

Applied Social Sciences

Applied Social Sciences:
Education Sciences

Edited by

Georgeta Rață, Patricia-Luciana Runcan
and Hasan Arslan

**CAMBRIDGE
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P U B L I S H I N G

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FOREWORD

The book **Applied Social Sciences: Education Sciences** contains five chapters centred on general educational issues, early childhood, elementary school, high school, and higher education.

Chapter One, “General Issues”, begins with a *historical and anthropological perspective upon ancient education* written by Mariana BALACI and Atalia ONIȚIU. The authors describe the ancient educational system and compare it to the modern one focussing on similarities and differences between the public and the private school systems of Roman education, using the analogical method of written texts and comparing them with other sources. The authors state that Roman society (and Roman education) was a male-dominated elitist and pragmatic society. The focus of Amalia DIACONU’s research, *Formative Assessment: Implicit and Explicit Principles*, shows that formative assessment has significant learning gains and should cover areas of interest as well as targets. However, it seems that, in the Romanian Education System, there is a discrepancy between the need to modernize the assessment practice and the political declarations in the field. Elizabeth-Anne ERICHSEN presents, in her paper, three practices toward an embodied philosophy for transformative learning – learning mindfully, communicating mindfully, and re-scripting mindfully: her conclusion is that we can build our awareness and learning in relationship through these basic practices, for ourselves and together for change. Silvia LUCICA’s research is an attempt to explain the relationship between education and media culture. The higher educational system has to face a tremendous problem: using human resources with maximum efficiency. Traditional education is too expensive, and demands from higher education are steadily increasing. Alternative solutions like “virtual classroom”, “virtual campus” or “invisible universities” are becoming more influential in the new era. The research carried out by Narcisa-Maria NADOLU focuses on *the didactic perspective of gender stereotypes in the Romanian educational system*. The author states that educational institutions have a vital role in the generation, restructuring and consolidation of social construction stereotypes in connection with social genders. Research results indicate that girls are appreciated as being more competitive, more creative and more critical than their peers. Vesna PRODANOVSKA and Elizabeta

MITREVA examine *incorporation, authorization and encouragement of employees to improve the quality of the educational process*. The authors argue that socio-political, economic and cultural changes affect both educational institutions and educational process. The new concept of quality changes people's mind, attitude and working style. Educational institutions could adapt these new changes and meet the new demands if the quality of learning processes improved. Ileana ROTARU tackles, in her study, the impact of mediatisation on social life, particularly on the education system, which is subjected to both quantitative and qualitative constraints. In the paper titled *A Review of the Literature on Pedagogical Approaches to Native American/African Indian Literatures* by Kelly SASSI, the author claims that native peoples remain fraught with potential missteps, re-stereotyping, or even oppression. The majority White teaching force lacks the training needed to successfully teach proponents of culturally relevant pedagogy. The article is trying to reconcile the understanding gaps that non-Native teachers and (non-Native) students experience when reading Native texts. A research written by Mihaela TILINCĂ and Valentina MUREȘAN concludes that *teacher training team is the key to successful training sessions*. The research examines the difference between theories in applied linguistics and the practice of teacher training. The researchers consider that linguistic analysis of teacher training dialogues can bring clarifications and add value to both areas of study. In order to successfully train, developing teacher training and learning are essential elements.

Chapter Two contains two papers on “**Early Childhood**”. The first one, focusing on *discipline in early childhood and valorisation of the minuscule*, pertains to Liliana STAN. The content of the study encompasses the before pre-school age (the period between 3 and 7 years), the most momentous period in childhood. The discipline of early-age children is derived from the child's relationship with his/her environment and children's attitudes and behaviours are shaped at this stage. For these reasons, teaching staff training and parent/counselling education are particularly useful. Finally, Mona VINTILĂ suggests using reflective seminar as a learning method at midway between everyday language and academic expose.

Chapter Three focuses on “**Elementary School**”. Claudia BORCA debates, in her paper, the relationship between metacognition and learning in visually impaired children, concluding that cognitive skills may be developing by use of mediated learning criteria. Another paper presents *Classroom Environment, Attributional Style and Science Achievement in Early Adolescence*. Loredana-Ruxandra GHERASIM and Simona

BUTNARU emphasize that achievement is moderated by both individual and learning environment characteristics. The paper explores how attributions and classroom environment interact in predicting the achievement in sciences during early adolescence. The researchers found out that attributional style and teacher support predict achievement. Marian ILIE, Marius-Lupşa MATICHESCU, Alexandra PETCU, Gheorghe MANDA and Adrian MARCU carry out an investigation on the *Dynamics of Curriculum Design Options* in the Romanian primary school system. Students believe optional and elective disciplines are useful and helpful; however, teaching elective subjects remains a limited practice. The research on how electives are used by each curricular area revealed a more frequent use of the time slots to deepen or broaden the compulsory core subjects than to introduce new disciplines.

Chapter Four is dedicated to “**High School**”. The research on *Leadership Styles of High School Students* by Hasan ARSLAN examines the leadership styles of public high school students based on Bolman and Deal’s theory of leadership frames. The author attempts to answer the questions “What kind of leadership styles are adopted by high school students?”, “Is there a significant difference between leadership styles of female and male high school students?”, and “Is there a significant difference between leadership styles of high school students in terms of grade level?” The findings indicate that leadership styles of high school students differ in terms of gender and grade level. The paper *Role of Modern Methods on Performance Evaluation of Secondary Education Pupils* by Otilia-Sanda BERSAN draws attention upon the influence of modern methods of assessing performance of secondary education. The researcher’s analysis relies on the teachers’ opinions and beliefs regarding the necessity, the usefulness and the impact of alternative methods on scholastic performance of pupils in secondary school. Results indicate that alternative methods of learning assessment have a higher level of effectiveness because they allow pupils’ results to be gauged and assessed with greater accuracy and objectivity. The article titled *Truancy: A Stringent Problem in Education* by Elena-Liliana DANCIU deals with children’s emotional problems that cause truancy. The author underlines that modern life is extremely complex and generates many social, psychological and economic problems. Children are impacted by peer pressure, scholastic overburdening, temptation to do drug, lack of educational activities. Because of these reasons, school absenteeism becomes a kind of rebellion and a method of overcoming the fear of helplessness. Students feel that school atmosphere is not longer pleasing to them. The author claims that school absenteeism leads in the short run to

social absenteeism. Daniela DUMITRU suggests, in her paper, that a community of practice can be an educational asset by putting the teenagers in the situation to use their ability and skills to make friends online in order to increase their knowledge in their field of work. Oana-Roxana IVAN's article tries to make a connection between argumentation and the teaching experience. The author conducted a descriptive study and asked unstructured questions to 20 students regarding the issue of argumentation in school. The author claims that building a proper argumentative essay requires knowing the rules underlying the construction of an argumentation and having the ability to juggle with these skills. A further analysis of Ionuț-Dorin STANCU, Mușata BOCOȘ and Daniel-Cosmin ANDRONACHE focuses on *Contextual and Individual Moderators in the Self-regulation of Learning*. The researchers try to find the relationship between intra-contextual learning and inter-contextual learning while focusing on age and learning context. Research results indicate that the self-regulation of learning strategies has a positive influence on thinking, emotion, and behaviour. Using the self-regulation of learning strategies, students may accomplish certain individual goals.

Chapter Five deals with “**Higher Education**”. Gabriela DOMILESCU's article tackles the issue of *Quality of Pre-service Teacher Training*. After analysing the reforms of Romanian pre-service teacher training, the author claims that providing quality in pre-service teacher training means meeting the needs of the beneficiaries (enrolled students, teacher educators, pupils, schools, and parents). A socio-pedagogical questionnaire was applied to 593 people and focussed on the objective of the research: outlining a concept of quality of pre-service teaching training in the opinion of all those involved in this type of training. Another article is dealing with how Romanian students spend their time. Ioan-Valentin FULGER conducted his research in the University of Petroșani as a case study. The author asked the students to assess their daily schedule from the perspective of the activities they have to accomplish, in general, including activities outside the university. The main results range within national averages starting with didactic activities, continuing with individual study, and ending with the effort made per day strictly on the academic activities. Gabriela GROSSECK and Carmen HOLOTESCU examine the issue of *Scholarly Digital Curation in 140 Characters*. The authors reconsider the concept of digital curation by correctly applying it to the tools used by educational actors. They claim that digital curation has a strong impact on the learning profession and performance. Digital curation is a way to discover and to filter the vast information on the web in some functional way to bring to the users' activity streams data. Laura-Ioana LEON's

study underlines the importance of *Communication Skills in English for the Medical Practitioner*. The author describes that communication skills are essential in establishing strong relationships between doctors and patients. Therefore, communication skills should be systematically taught in all medical education. Medical students confronted with both linguistic and cultural barriers should become aware of the need to possess these communication skills in general, but also to get some cross-cultural communication skills early in their career. Another research, carried out by Laura MALIȚA, tries to answer the question “*Should Teachers and Students be Friends on Facebook?*” The author takes the case of social sciences Facebook teachers and students from the West University of Timișoara, Romania. They claim that academics should find a proper solution for using this tremendous potential tool for educational purposes. Facebook becomes a vital educational resource for all academic actors: students, teachers and academic institutions. The focus of Lavinia-Maria NIȚULESCU’s research is on *Training and Development of Teachers’ Professional Competence*. The author reviews the literature related to the achievement and the development of the teachers’ professional competence and tries to improve the training of the future teachers. The comparative analysis of the results of control and experimental group indicates that there are significant differences between pre-test and post-tests. Georgeta RAȚĂ’s article on *Teaching Vocabulary at Tertiary Level* focuses on making the teaching/learning of the English language as easy, enjoyable, and permanent as possible using cheap, available visual aids from the internet. The researcher claims that the choice of a visual aid is influenced by learning situation-connected factors, by lesson aim-connected factors, or by lesson strategy-connected factors. The researcher compared two groups of students totalling 224 respondents. The research results were compared between control group and experimental group. The comparison of the results of the two groups suggests that, as far as architecture is concerned, teaching the English of architecture should be done, maybe more than any other type of English for special purposes, with visual support for higher effectiveness. Florin SĂLĂJAN and Sorina CHIPER underline, in their study, the positive effects of ERASMUS programmes on Romanian students having spent some time abroad and having strived to represent their country in a positive light. The study *Initial Teacher Training from the Perspective of a Genuine Approach to Cultural Diversity in Education*, written by Nadia-Laura SERDENCUIU, focuses on the importance of teacher training in relation with cultural diversity in education. The author used a questionnaire regarding the response to cultural diversity. The students evaluated 18 items. Research

results indicate that intercultural training programs conduct to increased openness regarding perception toward cultural diversity in the academic environment sustained by an increased willingness to respond of the subjects tested. Acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity are influenced by the individual's learning experiences in the academic environment. *Facilitation in the Educational Process: Perspectives and Approaches at University Level* is an article by Carmen-Maria ȚÎRU, which discusses the process of the conceptualization of facilitation in education. The author's objectives are to reveal the characteristics of university teachers, to establish differentiating aspects regards the facilitation approach in the teaching activity, to identify the significant differences between course titular and seminary titular, and to formulate suggestions of optimization of the educational facilitation in the educational process in higher education. The findings suggest that teachers largely approach facilitating teaching in the educational process in higher education.

Hasan Arslan

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ISSUES

INCORPORATION, AUTHORIZATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE EMPLOYEES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

VESNA PRODANOVSKA AND ELIZABETA
MITREVA

Introduction

In the last 20 years, quite a few major socio-political, economic and cultural changes in the process of transition to a democratic system and market operation have occurred in our environment. Such changes in our environment are accompanied by changes in all segments of life, especially in the educational institutions. The new concept of quality requires constant changing of people's mind, their attitude and working style in order to revive something new. In order to enable the educational institutions to respond to changes, it is necessary for their internal change to allow them to function effectively in the new conditions. This refers to enabling a development of a new system values that will support the change of current behaviors and actions as well as to develop new paradigms in accordance with the requirements of the new conditions.

The Necessity of Teamwork in Building TQM Systems in Macedonian Educational Institutions

Teamwork can be an important factor that would initiate the change of organizational culture. The introduction of teamwork in building TQM systems within the educational institutions is affiliated with emphasis on team learning.

The educational process is rather long and applies to all employees regarding their work. It takes at least 70% of the employees to master the way of achieving quality in order to obtain the goal. The first stage is

gaining additional knowledge followed by a change of attitude, change of the relationship of the individual with the surrounding environment as well as one of the team. Thus, it will result in a change of the attitude of the entire organization, which is also known as *learning organization* (Cepujnoska et al., 1993).

The application of TQM strategy means new design of a good documented quality system which covers all business processes of the educational institution and is a necessary base for successful application of SPC (Statistical Process Control) and effective teamwork that otherwise might not be set in case of poor quality system. In this manner, it ensures an effective conduct of top management positions consisted in the policy of quality and creates both good climate and informational base upon which teamwork is developed.

The development of team work requires patience and nourishment of long-term processes in order to obtain long-term results, while top management's desire for quick results and forcing them suffocates the teamwork. All these leads to dissatisfaction among the team members who have conscientiously and responsibly accepted the task (James, 1996).

The ability to work creatively hence giving professional contribution as well as respect for personal opinion and attitudes, feeling of involvement in the management of the educational institution, the common spirit to succeed – all these are elements of a company culture and teamwork that will contribute to the developing of mutual trust and respect, commitment, expansiveness, patience and loyalty to one another and loyalty towards the company, according to Druskat and Wolf (1998).

The strategic management in educational institutions should include their own human resources by the means of good will and persistence by forming teams from all professional profiles. Furthermore, by integrating their knowledge in order to achieve full conduct of quality in all business processes at the lowest cost of operation thus preventing possible complaints and eliminating the problems as well as removing the possible reasons which will be solved in a timely manner.

The common fear of change and resistance are quickly overcome by a strong desire of changing the current situation by implementing a new approach to the quality education.

This can be accomplished by applying the new philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) and application of the proposed methodology for building management teams in the Macedonian educational institutions.

Methodology for Building Management Teams for Designing and Implementing TQM systems within Macedonian Educational Institutions

The modern interpretation of the importance of the quality system for the staff in order to achieve the objectives of the company is presented through coordination between the systems and the employees. The capability of the top management to unite, motivate and to organize the employees will depend on the ability and the managerial skills.

Building management teams in solving problems is achieved through: incorporation, authorization and encouragement of the employees in quality improvement; achieving effective dialogue with the employees by constructing an effective communication system.

When a top management makes a decision to implement reengineering within the organization, the team approach in taking steps must be considered. It bears full responsibility for the execution of the reengineering business processes without having direct control over the employees who perform work because they become autonomous in their activities. The communication between the leader and the employees should provide a new working environment in order to improve their performance in the business and it will be accomplished only by a process of continuous learning. In addition, the employees must be trained and motivated to learn from the others, as well as to agree on updating their knowledge and experiences.

Good communication between leader and employees should provide: new awareness based on better mutual understanding; competency which is accomplished by changes to better; involvement of the employees in problem solving, decision making and proposal of improvements and innovations.

The role of management has great impact upon the staff planning which is based upon the policy and strategy of the institutions and presents a part of the strategic planning.

In the process of building the managerial teams, the personnel revisions should be developed in such way to display the personnel's potential and its performance, but also to display the need of professional personnel of the organization.

The hiring of new staff, the development of their career, and their active involvement in the team work should be defined in a way to both enable and stimulate competence, creativity and involvement in the problem solving as well as decision making.

A special task in the development of staff is coordination of both the individual and team objectives derived from the combining of the strategic and operational tasks with the personal goals of each employee.

The team should not be a place of suffocation of the individual initiatives or where they are adopted on behalf of the leader of the team.

At the same time, the method of operation must allow an easy flow of decision making due to the excessive individualism, exaggerated expectations, lack of flexibility, as well as achieving a consensus in building attitudes.

Incorporation, Authorization and Encouragement of the Employees to Improve the Quality of the Educational Process

The basic idea of use of the potential of the human resources presents a motivated involvement of the employees in creating solutions to problems and decision making.

This strategy is based upon the logic that all employees are familiar with the problems.

Hence, new and wider improvement opportunities are being created. The employees have the best possible position of finding the solution or the decision for improvement, especially if they are carriers of the improvement process. When it comes to services, especially services with highly frequent repetitions, the employees are in a position to note directly the judgment of quality from the users, which can provide an excellent basis for improvement or innovation.

The incorporation, of the employees within the quality improvement presents a process where they are authorized or encouraged on behalf of the managers in order to solve the problems and reach decisions suitable to their institutional level.

This applies primarily to: problem solving and decision making for the realization of the operational activities within the scope of work, in accordance with established rules and procedures; reaching decisions and / or proposing improvements or innovations in the activities of the process that they carry or the performance results; participation in defining the strategy of the institution.

Unlike the ruling institution confronting atmosphere where every idea is intentionally cut in the root, there is a need of organization which is ruled by an innovational climate of cooperation and communication, because even though every idea presents a potential for improvement or innovation it still generates new ideas. The participation of employees in

building a TQM system in an organization can be both individual and collective.

The methodology in building managerial teams for designing and implementation of TQM system includes the establishment of (Mitreva, 2010): Quality Board; Process quality teams; Control (field) teams for quality; Quality workshops; Involvement of all employees.

The service or quality board is responsible for all aspects of the TQM strategy in an institution. The work of this committee will largely depend on the design and the implementation of the TQM system. This committee is formed by the manager of the institution with a special declaration. The structure of the board of managers includes managers from all organizational units by default.

The structure of the board quality will: present the meaning and importance of the quality of overall performance; provide a permanent link between the perpetrators and management; meet at least once a month to see the effects of implementation.

The responsibilities of the Board are: provision of a strategic guidance; adoption of the plans for the implementation of the TQM strategy for each area; establishment and evaluation of procedural teams (process owners); evaluation and revision plans for quality improvement.

The managerial board is led by management representative for quality. The Board has a secretary who is in charge of the records, findings, decisions and obligations as well as coordination of the work between two board meetings.

The tasks of the board are conducted through several steps:

- **Step 1:** The dynamics of organized plan for making the documents of the quality system;
- **Step 2:** Adoption of the plan under 1 and the control of its implementation;
- **Step 3:** Adoption of documents of the system under Plan ;
- **Step 4:** Preparation of the plan for training the employees to implement the adopted documents of the quality system;
- **Step 5:** Adoption of the plan under 4 and the control of its implementation;
- **Step 6:** Control of the process of testing the knowledge within the area covering the internal standardization documents;
- **Step 7:** Coordination and following of all the activities of the organization regarding the control and verification of internal standardization;

- **Step 8:** Control of the implementation of the corrective and the preventive measures that are directly related to activities under 7;
- **Step 9:** Organization of the procedure of certification of the quality system introduced by the authorized organization;
- **Step 10:** Influence over the design of the motivational system of the staff to fully implement the quality system;
- **Step 11:** Coordination of all activities and management of all tasks related to the overall design and implementation of the quality system;
- **Step 12:** If external experts are hired, it should conduct the involvement of the experts in process design and the implementation of quality system through joint team working, defining plans and activities as well as monitoring of agreed realized activities.

The work of the board can come to barriers, crises and risks. The most common barriers that undermine the functioning of the quality system are: unrealized needs, bad decisions, vaguely defined roles, interpersonal conflicts, poor leadership, lack of feedback or information, inadequate system of remuneration, lack of confidence within the team and being not prepared for changes. The core barrier is a psychological matter which can be linked to cooperation, work demotivation, vanity, and inadequate financial support, as well as lack of interest for continuous learning and improvement, or inadequate training program. These barriers are omnipresent and require coordination through meetings where the employees are present in person. Furthermore, these meetings allow freedom of creation, define group norms, strengthen the sense of belonging, loyalty and promotion of team communication.

Process quality teams. These teams consist of employees who are part of the business process and are obliged to plan the standard operating procedures (SOP). Through SOP the rights and obligations of all employees is defined.

The characteristics of these teams are as follows: mandatory attendance of the managers; ensuring top to bottom approach which involves all of the employees; meeting at least once a month before the meetings of service quality.

Management teams of quality. The characteristics of these teams are as follows: election of the projects to improve quality; determination of the realms of the project; election of the members of the team and the leader; evaluation of the project quality progress.

The characteristics of the workshops of quality are as follows: selection of people with knowledge and skills; selection of employees who are elected directly to confront with the problem that needs to be solved;

meet regularly under supervision; to identify, analyze and solve problems related to quality.

Involvement of all employees underlines: inclusion of a large number of employees; increase of the motivation in order to improve the business processes; increase of the awareness of the need to improve quality; improvement of the communication channels.

Building such an organizational structure would provide involvement of the staff as well as opportunity of expressing their personal ideas, ability to communicate with the others who have different aspects in regard of the proposed solutions. The top management must provide fast and competent evaluation as well as selection and implementation of the solutions in practice.

The necessity of Teams for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Macedonian Educational Institutions

Satisfied employees tend to improve the service quality or to increase their efforts in order to raise it to a higher level.

Hence, one of the key factors is the instrumental and the material equipment in the workplace, especially the informational and communicational links that present another factor of effectiveness and efficiency of the business processes. The collaboration within a mature team is dependent on the interaction between the team members. The team will be able to provide both an effective and efficient decision if it is well structured in regard of the personnel. What is highly required is a cooperation with the Department of Personnel and Education in the selection of the associates for the team building, the profile of requirements and cooperation among themselves. The participation in such teams is not merely a tool for personal development, but also an opportunity to develop business processes and services. By comparing the results among the teams we can assess both the productivity and the efficiency or the effectiveness of a team able to assess their awareness of the results. The educational institution should be based upon the number of individuals and teams participating in the improvements and innovations, as well as the effects of those decisions.

Top management teams are being set upon certain issues depending on the nature of the problems and effects to be achieved. Often the teams are being formed in the following manner (Mitreva, 2010):

Teams for improvement of a particular task after it has been performed: it is a top management's task to implement the project in order to improve the quality of the educational process; they have a

multifunctional composition; they operate under the principle of virtual and /or project task; the management of these teams functions within the quality realm, apart from the function area which is to be improved.

Permanent teams to enhance the quality of the educational process: it is a top management's task to follow and improve individual areas such as marketing, visual identity, SPC; they have a multifunctional composition; they work on the principles of physical and /or project task; the management of these teams functions within the quality realm, apart from the function area which is to be improved.

Promoters of quality: these are leading professionals of individual organizational units which are in charge of the quality promotion of the educational processes by applying documents to the quality system, the techniques, etc. within the institution; The promoters perform these activities apart from their regular duties, for which are being specifically stimulated.

Individual schemes proposing improvement and innovation: these are schemes by which each employee takes an initiative to propose improvements and innovations; schemes of work in a modified PDCA cycle. The management improvements to perform the following functions are: quality function for improving business processes; function of development for service innovation. The individual improvement schemes may include corrective and preventive measures.

Teams for self-assessment: These are set by the top management and present continuous self-assessment teams that determine both results and areas for improvement.

Conclusion

Top management should initiate a special program to promote improvement and innovation by encouraging employees to engage in the internal presentations of the proposed solutions. These presentations must have a high level of importance, to be a special event in which the top management will participate.

The process of authorizing and encouraging the involvement of the employees in finding new solutions and improvements of the educational process should be consisted of rewards for their taken initiative and displayed creativity in solving the problems as well as for the proposed and realized improvement and innovation. The top management must create a system for motivational rewards as it develops the process of involvement of the employees' potential.

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