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THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS IN SOCIOEDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Abstract: This article presents the results of an empirical study, whose main purpose is to establish a management style that is best for socio-educational organizations according to their specificity. The study was conducted in a government and three nongovernmental organizations. They were selected randomly. Two institutions work with smaller, the other two – with greater capacity. In the first part of the article we present the functioning of the institutions and the second part results from the empirical study.

Organizational effectiveness largely depends on the style of leadership. Each organization has its own specific culture, its mission and vision. The way in which its employees perform them very dependent on management. Therefore we believe that to be a socio-educational organization effective its management must meets certain conditions. In this regard through this study we try to determine what leadership style is used in socio-educational institutions and which of them greatly contributes to their effectiveness. We recognize that no single or best leadership style, but rather that there is one dominant, which varies with time, place and style of working.

The empirical study was conducted in late 2013. In it participated 37 specialists (10 managers of institutions and/or Unit, 27 experts working in four socio-educational organizations. The study was done in a government and three nongovernmental institutions working with children and families. Organizations that participated in this study are: Department „Social Support” – 13 people (3 managers and 10 experts), Foundation „Agapedia Bulgaria” – a total of 8 people (4 managers and

4 educators), Foundation „Hope for the small” – 7 people (2 managers and 5 members of staff), and Foundation „Concordia Bulgaria” – 9 people (2 managers and 7 experts).

Main point and functioning of the socio-educational organizations participated in the empirical study

The first socio-educational organization involved in this study is Department „Social Support” whose main purpose is to protect the rights of the child. It is a territorial division of the Agency for Social Support, established under the Minister of Labor and Socio Policy implementing of state policy in the field of the social assesment.

The main activities in Department „Social Support” is aimedat: carrying out of current practical activities of child protection in the municipality proposals to the municipal council for a municipal program for child protection, identifaying and implementing specific measures for child protection and monitor their performance carrying out checks on complaints and signals (reports) about children’s rights; giving a compulsory prescriptions for their eliminaton specified in the regulation for law enforment; giving tips and advice on raising and educating children; providing information about social services in the community and assistance to parents and families of children needs; drawing up and update registers for children who need: „special...policy protection, drop out of school, staying to live with relatives and close, in foster care, in specialized institutions, corporate bodies from NGO working on programs for child protection”. Creating on par in these function, Department „Social Support”: assist and corporate with the NGO aim to persue activities related to child protection; organizes training and consulting foster parents and participated in their selection; whennessesary signalled on the police, prosecution and the court that are required to take immediate action to protect children, organizes immediate assistantce to children who get into a emergency situation including cases when the 48 hour police protection; make proposals for the appointment of guardians counsils and trustees; investigate adoption candidates and prepare a wrriten report for their

ability to adopt a child; give opinion in the cases provided for in the Family Code; organizes consultations and training of prospective adoptive parents and adoptive parents and provides monitoring of the child post-adoption period of two years after date of adoption; bring action for deprivation or restriction of parental rights in child's interest or joint as a part in legal proceeding already; prepare written reports and opinions in cases of administrative or legal proceedings which affect the rights and/or interests of the child".

The next socio-educational institution is participated in this study is the Foundation „Agapedia Bulgaria“. This is a NGO a functioning with its own financing. It provides basically three types of social services: Center for family type accommodation, Foster care center and the Center for counselling and psychological support for children abandoned and abused. Towards the foundation functioning two centers for family type accommodation, which are intended for children aged 6 to 19 years. Foundation „Agapedia Bulgaria“ making efforts children in these centres do not reside in them more than two years. During this period (maximum 2 years) the specialists actively seeking opportunities for their effective reintegration into the biological family (where there is a parental capacity and willingness from parents or extended family) staying with relatives or close, in foster care or adoption in real supportive and loving environment, because even high quality professional and dedicated individual care provided in centres, they can not replace it.

In Foster care Center they organize and conduct training of candidate foster parents and provide support in the process of complementing and submitting the required set of documents accompanying the support of children through foster care.

Through the Center for counselling and support for children abandoned and abused located in Plovdiv the Foundation provides 18 children (now) living in Homes for children without of parental care, assistance in preparing for school, activities in their free time in the afternoon. Most often the largest group on the Center are teenagers and young adults aged 12-22 years. The Center works with children from

several Homes for children without of parental care, namely: in village which name is Razriv (near the town of Pravets) and in village Lisichevo in Plovdiv.

The third organization within which conducts studies conserving in the problem of the impact of management on the effectiveness is social educational institution in the Foundation „Hope for the small”. This is a NGO organization which aim is providing social services for community support residential care. Center for family type accommodation. It has built a two such centres with a capacity of a maximum of 8 children. They were created in the context of the idea of deinstitutionalization in the country and have the main purpose and according to the policy of the „Agapedia Bulgaria” to be temporary alternative for children deprived of parental care until it finds a true family and home for them. The termination of the stay of children in their place only if the child is found appropriate family environment through reintegration into the biological family, placement in a foster care or adoption. The specialists in the organization make efforts in a maximum period of two years each child to find his constant care, carried out in family. Of course these professionals do everything possible these period be reduced to a minimum because they find that the child residence with then more a year develops the so-called „Domovski syndrome” – syndrome associated with social neglect and emotional deprivation. To avoid its inevitable manifestation they seek long-term environment up to one year.

Than one year from Foundation „Hope for small” functioning Unit „Mother and baby” which is also designed to support the idea deinstitutionalization. In this social services for community support (4) specialists provide advice and psychological support to mothers at risk of abandoning their children. This is done to prevent and lasts from six months to one year. The Foundation has a license to conduct a training of foster parents and prospective adoptive parents that professionals made within three months.

Last socio-educational institution which is involved in the present study is the Foundation „Concordia Bulgaria”. This is a NGO and also

functioning with its own financing. It is the first branch of the Austrian International Organization. The Foundation implements its activities through social and youth Center „St. Constantine”, which provide several services for children and young people in different departments, namely: Center for temporary accommodation with 22 seats; Transition and Observed Homes with a total capacity of 46 persons; Shelter for homeless children with a capacity of 12 seats. There is a newly built Unit for teenagers from 14 to 18 years (named Ropotamo) and the Center for street children with a capacity of 30 persons, or the total capacity of the organization is 112 seats.

All these services can be used by the customers of the „Concordia Bulgaria” short-term period (3 months) and long-term (6 months). All the Center for Temporary accommodation are placed children and young people who have temporary left without parental care. Specialists working in it trying to help them to be able to meet their basic living needs. Providing support to children and young people working in the Center are seeking to develop their desire to improve their quality of life. The specialists encourage them to attend school, or if they are over 16 years and do not attend school encourage them to seek employment. They help to organizing the meetings with different employers.

In Transition and Observed residence care are placed children and young people who need a security and satisfaction of their basic needs such as shelter, food, clothing, socio educational care. Here specialistst make efforts to encourage to regularly attending school by proving them with the nessesary assistance and support.

Shelter for nomeless children is a temporary social service residential care for children from 10 to 18 years. The shelter has a continuous operation mode offers nonstop stay and care of children placed (children at risk) as everything is free for them. The services is aimed at providing temporary shelter and save environment for children at risk, for which is taken measure of protection outside the family. In its target group includes children who have no permanent home or living conditions are below the minimum for their normal functioning and

growth, from dysfunctional family, street children, those who are run-aways from home, school dropouts, children who wonder and/or beg; victims of abuse and violence.

Center for street children is an all-day mode of operation, offering everyday accommodation and care of children placed between 09.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. All services are free of charge. Its purpose is the prevention of falling into street children and providing a save environment for children at risk for where is missing parental or other substitute care and control during the day. The key aim of the Center is to implement of child care by providing social services, psychological support, training and education in accordance with the needs and temporary nature of the stayof each child. For these purpose the specialists at the Center performed as mobile work and field work.

The Center for work with street children adopt children living in condition not covering the minimum for normal functioning; victims of violence, abuse, exploitation or any other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment within or outside the family, for which risk from damage to physical, mental, moral, intellectual and social development and children who need social services and support in every day life.

The main target areas of work in these and other units of the organization are focused on the following points: health and safety; education, emotional and behavioural development, independence and responsibly, family, identify and social contacts. There are interesting practice in Foundation „Concordia Bulgaria“ which named is so – called „Open day“. Every Monday children living in Roma settlements located on Territory Foundation comes with their parents to consult a specialist, to take a bath, feed and play with other children.

Analisis of the results of the empirical study

The empirical study was conducted using three instruments namely: Test №1 „What is your leadership style“. Developed by Lidia Todorova and intended for managers of socio-educational organizations. Test №2 „Assesment of current leadership“ prepared by John

Maxwell aimed at professionals and questionnaire specifically developed for this study which seeks to establish the opinion of specialists and managers on the impact of different styles of management on the effectiveness of the organization.

(48,6%) of the experts who participated in this study practice from 1 to 5 years in the indicated socio-educational institutions and (43,2%) of all aged between 35 and 45 years. In view of this it can be said that as professionals in social work and in particular the protection and care of children they have sufficient experience to be their objective legal and practically determined.

Through the first test we aim to establish leadership style which used socio-educational organizations. The test consists of 10 closed questionnaires with possible 3 answers each requiring the respondent to indicate their behaviour from its position of manager in the execution of management functions such as decision making, control, team work. Based on the aggregation of responses were determined leadership of respondent as a democratic, authoritarian or liberal. The key to processing the results of the first test is based on the theory of K. Levin leadership.

The second test allows to compare how successful management style of the managers established with the help Test №1 is efficient in terms of the institutions and people working in it. Test №2 consists of 25 questions about the ability of manager, the respondents (as a subordinate) should consider the extent to which he owns them. Here is scale used Likertova whereby 0 – is never, 1 – rarely, 2 – times and usually, 3, 4 – forever. Responses and points are added together and analyzed according to the rating scale provided by J. Maxwell. The answers falling in the range of 90 to 100 points indicated that the leader is outstanding leader and he must train exceptional and good leaders. 80-89 – a good leader (must continue to develop and train others), 70-79 points – rising leader (must focus on growth and begin to train others), 60-69 – full of great potential (an excellent candidate for construction) under 60 points – needs to grow (possibly not ready to be constructed leader).

Through designed specifically for the needs of this empirical study questionnaire, we aim to examine the views of those working in the social - educational organizations on the impact of leadership and its styles on their effectiveness. It consists of eight closed questions that each respondent can give one answer. Question № 1 of the questionnaire is a contact and has the function to introduce the respondents on the examined of issues. It refers to their judgment on what is the most important factor for them on the effectiveness of the organization in which they working. The most important section includes issues of № 2 and № 6. Their purpose is to establish the position of the respondents in their capacity as employees and managers in terms of successful leadership behavior in different organizational situations and in the process of performing management functions, namely: what is the most appropriate leadership style to them, how to make decisions in order to be most effective, what leadership means to influence and motivation would lead to productive results, and according to them, what is the appropriate level and intensity of control by the leader to be effective organization. As regards tne one of the purpose of this study related to identifying the most effective leadership style for social educational organizations, based on the results obtained from Test № 1 shows that all 10 managers assess their management style as democratic. This result shows clearly that according to research managers democratic management style is best suited for social and educational institutions and for teams of professionals working in them too. This view is supported by data from the general test № 2, according to which 40,7% of all surveyed experts fix your manager as an outstanding leader. Thus, they define his style of leadership as democratic as they give the highest rating on the scale of J. Maxwell of his leadership behavior. This means that as professionals working in the social and educational organizations, democratic style of management has been successful in the context of the area in which they working. In view of this, the democratic leadership style stands out as the style that contributes most to the effectiveness of the social educational institutions. According to the results of the two tests to be the most successful social

educational organizations need a leader who: interested in the opinions of his subordinates, working closely with them, and take together important decisions; seeks all be aware of the mission and vision of the organization and not just manage, lead and directs staff to practical implementation through mutual partnering. This type of institutions also need a leader, which meet the needs of professionals working in them is a top priority. Their manager should encourage professional and personal development, because for achieving the objectives and effectiveness are naturally results of them. Analyzing the results of Test № 2, differentiated institutions see slight differences. For example, 100% of people surveyed by the "Agapedia Bulgaria" and 60% from the "Hope for small" belong to the general opinion, but there are doubts as to the effectiveness of democratic style of management in their organizations. 42.8% of professionals working in the Foundation "Concordia Bulgaria" give "average" rating on the scale of Dzh. Maksuel of its leader as "rising" and 54.5% of respondents in the "Social Assistance" stated that their leader is "good". In view of these results, it is noted that according to the respondents within the last two social educational institutions democratic leadership style used by their leaders not significantly alter their effectiveness.

Therefore we can say that there is not only a difference in opinion of experts from various organizations studied this problem, and also between them and their leaders. These findings may be due to the different specificities and characteristics of work in different institutions, considering the fact that the Foundation "Agapedia Bulgaria" and "Hope for the small" provide social services in the community with a small capacity (up to 8 children) which allows and facilitating both the development of a high level of teamwork and the realization of direct and interpersonal (horizontal) communication between all professionals (subordinates and guiding) in the community. While the Foundation "Concordia Bulgaria", also non-governmental organizations like the previous two, provides a different of community services through independent units built more than 110 persons (children and adolescents).

Department "Social Support", the second institution within which fluctuates opinion as to whether democratic leadership style is most effective in its conditions, is inherently a state administrative territorial division of the Agency for Social Support and one of the main units child protection in the municipality. Also, in these socio-educational organization annually passing in the case 1600. Probably to be the work of specialists most effective and productive is necessary to have another leadership style – a more liberal or authoritarian. On the other side, as the most important factor for the effectiveness of social educational institutions stands „cooperation and teamwork” in the context of the received data: total (69,2%), and differentiated by institutions results from the questionnaire study (55,5%) – Foundation "Concordia", (87,5%) – Foundation "Agapedia" (100%) – Foundation "Hope for small"; (53,3%) – Department "Social Support". Therefore the leader who seeks the implementation of childcare protection by listening to the opinions of his followers is the most successful. Here, the data also stand out the democratic leadership style as the most suitable, a finding made on the basis of the behavioral characteristics, which corresponds with the results of the first two tests. According to (81%) of all respondents to be most effective this process must be done through collective work and responsibility of the decisions to be shared equally between managers and subordinates acting in their team. This is because decision-making is often associated with children's lives due to the nature of these organizations. It is noteworthy that the experts who participated in this study believe that this management function – making organizational decisions should also be carried out according to the principles of democratic leadership. In the context of motivation to work, the majority of all respondents (36,9%) again stand out as significant democratic leadership behavior and in particular the applying of rewards, praise and evaluate the efforts of subordinates by their leader.

There is a difference of opinion of the respondents on this issue – Foundation "Hope for the small" (44,4%) and the "Agapedia" (60%), which are attributed to the overall results, considered encouragement

as the strongest motivational factor, experts from the "Concordia" attribute biggest motivating percentage (44,4%) of providing the choice of working methods and decision-making, and experts on the Department "Social Support" (50%) attach particular importance to a fair financial compensation. People practicing in social educational organizations are usually willing to work in them, because they are provoked by altruistic ideas. In most cases they have a desire to help people and are especially happy when they can positively influence the development of a child and to contribute to the change in his personal history, and turn negatives into positives. It is our assertion is confirmed by the results of the empirical study, as most of the respondents indicated that they moral rewards and positive evaluation of their work are more important than material incentives. Encouragement, expressing kind words for his good work usually uses a system of leaders with democratic style of management, which in turn again indicates that this management style is best suited for social and educational institutions. (57,7%) of all respondents believe that leadership means to influence the leader are its expertise, skills, competencies and experience. For the rest of the participated experts of particular importance to the influence of the manager are his personal characteristics and qualities, by the which he plays the role of a leader and role model for others. From the perspective of participated organizations, the highest percentage of surveyed respondents (64,7%) working in the Department "Social Support" believe that the leader is especially important to have expert knowledge, skills, competencies and experience. This result directly corresponds to the fact that they perform expert activities mainly through the implementation of various social protection measures and protection of children and families. Next come the Foundation "Hope for the small" (60%), where also a major factor is the fast and expertly behavior, taking effective measures to reintegrate the child in the family and the "Concordia Bulgaria" (55,5%) too (55,6%) of respondents who practice in the Foundation "Agapedia Bulgaria" attach greater importance to the personality of the leader.

The conclusion we can make here is that professionals working in the social and educational institutions needs not from the manager, which provides the following procedures and regulations and is intended primarily to perform the tasks, but rather is a leader in the true sense, a guide on which to believe and to follow both because of its high competence, knowledge and practical experience in the field of social work, and because of his personality, charisma, qualities and traits that can be a role model therefor.

(41,1%) of all respondents believe that control in socio-educational organizations is done most successfully by the democratic style of leadership behavior. A large proportion of respondents to the implementation of effective work is enough to make team meetings once a month. These team meetings manager and specialists should present their work, problems and challenges and to express their need for help on the implementation of certain tasks. On the other side, contrast to the general opinion of respondents is observed for professionals working in the Foundation "Concordia" (44,4%) and the "Agapedia" (37,5%). According to them, to be their most effective organizations require constant monitoring and surveillance, as well as providing a report every day /week/ month for the work done by each team member. So for them in terms of control is suitable authoritarian management style. But on the other side, serious internal paradox is observed in the second institution, as the same percentage of the surveyed specialists (37,5%) from the "Agapedia Bulgaria" believe that the most successful in the margins would be manager with liberal approach to control, respectively, its performance is not needed control by its leader, but rather employees should be able, if necessary, seek advice, assistance and support to it. Thus, in the same institution are observed views both extremes – either permanently or no control. These diverse opinions may be due to the different personalities of specialists using different strategies and approaches to work, in view of which they also need a different level and intensity of control by their manager to be their work productive. Received results from the empirical study as the most effective style of leadership in social educational institutions stand out

the democratic style. Using the attached two tests and specially designed for the needs of empirical research questionnaire are discussed its advantages in the context of different organizational situations having equal importance for the successful implementation of the main mission of these institutions, namely the implementation of social protection and child protection and families. According to the respondents in this study this objective is to achieve maximum success when their manager used the democratic leadership style.

The findings of an empirical study are the following:

1. The most important factor for the effectiveness of social educational institutions is cooperation and teamwork.
2. The leader who is interested in the opinions of subordinates work through mutual partnership and cooperation with them is the most successful of these organizations.
3. To be most effective and efficient process of decision-making should be implemented through collective work and responsibility of the decisions to be shared equally between managers and subordinates acting in their team.
4. Most motivating impact on professionals practicing in the social educational organizations has the use of rewards, praise and expressed a positive assessment for a job well done by the leader.
5. Two management approaches are most supportive of employees working in these types of institutions: manager to have the expertly knowledge, skills, competence and experience why it is perceived by them as highly qualified specialist, but also personal characteristics and qualities of a leader, through which plays the role of a leader and role model for his followers.
6. To be social educational organizations effective and productive control them should be "democratic" or be undertaken by conducting team meetings (once a month for example), which should manager and specialists to discuss and analyze: the work done of each team member; problems and challenges in their work; need specific help in the process of implementing an effective socio-pedagogical support to children and families.

In conclusion we can say that the professionals who have the honor to lead social educational organizations should seek to mastering and developed good personal and social, communication skills, characteristic of democratic leadership style if they want to achieve high organizational performance.

Literature

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