

School autonomy, achievements and challenges in the Albanian education process

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Abstract

After 1990, special attention was paid to education management and school management. In the field of education reform that includes Albania this was an opportunity that our school sees itself in a more modern vision in terms of its management. It should emerge from the frameworks as the executives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports guidelines and orders, but also as the initiator, drafting and implementing policy at school level. In a wider vision besides the contentious side, the look had to be thrown away by financial management, new relationships with the parent community and ultimately with local government.

From this point of view, we must acknowledge that positive steps have been taken, but much remains to be done in terms of effective, long-term management, and management of the school as the primary institution of education.

This paper aims modestly explain step by step the role of school leaders as managers, in aid that he should give, and then supporting factors in school governance. Of course, the analysis provides facts on achievement and not achievement, so i was trying to keep my position on this problem.

Keywords: School management, administration, school director and finance, managerial skills, sources of funding, school board, local government.

Introduction

The development of quality accountability systems is one of the main directions of modern and quality management of our school. School autonomy is balanced and evaluated with quality accountability systems. Such systems make educational institutions encouraged to fulfill their mandate obligations, evaluate, report on achievement levels, and pursue the completion of the necessary measures for further improvement. They should regularly report on the productivity of using public funds and institutional resources, but at the same time, leadership, staff, and learners can answer to actions and achievements. Accountability systems at the level of institutions administering the system imply regulatory systems, strengthening management capacities, encouraging public participation and control. All of this enables assessment of achievements as a basis for ensuring transparency and accountability.

In this context, we consider as fundamental one of the key aspects of the SKAP, which is of interest to any discussion. According to this basic document "in this decentralized system, schools will be required to take great responsibilities in planning, managing and improving the quality of the services they provide [...]. The School Grants Scheme, as an essential element of school autonomy, will favor the creation of budget planning capacities at the school level as well as at local government levels. Here are intended productivity growth, the quality of transparency in the work

of school administration and the new roles of school leaders as managers. Despite fluctuations that may accompany the process, progress towards school autonomy will be sustainable over the next 5 years. Large schools or small school groups will test the autonomy model. It is of interest to highlight the drafting of the School Improvement Project and the strengthening of school autonomy within the P-CBA".¹

Determining the level of autonomy, which will be allowed by schools by law, is the key aspect of the process of vitalizing school autonomy. I think that for setting the level of school autonomy we can be informed by two key sources:

First of all, from the diverse experiences that gave life to models over the last 3 decades in European countries.²

Thus, the massive changes that took place in this timeframe made the policy of school autonomy to spread almost to all European countries. All of these countries have adopted the top - down approach, which has provided a powerful framework for new school freedoms. Notably, these countries, school autonomy reforms have gone through several stages and implemented in the process ideas, peak footage of different schools.

Initially, in 80 years, to the twentieth century, reforms were linked with the political cause of democratic participation and emphasized the need for more schools open to their local communities. For example, in Spain, in the spirit of the Constitution, the LODE (Organic Law on the Right to Education) considered school autonomy as a means of achieving democratic participation. All sectors of the education community had to be represented in the school's decision-making process. Similarly, in France, a new legal status for the second-tier elementary education group gave them greater freedom of management, while the August 1985 decree introduced the terms of school autonomy based on the principle of openness schools to their communities.

In the 90-th, of twentieth century, for school autonomy reforms became strongly linked to a dual theory that made the movement for political decentralization (new freedoms for the participation of local actors) with the movement for the realization of the agenda of "New Management public ". The agenda sought to apply the private sector principles in public service management, based on the five main principles (doctrines):

- placing the client at the center of state activity, thereby weakening the mentality of the public sector;
- decentralization of responsibilities at the closest level to the area of action (principle of subsidiarity);
- giving account of government officials to the community;
- emphasizing the quality of service and efficiency of public bodies;
- replacement of traditional procedural control with assessment on the basis of results".³

Consequently, "decentralization of responsibilities to local communities and

¹ National Strategy for Pre-University Education 2009-2013, pp. 19-20.

² Extensive synthesis of experiences can be found in the School Autonomy in Europe - Policies and Measures, Eurydice (2007), adapted by the Albanian Center for Educational Assistance (<http://www.qshaa.org>).

³ Hood, C. (2001), MenaxhimiiRiPublik, In N. J. Smelser, P. B. Baltes (eds), Enciklopedia Ndërkombëtare e Shkencave Sociale dhe të Sjelljes, Amsterdam, Elsevier. Shih Eurydice (2007). "School autonomy in Europe – Policies and Measures".

school autonomy aimed at boosting the productivity of the school's functional and quality management - believing that decisions taken at the level closest to the workplace would ensure better use of public resources. This dual theory led to this period of reforms in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and the Baltic States, where the fragmentation of the former highly centralized system created the opportunity to adapt new rules for public management. School autonomy is often part of the same legislative framework with political decentralization - as two boxes together - since local authorities who have gained new responsibilities may delegate new responsibilities to schools in this spirit are in charge.

In most European countries, currently, school autonomy is seen as a tool to improve the quality of education. Regardless if it is a country that resumes a starting process in the past decade: Bulgaria, Czech Republic or Portugal, or a country that is in the first steps of this road as Germany, Luxembourg and Romania, the emphasis is on analysis the finest of the responsibilities that will be allocated and implemented realistically . The greatest attention is paid to pedagogical autonomy that is closely related to improving school outcomes.

Raised at the level of a basic principle for school and policy management (institutions should be autonomous to guarantee learning freedom, strengthen local school democracy and complete the decentralization process) school autonomy has been done in the days in most countries, an instrument for achieving the primary goals of education: to give school and teachers more freedom to develop the quality of education"

Secondly, setting the level of autonomy considers, in the first place, the general characteristics of this governing model of school:

- full autonomy (where schools take decisions within the limits of the laws and the general regulatory framework for education of students, without the interference of external bodies, but without denying their right to be 'consulted r with authority high);
- limited autonomy , which refers to cases when schools make decisions by choosing within a defined set of choices set by a higher education authority (or receiving approval for their decisions from such authority);
- conditional autonomy , referring to the experiences of those countries where education providers and / or local authorities may choose, or not, to delegate their decision-making authority in some areas of the school. If this happens, differences may arise between schools at the level and areas of responsibility delegated.

On the other hand, level assignment refers to the characteristics of the concept. School autonomy combines in its volume three main elements:

1. persons to whom authority passes to make decisions;
2. the management field where decision-making is exercised, where the most important are finances, staff and curriculum;
3. regulations that control what decisions are taken and how they are accounted for.
4. A more complete view of these elements provides the following table⁴

⁴ R. Levancić (1995). Local management of school. Analysis and Practice. Open University Press, page 5.

Persons passing authority to make decisions	The areas where decisions are made	Regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Directors • Teachers • Parents (through the governing body of the school) • The local community (through the Regional Education Board) • Businesses (donations and sponsorships) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Material resources • Human resource • Engagement of students • The curriculum 	<p>Use of resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial audit • Professional development of teachers, salaries and conditions • Employment Laws • Class size • Building standards <p>Determining products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National curriculum • Indicators of achievement • Inspection of quality and standards fulfillment <p>Educational market conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening / closing of schools • Admission of students • Publication of school achievements

Conclusions

From what we set out and tried to analyze above we come to some conclusions and concretely:

1. Based on this paper, it emerges that one of the other steps in assisting a school management and good management is the improvement and intensification of parental participation in education issues;
2. It is raising their level of awareness on the value of their children's education, as well as the advantages and benefits from the presence of parents in the school, and involvement in solving the problems of education in general.
3. This would be an effective response to the indifference and passivity of the parent's mass. Certainly parents presence in school and co-operation with teachers can not be strengthened if parents are not sufficiently aware of the role that plays a qualitative education for their children's economic and social future.
4. What is suggested is an effective awareness campaign on the practical value and benefits of obtaining a qualitative education and the changes that this can bring to the lives of children, especially those of low-income families. Concretely, it is advisable to undertake an awareness raising campaign for parents on the need for education as well as their role, rights and obligations in the process of educating their children at home and at school.

Recommendations

For all interested actors who want to know more about school autonomy in today's European Integration Process, we recommend that:
 The campaign should be at the national level and a long-term enterprise involving

national and local radio and television, newspapers and magazines in the field of education as well as a national training program for teachers and parents;

- *It must be adapted to the cultural level of the parent's mass and respond to their communication needs by using more creative ways and away from the consumed templates;*
- *The campaign should be programmed in the long run, as it aims at changes in mind, which are not easy to achieve and should provide through its continuity a critical level of attention and interest from parents. Its content and ways of development can be tested initially in some circles, but always with the ultimate goal of a national campaign. This is especially necessary to develop the sense of solidarity and parenting when it comes to participation in important education decisions that can not be realized within a school or district;*
- *The campaign must be programmed by a complex group of education specialists and other media to ensure an optimal content of execution channels as fruitful h n h that. It must be approved in advance by MARS, which should be an interactive actor in its implementation.*

References

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- P-CBA Evaluation Document, page 5. For more information, see www.mash.gov.al
- IZHA Manual for School Leaders, Tirana 2012.