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Educational Reform – Etiology, Types, Rules

Abstract: The subject of the article is the phenomenon of educational reforms. This phenomenon is one of the basic elements of pedagogical processes. In each historical period, all the educational reforms have their etiology and are characterized by specific consequences or the partial or total lack of them. The aim of the research on the above issue is to establish the general reasons for their conducting, to describe and explain the factors determining their process, making a typology of educational reforms and the rules for their implementation. All of these elements can significantly determine their quality. It is known that this affects the effectiveness of school teaching and educational process. The school as an educational institution fulfills a social function having in mind the increase of the level of consciousness and pedagogical culture of each local environment, regional and national community and state.

The basic methods that have been applied in the research were: the historical-comparative method and progressive method. The first enabled to implement the synthetic generalizations depicting mainly the etiology of educational reforms. The second method, in turn, was used to propose a typology of educational reforms and the formulation of the rules for their implementation. The research of these issues and the findings of them can be used for an in-depth reflection and discussion on the searching for the conditions that optimize the processes of educational reforms and their effects.

Keywords: educational reform, educational reform etiology, types of educational reform, the principles of educational reform, the authors-reformers, implementers

Introduction

Reform of education is defined as a legally sanctioned, radical change in the whole school system or its selected segments. Its aim is to improve the existing state of affairs in the field of education, which is an essential part of social reality. Reform of education is also understood as a process of its practical implementation into the daily rhythm of work of particular types of schools. Each educational reform aims at the optimisation of pedagogical processes in their broadest sense. Therefore, the main task of educational reforms is to improve the basic functions of the educational system such as didactic functions (cognitive, innovative, creative), educational functions (model-making, axiological, integrative) and care functions (help, information, supervisory). It is not always possible to articulate in the same way all these functions in practice while reforming school education, as many external and internal factors and conditions come into play.

Comprehensive educational reforms most often take the form of top-down recommendations under a prescribed scheme with specific targets assigned. The control over their implementation in the country is performed by the central authorities of the state administration. In practice, reforms of smaller range and reach are also applied. They concern organizational patterns relating to specific types of schools, or defined areas (a region, district, city, etc.). Both in the former and the latter case, the reform initiative belongs to the state or local administration. There is also a third type of reforms with more limited range. These are conducted by specific schools and concern some modifications in the organizational work of a given school: teaching methods, education or cooperation with the local community. They are supervised to some extent by educational authorities and persons responsible for the functioning of particular educational institutions. However, they do not affect the fundamental changes in the whole school system. It can, therefore, be said that school reform can be born in state centers or in individual schools (Smolański 2009).

Ever since humanity appreciated the need for teaching and learning, especially since the institutions involved in this activity, that is schools,

started functioning, the need to improve their own work has not been foreign to them. This work has been optimized, and this process still continues through educational reforms which have included the organization of schools, curricula, teacher training methods, educational directions, and strategies¹.

The origin of educational reforms

Roman education took the form of reformed Greek education. In the Middle Ages, educational reforms were conducted by philosophers and the clergy subordinated to monarchs and popes. In the Renaissance, they became a factor which was to change the existing social order and also the political and economic one. Education was reformed by the Protestants: Luther (1483–1546), Philip Melancton (1497–1560) – reforms of the universities in Tübingen, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Königsberg, Marburg; Jan Sturm (1507–1589) – reforms of secondary schools; and many other religious leaders did so as well. In Poland, educational reform was called for by Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (1503–1572). Also well-known are the reforms by Catholic bishops: Charles Borromeo (1538–1584) and Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius (1504–1578). J.A. Komeński (1592–1679) reformed schools by introducing the classroom type of teaching. Religious orders dealing with the teaching of male youth (Jesuits, Piarists) reformed their own schools and curricula, taking into account the educational needs of various social classes. During the Enlightenment period, the reforms by J.F. Herbart (1776–1841), S. Konarski (1700–1773), but also the one by the Commission of National Education (1773–1794), including the famous reform of the Krakow Academy, conducted by Hugo Kołłątaj (1750–1812) were well known. When Poland regained independence in 1918, reform of schools began as there was the need to unify educational structures

¹ In the following parts of the present article I refer to the publication: Tchorzewski de A.M. (2002), *Uwarunkowania i kreatorzy reform edukacyjnych*, Edukacja Badania Innowacje, nr 1 (77), p. 5–15

after the Prussian, Russian and Austrian partitions. The school reform of the 1930s was based on the Educational Law of 11.03.1932. It concerned primary education (different for rural and urban schools), development of post-primary schools (4-year gymnasiums and 2-year high schools), vocational schools, transformation of teacher colleges into pedagogical high schools, changes in higher education institutions (it was the minister who appointed and dissolved University Chairs, faculties, and research institutes; rectors received broader prerogatives).

After World War II, education in Poland was reformed many times (1947, 1964). The last reform of 2001 introduced a new organization in the system of education and changes in curricula; it also concerned the ways of teacher promotion.

Another reform of education has been announced for 2017. According to the law adopted by the Polish parliament in December 2016, the school system consists of two-level education of children and youth from 6/7 to 18/19 years of age at 8-grade primary school and 4-grade high schools or occupational schools, which will be the technical and vocational schools. Currently, work is being done on the core curricula and adequate school textbooks are being prepared. The reform is expected to be implemented from 1st September 2017. It has led to many disputes between the educational authorities and the public. The ministry of education imposes certain conditions on its implementation, and a certain part of the society, especially the parents of the youngest pupils, oppose the reform, anticipating bad consequences stemming from the prolonged primary and secondary education. And although the last reform of education in Poland carried out in 2001 did not meet all the goals set at the time, it has, in the course of time, brought some evident results, making the results of the teaching clear. Polish pupils, especially from junior high schools, showed higher and higher level of knowledge and skills in comparison with their peers from various European countries and even in the world.

The origin of reform initiatives is multifaceted: taking care of man, society, the state, and the nation. However, they were also accompanied by motives of psychological, ambitious and personal nature that have always had a deeper political foundation. It has been well known for centuries

that state education serves the authorities as far as shaping the awareness of the younger generation is concerned and strengthens their position as well.

The results of reforms are generally less effective than the expected predictions and they may bring – apart from good results – also bad ones, or no results at all. The increasing level of pedagogical culture and educational awareness of society are often the sources of disputes between the initiators of educational reforms and those who are subject to educational processes. These are teachers, parents and pupils/students.

We can say that a tendency to reform is an attribute of modern education, which often transforms itself into something that can be called ‘reformomania’.

Etiology of Contemporary Educational Reforms

The etiology of educational reforms should be understood here as a set of causes which lead to their emergence and becoming legitimate. Taking into consideration the existing knowledge of educational reforms and the predictions, strategies, and development trends of the contemporary world, we can describe the reasons of educational reforms by the use of such categories as a crisis, transformations, integration and globalization.

Crisis, understood here very broadly, and at the same time regarded as a necessary turning point or breakthrough in various fields and dimensions of social life, forces changes in the educational system, which constitute the basis for the prepared and then introduced reform. Crisis, especially a general one “...that has overtaken the modern world everywhere and in almost every sphere of life manifests itself – according to H. Arendt – differently in each country, involving different areas and taking on different forms” (Arendt, 1994). It is obvious that any crisis that results in changes, whether it will be a crisis of ideological-political, economic-social, welfare-social, or any other nature, provokes a crisis situation, and becomes visible in the field of education, forcing or at least leading towards

changes not only of its objectives and content, forms and teaching methods, assumptions concerning the teachers' professional preparation, but also in educational structures, systems and institutions.

The crisis as the (proto-)cause of educational reforms arises also from a perspective, different from the traditional one, concerning the place and role of a teacher and school in the changing world. I mean the view of the teachers themselves who, under the influence of various expectations and demands by environmental factors as well as the latest academic achievements including the dynamic development of the science of education, make changes in the definition of their own professional identity. The modern teacher is becoming increasingly aware that school is/is becoming more and more of an institution which should be placed "... between the private domain of home and the world, in order to enable (a growing up child – A.M. de Tchorzewski) the transition from family to the world. Going to school is not a requirement of the family, but of the state, that is, of the public world, and therefore – according to the above-mentioned H. Arendt – in relation to a child, the school represents, in a sense, a world, even though in reality it is not yet so" (Arendt, 1994). Hence, the need to reform school grows out of the necessity of teaching students of what the world is like, and not imposing the art of life on them.

The world in which we live is mobile by nature, which results, among others, in its constant transformation, which should also be treated as one of the reasons for educational reforms. Being one of the main segments of education, the school is rooted in the past, in tradition, and therefore it undergoes transformational processes extremely slowly or even with some resistance. The processes which are much faster are manifested in many other areas of life. However, they are forced to use the 'product' of the school, namely a graduate, often insufficiently prepared to meet the challenges brought by various sectors of the economy, by public and private domains, oriented towards the continuous transformation of what serves people's needs and their development effectively.

The aim of transformation is to change everything that can and should contribute to optimisation of the quality of living conditions.

Hence the education in which, according to Jacques Delors, the author of the Report for the UNESCO International Commission for Education for the 21st century, there is a hidden treasure, can be reformed thanks to the perception and use of the experiences of transformation processes it undergoes itself.

At the beginning of the 21st century, there are no areas of life and activity which would not be subject to rapid transformation processes. This applies both to individuals, local communities, and the international community. Political, institutional, economic, social and even religious systems undergo a transformation. Transformations in these areas force changes, while their pace depends on the transformation of education itself. It is education which, under the influence of the ongoing alterations external to it, simultaneously is subject to the laws of the internal transformation. The inevitability of transformation processes encompassed in human life and activities is a factor conditioning educational reforms. The legitimacy of the transformation of educational systems stems from the need to obtain, or come close towards, a 'balance' between all areas covered by transformation processes.

Being one of many causes of educational reform, the transformation does not present ready-made solutions in this regard. It only raises awareness of the need to make such changes in the school and extra-school educational systems that will enable to take steps to increase the general level of human knowledge that will, in turn, enable Man to be better prepared to live in dynamically changing conditions, structures and systems of the modern world which is becoming increasingly dependent on the accelerated scientific and academic progress. In addition to its beneficial effects, it is perceived as a kind of threat by humanity.

One of the ways to counteract any threat is integration which, apart from crisis and transformation, can be regarded as one of the causes of educational reforms. Integration as a certain trend to merge, unite, combine, or adapt different elements is aimed at their aggregation aiming to create a system whose nature is a communitarian character marked by the similarity of the challenges faced by its subjects. Integration processes cover many different areas of life, from economic, political, military, to

socio-cultural. They are based on a specific system of values, developed and accepted by the parties involved.

This pattern also applies to educational reforms. They are, to some extent, forced from the outside by decision-makers of integration processes, especially on the scale concerning the communities larger than the local ones. They are aware that integration, in almost all areas, is possible to carry out and dependent on the necessary changes that must be made within the existing and binding educational systems.

The main idea of the educational reform caused by the integration processes today is 'European education' taking into account the diversity of cultures and traditions of particular countries and nations living on the Old Continent. The essence of modern 'European education' is the reference to the values created through the merger of the ancient worldview with the Christian vision of human life and the achievements of modern science. Authentic Europeanness means opening up to a dialogue with other cultures of the world, tolerance, respect for human rights, and cooperation of each with everyone within the framework of freedom and democracy.

The educational reform led by the integration processes in the European dimension must aim at the strengthening of a sense of European identity in the young generation, free from the burdens resulting from the division after World War II into Eastern and Western Europe; it must be built on a sense of belonging to the European Community. Hence, the educational reform perceived through the prism of integration must take into account, within the framework of the properly defined aims and objectives, the relevant curriculum content concerning the history and common European cultural heritage. Meanwhile, the reality in Europe at the beginning of the third millennium and at the same time the 21st century is complicated and "... the idea of European integration sounds far from tranquil optimism" (Suchodolski, 1993)' This was expressed by Bogdan Suchodolski who, talking more than 10 years ago about the dangers of European integration, stated that. "Powerful forces of internal development (of Europe – A.M. de Tchorzewski) are constantly revealing new dangers and disappointments, new areas of conflict" (Suchodolski, 1993). The

author perceived the growing tendencies for separatism and independence as the most dangerous of these, which are becoming visible with increasing intensity and seem to be capable of transforming the map of Europe, reconstructing the systems of government and state borders. We can also add to these the growing signs of fanaticism, nationalism, xenophobia or even chauvinism.

In the face of European integration, these phenomena pose challenges to educational processes, within which complex moral problems play a substantial role. The need for educational reform in the context of European integration stems from the necessity to read anew the symbolic values belonging to European culture and tradition, which have become more visible in modern times. These first of all include Freedom, Equality, Fraternity, and also Justice, Peace, Tolerance, Sovereignty, Responsibility, Cooperation and many more. Thus, it can be said that in this case, the educational reform must serve the purpose of forming a human being capable of creating the conditions for international co-operation and coexistence within a community belonging not only to the political and economic European Union but also to the Europe which is united culturally and has been morally rebuilt.

Education, being one of the most important factors in the development of individuals, societies and the world, faces a new phenomenon that emerged in the 1980s and began to be talked about in the 1990s, namely globalization. It is about the phenomena (from both the economic, political and cultural spheres) which are related to the whole world and possess a universal character. The mother of globalization is the technological, communication, telecommunication and Internet revolution, which has brought about de-territorialisation and contributed to the emergence of a global, borderless economic market in which businesses can be carried out throughout the whole world without leaving the office. This has not limited the possibility of the creation of huge transnational corporations (e.g. General Motors), whose income is greater than that of many states. The disintegration of the 'old' political system in Europe caused the United States of America to become the leading global power, playing the most important role in the development of all

the latest technologies. As a result, America still plays a dominant role in the world, which in turn also results in the Americanisation of almost all areas of everyday life.

It also has an impact on educational institutions, including schools, which not only teach English, install computers and the Internet, but whose students and teachers go to McDonalds, pubs, wear jeans, listen to Madonna, eat popcorn, read Playboy or Hustler. All these and similar phenomena and behaviors, in fact, carry mass consumption patterns and create the phenomenon of the mass consumer which is trying to impose a vision of the world.

It must be remembered, however, that globalization does not lead to uniformity, that is unification of human life, action and behavior to a uniform character of norms. Z. Bauman is right in saying that in its deepest meaning the concept of globalization conveys an unspecified, capricious and autonomous nature of the world and its affairs, the absence of a center, the lack of the operator's desktop or the directors of the board. Globalization is another name for the Jowitt's new disorder of the world (Bauman, 2000). Education cannot remain indifferent to globalization processes, and moreover, globalization forces the need for changes in the educational system, especially in the sphere of socialization and education. Education which until now has been understood as the process of the preservation and diffusion of the current shape of social life, liberating the possibilities and adaptation skills to the unpredictable changes in the unspecified future, must undergo reorientation, through which a man will be able to seek inner harmony and independence in a world marked by chaos, in a world of trash, and the primitivism of mass culture, and, more importantly, in a world of deregulation, a completely free market and total privatization, in which the rich will become even richer and the poor even poorer, a world in which national governments and parliaments will become less and less important, in which globalism may replace any local initiative or activity.

And though globalization, as a phenomenon, denies the theory of the balance of powers and will be a growing phenomenon that the world cannot escape, it brings some hope for the solution of some global prob-

lems. This was mentioned by the representatives of the richest countries at a conference in Genoa already in July 2001.

Thus, the task of education is to show to every human being all that is brought about by globalization, about which Z. Bauman says is what is happening to us all (Bauman, 2000).

Education reformed because of globalization is an education which will increasingly show the global effects of 'anonymous' forces acting in an unconventional and unpredictable way in order to warn men against getting lost by losing their own identity, their own ME, their own potentiality in a constant process of becoming oneself. It can be said that it is globalization that is a source of the justification of lifelong learning.

Creators of educational reform

The creators of educational reforms can be divided into two categories, namely creators – AUTHORS and creators – REALIZERS. This division, however, does not have to be characterized by any dichotomy.

Creators – authors, that is originators, inspirers, or initiators of educational reforms are usually politicians (presidents, prime ministers, members of parliament, activists of various political hues) representing various ideological orientations, representatives of the broader economic world, who perceive in education the factor of favorable change in the sphere of material services, consumption or entrepreneurship. We should not forget or lessen the role of the representatives of the academic community, especially the representatives of social sciences and the humanities who, together with experts and futurologists, put forward hypotheses about future trends in consumption, mass culture, economic development or risks, as well as the opportunities and barriers of modern civilization.

The world changing under the influence of crises, transformations (alterations), integration (unification, adjustment), globalization (the problems common to all the inhabitants of the Earth) forces the elites to perceive the role of education as a potentially protective factor in an increasingly complex world, a world often incomprehensible for a single

human; a factor which may protect what determines the value of the world itself as the living space of man and the value of man himself. Education is treated as a collective good that should be used as an international partnership center. Thanks to education, the gap between rich and poor countries, between industrialized countries and developing countries in a 'global village' can be gradually reduced. Its primary task, according to various assumptions of general educational policy, will be to reduce the disparities between continents, regions, states or countries, as well as between local communities in terms of access to school and out-of-school education, general education and vocational training. Such an approach may not only contribute to the elimination of qualitative differences in various educational systems but should also help to create new opportunities for people destined to use information society technologies. Those who may be considered as creators-authors of educational reforms are aware of this.

In turn, creators-realizers of educational reforms include the local community, that is teachers and parents, as well as local and public authorities. It depends on them and it is up to them to undertake, materialize and implement educational reforms. Each of these groups, in its specific way, is involved in the realization of educational reforms. Jacques Delors, in his well-known *Report*, says that "attempts to influence educational reforms from the above or from the outside have failed (...)", while the process of their implementation may be successful "...thanks to the participation of local communities, parents, and teachers. Their engagement was supported by constant dialogue and help from the outside in various forms – financial, technical and professional. This is why the primary role of the local community in the implementation of the reform strategy is obvious" (Delors, 1998).

Another important statement by the President of the International Commission for Education for the 21st century, J. Delors, worth mentioning here is that, "participation of local communities in the assessment of needs through dialogue with public authorities and interested social circles is the first essential step which extends the access to education and enables it to be improved. Continuation of the dialogue through the

media, social debates, education and preparation of parents and teachers at school raises awareness, increases the ability to identify problems and favours grassroot initiatives, as local communities become increasingly responsible for their own development, learn to appreciate the role of education as a means which serves to achieve social goals and leads to the desired improvement of the quality of life" (Delors, 1998).

The dialogue between creators-realizers of educational reforms should be perceived as a means of decentralization of the responsibility for their implementation. The role of the teachers themselves is a special one, as they are the direct executors of the tasks resulting from the assumptions of the reforms. This is not only about their didactic preparation, but above all about a better understanding of the outside world, which penetrates schools that for centuries have been 'closed' institutions, specific enclaves, or ghettos, amidst the changing reality. A teacher who consciously and actively participates in educational reform (a creator-realizer) functions at school where the outside world penetrates more and more fully through new means of information and communication, and young people taught in different educational segments (from elementary school to university) are no longer, as it used to be, strongly influenced by family, churches, religious associations or social movements, but more than ever they are guided by information that cannot be identified with sound knowledge.

Public and local authorities, as creators-realizers of educational reforms, participate in them through the choice of the option for changes in education that will provide the communities with the best possible solution for their educational aspirations and will ensure that they are prepared for ever-changing living conditions of a man in a world full of contradictions, chaos, risks of being torn, in which time and space shrink and the flow of information and communication cannot be stopped.

Undoubtedly, it is not an easy task, but one which is possible to be at least partially accomplished if the elite of public and local authorities themselves understand well the meaning and importance of education for the future that is difficult to determine.

Types of educational reforms

Both the complex causes and creators of educational reforms, and especially their role in the process of educational change, enable us to present a typology of reforms. The basis for the creation of the typology may be the criterion of change, as this is the essence and sense of each reform, including educational reform.

Change as the primary category for the analysis of all pedagogical processes is widely used in the science of education, thanks to which we can better understand the laws and mechanisms governing these processes to achieve the established objectives.

Typology as a logical and methodological tool is successfully applied in the process of research on educational reforms. An example here may be the proposal by M. Carnoy and H. Levin, who constructed a taxonomy of educational reforms based on the criterion of the range and nature of the introduced changes. This enabled four types of reforms to be singled out, namely: (1) microtechnical reforms, (2) macrotechnical reforms, (3) micropolitical reforms, (4) macro-political reforms (Carnoy, Levin, 1976).

The approach to the typology of educational reforms which I propose is by no means a novelty. It is merely an attempt to organize knowledge about the properties and characteristics of educational reforms. The analysis of the various processes of educational reform enables to distinguish the following types:

(1) *Adaptational reforms:* they include small changes in the existing educational systems, especially in the structures and arrangements of institutions which carry out education. These changes concern the issues that enable one to adapt to the present requirements, that is to update what is associated with the changes necessary in the organization of the educational process, including institution management, teaching content, methods and techniques of working with pupils, etc. They are intended to adapt to the changes that have occurred in the environment outside of the school, a part of which is a particular educational institution. Examples of adaptational reforms in education in Poland may be

the election of the headmaster for a term, the way of financing educational institutions, the introduction of new content into curricula such as religious education, health and sexual education, regional education, “educational paths”, as well as the introduction of new techniques or teaching technologies (e.g. computer and multimedia).

Adaptational reform is intended, among other things, to correct, improve or give a new dimension to some aspect of the educational process so that it can keep up with the changes that occur in other social processes.

(2) Radical reforms: they take into consideration fundamental changes in various systems, structures, or educational institutions and concern their essential functioning. As a rule, they are uncompromising, resolute, definitive, irreversible; after their implementation, they are not subject to a discussion which may lead to their weakening or alteration. Before the final decision to implement their purposefulness, anticipated effects or economic and social costs are the subject of discussion carried out publicly and/or in the circles of experts familiar with the problem.

This type of reform comes at the time of organizational and structural changes in education, creating its new segments (e.g. elementary, junior, high school, undergraduate, academic), systems (e.g. public, non-public) or institutions (e.g. general education, pro-professional, vocational). Radical changes are introduced in the range and level of professional education, including teacher education, etc.

Radical reforms are closely connected with the legislative and administrative powers, including the external management and control over educational systems and processes.

(3) Partial reforms: a type of reform that is very limited in the education areas, and their implementation depends on the will and decision of the local government (for example, the location of school facilities, the funding of their educational or other activity), management of a given educational institution (school board, pedagogical council), parents’ council, or even the pupils/students themselves. All these units form

a given local community and have specific rights to carry out partial reforms at the level and within the scope of their rights granted by the legislator. In this way, the community expresses, among others, its responsibility for the local educational process. The subject of partial reform may be student codes, student assessment system, school/educational institution regulations. They concern concrete educational entities and may undergo more frequent changes under the pressure of the local community units interested in them. It must be added that they also have a pragmatic, subjective dimension, but are sometimes also biased.

(4) **Holistic Reforms:** they are generally carried out very rarely, because of the complexity of their nature and the fact that they encompass the whole national education system, some larger area (province or district), or possibly the type of education (in a particular segment, for example, universities, post-elementary or post-high school education). They are carried out in stages, and the costs associated with them are much higher than the costs of adaptational or radical reform, not to mention the partial reform. So, generally, they are undertaken by rich or at least affluent countries/states belonging to them, such as Japan, England, Canada, the United States, Australia or New Zealand.

Generally speaking, holistic reforms are carried out in periods of political change, as education should play a stabilizing role in the effects of the changes taking place within a given socio-economic system.

A change of every social order according to a specific concept is based on holistic reforms which, by nature, also include education. They are generally revolutionary par excellence, and it is difficult to find in them successful and effective educational reforms (examples may be here the creation of a new educational system during the October Revolution in Russia and the first years of the existence of Soviet Russia).

The typology of educational reforms presented here enables an alternative approach to the studied object. According to its nature and characteristics, it does not explicitly define that one or another educational reform belongs exclusively to a given type. The dominance of some

features of a specific educational reform entitles it to be recognized as a type-specific reform, which does not exclude the same reform from being studied through the prism of other types. Thanks to the typology – treated as a specific research tool – the properties and mechanisms that characterize specific educational reforms can be more clearly described and explained, and also other reforms can be postulated on the basis of this approach.

Principles of implementation of educational reforms

If we treat the notion of a principle as a complex directive guiding a specific procedure, in the case of considerations concerning the implementation of educational reforms we can talk about the principles of (1) reality, (2) complementarity, (3) acceptance, and (4) reliability.

The principle of reality points to three characteristics of the procedure in the process of the implementation of educational reforms, namely: authenticity, pragmatism, prognosticity. In other words: every educational reform must involve a real, not an imaginary educational area, so it cannot be an ostensible or pretended activity; it must undergo objective assessment on the basis of which its creators take into account specific opportunities and take steps to ensure its effectiveness; finally, it must take into consideration the most likely, predictable directions of expected changes as well as their pace, structure, and extent.

The principle of complementarity is a directive that guides the activity relating to the implementation of educational reforms, which makes their creators aware that educational reforms are complementary to those carried out, or to be carried out, in other areas of social reality. It can be said that educational reform is not implemented for itself. Most often creators-authors (politicians) initiate educational reforms driven by economic considerations. The labor market requires that men acquire increasingly new abilities based on skills connected with the rapid communication and information.

It should also be remembered that every educational reform is a 'complementary' instrument by which problems of a social and political nature are resolved.

The principle of acceptance refers to such activities related to educational reform which have the consent to be implemented expressed by all participants. The realization of educational reforms depends on the ability to correlate the proposals they bring with the universally recognized social values. The creators-authors of the reforms must win the favor of creators-realizers of the reforms and the permission of all their participants. The principle of acceptance refers to the consent of the subjects that participate in the reforms directly, and also indirectly, or other systems, or educational institutions. This requires mutual respect for differences of views and the achievement of a similar position on specific issues, in particular the essential ones, which may have an effect on the quality of the implemented reforms.

The principle of reliability directs the creators to such activities related to the implementation of the educational reform which reaffirm its meaning and importance, guarantee the achievement of the expected results in the near or long term, and the effects are authentic, not dubious and possess a relatively constant character. The reliability of the reformist efforts is reflected in a fair, honest, impartial and objective process of the implementation of changes in the educational field. It concerns both the creators-authors and creators-realizers on various levels, ranges, and types of educational reform.

Summary

The presented attempt to look at the determinants of educational reforms was intended to present the issues known to date in a different way. It seems that educational reforms, as a particular phenomenon, occurring with great frequency in the last decades of the past century and at the same time the past millennium, have become common in everyday

social life. Today we can talk about them as an indispensable element of any change taking place in the world, characterized by an unbelievable pace of change in all areas caused by the unprecedented development of communication, information, and technology in a world set on success, which is accompanied by the expectations and disappointments of its inhabitants.

According to OECD data, 450 educational reforms were conducted in as many as 32 member countries in the last decade alone. Only 10% of them are monitored and evaluated by international institutions. Hence, it can be concluded that we do not know much about their course and consequences, especially the long-term ones. Nothing is known, either, about their cancellation or modification.

It is worth remembering, however, that under the term of *educational reform*, we always mean certain evident changes that relate to the system, content, and organization of the educational system or only to its selected segments. The reform of education has its causes in the socio-political and economic transformations of the country in which it is conducted. Its aim is to adapt the school system to the changing external conditions, especially the political and social, but also the economic ones. Politicians generally aim at educational reforms in order to strengthen their position through educational reform in the public consciousness. Meanwhile, the changes in political options which occur in their specific cycles, usually lasting a few years, do not correspond with the cycles of educational reforms that are generally longer than the duration of a particular political group. It is also worth remembering that the lack of agreement between the political authorities and students' parents about the direction and implementation of educational reforms is not conducive to the reforms. The effectiveness of educational reforms is not determined by single, rapid decisions, but rather by substantive negotiations between the parties. Such an attitude should be a daily practice, especially in democratic states abiding by the rule of law.

Both the reformers-politicians and reformers-realizers should take pedagogical progress into consideration, which depends on the development of pedagogical sciences, the science of education and educational

sciences, as well as various fields and disciplines that support them. The effectiveness of educational reforms is determined by the level of pedagogical culture and the educational awareness of those who are the main subjects of the educational process, especially parents and their offspring. Hence, each educational reform should be preceded by long-term prognoses and preparations that will constitute the foundations for the decisions made within their implementation process. Such preparations should also include a broad social discussion about the need for the reform and the legitimacy of its introduction. The condition for the success of educational reform is the profound conviction that it needs to be introduced, which is derived from the analysis of reform projects in all the necessary areas that determine its effectiveness. These may include the issues of the school system, curricula, the preparation of competent teachers and appropriate accommodation base. Only the fulfillment of these conditions can be the basis for taking decisions on the implementation of educational reform by those responsible for the level and state of the education of the society.

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