

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS REGARDING THE EDUCATIONAL CHANGES AND THE SCHOOL MANAGERS' ATTITUDES IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: *In the Romanian educational system, educational reforms were not easy to implement. It involved a chain of operations and restructuring, adaptation and training processes, in accordance with the nowadays demands of the educational system. This study highlights a diagnosis, a critical reflection, a reconsideration of the socio-educational realities. We emphasize that there is a conditioning reciprocal relationship between the change and the human resource's attitude and motivation in the educational system. The study results highlight the importance of personality development, school managers' capacity to analyze the process of change and to design and implement changes in the school organization. We demonstrated, using scientific methods of investigation, on a representative sample that the change and development of the school organization can be possible only if its people have valid reasons to operate the change at an educational level.*

Keywords: *change; education; education system*

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last three decades, the education systems in Romania were subjected to a succession of diverging reform proposals, going over a significant restructuring process.

The nowadays reformatory process in the educational institutions implies restructuring and conceptualizing the medium and long term strategies. All changes must materialize at the school level and should be transposed into an educational reality. In these conditions, efficiency and competence are fundamental issues; the education system must comply with the European standards of efficiency, competence and quality.

The educational reforms in the education system in Romania are addressed and equally affect the school organization and its members. Starting from the reality of the past few years, we can say that school organizations have shown a great capacity for adaptation. The observations made on reforms / changes in the pre-university education system highlight that in the early stages of the first educational reforms were registered times of crisis, and then, through a process of transposing into practice the reform measures, the members of school organizations have adopted a collective learning process that allowed adapting and implementing change strategies.

In order to meet this goal we have achieved an objective assessment of the impact, the effectiveness and efficiency of several activities in relation to their objectives.

2. CHALLENGES FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS'

After being part of the European Union, the Romanian educational system adheres to school quality, in which the satisfaction of direct and indirect beneficiaries is the main objective (National Reform Program, 2011-2013; <http://www.edu.ro>; OMECTS 6194 , 13.11.2012, art.1 al. 2). In the wake of the observations made in the study, we emphasize that the cooperation of all actors involved is still necessary, so as to achieve a modern, coherent and unitary system. It is still necessary that training in the Romanian society adapts teaching to the needs of the modern society and focuses on the individual's educational needs and training, so as to be able to adapt and anticipate the pace of the society and the future will no longer be a surprise. The agents who participated in the training program "Education for Change" have realized that in the contemporary social context, where information and knowledge are the main factors of development, the educational system will make a prospective effort of development and school will be responsible for developing knowledge. "Knowledge is the power of both mind and directed action, and school is the main institution of transmission / reproduction of knowledge and thereby the distribution of power in society" (Fr.Bacon, 2002, p.29, Vlasceanu L (coord.) 2002, p.29).

The training program "Education for Change" where school managers took part in targeted the development of analyzing and interpreting skills regarding the phenomenon of educational change, as well as improving the attitudes towards reforms. The goal was to convince school managers of their ability to apply and control the process of change and make them promote the change / educational reforms. We focused on the future educational changes content investigating the availability or constraints which argues the attitude and determines or not the resistance to change, or acceptance of the educational reforms. The formative educational approach to change was based on:

1. Creating a cognitive structure;
2. Creating an attitudinal and motivational structure in order to determine the acceptance and change implementation;
3. Creating an action structure (behavioural) by designing a strategy to promote the educational change and the school management tools, as well as a coherent implementation and promotion of the changes and a self-evaluation of the need for change in the school.

I affirm that I have managed to achieve the overall objective, i.e. evaluating the capacity to change at an individual and group level, the development opportunity in a climate of satisfaction, contentment and professional fulfillment.

Analyzing school managers' category, I affirm that I have managed to get them set organizational goals that meet the objectives of school organization members, so that everyone involved be engaged in fulfilling the objectives and promoting change. It is worth mentioning that the assertive attitude towards change was due to the challenge of change and motivation in this direction, favoring communication, persuading educators to analyze and debate the reforms that have to be implemented.

I have found that in the early stage of the change process, those involved were unbalanced and only afterwards they formed their knowledge, pro-change attitudes and skills, so the balance is regained (Bargh, J.A., Chaiken, S., Govender, R. si Pratto, F.1992).

The study data show similar conservative trends towards change from the school managers' part, accepting the change only declaratively.

The study highlights the exponential growth of the management team's interest after the training program. They have managed to make diagnosis, projects and plans to implement programs in order to development the institution.

The decentralization reform of the pre-university education system is the one that changes the role of the school manager, which is totally different from the old management practices. Nevertheless, there are still many school managers that need to acquire new competences and specific skills regarding organizational leadership.

The manager has the role of operationalizing and implementing the change as well as managing the educational reforms in all dimensions of school organization, as effective as possible.

Because of the many changes in education and nowadays society, the manager has to plan the future of the school organization and anticipate possible changes. The previous experiences in management are insufficient and I even dare to say that they may hinder the change. A very important aspect is the manager's ability to analyze the process of change from different points of view, so as to have access to a change in management. To reach this goal, the manager must work on the awareness, identification and prioritization of the main levers so as to implement changes and educational reforms quickly and efficiently.

A part from management skills, which he can develop through professionalization programs, the manager must also use organizational development strategies and should always be concerned about the diagnosis of the institution. This diagnosis must cover both the internal and external environment of schools according to the European standards.

According to another observation of the survey, the current managers must combat the stress caused by the change by promoting pro-change attitudes, or developing affective-motivational and volition aspects as well as empowering all the beneficiaries of educational change. It is important to stress here the need for frequent and responsible analysis and diagnosis regarding the need for change, both at an organizational and individual level.

3. RECOMMANDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

We recommend a formative step in this direction both at the individual and organizational level so that the main objective should be developing individuals' personality as well as the school organization. Educational strategies must be diverse and should involve both organizational development and personnel development strategies so as to facilitate a correct assimilation leading to change.

Among the most effective strategies that should be promoted nowadays are the innovative, proactive and participatory strategies that involve both the individuals and the organization in transposing the reform into concrete actions and promote reform measures effectively. These strategies need to be updated and adapted to the needs of the school organization and the individual members of that organization but also according to the particularities of the school as an organization.

In conclusion, the educational change through the current reforms, recommends the school managers to provide professional management in the educational institution that s/he leads and to raise the awareness of all educators in order to promote the change, because it is the only way to respond to society's demand.

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