

## **Educational Management: Science or Art?**

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**ABSTRACT:** At the present time, it is increasingly accepted that science is a systematic knowledge of the world that begins by observing and collecting data and continuing on the basis of accumulated experiences. An effective management will give life to theories by putting them into practice by knowing the specifics of the field of activity and its context. The cumulative organization of knowledge and experience has led to the origination and strengthening of science.

A collection of figures, however, is not sufficient to say that a particular leader is conducting a scientific activity or that he masters the art of driving. There are people who know a lot of things, but when they relate to their peers, they do not have the art of communicating the principles learned from the study and the experience.

Science begins in practice, but practice cannot ignore science. This article will highlight the fact that educational management is both science and art. It is emphasized that the effective development of the educational process must take into account both the scientific aspect and the art aspect.

**KEYWORDS:** management, education, science, art, leadership.

By management as a science it is meant to study the management process in order to systematize and generalize concepts, laws, principles, rules, design of new systems, methods and techniques that contribute to increasing the efficiency of the activities carried out for the achievement of certain objectives. Management is also considered as an art, as besides specialized knowledge, the manager also needs the talent to put

into practice the accumulated knowledge, to adapt the systems, methods, management techniques to the concrete conditions of the driven objective. “The art of management is not the opposite of management science, but rather, it reflects the highest level of affirmation of the science of leadership in education”. (Cerchez and Mateescu 1995, 18)

From the appearance of writing to the development of the first orientations and managerial schools, various methods, techniques, concepts, principles that were later found in management science were invented and applied. By management as a science it is meant to study the management process in order to organize and generalize concepts, laws, principles, rules, design of new systems, methods and techniques that contribute to increasing the efficiency of the activities carried out for the achievement of objectives. The School of Scientific or Classical Management has laid the foundations for managerial science, but has also been criticized for its authoritarianism, formalism and mechanism, because it has ignored the role of the human factor in the organization. Speaking about the educational management: science or art, Elena Joita (2000, 22) underlined the following aspects: “From the very definition of education as an activity, a system of actions of training-development of the educated personality, of conscious influence, oriented and regulated to certain finality, an explicit approach to conceiving, organizing, coordinating, evaluating, and continually optimizing the elements of the educational process. It is even the field of study of educational management, seen as both theory and practice as science and art”.

On its way to conquer a scientific status, management has defined a number of general concepts with which it operates: systems, objectives, resources, processes, optimization, autonomy, adaptability, organization, plan, inclusion, verification, decision, and control.

In the specialized literature, a distinction is made between:

- ✦ Managerial science defined as the activity of management scientists;
- ✦ Scientific management defined as the practice of leadership according to certain principles, by means of general methods and techniques whose use ensures the efficient use of human, material, financial resources.

Corneliu Russu defines management as “the science of the leadership of socioeconomic organizations and their scientific leadership” having three meanings:

- ✦ science, as an organized and coherent set of concepts, principles, methods, techniques, explaining the phenomena and processes in the management of the organizations;
- ✦ art, as manager’s talent to put into practice all the knowledge to solve the problems;

- ✦ a state of mind reflected in a certain way of seeing, seeking, seeking and accepting progress (Russu 1991, 11).

Today there are a number of criteria that allow the recognition of a set of knowledge as defining a science. A first criterion is the possibility of measurement. Thus, it is sufficient to think that the objectives set by the exercise of the management foresight function can and must be measured, dimensioned to accept the introduction of consistency, rigidity and structure in the field of management. A collection of figures is not, however, sufficient to say that a particular leader is conducting a scientific activity. Science begins in practice by observing and collecting data with the fundamental purpose of discovering laws, principles, new structures of facts and processes. Explanation of the facts by hypotheses, which, after repeated tests, have resisted in time by obtaining the status of laws, is another criterion for recognizing the knowledge of management as a science.

Analyzing the evolution of management as an art, until the beginning of the twentieth century, we can observe both the avant-garde ideas that have been maintained so far as well as the retrograde or even absurd ideas, which have been gradually refuted by the practice and the management theory. The first category can be emphasized: planning, organization, leadership, honesty, responsibility, interpersonal relationships, leadership characteristics, group work rules, citizens' rights and freedoms, etc. Speaking of managerial art in education Mihuleac highlights that this is characterized in the literature by the following:

- ✦ Aligns management in a certain manner, mentoring to achieve the goals;
- ✦ Values the manager's experience and psychological traits;
- ✦ Highlights the role of motivation, of the climate according to the efficient activity;
- ✦ Show "know how to do" to get a practical result, like skill, vocation, intuition, along with knowledge, intelligence, affectivity;
- ✦ It consists precisely in the connection of science with practical experience, which materializes in the ability to work with people, to work through and with people;
- ✦ It means creating a favorable environment in the organized group, favoring cooperation and stimulation, working with the variety of individual, group reactions;
- ✦ Values certain features of the manager: intuition, flair, ability to decide, ease of human contact, desire to be effective, curiosity, conscientiousness, adaptability, ability to cope, inspiration, the ability to achieve group engagement, honesty, objectivity, operability, efficient contour style of activity;

- ✦ Assume the flexibility of the manager's behavior after the concrete situation, the subjective peculiarities, the chance circumstances to overcome or to use them adequately;
- ✦ The ability to move from laws and principles to norms and rules of practice, under varying concrete conditions, with balance between objective and subjective;
- ✦ It is based on scientific knowledge, but it also uses personal style. Here three categories of opinions: one refuses to recognize the scientific bases of management and admits only empirical-practical ones; another recognizes the two sides - science and art, and the third holds that gradually science will replace managerial art;
- ✦ How much science and how much art depends on the concrete situation, one leaning on the other and together effectively solving objectives (Mihuleac 1994, 52-61).

As far as the relation between science and art is concerned, referring to leadership, opinions have been structured in three directions:

- ✦ leadership is not an art, it is science because it has an object of study, principles, methodology;
- ✦ leadership entails not only a scientific dimension but also an art dimension. The dimension of art refers to the individuality of managers, intuition, experience, skill, courage, and so on.
- ✦ leadership is science and art, but as information becomes systematized, science will replace art (Popescu 1973, 159).

It can, therefore, be said that educational management has a dual dimension: science and art. Thus, the field of science could be represented by the principles and methods used, and the art one, the individuality of the education managers, the intuition, the experience, the skill, the courage and the way of their activity.

Educational management is an art because, in addition to the science that is so necessary, the power of adaptability to changing situations is generally needed, due to the actions of other people.

At the same time, educational management is a science, because decision-making is based not only on models built on personal experiences or personality traits but also on rational, scientific models. When decision-making is characterized by the existence of data, information and knowledge that reduce uncertainty to an insignificant level, decisions can be made using already learned and tested scientific models, and this minimizes the risk of mistaken decisions.

The approach of management as art thus presumes the adaptation and transposition of the principles, methods and techniques of work to the concrete conditions of the organization.

As a science, management indicates, as a rule, how to act to meet established standards. If the field of science is the principles and methods - then the art is given by the personality of the managers, their intuition, their experience and their understanding, their courage. Educational management thus becomes an explicit integrative conception, but also a way of action oriented towards educational success. According to V. V. Popescu the science and art of leadership in education are two complementary aspects, therefore:

- ✦ The essence of leadership is science, and its application is related to art (the individuality of leaders, experience, intuition, living, skill, attitude, communication, mode of action, solution differentiation, and adaptation to situations).
- ✦ The development of science leads to an increase in the degree of abstraction, in rationality, but the art of leadership consists in making the most efficient use of science in the current activity, by the valorizing leader.
- ✦ For a leader, science (terms, statements, norms, methods) is not an end in itself, but a means for resolving specific problems.
- ✦ Science elaborates action strategies, but in any situation, there is a multitude of possible strategies. And the necessary choice is given by personal style, by way of operating with science, creativity, mastery.
- ✦ Science cannot progress without the personality of the lead, and art cannot manifest itself effectively without the scientific knowledge of the leadership (Popescu 1973, 158-163).

In viewing the above, some essential aspects of the management of education, as a scientific discipline, highlighted by Elena Joita as follows:

- ✦ It presents a complex of actions designed and carried out in order to ensure the optimal functioning, with maximum efficiency of the educational system;
- ✦ In order to achieve the established goals, the most efficient use of the potential of educators, educators, as well as other resources;
- ✦ Structures the issues of education, the elements of the process, the factors according to the criteria of effectiveness, the particularities of the collectivity;
- ✦ It is a participatory management due to the inherent human nature of educational activity, such as organization, deployment, evaluation, finalization;

- ✦ Has principles, content, methodology, criteria adapted or specifically designed beyond the interdisciplinary determination;
- ✦ It specifies the general theoretical and methodological conditions, after which can be developed strategies, concrete managerial programs;
- ✦ Admits dynamism in consolidating its theoretical bases and in building strategic models in finding new applications in the field;
- ✦ It is integrative because it uses data, concepts, models, methodologies from related and own domains, which it synthesizes specifically;
- ✦ It is prospective because it anticipates strategies, methodologies, programs, projects, specific norms from the analysis of the evolution directions of the educational system;
- ✦ It is indicative-instrumental because it shows how objectives should be achieved by observing principles, methods, criteria, resources;
- ✦ It is multifunctional, through the description, use, application of several roles, tasks, application operations;
- ✦ In practical terms, it may be the sign of normality, efficacy, and applicability to solving concrete educational situations, to overcome empiricism, and to assert the rationality, creativity of the educator (Joita 2000, 27).

“In contemporary management contextual (situational) approaches are dominant from the late 60s to the present. They have developed from systemic theories. The contextual (situational) management approach recognizes that there is not only one correct way to drive and that a proper driving style depends on the requirements of the situation concrete.” Therefore, it can be said that there is no good or bad managerial style by definition but only managerial style appropriate or inappropriate to the concrete situation (Iosifescu 2001, 39).

A good manager will, therefore, use both management science and art. The use of science and art in educational management is beneficial because it acts as a motivating force for achieving the goals and objectives proposed.

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