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## THE WORK MODEL FOR ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN BUILDING A TEAM CLIMATE IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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The issue of educational management and educational policies is studied in various countries and is relevant and important especially in the pandemic period. The present research study examines the relationships between the organizational climate and the components of management in it. In the initial stage of the research study, we present a picture of the climate that exists in the education team. Surveys of climate and pedagogical environment address a wide range of topics from the school life and reflect the range of the processes, as they are perceived by teachers in three clusters of measures: the cluster related to the perception of the school management, the cluster of the indices of self-efficacy, and the cluster of identification and belonging.

**Keywords:** *education organization, management, team climate, relationships and personal development.*

### MODEL DE LUCRU PENTRU MANAGEMENTUL ORGANIZAȚIONAL ÎN CONSTRUIREA UNUI CLIMAT DE ECHIPĂ ÎN SISTEMUL EDUCAȚIONAL

Problematika managementului educațional și al politicilor educaționale este studiată în diverse țări, fiind relevantă și importantă mai ales în perioada pandemică. În prezentul studiu sunt examinate relațiile dintre climatul unei organizații și componentele managementului din cadrul acesteia. În etapa inițială a cercetării se prezintă o imagine a climatului care există într-o echipă dintr-o instituție de învățământ. Sondajele privind climatul și mediul pedagogic abordează un șir de subiecte din viața școlii și reflectă cum este percepută de profesori gama proceselor organizaționale. Studiul s-a bazat pe trei grupuri de indici: clusterul indicilor legat de percepția managementului școlii, clusterul indicilor de autoeficacitate și grupul de indicatori de identificare și apartenență.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *organizație educațională, management, climat de echipă, relații și dezvoltare personală.*

### Introduction

On the basis of a comprehensive and multifaceted picture of the situation, the research study presents a managerial organizational model that supports the promotion of the climate. The research findings are organized into a management model that includes two levels: personal and team, between which are woven the interactions that create the climate in the organization, as expressed in the organizational culture. In addition, the article presents principles and practical directions on the topic.

The research subjects included 47 team members. The method chosen in the research study is a case study. The current study uses the mixed analysis methods – quantitative and qualitative. The questionnaire is subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS software, including a reliability test. The qualitative methodology focuses on one source and examines it in-depth for a long period of time and deploys in it many instruments in order to see an in-depth picture rich in details.

The issue of the management and the building of the team climate is relevant and important, especially in the period of the coronavirus, which obligates social distancing and performance under situations of stress and uncertainty. This period has brought to the fore the importance of the organizational resilience that is built in management and promotes an optimal climate. It appears that many organizations are forced to undergo changes that will ensure effective team performance tailored to the new reality.

### Management in the Education Organization

Management of education and educational policy is an important area of research in many countries around the world. The creation of large and complex education systems conditioned the need to transfer the skills of teachers, who were educated to teach, not to manage organizations.

Management research focuses on "educational leadership". Like other sciences of education, educational management draws its sources from texts and discourses from other social sciences and humanities, including philosophy, sociology, psychology, business administration, and economics. Political science has made a great contribution to the development of educational policy models. Some believe that educational management is

similar to general management. Proponents of the general management approach believe that there are universal management principles that can be applied in any organizational structure, for example, in the processes of strategic planning, budgeting, financial management, human resources management, and public relations [1].

For example, in educational organizations there are difficulties between organizational processes and results, because financial resources are in the hands of the education ministry or finance ministry and there are big problems in establishing measures to reach targets, in other words, if the goal is academic achievement or creative development and curiosity to children.

The researcher observes that maintaining the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization depends on many other variables found outside of school, such as the child's family and environment and his or her cognitive and emotional characteristics. These aspects reinforce the approach that the management of an educational institution as a school differs from the management of economic institutions [2, p.58].

The success of the school principal in recruiting all the school teachers for this demanding process is a testament, first and foremost, to the relationship of trust and mutual appreciation created between the principal and the teaching team. Building such a system of relationships between a principal and the teaching team is not a trivial matter. Indeed, Fox, Gong, and Attoh [3] maintain that in many cases teachers feel pressure on the part of the principals and only viable, positive, and trust-based work relationships between the principal and the teaching team are an essential condition for the achievement of the school objectives.

Human resource management (HRM) is the practice of recruiting, hiring, deploying, and managing an organization's employees. HRM is frequently referred to as human resources (HR) or human management (HM). A company or organization's HM department is usually responsible for creating, implementing, and overseeing policies governing workers and the relationship of the organization with its employees. The role of HRM practices is to manage the people in a workplace to achieve the organization's mission and reinforce the culture [4, p.89].

HRM in organizations has advanced in the past thirty years. Now we have a clearer understanding of the need for the strategic management of human resources and adjustment of organizational structures for this need. The management of human resources and climate has a direct influence on the level of performances in the organization. This topic influences challenges in applied management [5, p.24].

### **Team Climate, Relationships, and Personal Development in Educational Organizations**

The concept of climate has received considerable attention from applied psychologists and organizational sociologists over the last four decades. Numerous empirical studies have been conducted as well as regular reviews of the research. Research in this area has unequivocally demonstrated that team climate management is extremely essential and effective for the work relationship. The topic is particularly relevant in environments where interdependence, close collaboration, and teamwork are high [6, p.560].

Although, in recent years, there is interest in the research of the team climate, there is also difficulty with the issue of its accurate measurement and there are many parameters that compose it and can change according to different theoretical perceptions.

Research studies indicate that the climate has a profound influence on the team's mental health [7, p.143].

**The school climate, by definition, reflects the experiences of the students, teachers, and other partners in emotional, social, civic, moral, and academic terms.** In the past two decades, many research studies from a range of fields related to the education system, including reforms, prevention of risks, advancement of health, moral education, mental health, and social-emotional learning, have identified and proposed guidelines for the improvement of research-based schools that advance confidence, caring, response to needs, and collaboration [8, p.770]. These research studies show that there are parallel processes that teachers and students experience, and there is a direction correlation between the climate level of the teacher team and its impact on the climate among the students.

The teaching team is the anchor of the school. To successfully engage teachers in the challenging task of making such a fundamental change in school activity, teachers must first develop in themselves a sense of efficacy to achieve the determined goals. For this, professional development processes have been established for all school teachers. It was decided that the process of the training for the assimilation of the reform in the school would be carried out in grade-based learning communities of teachers. Every such learning community undertook to design an annual outline of excellence for each of the age groups and to build a detailed curriculum that implements the principles of excellence adopted by the school. During those team meetings, the role of the class educator was redefined as the case manager of each of her students. In the framework of the new job definition, the educator is responsible for identifying the strengths of each of her students, guides,

supports, and instructs the student to meet the requirements of the areas of excellence in which he participates, and ensures the change of the class discourse towards the striving for excellence and the internalization of appropriate values of excellence and perseverance. Teacher learning in grade-based team meetings also included an in-depth discussion of the issue of diversity and difference and how the school team should encourage excellence in a wide range of areas, depending on students' preferences and skills. Special emphasis was placed on the improvement of the teachers' skills to manage a meaningful dialogue with their students, actively listen, and to express empathy and support of the students. Another essential aspect discussed in the groups of teachers is the teachers' need for constant learning and lifelong continuous professional development.

The school principal, in the role of educator that was formulated, also took care to identify in the teachers their characteristic strengths and allowed the teachers to express their preferences and talents. In addition, to support the teachers, each teacher was assigned from the school administration a disciplinary academic advisor and, of course, a listener, to support and empathize with them. The school principal's working assumption was that an empowered teacher cultivates an empowered student.

The main teacher leadership of the school has an active part and is a partner in the planning and leadership of the community. Regular meetings are held between members of the school team. In these meetings, topics related to the school's educational activities and the community activities in which the school participates are discussed. In these days of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has also become a distance learning community, where learning sessions are held synchronously and asynchronously.

### **Research Methods and Research Instruments**

The method chosen in the research study is a case study. The current study uses mixed analysis methods – quantitative and qualitative. The questionnaire is subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS software, including a reliability test. *The qualitative methodology focuses on one source and examines it in-depth for a long period of time and deploys in it many instruments in order to see an in-depth picture rich in details* However, it should be noted that, as appropriate for a case study, this is a research of one specific school (which is a pilot for a broader study). The study includes an anonymous questionnaire, a very great number of documents, protocols of meetings, reports of teachers, results of national tests and surveys, interviews with teachers, and documents on the school in the Ministry of Education and especially in the Research and Development Department.

### **Research Objective**

The objective of the research study is to examine the relationship between the perception of the climate by the educational team and the manner of management of the organization. In the initial stage, it is important to understand the situation that exists in the team. Climate surveys and pedagogical environments address a wide range of issues from school life that reflect the range of processes as perceived by students and teachers. Hence, through the questionnaire, there is a review of the climate and the pedagogical environment that reflect a wide range of topics from the life of the school. In the second stage, with qualitative research methods, we examine managerial aspects. The comprehensive and multifaceted picture obtained from the quantitative research on the climate will constitute the basis for the extraction of a management model that advances an optimal climate as seen in the data of the researched organization. We define the applied implications in management for the purpose of the improvement of the climate in the team.

### **Research Findings**

The findings of the research study will be presented in two stages: (1) the presentation of the findings of the climate in the team questionnaire and (2) the presentation of the model and principles in the management work that promote an optimal climate.

The questionnaire that was distributed to the school teachers included indices that collect the answers to a number of questions related to an identical content world. In the previous report, there are seven different indices (see table number 1), when each index is the mean of the questions.

In the continuation, we present in a select manner the description of the questions that comprise the indices in part 2 of the report. The scale of most of the questions in the questionnaire (with the exception of the questions on the topic of the perception of violence in the school) is built so that a higher score is more positive for the school (the scale ranges from 1 to 5). Since in a number of questions the direction of the scale is reversed, we changed for the purpose of the construction of the indices the direction of these questions. To summarize, in all the indices (except for the perception of violence) the direction is that a higher score is more positive for the school.

The order of the appearance of the questionnaire findings will be based on the three clusters examined:

- 1) the cluster of the perceptions related to the school (perception of the school management);
- 2) the cluster of the indices of self-efficacy (social relationship efficacy and task efficacy);
- 3) the cluster of identification and belonging (belonging to the team, identification with the profession, and identification with the school).

The report has two parts. The first part of the report presents in the table the mean of every index (which is as aforementioned from 1 to 5), the standard deviation of the index (which expresses the dispersion of the answers among the school teachers), and the number of team members who responded to the questions that compose the index. The second part of the report describes for every index the complete distribution of the answers for each one of the questions that compose the relevant index and the mean and standard deviation of every question. Here we present only a number of statements, for the purpose of illustration.

### Stage 1: Presentation of the Results of the Climate in the Team Questionnaire

#### Part 1: Presentation of the Results of the General Climate

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of the Indices

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of Respondents
Perception of School Management	4.41	0.49	N=47
Perception of Violence in the School	1.26	0.41	N=47
Efficacy of Social Relationship	4.50	0.39	N=47
Task Efficacy	4.35	0.38	N=47
Belonging to the Team	4.54	0.44	N=47
Identification with the Profession	3.87	1.28	N=47
Identification with the School	4.73	0.38	N=47

Source: elaborated by authors

The findings indicate that in all the areas examined the mean of the scores in the institution is high. In all the parameters there is an average standard deviation, aside from the parameter of "identification with the profession", in which it is possible to see the lowest score obtained in the institution and a high standard deviation, above 1 (1.28), thus indicating gaps between the team members in this topic.

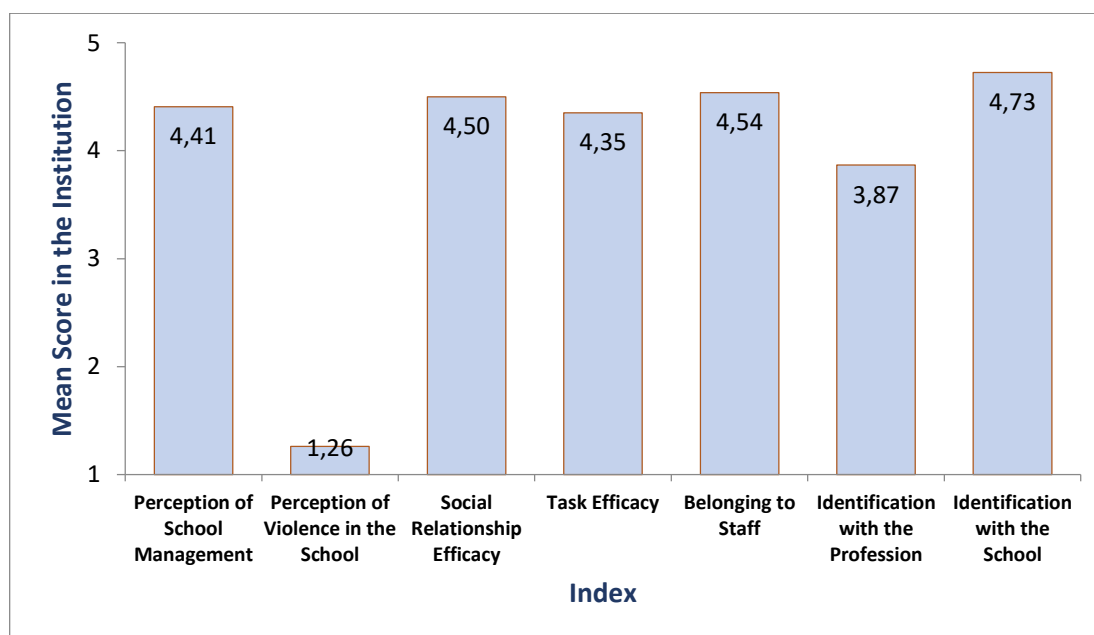


Fig.1. Part 1 – Presentation of the Results of the Climate in the Examined Indices

Source: elaborated by authors

The current table summarizes a general picture of the team's climate, and includes six parameters that represent the clusters described above, and these are: the cluster of school management perception, the cluster of self-efficacy indices, which includes two parameters such as: social relationship efficacy and task efficacy, and the third parameter – the cluster of identification and belonging, which includes three parameters: belonging to the team, identification with the profession, and identification with the school.

Perception of violence in the school parameter- appears as another statement and does not enter the cluster.

## Part 2: Description of the Data of the Climate Indices according to Clusters

### Cluster 1: Perceptions Related to the School

Cluster 1 addresses the perceptions of the management by the educational team. Through the perception of the management by the teachers, we can see the components in the school management and their impact on the climate in the school. The principal's pattern of leadership and the school climate influence the workers' effectiveness and satisfaction. In this research study, it is possible to see that the principal's pattern of leadership contributes to the shaping of the organizational climate.

Table 2

### Perception of the School Management

	Disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Agree	Greatly agree
The principal encourages teachers to take part in the shaping of the main school policy			10.0%	30.0%	60.0%
I feel that the management believes in me and in my ability as a teacher	5.0%		5.0%	35.0%	55.0%
The management supports me in dealing with problematic students				45.0%	55.0%
I feel that the school management appreciates my work as a teacher in the school		5.0%		45.0%	50.0%
The school management invests and cares for the teachers and their feelings		5.0%	10.0%	50.0%	35.0%
The management addresses the teachers' personal needs			20.0%	45.0%	35.0%
I feel that I am a partner in the processes and plans in the school				50.0%	50.0%

Source: elaborate by authors

According to the data, it was seen that the strength of the organization- is the high involvement of the staff in the educational endeavor. In addition, the findings show that there is reference on the part of the management to the personal and professional needs of the staff.

Table 3

**Perception of the School Management. Standard Deviation**

	Mean	Standard Deviation
The principal encourages teachers to take part in the shaping of the main school policy	4.50	0.69
I feel that the management believes in me and in my ability as a teacher	4.35	0.99
The management supports me in dealing with problematic students	4.55	0.51
I feel that the school management appreciates my work as a teacher in the school	4.40	0.75
The school management invests and cares for the teachers and their feelings	4.15	0.81
The management addresses the teachers' personal needs	4.15	0.75
I feel that I am a partner in the processes and plans in the school	4.50	0.51
The school management supports me against the parents if necessary	4.65	0.59

Source: elaborated by authors

These findings indicate that the management encourages taking part in policy (90% at a high and very high level). There are processes of sharing in the processes and plans (100% at a high and very high level), as well as consideration of personal needs and support with the parents and problematic students (at a very high level, 95%).

The topics of reference to the teachers' personal needs and concern for the feelings of the teachers in the team are more broadly distributed. Only 80% responded that this happens greatly and very greatly.

**Cluster 2: Indices of Self-Efficacy**

The concept of 'self-efficacy' developed from the social-cognitive learning theory and was accorded considerable interest in the context of the professional domain in general and the field of teaching in particular. Friedman and Kass [9] present in this model that the teacher's feeling of personal efficacy is composed of three areas: the field of the task, the field of relationships, and the field of the organization.

The findings of social relationship efficacy and task efficacy are presented below. Many research studies have proved the relationship between relationships and task and work efficacy, according to which if the teachers work in cooperation in intimate and structured groups and have the ability to share with their colleagues, then their sense of efficacy increases.

Table 4

**Social Relationship Efficacy**

	Mean	Standard Deviation
I can help my students deal with their social problems	4.65	0.59
I have sufficient knowledge and tools to deal with situations of violence in the school	4.30	0.66
I always am careful to know why a student is absent and to be interested in his wellbeing when he returns to class	4.60	0.60
I can hold with students conversations that improve the atmosphere and the system of relationships in the class	4.55	0.51
I am confident in my ability to hold a significant personal conversation with the student	4.75	0.44
I frequently find an opportunity to hold personal conversations with students and be interested in them	4.40	0.60
My responses to social problems of students are effective and achieve their goal	4.25	0.55

Source: elaborated by authors.

The following table shows the task capability parameter. It represents the practical ability of the staff to perform various tasks, in the educational organization it is about the ability to teach, explain to students the difficult material, and know how to work in a heterogeneous class and the ability to work in a team and guide it.

Table 5

## Task Efficacy

	Mean	Standard Deviation
In the teaching fields I feel sufficiently free to act according to my perception and understanding	4.65	0.49
I can guide and develop other teachers in the team	4.15	0.75
I can teach well even difficult and complex material	4.35	0.59
Even students with difficulties can understand the material with me	4.25	0.64

Source: elaborated by authors

## Cluster 3: Identification and Belonging

In the past twenty years, concepts such as *work engagement* and *organizational belonging* have become the most spoken topics in the field of organizational management. When these concepts are addressed, the intention is the profound emotional connection that the worker feels towards his workplace that causes him to invest greater conscious effort into the performance of his role, which is expressed in that the worker will act to maximize the good of the organization, through enthusiasm and complete involvement in his work. Therefore, every organization that has a committed management can increase the sense of belonging with a relatively low investment. This does not mean that it is not worthwhile to invest also in financial reward but rather this alone will not create a sense of belonging.

The research findings indicate that the topic of environment and belonging to the team received one of the best scores: 90-100% to a great and very great extent answered that the teachers feel belonging in social terms and in the team there are relationships of reciprocal respect.

Table 6

## Belonging to the Team

	Disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Agree	Greatly agree
If I have a problem, then I will always find somebody in the teachers room to share with and get help from				30.0%	70.0%
I have friends in the teaching team in the school				30.0%	70.0%
In the teaching team in our school there are relations of mutual respect			10.0%	40.0%	50.0%
The teachers who teach my teaching subject work as a professional team	5.0%			45.0%	50.0%

Source: elaborated by authors

The following table shows the average score and standard deviation according to each question.

Table 7

## Belonging to the Team. Standard Deviation

	Mean	Standard Deviation
If I have a problem, then I will always find somebody in the teachers room to share with and get help from	4.70	0.47
I have friends in the teaching team in the school	4.70	0.47
In the teaching team in our school there are relations of mutual respect	4.40	0.68
The teachers who teach my teaching subject work as a professional team	4.35	0.93

Source: elaborated by authors

The parameter of the identification with the profession indicates the phenomenon of professional burnout among the team. The topic is relevant and receives considerable reference in the theoretical and research literature. Burnout is described as a difficult problem that harms the person's natural tendency to help others effectively. The reasons for burnout are not apparent, and its roots lie in mental, occupational, organizational, social-cultural, and interpersonal phenomena. It is possible to understand from this definition the degree of complexity of the phenomenon that makes it difficult to provide an unequivocal definition and there is no universal agreement among the researchers about the dosage and intensity of the influence of every component on the phenomenon as a whole. However, in recent years the steadily forming perception is that burnout is an expression of the worker's disappointment, which derives from the gap between his perception and expectations of his abilities and professional successes and the less satisfying professional expression in actuality [10]. The research findings indicate that from the topics of the questionnaire this topic is most important to address. A high standard deviation indicates gaps in the team.

Table 8

## Identification with the Profession

	Disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Agree	Greatly agree
If I could, I would leave the teaching profession and professionally retrain	55.0%	5.0%	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%
I feel that 'the batteries are emptied' and I need to turn to new professional horizons	60.0%	15.0%	10.0%	5.0%	10.0%
If I had a second chance, I would again choose teaching as my career	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	25.0%	45.0%

Source: elaborated by authors

Table 9

## Identification with the Profession. Standard Deviation

	Mean	Standard Deviation
If I could, I would leave the teaching profession and professionally retrain	2.35	1.69
I feel 'the batteries are emptied' and I need to turn to new professional horizons	1.90	1.37
If I had a second chance, I would again choose teaching as my career	3.85	1.39

Source: elaborated by authors

In the perception of the identification with the profession, it is possible to see uniformity of the team in the identification with the school (100% of the people answered that the school has a significant place in their life).

Table 10

## Identification with the School

	Disagree	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Agree	Greatly agree
I care greatly about what happens in the school				15.0%	85.0%
The school has a significant place in my life				40.0%	60.0%

Source: elaborated by authors

To summarize the first chapter we can say: an educational climate is the atmosphere and organizational culture of an educational framework. It includes the full range of qualities and social and professional components, individual and group processes and relationships with management. These parameters were measured in the study and gave us a general picture of the climate of the organization. However, it is important to note

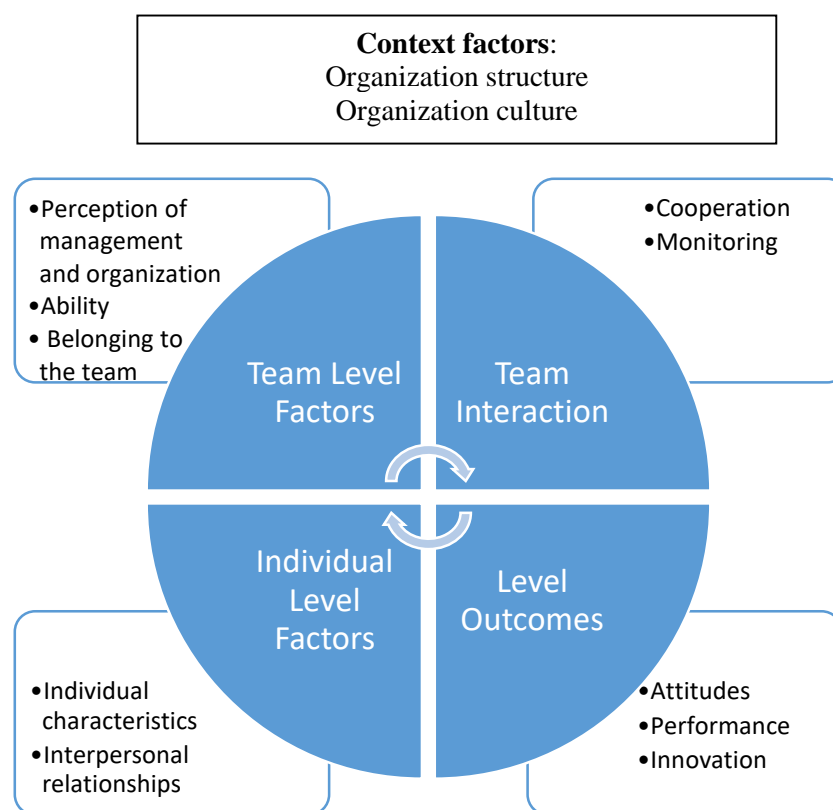


that the educational climate is expressed in culture and it crystalizes and takes shape over time. Next chapter will discuss a management model that supports climate development.

### Stage 2: Presentation of a Model and Principles in Management Work that Promote an Optimal Climate

**The promotion of an optimal educational climate in the organization is important and significant.** It is clear to all that the school where the climate is optimal is a place in which the educational team is happy to work, feels belonging and capable. This fact influences the feelings of the students, who feel belonging, involvement, and availability to learn and who display curiosity. The question that needs to be asked is how such a climate can be created and how it can be preserved and improved over the years.

The teacher acts as a center and focus of research and information on the data of the climate in the school. The teacher is the one who reports his feeling and what occurs in the school. According to Costa, Fulmer, and Anderson [11, p.172], the climate in the school is perceived by the teacher from two different yet complementary perspectives. The first perspective is a personal one, according to which the teacher reports, individually, about the way in which he perceives his principal and his reciprocal relationships with him, and the way in which he perceives the general atmosphere in the school and his work colleagues. Conversely, it is possible to obtain a broader picture – on the level of the team and the organization.



**Fig.2.** Model of Human Management Practices

Source: elaborated by authors

The findings facilitate the delineation of a picture of the situation and the construction of a work model. This is not a project or another program but the building of an educational management strategy, which is based on a number of basic guidelines of organizational theory and on management models and which includes two levels: the personal level and the team level. The organizational-cultural context is of great significance.

### Principles for Practical Work

Practical Directions:

- To hold processes of assessment of the organizational environment – the school principal assesses himself and the organization.

- To hold regular processes of assessment in the routines of the organization: create continuous organizational mechanisms of assessment.
- To create organizational symbols: the creation of human organizational symbols, which constitute a model for imitation and represent models of success, will influence the manner in which the people perceive the organization and their desire to be similar to them and to belong to the organization in which they are found.
- To keep the success stories accessible not only to maintain the existing workers' commitment but also to expose both the new and old workers to the spirit of the organizational culture.
- To foster mutual communication: Create clear and consistent mechanisms of communication that enable and encourage two-way communication.
- To hold processes of continuous feedback that focuses on the reinforcement of the abilities and encouragement of initiative and experience.
- To build a strong organizational brand, the goal of which is to emphasize the strengths, abilities, and powers of the organization and thus to build an organization to which people would like to belong.

### Conclusions

The preceding analysis opens up several new avenues for HM research. The core concept of well-being has been defined in terms of three dimensions – perception of management and organization, ability, and belonging to the team. Further research is needed to establish the specific antecedents of each dimension as well as their distinctive consequences. The model presented here contains four provisional sets of HM: Team Level Factors, Individual Level Factors, Team Interaction, and Level Outcomes.

Research is needed to establish whether all are integral, whether they have differing salience, and whether the list of antecedent HM practices needs to be extended or adapted. In this analysis, we argued that a dual track promoting both well-being and a positive employment relationship is necessary. Research needs to establish the extent to which this is invariably the case and whether, for example, a positive employment relationship is better considered as an antecedent or a correlate of well-being. The challenge of effective HM implementation has become a major research theme, and it will be particularly important to understand the determinants of effective implementation of well-being-oriented policies in a context where there is a risk that managers only pay lip service to employee well-being.

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