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STRATEGIES OF THE EFFECTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The problem of communication among the participants of the educational environment occupies one of the leading places in modern pedagogical science. A natural possibility in an educational organization is the

existence of conflict. This article presents the essential role of effective communication in the proper management of conflict within the school environment. It has been proved that dealing with conflicts in educational organizations executives tend to apply different styles of administrative behavior. These mainly include the integration of objectives, concession, enforcement, avoidance and compromise. The choice of conflict management-settlement style depends on organizational communication, the interdependence of individual objectives and the ability of individuals and groups to work together. The article analyses the specific type of communication the educational managers must rely on in order to achieve the collection of information, rational decision making and even the control of the expected results. Organizational communication is an important tool of effective management as executives manage to persuade, motivate and do what their subordinates want. It has been grounded that the crucial factor in effective conflict management through organizational communication is decision making. The article highlights the fact that the value of a conflict is assessed as favorable or not, depending on the participants in the conflict, the means used and the subjective criteria of the participants. The positive causes or constructive actions for the rational management of the conflict phenomenon must arise as a result of the dialectical way of dealing with disagreements, crises and conflicts. Their effective resolution is a positive potential for experience, as it provides an opportunity for stakeholders to get to know the problem, plan and implement positive changes in challenge outdated ways of thinking and develop new ways of working effectively together.

Keywords: *educational environment, conflict management strategies, organizational communication, decision-making process, conflict resolution framework.*

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СТРАТЕГІЇ ЕФЕКТИВНОГО УПРАВЛІННЯ КОНФЛІКТНИМИ СИТУАЦІЯМИ В ОСВІТНЬОМУ СЕРЕДОВИЩІ

Проблема спілкування між учасниками освітнього середовища займає одне з провідних місць в сучасній педагогічній науці. Природно, що в освітніх організаціях поширені конфліктні ситуації. Метою статті є аналіз сутності ефективної комунікації у врегулюванні конфліктної ситуації в шкільному середовищі. Доведено, що для вирішення конфлікту в освітніх організаціях керівники, як правило, застосовують різні стилі адміністративної поведінки. Сюди входять об'єднання цілей, поступка працівникові, настоювання на виконанні вказівки керівника, уникнення реакції та досягнення компромісу. Вибір стилю управління конфліктною ситуацією та її врегулювання залежить від організаційного спілкування, взаємозалежності індивідуальних цілей, здатності окремих людей і груп співпрацювати разом. Проаналізовано конкретний тип спілкування, на який повинні покладатися освітні керівники, щоб досягти збору інформації, раціонального прийняття рішень і навіть контролю очікуваних результатів. Організаційне спілкування є важливим інструментом ефективного управління, оскільки керівникам вдається переконувати, мотивувати чи йти назустріч бажанням підлеглих. Обґрунтовано, що вирішальним фактором ефективного управління конфліктними ситуаціями є прийняття рішень у процесі організаційного спілкування. Цей демократичний прийом доводить, що працівники беруть активну участь у прийнятті рішень. Успіх рішення, прийнятого за допомогою цієї стратегії, значною мірою залежить від того, чи виконавчий директор враховує якомога більше точок зору, спокійно контролюючи будь-які суперечки, і не настоює на прийнятті рішення заздалегідь, починаючи обговорення зі свого власного бачення вирішення проблеми. Відзначено, що позитивні наслідки раціонального виходу з конфліктної ситуації закладені у вирішенні розбіжностей, кризових ситуацій та конфліктів. Їх ефективно вирішення має позитивний потенціал для майбутньої роботи освітнього закладу, оскільки це дає можливість зацікавленим сторонам виявити проблему, спланувати і здійснити позитивні зміни у підході до її вирішення, що, відповідно, вимагатиме боротьби зі застарілим способом мислення і розробки нових способів ефективного співпраці в освітньому колективі.

Ключові слова: *освітнє середовище, конфліктна ситуація, стратегії управління конфліктами, організаційне спілкування, процес прийняття рішень, вирішення конфлікту.*

ВАСИЛИКИ ПАПУТСИ

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ул. Максима Кривоноса, 2, Тернополь**СТРАТЕГИИ ЭФФЕКТИВНОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ КОНФЛИКТНЫМИ СИТУАЦИЯМИ В ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЙ СРЕДЕ**

Проблема общения между участниками образовательного процесса занимает одно из ведущих мест в современной педагогической науке. Распространенным явлением в образовательной организации бывает наличие конфликтных ситуаций. Целью статьи является анализ сущности эффективной коммуникации в урегулировании конфликтной ситуации в школьной среде. Доказано, что для разрешения конфликта в образовательных организациях руководители, как правило, применяют разные стили административного поведения. Сюда входят объединение вокруг целей, уступка противоположной стороне, настаивание на выполнении указания руководителя, отсутствие реакции руководителя на конфликт или достижение компромисса между участниками конфликта. Выбор стиля управления конфликтной ситуацией и ее урегулирования зависит от организационного общения, взаимозависимости индивидуальных целей и способности отдельных людей и групп сотрудничать вместе. Проанализирован тип общения, на который должны полагаться образовательные руководители, чтобы достичь сбора информации, рационального принятия решений а также контроль ожидаемых результатов. Организационное общение является важным инструментом эффективного управления, поскольку руководителям удается убеждать, мотивировать, идти навстречу желанию подчиненных. Обосновано, что решающим фактором эффективного управления конфликтными ситуациями является принятие решений в процессе организационного общения. Этот демократический прием доказывает, что работники принимают активное участие в принятии решений. Успех решения, принятого с помощью этой стратегии, в значительной степени зависит от того, учитывает ли исполнительный директор как можно больше точек зрения его подчиненных, спокойно контролируя любые споры и не настаивает на принятии решения заранее, начиная обсуждение со своего собственного видения решения проблемы. Отмечается, что положительные последствия рационального выхода из конфликтной ситуации заложены в решении разногласий, кризисных ситуаций и конфликтов. Их эффективное решение имеет положительный потенциал для будущей работы образовательного учреждения, поскольку это дает возможность заинтересованным сторонам выявить проблему, спланировать и осуществить позитивные изменения в подходе к ее решению, что, соответственно, потребует борьбы с устаревшим способом мышления и разработки новых способов эффективного сотрудничества в образовательном коллективе.

Ключевые слова: образовательная среда, конфликтная ситуация, стратегии управления конфликтами, организационное общение, процесс принятия решений, решение конфликта.

The problem of communication among the participants of the educational environment occupies one of the leading places in modern pedagogical science. The issue of interaction between the teaching staff and educational executives is of particular interest. Dialectics, as a method of seeking the truth, directs and provides possibilities for a new way of thinking or acting that may not have been originally envisaged. Within the limits of conflict, logical and emotional elements and their ability to handle are tested, which is a basic skill that stems from dialectical thinking and is the basis for the successful resolution of the conflict phenomenon.

It is emphasized that, although conflict and cooperation have as common references learning and socialization, but within the realistic educational environment and especially in the field of conflict resolution, there is a lack of inactivity in the development of effective communication and cooperation.

A conflict in educational surroundings has been the subject matter of different studies and research. Scholars P. Hatzipanagiotou [8], L. Kriesburg [12], E. Mavrantza [14], D. Mumby [15], O. Papadopoulou [17], R. Pondy [20] have internationally contributed a lot to our knowledge of the problem.

The goal of our article is the theoretical analysis and differentiating various types of conflicts in the educational environment as well as sharing some practical experience of applying a variety of techniques for solving the problem.

The research under consideration presupposes the necessity to determine the essence of the term 'conflict' in general and the conflict in educational background in particular. The analysis of existing definitions of conflict as a scientific category seems quite reasonable.

According to L. Kriesburg, contradictions are a form of relationship between two or more individuals who believe they have incompatible ends [12].

D. Burandas defines conflict as a situation where the behavior of one individual or group deliberately seeks to prevent the achievement of the goals of another individual or group [3]. According to F. Saiti, this is a rivalry between two parties based on values and claims, the social position, power (power) and the financial resources that exist in short supply [27]. Conflict is also defined as an active-reciprocal process that manifests itself in incompatibility, disagreement or confrontation between individuals or groups of individuals [20].

In other words, the conflict is seen as an open or closed confrontation that has not been effectively addressed. Organizational conflict occurs when members of the organization act or adopt attitudes that are incompatible with those of their colleagues or external members who utilize the services or products of the organization [22].

Dealing with conflicts in educational organizations, executives tend to apply different styles of administrative behavior. These mainly include the integration of objectives, concession, enforcement, avoidance and compromise [22].

In P. Polychroniou's opinion, the choice of conflict management-settlement style depends, among other things, on the following factors: organizational communication, the interdependence of individual objectives and the ability of individuals and groups to work together [19].

Based on the studies of R. Blake and Mouton and Thomas, M. Rahim proposes a model of conflict management based also on two basic dimensions: a) individual interest and b) interest in others. The first dimension of the conflict management model refers to the degree (high – low) that an individual seeks to meet his personal goals. While the second dimension proves the degree (high – low) to which a person tries to meet the goals set by other people with whom he relates. These two dimensions describe the motivations of an individual or a group during a conflict [21].

O. Papadopoulou thinks that this combination of the two dimensions yields conflict management technique. One of them is the technique of goal integration or problem solving or cooperation; the use of goal integration to manage disagreements within the organization which are characterized by open communication, continuous flow of information as well as examination of disagreements. This method promotes creativity and innovation and removes obstacles, thus leaving room for greater efficiency. To make this possible both sides need to be honest about their motives and goals, differences openly expressed and mutual trust, understanding and maturity [17].

A. Saiti mentions that 'organizing' technique can also be included in the model of problem solving and is determined primarily by the analysis of the nature and conditions that created the situation of the conflict. In this case the causes or conditions of the conflict focus mainly on poor organization and the main reason for the efforts made under this model is coordination between the conflicting parties [27].

E. Mavrantza highlights the conditions of collaborative problem solving:

- when the goals are complex and particularly important for both parties;
- when consent and participation is desired, everyone has the strength and knowledge to make decisions and solve problems;
- when the management wants to win the commitment of those involved in achieving the common goal;
- when management wants to improve the interpersonal relationships of the people involved.

The scholar highlights the technique of concession or normalization / adaptation: the specific method of conflict management is associated with the effort to reduce the intensity of disagreements and to highlight common ground in order to satisfy the interests of the other party. This model is used when each of the opposing groups is interested and concerned about the interests of the other group, showing an intention to retreat in order to achieve a peaceful settlement and harmonious coexistence [14].

According to A. Saiti, another technique is that of enforcing or using power when enforcement is characterized by a high interest in individual goals and a low interest in the goals of others. In competitive conflict management, personal views and goals are more important than relationships. The dominant side tries to secure its own supremacy by using the power it has and which can come from: a) power (position in the hierarchy), b) seniority and experience and c) specialty. An individual or a group of people who try to impose their goals in every available way and without calculating the cost, often ignore the needs and expectations of the other party and orient themselves to a "win-lose"

trading style. To this administrative style belongs the tactic of the formulation of orders of the boss to his subordinates for routine tasks that require quick execution [27].

The researcher highlights the avoidance technique which indicates low interest in both individual and third party objectives. This particular negotiation method is used when the point at which the disagreement is located is of little importance or when it comes to issues of tactics or maneuvering in relation to the other protagonists. The use of this tactic can result from: a) indifference to the nature of the conflict problem, b) aversion to the process required to resolve the conflict or, c) a sense of inability to resolve the conflict [27].

The compromise technique suggests that in compromise, the parties usually use a “give-and-take” negotiation style and try to “share the difference” in order to reach mutually acceptable decisions. This settlement is similar to the co-operation technique as it leads to mutual satisfaction of the parties involved, but does not offer permanent and sustainable solutions. Therefore, a superficial solution is achieved without seeking to find the deeper needs and interests of both groups. With compromise no one loses, but no one wins, it is a simple and effective way of resolving conflicts within the school unit [27]. In general, compromise as a style of negotiation is not considered appropriate in the context of solving complex problems, which require effective harmonization with the goals set by the parties involved.

Combining in a critical context, the above-mentioned elements and data, the tactic of conflict avoidance does not seem to be a functional choice unless it is a conflict that will create unresolved and strongly negative situations for the smooth functioning of an educational organization. An indicative case is the intense and constant conflict e.g. of a school Principal with a teacher, for the arrangement of which one could suggest the removal of the second from the school headed by the first and after the other settlement practices (compromise, adaptation) have previously failed [27].

Therefore, taking into account the provisions of this article and the practices of resolving interpersonal and individual conflicts proposed by the relevant literature (D. Bourandas [3], J. Dean [4], J. Greenberg and R. Baron [7], A. Saiti and Ch. Saitis [27], M. Zavlanos [31]) different solutions are proposed for each of the respective types of conflicts.

In personal conflicts, the use of power seems at first to be the most appropriate, because conflicts stem from the characteristics of each employee, such as perceptions, personality, emotions, and values, which can hardly be come to a compromise. However, given that this practice creates winners and losers and that the solution that is likely to be temporary and superficial may have been more effective, the solution would be a compromise settlement using the characteristics of dialectics and persuasion (each or every group tries to convince the other side that it must adhere to its own goals, not out of fear or in return, but to the satisfaction of its own interest within the value framework it has adopted).

In other words, the educational executive who uses persuasion tries to persuade the dissenting party that in fact and in essence they are not opposed to the intended goal. This, however, presupposes that both parties involved are open to solutions and available for mutual concessions or consensus.

Let's proceed to the case about the insistence of a teacher not to use ICT and the corresponding digital tools at all during the teaching of Mathematics or Physics in the 6th grade, while the school headmaster has repeatedly suggested the systematic use of ICT and of the digital material that exists in the respective basic digital services of the Ministry of Education, could possibly lead the existing situation to a dead end or even to a conflict, since a significant dimension is recorded – differentiation in the teaching practices.

Proposal for conflict resolution: the teacher could continue to teach using his/her teaching methods until the completion of his / her participation in a corresponding fast-paced ICT skills training program in the teaching practice with the necessary integration of the appropriate digital material in it. The teacher participates in this program upon the proposal and presentation of the School Counselor, who during this period, will continue to encourage and support him, so that he on the one hand successfully completes the training program and on the other hand gradually transforms the teaching strategies it uses (relationship of motivation and efficiency).

In terms of group conflicts (intergroup and intragroup) the technique of goal integration or problem solving or collaboration seems to be the most appropriate choice because at school level, school management is collective and its hierarchical structure largely horizontal (School Principal – Teachers Association).

This particular conflict management style is associated with a high degree of stakeholder commitment to its effective resolution, so that this dispute can be effectively managed through their cooperation. The style of integration is characterized by two parameters: confrontation and problem solving. The debate includes open and direct communication, two-way information flow, study of alternatives and constructive disagreement analysis in order to find a solution that maximizes the common good.

As E. Marvantza states, the integration of objectives in the problem-solving process contributes to the creative solution of the latter. It is therefore an approach in which both parties wish to satisfy to the same degree their personal interest and the interest of the other party by preserving their interpersonal relationships and being both winners [14].

A well-known suggestion for dealing with this form is to create and achieve a new ultimate goal. Such goals can be the implementation of a new educational project, the creation of new working conditions or even finding solutions to the emerging conflict. In this case, alternative ways of action are utilized in an objective way, taking into account the particular doubts and reservations of each group.

By implementing such an independent action or even in combination with the facilitation or mediation actions of a neutral and impartial individual (the School Counselor, who has institutional prestige and, as a rule, the ability to persuade), the conflicting parties achieve communicate and work together effectively. In this way, the School Counselor reinforces the sense of justice and the perception that opposing groups control the process of resolving the conflict. That is, the imposition of a solution that comes from higher hierarchical levels using their hierarchical and administrative power is avoided.

The technique of “organizing” could be adopted in conflicts arising from a different view of the obligations, duties and rights of the position taken by each member of an organization. The reasons for this different view may arise from, among other things, poor organization, changes in human resources, changes in the structure of the organization and a change in the object of work.

Therefore, regular and positive practices could be considered both for the prevention and resolution of conflicts between groups, and for their coordination as well as for the effective management of conflicts due to the overload of obligations and duties to an employee, from which we expect to deliver the maximum in assigning diverse – and often conflicting – goals to a role (intra-conflict): a clear description of responsibilities or information flow, the establishment of a project coordinator and the establishment of acceptable teamwork decision-making rules.

In general, the use of “integration” of goals or problem solving (according to our judgment belongs and the technique of organizing as a management style) optimizes the learning outcomes of the process and the effectiveness of conflict management of this form according to the above, since the technique of coordination or problem solving is based on the belief that the opposing parties have the ability to solve problems mainly through cooperation. That is, there is a constant exchange of information about the problem, as seen by opponents and at the same time process their differences in order to reach a solution that is mutually beneficial in the end.

We strongly believe that the main factor in effective conflict management through organizational communication is the decision-making process. By this we mean that the main functions of the educational organization administration must include decision making. In fact, if the basic functions of management are considered as a linear sequence, many theorists of the organization place decision-making immediately after the operation of programming and associate it closely with it. In reality, however, decision-making is a function and a condition for the effective exercise of all administrative functions.

G. Typas and G. Katsaros claim that decision making could be defined as a process of solving a specific problem, through the selection and implementation of the most appropriate of the possible alternatives. Recognition of the importance of decision making has made this concept central to the modern theory of organizations [30].

It is also self-evident that good communication is vital to organizational effectiveness, as it has been characterized as one of the keys to organizational competence. The ability of executives to communicate successfully is therefore a key prerequisite for the smooth operation and empowerment of organizations.

According to S. Robbins and T. Judge, important functions of communication within organizations include mainly control, motivation, emotion and dissemination of information [25]. This

essential role of effective communication naturally has an effect on the proper management of frictions or tensions, on the adoption of appropriate leadership behavior (transformational) and on making quality and rational decisions.

Furthermore, what is called information flow in an organization is actually a dynamic process in which messages are constantly generated, distributed and interpreted. Therefore, the communication process is continuous and dynamically evolving and organizational communication does not cease to exist.

As D. Mumby claims, for this reason, educational managers must rely on the specific type of communication in order to achieve the collection of information, rational decision making and even the control of the expected results. In addition, organizational communication is an important tool of effective management as executives manage to persuade, motivate and do what their subordinates want [15].

According to I. Katsaros, in order to communicate effectively within school, the managers undertake the input and collection of information from the internal and external environment for the correct decision-making and the implementation of appropriate administrative control. The researcher states that employees should be encouraged and motivated to act in a direction towards the realization of the desired goals of the organization [10].

Also, it is considered appropriate to prevent conflicts by avoiding those conditions and situations that lead the members of a team and the teams in general to competition and conflict. Team leaders should focus on coordinating actions that will bring benefits to the organization. Also, moving some members from one group to another seems to work positively several times.

However, the leadership of each educational organization must ensure that the functional role of each subgroup and the contribution of each member are clearly emphasized and defined so as not to create those conditions that lead to friction and competition between members of the teaching staff.

In addition to the above, P. Hersey and K. Blanchard state that the regular meetings and meetings between the staff seem to contribute positively, in which the critical issues that have arisen during their work will be analyzed and discussed [9].

Taking into account the relevant literature as reported in P. Hadjipanagiotou, to the most common decision-making methods belongs the technique that reduces potential tensions due to the fact that decisions are made unanimously or by a majority of all stakeholders and advisory [8].

A. Konstantinou states that democracy involves in the process of achieving the goals of the educational organization – school all its members and ensures collective responsibility. It makes teachers feel satisfied and excited about their work environment as they gain the feeling that they contribute to the success of school goals [11]. Despite its positive points, it is worth noting that democratic decision-making runs the risk of being taken late and through controversy. In the environment of educational organizations, the way of decision-making with the influence of counseling is also suggested as an appropriate proposal. According to A. Konstantinou, existing educators present ideas and opinions that the faculty member may not have anticipated and help to form a complete picture from different perspectives before the faculty member makes the final decision. In addition, this democratic technique reinforces the belief in teachers that they are actively involved in decision-making [11].

A. Reppa, in his turn, claims that that the success of the decision made through the counseling technique depends to a large extent on whether the training executive takes into account as many points of view as possible, calmly controls any controversies and does not affect the others in advance, e.g. starting the discussion with his own point of view [24].

In general, the characteristics in the role of the school executives in making a decision while reducing the likelihood of friction or tension – should be mainly characteristic of those resulting from the combination and the delimitation of transformational and participatory leadership. In other words, the way out is the creation of a vision and its connection with the reality of the teachers collective, the promotion of change in education, the development of a collaborative culture and the personal development of all.

Some measures the school executives may take should be as follows:

- ensuring that the vision for the school is clear, understandable, accepted by all, in accordance with the values and needs of the school and the local community and compatible with the principles of current national education policy;

- realization of the vision with clear common goals and plans in daily practice in the school community;
- mobilizing members and work with them in a spirit of justice, reciprocity and equality, respect and dignity - to shape a common culture and a positive climate (collaborative culture);
- leading educational change;
- supporting creativity and promoting innovation;
- rewarding teachers and educational executives, recognizing their work and praising its value by organizing events to promote their achievements;
- cultivating teamwork, collaboration and participatory decision making;
- empowering teachers by inspiring confidence in their abilities;

In conclusion, the existence of conflict in an educational organization is considered a natural possibility. Although the involvement of individuals in conflicts is stressful, no conflict can be described as positive or negative, constructive or destructive for an educational organization. The value of a conflict is assessed as favorable or not, depending on the participants in the conflict, the means used and the subjective criteria of the participants. The positive causes or constructive actions for the rational management of the conflict phenomenon must arise as a result of the dialectical way of dealing with disagreements, crises and conflicts. Their effective resolution is a positive potential for experience, as it provides an opportunity for stakeholders to get to know the problem, plan and implement positive changes in challenge outdated ways of thinking and develop new ways of working effectively together.

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АНАЛІЗ НАУКОВИХ ПІДХОДІВ ДО СУТНОСТІ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ АКТИВНОСТІ СТУДЕНТСЬКОЇ МОЛОДІ

На основі виокремлення основних підходів до розуміння змісту активності особистості проаналізовано основні наукові підходи до тлумачення сутності соціальної активності особистості: діяльнісний, акмеологічний, системний, суб'єктний, аксіологічний, генетико-моделюючий. Визначено, що найбільш доцільним у трактуванні сутності соціальної активності студентської молоді є запропонований авторкою суб'єктно-діяльнісний підхід. Встановлено, що суб'єктність особистості є важливою передумовою та одночасно результатом соціальної активності студентів, яка реалізується через діяльне і відповідальне ставлення до себе, різних об'єктів, іншої людини, навчальної та майбутньої фахової діяльності. В основі активної діяльності людини вбачається готовність і вміння реалізувати свої інтереси й інтереси суспільства, постійне прагнення впливати на соціальні процеси і реальна участь в суспільних і громадських справах, прагнення вдосконалювати соціальний лад на основі соціальних, моральних і правових цінностей. Відзначено, що згідно з суб'єктно-діялісним підходом соціальна активність студентської молоді є особистісним утворенням просоціальної спрямованості, внутрішньо детермінованим індивідуальними потребами, ціннісними орієнтаціями, вольовими характеристиками та особливостями людини і назовні проявляється у перетворенні особистості і соціуму.

Ключові слова: *активність особистості, соціальна активність, суб'єктно-діялісний підхід, студентська молодь.*