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PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL FACTORS AND PRINCIPLES FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT SITUATIONS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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The article presents the psycho-pedagogical factors and principles of managing the professional stress of teachers in the educational process. The analysis of specialized literature demonstrates that there are stressful factors that influence the professional activity of teachers. In the given context, there are several types of stress: the stress produced by the education process, the stress from the parent's attitude, the stress from the class of students. The normative framework of professional stress management is based on psycho-pedagogical principles, especially the principles of practical pedagogy, which foresee certain actions undertaken in the relationship between the teacher and the actors involved in the educational process.

Keywords*: factors, psycho-pedagogical principles, stress, teacher, educational process, relationship, communication.*

FACTORI ȘI PRINCIPII PSIHOPEDAGOGICE DE GESTIONARE A SITUAȚIILOR DE STRES ÎN PROCESUL EDUCAȚIONAL

Articolul prezintă factorii și principiile psihopedagogice de gestionare a stresului profesional al cadrelor didactice în procesul educațional. Analiza literaturii de specialitate demonstrează că există factori stresori care influențează activitatea profesională a cadrelor didactice. În contextul dat, se prezintă mai multe tipuri de stres: stresul produs de procesul de învățământ, stresul provenit din atitudinea părintelui, stresul din clasa de elevi. Cadrul normativ al gestionării stresului profesional are la bază principiile psihopedagogice, mai ales, principiile de pedagogie practică, care prevăd anumite acțiuni întreprinse în relaționarea profesorului și a actorilor implicați în procesul educațional.

Cuvinte-cheie*: factori, principii psihopedagogice, stres, profesor, proces educațional, relație, comunicare.*

Introduction

There are also other stressful factors of the teaching staff that are highlighted in the specialized literature, such as managing the relationship with the problematic students, with the students' parents and with other teaching and managerial staff. This proves to us that stress is permanent in the professional and the personal activity, a fact that leads the teachers to identify effective stress management strategies, which are vital for them.

The stress produced by the educational process can turn into a stressor. Specialists in the field have identified a number of factors that, if mismanaged, can cause stress at work: participation in lessons, the student's involvement in various classroom activities, the quality of manuals or other informational resources, the type of learning required (mechanical or logical memorization), the level of difficulty and the size of homework, the evaluation system, school motivation, etc. [appud 14, p. 139]. For example, if the student has not completed his homework tasks, his/her participation in the lesson can cause stress for both the student and the teacher. Therefore, the teacher must take into account these situations when developing the contents for that lesson. Textbook quality can make learning difficult and requires more effort from the student. In this case, the teacher may have stressful situations, because this fact would contribute to difficulties in the learning process. Another reason would be the evaluation system which would create certain difficulties and contribute to diminishing the students' motivation to learn. Because of its finalizing role, assessment causes stress in the learning process.

The stress that comes from the parent's attitude, analyzed by the researchers, causes stress to both the student and the teacher. Author S. Ciocotti has shown that this pressure can appear quite early in children's lives. [Appendix 3, p. 139]. Later, in school or kindergarten, the parent can be a stressor through another

perspective: unrealistic expectations. The student has a self-image provided by the parents and the situation can be completely different at school. The teaching staff must keep in constant contact with the parents to ensure that the student has a positive, stimulating, but not exhausting climate on their part [apud 14, p. 139].

The stress in the classroom is another stressor. Researcher K. Burgess et al. state that non-aggressive students, especially those who can be described as socially cautious and withdrawn, may perceive interpersonal situations, such as integration into a group, as stressful and anxiety-producing. From this perspective, integration into the social group of the class can bring a great amount of stress in the child's life [apud 2, p. 139]. This fact also causes stress to the teacher, who must manage the situation in the classroom and the relationship with the respective student's parents.

Concept and argument

The author C. Mironov analyzes several models of professionalism and identifies two of them, which are at opposite poles [10, p. 46]: Model A – *regulated by professionalism* and Model B – *free from professionalism*, both focusing on the following components: *character*, *profession*, *professionalism* and *professional standards*. The axis defined in these models, regulation, standardization, which offers freedom, openness, non-standardization, generates the question: *What kind of model would the teacher identify in the professional activity regarding the management of occupational stress and what managerial communication resources would the teaching staff need for managing stress in professional and personal activity*?

Eminently, an important step in managing the occupational stress of teachers is the rethinking of the set of professional skills required by them and the entire professional development program and professional development curriculum, which requires systemic changes targeting aspects of the educational policy in the field of professional development , the general concept and contents of professional development, institutional structures and their way of functioning, according to the pedagogical model of managing the occupational stress of teachers, which assumes new purposes in the professional development of the teaching staff.

Results and discussion

In the investigations analyzed with reference to the management of stress among teachers, their authors have systematized various principles of practical pedagogy, which are the basis of the model of managing the occupational stress of teachers [13].

In the specialized literature, we have identified the most significant principles for our research:

A first principle would be *the principle of personalizing the relationship*, which implies the closeness of the relationship teacher-teacher, teacher-student, teacher-manager, teacher-parent, etc., which contributes to diminishing the limits of behavior at an internal and external level. The relationship between two educational subjects must be open, based on mutual trust, which would reduce or avoid the occurrence of tense situations within the professional activity. The author R. Dawson presents cases of personalizing the relationship in conferences through different gestures: shaking hands and the way to introduce yourself to the guests. People are impressed by this personalization that even the most demanding hesitate to create certain problems during organized events [5]. When you want someone to listen to what you say, you need to personalize the relationship, so that this person can trust you. People who relate more to each other are more open, interact more, know how to get closer to other people and have more trust in that person [13, p. 47-49]. The personalization of the relationship allows the efficient management of stressful situations that arise in the institution at the level of the student class, at the level of colleagues, at the level of administration, etc., but at the same time the teaching staff protects themselves from serious behaviors inside the institution and from outside the institution.

The principle of empathy represents the knowledge of the other, the understanding of needs, fears, needs, desires, which contribute to the successful solution of problems arising in professional activity [13, p. 51].

Trust and honesty are two essential components in establishing relationship between people. In the given

context, we can talk about the principle of the interlocutor's trust towards us. *The principle of trust* also starts from the idea that people will perceive you better and have a better opinion of you if you are honest [13, p. 59-61]. The author G. Kohlrieser talks about the mission of a secure base, which provides a sense of protection and safety, something that helps us focus on the issues that send us to performance and success [8].

The principle of creating a connection with the others has an important role in the formation of the relationship and of the behaviour with other people. G. Kohlrieser mentions that problem solving is the ability to create an emotional connection [apud 13, p. 55-56].

The principle of coherence between verbal communication and non-verbal communication: within the professional activity there are several types of communication, but the biggest influence is the verbal-non-verbal communication axis. The specialized literature analyzes verbal communication more, and non-verbal communication less. In the given context, we highlight the most important channels of non-verbal communication: eye language (visual contact), body language (gestures, movements, posture), physical contact and space [13, p. 69-70]. Authors S. Hybels, R. Weaver, and J. DeVito present the important elements of the relationship that verbal communication establishes and nonverbal communication records:

- non-verbal communication is meant to emphasize the verbal one; thus, the teacher can reinforce the importance of a certain part of the message from what he/she conveys during the lessons through mime or gesture elements;
- non-verbal communication can complement the message sent verbally;
- non-verbal communication repeats or updates the meaning of verbal communication;
- elements of non-verbal communication can replace aspects of verbal communication (for example, when the teacher indicates to the interlocutor what to do through a gesture) [6, 7].

The principle of active listening focuses on both presentation and listening as a whole. D. G. Myers mentions that: "active, verbalized participation in the discussion produces more changes in attitude than passive listening.... People's minds are not blank slates on which the sender can write what he wants, what people think in response to which gives it to the message is crucial" [11, p. 290]. The teacher is a good speaker and, at the same time, a good listener, knowing how to listen to the interlocutor. In this way listening is as important as transmitting information.

Raymond S. Ross develops a listening analysis model comprising four steps [15]:

Step 1: sensation, which is a resultant of several analyzers (visual, auditory, etc.). The given author mentions the barriers that act at the level of this first step: different types of noises, reception defects, fatigue, other elements in the sensory field that distract attention, transmission defects (problems at the transmitter level), etc.

Step 2: interpretation, which aims to assign meaning to what we have heard.

Step 3: comprehension requires, in addition to interpretation, a critical evaluation of what was heard.

Step 4: the answer, which can have several variations: we listen to understand, we listen to retain, we listen to analyze and evaluate content and we listen to develop relationships (empathic listening). Thus, the teachers actively listens and reconciles the people around them.

The principle of educational conflict management is about something more than just conflict resolution. As a result of participating in and managing a conflict, participants develop new cognitive and affective acquisitions. The analysis of specialized literature indicates four major types of conflict:

- the goal-conflict that occurs when one person wants different results compared to another;
- cognitive conflict, based on contradicting ideas or opinions of others regarding a certain phenomenon;
- affective conflict, which occurs when a person or a group has feelings or emotions incompatible with those of others;
- behavioral conflict, which occurs when a person or a group does something that is unacceptable for others [13, p. 135].

For an effective conflict management, the teacher needs not only information about the types of conflict that can occur, but also has to know what needs a person has during the conflict. Thus, the teacher will be able to find the necessary resources to resolve the conflict in question.

The principle of mentoring and coaching aims at different complex roles of teaching staff, to offer them options for cognitive and social development in their professional activity. In the research and practice of the last years, *mentoring and coaching activities* are emphasized. In the educational process the concept of mentoring has a more important meaning than the concept of coaching. Researcher G. Pânișoară emphasizes that the person who is integrated into the organization through mentoring and coaching, gains immediate access to the experience and professional perspective of his mentor, regarding the development of action techniques adapted to concrete situations, as well as improving personal capacities and abilities or personality traits [12]. Studies in the field demonstrate positive developments due to the implementation of mentoring and coaching programs. *Mentoring* describes a special relationship between a more experienced person, able to provide support, and a beginner. *Coaching* is governed by the idea of being coached, where the important aspect is focusing on performance, success. According to the author O. Devillard, coaching must cover three aspects: coaching for solving (aimed at overcoming a difficulty), coaching for development (tracks progress in a certain direction: support, maintenance, etc.) and strategic coaching (presupposes the development an evolution plan) [1].

The principle of meritocracy and transparency aims at the evaluations, selections and hierarchies obtained in professional life [4, pp. 224-226]. The activity of the teaching staff is related to quality criteria in all its achievements. Teachers obtain qualifications and they are promoted, sanctioned, criticized based on indicators, descriptors, values, which gives the respective principle a fundamental role in the professional activity of teachers.

By meritocracy we understand to publicly recognize the advance or merit that a teacher receives at a given time. This principle contributes to increasing the motivation of the teacher, to value stimulation, to the creation of a sociocultural and value climate, where everyone takes their rightful place [adaptation after 4, p. 226]. The author C. Cucoș mentions that merit is not an inheritance that is passed on as such, but a non-transmissible asset, which is earned personally through one's own effort, which is waiting to be valued by those around it through transparent and fair procedures [4, p. 226]. Meritocracy is also addressed by the author M. Manolescu, who approaches the given concept at different levels and finds that the continuous training of teaching staff through accredited programs represents the first achievement in Romania (2000-2010) of promoting teachers in this sense. The researcher mentions that the creation of the National Center for Pre-University Education Personnel Training (2001) proved to be effective, it positioned the training of teaching staff at a new, higher stage, in accordance with modern ideas of professionalizing the teaching career [9, pp. 325-326].

The principle of strengthening and highlighting the performances of teachers aims at the appreciation of each person, who contributes to their motivation and to the reduction of stressful situations in the activity of the educational institution. The researcher C. Cucoș emphasizes the need to admit a system of awards in the school that would be in agreement with the need to restructure an incentive framework and meritocratic ethos in which everyone is aware of the value or rank of each employee [4, p. 226]. The teachers' performances need to be valued, both those obtained at a high level (obtaining the second, first, higher teaching degree, obtaining the scientific title of doctor, obtaining the status of national and international trainer, national and international mentor, etc.), and the performances obtained at local and institutional level as well (organization of activities within the decade of the subject he/she teaches, organization of volunteer activities with students, obtaining the status of local and institutional trainer, local institutional mentor, etc.).

Conclusions

In the context of the analyzed principles, we conclude that the management of the occupational stress of teachers directly aims at the correlation of these principles in the professional activity and the identification of the specific elements of each tense situation that has arisen, the application of these principles at a particular and general level, at a procedural level, in order to achieve the expected results in the educational institution.

The stress factors among teachers undoubtedly imply a level of respect between the parties involved in the education process.

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