



STAGES OF SCHOOL MANAGERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ETAPELE DEZVOLTĂRII PROFESIONALE A MANAGERILOR ȘCOLARI

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Rezumat: Dezvoltarea profesională a managerilor din domeniul educației parcurge diferite etape, în dependență de experiența anterioară, de personalitatea și de vârsta managerului. Articolul de față reflectă diverse abordări privind evoluția profesională a directorilor de școală, factor care determină, în esență, performanțele cadrelor didactice și, rezultatele elevilor.

Cuvinte-cheie: educație, manager școlar, dezvoltare profesională, management organizațional, necesități economice, necesități psihologice.

Choosing the job is a part of the professional career of managers. The term career which is common in daily language usually refers, as describes, to a wanted profession or to a person at the head of an organizational pyramid. Therefore understanding the career of staff management in an educational organization, it is important to understand the world of teachers and managers and their work at school. The professional career is dynamic and flexible according to environmental, personal and organizational factors. During their career the teachers experience changes in their needs, in their attitude to their profession and the organization. The professional development of teachers' career is also not linear and has its ups and downs or different courses for a certain person. [1], [3]. Beside this there are people that plan the stages they pass and influence in a way on their development sequence. It is common to assume that there are managers that arrive to management after they have professionally established and held positions at school.

They are very motivated and have a sense of mission and management is a natural continuation. On the other hand there are managers that arrive to management from the desire to escape from frustration and routine as teachers and management is a breakthrough for them.

According to the theory of choosing a position, candidates to a position are influenced by the position and organization characteristics. There are situations in which the candidate will tend to decide by objective factors like promotion, salary and benefits, and situations in which he will decide by subjective factors as a match between his psychological needs and personality patterns and the image of the organization. Others claim that a candidate is influenced by different factors on different occasions at the same time. Thus, management candidates are influenced by factors that match their economic needs, their psychological needs, especially the desire to improve education and the need to have informa-

tion about the job and the position concerning the time needed to fulfil it. In their research they found that women tend more to base their decision on subjective factors like their desire to be involved in leading teaching-learning processes [2].

There are many theories about the stages that the managers' experience, most of them describes three main stages: a meeting that include expectation and confrontation, adjustment, establishment and stabilization. Nevertheless, there are researchers that suggest a detailed model [4]: Formation – the early socialization is influenced by different factors that have designed the manager's personality. Joining – progress in the career and preparation to management. Conception – the management time from appointment to leaving. Further – leaving management. Nevertheless, it is important to remember, that managers begin at different stages, not all of them start at first stage, they develop in stages at different times and there is no unique factor that determines their development. Personality characteristics, previous connection between school and the manager, all take a role. Managers may be at more than one stage at a time.

Based on former models, it was built a more detailed model that shows the transfers on the way to leading [5]:

- Stage 0 – Preparation before leading. In their opinion, the formal training is important, but work experience as a vice manager is more significant to management.
- Stage 1 – Entrance and meeting (first month) - the first days and weeks are critical when the manager meets school reality. This

is the time when the managers start to develop a cognitive map of the situation's complexity, the people, the problems and school's culture.

- Stage 2 – Holding (3-12 months) – the new manager wants to take responsibility and starts to dispute obvious things at school. He develops deeper understanding and recognizes key subjects to determine priorities. This is also the "honey moon" period and the staff is more indulgent and open to changes. The period of time is changing and sometimes ends with a negative response of the staff to the manager's action.
- Stage 3 – Redesign (second year) – most of the managers are more confident. They learned the staff's strengths and weaknesses, the staff has learned to know him, and the expectations are more real. The term enables leading a significant change at school. This is a stage of significant changes.
- Stage 4 – Gentle (3-4 years) – Most of the structures at school changed and the changes have established. The manager has time to make changes in the curriculum.
- Stage 5 – Establishment and stabilization (5-7 years) – A period of legalization and exterior changes.
- Stage 6 – Plain (8 years and up) – Extraction, release from illusions. Some go to manage another school and go back to stage 1. Those who stay are less motivated but they still enjoy the job [7].

The attitude of career stages, as Oplatka describes, is based on the assumption that people advance through

a series of different stages during their career and that each stage is characterized by attitudes and behaviours, relationship patterns, development needs and unique work aspects [2]. The worker changes his attitudes to his work and his professional behaviour when he goes from one career stage to another. However, you can find several differentiated main stages in a school manager's career:

- The stage of entering the position – in which the new manager is going through a socialization process and deals with getting legalized by the staff, getting to know the organizational culture and more.
- The building stage – characterized by growing and enthu-

siasm. The manager feels that he controls the school.

- The middle of the career stage – the manager usually feels very little opportunities to grow.
- The loss of enthusiasm stage – usually before retirement. The manager feels trapped in his position.

In each organizational activity envelope the dilemma of the change renews compared to conservation and concern for stability. Every decision, especially concerning change and renewal opens for the organization a new chance but also exposes it to risk. Integration of the two axes (change – stability; chance – risk) can be used as a conceptual framework of four types of leadership and management.

Schematically the four basic styles will be:

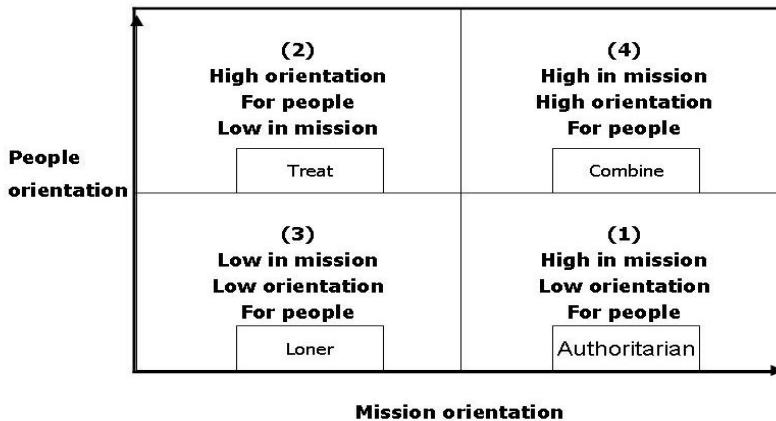


Figure no. 1

The Four orientations integrate in varying degrees both approaches, management and leadership, but at the same time create operating orientations themselves [2], [4]. **Challenging leadership** emphasizes first and foremost the creation of the vision of the school. This behavior focuses on expansion of the chance and it creates

all the time new challenges. Allowing leadership is an open and sensitive for casual options leadership, but it worries to reduce the risk. It doesn't see a change as a purpose, but relates to it as to an option. **Solving leadership** focuses on solving problems, on seeing the chance of the school, on coping with the problems rather than

ignoring or evading from them. Solving the problems will be directed toward maintaining the stability of the school and the relationships in it. Preserving leadership worries for the integrity of the school, reduces the risks that emerge and worries for stable work processes, for clarity, for normal labor relations, for a culture of collaboration and for relaxation [6], [7]. The distinction between the four types of leadership is of course conceptual. The reality is much more complex. In actuality there are no pure situations. The reality places the manager towards the need to make integrated decisions. Moreover, the future will be much more complex – there will be added paradoxes, dilemmas and crossing and contradictory administrative and educational processes that will set a new level of leadership challenges that we didn't habituate for it. These challenges will emerge from seven expected situations:

Autonomy without Monopoly:

The school is expected to receive a much more independent and important status in society, but simultaneously it is expected to lose its monopoly on knowledge and training. On the one hand, the school will be strengthened as an autonomous institution, but on the other hand it will lose the monopoly on providing knowledge.

Autonomy from Struggle for Legitimacy and Resources: Although the school is expected to be released to a great extent from the state frameworks and to gain greater autonomy, the weakening of the state casing that protects it from external pressures will require every school to be almost by itself in front of the crossing pressures

and to fight for its educational legitimacy for gaining resources.

Diversity of Specialization: The school will be required to gain more resources independently and will be compete with private and public factors, to study the market behavior and to react to it. This will expose the school to pressures: on the one hand it will be required to respond to diverse social demands, and on the other hand it will be exposed simultaneously to requirement for specialization – to provide the highest possible level in various fields.

Mass Technology and Individualized Teaching: The principle of variance in learning is the idea that different pupils need different learning processes, won't be changed with the entering of educational technology. Indeed the educational technology will enable to develop all – national, or even multi – national curricula from a wide variety of contents and levels, but there is no substitute for dialogical learning and for interpersonal and group discussion. The fear is that digital learning will be for the wide crowds and the dialogical learning will be for individuals with capability – analogical computer for poor people and dialogical learning – for rich people.

From Bureaucratic Authority to Leadership: The transition from bureaucratic authority to autonomy without monopoly with struggle for legitimacy requires the management of school based on bureaucratic – hierarchical legitimacy to management based on leadership and professional power.

From Proper Management to Professional Ethics: The transition from bureaucratic management to professional leadership is a transition

from activity that justifies itself through proper management and fulfilling of the standards for the activity that

justifies itself by taking personal responsibility and behavior according to ethical and professional codes [1], [3].

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