

# Managerial talent in education

## Summary

Spanning over 20 years, the transformation period in Poland's political system has brought about a series of educational reforms. The speed of these changes, as well as their size and diversity intensify the challenges posed to the Polish education system. Currently, schools are forced to modify their systems so that they follow European standards.

Among current areas of discussion concerning the functioning, organization, and management of personnel, the issue of managing talented people has a special place. According to the literature and practical definitions, a talented person is someone extraordinary, who stands out, is highly specialized, open to new experiences, and reflects deeply upon his or her own progress. In the light of diverse changes and expectations evident in Polish schools, one particular issue seems interesting: Are school head teachers, who are more and more frequently called educational managers, also influenced by this tendency? The contemporary head teacher should have a comprehensive and interdisciplinary knowledge concerning teaching methodology, methods of education upbringing, and ways of working with children and teenagers in psychological, educational, legal, administrative and other areas. Not only are schools subject to expectations and requirements as far as education is concerned, these also apply to the quality of management standards.

Nowadays, schools face higher expectations and requirements not only from the teaching and educational perspective, but also in the context of management. An effective school head should possess extensive, interdisciplinary knowledge. In light of the dynamics of the diverse changes and expectations facing modern educational institutions, as well as high expectations towards head teachers, an attempt to identify the category of managerial talent in education has been made.

This book consists of five chapters. The first three chapters include an analysis of concepts associated with managing education, whereas the subsequent two chapters present the methodology and results of my own empirical studies, as well as practical implications related to the position of school head.

The first chapter is entitled *"Education as a system: definition, structure and specificity"*. The introduction presents the concept of a system in social sciences. This problematic aspect is fundamental to a description of Poland's current educational system. The modern educational facility's organization is analysed from the local government and independent school head's organizational perspective. The process of promotion for teachers as well as

its conditions and consequences are all presented. The category of school head is described and the procedure of promotion shown, along with the obligations resulting from the pedagogical supervisor's duties.

The aim of the second chapter, entitled "*Management: educational implications*", is to present the subject of organizational management. In this chapter, organizational structures and classical management theories are described. The issue of leadership styles and their practical application is analyzed both from the staff and head's perspective. The issue of work humanization and its significance in managing is touched upon, as well as concepts of managing based on intuition and personal strengths. The main aim of this chapter is to analyse ideas stemming from the classical managing knowledge and apply them to educational management.

The third chapter is entitled "*Modern sciences on managing in view of talent in organizations*". The issue of managing the most talented employees is deeply rooted in the notion of personnel management. This chapter includes an introduction to the essence of the term 'talent', its etymology and ways of defining it. Various methods used for the recruitment and selection of talents are indicated. There is also an attempt to contrast the current recruitment and selection procedure used during the formal process of selecting a head, with the possibility to identify potential talents. Moreover, there is a profile of the school head as a manager who represents desirable competences and skills.

The fourth chapter is entitled "*Managerial talent in the author's research results*". It aims to present the research schemata, the methods used in the study, its procedures and techniques in order to present and analyze the findings of empirical research. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research practices was used using the individual in-depth interview (IDI) with school heads and a Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI) with teachers.

The final chapter is devoted to practical implications, and consists of subchapters of significant importance for practical educational management. Firstly, an attempt is made to construct a category of managerial talent in education, along with a social, educational and professional profile and the distinctive features that may be considered as appropriate for this category. Additionally, there are references to practical education, as well as the problems of contemporary school management. Specific recommendations are made given as far as the position of school head is concerned, starting from candidate's education, through the formal recruitment contest, ending with the issue of professional development and day-to-day professional experience after the position has been taken up.

Education is one of the most significant structures developing in society over a long time. The main source of changes in contemporary education are its leaders. Nowadays, a school's head teacher adopts different attitudes, resulting from the specificity of their professional activity. In order to perform their role successfully, a head teacher should possess managerial talent. Not only should the head be a formal supervisor, but also a real leader, who has personal authority, charisma and who inspires staff's trust. Such an approach enables the head to lead their staff not only by means of formal sanctions but also cooperation and mutual respect.