



RESULTS OF RESEARCH ORGANISED WITHIN THE PRO-SCHOOL PROJECT

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Abstract

The Institute of Education and Communication Prague (IEC) cooperates with five other European education institutions on the international project within the LLP programme Comenius. The main aim of PRO-SCHOOL project was to develop new leadership methods for managers from secondary schools and improve the managerial competences of these school managers.

To achieve this aim, project teams from each partner country organized a questionnaire research at several secondary schools in order to analyze the situation and find out important indicators of effective management.

The research results were analyzed and compared with the results from researches undertaken in partner countries and they are presented in this paper.

1. INTRODUCTION

Institute of Education and Communication focuses apart from teacher training on many different scientific activities. At the first place, IEC participates in several national and international projects. In our paper, we would like to aim at the international project PRO-SCHOOL organized within LLP Comenius, which IEC has been solving with six other European education institutions (Menderes Town National Education Directorate Izmir in Turkey, University College Ghent in Belgium, University of Peloponnese Korinthos in Greece, National Agency for the Development of School Autonomy Lombardia in Italy, Brasov County School Inspectorate Romania and Transilvania University of Brasov in Romania) since year 2009.

The main aim of the PRO-SCHOOL project is to develop new leadership methods for managers from secondary schools and improve their managerial competences. To achieve this aim, project teams from each partner country organized a questionnaire research at several secondary schools in order to analyze the situation and find out important indicators of effective management. The purpose of the research study is to identify school efficiency indicators at the Czech high schools from the perspective of school managers, teachers and parents, and also the requirements of the school managers for in-service training needs.

The outputs of these researches in the partner countries are six national reports and one comparative report, six seminars for school managers in partner countries and one international in-service course held in Turkey.

2. THE ROLE OF IEC IN THE PROJECT

Apart from the common activities such as management of the project, participating at the partners meetings and common tasks, each partner is responsible for one particular project workpackage. IEC is in charge of the workpackage 3 – „**Development of Educational Materials and Curriculum**“.

The main task within the workpackage is to create study guideline for directors and other managerial staff from secondary schools. The material consists of seven modules (communication, leadership and management of human resources, life cycle of the project, evaluation of school effectiveness, learning achievements...) Each partner is responsible for creation of one module and IEC developed the module titled **Indicators of the School Effectiveness**.

The second task was implementation of the research results and their dissemination at secondary schools in partner countries.

Each stage of the project is consulted with the managers of secondary schools in order to process materials in accordance with their needs. The last stage of the project will be devoted to the modification and adaptation of study materials to the needs of high schools.

3. QUESTIONNAIRE RESEARCH

In October 2009, IEC organized questionnaire research within the PRO-SCHOOL project at eight different Czech high schools and the research team interviewed: school managers, teachers and parents. Altogether we obtained results from 162 respondents.

The questionnaires were distributed by teachers from the IEC during the training of student teachers and analyzed by research team at the IEC. Some results are presented in detail in the next chapter.

The questionnaires contained the list of specific indicators of the school efficiency and the target groups were asked to quantify the importance of each indicator in the scale from 1 to 5 establishing personal priorities in each area. The indicators were grouped in six different dimensions: Physical Conditions, Management and Planning, Education and Training, Social Life, Financial Aspects, Relations with Environment.

The respondents profile as presented above referred to age, gender, experience, education and field of activity.

In this paper, we would like to focus on the dimension "Education and Training", which was divided into four different sub-dimensions:

3.1 Teaching activities (teaching styles, use of materials and tools, focus on general education or specialization, homework).

3.2 Students' behavior coherent with student's role (sufficient use of educational tools and equipments, engagement towards school tasks, disciplinary situation and corrective measures, rate of absenteeism, attires).

3.3 School results in terms of output (testing sessions, achievement levels for main subjects – as Literature, Math, Science, Civics - class promotion and repetition rates, age regularity, abandoning and drop outs, graduation rates).

3.4 School results in terms of outcome (success of students in university and higher education admission, students employed after some years from graduation, access to the labor market coherent with studies).

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

The second questioned group – **teachers** quantified the importance of each indicator in the scale from 1 to 5 establishing personal priorities in each area (1 – the least important, 5 – the most important) and the results are presented in table 1:

Table 1: Teachers Evaluation

Evaluation	3.1		3.2		3.3		3.4	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	0	0	1	1,3	0	0	0	0
2	1	1,3	4	5,3	5	6,6	1	1,3
3	24	31	30	39,5	30	39,5	32	42,1
4	37	48,7	31	40,8	32	42,1	24	31,6
5	11	14,5	7	9,2	6	7,9	13	17,1
No answer	3	3,9	3	3,9	3	3,9	6	7,9
Total	76	100	76	100	76	100	76	100

Table 2 shows the comparison of the indicators in the dimension Education and Training from the perspective of all three groups of respondents.

On the right hand side of the table you can see the means of these indicators qualified by managers, teachers and parents within each sub-dimension.

Table 2: Comparison of means of three groups of respondents

Dimension	Indicator	MEAN		
		Directors	Teachers	Parents
Education and Training	3.1 Teaching activities	3,50	3,79	3,39
	3.2 Students' behavior coherent with student's role	3,50	3,53	3,28
	3.3 School results in terms of output	3,38	3,53	3,27
	3.4 School results in terms of outcome	4,00	3,70	3,24

5. SUMMARY

The research showed that for managers are results of school activities (mean: 4,00) more important than for teachers and parents who pay more attention to the training activities at the school (mean: 3,79 – teachers, 3,39 parents).

The questioned high schools were very cooperative in terms of this research but some problems occurred after completing the data collection. The main problems of the research process were that many respondents (especially several teachers and parents) did not deliver their filled in questionnaires although they were asked for it. In the end, we received questionnaires from 162 respondents. The total number of respondents is appropriate in accordance with the rules of the PRO-SCHOOL project but not representative enough to generalize the results for the whole Czech Republic and its secondary education.

Another problem was cased that some respondents did not answered all the questions. We hope that it was not caused by accident but because they were not able to answer particular question or they did not understand the question. For the next research, we would suggest the method of interviews (face to face questioning the respondents).

For conclusion, the research was very important for identifying the preferences in terms of the school effectiveness indicators among school managers, teachers and parents and also for finding out the training needs among managers.

6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we presented only one dimension of the research – Education and Training and this dimension consisted of four dimensions. Finally we would like to mention the most and the less important indicators for all three questioned groups (managers, teachers, parents).

From the choice in 23 different indicators, managers, teachers and also parents share the biggest importance in the two indicators: "Hygiene, safety and security system" and "Effectiveness of schools operations".

Both managers and teachers evaluated the same indicator "Absenteeism of teachers and staff as the least important. Parents do not share the lowest importance with teachers and managers. For them, the "Documentation" is the least crucial.

The PRO-SCHOOL research results were presented at the national course for school managers organized at the IEC in Prague – Mala Chuchle in March 2010. The dimension Education and Training was the main discussed issue at this course.

The conclusions from this course were reported to the coordinating organisation (Menderes Town National Education Directorate Izmir) and to other partners and they are analyzed in the Training Needs Assessment which is a part of the PRO-SCHOOL Evaluation Report.

7. REFERENCE

<http://www.pro-school.eu/>

Jordanova, B., & Kříž, E. (2009). National Report Czech Republic Czech National Education System and Effective School Indicators. Prague: Czech University of Life sciences Prague.