

# THE INTERFERING INFLUENCE OF TEACHER MOTIVATION IN QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ROMANIAN PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

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***Abstract:** Analyzing the Romanian pre-university education system, from the perspective of human resources management, we can observe its impact on the performance of teachers and institutions. It is imperative that in pre-university education institutions we reimagine our education and adapt to the latest challenges and changes, delivering a quality education, in order to prevent a learning crisis with long-term effects. Therefore, an analysis of the impact of human resources management policy on teacher motivation and performance, the prospect of improving efficiency and educational equity in schools, is needed. This paper addresses elements of human resources management and quality management, being a document that analyzes the current and future situation of Romanian pre-university education. The objective of this article is to capitalize on the need to consider the relationship between teacher motivation and the results of the instructional-educational process. The authors offer arguments, opinions, explanations regarding the importance of teacher motivation as the main premise in increasing the quality of Romanian pre-university education.*

***Keywords:** motivation, human resources, quality in education.*

***JEL Classification:** I21, O15.*

## 1. Introduction

Nelson Mandela said that "education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world".

Education is the basic indicator of social development and, as a result, of the quality of life, with contemporary education becoming one of the priority factors in human and social development. The concept of quality in education has a strong cultural charge, depending on the values promoted by individuals, groups and society as a whole.

At a time when quality of work is of prime importance, efficiency can only be achieved by successfully motivating human resources. There is a consensus in the field of human resource management that, in order to remain competitive and achieve organisational goals, managers need to incorporate human resource management and motivation strategies into their overall planning. Human capital theory aims to effectively and proactively use human resource management to increase the value of the organisation's human capital and the value of anticipated returns such as labour productivity.

## 2. Quality - the added value to the educational process

Romania joined the leaders of the 193 UN member states at the September 2015 Development Summit in adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a global development agenda for action that is universal in nature and promotes balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. The 2030 Agenda comprises the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also informally referred to as the Global Goals. Romania fully supports the idea that the 2030 Agenda should be implemented by local institutions, responding directly to the needs of citizens.

Goal 4 of the SDGs - Quality Education: **Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning** - was a single goal focused exclusively on

education. This is the first time that such a stand-alone education goal has been established and ratified, where it is clearly specified that education is a human right and a public good, essential for the health and future of the world.

The efforts made in Romania in recent years to achieve a standard of education on a par with that of European countries have been visible and commendable.

The national education system is committed to achieving quality objectives. The education services offered to students, their quality level and the quality of the teaching staff determine the premises for a harmonious development of the Romanian economy.

Quality in education is defined as the set of characteristics of a programme of study and its provider, through which the expectations of the beneficiaries and the quality standards are met. The definition of quality is constantly evolving and transforming in response to the evolving needs of individuals, communities and society. The quality of the school organisation is influenced both by the environment in which the school operates and by the satisfaction of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the services provided by the school. In order to meet their expectations, the school organisation must take into account the needs of the beneficiaries.

There are similarities between industry and education in terms of the management of organisations; the differences are due to the specific features of the 'end product' which, in the case of school organisations, is the 'pupil' whose personality, training and professional development are achieved in the school, during the years of study, under the guidance of teachers and other school staff.

Quality assurance goes beyond the functioning of the school, measuring 'added value' and 'value created', with the pupil being considered as the lower intellectual input and becoming a higher intellectual output. The educational process is the chain of interrelated and interactive activities that transform inputs into outputs, adding value.

Education has also become a way of directing social development and underpins all the transformations taking place in society. In today's society, the vicious circle of education is the system that creates values and norms, which it imposes and changes according to the state of science, technology and knowledge. Every society and every human being is therefore the fruit of education, which generates effects and results that should be superior to the previous level of knowledge.

U.N.I.C.E.F believes that **quality education means:**

- ***Students' well-being:*** health status, eating style and lifestyle in family and society;
- ***Educational establishments equipped,*** with clean and hygienic conditions and which offer pupils access to learning and equal opportunities;
- The instructional-educational process to be provided by ***qualified human resources,*** well trained professionally, of high moral character and outstanding human qualities;
- ***The aims of education*** need to be ***related to the national objectives of education,*** which can ensure that graduates are able to participate beneficially in the development of society.

Quality education is underpinned by three key pillars: ensuring access to quality teachers, providing quality learning and professional development tools, and establishing safe and supportive quality learning environments.

### **3. Teacher motivation - a source of quality assurance in education**

Motivation is an important aspect of achieving quality by staff. The process of motivating human resources includes a set of incentives, recognition of their success, but also rewards of different kinds (financial and non-financial). Managers have a particular

role to play in motivating employees and must have the ability to appreciate and publicise their achievements and to guide them towards success.

With the increasing value of employees as individuals, the traditional approach to human resource management is no longer satisfactory, and attention is now turning to a more up-to-date treatment of the importance and effectiveness of human resources. The main reason for such an approach is the desire of as many organisations as possible to understand the human factor. It has been observed that engaging individuals effectively through force and intimidation is not possible and as a result the focus has shifted to methods and opportunities that enable people to work willingly. Positive employee attitudes and social behaviour can generate effective implementation of HR practices which in turn helps shape the culture and work in the organisation strengthens the employee's position with the organisation and increases the levels of effort that employees put into achieving the organisation's goals.

School organisations that invest in the development of human resource skills seek to create working conditions that are compatible with their requirements and desires, and are thus the ones that achieve success and in turn build a well-trained human resource. Employees are the essential resource that institutions need in times of change, so organisations that have succeeded in satisfying their employees and have been able to implement loyalty and trust, can get through difficult times with greater ease. Giving people credit not only increases personal and work productivity, but also raises the quality of the company and the team. The main goal of human resource management is to approach human resources in the most competitive and productive way.

Acquaah asserts that human resource management and motivation practices enhance organizational effectiveness and performance by attracting, identifying and retaining employees with knowledge, skills and competencies that will support the organization's mission and goals. In the instructional-educational process, ensuring the quality of educational activities depends on how human resource management produces and implements motivating employee attitudes and behaviours.

Armstrong considers that motivation refers to factors that influence people to behave in certain ways and defines this concept as a reason, a rationale for doing something. Thus he specifies that "Motivating people means getting them to move in the direction we want them to move to achieve a result. Motivation can be described as goal-directed behaviour".

Abraham H. Maslow's theory states that motivation is formed due to a hierarchy of needs. First, physiological needs such as clothing, food and shelter. Secondly, the needs for physical, psychological and intellectual security. Third, social needs, such as recognition of existence and appreciation of others. Fourth, the need for prestige, as all people need recognition of their existence and status by others. Finally, the need for self-actualisation in the sense of opportunities to develop potential and transform it into real skills and competences. He states that every manager who wants to motivate his subordinates must understand the hierarchy of human needs, because the continuous satisfaction of human needs is the key to employee motivation and effective motivation is the key to productivity, in the case of the educational act, the key to a quality instructional-educational process.

Maslow also says: "What a man can be, he must be". Maslow's quote refers to self-actualization, which is the highest level or stage in his model of human motivation: the "Hierarchy of Needs". According to the hierarchy of needs, self-actualization represents the highest order motivations that drive us to realize our true potential and achieve our "ideal self". Self-actualization needs are also referred to as the needs of our "being"; they include personal and creative self-growth, which is achieved by fulfilling our full potential. Maslow studied "exemplary" people, or individuals considered to have achieved their full

or near full potential in their particular area of expertise or focus. These individuals included Mahatma Gandhi, Viktor Frankl and Albert Einstein, who "personify a reality of self-actualization".

#### 4. Conclusions

The active participation of educational actors and the valorisation of human resources ensure quality education. People are the essence of any organisation, their involvement and their professional development depend on how they use their competences for the benefit of the organisation.

The teacher, one of the major contributors to the school, is a major factor influencing learning outcomes and a fundamental way in which educational performance can be developed. The teacher is also an active participant in achieving the mission of any school, namely education. In general, a teacher who is well prepared, competent and motivated to do his or her best can be worth more than the teaching resources and materials and even more than the social, financial or cultural background of the pupil.

Prioritising the development of teachers' performance and motivating them are probably the most effective methods of ensuring quality in pre-university education, methods that can lead to substantial gains in pupils' education.

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