THE MANAGERIAL CULTURE AND THE UNIVERSITY'S MANAGEMENT

Ioana Mihaela VALENTIN*, **Ion DINESCU****, **Valentin Gabriel VALENTIN*****

*"Bucegi" Mountain Training Base, Predeal, Romania, **"Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy, Brasov, ***Military Transportation Bureau, Institution, Brasov, Romania

Abstract: The managerial culture represents the value system, the beliefs, the aspirations, the expectations and the managers' behavior that is being reflected in the management types and styles practiced within the universities, visibly affecting the content of the managerial culture. The managerial culture regards the objective fulfilling, influencing the internal and external factors that affect the organization and contribute at increasing its competitiveness on the internal and external market. Another important role is foreseeing the apparition of the anti-organizational culture that contains opposite elements of the managerial culture, focused upon the objectives' fulfilling. An important part of the managerial culture is that of protecting the university and the academic community from the multitude of challenges raised by the internal and external environment. Therefore, the managerial culture can be considered the basic component of the quality increase of the education. The present paper presents aspects regarding the way in which the university's management is being integrated within the managerial culture.

Keywords: culture, management, university, education, quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays the management represents an essential feature of life and mainly of the academic life. The management as a particular type of activity comes from the very existence of the university. It is a system, a mixture of elements and actions.

Their normal running not only depends upon their nature but also upon their interrelations. It also depends upon the assembly's organization and interdependence between its components.

The academic management nowadays becomes an element of the managerial culture, as a mixture between art and science. In such an environment the university managerial process has specific features and functions (Voiculescu, 2004: 35-40).

It comprises informational, decisional and motivational elements. Their meaning and percentage varies from one domain to another, in a specific ratio. The university management must own and use the motivational factors' mechanism.

In the academic education the managerial art often prevails the managerial science.

The manager's personality and self-example play an important role in accomplishing the system and the university's objectives at the highest performance level.

The activity's success depends on the orientation, the organization, the guiding and the motivation capacity belonging to the university corpus – teachers and students.

2. THE MANAGERIAL CULTURE

2.1 Notional boundaries. The managerial culture represents a system of values, beliefs, aspirations, expectations and behaviors belonging to the managers that sensibly mark the content of the organizational culture as well as its performances.

The managerial culture aims at fulfilling the objectives by influencing the internal and

external factors that affect the organizations and contribute to the growth of its internal and external competitiveness.

Another important role is the foreseeing of the anti-organizational culture – elements that are opposite to the managerial culture – focused upon fulfilling the objectives.

Regardless of the way in which the managerial culture manifests itself, a crucial factor is the manager's personality, especially the one belonging to the superior level.

In most cases, the managerial culture is being built according to the style imposed by the general manager.

He represents a role model for the rest of the managers.

The stronger the manager's personality and leadership is, the better the managerial culture reflects the conception, the potential and the managerial particularities.

Upon the managers' experience the specialists have identified a series of features – psychological and intellectual – that actively influence the success. No leader should own all these features, because not all of them are useful.

They manifest themselves differently, from one case to another: practical skills, adaptability, risks taking, intelligence, flexibility, concern towards the personnel, creative and innovative vision, etc.

In any strong organizational culture, the top managers gather a series of common abilities and share the same set of beliefs, values, behaviors that directly regard the way in which the organization must be guided (Petrescu, 1998:14-15; Voiculescu, 2004: 71-75).

The managers' personal values influence the employees' perception, decisions and behaviors determining a major impact upon the organization's activity.

In such cases, the managerial culture is a strong one; one that is extremely well implemented.

The new employees that make contact with this cultural environment adopt is as a consequence of their formal and informal manifestations.

One of the most important values of the top managers regards: the organizational

efficiency, the labor productivity, a pleasant and stimulating climate, an attractive organizational image.

2.2 The dimensions of the managerial culture. The specialty literature mentions a series of pair dimensions of the managerial culture, from which we will highlight the ones that seem more important (Petrescu, 1998: 15-16).

➢ *Large/Short power distance* depending upon the way in which the resources and the power are distributed within the society. In the cultures that are characterized by a large power distance we can notice big inequalities in its distribution within the society members and all the way round. This distance is being reflected in the sizing and distribution of the authority and motivation within the social system, in the centralization of the managerial systems.

➢ *High/low risk avoidance.* It is represented by the people's position towards the fact that time flows in only one direction and the future is rough and difficult to anticipate.

The cultures having high risk avoidance place their accent upon building well-defined organizational systems, upon ensuring a strong hierarchy, upon planning promotion as a means of anticipation and preparing the future.

The cultures having low risk avoidance present a less intense or detailed planning and organization. The accent is being placed upon creativity, upon the creation of the safety feeling and upon continuity within the organization

➢ *Individualism/Collectivism.* Taking into consideration the intensity of the relations between the component parts of a collectivity we can see individualist managerial cultures in which the relations are less intense. Here we have a higher degree of individual freedom within decisions and actions. People are being preoccupied by accomplishing the individual objectives.

In the collectivist culture he human relations are very strong. A mixture is being manifested in pursuing the individual and group accomplishments whereas the problems are frequently faced and solved in a moral vision.

These dimensions have a determining and leading role for any managerial activity.

The way in which these dimensions work is strictly depending upon the general and specific elements of any organization.

3. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC WITHIN THE HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

In the beginning we mentioned a few problems belonging to the managerial culture because we consider that mutual relations are being established between this culture and the university's management. Therefore, they determine and condition each other providing contents, methods, means and purposes.

"The problematic of the higher education management receives a special meaning in a rapidly changing social and political environment. In this change, nearly all the educational aspects, especially the ones of the higher education, starting with the ones of financing, contents, quality, systems' efficiency and educational activities are being questioned" (Petrescu, 1998:22-27).

As a consequence, the problem *"what kind of managerial environment is appropriate for the academic education at the beginning of the XXIst century?"* becomes a central one for the efforts of developing the education.

In answering this question we start from the following general premises:

- the general management, regardless of the way it is conceived, defined or practiced is also found in the field of education, with all its elements, dimensions and functions that it has in any field of activity;

- within the education, it is present in a rapidly changing social and political environment when the technical progress is stronger and deeper as well as the informational revolution. This impact is also felt by the society's general equilibrium and by the manner in which we perceive the surrounding world.

On the other hand, a series of specific elements of the higher educational management are governed by a multitude of external and internal factors that affect and influence the educational systems and progress. Among them we can find:

- the development and the transformation of the contemporary knowledge, a process that triggers deep changes in the academic education, in the interdisciplinary relations and between the departments belonging to different organizational structures and between the fields of research;

- the problems raised today by the available resources of financing the academic education that affect the "expansion" and that often determine the "compression", the access to education as well as its costs;

- *the global evolutionary tendencies of the academic education,* with political and power factors that, participating in financing the education have the right to ask for an efficient and adequate use of the resources;

- all these within the frame in which the vocation of the academic education is that to produce, disseminate and present knowledge and values through educational activities, research and continuous training. Therefore, it has to organize itself and function on specific grounds regarding both the intellectual autonomy as well as the freedom of action and thought, establishing both the objectives and the educational practices;

- finally, the general picture of the academic management is marked by the fact that the academic "production" is represented by the cultivation and praising of the human resources, of humans and not of the material goods; education is being realized in knowledge based institutions that also produce and disseminate knowledge.

"The most adequate model of the contemporary educational management is considered to be the cybernetic model characterized by:

- constant answers and adjustments made in continuously changing situations;

- cybernetic control based on feed-back;

- corrective and spontaneous action of the different individuals belonging to the institution not through a rational agent but through an omniscient one;

- harmonic work within a common organizational culture;

- organic mixture of the interests and individual reason through their subordination to the organization as a whole" (Petrescu, 1998:31).

We must mention the fact that such an approach of the higher education management is adequate only in performing it in normal conditions. In versatile conditions we can notice the need for a competent academic management because a complexity of changes may appear changes with secondary effects that are totally unproductive.

4. THE PRESENT STATE OF THE ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

The contemporary Romanian universities find themselves in versatile situations and so they have to find appropriate leading models for the universities. This effort is marked by common and general conditions that nowadays affect the academic education. These conditions derive from precise states of action:

- the academic management was left behind the new requirements;
- it aims at becoming a stop in front of the transformations produced in the academic education;
- the simultaneity of the managerial transformations is an imperious requirement for the risk reduction and the transformation diminution of the university reform.

Added to all these we have the fact that the main transformations that are being performed in order to move on to a centered managerial system, one that is based on academic autonomy. These trigger radical structural transformations but also practical and mental managerial ones (Voiculescu, 2004: 52-60).

We are forced to build such an objective by mixing the decentralization and the autonomy with the judicial responsibilities belonging to the Education, Youth and Sports Ministry, through new communicational routes within the leadership of several educational institutions.

Professionalizing the academic managers and administrators represents a crucial necessity.

It imposes the accomplishment of all the preceding actions with rigorous and precise

efficiency criteria, quality and performance, within a coherent thinking ad strategy upon the contemporary academic development.

The key word that highlights the present evolution of the academic management is *the change*. It must not be made only for the change's sake. One must not give up a series of component elements, strategies, technologies.

Whether we mention the necessity to change the management techniques or methods used to lead the universities or significant changes of the environment in which the university evolves today it is obvious that the academic environment faces great challenges.

Its previous evolution depends upon its adaptive capacity for the next century.

Few of the questions it needs to answer are mentioned below (Petrescu, 1998:33):

a) Can we accomplish the Romanian academic education reform upon long-term projects and strategies? Will they be correlated to the European one?

b) How do the universities manage their own image?

c) Will the great companies take over some of the university's functions? Will they be involved, financially speaking, when qualified personnel will appear on the labor market?

d) Could we align the academic management strategy to the European standards?

We could continue enumerating such questions due to this complex and specific managerial process.

But, we will stop here, at the last question, trying to present strategies and procedures regarding the quality management for the education within the Romanian military universities.

5. STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

The Romanian universities function upon the University Charter and the Internal Rules and Regulations that were approved by the Senate. The university's leading is being organized by the academic senate. The

operational one is ensured by the Senate Office.

According to the stipulations of the Romanian Government's Decision number 1418/2006 regarding the approval of the External Evaluation Methodology, of Reference Standards and Performance Indicators' List belonging to the Romanian Agency for Ensuring Quality to the Academic Education, within the universities we elaborated and implemented the System that Ensures the Quality of the Educational Services.

It comprises a series of academic policies and strategies, procedures, competences and responsibilities adopted by the senate and applied by the involved components in order to: improve the educational services' quality regarding the initial and continuous training. Facilitate the mutual recognition at an European level of the academic diplomas and studies; protect the beneficiaries' interests regarding the graduates' performance quality and standards; make proof of the institution's responsibilities regarding the way in which the financial resources were used in order to accomplish the mission and increase the transparency and the mutual understanding of the educational offer (*Metodologia evaluării externe instituţionale,* 2006).

Within the university we have "The Commission for Evaluating and Ensuring the Quality" that functions upon a regulation approved by the Senate.

This commission takes part in implementing and developing an educational culture according to the national and international standards.

For a good development of the specific activities and for ensuring the efficiency every compartment was assigned with several people responsible for ensuring the quality and having precise duties.

According to the "Methodology of internal audit for the quality of the educational process" we see that universities have a "Commission for internal audit regarding the quality of the educational process".

For each academic year a "Plan of internal audit regarding the quality of the educational process" was established.

Each evaluation is finished with a Report of internal audit.

Ensuring the quality for the academic activity represents several components:

- *The quality of the didactical process*: therefore the necessary measures were adopted and applied in order to ensure the quality of the didactical processes, to respect the indicators and the performance standards required by the Romanian Agency of Ensuring the Quality within the Academic Education. The universities promote activities for ensuring the quality for the teaching-learning-evaluating processes. They provide them with the status of reliable competitors at an European and national level, competitors that are able to attract students through a varied and attractive educational offer that allows the graduates to be integrate on the labor market.

- *The quality of the scientific research*: is accomplished by increasing the efficiency and the prestige of the didactical personnel by gathering national and international publications, international conferences, by publishing the research results within the didactical act, by increasing the evaluating experts' number by involving the students in research activities and in international conferences organized by national and international universities.

- *The quality of students' life*: accomplished by showing a constant preoccupation for providing them with the best educational conditions, the best didactical and material grounds.

This system of ensuring the quality of educational services represents the gathering of all academic strategies and policies, procedures, competences and responsibilities embraced by the academic senate and applied in all involved components (*Metodologia evaluării externe instituţionale,* 2006).

Coordinating the evaluation processes and ensuring the quality at an institutional level represent activities performed by the Commission for Evaluating and Ensuring the quality. It supports the creation of the quality culture and ensures the teachers and students' involvement within the activities performed in order to ensure, evaluate and improve the performance indicators.

6. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the facts mentioned above we can depict the following conclusions for the academic managerial activity:

- the managerial culture represents a strong motivational factor in obtaining performances;
- the managerial culture represents a strong motivational factor in promoting the organizational changes;
- the managerial culture provides the managers with a vision and an affiliation to a particular social category;
- the lack of culture with elements embraced by most of the managers that act for the organization's progress would directly influence – positively or negatively – the organization's success;
- the managerial culture ensures a balance between the values of the organization; therefore it ensures a dynamic balance between the organization's values and the ones of its members;
- the managerial culture plays a major determining role in obtaining the competitive advantage;
- the managerial culture favors the organizational learning process.

The quality of the educational processes can be constantly improved also by the suggestions' content, suggestions that came from the graduates and the beneficiaries regarding the level of competences and knowledge acquired during the academic studies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Petrescu, I. *et al*. (1998). *Tratat de management universitar*, Braşov: Lux Libris Publishing House.
2. Voiculescu, F. (2004). *Analiza resurse – nevoi şi managementul strategic în învăţământ*, Bucureşti: Aramis Publishing House.
3. *** (2006). *Metodologia evaluării externe instituţionale*, Bucureşti: Agenţia Română de Asigurare a Calităţii în Învăţământul Superior.