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The Functional and Social Aspects of Organizing Comprehensive Educational Institutions

ABSTRACT

Organizing comprehensive educational institutions poses new challenges and has often entailed the changes of administrative structures and levels. The paper explores the interrelation between organization and management and explains the main underlying concepts in social management. The author analyzes the general principles of scientific organization of labor and argues that their implementation will raise the teaching standards at comprehensive educational institutions.

Key words: *comprehensive educational institution, organization, management, scientific organization of labor.*

Organization is an integral part of any activity, including management. It is aimed at providing necessary conditions for implementing a management decision, accomplishing concrete tasks with a view to reaching the ultimate goal of the social pedagogical system and regulating the activity of its bodies. "In terms of this, organization as a function of management can briefly be defined as an activity aimed at regulating the subject and object of management as well as their relations" (Gaevs'ka, 2008, p.221). The nature of organization is one of ensuring the implementation of a management decision and building a system of organizational relations between subjects and objects in order to accomplish goals.

The most effective methodologies which provide a profound insight into organizational potential, organizational social and systemic factors, and the human ability to understand them are M.Weber's organizational theory, G.Hegel's organizational potential, and the social aspects of cybernetics. The creative output of these theories allows for a scientifically valid analysis of the universal foundations of social management (Gaevs'ka, 2008, p.74).

In contemporary science, the term *organization* has a few meanings: (a) a state of being organized, structured, that is the inner form of a system; (b) a system which has a complex inner structure; (c) an activity aimed at creating a coherent system, that is organizational work; (d) a unity, a social institution. In other words, some researchers regard organization as the main attribute of management; others, as a structure where a management process takes place. This means that organization, as the essence of management, is its objective property. It is in this sense that management as an organizational activity should be regarded because it represents any phenomenon (object) as a certain organizational structure. As regards social constructs, their structure is characterized by organization as a unity which lies in building human-nature relations, with labor being their highest manifestation. Under such conditions, a person is regarded as a definite organizational structure which consists not only of working efforts but also of personal self-management (a process which underlies reasoning) and its main outcome – cognition. According to O. Haievska, "For this reason, classification of human activity organization in the form of division of labor is a reflection of natural needs, laws of nature; the interrelation of classifications is the organizational nature of management" (Gaevs'ka, 2008, p.79). The researcher stresses that the nature of organization manifests itself not only as interrelation of its constituents but also as mutual influence which necessarily generates the qualities of organization none of its constituents possesses. A quality of organization includes a whole range of characteristics which can exist only in a certain management regime. A regime is regarded as the highest manifestation of organization. The more relevant a regime is in the social respect, the more relevant it is in terms of management. Total adequacy is crucial here. In this sense it is necessary to mention the objectivity of goals which are not set from the outside but are generated by this regime, by the interrelation of its constituents. "The interrelation between organization and management as that between essence and phenomenon is a process which has its challenges, like any process does. In this case, challenges are the source of motion, development" (Gaevs'ka, 2008, p.91). The researcher's principles of social management are rather relevant; they are as follows: *coincidence between the system and methods of management, concreteness, stimulation, hierarchical arrangement, collectivism, control, responsibility, prediction, the overtaking development of theory with respect to practice.*

The features of organization as a function of management result objectively from the systemic nature of society. In turn, organization per se is meant for bringing a system into line with its inherent laws of development. Organization is connected with a management cycle and defined through its place in the management process. V. Afanasiev interprets the role of organization for management as follows: "Operations, that is the actions of the management body, which correspond to the successive stages of the management cycle are management functions, and a set of these functions is the nature of the management process. These functions include designing and taking a management decision, organizing, regulating, correcting, revising, and controlling" (Afnas'ev, 1973, p.207).

At the same time, V. Afanasiev emphasizes the interpretation of the management cycle stages as management functions --- in contrast to treating functions as certain concrete tasks which are performed by a certain social body: "None of the functions is on its own; a set of functions does not reveal the nature of management: only in inseparable unity, in dialectical relation do they constitute a single management cycle" (Afanas'ev, 1973, p.207).

However, it is more convincing to interpret the organizational nature of social management by focusing on management as a special type of activity, that is a conscious subjective relatively stratified process. As the essence of management, organization presupposes the implementation of a decision, and regulation includes organization in the function of managing the implementation of a decision as well as creating new organizational characteristics which oppose spontaneous phenomena arising on the way of implementing a decision. Review and control function as an information system in this process; they also need organizing because an organizational management system is at the same time a specific network of communication channels, a management communication network. Information is an objective basis for developing management goals, that is it constantly performs controlling and reviewing functions in the management process, which provides a relevant understanding of the role of organization in social management.

Therefore, in the general sense organization as the essence of management is characterized by the necessity of developing means of performing a management decision task. The general factors which direct society towards one definite goal are the mechanisms of self-management, which are objectively inherent in society. The central factor in this process is the use of human resources and needs as well as their further development in line with market supply.

In the literature there is no agreement on the nature of organization and the relation between organization and management. In cybernetics, organization is viewed as a process which takes place outside the management process, as the influence of the subject on the object. According to V. Trapeznikov, management is "a corrective influence of the subject on the object connected with the changes in its material and energy processes" (Trapeznikov, 1957, p 38). V. Tereshchenko gives a similar definition of management and organization to that in the cybernetics perspective: "Organization is regarded as a structure, or framework, within which certain measures are taken. Management is a set of coordinated measures aimed at reaching a goal. Organization is a sort of anatomy of an institution, and management is its 'physiology'. If you will, organization is 'stasis' in activity, and management is its 'dynamism' " (Tereshhenko, 1996, p.12).

An important aspect of the problem is developing the organizational culture of social and pedagogic management of a comprehensive educational institution; this means establishing a connection between subordination and coordination which would allow to effectively perform a management decision task within the shortest time and with the least effort. In practice this means something other than creating an optimal number of management levels. For instance, creating a system of review and control complies with the aim to improve the effectiveness of the social and pedagogic system and the time factor. In this case, it is necessary to take into account both the specifics of sectoral management and possible social and pedagogic consequences.

The definition of organization as the essence of management, its defining feature, is based on the fact that, firstly, it is possible to identify organization at every stage of the management process; secondly, being a conscious process, management needs organization. Organization has the characteristics of all management functions; namely, systematicity and integrity if management is regarded as function in the wide sense (Gaevs'ka, 2008, p.119).

In the present world, labor activity is marked by a process of changing from a spontaneous self-organization to a conscious organization of its cooperative foundations. The current level of civilization development can last and progress only as a consciously organized process. As an objective state of society, self-organization is presupposed by its systemic nature and the objective need for an interconnection among all spheres of social life, which is based on cooperation. In this respect, organization is aimed at bringing an activity into line with the laws of its development, and for this reason it has an integral, systemic character.

The key methodological basis of social management is the thesis that under conditions of modern civilization, organization itself – management relations – is the source of social development. Thus management activity is one of the various forms of implementing social norms. In terms of function, the organizational nature of management manifests itself in regulating people's common activity, with cooperation being its highest form in the history of civilization.

O. Vikhanskii defines the role and mission of an organization as one of orienting the interests and expectations of people who perceive it inside towards those who perceive it outside and stresses the following: "In the wide sense, mission is philosophy and purpose, the sense of the existence of an organization ... In the narrow sense, mission is a statement about why an organization exists, that is mission is viewed as a statement which reveals the purpose of an organization which distinguishes it from other similar organizations" (Vihanskij, 2002, pp.71-72).

Defining the mission of an organization contributes to boosting the corporate spirit of its members. At the same time it is possible to draw a parallel with the social mission of a comprehensive educational institution, which is aimed at providing educational services to all children of school age, preparing comprehensive secondary school leavers for an active social life, identifying their personal mission in the interaction with the surrounding world.

Enhancing the social mission of a comprehensive educational institution under current functioning conditions determines the need to regard management as a purposeful influence on the social system. From the sociological perspective, management is viewed as a process which reflects successive changes in the system and the spatio-temporal characteristics of its dynamics. According to E. Podolskaia, "In the most simplified sense, a management process is the activity of a supervisor in a team of subordinates which leads to uniting the members of the team" (Podol'skaja, 2007, p.302). The researcher suggests the following classification of management functions: prediction, planning, information processing, management decision-taking, organization, regulation and coordination, control and review of the results of implementing a management decision. The nature of management is revealed not only through its functions but also through the following principles: sole supervision, motivation, leadership, scientificity, responsibility, correctness, cost effectiveness, communication, labor division, authority, discipline, subordination, centralization, scalar chain (Podol'skaja, 2007, pp.304-306).

We take the view that it is not plausible to refer to prediction, planning, and information processing as independent management functions since they are integral elements of management decision-taking – these are in fact its step-by-step components. However,

exploring their nature can be useful for supervisors of comprehensive educational institutions. For instance, with the help of logical, sociological, and statistical tools, *prediction* contributes to foreseeing the outcomes of developing models of the prospective institution, formulating the most significant tasks, and identifying the possibilities of accomplishing them. As regards *planning*, it is one of the forms of management decision-taking. *Information processing* helps a supervisor to orient themselves in real circumstances and to take a relevant management decision.

E. Podolskaia expresses the following opinion regarding the nature of organization: “*Organization is such a kind of management activity which is connected with building a structure of the systems which supervise and are supervised.* This refers to establishing supervising institutions, developing their structure, personnel, laws and regulations, logistics, scientific management of labor, the sociology of small groups, etc. Such regulation of the above-mentioned spheres is, to a certain extent, the primary condition of ensuring the functioning of the management subject and object” (Podol’skaja, 2007, pp.334-344).

E. Podolskaia argues for interpreting a comprehensive educational institution as a social and pedagogic system: “*Organization (derived from the Latin organizo) is a type of social system, a group of people who accomplish a certain goal together and act on the basis of definite principles and rules (state institution, firm, public organization, and so forth). It is an element of the social system, the most common form of human community, the primary social unit*” (Podol’skaja, 2007, pp 307-308).

Management at an organization (institution) is a process of performing interconnected actions aimed at coordinating, developing, and changing the resources and the inner environment of an organization with a view to achieving significant goals. The author refers to the following as the inner environment of an organization, including that of a comprehensive educational institution:

- *structure*, that is determining the structure of branches, their rights and responsibilities regarding a system of interaction and communication;
- *technology*, that is choosing, combining, using, and analyzing effectiveness and influence on the climate in an organization;
- *personnel*, that is personnel planning, recruiting, selecting, motivating, professional training, career planning, and so forth;
- *organizational culture*, that is the process of designing, supporting, developing norms and principles which benefit an organization;
- *inner organizational processes* pertaining to coordination, communication, decision-taking.

The above-mentioned theoretical and methodological foundations of organization as functions of managing social systems allow for the possibility of transforming them when dealing with organizing a comprehensive educational institution.

The term organization refers to arranging, forming something into a system, making something systematic and coherent. Organization is a certain order in building an entity and its functioning. Organization also refers to a degree of being regulated. Improving the regulation of human systems has a big practical significance. With regard to this, M. Cherpinskyi wrote the following: “*Rationality in organization is necessary for effective functioning of every system. Rationality eliminates indeterminacy in processes, ensures proper human relations, contributes to building necessary labor skills and habits*” (Cherpins’kij, 1972).

Pedagogical work is characterized by organization which manifests itself in regulating the stages and constituents of pedagogical work, building a system, identifying its functions in line with the goal. Organization also determines the means of direct communication and feedback.

The characteristic features of good organization of labor are that its stages follow a planned fashion, a certain sequence and are in line with the goal. On the contrary, randomness, lack of systematicity are signs of bad organization of labor.

One should distinguish between scientific organization of labor, which is determined by principles, rational methods, techniques, and practical organization of labor, which does not presuppose scientific foundations and uses trial-and-error methods. Scientific organization of labor draws on the latest research findings, which contributes to maximum effectiveness at minimum time consumption, effective use of financial and labor resources, non health-hazardous working conditions, and improved worker productivity.

Principle (derived from the Latin principium – basis, primary source) is the main foundation, the leading idea, the principal rule of behavior, activity (Lehin, 1954, p.563). Scientific organization of labor is a system of the following general principles: systematic use of research findings, relevance, programming, feedback, prospect, optimization, normalization, humanization, personal interest, collectivism, specialization, integrity (Cherpins’kij, 1972, p.25). Implementing these principles of scientific organization of labor helps to raise the teaching standards at comprehensive educational institutions.

Therefore, organization is an integral part of any activity, including management. Its purpose is to provide conditions for implementing a management decision, resolving certain tasks aimed at achieving the ultimate goal of a comprehensive educational institution – building socially significant effective interaction among all the participants of the educational and upbringing process which would result in the good qualification and competitiveness of its graduates. These achievements are possible only on condition of a rational organization of labor, high professionalism, and an optimal psychological and physiological climate at a comprehensive educational institution.

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