

THE INFLUENCES OF ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TRANSFORMATIONS ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Professor Ph.D. MUSCALU EMANOIL ,
„LUCIAN BLAGA” UNIVERSITY OF SIBIU, ROMÂNIA
emanoil.muscalu@ulbsibiu.ro

Abstract.

The educational system operates in an increasingly globalized environment, constantly changing and characterized by increasing competition to attract talent, as well as by the emergence of new applications. The appreciation of knowledge in the world is seen as an opportunity, but also a major challenge, especially for Romanian educational system which has seen many changes in the last years and its inability to attract talented people to work in the educational system.

Keywords.

Human resources, human resources administration, educational transformations, school management.

Introduction.

Romania's education system offers an impressive public service and is engaged in a profound change in order to improve the quality of teaching. The Ministry of national education has initiated important changes in all sectors of the educational system and has taken significant steps towards institutional and legislative reform, such as: setting up the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the creation of National Review etc. The Ministry has created methodologies, regulations and rules that will provide the framework for the implementation of new laws for the national education.

A major change must be made on the defining elements: organizational culture of each school and the attitude towards lifelong learning and in all situations that arise and the attitude to learning and change, among students, teachers and parents. Rethinking communication for teaching emphasizing learning collaborative, cooperative, encouraging the expression of personal ideas, valuing differences in a constructive perspective and opinion.

By reporting to the general trends of development of education at an European level and at international standards, the dynamics and the needs arising from the knowledge society and information, the aims of the educational system are necessary to identify a set of priorities, at a staff level (teachers) such as: the reconsideration of initial and lifelong learning and preparation, supporting integrated programs for mobility of teachers and conversion to other activities, efficient use of all data about groups of students for the continuous improvement of results; formation and development of technical skills in using creatively and complex digital sources of information in the educational process, research capacity development, testing to maximize the benefits of learning, creating a high level of motivation of teachers, the operation of a new system for evaluating teachers.

Elements of educational reform

In education, the terms **systemic reform** or *systemic improvement* are widely and commonly used by educators, reformers, and others. While education reforms often target specific elements or components of an **education system**—such as what students learn or how teachers teach—the concept of systemic reform may be used in reference to (1) reforms that impact multiple levels of the education system, such as elementary, middle, and high school programs; (2) reforms that aspire to make changes throughout a defined system, such as district-wide or statewide reforms; (3) reforms that are intended to influence, in minor or significant ways, every student and staff member in school or system; or (4) reforms that may vary widely in design and purpose, but that nevertheless reflect a consistent educational philosophy or that are aimed at achieving common objectives.¹

The term **education system** generally refers to public schooling, not private schooling, and more commonly to kindergarten through high school programs. Schools or school districts are typically the smallest recognized form of “education system” and countries are the largest.

Simply put, an education system comprises everything that goes into educating public-school students at the federal, state, or community levels:

- Laws, policies, and regulations;
- Public funding, resource allocations, and procedures for determining funding levels;

¹ The Glossary of Educational Reform, 2015

- State and district administrative offices, school facilities, and transportation vehicles;
- Human resources, staffing, contracts, compensation, and employee benefits;
- Books, computers, teaching resources, and other learning materials;
- And, of course, countless other contributing elements.

While the term education system is widely and frequently used in news media and public discourse, it may be difficult to determine precisely what the term is referring to when it is used without qualification, specific examples, or additional explanation.

Like the teaching profession, education systems are, by nature, extremely complex and multifaceted, and the challenges entailed in reforming or improving them can be similarly complex and multifaceted. Even reforms that appear to be straightforward, simple, or easily achieved may, in practice, require complicated state-policy changes, union-contract negotiations, school-schedule modifications, or countless other conditions.

Given its widespread use and universal familiarity, the term education system can fall prey to what psychologists call the “illusion of knowledge”—or the tendency for people to think they have a better understanding of something than they actually do. For example, most people would say they understand what a teacher is and does, yet—if pressed—many people would not be able to explain precisely what people need to do to become certified as teachers, how state policies and requirements may dictate or influence what teachers teach in a course, what specific instructional methods are commonly used by teachers and which seem to work best, how educational research informs new instructional approaches, or how certain kinds of professional development can improve teaching effectiveness in a school, among many other things. When investigating or reporting on education reforms, it may be useful to look for more concrete, understandable, and relatable ways to describe abstract concepts such as education system.²

A new strategic plan for schools.

The reality of the educational system and vocational training from Romania resulted in a new approach to the reform of Romanian education in a strategy consisting of educational policy aims:

- systemic reform-aimed at all components with a focus on quality, equity, efficiency;
- reform continues, with capitalization of the results obtained so far and the stability necessary for the objectives of the proposed educational by 2018;
- reform assumed-empowering strategic partners and by assuming national programmes for the development of the educational system and vocational training by 2018.

To achieve this, the educational reforms need to focus on the following coordinates, essential for the educational reform:

A. The design and organization of the curriculum:

- schooling in certain professions/specialties interest locally, nationally and even internationally;
- smart and effective development of the segment of the curriculum of the school so that students can build on individual routes, in accordance with their interests and personal skills;
- consultation of the social partners of (students, parents, community) to synchronize with the present reality curricular strategy and for the anticipation of predictable developments;
- the evaluation of the results and sequential, permanent collection of real signals of the system with the purpose of corrections necessary progress;

B. Human resources management:

- continuous improvement of all categories of personnel in order to achieve and maintain the superior performance;
- all staff loyalty and brand objectives for the institutions;
- the development of superior competence and motivation competition;
- the use of balanced and carefully orchestrated system of rewards and sanctions in such a way that they become a lever to help achieve the objectives proposed;
- effective resolution in the interests of students and the school principal, crises and conflicts;

C. Material and financial resources management:

- efficient use of the facilities of existing materials and finding solutions for the continued development of material base;

² Definition of educational reform – The Glossary of Education Reform

- increased financial autonomy through programmes and projects geared towards the realization of own incomes;
- developing specific strategies to attract sponsors to the school;

D. Marketing strategy:

- placing all activities of the school under the sign of the need to promote the school's brand in the best possible position on the educational market
- development of continuous campaigns explaining, importance and technical education prospects in the light of Romania's accession to the EU;
- the development of productive activities and crafts and placement of quality products, made by students, the real market;
- establishing domestic and international partnerships.

E. Management of community relations and partnerships:

- strengthening relations with traditional partners from outside the school community (City Hall, Local Council, police, non-governmental organizations and institutions of the State);
- reinforce and develop relations of cooperation with economic operators which provide carrying out of practical training of students;
- detecting and using the most effective ways of collaboration with the ability of the State educational institutions;
- initiation of cooperative relations between the school and new partners that would be willing to support the work of the school.

Obstacles in achieving an efficient educational reform

A big obstacle in the process of the educational reform is the insufficient number of well-trained personnel. Preparation is required at all levels, from teachers to principals, teacher councils, ministerial offices to introduce norms and values associated with quality in the educational system skills like planning, assessment and decision. Private consultants could prepare teachers and principals and could provide the professional development of teachers. The Ministry of National education should be able to rebuild the capacity of preparing and supporting democracy in the period of reform and could ensure sustainable levels of national resources for improving quality of education and management of equipment in particular.

Those who advocate centralization, argue that decentralization would accentuate the disparities between schools and regions and would affect educational opportunities. In Romania, however, more than half of the romanian schools (in some of the rural areas) do not provide basic education because of lack of basic teaching materials. Just like centralized and other organizations, the specific needs of the individual are not satisfied. There are no specific programmes for disadvantaged areas, for gifted students or less gifted ones; the system has a tendency to make differentiations on the basis of social and intellectual environment rather than based on level of training.

The new technologies – professional development for human resources in the education system

Today, training methods drive more innovative strategies to make every hour a way to access the methods and tools of knowledge. Most of the time, teachers are forced to turn to training courses to learn what is innovative and to adapt to the specific taught material. Partnership networks are a solution for achieving the training of teachers, and these networks can sustain an informational base. The new technologies can contribute to the professional development of teachers and make possible the results to be the most interesting.

Thus, information and communication technologies are the basic tools and the information society becomes a real one. Adaptation involves changing the way of thinking in order to adapt to the new requirements. Continuous professional development of teaching staff should be viewed from two perspectives: *improving training methods for the development of vocational training* and *the adaptation to the new requirements of the generation of students*.

From the first perspective, the continuing training of teachers represents an activity with pedagogical and social content designed, made and developed within the education system, with the managerial function of adjustment, auto-adjust to the continuous educational process at all its levels, from structural and functional reference, to the operationa part. This training is required for each teacher to improve methods they apply to teaching in the classroom. From the second perspective, every teacher must make teaching as understood by the younger generation, as well as more attractive and closer to the practice of application of theory. The young generation of today is more pragmatic and more oriented to the concrete and, thus, every one of us ought to be aware of the need for learning and the discovery of applications in everyday life to theoretical notions. And we cannot do these things without a substantial training of our teaching staff in a language known to them and used daily. Teachers' professional development must be a priority for all decision makers so that all students receive a good training and with acces to the latest technology.

Unfortunately, the situation in Romania does not seem to be the best when it comes to people's ability to use a computer. According to the last report of the National Institute of Statistics on tis subject, aproximately 60% of the

population does not have any computer skills and the remaining 40% have different levels of competency, with no more than 8% with high skills.

	2006	2007	2009	2011	2012
people without any computer skills	72	71	64	61	65
people with low computer skills	13	14	17	15	14
people with medium computer skills	10	10	10	14	13
people with high computer skills	5	5	9	10	8

Figure no.1: Percentages of people with computer skills in Romania (%)

Source: Romanian National Institute of Statistics

The continuing training of teachers in the use of new technologies, can bring only benefits to their students. Their use in teaching the classroom leads to a much better understanding of concepts taught and applied into practical life. The ability to view some demos on the computer, use the multimedia presentation tools (PC, Internet, DVD Player) lead to a more thorough understanding of concepts, an understanding of their integrated and interdisciplinary approaches is encouraged. Thus, the teacher's education should be for the purpose of addressing the matter on an interdisciplinary level and for the sole purpose of sending the pupil as prepared as possible for the real life, with an understanding of various meanings from the perspective of several disciplines. And the new technologies can be a real support in the implementation of such training.

Conclusion

Today, more than ever, we are witnessing a process of rethinking the educational systems throughout the world. The reform in education should start from the idea that the educational system needs to be a result of the synergy between management and technology. Educational performance is definitely influenced by the management style and the Government expenditure for education.

The first aspect is the one that proves to be the most important since it provides the framework for being efficient, but in the same time it consists of a high level of planning, taking into account all the following aspects: *the design and organization of the curriculum, human resources management, material and financial resources management, marketing strategy and the management of community relations and partnerships.*

All of the above mentioned aspects are to be treated in regard with one another because they are highly interconnected. For example, an improvement in the curriculum should be made according to the market needs and the partnership between the education institutions and the business environment and would be insufficient without a change in terms of teaching staff training.

The reform of the Romanian educational system is a very complex matter, but with a consistent managerial effort, the result will have long lasting and will lead to an increase in the overall wellbeing of all the nation's population.

References

- Andrei, T., Teodorescu, D., Oancea, B., (2010), *Characteristics of higher education in Romania during transition*, Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, Vol.2 issue 2.
- Andrei, T., Lefter, V., Oancea, B., Stancu, S. (2010), „*A Comparative Study of Some Features of Higher Education in Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary*”, Romanian Journal of Economic Forecasting, 2010, volume 13 issue 2.
- Curriculum pentru învățământul preșcolar. (2009). Didactica Publishing House, București
- Ghergut Alois, *Management general si strategii in educatie* – (2007) – Ed. Polirom.
- Noveanu E, D. Potolea – (ed). , *Stiintele educatiei. Dictionar enciclopedic*, vol.I, II (2007; 2008) – Ed. Sigma.
- Teodorescu, D, Andrei, T. (2009) „*Faculty and Peer Influences on Academic Integrity: College Cheating in Romania*”, Higher Education, Springer, 57(3).
- Institutul Național de Statistică, Management of community relations and partnerships www.insse.ro/cms/files/Web_IDD_BD_ro/index.htm