancing the quality of education as a whole, democratizing school life, shaping pupils' personality in the context of a democratic and open society.

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