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TIME MANAGEMENT AS A TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCE IN THE WRITTEN AND TAUGHT SCHOOL CURRICULUM: CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES

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The article examines the concept of time management within the structure of the educational curriculum in the Republic of Moldova, highlighting its importance as a transversal competency essential for the efficiency of the learning process and the development of students' autonomy. Time management is addressed both theoretically, from the perspective of pedagogy and educational psychology, and practically, through the analysis of the written and taught curriculum, demonstrating that, although its elements are present within the "learning to learn" competency, explicit methodological guidelines and systematic assessment tools are lacking. The study proposes a conceptual framework that correlates educational theory, curricular documents, teaching strategies, and outcome evaluation, emphasizing the interdependence between planning, prioritization, monitoring, and self-regulation of learning activities. Systematic integration of time management into the curriculum supports the development of students' personal competencies, increases the efficiency of the educational process, and prepares them for the professional and social demands of contemporary society.

Keywords: *time management, taught curriculum, transversal competencies, self-regulation, teaching perceptions.*

MANAGEMENTUL TIMPULUI CA COMPETENȚĂ TRANSVERSALĂ ÎN CURRICULUMUL ȘCOLAR SCRIS ȘI PREDAT: PERSPECTIVE CONCEPTUALE

Articolul examinează conceptul de management al timpului în structura curriculumului educațional din Republica Moldova, evidențiind importanța sa ca competență transversală esențială pentru eficiența procesului de învățare și dezvoltarea autonomiei elevilor. Managementul timpului este abordat atât teoretic, prin prisma pedagogiei și psihologiei educaționale, cât și practic, prin analiza curriculumului scris și predat, demonstrând că, deși elementele sale sunt prezente în competența „a învăța să înveți", lipsesc repere metodologice explicite și instrumente de evaluare sistematice. Studiul propune un cadru conceptual care corelează teoria educațională, documentele curriculare, strategii didactice și evaluarea rezultatelor, evidențiind interdependența dintre planificarea, prioritizarea, monitorizarea și autoreglarea activităților de învățare. Integrarea sistematică a managementului timpului în curriculum susține dezvoltarea competențelor personale ale elevilor, creșterea eficienței procesului educațional și pregătirea acestora pentru cerințele profesionale și sociale ale societății contemporane.

Cuvinte-cheie: *managementul timpului, curriculum predat, competențe transversale, autoreglare, percepții didactice.*

Introduction

In the field of education, time management is viewed as an important factor that influences the organization and effectiveness of the learning process. Rather than being limited to scheduling activities or following deadlines, it involves the ability to prioritize tasks, distribute effort appropriately, and adapt learning activities to the available time resources. Educational researchers frequently associate these abilities with self-regulated learning, emphasizing that students who are capable of planning and monitoring their own academic activities usually demonstrate higher levels of responsibility and engagement in the learning process [10].

The growing attention given to time management in recent years is largely connected to the increasing complexity of academic demands faced by students. International studies point out that ineffective use of time may negatively affect academic performance, stress management, and students' capacity to maintain consistency in their learning routines. By contrast, the development of effective time management habits

has been associated with improved academic achievement, better concentration during study activities, and a healthier balance between academic and personal responsibilities (World E-learning Organization, 2024) [4].

From a pedagogical perspective, time management should therefore be understood not only as a technical or managerial skill, but also as a component of students' broader educational development. The ability to organize learning activities efficiently contributes to greater autonomy, encourages reflective learning practices, and supports long-term academic adaptation in increasingly demanding educational environments.

In the Republic of Moldova, the modern educational curriculum increasingly emphasizes the development of transversal competencies, among which is the competency of *"learning to learn"*, encompassing elements of self-regulation, strategic planning, and efficient organization of learning activities [8].

Curricular documents focus on fostering a proactive attitude toward learning, stimulating intrinsic motivation, and developing organizational skills for educational activities. References to organization, responsibility, and independent learning can be found in most contemporary educational curricula. Still, when looking more closely at curricular content, it becomes evident that time management is rarely treated as a distinct competence area with clearly defined instructional strategies. In practice, students are generally expected to organize their learning activities on their own, even though explicit guidance on how to develop these abilities is often limited or inconsistent.

This situation influences classroom practice in different ways. In some cases, teachers integrate elements of planning and task organization naturally during lessons or project activities. In other situations, however, time management receives little direct attention and remains secondary to subject-related content. Because of these differences, students do not always develop the same level of competence in organizing academic responsibilities, and the support they receive may vary considerably from one educational context to another.

It is also important to note that time management in schools is frequently understood in a rather narrow sense. The discussion usually focuses on following schedules, submitting assignments on time, or respecting the duration of classroom activities. While such aspects are relevant, they do not fully capture the complexity of the competence itself. Less attention is given to processes such as setting realistic goals, identifying priorities, reflecting on personal learning habits, or adapting study strategies when academic demands increase.

These limitations become easier to observe during periods of increased workload, when students are required to balance multiple tasks simultaneously. Some manage to adapt their routines and maintain consistency in their work, whereas others struggle with planning, concentration, or task completion. Such differences are not necessarily the result of motivation alone; they may also reflect the lack of a more systematic and coherent educational approach toward the development of time management skills within the learning process.

Recent studies in the Republic of Moldova indicate that the effectiveness of time management varies depending on the subject and the students' level of autonomy, and the absence of curricular indicators and well-structured teaching strategies may hinder the development of stable time management skills among students [12].

In today's educational context, where academic demands are becoming increasingly complex and learning tasks more diverse, the explicit integration of time management into curricula and teaching practice appears particularly relevant. Although curricular documents often include indirectly related competencies such as planning and task organization, the absence of a clearly defined and systematic approach means that the development of this skill tends to remain fragmented.

A more coherent pedagogical framework could support students not only in organizing school-related tasks, but also in forming more stable learning routines and strengthening their capacity for self-regulation [4].

Theoretical foundations of time management

In the specialized literature, time management is generally understood as a complex, multidimensional concept situated at the intersection of pedagogy, psychology, and educational sciences. It extends beyond the simple chronological organization of activities, referring instead to how learners plan tasks, prioritize

responsibilities, and adjust learning strategies in response to academic demands. From this perspective, it is closely linked to self-regulated learning and is often considered an important component of effective educational practice [11].

From a pedagogical standpoint, time management involves processes such as planning learning activities, structuring work stages, estimating task duration, and monitoring progress. However, these processes are not purely technical. They also involve cognitive and metacognitive dimensions, as students are required to reflect on their learning behavior, adjust strategies when necessary, and evaluate their progress. In this way, the use of time becomes an intentional and adaptive component of the learning process rather than a mechanical routine [10].

These theoretical perspectives are further supported by psychological approaches such as Temporal Motivation Theory, which explains how individuals' perception of time influences motivation, attention, and effort allocation in relation to deadlines. In educational settings, this translates into observable differences in how students manage cognitive resources, sustain attention, and remain engaged in learning tasks over time [14].

Closely related to this is the concept of self-organization, which is widely regarded as essential for autonomous and lifelong learning. Students are expected to define goals, plan activities, and evaluate outcomes, all of which require the conscious and efficient use of time as a learning resource.

International research increasingly highlights time management as a transversal competence relevant across disciplines and educational contexts. Recent meta-analytical findings indicate that strategies such as planning and prioritization are positively associated with academic engagement and performance, although their effectiveness often depends on contextual factors and the level of pedagogical support provided to students [6].

These strategies are not limited to mere time allocation but also include organizing activities in a way that supports efficient and progressive learning.

Theoretical approaches to curriculum integration

In the curricular context, time management is not only a psycho-pedagogical concept but also a functional element of curriculum design. The modern curriculum emphasizes the development of key competencies, among which is the ability to *"learn to learn"*, which includes dimensions related to planning and managing educational activities. This approach trains students to create effective learning routines, identify available time resources, and maximize these resources in relation to curricular objectives.

Theoretical approaches to integrating time into the curriculum include the development of instructional programs that encourage independent planning of study tasks, the design of educational projects based on self-assessment and self-regulation, and the introduction of tools for self-monitoring progress [7]. These conceptual references support the idea that a structured and intentional approach to time management in the curriculum can significantly contribute to student autonomy and enhance the efficiency of the educational process.

Theorists of time management in education argue that its pedagogical application involves clearly setting learning objectives, prioritizing tasks according to these objectives, and conducting activities at a pace that reflects the level of difficulty and available resources. In practice, this may include integrating planning tools into teaching strategies, using study journals, organizing schedules, reflecting on progress, and adapting activities to the individual pace of the student [5].

In conclusion, the theoretical foundations of time management in education are based on the intersection of pedagogy, psychology, and motivational theories, integrating concepts of self-regulation, strategic planning, and efficient organization of time resources. These conceptual frameworks provide the basis for curricular solutions that support the development of time management competencies and facilitate effective and sustainable learning.

Distribution of teaching time and curricular priorities

Another component of the issue concerns how curricula organize teaching time through framework plans. The approved framework plans for primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary education establish a fixed number of hours for compulsory and optional subjects but do not include any mechanism

to assess or integrate competencies related exclusively to time management as a transdisciplinary activity (Ministry of Education and Research, 2025) [9]. This organization reflects a prioritization of traditional subjects – such as language and communication, mathematics, or sciences – at the expense of practices that emphasize the development of practical skills in managing personal learning time.

Moreover, the allocation of hours per subject does not provide sufficient curricular flexibility to integrate activities that explicitly foster organizational competencies, such as self-regulation projects, task planning, or personal time optimization techniques. Although curricular documents—including proposals under revision—mention the development of key and transversal competencies, these often remain abstract and difficult to translate into concrete learning strategies oriented toward time management.

Educational implications and directions for curricular development

This „*explicit absence*” of time management as a curriculum element can have significant practical effects. First, students do not always have effective strategies for organizing their study time, and this can influence both their academic results and the gradual development of self-regulation skills. At the same time, teachers may experience difficulties when trying to design learning activities that intentionally develop these competencies, especially in situations where there are no clear methodological frameworks or specific tools for assessing time management.

Conceptual framework of the educational curriculum: the dimension of time management

In educational research, time management is increasingly understood as a complex, multidimensional construct that goes beyond simply arranging activities in chronological order. It is closely linked to the development of self-regulated learning and is often considered an essential competence for academic success. In the literature, time management is described as „the totality of activities through which project stages are completed according to schedule: defining, sequencing, estimating durations, planning, tracking, and controlling” which highlights its dual nature as both an organizational and a self-regulatory process.

From a pedagogical perspective, time management is not limited to efficient scheduling of instructional time. It also refers to students’ capacity to plan their learning tasks, set priorities, and continuously monitor their progress in relation to available time. In this sense, it combines organizational skills with motivational and behavioral aspects of learning, being strongly connected to self-regulated learning, where learners actively guide their cognition, emotions, and actions in order to achieve academic objectives.

Within this approach, time management becomes a key element in the learning process, as students are expected to take responsibility for planning, organizing, and evaluating their own work. This includes distributing study time realistically, prioritizing academic tasks, and gradually building stable independent learning routines. Therefore, time management should be seen not only as a factor that influences academic performance, but also as a foundation for autonomy, responsibility, and self-organization.

Theoretical approaches in education

From a theoretical standpoint, time management is discussed through several major perspectives:

- **Self-regulated learning theory**, which emphasizes the role of metacognitive abilities that allow learners to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning processes, including the efficient use of time as a key resource [apud 10].

- **The pedagogical perspective on educational planning**, according to which time management is not only a personal competence but also a condition that supports the efficiency of the instructional process [1]. From this perspective, time is considered a key curriculum resource, and optimizing its use represents a strategic objective in the design and implementation of educational plans.

- **Psychological approaches to temporal motivation**, such as the Temporal Motivation Theory (TMT), which highlights the role of time and the perception of deadlines in motivating students to complete learning tasks. According to this theory, the perception of time influences the prioritization of activities and allocation of effort, which is relevant for developing self-regulation and time discipline competencies in education [13].

These theoretical frameworks suggest that time management is not an isolated concept but an integrative construct reflecting the interaction between cognitive-motivational, pedagogical, and curricular factors.

The concept of time management in the curriculum

Within the educational curriculum, time management can be conceptualized as the set of cognitive, metacognitive, and behavioral competencies through which students plan, prioritize, monitor, and evaluate learning activities according to study resources and objectives, with the aim of maximizing efficiency and autonomy in learning.

This conceptualization highlights several fundamental dimensions:

- **Planning** – setting learning objectives and allocating appropriate time to achieve them.
- **Prioritization** – identifying essential tasks and distributing time according to importance and deadlines.
- **Monitoring** – tracking learning progress and evaluating the use of time resources.
- **Self-Assessment** – reflecting on the efficiency of time use and adjusting strategies according to results.

Through these components, time management gains coherence as an integrated part of the *"learning to learn"* competence required by modern curricula to support students' personal and professional development.

Conceptual relevance for structuring the written and taught curriculum

In developing a methodology for a time management concept within the written and taught curriculum, it is essential to understand that:

- The **written curriculum** must clearly include competencies, objectives, and performance indicators that reflect time management as part of transversal competence development.
- The **taught curriculum** must include teaching strategies, activities, and assessment tools that allow students to practice and develop competencies in planning, prioritization, monitoring, and evaluation of time.

This conceptual framework provides the basis for subsequent research methodology, as it identifies the competency components to be measured, the instructional tools that can be used, and the evaluation criteria that can be incorporated into curricula to support the development of students' time management skills.

From a curricular perspective, time management can be integrated in the following ways:

- Through **cross-curricular subjects** that develop self-assessment and planning competencies.
- By **including objectives and assessment indicators** related to time organization strategies.
- Through **interdisciplinary projects** that require continuous planning and self-organization.

In this regard, it is necessary to formulate a clear and well-structured concept of *"Time management in the structure of the written and taught curriculum in the Republic of Moldova."*

The concept of time management in the structure of the educational curriculum (written and taught) for the Republic of Moldova

Time management, in the educational context, is defined as the set of cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral competencies through which students plan, organize, monitor, and efficiently evaluate learning activities in relation to the available time resources and curricular objectives. This concept emphasizes the role of time not only as a simple calendar duration in which teaching takes place, but as a strategic educational resource that influences the quality of learning and the development of students' personal competencies [11].

Moreover, time management is seen as a transversal competence that supports the development of self-regulated learning – that is, the ability of students to actively take control over the cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes involved in learning.

The written curriculum is the set of official documents (framework plans, competency standards, school programs) that structure what "must be taught and learned." In the Republic of Moldova, these documents indicate general and key competencies, without explicitly mentioning time management as a separate subject, but they refer to competencies such as learning to learn and self-regulation, which implicitly involve time management skills [9].

Therefore, in the written curriculum, time management could be formalized as:

A transversal competence that supports other key competencies (for example: autonomous learning competence, communication competence, problem-solving competence) and may have specific indicators such as:

- The ability to set short-term and long-term learning objectives;
- The ability to plan learning activities and meet deadlines;
- The ability to evaluate and adjust the use of time resources.

Learning outcomes in school programs specify not only what the student “knows” but also what the student “can do” in relation to their own organization of learning activities.

A written curriculum structured in this way would support the explicit assessment of time management competencies, avoiding situations where these competencies remain only implicit or are left to the discretion of the teacher.

The taught curriculum reflects how the teacher interprets and implements the written curriculum in the actual teaching–learning–assessment process. It includes the strategies, techniques, and educational tools used by teachers to achieve learning objectives. Regarding time management, the taught curriculum should include:

- Teaching strategies for planning and backward design – Teachers can use models such as *Understanding by Design (UbD)*, which start from the expected learning outcomes to structure activities and time allocations throughout the instructional process (UbD promotes planning aimed at deep understanding and efficient organization of activities).
- Practical planning and prioritization activities – Students can be involved in weekly or project planning activities, where they set tasks and deadlines, monitor progress, and reflect on how they manage their time.
- Monitoring and self-assessment tools – Time journals, self-assessment portfolios, prioritization tables, or reflection rubrics that require students to analyze how and how efficiently they used their time for learning.
- Formative assessment focused on self-regulation – Teachers can include evaluation criteria related to students’ ability to plan and manage learning activities, as part of process assessment, not just the final result.

Thus, the taught curriculum integrates time management into concrete educational activities, ensuring not only knowledge acquisition but also the development of organizational and self-regulation competencies.

Conceptually, the relationship between the written and taught curriculum regarding time management should be aligned through the following principles:

- **Clarity of competencies:** The written curriculum indicates competencies related to planning, organization, and self-regulation, which are reflected in the applied teaching strategies.
- **Coherence between objectives and activities:** Activities planned in the taught curriculum aim not only at knowledge transfer but also at developing time management competencies in real learning contexts.
- **Integrated assessment:** Evaluation indicators in the written curriculum must include criteria related to efficient use of time, and these criteria should be applied in student assessment in teaching.
- **Reflection and adjustment:** Students develop the ability to reflect on their own learning process and adjust time management strategies based on feedback received from teachers.

The implementation of the time management concept requires:

- Careful curriculum design at the central level – authors of the written curriculum must include competencies and specific indicators for planning and managing time.
- Professional development of teachers to effectively integrate time management techniques into the teaching process.
- Adapted educational tools – materials, guides, and methodological resources that provide practical examples of integrating time management into teaching activities.
- Formative and summative assessment that includes criteria for time organization, not only knowledge acquisition.

In this way, the contribution to effective and sustainable education is reflected through the application of a well-articulated concept of time management, integrated both in the written and taught curriculum. Such an approach contributes to:

- The development of students' personal competencies, such as autonomy, responsibility, and the ability to strategically plan educational activities;
- Increased learning efficiency, through optimizing the allocation of time for tasks, projects, and preparation for assessments, reducing tendencies of procrastination and organizational difficulties;
- Alignment of teaching practice with the demands of contemporary society, where the competence of time management represents an essential skill not only in the school environment but also in professional and social life.

Based on these conceptual foundations, it is necessary to establish an integrated concept of time management, systematically applied within the educational curriculum of the Republic of Moldova. Such an approach involves clarifying the relationships between the theoretical dimension of the concept, its reflection in the written curriculum (normative documents, framework plans, school programs), and its implementation in the taught curriculum (actual teaching practice).

In this logic, time management becomes an element of curricular coherence, ensuring alignment between educational intentions, the organization of the teaching–learning process, and learning outcomes. Its systematic integration contributes to the optimization of teaching activities, the development of students' competencies, and the improvement of educational results.

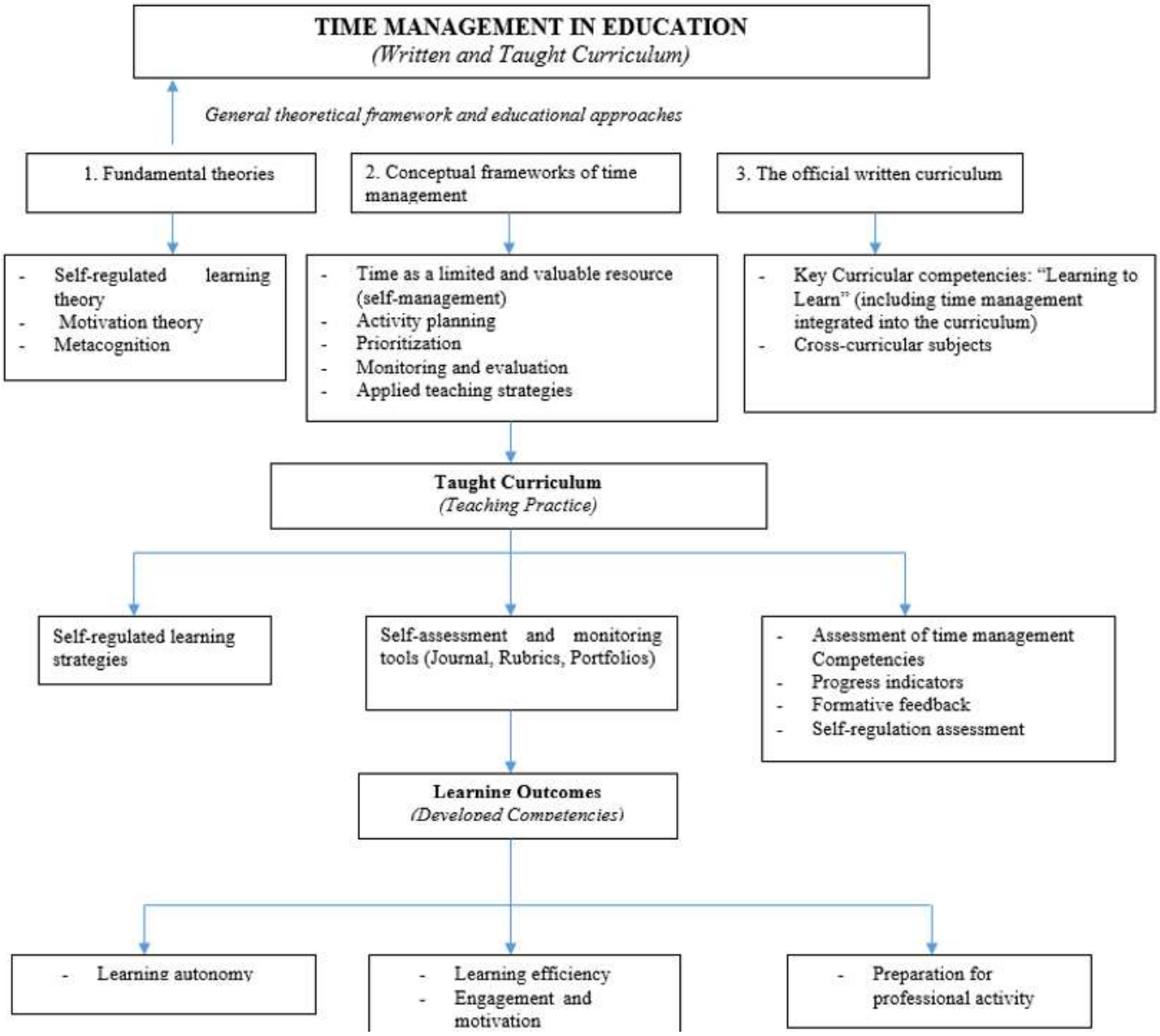


Figure 1. Conceptual model: time management in the educational curriculum (Republic of Moldova)

The proposed conceptual model of Time management in the educational curriculum highlights the interdependence between educational theory, conceptual benchmarks, the written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and the targeted educational outcomes in the context of the Republic of Moldova, providing a systemic perspective on how time management is conceptualized, integrated, and utilized in the educational process.

At the *theoretical level*, the conceptualization of time management is based on foundations from pedagogy and educational psychology, particularly theories of self-regulated learning, metacognition, and motivation for learning. From this perspective, time management is not reduced to a simple organizational technique but is understood as an internal process of self-regulation, through which the student learns to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process. Time thus becomes a strategic resource, essential for the efficiency of intellectual activity and personal development.

Based on these theoretical foundations, *the conceptual benchmarks* of time management in the curriculum are outlined. Time is seen as a limited and valuable resource that requires conscious planning, task prioritization, and progress monitoring. Time management is associated with strategies such as organizing activities, setting goals, self-assessment, and adjusting the learning process. Within the curriculum, these elements are subsumed under the key competency “learning to learn,” provided in the official documents of the Republic of Moldova, a competency that presupposes the student’s ability to organize and regulate their own learning, including through effective use of time.

At the *level of the written curriculum*, time management does not appear as a distinct subject; however, it is implicitly integrated into the set of transversal competencies formulated in framework plans, competency standards, and school programs. Curricular documents promote the development of autonomy, responsibility, and self-regulation, elements that indirectly include the dimension of time management. Thus, the framework highlights the fact that time management is present at the normative level, even if it is not explicitly named as a separate curricular component.

The translation of these provisions into educational practice is realized through *the taught curriculum*, where teachers operationalize the principles of time management in daily activities. This is reflected in the rigorous planning of lessons, balanced organization of tasks, engaging students in setting priorities, and the use of self-monitoring tools, such as learning journals or self-assessment sheets. In this way, time management becomes an active educational process, integrated into the dynamics of the teacher–student relationship and the structure of teaching activities.

Finally, the framework includes *the dimension of assessment and educational outcomes*, emphasizing that integrating time management into the curriculum contributes to the formation of sustainable competencies. Assessment targets not only cognitive performance but also students’ ability to organize their activities efficiently, meet deadlines, and adjust their work strategies. The targeted educational outcomes include the development of autonomy in learning, increased efficiency of the educational process, and preparation of students for the demands of professional and social life.

Thus, the framework reflects a coherent logical flow – from theoretical foundations to practical application and impact on outcomes – highlighting the role of time management as an integrative element of the educational curriculum in the Republic of Moldova.

Conclusions

The analysis shows that time management is, in essence, a key competence for improving the effectiveness of the educational process, even if in the curriculum of the Republic of Moldova it is mostly present in an indirect way. While the “learning to learn” competence does include aspects such as planning, prioritization, and self-regulation, in practice these elements are not always supported by clear methodological guidelines that would ensure their consistent application in classroom activities.

What also becomes evident from the literature is the gap between what is formally stated in curricular documents and how these provisions are actually translated into teaching practice. In many cases, time management is addressed in an uneven or fragmented manner, depending largely on individual teacher

initiative rather than on a shared or clearly structured framework. This naturally leads to differences in how students develop these skills.

At the same time, a more deliberate and coherent integration of time management into the curriculum could make a real difference in how students learn to organize their work. Beyond academic performance, it would help them gradually develop more autonomy and responsibility in managing their learning process, which in turn contributes to a more efficient and better structured educational experience overall.

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