

THE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCES – MEANS TO OPTIMIZE THE CHANGE IN SCHOOLS IN THE PREUNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Abstract. In the context of the worldwide amplification of the education crisis effects, this study presents an eclectic and balanced approach of the theoretic contents between the educational leadership domain and the practical implications of the research. The research issues aim at the practicability of the “leadership competences” concept and draws an innovative vision of the characteristics that are specific to educational organizations, oriented towards change. The purpose of the papers, to supply scientific conclusions referring to ways to integrate the leadership competences into educational organizations, allows, on the one hand, understanding the complex relationship between the leader and the members of the organization and, on the other hand, facilitates the assessment of the social responsibilities of the change actors.

Keywords: leader, leadership competences, optimizing change, school organisations

1. Introduction

International specialized literature highlights the impact of leadership resonance both on organizational changes (by understanding the assumed role) and on the quality of the organization's performance (by sharing the same vision).

Leadership skills formulate a positive response to multiple expectations of the organization's members: intrinsic motivation and creative thinking skills, teamwork, interdisciplinary problem solving, delegation of power that gives members of the organization the confidence they can take risks. By using the skill set, formal and informal leaders optimize organizational change. .

Leaders, the main actors in the process of change, are those who innovate and optimize the educational environment and can partially or globally solve the problems that arise in the school organizations. Having a clear vision and possessing the art of influencing, leaders are the ones who succeed in changing the organization's perception of change and transforming it from a threat into an opportunity. The leader is formed, proving his competencies, confirming his value through results with long-term beneficial impact on the organization.

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2. Involvement in the evolution of concerns about the emergence and recognition of the global significance of the concept of educational leadership

Since leadership has an epistemological and ontological evolution, extensive empirical research is required on the changes made by this process in the educational system.

The concept of educational leadership, consisting of a series of desirable behaviors, is a complex concept describing the leadership exercise of the forms of power that legitimize it, evidenced by the variety of concepts and theories developed over time. The analysis of the concept builds the image of a complex educational process, based on three dimensions: influence, values and vision. Educational leadership is etymologically found in UK social governance models.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the ample process of change was initiated, and the term "superintendent" was replaced by the term "administrator". The concepts were criticized by the emancipator theorists who regarded the educational administration as a tool of control [1], but also by humanists for subjective privilege [2]. The first ideas of educational leadership emerged in 1980, when both scientists and practitioners set out to ensure quality in education by enhancing teacher professionalism [3].

The study of literature highlights valuable theoretical remarks made by the theorists since the end of the twentieth century: elementary effective schools [4] and leadership of learning/leadership centered on learning [5].

Educational leadership has been included as a discipline in the programs of English universities since the end of the twentieth century. In France, after initial resistance, leadership has rapidly developed, being a compulsory discipline at universities. In Romania, the leadership literature is in its infancy. Analysts note that, to date, there is no transfer of educational leadership concepts.

The education leader has a crucial mission in the development of collective competencies through the activity of establishing group identity around organizational values and aspirations, by implementing collaborative working tools and constantly pursuing the co-vision approach. Leadership is focused on constantly analyzing the organization's internal data to motivate people with multicultural backgrounds and to determine whether the proposed vision is feasible.

3. Leadership competences

By defining school in relation to social expectations, leadership is placed on building skills [6].

Does competence measure the direction of the actions of change actors in education, centred on the functional and functional dimension, starting from where do we want to reach? How do we get there?

In the managerial field associated with a profession or status, "competence includes knowledge - know how to do and know how to be" [7].

In the field of education, competence is "a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable a role, function or activity to be accomplished" [8].

Educational leaders are teachers who, through their professional profile, have the following skills (Table 1):

Table 1) Professional skills in education

<i>Competence</i>	<i>Extension of competence</i>
valuable competence	Assuming the status of a delegate of the community that transmits a system of values from society to the individual
Academic competence	Internalisation of congruent methodologies and attitudes with modes of knowledge
Didactic competence	Generation, selection, training and the phased explanation of knowledge
Psycho-referential competence	Valorizing others
Ability to cooperate	Partnerships
Integration of new information technologies	Cyberspace is the potentiator of collaborative learning ;
self-Reflexive competence	Professional development

Source: Cucos, C. (2013), *Educația. Experiențe, reflecții, soluții*, Iași: Polirom, pp. 17-19

We believe that these competences bring to the fore the role of the educational leader in relation to his social importance.

Educational leadership is found in the sphere of personal competences and social competences [9].

Personal competence, through the three components: self-awareness, self-discipline and motivation, aims at recognizing strengths and weaknesses, self-confidence, honesty, adaptability, conscientiousness and self-control. Work also requires an attractiveness to performance and optimism, a necessary component for a person with a developed conscience.

Social empowerment, through empathy, determines the leader to be concerned about the awareness of the feelings, needs and concerns of others in order to help them grow, to have the ability to harmonize with their own self and with others.

Competences of emotional intelligence are useful and effective tools for exercising leadership in school organizations (see Figure 1).

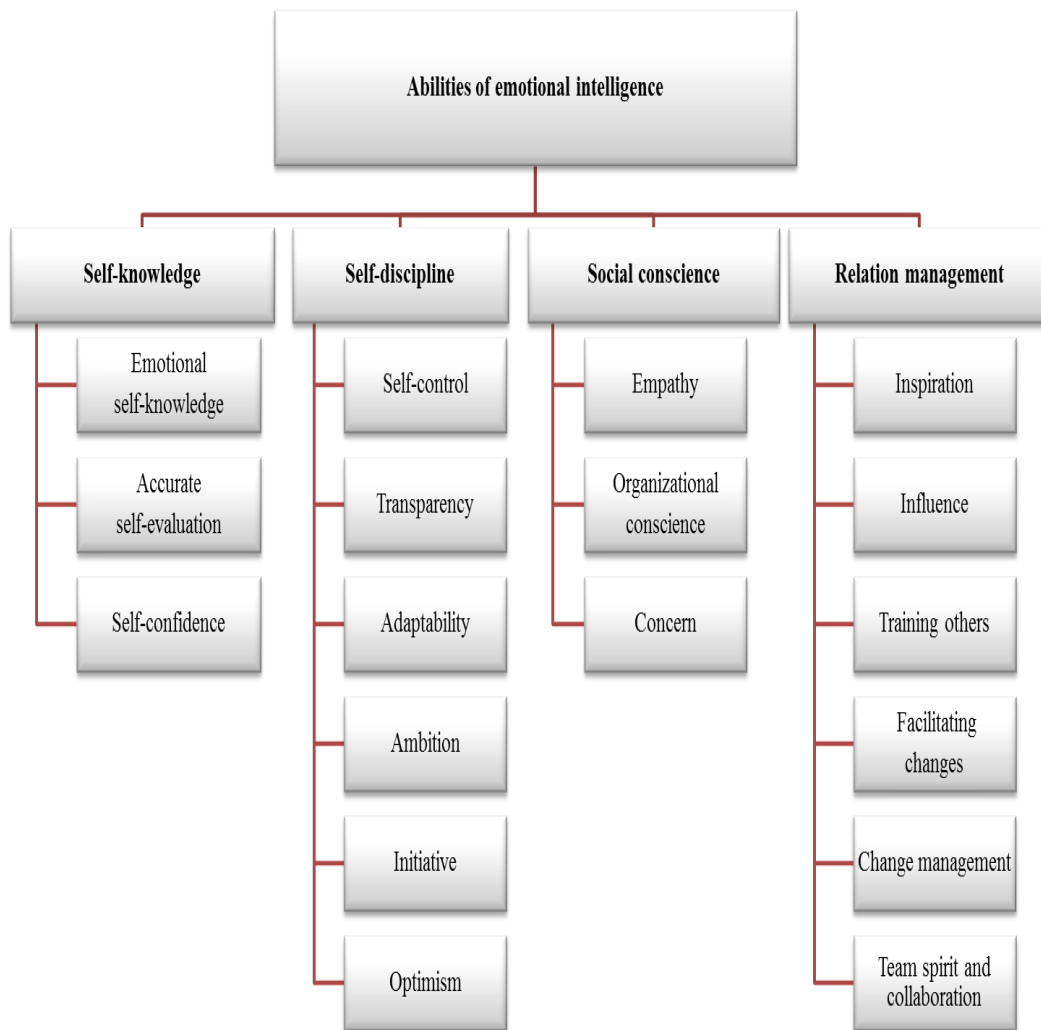


Fig. 1 Competențele inteligenței emoționale în leadership

Source: Goleman, D., McKee, A., Boyatzis, R. (2007), *Goleman, D., McKee, A. & Boyatzis, R. (2007), Inteligența emoțională în leadership*, București: Ed. Curtea Veche, pp. 188-229.

Leadership based on the skills of emotional intelligence, on the one hand, inspires the passion and enthusiasm of the members of the organization, and on the other hand, supports their motivation and devotion, the theory being presented as "beneficial in workplaces where personal interactions are prioritized" [10].

Conclusions

The personal, social and cognitive skills of the leader prove the interactive character of the leadership process. Through these, leaders' combat time-consuming factors within the school organization, clarifies the roles and priorities for achieving the goal, sets the rules for communication, develops the polyvalence and inspires the members of the organization the spirit of solidarity.

Capitalizing on these competences is the answer to the challenges posed by the imperatives of the knowledge society, the leader being the one who holds the levers of optimizing change in this complex environment.

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