

Training and Professional Improvement throughout the Teaching Career in the Romanian Secondary Education System

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Abstract

The training of the teaching staff in secondary education must have a continuous value through the permanent training of the teaching staff and their adjustment to the changes occurring in the secondary education system. Even though they benefitted from training and qualification through the higher education system (teachers) or the high school and post – high school education system for primary teachers and teachers of practical instruction, it is necessary that they be trained on different pedagogical or educational management topics periodically. The training models of the teaching staff in the secondary education system can be achieved with the help of higher education institutions, of public organisations for the training of the teaching staff or of private firms whose purpose is the training of employees. The purpose of the paper is to identify the impact of training and improvement of human resources in Romanian pre-university education, on the efficiency of teaching, making a correlation between the need for training, the training methods used and the impact on improving teaching.

Key words: professional training, professional development, career development, professional improvement, career

J.E.L. classification: M12, M53

1. Introduction

As the national economy is in a state of continuous change, so is the secondary education system affected by permanent and major changes, which entails the continuous training of the teaching staff. The managers of the secondary education system must attach special importance to the training of the teaching staff, since the level of knowledge, the teaching methods, the teachers' skills must be permanently adapted to the existing changes. The necessity of training the teaching staff should not be ignored or underappreciated (Barbu et al, 2019, p. 29). It is advisable that the planning of training the teaching staff in secondary education be achieved by means of long – term plans but at the same time take into consideration the permanent changes of the needs of the secondary education establishments so that they can be adjusted, and in some cases there is even the notion of altering or changing these plannings of staff training. The manner of designing the planning strategy must provide some concrete answers which are attentively quantified taking into account the need to plan the training of the secondary education staff (Tziner et al, 2015, p.4).

2. Literature review

Secondary education organisations must envisage the achievement of planning the training courses of the teaching staff in the secondary education system. This planning must be regarded as a tool of strategic planning with the purpose of obtaining good results regarding the continuous training of the staff. This planning should not be regarded as an attempt to impress the partners of education establishments, as it must represent the necessity of the courses to be completed by the teaching staff with a view to adjust to the permanent changes of the environment in which the secondary education schools unfold their activity (Currie, 2009, p.209).

Career planning is a complex process comprising on the one hand establishing the objectives regarding career evolution regarded both from the perspective of the organisation and of the employees, evaluating the employees' performances and also self – evaluation, the analysis of the opportunities for evolution in particular conditions, which are specific to organisations, and evaluating the planning activity on the whole(Manole, 2013, p.142) .

Another modern method for the training of secondary education teachers is represented by the training organised by teaching – staff resource centers, which are organisations subordinated to county school inspectorates and whose activity aims at offering training courses for teachers in secondary education.They must take into account both the teachers' requirements and the training needs of the secondary education system. Normally the courses offered by Teaching – Staff Resource Centers offer a wide variety of specialised courses, educational management courses, management courses, pedagogy courses, methodology courses, psychology courses, etc. The main advantage of the courses offered by Teaching – Staff Resource Centers is the financial aspect that should be paid by the school, and as these resource centers are subordinated to county school inspectorates, they will not expect to obtain profit and the venues for the courses will be the classrooms when these spaces are no longer used for teaching students. Another advantage is represented by the adjustment of the course offer to the teachers' needs and requirements.

The organisation of teacher training through online training platforms and systems. This type of training has as its main advantage the flexibility represented by giving teachers the possibility to access them whenever they want. The training of the teaching staff can be achieved even by means of good practice models presented at pedagogical reunions or teachers' debates. This can be considered one of the most accessible methods of teacher training and its main feature is that it does not involve expenses from teachers or education establishments. Both teachers' debates and pedagogical reunions take place periodically, normally every semester and are usually compulsory for teachers (Manolescu, 2001 p.75).

3. Research methodology

The research methodology aims to highlight the impact of forms of training and improvement on teaching by studying the literature in the field of human resources management and identifying the most appropriate training and development methods applicable to teachers in Romanian pre-university education. Following the critical analysis of the specialized literature, we selected the main training methods used for **vocational training and professional improvement** which can be used in the training of the pre-university education staff (Tabel no.2).

One must take into account the fact that teacher training also consists in their individual training with a view to keep up both with the latest discoveries of science and technology and with the modern methods of teaching.

Another classification of teacher training is the one taking into account the training period as continuous training programmes and discontinuous training programmes(Nicolescu et al, 1999, p.456) .

Continuous training programmes are those extending over a continuous period of time, without interruptions. The main advantage is the fact that the trainee can focus on the training contents, and there is also communication among the trainees, as they exchange ideas, knowledge, etc. The disadvantage is that the teachers attending the training courses must be substituted for the teaching classes comprised in their didactic norm if the training takes place over a long period of time.

Discontinuous training programmes for teachers. These are characterised by training teachers over several training periods, with a view to minimise the impact of substituting the trainee teacher during the teaching process.

4. Findings

The factors that influence career planning are individual factors, which are connected with the employees' interests and individual aspirations, their level of qualification, their professional experience, and also organisational factors belonging to the organisation's managerial policy, the

policy regarding human resources, the scope of the organisation, the manner in which the evaluation of the employees’ performance is conducted, etc.

As mentioned before, the training strategies must take into account the requirements of the environment but at the same time have a certain uniqueness, as there is also the need for a well-planned development.

The school management together with the schools’ management boards must take full responsibility for the designing of the strategic planning of the training of the staff in secondary education establishments but at the same time must take into consideration the school’s requirements and the training necessities of the teaching staff. In this regard, it can be said that the manner of the strategic planning of the training of the teaching staff in secondary education will still remain easy to accomplish as far as the planning is concerned, but it will take into account the social feature both of the employees’ needs and the needs of the secondary education establishment and especially of the beneficiaries of the secondary education system and of the local community

The requirements of the local community are of the utmost importance in designing the continuous training plan of the employees in the secondary education system. Thus, the areas where the industry is very well developed need certain types of training programmes, both for teachers and students, while the training programmes in the areas where tourism is well-developed will have different training needs.

As far as the training means are concerned, one can mention the training programmes of the teaching staff within training sessions organised by higher education institutions which support secondary education teachers with different modern methods and techniques of teaching and with the adjustment of the level of knowledge to the latest technological breakthroughs.

The continuous training of secondary education teaching staff (Table no.1) is organised under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and Research by means of certain institutions which ensure the quality of the training of the teaching and management, guidance and control staff in secondary education.

Table no.1 Secondary Education Staff

Teaching Staff	Management, Guidance and Control Staff	Auxiliary Teaching Staff	Non – teaching Staff
Teacher	General School Inspector	Chief Secretary /Secretary	Janitor
Primary School Teacher	Deputy General School Inspector	Chief Accountant/ Accountant	Stoker
		Documentarian	
Kindergarten Teacher	School Inspector	Laboratory Assistant	Mechanic
		Asset Manager	
Shop Teacher - Instructor	Manager of Teaching – Staff Resource Center	School Pedagogue/Technician	Guardian
	School Manager	Librarian	Driver
	Manager of Students’ Clubs	Computer Scientist	Electrician/Carpenter

Source: Developed by author

At the level of the Romanian secondary education system, the activity of performance assessment is achieved annually for the entire staff: teaching, auxiliary teaching and non – teaching staff according to the annual assessment sheet drawn up by the Ministry of Education and Research by Order of the Ministry. The assessment process is based on the annual Methodology of

evaluation of the activity of the didactic and non – didactic staff , which establishes the unique frame of evaluating the activity in the field of education by establishing the assessment criteria, the calendar of the annual evaluation, the performance criteria.

The continuous training of the teaching, guidance and control staff is substantiated on the observance of quality and professional standards as well as on the competences that are specific to the profession:

- Participating in methodical – scientific activities within the school, at the level of methodology committee;
- Participating in semestrial pedagogical meetings organised at county level by the county school inspectorate, on school subjects;
- Participating in scientific and methodical paper sessions organised in the form of partnerships, symposia, round tables, etc. at regional, county, national or international level and accredited by Teaching -Staff Resource Centers and the Ministry of Education and Research ;
- Participating in training courses for special training in the field of methodics and pedagogy;
- Participating in courses/colloquies for specialised training for didactic degrees exams;

The teaching staff in the secondary education system has to participate in continuous training, having the obligation to cumulate 90 transferable credits over a five – year period, which is achieved by completing training/ professional development courses organised by accredited institutions under the coordination of the Ministry of Education and Research. (Tabel no.2)

Table no.2 Characteristics of vocational training and professional improvement for the teaching staff

Vocational training – characteristics	Professional improvement - characteristics
acquiring new knowledge	improving current knowledge and skills
acquiring a new qualification	continuing the learning process
learning a trade	making connections between the acquired knowledge
acquiring new practical skills	practical application of acquired knowledge

Source: (Manole, 2013, 106)

The organisation of teacher training courses through non – profit organisations or associations. These entities support the teaching staff and education establishments with a variety of courses addressed to their needs. One of these aspects is that these organisations will only aim to cover their operating expenses and not gain profit.

The training of the teaching staff according to career evolution stages is achieved through training programmes structured as follows:

- Training programmes for the full – time professional degree;
- Training courses in the field of the didactics of teaching;
- Training courses in the field of school pedagogy and psycho -pedagogy;
- Training programmes for the second teaching degree;
- Training programmes for the first teaching degree;
- Training courses/programmes in the field of educational management;
- Programmes of re-training;
- Participation in study programmes in a different specialization, other than the one previously obtained by the teaching staff in secondary education.
- Participating in different courses in order to acquire new professional competences and qualifications;
- Participating in training courses especially designed for the management, guidance and control staff in secondary education;
- Graduating post – university courses ;

- Graduating master’s degree studies ;
- Graduating doctoral studies;
- “Acquiring new didactic specialisations”, other than the initial didactic specialisation.

5. Conclusions

A special place is taken by administrative issues represented by the funds allotted for the necessity of completing training courses and the choice of the time periods that are necessary for the successful training of the teaching staff. The training at secondary education level targets the improvement of knowledge in the field of the didactics of teaching the school subjects, school pedagogy and psycho – pedagogy, as well as scientific training. The teaching staff in the secondary education system have the right to participate in training and professional development courses stipulated in the Methodology of continuous training of the staff in secondary education, organised both nationally and abroad. The planning of the continuous training of the employees in the secondary education system will have to be well- structured and also there has to be an easy implementation of the training programmes at secondary school level. The practical applicability of this research is to apply the most appropriate training methods for human resource development, at the level of pre-university education units, to integrate the knowledge and skills acquired through training programs in current activities. The personal contribution consists in selecting the most effective training methods in accordance with the existing training needs at the level of pre-university education and in integrating them into the training programs.

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