Stakeholders' Perception of the Process of Change in the Romanian Pre-University Education

Adriana GRIGORESCU[1]
Luminiţa Mirela OLTEANU[2]

Abstract

The Romanian society has crossed over the last 22 years a devious course characterized by dynamism and permanent experimenting. The pre-university education system has adapted „ad hoc" to the variations of the outer environment without the design of a medium and long term strategy. This fact was due to the shortcomings of the education before 1989 and the frequent changes of the education policy. Nowadays, there is a very bureaucratic pre-university education, relatively inefficient, in a continuous change of regulation.

Having as the general target „The identification of the perception of the stakeholders of the education process regarding the need for change, the mechanisms of implementation and the pattern of the change to be efficient for the pre-university education system", this research took place during the period of September-December 2012, on a population of 354 respondents, teaching staff and students of the pre-university education system, representatives of parents and local community, as well as businessmen, members of the schools administrative councils.

The big quantity of information we obtained allowed the possibility to achieve a connected analysis of the collected data. This consisted in the interpreting the standard averages and deviations for all selected items according to the socio-demographic variables. According to the proposed objectives, the research has brought about a rich set of conclusions which point out: the stringent need for stability; the implementation of an efficient pattern for the change, where the consolidation of the change has to be followed by the valuation of the effect; the reduction of the red-tape; the involvement of all stakeholders in the change process. The attained conclusions have confirmed the seven hypotheses used by this initial approach and, on the other hand, have created a working platform for the engendering of a pattern of change suitable for education. The level that will be accepted by the stakeholders will represent the theme of a new research.

Keywords: *education, stakeholders, change management, evaluation, systemic approach*

JEL classification: **I21, I28, M00**

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[1] **Adriana GRIGORESCU** National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania, adrianagrigorescu11@gmail.com; Valahia University from Targoviste, Romania; Institute of Economic Forecasting, Bucharest, Romania
[2] **Luminiţa Mirela OLTEANU** Valahia University from Targoviste, Targoviste, Romania, mirela_olt_t@yahoo.com

Introduction

The Romanian society during the last 22 years was characterized by an unprecedented explosion of knowledge, major changes in the field of the labor structure and the technologies and also by strategic changes of adjusting sectorial policies to the European requirements.

Under these conditions, the Romanian education was forced to react by a reform, structured in a number of change cycles, determined by the economic, social and cultural signals.

Taking the analysis of the pre-university education after the year 1989 one can reach to the conclusions that the education policies and the change strategies put into operation at the system level are not efficient if they are not based on the selection and promotion of managers that have the knowledge and behavior meant to support and not to block the change. Thus, the pre-university education reform should begin at the management level, human resources, curriculum and financing. (Petrescu & others, 2010)

The Romanian education is tributary to the too long practice of the centralized management. On the other hand, due to the stability of teaching jobs, in the most schools it was developed a strong organization culture that represented, in many cases, an important factor of resistance to change. During the last 22 years, strategies were designed to preserve the balance of the system by applying the change in the form of reforming measures mix and centralizing practices. In the case that during this whole period a quantitative and qualitative valuation would has had place to measure the amplitude of the organization and system changes, the future measures would have been more efficient. Change management is approached as mechanism, tools, and techniques by authors looking for the best solutions of implementing the 'new' in organizations (Burduş & others, 2008).

The knowledge of the previous years pointed out the fact that decisions centralized taken cannot cover all actual needs/situations all over the country. From direct observation, we found out that the numerous changes that took place in the system and the inefficient ways of communication from the center of the information regarding the measures/taken decisions by the decision makers till now have brought about different reactions at the education institutions management level, teaching staff, students, parents and community.

As an example, at the school management level it is noticed a deep concern to attract financing resources, to search for new methods of relationship with the representatives of the local community and, also to a slow adaptation to the frequent changes of regulation and the organization guidance towards excessive red-tape, in prejudice of focusing the efforts on the students' interests. Reconstruction of education system was analyzed by Buzarnescu in 'Academic Management', focusing on the concepts and praxiology (Buzărnescu, 2001) and others authors from its main characteristics and theoretical bases (Cojocaru, 2004).

This determined the need to a real „measuring" of the sources of pressure/resistance to change and of the methods and patterns of change that, in the

stakeholders' perception, would be efficient for the education units (Hafsi & Fabi,, 1997). At the same time we pay attention that different stakeholders can interact within different networks in order to be able to meet better their objectives (Roja, Nastase, 2012) and this issue should be well addressed by the schools.

In this work we started with the belief that the experience of the last 22 years allows all persons involved in the process of changing the pre-university education (the stakeholders) to express their opinion regarding to what is suitable for the system they are committed to. The drawing up of the general objective of the research *The identification of the perception of the stakeholders in the education process regarding the need for change, its mechanisms of implementation and the pattern of change to be efficient for the Romanian education system,* occurred, on one hand, as a consequence of this belief and, on the other hand, as a need imposed by the conclusions resulted from the mapping of the changes that took place in the pre-university education during the last 22 years.

The solution for achieving this objective was the design and implementation of a questionnaire that approach two themes of interest for the research: A – the opposition to change and B – mechanisms of change implementation.

The research with the theme "*The stakeholders' perception of the process of change in the Romanian pre-university education*" was integrated in an ample project and aimed at the attainment of reference conclusions that would form the ground of a future analysis. This new research will consist of the sketch of a pattern for change focused on the conclusions of this work and of determining the extent the proposed pattern is accepted by the stakeholders interested in the future pre-university education, including in this list of stakeholders also the staff of the competent departments from the Ministry of National Education or from the Institute of Education Sciences.

1. Actual matters resulted from the changes of the last two decades

1.1 General considerations

1.1 Legal requirements

In all papers of education policy and all the governmental programs of the last 22 years it is stated that the education is an imperative priority. The two laws of education – Law no.84/2005, Law of education and Law of national training no 1/2011 – had as main aim the ideea that the education system brings about educated and trained persons, with competences that enable them contribute to the progress of society. An efficient way to improve the organizations results in the pre-university education system is the achievement of change. But this doesn't represent in itself an end but an opportunity, a way to adapt the organization to the outer environment through a permanent process of passing from a balance state to another one.

During the time, the Romanian education system has tried to cope with the challanges of the economic, social or political crisis. This need to refer permanently to the outer variations imposes that the education policy and managerial thinking to be flexible and to fold on the fluctuations of the environment outside the education system.

For sure the education staff and the other acting people involved (defined as persons having well designed interests in the field of the education system) wish that the pre-university education system to be modern, flexible, with a curriculum architecture consistent with the European one, focused on the students and society interests.

Among the questions that it is necessary to answer to, when designing the matters the Romanian education cope with, there are also those that was laid at the base of this work:

- Does the present eduacation system, involved in a continuous change, respond to the Romanian economic-social needs?
- Has been taken into consideration, when designing the education policies, the need to draw up an efficient pattern for change, suitable also for the pre-university education?
- Was the change process implemented at one time based on substantiated data, scientifically determined from the quantitative and qualitative valuation of the effects of changes that occurred prior to this?
- Do the managers of the education institutions know in detail the characteristics of the change process and are they able to put into operation the most efficient implementing mechanisms of it?
- Do the stakeholders, influenced by the experience they passed through, consider the change as a possibility of the institution evolution?
- The answers to these questions can be found, on one hand, from the theoretical analysis of the system on the whole and, on the other hand, from the analysis of the results obtained from questionnaires answered by stakeholders related to their perception regarding the process of change from education.

1.2 The range of the identified matters

A. The outcomes of numerous changes that took place at all levels of the education system during the two post-revolutionary decades of education have not met the stakeholders' expectations. The rhetoric of the governmental programs was not endorsed by the medium and long term strategies, unanimously accepted by the political parties. The permanent change of the political directions at the top of the ministry has brought about a series of trials, many of them with no ends, whose effects were not deeply analyzed and were not followed by measures for improvement. On the most occasions, during a methodological action it was resorted to "tabula rasa" or it was taken another direction, with another vision about the fact and the desired results. All these failures along the strategic route of

the education system engendered regress and were not followed by effects that could be identified with institution changes or significant qualitative results.

Identified matter: The period of the last 22 years of democracy has not been characterized by stability. The strategies regarding the organization of the system and the achievement of the education process are a great deal and cancel one another, with a staggering speed determined by the change of the decision takers on the top management of the ministry. The generations that lived these last years the trial of attending different education levels have been disconcerted by the intensity, celerity in drawing up and implementation of a multitude of changes, reforms and strategic and legal innovations.

B. The education process is inefficient. The results of the national estimates are at a relatively low level and register significant discrepancies for the 'resistance rates' and also the opinions by genders (MECTS, Report on the state of national education system, 2011), and the national weight of graduating the school-leaving examination is under 50 percent as it is shown by its evolution during 2010-2012. The report of the ministry regarding the state of the national education system on 2011 point out that the main problem of Romania is the deterioration of the quality and not the level of enrollment and renunciation.

Identified matter: The quality of the education services, measured by results, is week and further deteriorating, according to signals that come from outside the system and draw the attention on this situation. This deterioration has been poorly noticed and monitored and the correcting measures had not the expected results.

C. The pre-university education system is still over centralized although; during the last two years some decentralization measures have been taken. The principals of schools have not yet the freedom of decision and feel the financial and decision making pressure put on them by the school inspectorate, City hall and the Parents council. To this aspect it is added the yearly change of the principals that at present, almost entirely, have these jobs on a mandatory basis and not on a competitive examination.

Among the most important aspects that come out of a poll achieved with the teaching staff there are the loss of authority, high reputation and dignity as against the students, their families, the community representatives. The status of the teaching staff has lost the greatness that was granted before 1990.

Identified matter: The excessive bureaucracy of school is a source of stress and ongoing unrest among the teaching staff. The teaching staff spends too much time with the red-tape requirements that have no connection with the education process and have no time for the methodological activities and self improvement. To the perpetuate of this aspect lays also the way of the teaching staff valuation in the framework of the process of mobility, promotion, gradation of ability or the annual mark, in the case of the management positions etc.

Identified matter: From the mapping of the changes that have occurred in the Romanian education comes out that the frequency of implementing the „legal

reforms" was extremely high. Under these conditions it is obvious that the schools principals resort only to the „ad hoc" management.

Identified matter: The data conveyed with the occasion of the training lectures on the matter of implementing the decentralization strategy of the pre-university education or on matters of education management were merely theoretical, and the school principals apply only the management of unplanned adaptation type.

Identified matter: Through its kind of activity, an education organization is based on communication. From the comments of different teachers on the changes in education follows that „in education the initiatives come from teachers, their authority is out of question" (Istocescu, p. 5; Iosifescu, 2001). The other acting parts involved cannot be forced to accept the change by major means of coercion. Constraints exist, but they can be of an emotional, financial, professional, mobility and education policy nature.

Identified matter: A school organization/pre-university institution works as a complex system with parts that mutually interact. As an example, the changes in the decision taking system can trouble the area of relationship and power of the stakeholders in the education process and can bring about changes at the organization level.

2. Pilot inquiry into the stakeholder's opinions

2.1 The design of the research

The research took place in the period September-December 2012, on a population of 354 respondents, teaching staff and students of the pre-university education, representatives of the parents and local community, and also businessmen, members of the administration councils of the education units. The used method was the inquiry based on self-administered questionnaire. Since it was used a rapid and "ecologic" way of managing the research process and the preservation of the respondent anonymity, the questionnaire was sent by internet. The used method was the self-administration, as it was aimed to remove the filtration of the data by the inquiry operator, and the respondent had enough time to think, the possibility to access different sources that allowed him to clear up different issues specific to the change management and could pass again over the ideas and logic configuration of his options. The data processing was done with methods of socio-economic research and statistical tools (Sava, 2004; Septimiu, 2007).

The survey's theme "*The stakeholders' perception of the process of change in the Romanian pre-university education*" **was** put in a set of indices, structured at the questionnaire 19 questions level.
The opinion questionnaire aimed at studying the subjects motivation, interests and moods/dispositions, and the question system was designed so that to allow the pointing out of certain technical conclusions about the direction and intensity of the opinion of the persons having interests in the field of the pre-university education.

The questionnaire was structured on two interconnected themes: A – Opposition to change and B – Mechanisms of implementing the change, aiming at both the acquiring of a large quantity of data and also the selection of the relevant information for reaching the aimed objectives. For this aim closed questions were used, with pre-codified answers and, in view to permit the same number of pro- and against alternatives for the subjects scales of 5 possibilities were used [from *total disagreement* (1) to *total agreement*(5), from *unimportant* (1) to *very important* (5) or from *very strong* (5) to unexisting (1)]. The pattern of display is mainly tabular, with clear defined matrix, to give the respondent the possibility to mark easily his option. In the preamble of the questionnaire the potential subject were asked that in the case of questions with pre-coded answers to check/mark with a color the chosen answers(texts), and in the case of items where a score is required, to mark with "x" or check the proper score by their opinion. From the beginning the respondents were informed that the aim of the survey is to find out the opinion of teaching staff and the other participants to the education process regarding the need for change, its mechanisms of implementation and the change pattern to be efficient for the pre-university Romanian education. It was also stated that this survey in pre-university education units has a scientific finality.

Using the size letter 10 in writing the questionnaire made the reading/filling of the requirements easy, without difficulty even for subjects with sight problems. To allow the subjects focus on the essence of each question the key words were underlined and negations were avoided. In the achievement of this means of survey we resorted to a high level of abstracting/technicality of the questions, as the level of knowledge of the inquired ones is high.

The effective time of filling the questionnaire was designed for maximum 40 minutes in view not to exceed the focusing power of the subject but, as mentioned before, the respondents had the possibility to come back over their options, the time between the sending moment and re-sending by e-mail being of about three weeks. There were no material costs with the process of sending the questionnaire.

The collected data as the result of bringing into operation of the research means were statistically processed with the help of the software *Statistical Package for Social Science - S.P.S.S.* for Windows, version 17.0. (Howitt & Cramer, 2010; Clocotici & Stan, 2001).

The multitude of statistic outputs came from the calculation of the standard averages and variations for all the items selected according to the socio-demographic variables (gender, age, length of service, institution type and the position in the institution) and made the complex descriptive analysis easier, only the data of interest for the theme being retained for this study.

2.2 The research objectives

General objective: *Identification of the stakeholders of the education process opinion regarding the need for change, its mechanisms of implementation and the pattern of change to be efficient for the pre-university education system.*

Practical objective:

O.1. Identifying the importance granted to the quality evolution of pre-university organization activity and of the strategies of change implemented till now in this system.

O.2. The determination of the way the interested parts in the pre-university system judge the change: as a necessary reality, a way of progress/development of the organization or as an innovation/chaos.

O.3. The study of the stakeholders' opinion regarding the effects of the variations of the two environments, the inner one – the organization environment or the outer one, on the initiation of the process of change in the pre-university education.

O.4. Identification of the stakeholders' opinions on the main factors of stress and opposition to change in a pre-university education organization.

O.5. Identification of the dimensions and the sub-dimensions relevant for the pattern of change which is efficient to be applied at the pre-university education organizations.

O.6 Determination of the importance that stakeholders pay to the stages of a change process in the institution they act and which are the methods of change suitable for the pre-university education institutions.

2.3 Drawing up the hypotheses based on the established aspects

General hypotheses: *The efficiency of the change process in the pre-university education is determined by a complex system of factors as the quality of the human resource, managerial competence, harmonization of stakeholders' opinions regarding the process and the efficiency of the national strategy of maintaining a balance between stability and change.*

Working hypotheses:

I.1. The planned change is a needed reality, a way of evolution of an organization and is determined by the changes that take place outside and inside the education institution. In the education system, the change is conditioned, especially, by the outer environment changes.

I.2. All involved stakeholders need training to positively understand the pressure factors and the factors of opposing the change, otherwise the change can fail.

I.3. The changes that took place in the pre-university education organizations are founded mainly on communication and transparency rather than on constraints.

I.4. The change of the pre-university education system has to be achieved taking into consideration the systemic pattern of change.

I.5. To achieve an efficient step, the change process has to be finished with a valuation, after a period of balance/stability under the new state (ex. a period of at least 4 years).

I.6. To ensure the increase of the organization efficiency in the process of change all actors/stakeholders have to be involved, both those from inside and also the one from the outer environment.

I.7. The red-tape and the great number of changes that took place in the education system bring about the lack of reaction of the staff to the idea of change.

2.4 Finding the sample size

One of the most important stages of a research in the sociological field is fixing the sample size. The sample sizing is a complex process where "from the target population on the whole it is chosen a part named sample that will be, afterwards directly studied" (Spătaru & Cădariu, 2003) The size of the sample (n) is given by the number of the statistical units from the selected community that will deliver the information needed for analysis.

According to the source (Hapenciuc, 2007) the sampling methods applied to the market research and the efficient management of business "The optimal size of sampling depends on obtaining the minimum volume that ensure an adequate representativeness of the sample, given by the factors of influence placed outside the size of the total community and that are referring to the community structure".

In such a study, the size of the sample (n) is very important, it represents the number of subjects that will be taken into consideration and depend on certain elements:

t = the value of the research outcomes warranty ;this represents a factor that shows the level of probability to guarantee the results;

p = the ratio of the sample components (usually it is considered 0.5 to have a maximum dispersion);

Δ_w = the error limited by the accepted representativeness.

The calculation formula for the size of a sample is:

$$n = \frac{t^2 * p(1-p)}{\Delta_w^2} \qquad (1)$$

In the case that an error limit is established for 5% (0.05) and a due value of probability of 0.95, the coefficient t=1.96 according to tables of previously calculated probabilities. The value of p is considered 0.5 if there is no other dispersion factor mentioned, and then:

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384 \, subjects$$

The analysis of the representativeness dependence on the size of the sample resulted in the conclusion that "a sample of a n size has the same

representitiveness irrespective of the dimensions of the population from where it was drawn out" (Spătaru & Cădariu, 2003)

Since the research has a didactic purpose, the above mentioned analysis was taken into consideration in establishing the size of the sample. So, the expected sample had to be of 384 subjects. As the questionnaires were sent by internet we estimated a rate of answer of about 80%, reason that determined the spreading of the questionnaires to a number of about 450 subjects. The sampling was improbably on an accessibility base, in fact there were selected those from the official databases, considering the access faster and data of quality. Taking into consideration the efficient collaboration on the occasion of other studies, the selected ones were required to create network points for spreading the questionnaire to other people of the target group: teaching staff, students, parents, businessmen, local community representatives.

In accordance with the database, 366 questionnaires were sent back. After the removal of the unrecorded answers, 354 questionnaires were analyzed.

The target group was selected starting with the fact that the strategy of the change process is drawn up mostly by the schools principals – the headmasters of the teaching units, in collaboration with the school inspectorates and is implemented by the administration councils of the teaching units, but concerns the whole community of stakeholders.

By the *gender* criterion, 74 men and 275 women took place into the study, five persons skipping to mark the gender. The ratio of teaching staff of a female gender is, according to statistics of the teaching year 2010-2011, of 73.8%. The ratio of the feminine persons who were questioned (78.79%) takes part in the predicted interval taking into consideration that the report is done at the number of feminine gender teaching staff and not at the number of the stakeholders.

Regarding the age category, the number of subjects shows the following: 16-20 years old – 8 persons, 20-30 years old – 29 persons, 30-45 years 177 persons and over 45 years – 139 persons.

2.6 Results after the data analysis

At this stage of the study, a prime analysis was made of the collected data and the standard averages and deviations were calculated for all items selected depending on the socio-demographic variables (gender, age, length of service, institution type and the position in the institution) and it was applied the ANOVA technique for the analysis of the dispersion of the variable depending on the correlation of the intra-group and inter-group dispersion. A set of conclusions and measures resulted from the analysis and they are shown below.

A. Concerning the impact of the decentralization process on the activity of the institution/organization where one works it results the idea that the Romanian education system is tributary to the centralized management pattern, put into operation for too long. Since in the last 23 years numerous strategies were tried to preserve the system balance, only the new stakeholders in the system, students and businessmen consider that the decentralization has had a strong impact on the education institutions while all the other categories of stakeholders, irrespective of

the type of the institution they are working in or the position they have, think that the decentralization process, in its "first-hand" forms of implementation, has not had effects of amplitude on the pre-university education system.

B. Stakeholders and, more pregnant the young ones, perceive the change that has occurred in the pre-university institutions as an evolution, a step in the institution/organization development, a light inclination of skepticism being shown at the level of the school inspectors.

Proposed measure: To be worked out the managers education policies after consulting the local community and the businessmen open to the efficiency improvement of the the education institutions/organizations, and the process of implementation to be put into life with the help of youth.

C. In the pre-university units, the management has to take into consideration a medium and long term planning of the change process (64.82%) but, in a great measure, the stakeholders accept that it is also important for the organization to adjust their objectives to the outer environment by a series of unplanned changes (33.43%).

Proposed measure: To cope with the environment dynamics, the education units have to accept the change, to plan according to the aimed goals, but also to apply fast, unplanned corrections if, on short time, the taken measures allow the system to be in a balance needed by the management for the adjustment of means and strategy to the desired state.

D. A change process has to be followed for a longer period of stability/balance (a cycle of at least 4 years) and than it is necessary to be measured/valuated (6.17% of the respondents). Its putting into life has to be done by a strategy made known with a year in advance, so that the staff could imbibe the idea of change, and the legal aspects to enter into force one year after their legislation (29.365 of all respondents). The need for stability is also shown in Figure 1, which shows the opinion of the stakeholders from different types of institutions regarding the necessity of a stability period of at least 4 years before an evaluation.
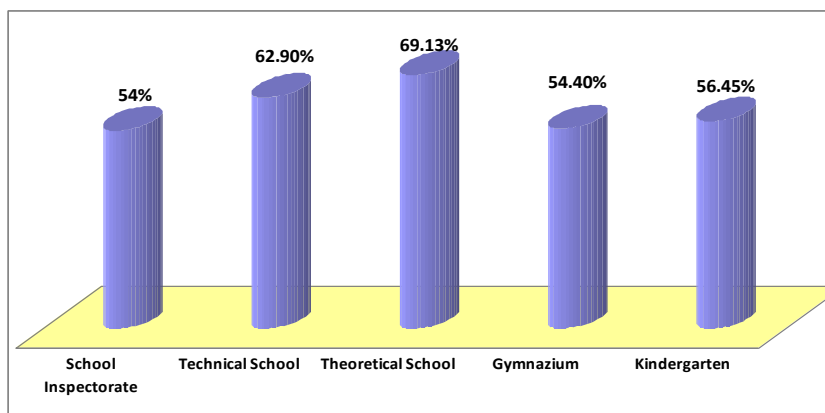
Figure 1. Stakeholders opinion about stability

Proposed measure: The elaboration of a strategy that stipulates a minimum compulsory period of stability and a unitary set of evaluation indices of the change effects.

E. All sources of pressure to change that were proposed by the questionnaire are considered important by the respondents.

F. Beside the businessmen that think that the *economic reasons and the dependence on power* have precedence in drawing up a strategy for change, all the other respondents , irrespective of age, seniority, institution type, position perceive the *need for balance* as the most important factor of resistance to change.

G. When a change strategy is drawn up, the management team has to ask the support of stakeholders of the outer environment (parents, businessmen, local community) for the deep analysis of the sources that bring about the organization resistance to change. In this process it is needed to be involved all students and young staff to determine those mechanisms that induce the transformation of the resistance forces into forms to urge the change.

H. The absence of a long term strategy agreed by all the political parties, the inadequacy of policies and strategies to the actual situations and needs of society, the bureaucracy and the economic state of Romania represent, according to the respondents opinion, factors of the system resistance to change. A high level of Trade Unions power is not an impediment for change, with the exception of the businessmen opinion and, also the present state of Romania's demography do not create concern regarding the activity of an education organization that seeks for change. The existence of a centralization of the decision and resources is, in the opinion of the economic community and non teaching staff an obstacle for the change.

I. During the implementation of change in an education institution it is advisable not to use *restrictions by means of coercion*. To ease the acceptance of change the manager has to be concerned to point out the discomfort caused by the present state and to involve the staff, as more as possible and also the students, in the implementation of the change process. It is also adequate to be concerned that the staff to be *advised/trained/supported to obtain new skills.* Figure 2 is presenting the dispersion of the averages of the answers regarding the stakeholders' opinion on the causes that can lead to the acceptance of change
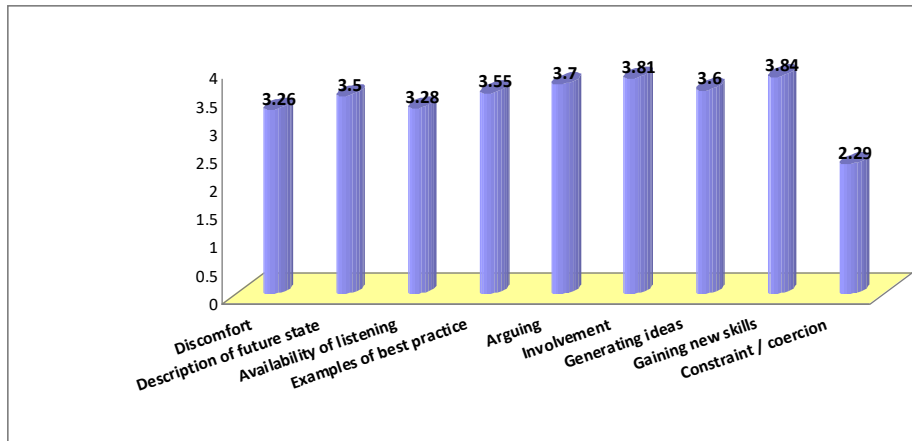
**Figure 2. Stakeholders' opinion on leading causes of change acceptance**

J. The youth perceive that the change process can be achieved if the school is involved in the implementation of European projects while the senior staff of the institution consider that in the change process it has to be involved the local community and the businessmen. All agree that the change is successful only under the conditions of a regulatory stability (Figure 3). In consequence, the managers of the teaching units have to take into consideration the achievement of European projects and involve students, staff newly entered in the system and the local community.
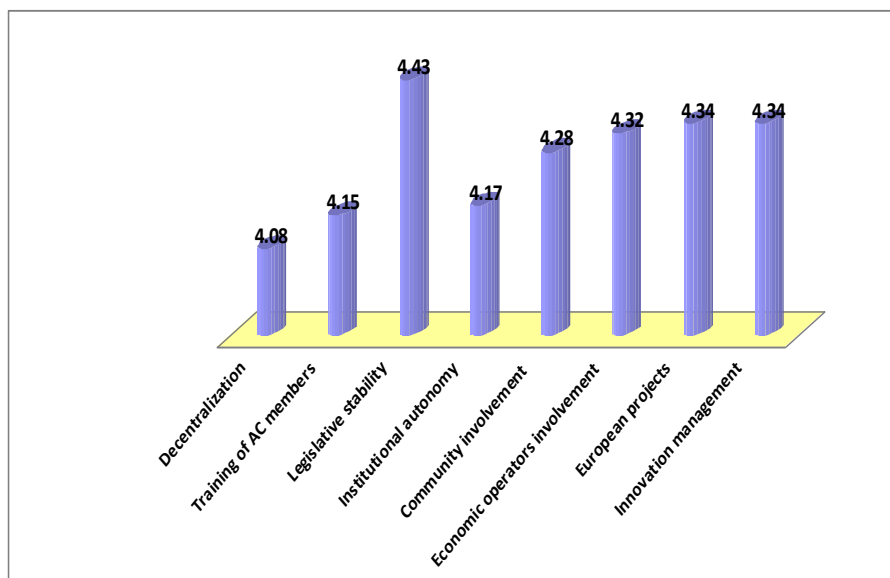
Figure 3. Stakeholders' opinions regarding the impact of the change process

K. The decision takers have to take into consideration the allotment of funds for the modernization of the material supplies and the re-launching of the financial motivation of the teaching staff. These measures have to be completed with the change of the didactic processes and technologies and of the teaching staff training system.

L. The stakeholders' opinion on the importance of stages of the implemented change pattern in an education institution, in graphic display in Figure 4, point out the fact that the most importance is given to the stage of action (15. 2 a-c). As it was founded in other analyses, there is of importance to ensure a period of stability for the system (15 III a) followed by a stage of the results evaluation. It is also clear that in the framework of the change process it is a need for the organization members' conviction that the change is for their interest, in view of the possible engagement of the staff (15.2b) in the implementation of the already planned actions (15.a)
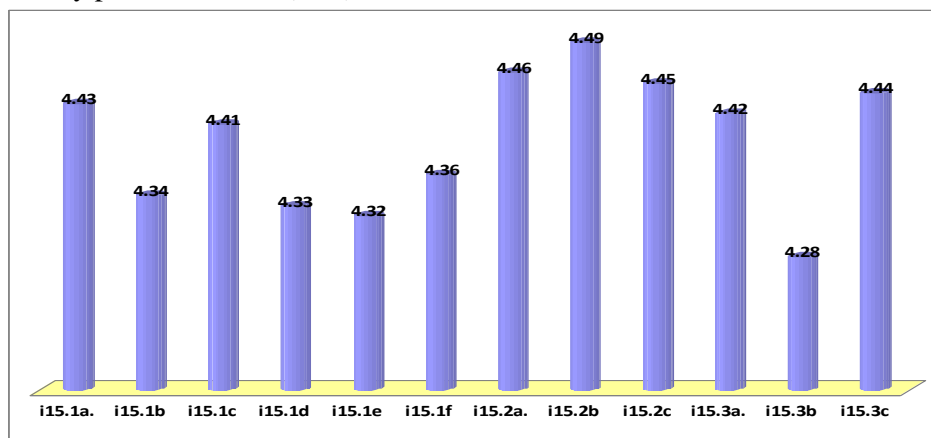
Figure 4. Averages of the stakeholders' opinions on the stages of the change process

M. The most suitable types of change for the education units are *change as a way of development and the change through learning*. Although the businessmen consider that the most suitable is the radical change, this is not accepted by the other categories of respondents.

N. Among the three shown change methods, the method perceived to be the most suitable for an institution of pre-university education is that of structural and strategic change. (Figure 5)
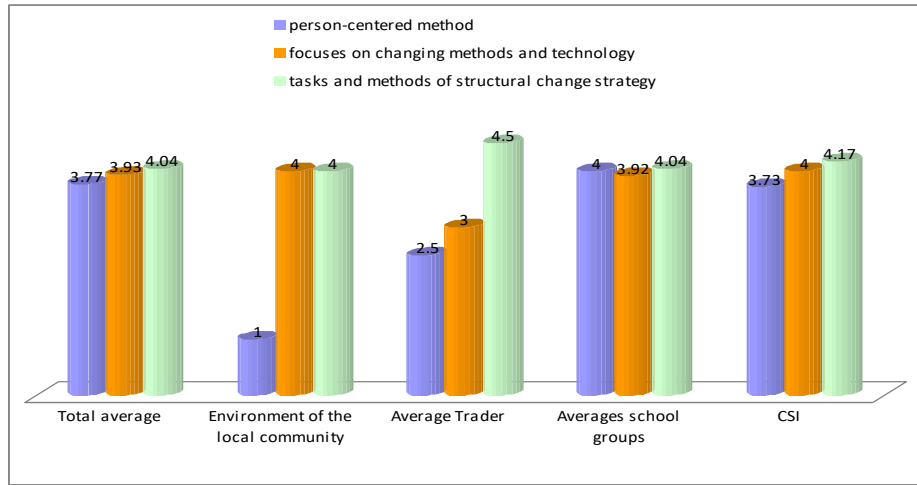
Figure 5. The evolution of the stakeholders' perception regarding the change methods

During the implementation of the stages of change, the managers have to take into consideration equally all these matters, but to pay a distinct attention to communication with the persons involved in the change process. In this process, the managers of the teaching units have to put their heads together with the parents and the representatives of the local community.

O. Generally, the hypothesis mentioned at point 19 a-h regarding the changes that have occurred during the last 22 years in the pre-university education system do not prove to be true, only the businessmen and the representatives of the local community thinking that these represent the real situation. There is a justified tendency to think that the training of teaching staff and the focus of teaching on the student's interests are in the course of implementation. As expected, the tested hypotheses at point 19.2-7 do not prove true, unlike the hypothesis 19.1 *The high frequency of changes negatively influenced the quality of the teaching education process that* it is confirmed.

All these conclusions certify the integral attaining of the proposed objectives.

2.7 The evaluation of the hypotheses in the light of the resulted conclusions

Hypothesis no. 1: *the planned change is a necessary reality, a way of evolution/development of the organization and is determined by the changes that take place out and in the education institution. In the education system, the change is conditioned, especially by the changes of the outer environment.*

From the balanced averages, the change process that took place in the education institutions, generally was perceived as prevalent from the prospect of the evolution/ direction to development (M_t =3.83, A.S. = .93) and less from the

outlook of chaos (M_t = 2.16, A.S. = 1.19), both by the feminine and masculine participants, irrespective of age and seniority. On the other hand, both the feminine and masculine participants consider that in the pre-university education units the management has to take into consideration a medium and long term pacification of the change process (64.82%) but, in a great measure, they accept that it is important that such an organization to adapt the objectives to the variations of the external environment by a sequence of unplanned changes (33.43%). Only 2% of the respondents considered that for coping with the changes of the outer environment a pre-university education institution have to maintain its state, fact that can be interpreted that the change is perceived as a risk by these respondents.

The analysis, centered on the correlation Institution type/favorable answer to the same variant of planned change as an answer to the dynamics of the environment, points out a significant percentage, as in figure 2.

From the study of the averages of the subjects' answers regarding the perception on the pressure factors of the change, it can be noticed that all the participants both of feminine or masculine gender have considered the majority of the change sources as important. The average value of these is M=3.93, fact that means the "agreement" on them.

Regarding the respondents option for the change types promoted by the questionnaire, they agree with the *change as a way of development* (16b) and change through learning (16c) (M_{16b} = 4.14, AS = .98; M_{16c} = 4.27, AS = .71).

Under this context there is also noticed the fact that *the change through crisis and adaptation* (16a), respectively *radical change* (16f) have gathered adequate to the disagreement.

Conclusion: *Hypothesis no.1 is confirmed*

The no. 2 hypothesis: *All stakeholders need to be trained to constructively understand the factors of pressure and resistance to change, otherwise the change can fail.*

The stakeholders give scores that do not mean explicitly the *agreement* for the situations shown in the questionnaires with the aim to see what aspects that lead to the acceptance of change : 12b *the state desired in the future is explained* (M_t = 3.50, AS = 1.03), 12c *your apprehensions are listened to/heard* (M_t = 3.28, AS = 1.21), 12d *efficient schools/systems are shown to you* (M_t = 3.55, AS = 1.16), 12e *you are offered arguments that support the increase of the school efficiency* (M_t = 3.70, AS = 1.13). The situations *12f you are involved in the change implementation process and* 12h you *are advised/trained/supported to obtain new competences* present the most proximity to the value corresponding to the *agreement.*

Regarding the option for 13b *training for education management the managers and members of the Administration council,* the score (M_t = 4.15, AS = .87) reflects *the agreement* of the respondents. The answer for the option 14j, *the staff training (managerial and professional),* (M_t = 4.44, AS = .72) also confirms the need for training of the respondents. At the request to judge the

possible problems that can appear during the change process, the respondents option goes to *agreement* for item 18a *the wrong understanding of the intentions expressed by the two parts: the one leading the change and the one formed from the organization members* (M_t = 3.71, AS = .87). At the question regarding the perception on the training of the teaching staff during the last 22 years (19h), the stakeholders answer is relevant (M_t = 3.38, AS = 1.12). This value confirms the need to train the teaching staff in the field of reform/change.

Conclusion: *Hypothesis 2 proves true*

Hypothesis no. 3 *The changes that took place in the pre-university organizations rely rather on communication and transparency than on constraints* As it is obvious from the conclusions regarding the perception on the causes that can lead to the acceptance of change, the stakeholders do not consider that *the use of constraints through coercive imposing* (12i) can facilitate the acceptance of change, the marked score to this item being clearly for disagreement (M_t = 2.29, AS =1.16).

From the analysis of the request no.14 of the questionnaire, the stakeholders were asked to specify which of the 13 enumerated elements would be significant to be changed in the teaching institution were they work so as its efficiency would increase, it is seen that the respondents give a value for the answer to item 14f *organization communication* (M_t = 4.30, AS = .76) as a desire for a better communication, and for item no.14d *the decision taking process* (M_t = 4.06, AS = .98) as a hope for having a more transparent decision taking process.

Conclusion: *Hypothesis no.3 proves true.*

Hypothesis no. 4 *The change in the pre-university education has to be achieved taking into consideration the systemic pattern of change.*
From all answers of the subjects it appears that the systemic pattern is the respondents' option for the selection of the change pattern type. For example:
- ➢ from the analysis of the option for item 15f *Establishment of interconnections between the system's variables: strategy, structure, technology, staff, tasks, organization culture,* it is seen that the respondents agreed that the managers have to take into consideration this aspect when they draw up a strategy for change (M_t = 4.36, AS = .71).
- ➢ from the corroboration of the first remark with the analysis of the average value, shown for the method of change suitable for an education institution 17c *methods of structural change and strategy* (M_t = 4.04, AS = .93), it appears that the strategy of change, that has to have in view the influence of the achieved change on an element, spreads to the entire organization system.

Conclusion: *Hypothesis no.4 comes true.*

Hypothesis no. 5 *For the achievement of an efficient step, the change process has to be finished by an evaluation, after a period of balance/stability of the new state of the system (ex. a period of at least 4 years).*

As we concluded earlier, a change process has to be followed by a larger period of stability/balance (a cycle of at least 4 years) before any measuring/evaluation, and that its implementation into practice has to be achieved by a strategy announced a year earlier so that the staff could embrace the idea of change and that the legal aspects to become applicable after a year from their legislation.

At point 11a, the request to estimate if the need for the individual balance is an important source for resistance to change, the respondents answered ($M_t = 4.07$, AS = 1.13) that the personal balance is an important source of change. It was also noted with a major agreement the guarantee of a period for legal stability of at least 4 years (13c) by all respondents ($M_t = 4.43$, AS = .73)

Regarding item 15 III-a the provision of a stability period of the new equilibrium during the freeze stage of the change process, about which the stakeholders were asked to take a stand on the importance of the aspect in the change process framework, the result was $M_t = 4.42$, AS = .68, what implies a value placed between *important* and *very important*.

Conclusion: *Hypothesis no.5 proves true.*

Hypothesis no. 6 *To secure an efficient increase of the organization efficiency, under the process of change all stakeholders , both from the inner environment and from the outer one, have to be involved.*

As about the influence that the nine enumerated factors on the 12 request have on the stakeholders and make them to accept the change, item 12f *you are involved in the process of change implementation* ($M_t =3.81$, A.S. = 1.03) has, together with 12h *you are advised/trained/supported to attain new competences,* the most proximity to the value suitable for *agreement* ($M_t =3.84$, A.S. = 1.09).

At the same time, form the analysis of the answers to items 13e *responsible involvement of the local community officials* ($M_t =4.27$, A.S. = .81) and 13 f *businessmen involvement in the insertion of graduates* ($M_t =4.34$, A.S. = .81) one can see that the respondents consider this aspect as *very important* for the achievement of the change process in the education system.

At the request no.14, where subjects were asked to say how important would be for the improvement of effiency of the organization they are working in if the *community and family responsibility level* (14k) will change, these answered that among the options expressed with values that go to the option *Very important* ($M_t = 4.47$, AS = .68), is also this aspect.. In fact, on testing the hypothesis 19.1, only the respondents from groups of schools agreed that, till now, the family was really involved in the school's life. At this item, the average of the respondents answers was $M_t = 3.68$, AS = 1.23. Also, on point 14l *the businessmen involvement degree,* the questioned stakeholders estimate was $M_t = 4.42$, AS = .80, value that presumes their general agreement.

In the case of the test of the stakeholders perception on the stages that a change pattern for the teaching institutions should have, at item 15Iib *training the staff to implement actions,* the respondents credited the option with values that aspire to *Very important* (M_t = 4.49, AS = .68).

Conclusion: *Hypothesis no.6 proves true*

Hypothesis no. 7 *Bureaucracy and the great number of changes that took place in the education system determine the staff lack of reaction to the idea of change.*

According to the answers of the stakeholders implicated in the school activity, bureaucracy, an aspect associated to the whole system, is considered, by them, a factor of resistance to change (M_t = 3.93, AS = 1.15). Moreover, the respondents perception expressed at point 19.1 is that till now no de-bureaucratization process of the institution activity took place (M_t = 2.30, AS = 1.17).

Regarding the image the respondents have on the education system evolution during the last 22 years it can be seen that the hypothesis "*The high frequency of changes influenced negatively the quality of the education, training process*" aim at getting to agreement (M_t = 3.68, AS = 1.23). We can consider that this hesitation to clearly express the agreement is also due to certain tangent influence, previously shown, as for example:

- ✓ The change process that took place till now in the education institutions has been perceived as an evolution/a development process;
- ✓ A significant weight of the respondents (33,43%) considers that the change process has to be achieved taking into consideration also the permanent adaptation of the institution's objectives to the variations of the outer environment through a series of unplanned changes;
- ✓ "*the frequent change of managers/management changes (10g)*" does not represent, in the view of the stakeholders involved in the school activity, a source of pressure for change (M_t = 3.55, AS = 1.23);

These remarks can be corroborated with the fact that some aspects as 12a *the situation when one notices any discomfort caused by the present state,* namely 12c *your concerns are taken into account/listened to* do not influence the respondents in their decision to accept the change. In other respects, as shown beforehand, no factor of possible influence out of the proposed nine ones met the average value corresponding to agreement, fact that allows us to only affirm that, for certain aspects, there exist propensity to express the agreement.

Conclusion: *Hypothesis no.7 is confirmed.*

Conclusions

During the last years the most frequently promoted idea was that the principal of an education institution is, in fact, a manager of the change, since the organization are in a permanent process of renewal. Starting from this finding,

through the achieved analysis we aimed at determining, based on the stakeholders' perception, the characteristics of an efficient change pattern for the organization of the system.

An image of the conclusions pointed out by the analysis appears synthetically this way:

A. The change is a vehicle for dynamism and progress for systems and organizations, reason for a manager to have a large scale of aptitudes and managerial competences in view of putting in life the most efficient type of management – the management of change;

B. The high dynamics of changes forces the organization to draw up strategic objectives specific to edu-partnership:

- the opening of managers for experience ;
- the development of different plans for the organization improvement;
- the re-design of the organization structure;
- the change of the organization culture ;
- hastening the creative individual and group process, denomination of innovation;
- inner communication development;
- implementation of a dynamic, efficient, flexible management system focused on sub-systems;
- stimulation of the roles and responsibilities;
- increase of the decision taking processes efficacy;

C. Stakeholders perceive the change that took place in the pre-university education units as an evolution, a step of the institution/organization development, in the case the two methods are applied in a corroborated way: the structural and strategy change and that focused on changing tasks and technologies. In their conception, the suitable pattern of change should be built up on the characteristics of the systemic pattern.

D. Although the change of organization is a process of permanent adaptation to the environment, a stage of stability is necessary (for the consolidation of the change), followed by the evaluation of change, entirely necessary for determining the results of the implemented changes and for producing feed-back. The decision takers can consider that the process of change is ended only when the evaluation outcome is satisfactory:

E. The results of this first analysis can form a guide both for the principals of the pre-university education units and for the organisms meant to draw up the education policies.

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