



Towards a modern epistemological paradigm of educational management

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Abstract

From the primary significance of management, that of "art to do something together with other people", the concept has developed significantly in intensity and extension by integrating various nuances designed individually to capture the characteristics and implications of the management as a leading activity. Contemporary educational developments are talking about the need to develop a modern epistemological paradigm of educational management, which to extend beyond the classical paradigm and that would consider modern evolutionary trends. In this study we aimed to reveal the lines of force of this paradigm in a comparative approach, in order to highlight the major changes recorded in the scientific approach in contemporary educational management.

Keywords: management, educational management, the classical paradigm of educational management, the modern paradigm of educational management

Zusammenfassung

Von wesentlicher Bedeutung des Managements, diejenige die sich auf "die Kunst mit anderen Menschen etwas zu vollbringen" bezieht, der Begriff hat sich maßgeblich in Intension und Ausdehnung entwickelt, durch die Einbindung verschiedener Schattierungen, jede erstellt zu sein, um die Ausprägung und die Implikationen des Managements als Führungsaktivität zu überraschen. Die heutigen pädagogischen Entwicklungen beschweren sich über die Notwendigkeit der Ausarbeitung eines modernen epistemologischen Paradigmas des pädagogischen Managements, die Grenze des klassischen Paradigmas zu überschreiten und die evolutiven modernen Tendenzen zu berücksichtigen. In diesem Studium haben wir darauf gezielt, die Kraftlinien dieses Paradigmas hervorzuheben, in einer vergleichenden Befassung, die grosse eingetragenen Veränderungen in der wissenschaftlichen Befassung des pädagogischen Managements in Gegenwart hervorzuheben.

Schlüsselworte: Management, pädagogisches Management, klassisches Paradigma des pädagogischen Managements, modernes Paradigma des pädagogischen Managements.

Towards a modern epistemological paradigm of educational management

1.1. Highlights of the evolving management concept

Etymologically speaking, the concept of "management" is derived from Latin, the phrase "manum agere" ("leading hand"); Later, we find the term in French ("manage" - manage) and Italian ("maneggio" - handling). In English we identify a variety of meanings, with educational relevance:

- „to manage” (to succeed, lead, solve, cope, to direct, to prosper, to curb elements for achieving a goal, manage, manipulate, to master, to cope, to find means to..., to govern, to carry out);
- „management” (business/ art of leadership, skills, organization, success in achieving the objectives, adaptation of optimal decisions in the design and construction of some processes);
- „manager” (leader, administrator, director, coordinator of a team).

A primary definition of management was provided by Mary Follet, one of the main founders of classroom management (mechanical) - "the art of doing something together with other people." Over time, over nearly 19 centuries, this term generated a special polysemantism, since the original meaning and until the crystallized modern significance. Some of the terms commonly used in diachrony are driving, organizing, managing, terms used with various nuances designed individually, to capture the specificity and implications of the management as a leadership activity. Thus the concept of "management" significantly enriched and was remarked as evolving, one with complex "real sphere", with an dynamic accentuated intensive and extensive.

1.2. The complex epistemological status of educational management

We intend to highlight the epistemological status of management, from an overview of management that can be analyzed from several points of view:

- a) as an integrated management science of an institution, a company, a church, army, state;
- b) as a metascience, namely a balanced mix of science and art, configured as a syntetized and unifying theory of:
 - scientific acquisition of some particular science;
 - acquisitions, findings and conclusions from practice, from managerial experience/ leadership.
- c) as a transdiscipline, respectively as a border discipline at the crossroads of several scientific disciplines (ergonomics, axiology, philosophy, logic etc.).

Given these general analytical perspectives, we can define management as a pedagogical discipline with a scientific character or a transdiscipline, making up the corpus of paradigms, theories, models, strategies, algorithms, etc., by integrating several acquisitions of particular sciences: axiology, ergonomics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, logic, biology. As an interdisciplinary pedagogical science (E. Joiţa, 2000, 2004, 2010, V.-M. Cojocaru, 2004), educational management is defined and characterized in operational and nuanced ways, depending on the particularities of the educational reality in which it acts, namely macro, meso and micro-level education. Just like the other

pedagogical disciplines, educational management has dual character - theoretical-conceptual and practical use, it simultaneously holding the status of descriptive integrated science, normative theory and practical achievement.

Generically, educational management is a component science of the educational sciences system, which operates with an articulated, coherent and integrated system of the pedagogical axiology's scientific acquisitions, of the philosophy, politics and pragmatics education, all these purchases providing convergent and consensual, reaching the predetermined outcomes in conditions of effectiveness.

Educational management considers the "theory and practice, science and the art of design, organization, coordination, evaluation and adjustment of the elements and resources of educational activities" (A. Gherguț, 2007, p. 20), "an integrative-explicit concept, an attitude, a methodology of action geared towards achieving success in education, which comprises a set of principles and functions, of rules and management methods through which achievement of the objectives of the education system is insured." (A. Gherguț, 2010, p. 20).

So simultaneously and complementary, educational management holds the status of science, art and practical achievement. In support of this we offer the following arguments:

- a) Educational management as integrated science:
 - has a well-defined subject of its own and precise finalities;
 - exploits a scientific language, a methodology and proper research instruments for full knowledge of the investigated educational reality;
 - analyzes the processes and management decisions and identifies the regularities underlying educational management;
 - makes predictions, researching in a prospective and ameliorative manner the managerial phenomenon;
 - involves complex steps of gathering information, documentation, and interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific approach and research - both fundamental-theoretical and practical;
 - builds a corpus of theories, principles, regularities, models of best practice, elements of savoir, cognitive savoir-faire, practical savoir-faire, basically hinged together by logical deductions and inferences likely to be experimentally verified;
 - facilitates interdisciplinary openings, supported by both the specificity and complexity of educational management and by the pedagogical research in the field, which provides fundamental-theoretical and practical investigative horizons, with pluri-, inter- or transdisciplinary character.

- b) Educational management as a practical realization:
 - has a practical, actional, operational dimension, assuming a system of actions designed to ensure optimal functioning of the educational process and the educational system; incidentally, the concept of practice is of particular relevance in the field of education since it generated a new understanding of learning as involvement in social practices (J. Lave, E. Wenger, 1991);
 - studies operational ways of achieving management processes, which are effectively realised in the educational management domain;
 - the major purpose pursued by manager is legitimizing and ensuring efficiency of the management processes and the adequacy of the management decisions;

- is necessary to provide functional and mutually shaping inter-connections between the theory and practice of the educational management; the theory is the one that fundamentals the practical steps and practice is the theoretical acquisitions' validation space;
 - the managerial experience that the manager possesses is a relevant variable in practising specific roles, in the formation and development of management skills, in the whole manager's professional activity.
- c) Educational management as art:
- educational management can not be reduced to a sum of managerial practices or requirements and managerial recommendations, but also requires personal investment of: individual reflection and constructive criticism; active, critical, flexible, logical, exploratory, divergent, evaluative, imaginative, creative thinking; self-analysis, self-questioning, retrospective and prospective interrogations; prospective vision, intuition, creativity, and also critical, active and interactive, evaluative, creative, projective practices;
 - realization of educational management does not involve a rigid and uniform application of theoretical recommendations, but rather their flexible, creative application, adapted to the educational constellation of variables involved;
 - assumes, sometimes heavily, holding capacity of rapid response, timely and adaptability to the situation, namely a dynamic attitude, enabling the manager to adjust the management decisions to the specific educational environment, to solve with speed and efficiency workloads, to ensure the double alternating individual-collective and reflection-action in the managerial act.

1.3. Hierarchical levels in educational management

In the field of education, managerial approaches are complex and integrated in large systems, spread over three correlated hierarchical levels, as shown in Table. 1:

Table. 1

Hierarchical levels in educational management

No. crt.	Hierarchical level in educational management	Decisional level	Educational structures / Courts decision (in the undergraduate and graduate education)	General features
1.	Strategical	Macro-structure (M)	The competent ministry (in both undergraduate and graduate education), at national level	- of superior type – the functions are acting based on educational policies, leadership, decision and control at macro-educational level (macro-system)
2.	Tactical	Mezo-structure (m)	Local decision-making authorities: - County school inspectorates (in graduate education), at county level	- of medium, intermediate type – are particularly exercised the administrative functions at <u>intermediate educational</u>

			- Higher educational institutions / universities (in graduate education)	<u>level (mezo-system)</u>
3.	Operative	Micro-structure (μ)	3.a. Institutional level: Educational institutions: - School organization/ School education unit (in undergraduate education) - College/ Faculty (in graduate education)	- of technical or executive type – the functions of concievement, management, decision and control are exercised at micro-educational level (micro-system)
			3.b. Departmental level: - Department (in undergraduate education) - Department (in graduate education)	
			3.c. Individual level: - The educational institution's/ structure's manager - Teacher (who performs management of the preschool group, the classroom, the group and student groups – in undergraduate and graduate education).	

In fact, the five levels of educational management (national, county, institutional, departmental and individual) are not isolated from one another, but rather are closely interrelated with each other and interdependent, so a two-way "communication" between them is assured, and between educational decisions taken and the check-up. Basically, the transition from one level to another is natural, each level is "fueling" from the previous. Thus, the strategical level is extended by the tactical and then with the operative one, which allows a flow of information and decision both from top to bottom and from bottom to top, as shown in Figure. 1:

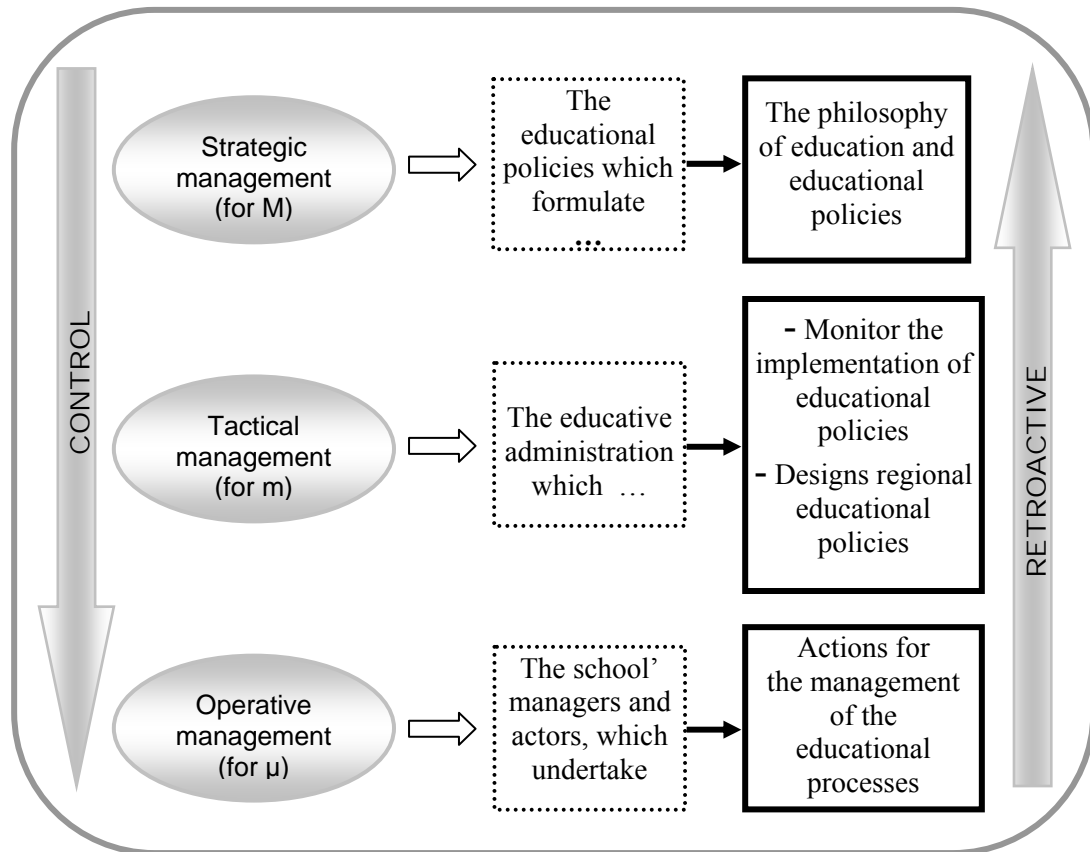


Figure. 1. Hierarchical levels of educational management and their specific functions

At the level of the national education system, from the microstructure to the macrostructure there is information flow and decision-making continuously to the lower courts (philosophical, political and pedagogical macro-structural decisions) and is pursued the oversight function, there are monitored and controlled the ways the application of educational policies and strategies, leading to the micro-educational level, at which the teacher establishes direct educational relationships with the students and capitalizes educational principles, options and management decisions designed to achieve educational aims. Moreover, from the microstructure level to that of the higher courts and to the macrostructure is performed the function of feedback, or is being generated a flow of information concerning decisions on education (at this level decisions are microstructural), making it possible to monitor, control and assess the quality of educational processes and subsequent regulation of these processes.

Decisions taken at each of these levels require a nuanced process with certain characteristics and appearance depending on the educational aspect, level and on the personality of the decision-maker, phased in approaches linked to other managerial functions, namely:

Analyse \Rightarrow Identifying and formalizing alternatives \Rightarrow Choosing an alternative (the educational option) \Rightarrow Applying the alternative (the educational action) \Rightarrow Monitoring the educational activities \Rightarrow Evaluating the educational approach \Rightarrow Evaluating the results \Rightarrow (Re)evaluating the whole decisional process.

At each of these levels of decision and control, it is advisable to practice a democratic, active, participatory management, to manifest an active and proactive attitude, courage, responsibility and creativity, so that there are degrees of freedom specific to each level and each educational and managerial problem addressed.

1.4. The base of skills held by the manager in education

If education management is simultaneously science, practical action and art, symmetrically, the manager simultaneously holds the following categories of indestructible (inter) related competencies, making up a base of skills, seen as a coherent and articulate ensemble of cognitive and non-cognitive resources allowing for the construction of cognitive pertinent answers to complex problems and situations and not applying simplistic, already made answers:

- scientific skills - which refer to the knowledge and understanding ("knowledge and comprehension") of the scientific theoretical acquisitions of the educational management and their application in solving problems;
- practical skills - which refer to "knowing how to act" ("knowing how to act") in practical situations, in which action is needed, such as: addressing the organization as a whole, identifying the sub-components, the (inter) connections between them and their contributions to meet the finalities at organization-wide; customized transposition of the theoretical procurements specific for the managerial situations; identification of problems; establishment of relevant variables and (inter) relations between them; formulation of possible solutions and their verification; decision making; risk taking; NTIC use etc.
- transversal skills - which refer to the knowing how to be and to become ("knowing how to be and to become") a manager of quality in education by harnessing and developing your own personality traits, through the development of the intrapersonal, and the interpersonal intelligence - related to establishing social relationships with peers (see the considerations about the educational management as art).

Each of the three categories of competences integrates a system of interrelated sub-competencies, with differing relevance based on the characteristics of the practical managerial situation. Forming, developing and refining these skills and sub-skills is a process that builds gradually through sequential, progressive and integrative-systemic accumulations, in operational managerial situations and not in an additive, cumulative and exclusively linear manner.

1.5. Major coordinates of the epistemological paradigm of modern educational management

The current trend is to raise the management at the status of profession, as shown by Korpiaho K., H. Päiviö, Räsänen K. (2007, p. 46), especially since at global scale, educational management represents a real industry (L. Engwall, 2007, p. 28). For this it is necessary to build a modern epistemological paradigm of educational management, which extends beyond the classical paradigm. The main coordinates and characteristics of the two paradigms are captured in Table. 2, where we propose a multi-criteria comparative analysis of them, highlighting the modern educational management's guidelines, how it conceives the processes and the management decisions.

Table. 2**The classical paradigm and the paradigm of modern educational management - multi-criteria comparative analysis**

The element of comparison	The attributes of the classical educational management	The attributes of the modern educational management
Education paradigm to which it refers	The analytical paradigm of education (studying parts of the whole).	The systemic paradigm of education (studying the whole).
Types of organizational structures and systems of control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rigid organizational structures, insufficiently documented, without clearly defined rules and procedures; - Control is exogenous and predominantly external; internal control is rigid and it is achieved at the end of the curricular process (final control), so without providing sequential control of advancing to the proposed general finalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible, dynamic, organizational network structures willing to perform effort for innovation, always open to new and extreme challenges, like: the evolution of the system of values, acquisitions from the sciences of education, results of the pedagogic research, the general social progress, the dynamic of education in the context of globalization. - Control represents a natural act, integrated in the managerial process; and it is final (realized at the end of curricular processes) and sequential (realized during the curricular processes, to settle the measure of advancing towards the final general purposes). Control is based on a participatory managerial style of the endogenous type.
Educational stake	<p>Informative stake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be offered a diagnosis, to quantify in terms of predominantly quantitative perspective the results with which the educational processes work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formative stake. - Formative, qualitative and continuous reviews to be realized, with the role of (self-)regulating and improving the educational processes. - To utilize a grid of strategic priorities.
General characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rigidity, bureaucracy, conservatism. - Passive attitude of the institution's employees regarding the decisional processes. - The prevailing programmatic concern to meet the professional requirements and demands of the higher-ups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexibility, dynamism, and to be anchored in modernism and postmodernism - An active and procreative attitude of the institutes employees in relation to the decisional processes (participatory and democratic management). - The pragmatic concern for efficient solving of the concrete problems from the life of school organization is the priority, in context with valuing the constructivist paradigm.
Educational management's organization	Imposed, rigid, dependent, immutable, controlled.	Own organizing, autonomy (total or partial), self-monitoring, self-management, self-regulation.

<p>The decisional process is characterised by...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excessive decisional centralization, autocratic ruling, uniformization. - The predominant decisional models are: ambiguous, political, subjective and formal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partial decentralization, the differences in the managerial processes, professional delegation of tasks and the decisional authority, collective responsibility, self-responsibility. - The management of the organization is interactively exercised, in relation with the members. - The intervention style is non-directive and the standards, regulations and procedures are transparent. - The predominantly decisional models are the democratic and the formal one.
<p>It encourages ...</p>	<p>Individualism and the competition between the members of the organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The psychosocial and intellectual exchanges, collaboration and cooperation, establishment of professional, affective and social relations between the members of the organization. - The progressive formation of working teams and the elaboration of managerial projects in a interdisciplinary vision - The accountability and especially the self-responsibility of the members of the organization.
<p>The accent is put on...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual involvement of the members of the organization. - Their actions, achievements and own portfolios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The collective implication of the members of the organization in working teams (eventually interdisciplinary) - The development of management projects through professional collaboration (the projects can be of a interdisciplinary nature) - Actions, achievements of collective portfolios
<p>How is the member of the organization viewed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a passive participant in the decisional process, who does not contradict, is obedient and submissive. - We can talk about a conformism of thought and about control of thought by the manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a active participant in the decisional process, as an authentic (object and) subject of the managerial act, as the authentic actor in this act, who establishes democratic relationships with the manager. - As an individual called to express his ideas and personal opinions, and confront them with those of others, to manifest a active and proactive attitude, and form self-initiatives and put them in practice, to participate consciously and auto-assumed, active and interactive to the collective debates, decisional processes, and also regulation and self-regulation of the managerial activities.

		- As an individual called to exercise active, critical, flexible, divergent, multi-referential and creative thinking.
Managerial documents	- Conceived in the first stage of projecting the educational activities, in a rigid, inflexible manner and rigorously respected.	- Designed by the management team in partnership with the institutional structures and the members of the organization, by promoting an active, interactive, creative and proactive attitude (the documents also have a proactive role, due to the fact that based on them the educational situations are constructed and are generated the experiences of learning).
Attitude towards corporate / professional community	- Weaker attachment to the common values of the professional collective/community. - Prevails the individualism (which is not mistaken with selfishness), weak relationships, little intense, sometimes chaotic and the individual is self-concerned.	- High degree of affiliation to the common values of the professional collective/community, higher attachment to these values. - The verbal and social interactions and intellectual exchanges are promoted and profitable for all the participants to the decisional process. - It builds collectivism, close collegiality relationships, of collaborations and professional and human solidarity.
Attitude towards change	- The speed at which the new acquisitions are applied is (extremely) slow. - The organizational structures and the control systems are resistant to change, inertial, they being projected to ensure protection from the environments' uncertainties and to ensure the needed stability for the performance of the specific functions. - Change is perceived as a threat, more or less acknowledged. - The school organization does not have a responsible, projective, active and proactive attitude, but a negative one; however, it reacts to the already certain changes that occur at macro-educational and social level.	- The management functions are exercised fluently, coherent and in a resilient, creative and innovative manner, open to the changes within the organization - Change is seen as a natural phenomenon, natural and inherent, demonstrating the vitality of the systems; it is studied, analysed, accepted, tolerated sometimes (when there are no adequate corrective actions). - There are searched and used ways and means to overcome and place under control the resistance to change: promoting communication on vertically and horizontally, the active and interactive involvement of the organization members, accountability and self-responsibility, organization of collective debates, providing support, facilitating various actions, negotiation, etc. - It is realized that change does not always mean progress, so the manifestation of resistance to change may even be necessary.

		- The school organization shows a positive, responsible, projective, active and proactive attitude, exploring and anticipating the changes that exhibit adaptive flexibility in the taken actions.
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1.6. Conclusions

The current trend is to raise the management at the status of profession, as shown by Korpiaho K., H. Päiviö, Räsänen K. (2007, p. 46), especially since at global scale, educational management represents a real industry (L. Engwall, 2007, p. 28). For this it is necessary to build a modern epistemological paradigm of educational management, which extends beyond the classical paradigm. The main coordinates and characteristics of the two paradigms are captured in Table. 2, where we propose a multi-criteria comparative analysis of them, highlighting the modern educational management's guidelines, how it conceives the processes and the management decisions.

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