

# Management of the Educational Team in the Context of Current Changes

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**ABSTRACT:** Acting in the name of a quality education means, first of all, knowing how to communicate and collaborate with others. Often, the dysfunctions in the education process, both interface and depth, are caused by insufficient training of a team management, but also by the inefficiency of team dynamics. All these aspects send us to the complexity of the collective factors, and those who know how to intervene in such contexts do not seem to be numerous. The article aims to address the dynamics of educational teams following three main levers: optimizing communication and collaboration relations initiated by the manager to educational factors, optimizing communication and collaboration relations initiated by the educational public to managers and optimizing communication relations between educational factors, especially between teachers and beneficiaries of education - students. Thus, possible blockages are specified that may occur in the process of effective communication and collaboration in education, as well as a number of suggested actions in order to help unblock these blockages and streamline the collaboration process.

**KEYWORDS:** team management, educational organization, communication fluency, educational audience

## **Introduction**

That is why the purpose of team management in school organizations is to support the development of the collective performance of the team of teachers in a continuous and measurable way, so that the operational result of the whole team exceeds the amount of potential of each member. The homogenization of the work team and the increase of the cohesion of the work group by integrating all members, the exchange of specialized information between the team members that meet the characteristics of topicality, usefulness and performance, thus encouraging and facilitating the achievement of an optimal team cooperation, is essential for each school organization.

This desideratum can contribute substantially to the awareness of conflicting behaviors, to the development of proper strategies that are able to reduce conflict and time waste share in the work environment, to the acquisition of new work skills (time management, conflict management) in order to optimize the organizational climate. There are, as far as we are concerned, three main levels through which the group cohesion can be strengthened: the optimization of the manager-subordinate relationship, the optimization of the subordinate-manager relationship and the professionalization of the friendship effort of all educational factors.

## **Optimizing the manager-subordinate relationship**

We are in the 21st century. Somehow, all bets are made, the dice have been rolled. We cannot go back, we have to reinvent ourselves. The competition dictates the rules. High Leadership ruling from above has become or will become obsolete. The new leadership seems to be based on the femininity of improvisation, inspiration, design, brand, experiences to the detriment of the individualized attributes of a single product or service, and not so much on a single product, but on a whole sphere of services to highlight the product. Something extra. Something more. There is talk about "packages" of services, even salary "packages". A team of functionality rather than an individualistic functioning.

The controlled order no longer satisfies the exigencies of the current flexible market. We have always sought shelter and shadow in the phantom of a leader who has all the answers, who promises

change, success, profit in exchange for our obedience, but we live in an era of unleashed forces in which any promise becomes obsolete. When the river comes out and breaks the ice, the only option is not the boat, but jumping from one ice floe to another. Initiative and creativity become values, and leadership must become open, perpetually innovative and optimistic. Not the boot, but the constant encouragement. Not the success, but the mistakes give life and colour. You can no longer nest in the comfort of permanence. Once you have built your comfort, you have to get out of the donut to look for another form of survival. From the worm to the butterfly. A permanent metamorphosis. I read in an article that excellent school organizations have a duty to transform people. How fake! No one transforms the other.

The school, at best, creates and offers opportunities for its students, encourages them to use their latent talents in order to seek for, to take advantage of, to embrace possible or existing opportunities. To know what to grab and to be prepared to go for it. The school, like the leader, does not transform people, but builds a context in which the journey on the river of perpetual change and mutual discovery is possible. Is the school preparing you for what? That there is no harbour in this struggle for survival. You never take a break to breathe. And, once you reach a goal, a target, another target appears in the distance. You won a battle today, but you can take the shot tomorrow. So that, in order to optimize the manager-subordinate relationship, we suggest the following development directions: developing managers' skills such as active listening, giving feedback, proactive attitude skills. Identifying non-routine strategies to help problem-solving situations are also a benefit of team cooperation process. A good manager knows his people, knows what motivates them, gives them the right development path, monitors development paths to remove potential stagnation or obstacles, gives feedback and encouragement, but more than all that together, the good manager must focus on the discovery, definition and optimization of the coagulation, polarity and circularity flow within his organization, as well as on the collective modes of operation. A fine psychologist doubled by a rigorous administrator.

What would be the necessary approach strategies that determine the group growing up process until reaching the team stage that would function as a vehicle with exceptional performance, but also as a crucible of individual and collective development? What exactly needs to be done? Focused on the mission of supporting the cultural growing up of a collective education system, the management of the team in school organizations must, in our opinion, focus primarily on the development of the individual and collective performance, autonomy and responsibility. How can this process of growing up be quantified?

The success of the maturation approach can be quantified by the success of the ensemble, based on precise operational and financial indicators, defined in advance, proposes a questionnaire to evaluate the degree of efficiency of the managerial style of the director which provides an example of quantifying the maturation of management with the help of precise indicators (Jinga 1993, 195-196). We consider that not the quantification, but the need for a constancy of the maturation approach would be the gain worthy of hunting here.

Therefore, in practice, in order to achieve these objectives, it would be desirable for team management to pursue mainly the development of interfaces between the occupations and missions of members and the environment, for example an inter flexibilization, a harmonization of internal, individual and external powers. It should be known that precisely in this complex of circumstances, in these internal and external interfaces there is the place where the most important deposit of collective potential lies, as well as the means necessary for cooperation.

### **Optimizing the subordinate-manager relationship**

In Romania, almost 500,000 people work in the field of education. This figure has placed, in the last 6 years, the education sector on the second place after the retail trade in terms of the number of employees. This large number of employees is associated in groups (groups of teachers, groups of department heads, groups of managers, groups of administrative staff, etc.), which groups weave a system of variables on whose proper functioning depends the very existence of the school

organization. However, education consists not so much in this large number of employees, but in its strength of educability, of promoting social evolution, in its power of a creator of change, creator of any professional deontology under the sun, creator of spiritual value, of self-government promoting force without which no country and no individual can evolve spiritually. However, Romanian education has become the target of virulent attacks by contemporary society as a whole. These frustrations raise the question: are these attacks deserved or chaotic, undifferentiated, manipulative? Is a change needed? If so, where do we start?

The changes, both positive and negative, both initiated by the government and required by students, teachers or parents to regulate the situation, seem to be based on the docimological axis of change, focusing on norms, rules, evaluations. It was insisted on the decentralization of the teaching authority and on ensuring as many centers of power as possible in the interest of affirming the student's individual personality. Necessary, logical, coherent steps. But we want to consider the teacher as the main actor of the school organization and we want to present him in this paper as a relational man, located in an organizational social context, interacting not only with others but also with the cultural and ideological environment in which he/she is circumscribed.

A well-trained teacher is, first of all, a team man/woman. And if the teacher promotes the crucible values of the team, then a whole generation will form in this spirit, will know, learn, internalize the values and requirements of cooperation and, being in a team, will mature both socially and professionally. We cannot offer the student the best of whatever we have without doing the same thing at the same time for his/her teacher.

On the contrary, the most beautiful gift that this society can give both to its children and to its own future, is a prolific way of teaching. I have often noticed that certain groups of teachers, despite their professionalism and seriousness, do not adapt well to the demands of teamwork. Much has been written about the team, either because the team seems to be a guarantee of success or because in our great human need for a team in both personal and professional life, we feel his lack, the sunset, the fatigue and then we look nostalgically to save something. But you must first understand who you are in order to know what it takes to make changes and only then should you draw the directional functions, the steps, the stages. That is why we have also tried to focus on blockages in order to better understand the unlocking mechanisms. We emphasized the fluidity of change at every opportunity, trying to look at the team as a living, moving organism, and that is why we avoided whole lists of types of groups (how many types?), roles (how many ways?) considering that groups, teams, roles have the right to be as many ways as they want. What really matters is whether it works now and here and, if it works, what have they done for it? What a good team actually means is hard to explain in words because it involves a complex of factors, but we have all felt the miraculous effects of belonging to a real team at least once in a lifetime, at least for 5 minutes.

A paradox of the circumstances the team of teachers usually complain of is the surprise that, in spite of the fact that we all want teachers behave as basic people of the team, we do everything in our power to sabotage it (see the behavior of the political parties, the media negative coverage, funds lacking, a.s.o.). And that discrepancy between the discourse and its means creates blockages. We do not hold the absolute truth, nor do we claim it. We only try a certain logical exercise that starts from the causes, emphasizes the effects, but especially looks for solutions and measures.

*a) Blockage 1: Bureaucratization and excessive computerization.*

First of all, we choose bureaucracy as a peculiarity of the contemporary school organization. Probably, feeling threatened and judged, pressured from inside and outside, troubled and dissolved by awkward questions, the system seeks to protect itself. The teacher has to draw up plans, lesson plans, activity reports, tables with students who participate or not in (extra) curricular activities with broad multidisciplinary/transdisciplinary/interdisciplinary spectrum, tables with the presence or absence of students in class, intellectual progress charts, minutes, quantitative and qualitative interpretations, tests. This bureaucracy seems to overwhelm, to worry. Springing from fear, it causes fear. We can talk about a paper professor and a department professor. In turn, teachers, more or less instinctively, transfer this information to their students. Thus, there are multiple competitive textbooks, bushy auxiliaries, progress sheets, evaluation sheets, independent topics, projects. This is while most

teachers mourn the apathy of students who “waste their time in front of the computer, TV, mobile phone and do not learn.” The effect of excessive bureaucratization and computerization? A lack of communication, a superficial communication, as precise as possible, a broken relationship, a lapidary transmission of information. The solution: compiling a list of mandatory documents that a teacher is obliged to present, but without unnecessarily overloading it.

*b) Media lack of professionalism in addressing the school organization problems*

The teacher’s discourse in the contemporary school organization becomes cumbersome, obsolete, tangled, lacking in consistency and constancy, often difficult to follow. That is why his voice seems weak in the aforementioned competitive information concert. Mass-media’s “Big Brother” takes advantage of this situation, and seems to catch all the school organizations on the wrong foot, without any differentiation. The more serious mass-media’s attacks seem to be, the more surprised and unprepared the school organizations seem to be, without a PR specialist or a spokesperson to present their coverage.

The unconvincing, eminently verbal, and often sublime, but utterly absent speech of a single blamed school organization does not only lose the battle to the well-packaged image, to the picturesque detail that sells the picture to the media, but it also conveys the anathema to all school organizations. The Romanian media, for example, broadcasts shows about second grade teachers at the tenure exams, teachers with sexual inclinations, teachers beaten by students or beating students. Teachers who train children for the school Olympics exams are content—at best—with an article in a local newspaper. Unfortunately, those best prepared teachers do not constitute sensational news and do not sell to the public the credibility that any teacher needs in order to form a team with his student, his parents and the community to which he/she belongs. The effect of the lack of professionalism of the media in addressing the problems of the school organization?

As our students learn, together with their parents and the entire population of Romania, that the entire education system in this country is compromised, they become detached from the system, accusing school organizations of failing the results of the baccalaureate and national evaluation exams. The idea of the team itself seems a distant desideratum when the members of the so-called team are preoccupied with pointing the finger, blaming, instead of building trust, exemplary, professionalism. Giovanni Sartori notes another aspect of the ubiquity of the media: “The big picture is therefore the following: while reality is complicated and complexities increase rapidly, minds are simplified and we know we have shaped a video-child who does not mature, an adult who remains for a lifetime as a man fallen into the mind of a child. And this is the dead end, the worst of all, in which we struggle” (Sartori 2006, 104).

Solutions? First of all, it is imperative to have a closer, fairer and more dignified partnership with the media, which should have less restrictive access to information, teachers, activities of the school organization in order to understand almost the whole complexity of the problems in the contemporary school system that lies at the crossroads of winds. The endless baccalaureate controversy - with or without a camera, with or without exams/grades throughout the pandemic period, teachers in love with their students, insulting positions of angry mothers because the school organization decided to impose the wearing of school uniforms on students, thus “depriving” children of the possibility of displaying branded clothes are only a few episodes of sad memory that have destroyed the image of all school organizations. We want to emphasize: not mentioning the situation does no good to the school organization image either, but the lack of professional ethics in mass-media’s approach when, intentionally or not, the discourse is meant to mislead by omitting most of the factors, the causes that lead to certain effects, is devastating. Thus, we consider that the failure of the baccalaureate exam in recent years is not exclusively due to the presence of the surveillance cameras in the classrooms, but to the fact that many oral tests were no longer considered necessary, depriving students of possible beautiful grades to “round-up” the final mark. Subjects in written mathematics had a higher degree of difficulty. The subjects written in Romanian language “benefited” from inaccuracies in expression (see the difference between “drama” versus “text with dramatic elements”), thus misleading students into choosing an inappropriate representative writer.

We live in a society of shallow media forms where the image reigns supreme, being shaped, in most of the cases, by adding laudatory details in their own interest while demolishing the image of the opponent. Perhaps it would be desirable for teachers to learn to counteract the persuasive virulence of the media, to learn to reinforce a positive image, to learn to brag, to learn how to become credible. We live in a society where it is difficult for us to choose the right detergent brand from a wide array of other detergent brands displayed on endless shelves. The more we have to choose, the more the requirements regarding the school organization that will shape the character of our own child will increase. However, not having enough time to analyse, we will choose the most attractive image. I propose the following exercise: to analyse the sites that promote the image of our/your school organizations. You will notice easily and immediately that the lack of a department or of a PR specialist speaks for itself. In an overloaded informational society, the image becomes the landmark that regulates, mediates people, events and relationships. Admitting this, our question is: at this moment, what school organization has a strong PR, an unshakable positive image? Therefore, as a second solution to remedy the school organization-media relationship, we recommend school organizations to appoint a person to have the permanent role of an image bearer and to build a positive campaign of it, involving the local media in positive joint actions, beneficial to both.

This is all the more so as, having as field of analysis and application the Education itself, promoted by teachers, that is, by lucid, profound, intellectual people, of character, school organizations should become a model of social organization, and not the mockery of a society so hurried that it does not notice that a deep educational system is the only salvation of the whole society, no matter how bitter the times.

As a kind of a chewing gum for the brain, the media accustoms us to value already chewed judgments, prepared and offered on the tray, injected with a dose in order to numb the critical thinking nerve. The critique is kept to destroy the competitor, but not used to diagnose our own shortcomings, thus caused the school organization to confine itself to the geometric place between the fast and persuasive world of the picture, and the sensitive one, eager for truth and ideal, of a real, sincere education, full of content and depth.

c) The absent parent. Supposed to be a reliable partner, the parent no longer supports education or school organization. Caught in gear, often lacking time and specialized psychopedagogical training, they feel the need for counselling because they feel confused, stressed, overwhelmed, exhausted, confiscated by the pursuit of money. Children no longer seem to “fit” into their parents’ busy lives, and so grandparents often become the lifeline. We propose the following approach: carefully notice, please, who takes the children from school? How many parents? How many grandparents? How many older siblings? Frustrated and saddened, parents no longer work with the school organization and often, poisoned by the counterexamples provided by the media, grow into school organization accusers. The effect? A crushing one for both partners of education. Neither the teacher nor the parent will succeed if they do not work together.

Solutions? The school organization should approach the family issue tactfully, delicately, systematically and in an organized manner. We suggest another approach for PTAs (parents-teacher appointments), with soul nourishment approaches, in addition to the list of money that the parent has to donate to the school, in addition to the list of teachers’ complaints, in addition to the list of behavioral mistakes and poor grades. Meetings with parents have often seemed to me a way of separation, of getting a divorce between the main factors responsible for the child’s education: the teacher and the parent. You should always keep the door open, even if it does not work. At least try to contact them by phone, by email. Nobody wants problems, but we forget that lack of communication becomes their constant generator. So the child is left alone and bored with toys, phones, computers, television shows. He is required to behave.

d) Money talks. The contemporary Romanian society (and not only) often seems to worship money power, which thus becomes the supreme value, the priority of priorities, the supreme meaning/purpose of life, the compass of relationships with others. No wonder children, as well as parents, as well as teachers become vulnerable, more cynical, more demotivated, more dehumanized, more humiliated, more disregarded when confronted with this issue.

Effects:

In a world of crisis and financial violence in which money seems to replace any other value, what other chances could we give to the fragile ballet of education seen almost condescendingly as a pedantry?

How many more teachers find the necessary financial and time resources to read specialized books or education sciences?

Solutions: a more carefully thought out salary scale. Investments in education and educational projects.

e) Information or competences?

The education development strategies encourage the creation and training of an educational culture that promotes the development of skills in order to connect the educational offer to the requirements of the socio-economic environment.

The Romanian strategy called “Education and research for the knowledge society” supports “focusing the curriculum on skills, not information”, on “blocks of knowledge, skills and attitudes that optimize problem solving” (Curaj and Deca 2018, 14). By implementing these strategies and in accordance with the objectives of the National Pact for Education, the aim is therefore “the curricular decentralization and adaptation of the curriculum to the specific needs of personal development, to the requirements of the labor market and of each community.” Emphasis is placed on an individual training profile that facilitates the student “the formation of a unitary image of reality” and the development of an “integrative thinking” (Stanciu 1999, 165). Thus, teachers are called to overcome the closed approach of their specialization, to open to multidisciplinary or thematic approach, interdisciplinarity or integrated approach, transdisciplinarity or cross-curricular approach, to an integrated approach to that content that is accompanied by the modernization of other aspects of education: finalities, strategies, methods and means, ways of organizing learning, evaluation, etc. The framework plan of the national curriculum clearly highlights the tendency to organize the contents of pre-university education from an integrated perspective.

Composed on the basis of the integration of the contents in “cognitively integrated fields” that transcend the boundaries between disciplines, the Framework Plan is structured on the seven curricular areas that are constituted in groups of disciplines that have certain training objectives in common. The flexibility of this approach is underlined by the fact that the teacher operates with themes, with thematic orientations. The Framework Plan involves, however, certain difficulties and limits such as:

- 1) The difficulty of training teachers to teach in such a way
- 2) The system of initial and continuous training of teachers in Romania is predominantly focused on teaching by subjects, depending on the specialization on the graduation diploma of the faculty or college
- 3) The students’ impossibility of deepening the specialized scientific knowledge
- 4) Lack of pedagogical tradition of integration
- 5) Teachers’ latent or active fight back regarding integrative tendencies (School and Employment Program OECD 1998; Vlăsceanu 1988).

Solutions: co-opting teachers in training programs.

3) Optimizing the cooperation and communication relations between the educational factors

A knelt-down, defeated education is the product of the current Romanian society. A handcuffed education. No matter how we look at it and no matter how many labels we find, one thing is certain: the purpose of school organizations is to overcome their own crisis and to support humanity in its formation, in its attempt to surpass the pressure of common sense and semi-learned pride, to get out of the labyrinth, to cross the boundaries of one’s own interest, to overcome the inner darkness. Mircea Eliade said in “The Labyrinth Test”: “To be human means to seek meaning, value, to invent it, to protect it, to reinvent it” (Eliade 2008, 142).

The purpose of the teacher is to provoke reflection, to provide the individual with the right tools to find the way to the centre of his own self, to the formation and strengthening of a fundamental attitude towards life. Swimming in murky waters, school organizations are, in fact, small

factories of ideals. The school organization should be the first to oppose the confusion, the multitude of petty goals and petty, immediate interests. That is, the school must snatch the young man from narrow horizons and direct him to self-fulfilment, to self-confidence. The solution of a life itself is to be found under the sign of the fundamental, consistent, authentic, sustainable approach.

The purpose of the school is not to offer the individual a ready-made ideal, but to bring the young person in the situation of forming his own ideal, moreover, the purpose of the school is to thirst the young man, to determine him/her to burn with the desire to formulate his/her own ideal, search, emotion of the road. For years, school has been considered a key factor in the thorough initiative of the individual's social integration. But if the society is sick, in crisis, adrift, it can no longer provide stability, security, since the abnormal becomes normal. That is why the contemporary Romanian school organization feels the need for a philosophy of education in configuration with the contemporary spiritual tendencies such as: the primacy of the human individual in relation to history, masses, nature. To overcome their inner emptiness, to gain self-confidence, the contemporary Romanian school organizations aim at stimulating and cultivating the love between people, their desire and satisfaction to always grow, to always deepen the human being's own inner syntheses. The emphasis must move from the domination and strict control of the contemporary Romanian state over the entire educational system to the decentralization, from emphasizing the national feeling on the authentic dialogue with other cultures, from social determinism to freedom of choice. Therefore, it is education that produces inner mutations, causing the rise of the cultural tension of humanity, as well as its resettlement. And the contemporary Romanian school organization aims at placing the individual in culture, in the world where he/she may find the fundamental meaning of his/her existence.

*The roles of the teacher in the contemporary school organization*

Having a wide range of roles, the teacher is aware not only of his duties, but also of the fact that he becomes a model for students, parents and society, practicing a self-controlled behaviour par excellence.

a) His/Her class managerial functions are achieved when he/she carries out the objectives set at the class level: the design, the organization, the decision making, the learning process management, the students' guidance, the evaluation, the optimization of the educational process.

D. Pontea finds the following main roles according to the functions assumed and fulfilled in the didactic plan:

- 1) Organizing and leading the class as a social group
- 2) School and professional counselling and guidance
- 3) Guiding the extracurricular activity
- 4) Professional development and pedagogical research
- 5) Socio-cultural activity (Pontea, 1989).

Among the qualities required of him, the teacher must be a professional with a solid specialized training, a very good teacher, a psychologist with a fine intuition and ability to know students and take into account age and individual characteristics.

b) Regarding the quality of the teacher to be an executioner concerned by the framework of the dynamics of the school organization, sociologists deduce the roles of the teacher according to the roles received and assumed according to the professional status established and regulated from a normative point of view: organizer of the educational process, director, counselor, methodologist, head of department, teacher trainer/trainer, educator, education partner, member of the teaching or administration board, head of a specialized office, leader of a group in the school, member of the examination commissions, responsible for pedagogical circle, specialized school inspector, manager/chief/project member, director, delegated by the management in solving a task, cultural animator, member of scientific associations, editor-in-chief of school magazine, researcher-practitioner.

From a formal point of view, the teacher is assigned roles in relation to his instructive-educational activity, with the hypostases related to solving the different objectives or functions, which he occupies and for which he is responsible.

In fact, the teacher fulfils the general roles observed in carrying out any communication activity, namely those of receiver or sender of various messages, participant/producer/organizer/source of information/responsible for communication and dissemination activities, initiator of ideas/working hypotheses/methods/strategies/programs/plans, solution agent/counsellor/modeller/mediator of situations/conflicts, disseminator of ideas/solutions/contents, user/practitioner in the application of ideas, decision maker in selection of objectives/contents/strategies/resources, behaviour model/bearer of values, defender/protector of assimilated values.

The role of teacher-manager does not imply, does not trigger a competitive effervescence compared to the role of teacher-educator. On the contrary, the two roles support each other, strengthen each other by strengthening, emphasizing the manager's role in leading students to success, to formative performances.

E. E. Geissler summarizes the contradictions between the roles of the teacher and their fulfilment as it follows:

“As an informant, the teacher plays the role of a transmitter, but keeping the cold distance imposed by science, but at the same time he/she provides students with values and he/she is concerned with the formation-development of the students' personality.

As a student's partner in the educational act, the teacher advises, appeals, guides, sanctions, slows down, while, as an examiner, he strives to be as objective as possible.

As a model, it offers and establishes moral requirements, but as an aspect it focuses on teaching and moral training” (Geissler 1977).

Cristea notes that educational management as a psychological activity is based on three characteristics:

“First, the primary system leadership involves a global approach to all elements of education and applications specific to the leadership function, at various levels.

Secondly, the pilot management implies the optimal capitalization of the pedagogical resources of the educational system through its managerial functions of planning -organization, methodological orientation and regulation-self-regulation.

Last but not least, strategic leadership involves the innovative perspective evolution of the system at different levels of organization” (Cristea, 1996).

As far as we are concerned, we consider the highlighting of the three mentioned characteristics to be welcomed, but we would like to emphasize that, besides the role of director (primary management), that of didactic (pilot management) and the role of researcher (strategic management), the manager of the contemporary school organization should also consider the role of team leader (relational leadership).

The teaching-staff of the school organization is regarded as a dynamic system and social group. The teaching staff is an institutionalized working group, made up of teachers of different ages, genders, ideological orientations who work in the field of instruction and education with double specialization: that of self-education, but also of training students in accordance with the established objectives arising from the educational ideal. The approach of the geometric place of teaching can be processed using tools offered by different perspectives/approaches: group theory, pedagogical, psycho-pedagogic, psychosocial, curricular, public relations, systemic point of view.

The principals and teachers of the school organization together form an organized ensemble, assuming each other in the joint effort and in the mutually beneficial contribution to the achievement of the aims of the educational system. Which means that the isolated approach of managers or teachers, without emphasizing the complementary reciprocity of relations between them is outdated, insignificant and inefficient. However, this reciprocity does not imply symmetry or equality. Therefore, an idyllic image of the director about a superb harmony with each member of the professional body is not validated by reality, as it is the idyllic dream of teachers about a total emancipation from the dominant norms and restrictions of managers.

The slogan “we all form a great team” therefore has the advantage of postulating a positive euphoria, but it is not limited to reality primarily because school organizations include dozens, even



hundreds of people while a team would be desirable to include maximum eight people and, secondly, because it neglects the desire to emancipate the individuals involved.

The main feature of the relations that are established between the members of the teaching staff lies, in our opinion, in the complexity of the formative or informational educational activity that they perform. Since a very large number of people participate in the design and production of the educational idea route, each of whom has only one component of the overall work, “the number of people involved is so large that no one can reasonably and convincingly claim (or he cannot be accused of) paternity (or responsibility) for the final result. The responsibility for the consequences is, so to speak, navigable, finding nowhere its natural harbour” (Eliade 2000, 23-24).

This responsibility of the teacher is enhanced by the job description through which it is desired to convey the idea of quantifying the teacher’s educational effort, instructions for use. Education is done anyway, thus cancelling the burden of moral responsibility due to both the abundance of roles that occupy the teacher (his personality seems to be built from separate shards to the detriment of the whole unifier) and the fact that, belonging to the river of normators/didactic pawns, his/her creative efforts are somehow lost in anonymity.

Here are some blockages teachers may encounter:

1) The postponement of the decision

Mihaela Constantinescu notes: “The way we choose our cultural identity is not about ourselves, but about others: we build ourselves, within the cultural supermarket, according to our social world (...) Some of us do this with great seriousness, buying from fashion stores objects with the help of which we model our roles and image as real works of art. Others, of course, are content with ready-to-wear goods” (Constantinescu 2001, 24).

Zygmunt Bauman, in turn, speaks of aimless “creative destruction”, characterized by an unquenchable thirst for change (Bauman 2000, 18).

Since the Romanian school organizations after the revolution seem to be flooded with flows of permanent educational offers, of enticing educational opportunities, it seems difficult not only for the teacher, but for each individual interested in the educational offer to decide in favour of one or the other.

The Decision Factor, the Responsible One, has not been abolished. It has only multiplied. An emerged avalanche of decisions have always coexisted, sometimes cancelling each other out, undermining each other’s authority.

Zygmunt Bauman notes: “The phrase of numerous authorities is, if we think about it, a contradiction in terms. When there are many authorities, they tend to cancel each other out, and the only effective authority in the field is the one who has to choose between them. But because of the one who chooses, a potential authority becomes authority. Authorities no longer command: they flatter the one who chooses, tempt and seduce him/her” (Bauman 2000, 56).

A limitation of authority that seems to be built on sand, on slippery lands, a distrust of the teacher as an individual in terms of authorizing authority, opening the appetite for confessions, the emergence of new centres of power that want to legitimize (councils and committees of local communities, media, parents, students).

The solution?

Moving the emphasis from teacher authority to mutual authority in the development of the teacher’s relationship with the student/parent/media representatives/community representatives while shifting the emphasis from school principal authority to teacher-teacher mutual authority. In other words, if the teacher is the educator of the student class, the principal is the educator of the teaching staff provided that both the teacher and the educator realize that neither is the only possible authority, but only a link in the chain of authorities. Both (both the teacher and the school manager) must take responsibility for the world (which they create). “In education, this responsibility for the world takes the form of authority. The authority of the educator and the professional qualifications are not the same. Although a measure of qualification is indispensable for authority, the highest possible qualification can never in itself give rise to authority itself. The teacher’s qualification is to know the world and to be able to instruct others about it, but his/her authority is based on his assumption of

responsibility for that world. In front of the child it is as if he were a representative of all the adult inhabitants, pointing out the details and telling the child: this is our world” (Arendt 1997, 197).

#### 2) Teachers belonging to small informal groups

There are departments within which the work is often collective, plans are shared, inter-assistance is carried out, ideas, opinions are disseminated, consensus is sought by respecting diversity, competitive or individualistic dynamics are given up, relations are warm and transparent, even friendly. The relations in the teacher’s rooms are, therefore, directed by the belonging to different “little churches”, which coexist in a subtle, but decisive balance, of the professional and career actions of each individual.

But, although the activity that prevails in the group of teachers is the attempt to establish consensus, empathy, equality, respect, the culture of the school organization seems rather interested in avoiding decision-making, a mini-struggle to share spheres of influence within curricular areas and “leadership“ them.

The solution:

As the role of the school organization manager is to assist the system during its initiation path, taking into account its collective identity, it is important for both the leader and the group to consider and develop a coherent organizational culture. From the wide potential of the organizational culture, we choose some aspects to follow such as: the stories and legends told by the “elders” of the school organization during the pioneer period, the myths of the founders that highlight positive or negative profiles, the advertising media campaign, arrangement and decoration of spaces, dress code, leadership style, relationship with educational partners, involvement in community activities, social policy, multicultural component of teams, important historical data, etc.

We emphasize that the main concern in the process of “construction” or adherence to a certain organizational culture is to avoid the discrepancy between discourse and reality.

#### 3) The authority of the school principals

As far as we are concerned, we would dare to characterize the culture of the school organization as rather an institutional and humanist culture

This means that school organizations tend to build and adhere to a traditional institutional and directive culture, based on the central presence of one or more senior and influential members, who in turn tend to become more distant, lonely, introverted, establishing rather hierarchical relationships (school situation), each with their own concerns under the careful guidance of the manager who monitors all projects.

The solution: That is why we emphasize the need to decentralize authority, shifting the emphasis from the authority of school principals to the mutual authority of principals.

Being par excellence extroverted people, teachers develop an informal participatory, relational, empathetic, charismatic full of warmth, communicative, humanistic culture springing from their own social ideals.

#### 4) The poor quality of the financial performance

Engaged in activities to develop the individual potential of both the student and the teacher, the school organization emphasizes the quality of team communication and the care of the democratic integration of each member, but, unfortunately, everything that is built by democratizing communication is lost because of the reactivity due to the frustrations accumulated over the last decades and by the poor quality of the financial performance.

The solution: attracting collaborators interested in financing projects, organizing self-financing events by organizing PR campaigns and shows with ticket sales.

In this case, the management knowledge of the group and/or the team well applied to the environment can help to create a distinct managerial function which, in turn, will help to establish and mention mutual communication limits, mutual acceptance and cooperation between a school organization and its actors, but also between the school organization and its audience. Involving problem management, helping managers to be informed about both the opinion of the actors involved and public opinion, and, moreover, helping managers to find answers to the demands of an increasingly demanding public opinion, defining and emphasizing the obligations of managers to

anticipate environmental trends, group and/or team management uses research and communication based on ethical principles as working tools.

A solid knowledge of the principles and content of group and/or team management therefore involves the art and social science of analysing trends, anticipating consequences, advising leaders of the organization and implementing planned action programs that will serve both the interests of the organization, as well as the interests of the team/group.

## **Conclusions**

The contemporary Romanian society seems to be a special challenge for today's teacher. Education, seen as an ideal, seems to be crushed by the force of money, by the audacity of the image, by the weariness of information. The teacher is required to become more and more rigorous, more precisely, more scientific to the detriment of his own soul, his own creativity. From a living, organic being, the teacher becomes a computerized robot, preacher of cold, frozen concepts, which no longer resonates with the surrounding beings, a shadow that tries to catch something in pedagogical circles, meetings, improvements, but no longer has time for a book, to complete and update his own psychopedagogical culture. Contradictory decisions in some places, central or local orders, sterile or of all kinds intertwined, bring with them confusion, confusion, a derisory skid between norms and creativity, between regulation and freedom. We propose a possible approach: ask teachers to define the notion of a good teacher and you will notice the multitude of options. Rigorous, uncompromising, or permeable, permissive, transparent? Open, emancipated or authoritarian, with prestige? Due to the repeated changes, teachers are insecure, somehow stuck in a wait, in a Kafkaesque world where they are being prepared for a salary cut, a staff reduction, statistics, reports, requests, and certificates to prove something. It seems that we all agree that contemporary Romanian organizations must prove this "something". The problem is, it's not clear what it needs to be proven. Hence the feeling that teachers are not listened to, are not consulted, are not understood, that there is a rupture between the vertical levels of the education system that seems to work unilaterally from top to bottom. Most teachers feel powerless and threatened. With low salaries, with students whose parents accuse, with a biased media, with authoritarian principals who call for new orders or who do not encourage alternatives, dialogue and initiative other than their own, with overloaded textbooks, with students educated by computer and television, with colleagues feeding the gossip from the office, taking care of staff reductions.

Thus, a trench attitude develops slowly but surely: rather than exposing yourself, you better wait in the shelter. You let others struggle, they die for their country. Your role as a teacher is to obey. What good is it to get involved, to agree to what? Cooperation, submission and participation are mimicked, but distrust and fear, dissatisfaction, indifference, blasphemy, procrastination prevail. It works mechanically. Lack of enthusiasm, security, determination, identity dehumanizes us, turns us into robots. The concept of education no longer inflames us, no longer gives us wings, no longer provokes our feverishness to form people. Our mission as teachers is at the crossroads of being a chiselled, crystalline, well-metered concept and an activity of the soul, of rendering the meaning of being human. In "Landmarks for a Humanistic Conception on Education," Albu (2017, 332) exemplified his mission as a teacher, as follows: "and we give height (in the face of smallness), exemplarity (in the face of mediocrity), identity (in the face of absorption in anonymity), turmoil (in the face of self-satisfaction), depth (in the face of superficiality), the taste of joy in the face of the taste of bitterness), the need for meaning (in the face of disarticulated life), the desire for freedom (in the face of submission and/or manipulation). Due to education we are struggling with wasted time, improvisation and work done just to catch the eye. Education serves to reduce deception, ridicule and stupidity. Due to education we are struggling with sleep, laziness, vanity."

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