

TRAINING ISSUES TEACHERS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Teacher continuous training is a long life learning activity that starts before the initial training and continues throughout the teaching career (Fullan, 1992). The key objectives of teacher training in European countries are: individual and professional development by acquiring new skills (teaching discipline, introduction to new technologies); enhancing quality of education, knowledge of social ambience. In Romania, teacher training is a social and educational activity designed, operated and developed in order to improve the quality of technical education by linking technical teachers training with of pupils / students needs and interests.

The evolution of teacher training activity takes place on the circuit methodology: initial training – continuous training – self-training, essential components of post-modern system of education. Because this profession has a strong influence on society and plays a vital role in the development of human potential and in shaping future generations, the continuous training aims at increasing the capacity of teachers to provide quality education and training.

Key words: training, teaching career, technical education, educational system

Teachers play a crucial role in supporting the learning experience of pupils and students, because providing high quality education ensure them professional achievement, better social skills and more diverse employment opportunities. This profession has a strong influence on driving the society and plays a vital role in the development of human potential and in the formation of young generations.

European Union sees the role of teacher, his lifelong training, his career development as some key priorities. In Romania the improvement of teachers' training is a social activity with pedagogical and educational content, designed, operated and developed in order to improve the quality of technical education by linking teachers' training to pupils/students needs and interests.

In order ensure teachers a higher education, it must be supported by national or regional policies.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

For carrying out the paper methods used were: investigation, documentation, application of questionnaires, SWOT analysis and interpretation of results. Data collection and analysis was conducted using techniques and tools specific to the qualitative research: published articles and structured interviews with teachers from specialized technical education in agronomy from

Iași county. As result from processing and interpretation of data obtained were issued a series of recommendations included in a policy paper on the lifelong training of teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Continuous training may be defined as the set of activities aimed at updating the initial training at periodic adjustment to the new demands of educational processes performing imposed by law 1/2011. Continuous training and professional and personal development (self-training) of teachers appears as a segment of long life education.

Within the educational system in general and by default in specialized technical education in agronomy, teachers training is an activity with pedagogical and social content designed, operated and developed as a function of continuous self-adjustment of the educational process. Main trends and perspectives recorded at European level in the area of the continuous training system for the teachers are:

- teaching career development through continuous training processes / improvement / professional development;
- teaching career professionalization – from the skill to the pedagogical competence;

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- training systems orientation to teaching competence and educational performance;
- teacher training standards for ensuring quality training;
- mobility and professional development-professional transferable credits system;
- Program / Mentoring / Teaching Training - teaching career debut; emphasis on computer-aided training and computer training;
- E-learning/ Distance Open Education and support for the continuous training system for teachers.

All these European principles adopted by the European Commission in Brussels provide the necessary framework to promote teaching profession recognizing the role of teachers as agents of development for the individual and social European values.

Strategic principles that have to be the base in continuous training system orientation would be best to be derived from common European principles and could be:

- profession oriented to quality standards in the initial training within higher education institutions;
- profession placed in the European context of continuous professional development / learning and training for life ("lifelong learning");
- mobility-oriented profession both at initial and continuous training at local, regional and European level;
- partnership based profession on the plan of cross-school and inter-school relations (industry, business, continuous training providers).

Providing the necessary attractiveness and status to promote teaching profession, the above principles recognize the role of teachers as agents of development for both individual and social European values. In order to support such principles it is necessary the teaching career professionalization and its orientation towards continuous development and self-reflexivity in the educational skills field and an appropriate remuneration.

For the purposes of alignment to European requirements concerning the continuous training of teachers in Romanian education system and hence the teachers from specialized technical education in agronomy we initiated this study on teacher training system. We investigated a total of 50 teachers who responded to questionnaires whose interpretation we present under the form of a SWOT analysis on continuous training.

They were identified the following

I. Strengths (S):

- development and validation of national standards in training regarding especially education curriculum;
- development of a continuous training program provided by various educational institutions and organizations, NGOs etc;
- greater involvement in domestic and international projects for teachers and directors;
- ability to harness the potential of human resources in the system;
- teachers and managers training in order to deal with system decentralization process;
- new vision of student progress during compulsory education, secondary education/professional education;
- development of post graduated type programs (master) for teachers initial training and the application of the Bologna process provisions in this regard.

II. Weaknesses (W)

This form of training of teachers may encounter the following difficulties:

- insufficient time assigned to courses assistance and to individual training;
- due to low salaries, teachers encounter difficulties in paying training courses, or buying expensive books;
- impossibility to apply what they learned at the school unit level because of the insufficient material base;
- the continuous training of teachers, critical component of the education reform, has recorded a slow development;
- low participation in scientific events abroad;
- small number of scientific articles in international educational field.

In order to remedy at least part of the current shortcomings faced by teachers in continuous training activities we have tried to sketch an analysis of public policy. In terms of key competencies that should be formed to the teachers, they will have the following formulation: **teachers in specialized technical education in economy must be able:**

- to operate / work with information, technology and knowledge;
- to operate / work with people in immediately education entourage: students, colleagues, educational partners and non-school pupils;

- to operate / work with and in society at different levels of complexity and expression: local, regional, national, European, global / international.

In the context mentioned above is recommended completion of the educational standards design process for the teaching profession. This work initiated by CNFP will be completed and approved by OMEdC.

III. Agenda

1. Participation in the demonstration activities on international experience achieved through school inspectorate and scientific events organized by the universities;

2. Informing teachers on courses that can be followed;

3. Information on ways in which teachers can attend some courses (information on structure, duration, course evaluation);

4. Overview of new teaching methods used in teaching;

5. Participation in seminars, conferences, international symposiums;

6. Thematic trips for experience exchanges;

7. Improving the quality of teaching process;

8. Professional development through a individual plan possible to be supported and implemented;

9. Social and educational partnerships.

Table 1

Complete agenda

Proposed	Risks	Solutions	Resources
1.Specialized educational commissions	- impossibility to apply the information received; - teaching commission to be formed according to curriculum area;	-processing received material according to necessities	-teachers ; -department directors
2.Teaching meetings	-different training levels -diversity of training materials,	adapting training methods to the educational group to be formed;	-teachers ; -department directors
3.Thematic summer schools	-impossibility to achieve all objectives; -period assigned to the activity;	-detailed planification for the activities;	-teachers ; -pupils/students
4. Knowledge of teaching process	- the inability to use the knowledge gained; - lack of new information technologies in schools;	- knowing/updating the content of the subjects taught and the related school documents; -design, conduct and evaluate teaching; -improvement and development of teaching; -revaluation the learning experiences of pupils/ students; -using the new informational and communication technologies in teaching;	-teachers ; -department directors
5.Adequate educational management	- inability to use material resources; - lack of emotional connection between teacher / tutor of the year and trained staff;	- organization and leading ducated group, -ensuring a secured socio-emotional climate based on trust and cooperation; -educational crisis management;	-class teacher/ tutor of the year; -directors of departments -students council; -students league;
6.School counseling	- family non-involvement in relations with the school; - parents which have left abroad for too long;	-knowing the individuality of students and assisting them in their own development; -identification of needs and learning difficulties; -collaboration with family and other educational factors;	-school counselor -teacher/tutor of the year; -school managers; -teachers carrying out the educational process;
7.Social and educational partnerships	- lack of interest from educational partners to school; - lack of interest from teachers to certain partnerships	-involvement of educational partners and local community in decision making; -cooperation with teachers from the school institution and other schools; -stimulation of pro-social behaviors and civic participation;	-school manager managerul școlar -responsible commissions -all educational partners

IV. Risks (T)

The content of teachers continuous training activities (advancement) includes (post)graduated

programs: general pedagogy, specialty teaching/teaching methodology, curriculum theory, school management, advanced training (in specific subjects) etc.

These programs are achievable in universities and specialized continuous training institutions through: courses, educational conferences, thematical seminars, intensive and extensive stages, practical activities, distance learning, summer universities, thematical trips (documentation, study, etc..) making the number of teachers who want to participate in these courses to be small.

V. Remedies / Limits

Continuous raining activities (advancement) of teachers evolve complementary in two contexts:

a) at the educational institution level "as a distinct approach to educational change that enhances pupils /students achievement and strengthens the ability of schools to cope with the change;

b) at the level of partnership relations as response to a set of social demands rapidly expanding and diversifying.

As an internal factor, teacher training helps to improve school culture, interpersonal relations while the evaluation of educational institutions takes into account the work of teachers. In this perspective the current activities organized occur at many levels: the teachers council, advisory board, methodical commissions, pedagogical meetings, cabinets for psycho-pedagogical assistance, demonstrative lessons, individual study, books reviews, lectures and teaching conferences, summer schools, international scientific events.

As a factor of partnership, the activity continuous training of teachers from technical education allows continuous self-adjustment of teaching practice in relation to a plurality of roles undertaken or about to be undertaken as a result of social demand: educator, instructor, evaluator, researcher, manager, advisor, partner education, teacher-author of lessons /courses held under the system of open distance learning (ODL). Institutions that can be engaged for this purpose, are located at the leading and relation structure, appropriate to postmodern systems of education: curriculum and assessment councils, continuous vocational training centers, psycho-pedagogical support centers, faculties, departments, specialized publishings, educational research institutes.

CONCLUSIONS

Continuous training system generalization for teachers of technical education at higher education institutions or their institutional equivalent.

Opportunities for mobility and career development.

Designing a continuous training curriculum reflecting the importance and the value of interdisciplinary and cooperative learning.

Development and strengthening the "educational market of continuous training programs" based on a fair competitive system through which teachers benefit from a diversified and constantly updated offer from the continuous training providers.

Correlation of structures and moments of progress in teaching career with educational standards and providing a professional dynamic by using transferable professional credits system.

Encouraging partnerships between institutions which contribute to the teacher professional development in order to support some effective program for quality theoretical and practice training;

Establishment at the local and regional level of innovation networks through involving all interested stakeholders and community factors in the area;

Initiating and supporting professional development programs that provide teacher training for European cooperation, respecting cultural diversity and education for pupils/students in the spirit of European citizenship;

Promotion in the continuous training process of opportunities to study European languages at the specialty level language;

Involving teachers in research and application projects for the educational practice.

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