STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION

Hiba KHADIJA
Doctoral School, Faculty of Economy and Business Administration West University of Timisoara, Romania
hibahad@gmail.com

Abstract: *The purpose of the present study is to explore the identity, importance, and goals of stakeholders involved in the school. Stakeholders refer to groups of people affected by the success or failure of an organization, who include individuals, public groups, governmental and private organizations, institutions, and associations. Stakeholders such as parents, teachers, community leaders, civic organizations and students, should therefore be encouraged to get involved in the school, and participate in various programs that will improve the school and the students' achievements. In the context of education, a skilled school principal will find ways to harness the interests and ability of different people to contribute to the educational institution, and create a school climate in which this can occur. It is important that the school administration involves stakeholders in the decision-making process, in order to improve the performance of the school. School performance and its success is affected also by the stakeholders' capability to use efficiently human and material resources at their disposal for the school benefit. Google Scholar database was searched and papers published in the last 15 years were analysed. The review findings show that stakeholder's participation can improve teaching and learning, efficiency in school management, raising motivation and commitment among staff, and foster open communication with various actors. In order to benefit the school, especially in a period characterized by accountability, competitive education market and limited government resources, the school principal must empower, provide information and train different stakeholders. The principal is the main actor capable to build bridges between all stakeholders, through provision of autonomy and support, in order to improve decision-making and implementation processes, designed to raise the quality of the school and the students.*
Keywords: *participation; school performance; school principal; stakeholders; student achievements.*

1 Introduction

Research on organizations has developed rapidly in the last two decades. Business management researchers, in particular, have developed the concept of 'stakeholders', which refers to groups of people affected by the success or failure of an organization (Freeman et al., 2010). Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) approached the concept of 'stakeholders' from a managerial and business perspective, and argued that current literature fails to identify stakeholders in the organization. These stakeholders can be individuals, public groups, governmental and private organizations, institutions,

associations and the environment. Michelle et al. (1997) focused on the relationship between an organization and stakeholders.

Stakeholder involvement means working with people and using available resources to achieve specific goals and objectives (Bartle, 2007). In the context of education, a skilled school principal will find ways to harness the interests and ability of different people to contribute to the common good, and create a school climate in which this can occur. It is important that the school administration involves all stakeholders in the decision-making process, in order to improve the performance of the school. Increasing stakeholders' involvement in the school management practices should strengthen school performance and promote academic excellence (Gichohi, 2015).

2. Literature review on stakeholders in schools

2.1. Stakeholders' theory development

Stakeholder theory developed in the 1980, as a response to the increased complexity and changes in organizations environment. This approach indicates that all individuals or groups that have interest in an organization are taken into account in the strategic management, and the organization is directed in order to avail customers, suppliers, owners, employees and local communities (Freeman et al., 2020).

Stakeholder theory wins acceptance and relevance in strategic management research and business practices, but most of its aspects still need to be explored in contexts such as educational institutions. Educational institutions play an important role in society because of their importance in transferring knowledge to the wider community (Bilodeau et al., 2014; Ferrero-Ferrero et al., 2018). Various stakeholders are able to influence educational institutions in terms of teaching quality and development of joint research projects (Kettunen, 2015). Therefore, in order to improve the relationship with the stakeholders, comprehensive strategies are needed that will ensure mutual cooperation and involvement (Stocker et al., 2020).

Schools nowadays operate as semi-commercial organizations and their success depends on their ability to adopt effective management practices. These institutions have a diverse system of stakeholders with whom they collaborate on behalf of the school. Therefore, classifying and locating these stakeholders and addressing their interests and claims is important to society and the school. Thus, investigating the issue of improving the relationships between the school and stakeholders, based on stakeholder theory is essential, because according to this theory, such collaborative management is a means of developing relationship with the organization and achieving a competitive advantage (Cho, 2017; Kettunen, 2015).

Stakeholder theory is based on the following principles: Active involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process; Exchange of information regarding the requirements and preferences of the stakeholders; Developing a relationship of mutual trust between stakeholders and the organization; And the inclusion of stakeholders in the organization's strategic planning process (Langrafe et al., 2020).

Freeman's (Freeman et al., 2020) important research is considered to be fundamental in stakeholder descriptive literature. They argue that a profound change is needed in the management of organizations that will adapt them to new demands and social trends. For an organization to succeed in this new context, the manager must create simultaneous satisfaction among his owners, employees, unions, suppliers and customers. Managing stakeholders' relationships is also seen as an organization's means of addressing social issues (Freeman et al., 2020).

Stakeholder theory poses various questions regarding strategic management of organizations, such as identifying and prioritizing stakeholders, understanding their interests and requirements, balancing relationships between different stakeholders and their involvement in organizational activities (Harrison et al., 2010; Sulkowski et al., 2018). Stoner and Freeman (1999) divide stakeholders into two groups: internal and external. Internal stakeholders operate within the organization, such as owners and employees, external stakeholders' operate with the organization, such as customers and suppliers.

Among the various definitions of stakeholders, Freeman's definition (Freeman, 1984) is the best known, he defines stakeholder as follows: "A stakeholder in an organization is any group or person, who can influence or be influenced by the achievement of the organization's goals" (p. 46). Mitchell et al. (1997) argued that the key concepts that appear in the organization's main theories, are power and legitimacy. But these terms are seen as contradictory to stakeholders' perceptions. The main common approaches in stakeholders' theories are: authority, behavioural, institutional, and population ecology, resource dependence and transaction cost.

'Agency theory' claims that managers can control the behaviour of their subordinates in order to fulfil the organization's goals. This is achieved through incentives and supervision. 'Resource Dependency Theories' indicate that stakeholders have resources and therefore are able to influence the organization. 'Transaction cost theories' indicate that stakeholders outside the organization, who participate in a small competitive system, can increase transaction costs to levels that justify their absorption into the firm, where the costs of hierarchy are lower than transaction costs of market failure'. These theories attest that power relations between managers and stakeholders are important factors in stakeholder theory. But focusing on power will not help identify suitable stakeholders. Both, institutional, and population ecology theories, link organizational legitimacy to the existence of an organization. According to these theories, legitimate stakeholders are the ones that are important. Urgency is the last attribute that affects the leaders' perception of stakeholders. Urgency is defined by Mitchell et al. (1997) as 'the degree to which stakeholder claim call for immediate attention' (p. 867). According to behavioural theory, urgency is the goals which is not achieved. Therefore, Mitchell et al. (1997) proposed a theory of identification and salience of stakeholders that includes the following concepts: power, legitimacy and urgency. Power, is 'a relationship among social factors in which one social factor, A can get another social factor, B to do something that B would not have otherwise done'. (p. 869). Legitimacy, refers to the actions of an organization, considered desirable according to the norms, beliefs and values of

society. Urgency, is a concept that refers to the call of stakeholders for immediate action. Salience, refers to stakeholders claims and the extent to which managers give them priority (Avci, Ring and Mitchelli, 2015).

2.2. Types of stakeholders

According to the theory of Mitchell et al. (1997), there are seven types of stakeholders defined based on their attributes. Three of these types have one attribute, three others have two attributes and one has all the attributes mentioned earlier. 'Latent stakeholders' have only one of the attributes. These types are: dormant stakeholder - who has power but not legitimacy or urgency. 'Discretionary stakeholder' has legitimacy but not power or urgency. Demanding stakeholder has urgency but not power or legitimacy. 'Expectant stakeholder' has two attributes. 'Dominant stakeholder' has power and legitimacy but not urgency. 'Dependent stakeholder' has legitimacy and urgency but not power. 'Dangerous stakeholder' has power and urgency, but not legitimacy. 'Definitive stakeholder' has the three attributes. Mitchell et al. (1997) claim that stakeholder attributes add dynamism to their salience: i.e., their attributes are variable and not fixed; they are socially understood, but not an objective reality.

An issue related to the relationships between schools and stakeholders, is the accountability of schools. Accountability is a difficult endeavour, it requires gathering insights about the pros and cons of the school, meeting with its stakeholders to conduct an open dialogue concerning the decisions and performance of the school, related to perceptions and judgments of various stakeholders. To this end, the relevant stakeholders need to be identified and sometimes also motivated and trained. The schools themselves need to build capacity in terms of leadership for multiple accountability processes, and ability to interpret and make effective use of data (Hooge, Burns and Wilkoszewski, 2012).

What organizations, groups, and individuals are important to the legitimacy of strategy, decision-making, and the quality of school services? And which parties are in a position to evaluate and provide important feedback to improve the quality of education? Regarding multiple accountability processes, Hooge and Helderman (2008) distinguished four groups of stakeholders: primary, internal, vertical and horizontal. In education, parents and students are the primary stakeholders. Teachers and educational and non-educational staff are internal stakeholders who have a clear interest in the success of the school. Governments and organizations such as municipalities, act as vertical stakeholders. Finally, all other organizations, groups or individuals in the school environment, with some interest in the school are horizontal stakeholders (Hooge, Burns and Wilkoszewski, 2012).

2.3. Motives for stakeholders involvement in schools

The motivations for collaborative management are divided into two types: 1. Humanistic or democratic - It has been argued that people have a right to participate in making decisions that affect their lives. It assumes that people have the ability and potential to participate intelligently. 2. Pragmatic or human relations - points out that

collaborative management is a way to achieve productivity, valued goals and organizational goals. It has been argued that in the last three decades, principal's rationale for increasing teacher involvement in school decision-making stems from pragmatic claims that educational innovation will not succeed without teacher support, and realization that teachers have the right to be involved. From a pragmatic perspective, participation was perceived as improving the quality of educational decision-making. Teacher participation is seen as giving principals access to important information related to various educational issues. Increased access and use of information is seen as improving the quality of curriculum and teaching-related decisions. In addition, involvement of various professionals can improve the quality of decisions through the use of a variety of expert knowledge (Gichohi, 2015).

2.4. Participatory management with stakeholders in schools
Most researchers in the field of education have focused on decision-making in investigating dimensions of collaborative management, and described participation as consisting of two areas: 1. A technical core, dealing with students and teaching policies, classroom meaning policies, and solving learning problems. 2. Administrative issues, such as school operation and administrative issues related to setting school goals, hiring teaching staff, allocating budget, and evaluating teachers (Gichohi, 2015). A manager could ask subordinates to participate at various levels of participation (Apodaca-Tucker and Slate, 2002). The degree of participation is regarded as being on a continuum. First, an autocratic decision-making in which no prior information about a decision is present to subordinates and the manager makes the decisions himself. Second, decision-making in consultation where the manager shares the problem with the subordinates and accepts their ideas and suggestions before decision making, which may or may not reflect his influence. Third, democratic decision-making is when the principal shares problems with subordinates, together they analyse the problem and come to a mutually acceptable solution. The literature argues that the usual areas of collaboration or involvement in decisions making include: team employment and team development; Establishing academic policies; School budget; Selection of textbooks and other teaching materials; Curriculum development; Planning new school facilities; Addressing the academic and other needs of students; Issues of student discipline; Problem-solving of school-community relations; Assessment of student and teacher performance; Problem solving of staff and students; And teaching methods (Aposaca-Tucker and Slate, 2002).

Studies have shown that improved teaching, optimal learning, and high school efficiency are the most common reasons for implementing collaborative school practices such as school boards, collegial educational leadership, and parental and community involvement (Quezada, 2003). This is achieved because creating close relations between school and community while listening to various parties allow interdependence that promotes the school to reach better decisions. In addition, collaborative school practices contribute to higher levels of employee motivation and commitment (Beyerlein et al., 2003).

Research suggests that allowing teachers to participate in the decision-making process leads to positive outcomes. Employee satisfaction, motivation, and self-esteem are positively affected by involvement in decision making and execution (Gamage and Pang, 2003). Also, employee commitment and loyalty are reinforced by collaborative school management practices (Wong, 2003). This is because better decisions are made and greater efficiency is achieved by open communication among people who express different perceptions and are involved in collaborative management. Collaborative management also has an impact on participants as it creates in them a desire for action and leads to greater support for change (Gamage and Pang, 2003).

Recently, stakeholders' theories have focused on mechanisms of value creation and distribution to stakeholders (Carcia-Castro and Aguilera, 2015; Tantalo and Priem, 2016). Instead of focusing on the most important stakeholders, improving relationships that create more value has become the focus of research (Freeman et al., 2020). Value is a significant concept in the field of strategy building. Within stakeholder theory, value creation is inherent in the relationships between the organization and its stakeholders (Bosse and Coughlan, 2016). Harrison et.a. (2010) explored different forms of value creation and noted that organizational performance measurements should address the perspective of many stakeholders. The emphasized that value is 'anything that has the potential to be of value to stakeholders'. Value can relate to community service programs, employee participation in the decision-making process, better payment terms, and lower customer prices (Harrison et al., 2010).

Stakeholder participation in school management, according to Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002), describes the level at which teachers, students, parents and various organizations participate in six aspects of the school community. Tilbury and Wortman (2004) explain that participation is done in various forms of stakeholder involvement and includes "consultation and consensus building to decision-making, risk-sharing and partnerships" (p. 51). They also argue that some people see participation as a process in which people have some involvement but no authority to provide feedback or make decisions. In such a way participation lacks the possibility of dialogue or decision making. White (2000) recognizes that participation has political implications, when people are persuaded to contribute to the operation of a project with a top-down approach (Shane-Antonio, 2014).

Tilbury and Wortman (2004) argues that besides participation as a form of manipulation, the true form of participation involves a collective effort between people during action planning and decision making. In this way, people are able to provide ideas and solutions to problems. Van de Fliert (2010) argues that this is related to communication between groups, and the final decision is made after analysing opinions and recommendations that people present. In the process of consultation, knowledge plays an important role in learning and decision-making process. Tilbury and Wortman (2004) note that teachers and parents are seen as helping students to provide solutions and act during decision-making processes. In this way, students develop the knowledge required to solve problems as well as

leadership skills to be active participants in their environment (Shane-Antonio, 2014).

Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) explain that not all stakeholders (such as: teachers, students, parents and local organizations) participate in the same way. Some participate because they see value in being part of the community, others due to private relationships and skills. There is usually a stakeholder coordinator who enlists the help of other leading people to assist him. According to Wenger, et al. (2002), there are five levels at which community members participate: Core, active, occasional, peripheral, and transactional. The 'core' group is the one that includes people with leadership roles who participate in discussions and projects, thanks to their dedication and commitment to the community. They also 'identify issues that the community needs to address and motivate the community according to the agenda of its learning' (Wenger et al., p. 56)

The members of the 'active' group are those who usually participate in meetings and activities but less than the core group. The 'occasional' group is made up of members who only participate when a particular issue on the agenda interests them, or when they have something to contribute to the community. The 'peripheral' group, includes the large number of community members. These are passive participants in the interaction that occur between the core group and active group members'. They are less committed to a community, as they do not have much to contribute to it. But they too are in the process of learning and use the skills they have learned outside the community. The 'transactional' group is outside the four groups and is considered external and communicates with the community from time to time to gain access to resources or to provide services. According to Wenger et al.(2002), some members of the core group can switch between groups due to a change of focus or loss of interest, and on the other hand, outsiders become more involved in issues that interest them (Shane-Antonio, 2014).

According to Harrison and Wicks (2013), there are relationships that add value and meaning to the organization. Power relations exist between stakeholders in organizations. In situations where the stakeholders are in control, the organization depends on them. It is therefore important to investigate the power relations between an organization and stakeholders. In addition, it is necessary to identify the stakeholders and their possibilities to influence the organization' operation. Also, the organization and the stakeholders are found in contractual relationships, where the stakeholders have an interest in the organization' success. Stakeholders can benefit or be harmed by the actions of the organization, and therefore have a moral claim against the organization.

2.5. Building stakeholders' capacity

When the school does not address the knowledge, motivation and attitudes of stakeholders as potential participants, there is a fear that important, but weak stakeholders will be excluded. This may reduce the quality of multiple accountability processes. Although these processes are not hierarchical, this does not mean that the relationships between the school and the horizontal stakeholders are equal in every

aspect. Instead, some stakeholders have a certain level of knowledge and involvement similar to school, but in other situations stakeholders have less knowledge and involvement than the school. This means that schools are often better motivated and equipped to get into the process of accountability with their stakeholders than vice versa. Schools are, therefore, required to understand the stakeholders' needs, since some need help in acquiring knowledge and organizing their involvement (Hooge, Burns and Wilkoszewski, 2012).

2.6. Possible obstacles of stakeholders

The use and ownership of professional or experimental knowledge, can constitute a barrier between the school and its stakeholders, as well as among them. The position of non-expert people who have only experimental knowledge can be weak, compared to professionals who interact and strengthen their exchange of information and mutual connections (Brandsen et al., 2011). Unequal power positions between school, parents and community members, can allow stronger stakeholders to control them. This situation can occur at various levels, including unequal access to decision-making bodies, information and power asymmetries and an agenda suited to the powerful stakeholders (Brandsen et al., 2011).

Involvement in multiple accountability processes requires much efforts from parents and members of the community. They often lack, knowledge, time, endurance and skill, which they are supposed to acquire during a short training. This situation can be frustrating when parents and community members involved, perceive that the rules of the game are dictated by the school, and the communication is one-sided. In response, parents and community members will choose not to be involved, which will sometimes lead schools to mistakenly conclude that they are satisfied with the school's services. This will prevent involving important stakeholders and improving the school (Hooge, Burns and Wilkoszewski, 2012).

Consultation and participation can be an obstacle to multiple accountabilities. For example, Brandsen et al., (2011) have concluded that multiple accountabilities increase stress, because it emphasizes traditional vertical responsibilities. They argued 'many of the organizations we examined indicated that they felt burdened by an increasing amount of paperwork, the fatigue of staff members was mirrored by stakeholders and especially individual clients, who showed increasing disinterest in being consulted and involved' (p. 17).

3. Model suggested and discussions

Based on the theoretical review the author presented above and the fact the society and education of the 21-sr century undergo serious changes of globalization and distant technologies, the following stakeholders' model is recommended for Israeli schools: 1. Mapping and classifying of stakeholders of schools including principals, school staff, pupils, parents, local authorities and community members. 2. Based on classification, giving the stakeholders some responsibilities, duties and rights. Especially, the author must emphasize the parents and their involvement at the times of Covid-19 crisis. If earlier they were not involved in school decisions, nowadays

their participation and cooperation are crucial for their children and the whole system's success. 3. Feedback and remapping the stakeholders, in case the roles should changes.

The author assumes that this model implementation in Israeli schools should make school structure and management less authoritarian and centralized, when actually more decentralization, cooperation and communication between all the stakeholders are needed.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

This literature review examines the relationship between schools and stakeholders and their impact on school quality and student achievements. The review presents theories dealing with stakeholders' function and concepts related to their involvement in the school work. In addition, the identities of the various stakeholders, their roles and the power relations between them and the school are described. The benefits of their participation in school management and decision-making were discussed, such as improving teaching and learning, efficiency in school management, raising motivation and commitment among staff, and foster open communication with various actors. The school principal is of great importance in recruiting talented and capable stakeholders. The review emphasizes that in order to benefit the school, especially in a period characterized by accountability, competitive education market and limited government resources, the school principal must empower, provide information and train different stakeholders. The principal is a significant figure in creating an effective school environment, and connects all stakeholders, providing autonomy and support, in order to improve decision-making and implementation, intended to raise the school and students' quality.

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