

A Review: Strategic Analysis of the Variables that Generate the Procedural Crisis in the Change of Organizational Management at the Educational Level

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Abstract

The process of educational change goes through a period of crisis of the organizational management. To reduce this period, a diagnostic and strategic analysis of both the inflow of flows is needed, by finding prospective strategies that meet the acute need for change, as well as the outflow, by guaranteeing proactive management.

This study has as starting point the danger of applying the managerial changes made in the European Union countries, not taking into consideration the national particularities.

Using a series of methodological activities such as identifying the shortcomings, applying the principles of change, generating conclusions, the study aims to broaden the perspectives in the field. On the other hand, it carries out a review of the strategies regarding the agents of change by elaborating a conceptual model for reaching a possible and desirable state, in which the political and the legislative play a very important role.

Key words: agents of change, space of transition, contradictions of change, brakes of change, managerial innovation

J.E.L. classification: I2, J5, M5

1. Introduction

It is well known that the school is created by society having the purpose of fulfilling the main functions of education. However, there exists an actual degree of social determinism that puts the school in a position to exemplify cultural, political and social reality. As a result, in a period when profound changes are taking place regarding the educational system, the question of the real capacity to change the school, as well as clarifying its content, raises the risk that change will become a pretentious but empty concept.

There is a tendency to consider that change occurs instantly, whenever it is requested. Both the organization and the members are affected, the desire for change being characterized by ambivalence, by the specialists' opinions. It is about trying to find a balance between new and old, between the need to maintain a comfortable state, given by ingrained behaviors and the desire for change.

For a better understanding, the therapists' experience is relevant. In many situations, regarding the patients undergoing treatment, instead of the maturation, they feel the presence of regression phenomena, explained by the power of the repetitive forces that act regarding the human psychic, and which require the continuation of the treatment. It seems to be a setback, a moment of denial, of not accepting change at this level. This is also the reason why the therapists consider the change to be a time of disturbance of a stable disorder, but that for the patients it was the only order they knew.

This example represents a possible support for understanding the contrasts that mark the evolutionary context of the organizational management. Regarding this, it is mandatory to review the most obvious such contrasts.

The first one calls for the psychological dimension of change and refers to the relationship between change and stability/ continuity. Not infrequently we have been witnesses or subjects of this contrast because, regarding the psychic the desire for evolution and routine behavior, the driving forces and the brakes of change coexist.

The meanings of this paradox are deeper than they are to be understood at first sight. It should not be neglected that, usually, change involves not only changing the rules, but even affecting the professional identity of those involved. This is why the change must respect the principle of planning / design. The emergence of resistance to change has as its motive the idea that novelty elements can be converted into old practices, possibly slightly improved, an aspect that gives the feeling of a certain stability.

Closely related to this paradox is another, that of respecting tradition and promoting modern/ postmodern values. The two aspects coexist, the change not meaning the cancellation of tradition. The problem nowadays that is being hinted at is quite another, experts say.

If modernity, by its already experienced values, has managed to be easy to anticipate and offer some stability, the same cannot be said about the values of post-modernity. This is recognized by the tendency to affect the basic structures, to deconstruct, to destabilize, to change the axis of things, which raises a serious question mark regarding the limits to which change can advance. If postmodern changes mean disassociation, then there is the risk of creating imbalances, chaos. Therefore, postmodernism becomes an uncertain world, probably increasing nostalgia for the past all the more, since sometimes the change only concerns external demands, leaving the system unmodified.

The relationship between decentralization and centralization regarding the educational organization is a possible paradox too. The fact that, regarding the Romanian education system there is an autonomy of educational institutions, one cannot help but notice the relativity of this concept. It manifests itself inside the organization. However, at the inter-organizational level there is still a centralism that maintains the organization within the rigid frameworks of bureaucracy. In other words, regarding the Romanian school, centralization and decentralization coexist.

An equally upsetting paradox is the one that emerges between the need to meet the modern demands of society and the low financial resources allocated to the school to support the reform. Their absence or their insufficiency, puts the Romanian school in the situation of choosing between two solutions: either to give up the change, in which case they would self-destruct, or to operate moderate changes, with the risk of depreciating their investments through the sustained effort of direct and indirect beneficiaries. This case is synonymous with the one in which quality is required without the necessary logistical and financial support.

A paradox found by some Western school analysts, but to some extent also suited to the Romanian education, is the one regarding the contrast between the requests for innovation in education and the institutional or individual evaluation according to the old criteria. This is explained by the fact that, although it is required to promote teamwork, individualization of the curriculum, promotion by school managers of an optimal educational climate, modernization of educational resources, involvement in educational development projects, these are not yet among the evaluation criteria. of managers or organizations.

2. Literature review

The issue of educational change has been of concern to specialists in the field since the early 1960s. The first works belong to American literature, but there is an almost total absence in the West-European space. You can talk about a small number of UNESCO conferences or a few reports from the Center for Research and Innovation in Education, published in the 1970s. The necessity of changing the school paradigm has made the phenomenon of change management a very debated topic in the recent period.

In the mid-1960s, Lapière is the one who analyzes, from the broad context of social change. Opposed to change is the event, considered a component element, being a generator of change when it affects the society structurally and functionally. If this condition is not met, the event manifests itself only at the individual level without affecting the community.

A clear distinction between social change and social evolution is made by G. Rocher in 1968. The time factor is the one that differentiates between the two concepts: social change refers to verifiable transformations in a more limited time, and social evolution highlights transformations recorded in a period of time that can exceed even two generations.

A.M. Huberman (1978) gives another definition of the concept for change starting from innovation. In its conception, innovation is represented by an innovative selection, organization for human and also material resources so that the proposed objectives are achieved at the highest level. The definition was challenged based on the premise that innovation is considered to bring added value to already known inventions.

A new perspective on the change-innovation report is provided by G. Adamezewski who tries to achieve a consideration of innovation, analyzing all the definitions existing in the specialized literature at that time. In its conception, innovation is a phased adoption of an idea in a value system.

Although innovation brings change, the reciprocal is not valid because a clearly defined purpose is needed for change to become innovation.

M. Forse makes the distinction between tendency and change, noting the small difference between the two. In his opinion, the tendency is an irreversible change, in time and space having a great magnitude, supporting the changes that will take place. In M. Fullan's view, although innovation is based on clear goals, there are situations when good intentions can assimilate inefficient practices.

In the educational perspective, the change comes in complementarity with the school improvement, but there are clear differences between the two concepts. In L. Stool's and D. Fink's view, this is that school improvement develops the capacity to accept change and must necessarily take into account the internal conditions of the environment in which the change occurs. Although considered a form of change, the renovation involves a return, a refresh of outdated practices, thus being closer to the concept of improvement.

In the conception of S. Cristea the education reform is represented by a fundamental change that is designed and realized regarding the educational system. The changes occur in the change of purposes and in its structure and content, thus making a modification of the curricula and curriculum.

In the same direction of accentuating the complexity of the changes in education is also M. Fullan (1991), who considers that the reform implies a fundamental restructuring of the entire education system.

J.C. Rouchy draws a parallel between change and adaptation, from a perspective of the depth of change, underlining the need for a transitional space when one process moves to another. It is very important that these processes are intertwined, adaptation can be a stage of change or even the means by which change is produced. The concept of change is analyzed by R. Dahrendorf (1996) who interprets change from the point of view of the social conflict, change signifying the struggle for authority. The author emphasizes the idea that change is not always generated by conflict. V. Doise, G. Mugny, J.A. Perez analyzes the change from the perspective of socio-cognitive conflict, being produced regarding thinking structures.

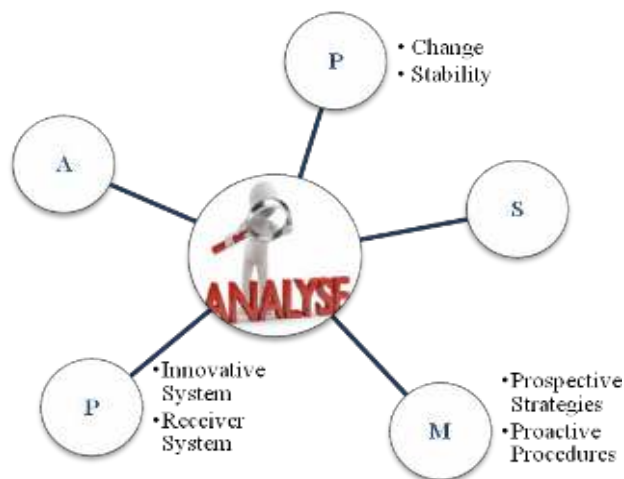
3. Research methodology

Following a critical analysis of the definitions, some characteristics of change emerge, the most important being: the global character (both economic and educational organizations are affected), it is a collective phenomenon (it manifests itself in isolation, starting from individuals to organizations), it represents the passage of clearly defined stages, being a lasting phenomenon. Although initially it causes imbalance and tension, then change can develop another form of balance.

Studies show that educational change needs to be approached from multiple perspectives, configuring it as an open, self-regulating process that contains elements in the inter-conditioning relationship. The implementation of change strategies at the organization level is underlined, emphasizing the need to shift the focus from the extrinsic motivation, financial eminence, to the intrinsic motivation.

To understand the phenomenon and the causes that generate them must be highlighted. It is better to specify that without taking into consideration the perspective from which the analysis is made, the process of change proposes new objectives and strategies required by the new type of society. Only an analysis from multiple perspectives can raise awareness of what the process really entails, with an emphasis on the mechanisms that generate it and the long-term benefits. There are five perspectives from which the process of changing organizational management can be analyzed: psychological, social, managerial-strategic, pedagogical and axiological (PSMPA, as shown in Figure no.1).

Figure no. 1. PSMPA - Map of perspectives for analyzing the process of strategic change of organizational management



Source: The authors' own concept

Using multiple methodological activities of study, observation, comparison, correlations, the authors consider that the psychological implications during the process of change are major. There are two perspectives that consider that personality can be underlined by elements that give it identity. It is the behaviorist perspective that claims that a person could be modeled by changing only the elements of the situation and the constructivist perspective that highlights the variable character of the behavior of humans. So, during the process of change of organizational management, two contradictory tendencies are put in balance: change and stability (rules, rules, procedures).

The authors found that during the change a series of turbulences may occur due to the fact that the stimuli may be received differently from one person to another, but these aspects are generally controllable, an essential role having in this regard education for change.

Special attention during this study was given to globalization, the authors appreciating the specialists' opinion in the field as the phenomenon that attracts both the mobility of a capital, but also a decentralization of decisions and policies, reshaping global markets, increasing competition, globalizing knowledge.

In this context, it is natural for globalization to propose the change of the paradigm of the educational phenomenon as this leads to the transformation of substance of the environment.

Thus, the organization must redefine its concept of development, and will explore new practices and technologies, adapting on the move to new trends. The two components develop an interdependence report as any organization can exist only insofar as it is able to adapt to the new demands of the social environment. It should be noted that each organization has its own social structure that becomes visible through interpersonal relationships and through the set of behaviors and norms that underpin the evolution.

The requirements of quality management must be respected, thus avoiding outdated practices, routine and inertia. Several variables must be taken into account, among which human resources are the basic capital. They must be endowed with proactive attitudes and motivation. Another variable is represented by the school organization, in which there must be cooperative relations, the partnership between its members being a guarantee of progress.

From a pedagogical perspective, education as a system and process is an integral part of the global system, being called to produce changes in all the components from the initial training to the continuous one, from the curriculum to the educational management. Early in the 70's, comparative studies were carried out between the school regarded as an organization and between the economic enterprises. In 1978 A.M. Huberman advanced the idea that one can speak at the following levels of change: individual perceptions, institutional system, teaching-learning system, environment.

In Huberman's view, individual change presupposes the existence of two systems: one innovative, the other receiver, both of which are modified by reference to the other. Any change is aimed at restructuring attitudes and values, knowledge, means of transmission, reviewing the policies of the entire process.

Regarding the environment it is the impact that any transformation has on the indirect beneficiaries, the local community or the various associations that can financially support the innovation efforts. An interpretation can be made from inside to outside and vice versa, the relationship of double determination, the process of change being performed in an evolutionary manner and not a mechanical one.

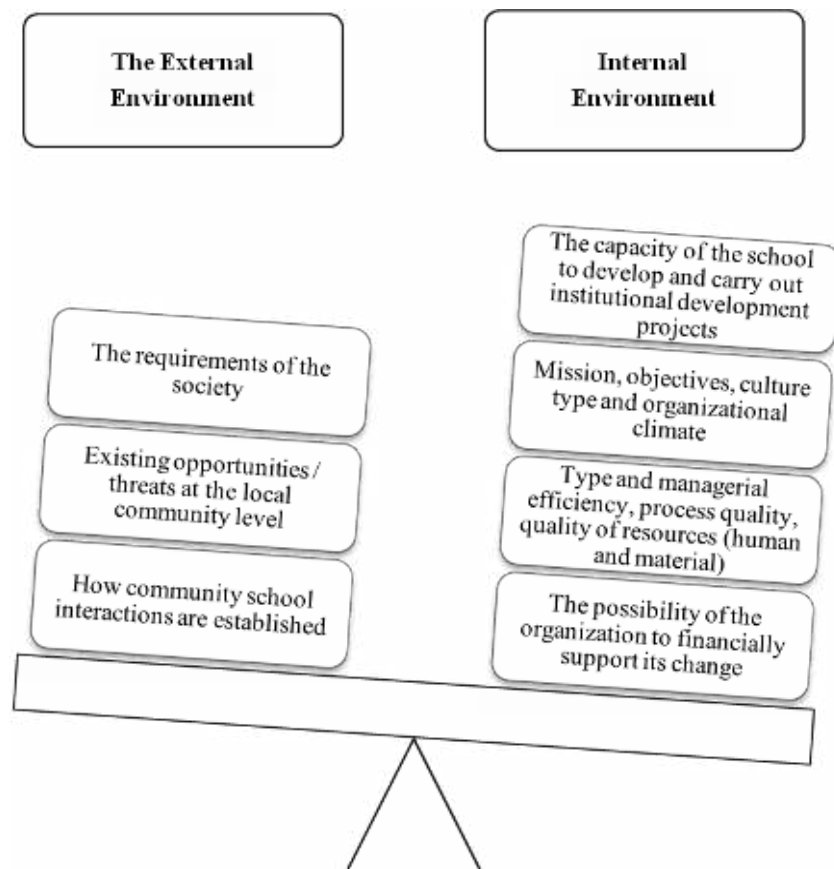
In view of the current managerial crisis situation, through a consideration of research from other fields, the authors emphasize the idea that changing organizational needs requires a reorientation of managerial values, a recycling of the entire school organization. For this, it is mandatory an analyze of the factors that can determine the change, the agents that are involved, and also the conditions that favor or that block the change of the old values without having to eliminate them. In 1990 R. Weil and J.P. During this period, I establish four factors of change: cultural and ideological values, technical progress and demographic factor.

Cultural values represent the fundamental axiological benchmark, guiding the promotion of the change type. Closely related to cultural values are ideologies, which can be considered as tools used in different social systems.

The principle of axiological substantiation emphasizes that change implies quality and value, which must become mobile in identifying the main managerial changes. Education is based on the value criterion, which is transposed in practice in the fact that education is achieved only through own and proper values.

When confronted with innovation, sometimes a doubt or a feeling of powerlessness can arise. For this reason, coping with change in education becomes a professional task, seemingly impossible when it addresses the psychological barriers or extreme solutions. There is a need to get rid of inefficient practices, critical reflection and reconsideration of socio-educational realities, as well as effective involvement in promoting change at this level. The social should take responsibility for the assistance of change when it is requested and for facilitating the integration of the trained young people, and the organization needs to assume the responsibility for the coherent changes and quality.

Figure no.2. The internal and external environment of the organization, variables generating the procedural crisis



Source: Authors' own concept based on the diagnosis of the two environments of the educational organization

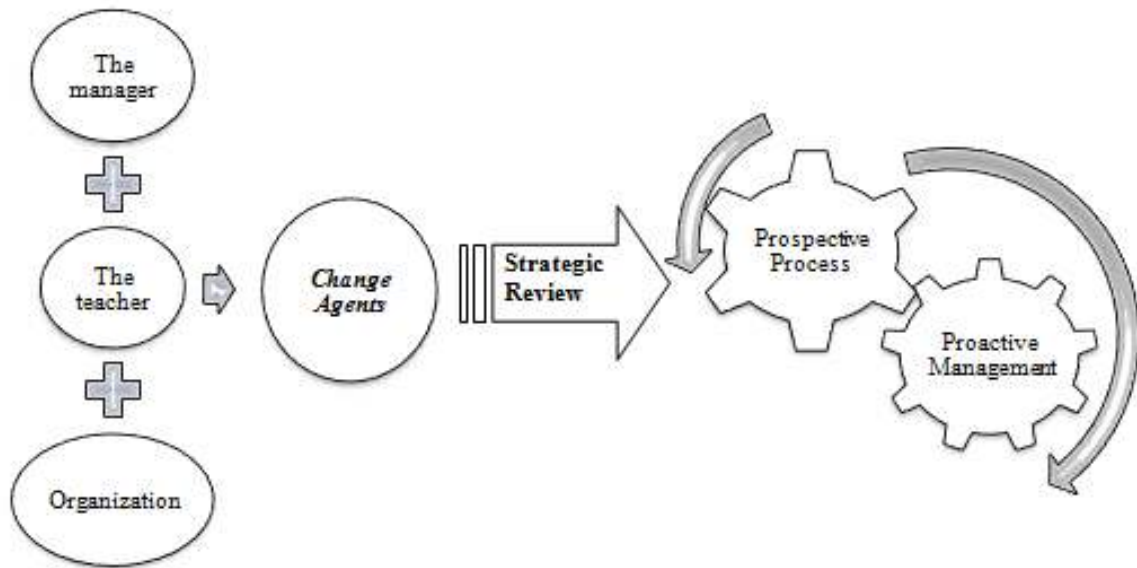
Two essential aspects are brought into question when we speak about the process of change. It is about the necessity of a diagnostic analysis that will be the support for the planning / designing and the effective realization of the change.

The results obtained from the diagnosis have relevance in creating a prognosis of the evolution of that organization. The diagnosis should concern the internal and external environment of the organization, two variables that can generate a situation of procedural crisis if too large imbalances in quality and efficiency of the organizational management occur, which most often face obstacles raised by the sphere of politics and deficient legislation (Figure no. 2).

The role of educational management is reconsidered at the social level. It is possible to speak of a double conditioning relationship between the social change and the managerial change. The individual's ability to respond convincingly to external challenges has its starting point in the way the organization connects its development strategies and the mission of the socially demanded needs. Without an understanding of the logic of social transformations, organizational management cannot restructure its educational offer because its performance needs to be socially validated. It should be emphasized that not always the social influences are beneficial, the organization having the task of operating a selection of them, without being limited to a passive and expectant behavior.

The educational organization operates according to its own logic of evolution, advancing only the changes that are in accordance with its own development needs (Figure no. 3).

Figure no. 3. Conceptual model of change design



Source: Authors' own concept based on the inflow and outflow of the management strategy

4. Findings

The company's evolution is affected by change, which aims to identify the agents of change (individuals, groups, organizations), these having the role of establishing the meaning of the changes. It is very important that the change of the educational management starts from an internal need of the school, not just a reflex act to the changes in the society. The change involves in each area several stages that consist in reaching the balance between all the factors involved in the process. And the process of educational change, like any other process, requires careful planning of the issues involved.

As a result, it is mandatory to carry out the diagnostic analysis of the need for change that can be requested by both the school organization and the direct and indirect beneficiaries. The analysis provides the support to establish the strategic objectives that are addressed to both individuals and the organization. The way of harmonizing the objectives is very important, imposing the finding of the common points involved in the change.

The teachers, the school manager and the school organization are the agents of change. The conceptual elements of education are represented by the contents that provide support for the achievement of the objectives. Their approach must be carried out in an interdisciplinary way with the possibility of intervening when the conditions require it. As in any process, a set of resources is involved, from the informational and material ones, to the experimental resources.

The strategies aim at either the instructional-educational process, in this situation being the rebalancing of the strategies of teaching in accordance with the modern requirements of education, but also the management strategies that refer to inter-institutional partnerships and projects. Prospective and pro-active abilities are the change result, offering the possibility for responding to the company's demands.

The technical progress represents the fundamental source of the change, initiating the transformation of the social and subsequently generating a new perspective of approach. However, the risks that can be achieved through an over-promotion of new technologies must be emphasized, as it is a depersonalization of the individual which leads to the limitation of creativity and the desire to get involved.

The demographic factor plays a very important role in producing change, and an interdependence between change and demographic growth can be established in that the promotion of change is determined by the intrinsic motivation.

The change in education refers to the reform process that the Romanian school is going through. Its effects on the organizational management process have been discussed for a long time and it is necessary to go through the types of changes promoted.

Each process or action is based on a set of laws, principles, rules or norms that have the value of procedures, ensuring the achievement of the proposed objectives and helping to guide the respective action.

The process of strategic change in educational management can be configured as an open, self-regulating process, containing elements in the inter-conditioning report, with the purpose of obtaining the proposed competences. In this context, it is necessary to ensure a normativity that will ensure the success, the principles of managerial change can be defined as standards that have the property to guide, carry out and evaluate the quality and size of the achieved change. Being quality standards and fundamental theses to the same extent, the principles act as indispensable factors in promoting managerial change, fulfilling some basic functions:

- Guidance, guides the manager's activity during the implementation of changes;
- Adjustment, representing a criterion in assessing the quality of change.

The principles represent the relationships during the process, expressing the essence of the action with a wide range of applicability. The essential features of the principles are derived from the characteristics of the change process and have a normative, dynamic, open and flexible, strategic and operational character. Although they seem compelling and rigid, their presence is required, regarding any process, being the result of the evolution of the society that asks individuals to manifest an independent and creative thinking in order to adapt to the new requirements.

5. Conclusions

The attitude towards education and the approach of the organizational management at national level require to be rapidly improved, being aspects that need to be changed, the compromises being not a solution.

Therefore, the educational policy must be a basic concern in the modern society, which by change is in a permanent search.

As the society is in a process of pretending, it is imperative that the organizational management is not confined to the old values, thus avoiding a retrograde image. The process of managerial change was marked during its unfolding of ambiguities and dysfunctions in an attempt to overcome the traditional limits of institutional reality. A management situation between tradition and modernity can lead to the emergence of valuable tensions, with the risk that the organization may lose its mark. At the same time, a clear delineation between the traditional and the modern cannot be made, considering that by change it is not desired to cancel the traditional but only to relocate to another foundation.

It should be emphasized that managerial changes prove their worth over time, through exercise, having a strong emotional burden. In promoting change, a major obstacle may be resistance to change, especially when it has not been sufficiently prepared before. In this situation, an internal support is needed at the organization level, not just external requirements. The changes cannot be made in a definitive way immediately, but only when a qualitative change has been registered in the level of managerial behaviors and attitudes.

Change in organizational management has a price that can be considered exorbitant. And yet, promoting it implies accepting the renunciation of old satisfactions and getting involved in finding the best solutions. There is the temptation of the organization to ask itself about the real possibilities it has to cope honorably with this development. There are no guarantees, but involvement by any means is preferable to disinterest and reluctant conservatism.

As a further development, it is desired to question some proactive managers, with a prospective vision for a reconsideration of the variables generating managerial crisis and the revision of strategies of resistance in the conditions of political pressures and of bad legislation.

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