

SOCIAL PERCEPTION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM REFORM. SURVEY CONDUCTED IN UPPER HIGH SCHOOLS OF BIHOR COUNTY

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1. Introduction

Between the elements which mark the global processes, we can include educational issues, the management of processes in pre-university education. Therefore, the synthetic approach to educational problems in Romania, studied in terms of the processes and the phenomena of social development, but also due to the need for submitting the pre-university Romanian educational process to the European Union requirements, appears to be current and important. This analysis focuses on the decentralization of education. This theme is a true significant of the stage and of the the changing potential of the management practice in the public area. Its actuality is also hard to contest under the conditions in which changes in this area have been slow compared to those of the other countries that joined the European Union (Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland), contradictory and inconsistent (Herczynski and Levitas, 2001: 1-2). The legislative changes, training facilities, as well as the constant institutional reorganization of pre-university education show the presence of an active interest in this matter. However, the real reform of university education still requires essential improvements. This study analyzes the social perception of performers in pre-university system, establishes positive and negative aspects of the reform in pre-university education, all from the perspective of teachers. The research was conducted between March 1st, 2011 and April 1st, 2011. During this time the questionnaire was applied and the data interpreted. The data obtained from the questionnaire interpretation were introduced into the SPSS program. For the analysis and interpretation of data we used SPSS 15.0. under Windows license. My investigation efforts were directed towards the impact of decentralization on the performers in pre-university education system and on their perception. The main purpose of the experimental study was to determine the essential perceptions of the performers involved in the decentralization process. Two general hypotheses were formulated: it is presumed that there is a negative perception concerning the reform in pre-university education, and it is also presumed that the reform in pre-university education does not coincide with a quality education, hypotheses confirmed at the end of the research.

2. Literature review

After Romania joined the EU in 2007, the reforming and adapting of education was more dynamic and priority focused from the perspective and requirements of the European Union structures. Moreover, in the official documents of the Ministry of Education and Research there is often a formula concerning the achievement of compatibility between Romanian education and EU rules, this being a defining part of the education reform policy in our country. An enumeration of external performers that contribute decisively to the deterioration of educational problems reveals the following list (Colceac, 2010: 1):

- The politicization of education that, notwithstanding the degree of professionalism of the administrative staff, raise to the level of system management people without skills necessary to ensure quality education. This external education and its flawed structuring is the factor with the highest weight in destroying the education system;
- Removal of teachers from the system without considering their professional quality and the evaluation of their work and results. The elimination based on being a holder or not, is contrary to the most elementary rules of increasing the quality in education;

- Demotivation of wages in education made by some politicians who show their inability to manage a nation. This demotivation obviously contributes to a great number of valuable people leaving the system, deciding on changing their profession.

The three causes external to the system shield the internal issues of education, which are the following: a curriculum based on speculation, not on practical application of information, an outdated assessment system, which makes only quantitative estimates, without taking into consideration the quality of education; a centralization made by a ministry staff largely composed of political appointees who do not have the necessary competence for the proper functioning of the system; a lack of autonomy of schools, who can not adapt to the crises conditions, a teaching staff with little training and the young ones with a poor professional training, a salary system that eliminated the performance and quality in education in the grid of wage growth, the lack of specialists in education in schools and complete lack of compensatory education programs that lead to solving school matters, except for programs provided by some NGOs; the lack of a labor market oriented education, community development without personal development and further use of a mass education without immediate practical application, a poor working relationship between parents and school because being a teacher is not considered a liberal profession and therefore it does not respond to market needs, but to political order. To these external or internal causes we can add the fact that the collective terms of employment at national level lead to the trade unions being unable to exercise pressure upon the government.

4. Results of the research:

In the methodological approach to see whether the assumptions made in the study are accurate, we have appealed to a quantitative type analysis. This data analysis will reveal the overall results provided by participants in this study, allowing the observance of the results trend and of those who were the subjects of this study. Based on statistical analysis and interpretation of sociological type we will define the results obtained from a spelling of methods that lead to the verification of the study hypothesis. Also in this approach we will make a series of charts to highlight the study assumptions.

Hypothesis no. 1

For Case 1: "It is assumed that there is a negative perception concerning the reform of pre-university education"; we used a qualitative analysis to determine the truthfulness of the hypothesis

	Frequency	Procent	Procent valid	Procent cumulat
Valid not coincide	14	17,5	17,5	17,5
to a lesser extent	31	38,8	38,8	56,3
to some extent	25	31,3	31,3	87,5
fully coincide	10	12,5	12,5	100,0
Total	80	100,0	100,0	

Table. 1. Frequency table for item no. 2 "To what extent do your aspirations coincide with the current changes"

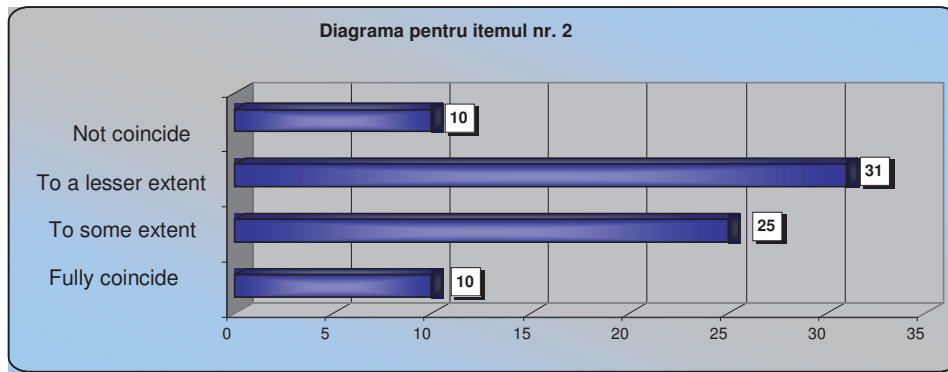


Fig. no. 1 Diagram for item no. 2

The presence of this frequency table and the chart of the studied item indicate a range of issues. Participants in the study say at a rate of 38.8% that the current changes do not coincide with their aspirations and a percentage of 17.5% believe that these measures do not coincide at all with their aspirations. Negative perception expressed by the ratio of scores is also visible in Fig. 1. This fact comes from the distrust of the study participants in the new educational reform and a reluctance to what this reform will bring. Also to confirm the first assumption we used the analysis of item no. 4 which says: "Specify the main weaknesses of the reform."

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid encouraging corruption	26	32,5	32,5	32,5
favoritisme	23	28,8	28,8	61,3
involving people from outside the system	18	22,5	22,5	83,8
financial constraints	13	16,3	16,3	100,0
Total	80	100,0	100,0	

Table. 2 frequency table for item no. 2

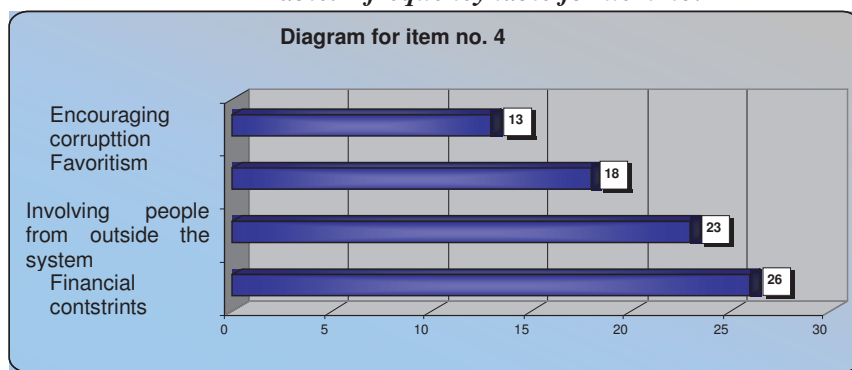


Fig. no. 2 Diagram for item no. 4

The analysis of the frequency table and figure no. 4 shows the great negativism related to the reform perception. According to the study participants encouraging corruption is the first major element, followed by favoritism, the involvement of outsiders and also by financial constraints.

Regarding the two items we can say that the first case examined was confirmed and that there is a negative perception towards pre-university education reform.

Hypothesis no. 2

For Case no. 2 "It is assumed that the reform of pre-university education does not emphasize the aspects of a quality education " we used a qualitative analysis to better observe the answers of the participants in the study.

For confirmation of the two hypotheses we analyzed items 7c, 7e and 7f. 7c "Continuous Improvement of Education Officials'

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid largely	11	13,8	13,8	13,8
quite a lot	12	15,0	15,0	28,8
moderate	29	36,3	36,3	65,0
insignificantly	22	27,5	27,5	92,5
none	6	7,5	7,5	100,0
Total	80	100,0	100,0	

Table. 3 frequency table for item no. 7c.

7e. "The growth of transparency of organizing the competition for employment and promotion in pre-university education."

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid largely	4	5,0	5,0	5,0
quite a lot	22	27,5	27,5	32,5
insignificantly	44	55,0	55,0	87,5
none	10	12,5	12,5	100,0
Total	80	100,0	100,0	

Table. 3 frequency table for item no. 7e.

7f. "Development and capitalization of teachers' potential"

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid largely	2	2,5	2,5	2,5
quite a lot	42	52,5	52,5	55,0
moderate	27	33,8	33,8	88,8
insignificantly	9	11,3	11,3	100,0
Total	80	100,0	100,0	

Table. 3. Frequency table for item no. 7f.

The three frequency tables illustrate how education reform issues are viewed.

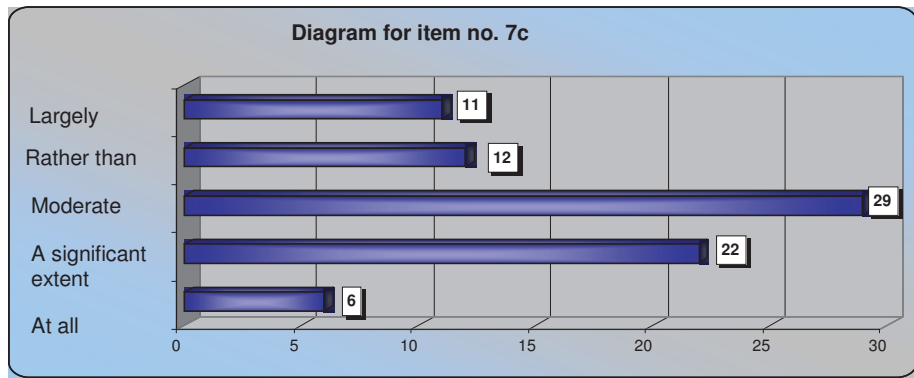


Fig. no. 3. Diagram for item no. 7c.

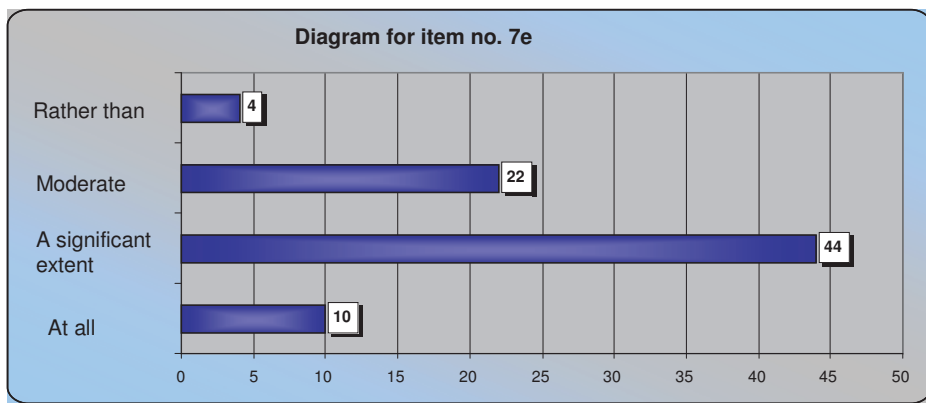


Fig. no. 4. Diagram for item no. 7e.

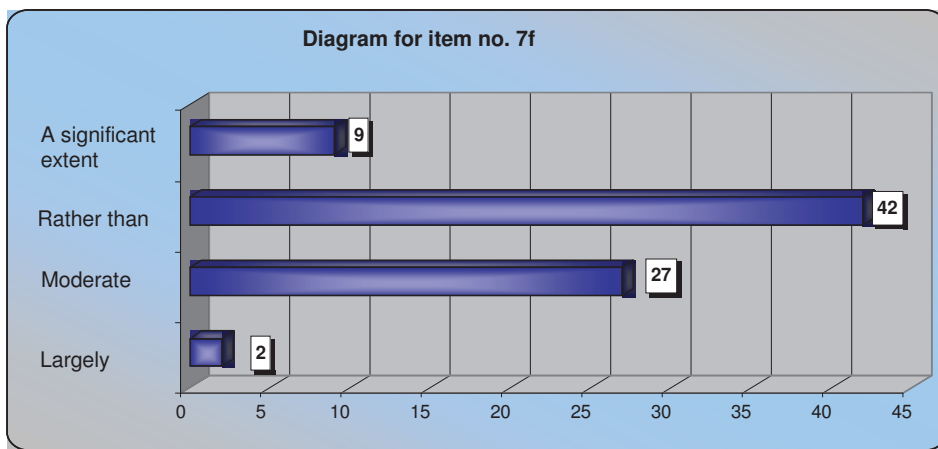


Fig. no. 5. Diagram for item no. 7f.

According to the study participants, the new educational reform does not highlight the aspects of training and preparing teachers for quality education. This chart is given in Fig. 3 which targets the improvement of staff training in schools. Score 29 for moderate and 22 to a minor extent comes and confirms that fact. For item 7e, which targets the increase of transparency in organizing the competition for employment and job promotion in pre-university education, its

results, ie a score of 44 for minor extent is eloquent for this phenomenon. Lack of transparency leads to suspicion regarding this phenomenon. For item 7f, concerning staff development and capitalization of education staff potential, the results are eloquent for „moderate“, the score being 27. After analyzing the three items listed above we can say that hypothesis no. 2 was confirmed after a quantitative analysis of the data obtained.

5. Conclusions

In this study we have highlighted aspects of the study participants' perceptions on the Romanian education reform. For the first hypothesis which assumes that there is a negative perception concerning the reform of pre-university education, the qualitative analysis of the items studied allowed the confirmation of this hypothesis. The changes in present measures do not coincide with the aspirations of the study participants and there are also highlighted the weaknesses of the reform such as: encouraging corruption, favoritism and involvement of others outside the system. The qualitative analysis allowed confirmation of the first working hypothesis. For the second hypothesis, which presumed that the reform in university education does not emphasize the aspects of a quality education, we used the analysis of three items: 7c, improving continue training of staff in education, 7e, increase of transparency in organizing the competition for employment and promotion positions in pre-university education and 7f, development and capitalization of teachers' potential. The quantitative analysis of items led to the identification of issues that the participants in the study have revealed. Thus, an insufficient training of staff in education, a lack of transparency in the contests for seats in pre-employment and a weak capitalization of the educational potential of teachers prevent this system from having quality in education. The qualitative analysis allowed the confirmation of the second hypothesis of the study.

6. Bibliography

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PhD STUDENT LECTURER :
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Thesis title is :„ THE INCREASING OF HIGH SCHOOL TIPE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS PERFORMANCE, FROM ROMANIA BY IMPROVING THEIR MANAGEMENT “

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