

Management Practiced in Education Systems

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Abstract

The term management is a comprehensive one in terms of its connotations, especially since the management process has its applicability in a variety of areas. The basics of management are the same, regardless of who and in what activity it is practiced, but a significant aspect of a qualitative management is the ability to adapt and evolve.

Educational management is a linear process, with too little evolution and development, even more so in the Romanian state system. Things seem to be progressive in the private system, where, although the biggest disadvantage of parents are the significant fees of the courses, the involvement of the staff is remarkable, which indicates that the management is a successful, development-oriented one.

The aim of this paper is to understand the concept of educational management and how it is applied in both the state and private education system.

Key words: educational management, poor management, state education, private education

J.E.L. classification: I21

1. Introduction

The foundation of this paper is educational management, an element without which the education system cannot function in normal parameters. To follow a logical line, we will focus in the first part on the term of educational management, followed by an analysis of how management is practiced in public and private schools. We will also consider the conceptual terms of the management process to understand in depth the meaning of educational management.

Once analysed separately the two types of education systems, we will draw a delimitation between the way in which each educational system is managed, identifying the similarities and differences between them; at the end of this paper we will understand why there is a discrepancy between the way the two types of educational units work.

2. Theoretical background - Education management

The management concept has significant valences in each sphere of activity. However, when management is associated with the term education, it seems to acquire even greater significance and responsibility; the association being made with education, a value that underlies humanity, it is fundamental to have rational and correct management activity practiced in schools (Cornescu et al, 2001, p. 73).

The elements that define the educational management process must allow its delimitation as a system of actions designed for the efficient functioning of the education system and process.

Management is driven by two essential activities: leadership and coordination. In order to achieve the proposed objectives, the managerial path to be followed to achieve them is established. The basics of quality management are the same, regardless of the field in which it is practiced; what differs are the actions that are taken. Each sphere of activity is differentiated by its own characteristics, so that the managerial actions undertaken must be adapted and directed towards the established objectives (Zlate, 2007, p. 49).

Are managers born or can they be transformed by education? This is a controversy that many experts are opposed to, some being on one side of the barricade and others on the other. What is certain is that there are people who are born with managerial skills, so that the process of deepening the managerial field is made easier for them; things seem natural and easy to implement for the category of those who are endowed with such skills. However, those who are not born with managerial skills can self-educate and undertake managerial qualities through learning and improvement. Specialization in management is a constantly evolving process, although management has the same foundation for any field in which it is applied. As each area of activity has its own characteristics, there is a need for a management capable of adapting to various situations.

Romania's state education system is a precarious, insecure and chaotic one, a fact caused by a faulty management that starts, first of all, from the country's management. This subject related to the education system is a sensitive and difficult to digest for most of those who come into contact with it or work through it.

In the following lines, we will make an analysis of the state and private education system, later emphasizing the common aspects and understanding what elements distinguish them.

3. Management of the state education system

The education of children studying at the state is provided free of charge. In certain circumstances, the free of charge of some services does not imply too many obligations and pretensions, a situation that also applies in the educational field in Romania. Poor management of the education system is caused, first of all, by the unpreparedness of those in the management position; secondly, the interest and involvement of the management in the good performance of the educational institutions are directly proportional to the monthly income, thus, the lower the salary, the lower the performance.

In the management of state schools there are teachers with or with too little experience gained over the years, who have crowded chairs, so once they leave the classroom, they need to enter the role of manager. This dual position can create challenges for both the role of teacher and the head of the institution. The duality faced by public school managers is a common, normal and real one in state education systems; the premise of this double position is that the one in the position of manager can understand undistorted the educational system, he is already familiar with the way things happen in the institution from the position of teacher, thus being suitable for the role of head of the unit. However, this situation is risky for the smooth running of the education system. Dividing energy and attention into two completely different activities is one of the aspects that can have negative effects on the management of the institution. The situation in which a teacher becomes the manager of the school is a comfortable and predictable one, especially if he has a history in that institution, he is already familiar with how things work, but this neglect only pushes education towards regression (Cristescu , 2004, p. 57).

According to the controversy mentioned above, regarding born or learned managers, it is certain that it takes time, energy and desire to learn to learn from the skills of an effective manager. The efficiency of a manager can decrease significantly if his attention is distributed to the activities of the teacher.

The impact that school management has on educational outcomes is strong. There is a need for an increase in the quality of management of public institutions through active and continuous involvement to achieve the proposed educational objectives, so that, implicitly, there is a need for involvement in the management of the public education institution.

In Romania, the attributions that the directors have are mainly administrative, a practice not encountered at all in the developed countries, OECD members, focused on the transformation and development of the educational process. In order to improve the educational system, it is a priority for the managers of the educational units to learn and accept the responsibilities that come with this profession of manager. The current directors must take into account the objectives set by the unit they represent and establish a path to guide the actions towards their fulfilment. At the same time, it is a priority for managers to pay attention to the way in which teachers organize their classes, precisely in order to come up with solutions that improve the classic way of teaching. It is also the manager's responsibility to analyse the students' results, so that depending on the progress and,

especially, the regression, it is necessary to understand the aspects that prevent their development, following to identify the necessary solutions to rectify the situation.

We live in an era of transformations and ever-evolving things, so that each generation of students that comes after has its own characteristics: strong personality and innate independence, which is why adapting the education system to the times we live in is paramount (Schleicher, 2015, p. 22). There is so much ferocity on the part of parents about schools that these feelings should raise some questions about managers. Schools in Romania are often compared to those in more or less developed countries, where there is a current education system, well prepared, where interaction with students is a priority and where the choice of subjects by children seems to be extremely beneficial for their education and their mood. It is certain that the new generations may be more difficult to master, but what burdens the communication with students even more is a backward management, not adapted to the times we live in, where the teaching of teachers is based on the classical foundations, which worked too many years ago.

The state education system is all the more deficient in rural areas, where children come from disadvantaged backgrounds and from families with too limited financial resources to afford to purchase even what is strictly necessary for school. Managers of such schools face challenges on a daily basis, which is why integrity, dedication and performance are needed to succeed in creating the right climate for students who are prone to early school leaving.

Romania has one of the highest dropout rates in Europe (15.3% in 2019), an alarming situation that calls into question the management of schools (Wall-Street, 2019).

In the following lines we will analyse the functioning of private schools in Romania, later comparing the two types of education. At the end of the analysis we will know the reasons why the private system is a fruitful one compared to the state one.

4. Management of the private education system

The private education system is becoming a current trend, with many parents with a stable financial situation seeing this way of education as the only option for their children. Private education is expensive, so only a small percentage of the population can afford the annual expenses of private education, which can reach tens of thousands of euros. However, leaving aside the trend created with private schools, the private education system demonstrates constant performance year after year compared to the private education system.

What is the reason why in private schools there can be performance and interest from students, while in the state there are more and more dissatisfaction? The correct answer: leadership. The type of management practised in private schools is focused on development, dedication and performance. The attention that private schools pay to the education of children by challenging children actively in the classroom is one of the most important activities that the management of this type of education practices.

One of the reasons why private schools become interesting even for children can be teachers of different nationalities, a situation often encountered in international schools. Multiculturalism is a key element that defines private education, so it is not only teachers who come from different parts of the world, but also students. The ability of children of different nationalities to communicate and get in touch with different cultures only contributes to the cognitive development of children, helping them to become independent and sociable (European Commission, 2018s).

Private education management also considers the challenge of teachers; class hours must be interactive, in which there is uniqueness, so that children become curious and actively involved in lessons. Leading private education allows children of a certain age to be able to choose subjects that are of greater interest to them. If up to a certain point all the basic subjects are studied, at an age when children become aware of the affinities they have for certain areas, they will be encouraged to choose the classes that interest them.

Private school managers are significantly involved in the smooth running of things. The development of the student is paramount for the management of these schools, so that all the necessary conditions are created and offered so that the child's mood is always trained and in a good mood. The leaders of private education, of course, also take into account the comfort of teachers.

When it comes to the class of each teacher, he becomes a manager on the subject taught, so he has free rein in managing and creating his own teaching method. Private education management aims to boost creativity, which is why these schools are so appreciated and desired by parents for their children.

With a management aimed at creating the necessary conditions for students, private schools provide them with breakfast and lunch, the possibility of after school hours and even hours of sleep for the little ones, so that parents, once they finish their program at work, take children at school and can carry out family activities, they are already eaten, with lessons learned and even asleep.

Another aspect practiced by private management is the creation of classes with a small number of students, the goal being that the teacher can share his attention proportionally for each of them.

In the private education system, the term leadership can also be approached, a term that is too little present in the case of the state education system. The concept of leadership is an extension of management, so management can exist without leadership, but leadership cannot be practiced without management. In private education there is a desire to change, inspire and motivate staff. Compared to management, leadership considers the vision of what can become an educational unit, which is why staff are encouraged to cooperate, teamwork being essential for achieving the goals set (Adair, 1973, p. 87).

There is a need for a well-made management, which should take into account the good approach of the organization, so that the obstacles that appear along the way can be overcome successfully due to the established concrete plan.

5. Practicing management in state education vs. private education

In the basic sense, the management is the science or art of leadership, managing to mobilize human resources to meet the objectives set by management. Like the controversy over born or educated managers, the management process is called into question when it comes to its nature: science or art? There are various ways in which researchers argue why management is science or art, but it is certain that, regardless of its nature, management has the same purpose.

From our point of view, the management has both scientific and artistic values. In terms of science, management needs to be accurate and can be subsequently analysed and measured. From the point of view of art, it takes imagination, an inaccurate science, which is activated in each manager in a particular way, the management being foldable and managing to adapt to various situations.

Management is a complex, systematic process, which outlines the path to be followed, those who participate in the process being coordinated by the person responsible for the good approach to the institution. The objectives that are drawn through the practice of management can be measured and dimensioned to identify if the point reached is the established one.

For the management process to exist and be effective, it requires the involvement of managers, a situation rarely encountered in the state education system. Because the country's management is a deficient one, in which the deficiencies are felt significantly, this situation is also felt on the state institutions. With a poor management model, how can management in educational institutions be productive? The disinterest of those in charge has serious consequences for the way the education system works, which is why the subject of state school studies has become sensitive and outrageous for many parents. (James, 1982, p. 26).

Following the analysis of the two education systems we can notice an important difference in the level of involvement of managers in educational activities. If in private education the involvement of management and teachers in the quality of students' education can be observed, in the state system the interest of practising a qualitative management is missing. This difference between the level of interest between the two types of systems is caused by several factors: the financial remuneration of the work, the conditions in the schools, the professional training, the personal character. The state education system struggles with unqualified managers, who reach this position from the position of teacher, having no training in the field of management. In the case of private education, in most cases there are staff trained to take over a management position. The level of training of the manager can be an element of differentiation between one educational unit and another. Also in this context it can

be mentioned that often the managers of private schools are the owners of the business, so that, implicitly, the level of involvement is at maximum levels, while the managers in the state system are simple employees, without personal involvement.

In Romania, at the moment, the state education system prevails, but not because there is no potential in the private one, but because too few parents can afford the annual fees imposed on the private sector, which is why state education is the main option. Unfortunately, due to the state education system, many parents make compromises in terms of their children's education, enrolling them, with not much conviction, in state schools.

There are differences in the management functions between the training of managers in state and private education. Like the ones mentioned above, in public schools there are certain conditions that the candidate for the position of principal must meet, and one of them is a degree in pre-university education, with a length of service of at least four years. There is, however, the requirement to prove, in at least three years, professional, managerial and moral qualities. However, with a disciplinary behaviour qualified as very well, without direct links with the management process, how can the person be qualified for such a position, which is subordinated to an entire educational unit? The disinterest with which the laws are written, without taking into account the effects that some aspects that cannot be taken into account can have, leads to an indoctrinated and backward educational system (Gherguț, 2007, p. 128) .a

As for the private education system, the situation is encouraging. The managers of these institutions are often trained in the field of management, so they know the steps to be followed for effective management. There is interest and involvement in private schools, both from teachers and especially from those in charge; this active attitude can be observed through the results and the multitude of activities that private educational institutions practice.

In the creation of this article was based on the qualitative analysis of the information as a research method. We chose a qualitative approach because we considered it relevant in dealing with the subject of educational management. Because qualitative research allows a detailed study, the information we analysed led to the creation of an article that highlights the concept of management and how it is applied in private and public education institutions. The analysis of the identified information helped us to draw a delimitation between the two types of educational institutions.

6. Research methodology

As a method of research used, qualitative analysis of information was the basis for the implementation of this article. The reason we chose a qualitative approach was the subject - Educational management, which required detailed research. Since qualitative research allows for a thorough study, the information we have analysed has led to the creation of an article highlighting the concept of management and how it is applied in private and public educational institutions. Analysing the identified information helped us draw a line between the two types of educational institutions. This type of research allows to treat topics in depth, helping to understand and interpret information.

7. Conclusions

Flexibility, the ability to adapt and modernize the state education system are needed. The backward practices that are still practiced in schools only make it difficult for children to access education and cause them feelings of revulsion towards the educational institution. In a century in which fields are developing rapidly and in which every generation of children that comes is in trend with the times, the state education system has become vulnerable, insecure and backward.

After analysing the two types of education systems we can note the following aspect: state education is focused on quantity and not quality, while private educational institutions are guided by the premise that quality prevails, not quantity; this also explains the difference in the number of children enrolled in classes. If in private schools there are even 30 students per hour, in private institutions the average is somewhere between 13-15 students. Once the number of students is higher, more misunderstandings occur, and a significant problem with the large number of children is the

attention that the teacher must share equally to such a large number of students. This situation does not apply to private schools, where the number of students in the class is limited, so that teachers can deal effectively with each.

Romania needs modern managers in the state leadership, first of all, where the entire public activity starts. Of course, there is the category of managers who, regardless of how things work in their higher hierarchy, do not deviate from the proposed goal and the objectives set; managers who fall into this category can be called leaders.

The management process is a complex and continuous one in which involvement, determination and adaptability are indispensable to function. Because Romania's evolution is not at the same level as the time we live in, most state institutions have poor management, with too many shortcomings.

We conclude the analysed information by mentioning the fact that the managers of the education systems, especially the state, should go through a path of training and managerial development, following which to learn the basics of the field of management; it would be beneficial for this training path to be completed before managers are appointed.

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