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Assessment of Transversal Skills



Change Management and Implementation Models

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Change Management and Implementation Models

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Introduction

Change and innovation initiatives are not uncommon in education, especially in the recent years with the rapid growth of digital technologies and their impact on personal and social life. Implementing an innovation in education and in the school unit, requires leadership and management skills so as to facilitate change. Resistance to change is an issue discussed often in regard to educational change and change models. Various models and approaches of change and for adopting and guiding innovations have been developed. The role of school leaders is considered to be one of the most basic keys for creating a school culture open to innovation and change. It is also critical that teachers are supported in this effort by the leadership and are provided with the necessary assistance and encouragement (Zuljan and Vogrinc, 2010).

This deliverable aims to discuss how a school organization, as an open social system, is influenced by the external environment and then transforms these influences in order to provide the best results, mainly related to students' learning outcomes. Looking at innovation and change literature, it aims to provide an understanding of what is expected in order to cope with changes in the school system smoothly and effectively and what is needed to implement an innovation, such as the ATS2020 learning model, successfully.

1. The school as an Open Social Systems Model

If we assume that a school is an open social system, this assumption may constitute the basis for the study of a schools' change management process. Having said that, we have to bear in mind that a school is not a static organization. On the contrary, school organizations are related to both their structure and their operating procedures. Therefore, a school organization can be considered as a dynamic system with both stability and flexibility, as well as with loose and tight relationships. In order to survive, a school organization needs to adapt to various changing circumstances, thus rendering the change management process as one of the most important aspects for its survival. Hence, it is very important to examine school organizations through the open social systems lenses.

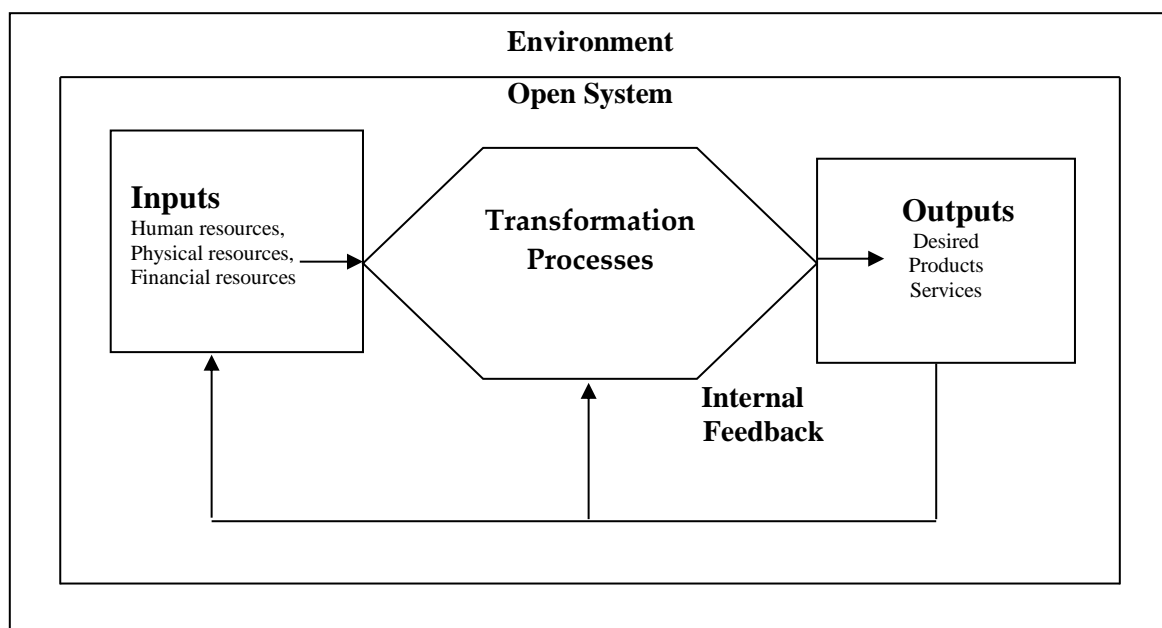
According to Hoy and Miskel (2013) three theoretical approaches have emerged through the examination of the organizations as systems. Firstly, the *rational – systems perspective*, which views organizations as formal instruments, designed to achieve organizational goals. In this particular approach, the structure constitutes the most important feature of the system. Secondly, the *natural – systems perspective* considers organizations as formal social groups, which seek to survive. In that case, the human resource is the most important aspect of the organization.

However, these two approaches are considered to have inadequate theoretical support, since organizations are considered complex entities. On the one hand, the *rational – systems perspective* and especially the theoretical model of management, ignores the effects of an individual's needs, as well as the importance of social relations in any organization. On the other hand, the *natural – systems perspective* and especially the theoretical model of social relations, underestimates the formal structure of an organization. As a consequence of the aforementioned weaknesses, these two approaches are not considered integrated, since both the structure and human resource are two important elements of any organization. Therefore, a third theoretical approach, the *open-systems perspective* has the advantage of combining the elements of the two previously mentioned approaches, and thus provides a more complete and comprehensive perception of an organization.

1.1 Open Systems approaches

The development of the Open Systems theory is a result of the need for change. This particular approach, which originated from the Engineering Sciences, considers that an organization is not isolated from its environment. On the contrary, there is a strong interaction between these two elements. More specifically, organizations in the open systems model are not only influenced by the environment, but they also depend on it. In order to achieve the desired change, a process with four components should be taken into consideration. Therefore, an Open System, as depicted in Figure 1, can be defined as a set of elements functioning all together, such as receiving necessary inputs, and then transforming and producing desired outputs through the processes which operate in a particular environment.

Figure 1: Open System



1.2 Components of Open Systems

According to the general theory of biologists Katz and Kahn (1978), an open systems model has four basic components: (1) *Inputs/ importation of energy*, (2) *A transformation process/ throughput*, (3) *Outputs* and the (4) *Environment*.

(1) *Inputs/importation of energy*: No organization is self-sufficient. On the contrary, in order to survive, each organization needs to gain energy from the environment. This energy can be formed through the elements of human resource, physical resource, as well as information resource. For example, inputs in a school setting include human resources such as the teaching staff and students, as well as physical resources such as school's supplies, materials, facilities, and equipment.

(2) *Transformation process/throughput*: Through various processes, an organization transforms the imported energy into desired outputs. For example, the school as a system is responsible to educate students. This transformation process is related to the students' quality, efficiency, performance and flexibility. At the same time, the processes include the curriculum, the various teaching methods and the audio-visual and technological means utilized.

(3) *Outputs*: The open system exports the product or services produced during the transformation process. In a school setting outputs can be perceived as the students' knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes. Also, these outputs can include teachers' satisfaction and loyalty and by extent the broader society's satisfaction.

(4) *Environment*: The environment consists of everything beyond the boundaries of a system. It affects an organization's internal processes and simultaneously is influenced by the organization itself. In other words, the environment provides inputs to the system and receives the outputs. It also provides certain constraints to the system which needs to be resolved so that the system functions as it should. Lastly, in addition to the four aforementioned components, the open system is related to a number of characteristics which are examined next.

1.3 Characteristics for the smooth operation of Open Systems

(1) *Feedback*: It is considered a mechanism through which an organization is informed, internally, regarding its operation and externally, regarding the attainment of its objectives. For example, school organization feedback comes from a variety of different ways and sources. For instance, teachers receive feedback through the evaluation of students' tests, written essays, as well as the student's oral performance. Also, school management receives feedback from classrooms' ratings, students' absenteeism list, as well as from the quality of the several celebrations and other activities performed in the school. Apart from that, a school organization receives external feedback

through the students' participation and excellence in various competitions (such as theater plays, international competitions, international evaluations such as PISA, sports competitions, etc.), as well as, by students' participation in national standard tests (such as mathematics, foreign languages, etc.). Also, by administering questionnaires, school management can be informed regarding teachers' and students' attitudes, as well as parents' perspectives about the functioning of the school.

(2) *Equilibrium*: a theoretical state of balance between interrelated social phenomena. It is the tendency of the social system, when disturbed, to return to its original state, because any small change in a social element is followed by changes in other related elements that work toward diminishing the first disturbance. In particular, there are two types of *equilibrium*, the *static* and *dynamic*. On the one hand, the *static equilibrium* is a situation where the environment is kept constant for a period of time. On the other hand, the *dynamic equilibrium* requires the system's ability to maintain its inner harmony, despite changes in the external environment. In both types of *equilibrium*, all the procedures are continuously working. However, when *equilibrium* is disturbed, the system must reset in the initial state, otherwise its existence and consistency is threatened. The causes of *equilibrium* imbalance are related to several internal or external changes.

(3) *Adaptation*: It is the process by which the system manages to receive and adapt the changes that are taking place. This process is supported by the system's control mechanisms as well as by the feedback system. The overall purpose is to change or eliminate the imbalance between inputs and outputs, so that the system can survive continuously, under any possible changes of the environment.

Based on these three aforementioned characteristics, systems manage to survive. Summing up, interaction with the environment is achieved through *feedback*, the stability is achieved through *equilibrium*, and finally, change is achieved through *adaptation*. Moving forward, according to Getzels and Guba (1957), who are considered the main representatives of the systems theory in education, there are a number of assumptions concerning the smooth operation of social system. Therefore, according to these two authors a social system:

1. Consists of other smaller systems, the so-called subsystems, which interact with each other
2. Has specific goals and purposes
3. Is not considered a mechanistic entity, since it is people- oriented
4. Consists of structures
5. Is normative, since it is bureaucratic, and acts under certain rules and regulations
6. Is considered as punitive, since it applies punitive measures
7. Is an open system, since it interacts with the environment
8. Is conceptual and its structures are relative in the sense that the system can be analyzed as a part of a larger system, and thus, depending on the point of departure, it can be a system or a sub-system.

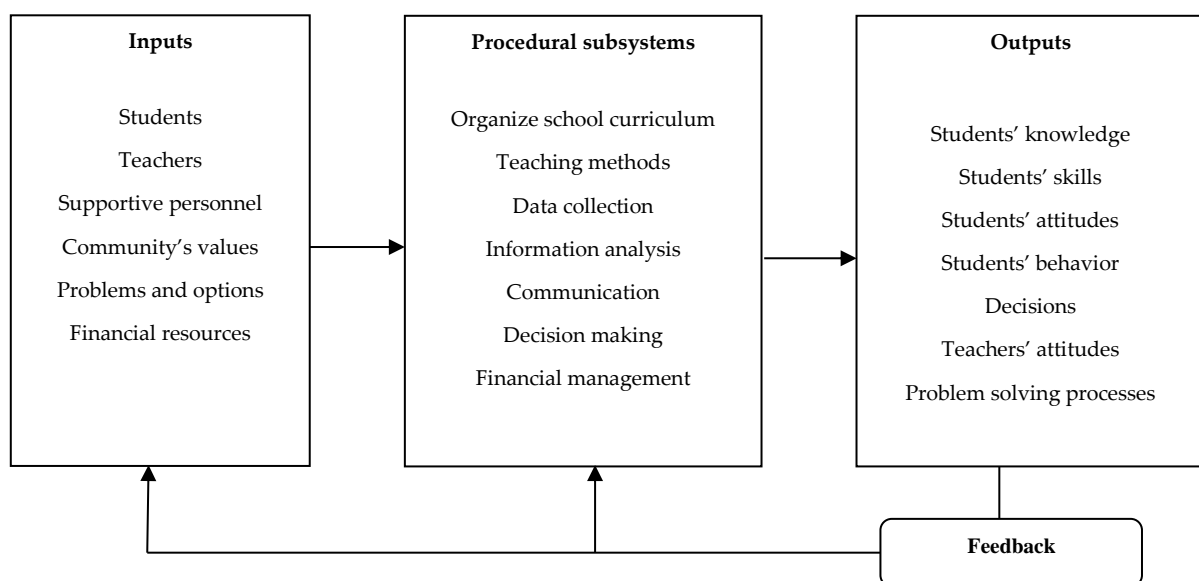
The school as an organization is a social system, since it is characterized by the above assumptions. Therefore, a school organization is divided into subsystems (e.g. the subsystems of teachers and students), serves purposes in relation to education, it has structures (e.g. school hierarchy), whilst it operates under specific laws, regulations and circulars. Also, it applies penalties and can be investigated as a case study or as a stand-alone system, or even as part of the whole.

Finally, it is important to refer to the two basic dimensions of the social systems model. The first one is called the *institutional/ organizational/ structural element* (nomothetic dimension), which is defined as the specific roles and expectations within a system. The other one is called the *individual element* (ideographic dimension), which is defined as the personality and needs of those involved in the system. In general, these two dimensions complement each other and should work in harmony, whilst they are considered essential elements for the survival and further development of the system.

1.4 School as an Open Social System

The following Figure 2 reveals in more detail the school characteristics as an open social system. Specifically, *inputs* of a school as a social system could be the students, teachers, the school supportive personnel, the administrative staff, equipment, financial resources and instruments. Secondly, procedural *subsystems* could be referring to the system's overall operation, such as the school curriculum, various teaching methods, the decision-making process, information analysis and financial management. Finally, *outputs* could be the new knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors acquired by students, as well as teachers' attitudes and problem solving processes and abilities.

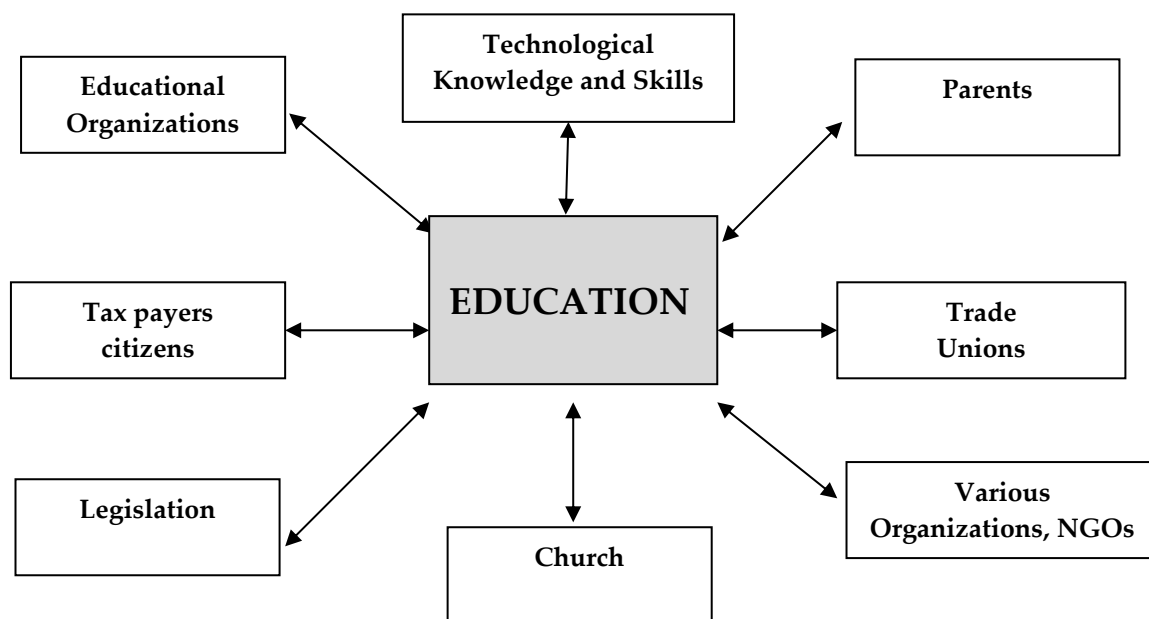
Figure 2: School Characteristics as a social system



Source: Adapted from Pashiardis (2014).

As mentioned before, the school as a social system consists of different subsystems. For instance, there is the bureaucratic / structural subsystem, the human subsystem, the informal relationship subsystem, the subsystem of norms, values and assumptions (the school culture), the technological subsystem, the academic subsystem, the decision making subsystem, as well as the information subsystem. Apart from that, the environment is considered as an external force that directly impacts all school's sub-systems and functions. Following, Figure 3 illustrates the main factors that constitute the external environment in education.

Figure 3: Characteristic Factors of Education's external environment



Source: Pashiardis (2014), p. 33.

Therefore, the main characteristics and factors in an external environment could be the members' skills and knowledge, legislation, the church, the parents, the taxpayers and other citizens, trade unions, and various other external organizations, such as human rights NGOs. As shown in the above Figure 3, an interaction is observed between each factor and education. However, as in many cases, the above Figure 3 has some limitations that could be taken into consideration, since these interactions between the external environment and education, could be characterized by complexity. First of all, the above Figure 3 presents only a limited number of factors coming from the external environment and secondly, the interactions between education and these various external factors are not clearly presented in this figure, as they are not linear relationships but complex ones.

A key question that could be raised and is directly related to school change, school development and school innovation is the following: How these kind of social systems are protected from the environment's daily change and uncertainty? Having that in mind, the protective mechanisms developed in a social system in order to cope with the presented changes, inevitably lead to an examination of the relationship between the social system and change. A key question addressed is the following: Is this change a systemic one? In other words, does it apply to the entire system? Following we will try to provide some answers to these questions.

1.5 Systemic organizational change¹

According to Burke (2002), organizational change could be a systemic one. This assumption is based on three main reasons. First of all, when a part of a system is changing, the remaining parts affect each other as well. Therefore, we can argue that organizational change affects the whole system.

The second reason is based on the existing knowledge about how organizational change occurs. According to the findings of various pieces of research, such as that of Burke (2002), organizational change is achieved when the main purpose is to change the entire system and not just a part of it. Therefore, it is very important to change the organizational culture, especially organizational norms.

The third reason relates to a specific feature of the open system, referring to the energy that flows into the system. In order, for a system to survive, energy is needed in various forms, which will transform the product or service into the final result of the transformation. According to Katz and Kahn (1978), particularly important is the human energy, which can help the leaders of an organization to achieve the change and the objectives of the organization, as desired.

Summarizing the above, we can refer to the school organization as an open social system. More specifically, it is considered a social system which is influenced by the external environment and then transforms these influences in order to provide the best results, mainly related to students' learning outcomes. Thus, in order to cope with these changes smoothly and effectively, a school organization must develop a number of self-defense mechanisms. Therefore, since change affects all of the school's dimensions, we can say that this change is a systemic one.

¹ Parts of this section have been translated and adapted from Kythreotis, A., Pashiardis, P. & Tsiakkiros, A. (2014). The necessity for Change and Factors influencing change. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume I)*, (pp. 29-71). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

2. The introduction of Change/Innovations and Resistance²

In order to fully understand the process of management and implementation of change, we must focus our attention to the meaning of *Change* and *Innovation*. What is *Change* and what is *Innovation*? Are there any similarities or dissimilarities between these two definitions? Even if the concepts of *Change* and *Innovation* are explored within a very large body of literature, some important definitions are presented below in an effort to identify the core meaning of both concepts.

To begin with, Fullan (1991) claims that “*change is a process of learning new ideas and things. It is learning to do and learning to understand something new*” (p.22). Also, Morisson (1998) understands change as a dynamic and continuous process of development and growth that involves restructuring regarding the needs of an organization. In particular, he acknowledges that *Change* is a process of transformation, either initiated by internal factors or external forces, involving individuals, groups or institutions, leading to a realignment of existing values, practices and outcomes (Morisson, 1998). Put differently, Robbins and Delenzo (2001) present *Change* as “*an alteration of an organization’s environment structure, technology or people*” (p. 230), whilst in a more explicit way, Earley (2013) defines *Change* as a natural and perennial part of life which supports people to survive in life. Therefore, in general, *Change* could be defined as a process of improving something. Also, different types of change could be observed.

Besides that, the related concept of *Innovation* according to Hargreaves (2003) is “*a matter of learning to do things differently in order to do them better*” (p.6). Since, *Change* is a natural and constant process in life, or in other words it could happen all the time, an *Innovation* is when something new is introduced so that you can do things either differently or through simpler ways. Nevertheless, apart from that, some other theorists do not differentiate between these two concepts. For example, Carlopio (1998) mentions that “*change can be described as the adoption of an innovation, where the ultimate goal is to improve outcomes through an alteration of practices*” (p.2). Also, Shen (2008) refers to both change and innovation as a hard and long term – process, giving the example that any progress in history is the result of both change and innovation.

Nevertheless, if the concept of *Innovation* would be properly executed, it would bring *Change*. On the other hand, if a *Change* would be successfully implemented, it takes *Innovation* to do just that. Therefore, someone could argue that these two concepts are partially overlapping. However, others could argue that even if we change something it does not necessarily mean that we have innovated anything. In other words, regarding the aforementioned, *Change* does not equal *Innovation*.

² Parts of this section have been translated and adapted from Kythreotis, A. & Pashiardis, P. (2014). The Individual and Change. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume I)*, (pp. 122-152). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

Having discussed the terms of *Change* and *Innovation*, our attention is now focusing on the factors which influence school organizations in the adoption of change. In general, various school pressures whether coming from the inside or from the outside of the school, they inevitably lead to change. Also, a number of pressures at the school level can be internal or external or both and could affect an educational organization simultaneously. Examples of external pressures could be the demographic changes observed nowadays, the rapid technology development, the continuous production of new knowledge, as well as the current economic and social crises. Examples of internal pressures could be the various changes in the teaching staff personnel, the procedures and curriculum changes in education, as well as the teachers' and students' quality of life. At the same time, there are pressures that operate both within the educational system internally and externally. Accountability for the educational results and performance (based on the inputs and outputs of the open systems model) is one such case. Below we examine the most important factors, affecting school organizations in their efforts to adopt these changes.

2.1 Criteria on which educators evaluate the need for change

For teachers and educators, change could be better understood through the close examination of the criteria used by them in order to assess a given change. According to Fullan (1991), the four criteria are as follows:

1. Is the change based on a specific need? Will it motivate students? Are students going to learn something? Are there any indications that the change will be successfully implemented (e.g. will the results be promising)?
2. Are the change instructions clearly set up regarding the teachers' duties and responsibilities?
3. How will it affect teachers' personality in relation to the time, energy, new skills, as well as the enthusiasm and feelings of competence?
4. In which ways teachers' motivation would be enhanced so that they could interact with colleagues or even with other people at their place of work?

Also, Fullan (1991) refers to a fifth criterion in relation to teachers' evaluation in case it will be affected because of the proposed change. More specifically, the fifth criterion refers to the teachers' moral code of their profession, in relation with classroom practices and improvements. Particularly, there are three dimensions of this moral code. The first dimension refers to teachers' estimations and status regarding students' reaction to the change (e.g. their interests, learning). The second dimension concerns the content of the change process, as well as the proposed change's clarity (e.g. how will the change be implemented) and finally, the third dimension relates to the

teachers' devotion on change. For instance, is it worthy to devote time, energy and emotions if the benefits gained from the change are not the appropriate ones? In many cases, as Fullan (1991) stated out, teachers proposed changes, which they thought would have great benefits on student learning, but the reality refuted these expectations.

2.2 School leadership and resistance towards systemic change

Resistance towards a systemic change is a natural tendency for a system, as a whole, even if that change is promoted over a long period of time. Therefore, school organizations as open social systems pretty often resist change. 'Resistance', usually refers to 'negative' actions and non-action (Starr, 2011) regarding a change. For instance, Burke (2013) has mentioned that there are several reasons for the resistance towards systemic change. More specifically, Burke (2013) has reported five different cases of resistance towards systemic change.

(1) *A rapid change is converted into evolutionary change*: In cases where the change aims to transform the system, in the end only some components of the system can accept change. The organizational culture as well as the existing structure is such powerful forces, unable to accept change, even in cases where the pressures from the external environment to accept a change are enormous.

(2) *Insufficient sense of urgency for change*: The change does not excite people, who often do not see the need for change. These people have no motivation to change, hence that leads to a different direction than the one originally planned.

(3) *Apathy*: People feel apathy for change. They believe that many organizations have experienced failed changes. Therefore, regarding their case, they believe that this attempt will fail too. Although, they do not actively resist change, the change itself fades away because of the apathy.

(4) *Diversionary tactics*: It is an active form of resistance in order to stop the change. There are two major diversionary tactics. The first is to create a crisis even before the change is applied. The second tactic is to support the view that the implementation of a particular change is bad timing, since other, more urgent things must be done.

(5) *Lack of supporters*: In this case, the people of an organization rather than support the leadership team in this effort they choose to be against. However, leadership's inability to affect the people within the organization, substantially, eliminates the chances of implementation.

In general, we have to bear in mind that educational systems all across the world are confronting unprecedented changes brought up by the challenges of globalization, the advent of technology, as well as the development of knowledge-based economies in the 21st century (Lai, 2015). However, as was previously mentioned, change is one of the most significant problems for

both individuals and organizations (Cakmak & Barsi Gunduz, 2012), and by extension to all educational organizations too. However, change resistance from school leaders may be a part of the social side of the problem, especially, if a promoted systemic change is rejected from the organization's school culture.

As Starr (2011) stressed, it is not easy for organizations of any kind to accept a particular change, and especially for school organizations, which have particular characteristics that help them resist major changes. For instance, the resistance could be derived from the numerous schools' stakeholders with competing interests and conflicting ideologies, constant policy change and political intervention, from the diverse student population etc. Therefore, it becomes clear that major systemic changes are sometimes impossible to implement, even though a change is well thought out and reasoned, and is accompanied by enthusiasm from those responsible to promote the implementation. In other words, the resistance to change usually becomes a natural component of the change process itself (Ungureanu, Rascu-Pistol & Ungureanu, 2014).

According to Earley (2013) leadership and management of change is about moving or transitioning members, teams and the organization to a preferred future state through change. In other words, to change is to adjust into the new conditions of the existing school culture. However, school principals view leading major changes as one of the most difficult aspects of their position (Starr, 2011). Therefore, as was mentioned by Starr (2011), school leaders, undoubtedly, require political astuteness in order to lead and manage change successfully, without any resistance occurring.

What is also important is that the local conditions in a particular country play an important role on how change is perceived. For example, from a piece of research about the resistance to change in the Turkish context, Cakmak and Barsi Gunduz (2012) revealed that the obstacles towards change emphasized by all school principals were regarding the lack of economic resources, the pressure of the other neighboring schools, the heavy bureaucracy, as well as the lack of common perceptions and agreements between other organizations. However, the principals in the Turkish context seemed to be able to resolve this problem and accept change in their school organizations with the cooperation of parents, the municipality and teacher-parent associations. Therefore, an important factor regarding resistance towards systemic change is closely related to the local context of each school organization alongside with the current social and economic trends that take place within their countries. Furthermore, in another study (Starr, 2011), it seems that school principals' concerns regarding change were closely related to the lack of agreement about policy or direction, increasing stress, widespread disengagement, rapidly changing student populations, and a lack of professional learning, preparation and induction for principals focused on change and micro-politics.

Having said that, change for many is synonymous with extra work, pressure and stress (Earley, 2013). Therefore, resistance should be anticipated as a natural part of the change process. In order to deal with those kinds of circumstances, Earley (2013) referred to various strategies for school principals to overcome resistance to systemic change, which includes ensuring people are given sufficient information about the change and its desired effect, greater involvement in the design and implementation of the change, as well as being supportive. From the above, it becomes clear that school leaders are facing individual resistance towards change besides the systemic change resistance. Therefore, the following section becomes very crucial in order to examine school leadership and individual resistance towards change.

2.3 School leadership and Individual resistance towards change

Change is related to the introduction of new elements in an organization. For example, change may be related to several aspects of the organization, such as the structure, people with interpersonal relationships and their needs, the organizational culture and climate, as well as the various organization's processes and functions. In other words, the introduction of something new is very likely to conflict with the existing dimensions within the organization. Thus, the reaction and the resistance towards change may be unavoidable. In general, resistance towards change occurs at different levels, such as the level of the individual, the organization (e.g. school organization) and the general system (e.g. a country's educational system). In this section we examine school leadership and individual resistance towards change within the school organizations' boundaries.

To begin with, individual resistance towards change is considered the refusal of a single person, organization, corporation, etc., to fully support or adopt a new behavior. As was mentioned before, change affects every aspect of the members' life within an organization, let alone in an educational organizational with various internal and external stakeholders. Therefore, a school principal plays a central role in the successful process of change. More specifically, school leaders are considered to be the basic key for developing and managing change in schools. Fullan (1991) states that leaders should be innovative, creative, visionary and reflective, when adopting the dynamic role of change agents. Besides that, as Earley (2013) supports, change is a complex process since it concerns people more than content and successful leadership is about leading successful change.

However, school leaders who attempt to implement change should have specific knowledge, skills and behaviors to accept and make the change in a school organization happen. More precisely, Cakmak & Brasi Gunduz (2012) argued that school leaders should be open-minded about

the school, as well as to be able to understand the nature, goals and effects of the changes they will do, as well as to have certain skills which can assist them to increase participation, support and motivation of the personnel involved.

Nonetheless, according to Starr (2011) research evidence suggests that schools are slow to change since many individuals are resistant to major change, especially if the individuals who have to implement the change, and then live through with its effects, are not involved in its creation. In other words, change requires all school's internal members, such as the teaching staff, leadership team and administrative personnel to give up feelings of comfort, values or beliefs, and established routines. For instance, teachers may respond to mandated change with negative emotions, including frustration, anger, annoyance, anxiety and an erosion of teachers' sense of self- efficacy (Clement, 2014). On the other hand, according to Starr (2011), school principals in the Australian context mentioned that sometimes they do not know what to do and how to act in these difficult and emotionally charged circumstances. Having said all of the above, according to Earley (2013), the following Table 1 clearly presents the individuals' feelings regarding change, as well as individuals' main sources of resistance to change.

Table 1: Individuals' feelings and main sources of resistance to change

Individuals' feelings	Individuals' main sources of resistance to change
Loss of status and control	Lack of trust – unsure about motives for change
Fear of the unknown	Belief that change is unnecessary or not feasible
Lack of clarity of purpose	Economic threats
Uncertainty and ambiguity	Fear of failure or failure to understand the problem
Feelings of vulnerability	Loss of status and power – personal costs too high
Lack of clarity on the benefits of the change	Rewards – insufficient gains
Reluctance to let go of the present	Threats to values and ideals – not like the proposal
Threats to expertise and established skills	Resentment of interference
The feeling of having surprises sprung	Anxiety – how will I cope!?
Fear of failure and threats to self-esteem	Lack of trust – unsure about motives for change
Admission that the present situation is unsatisfactory	Belief that change is unnecessary or not feasible
Concern about the ability to cope	Economic threats
Fear of loss of control	Fear of failure or failure to understand the problem
Stress	Loss of status and power – personal costs too high
Increased workload	

Source: Adapted from Earley (2013), p. 9.

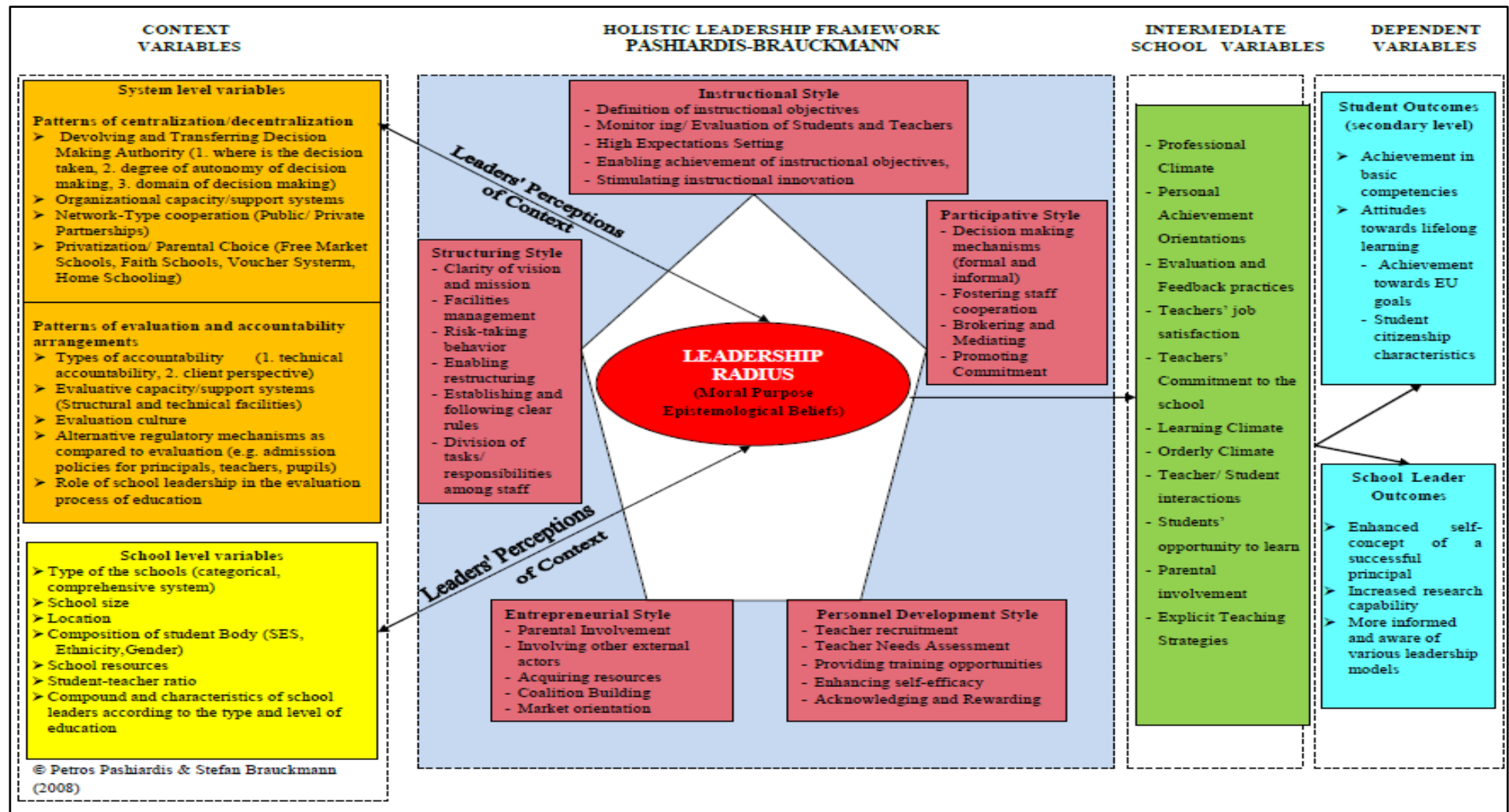
Therefore, school leaders of change need to be aware of the emotional costs involved with change and to ensure that people have full information, time and real opportunities to talk things through (Early, 2013). On top of that, school leaders must try to empower staff in order to create an agreed collegiate culture, encouraging a learning environment for all the school's teaching staff and students (Early, 2013). In general, we have to bear in mind that people and staff members react differently to the introduction of new ideas and initiatives where some of them are open to change and others are resisting. Thus, a necessity that arises is that school leaders should be aware of what they are trying to change, that is which particular domain of the school needs to be overhauled, and therefore become more aware of their leadership styles when implementing change. A useful model to have in mind is the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. The framework entails five leadership styles that school principals are likely to employ in their work as school leaders, especially when trying to introduce and implement changes. In our case a leadership style is defined as, "the nexus of all those behaviors and practices that school principals use in order to influence the behavior of others" (Pashiardis, 2014b, p.71).

Each leadership style consists of specific behaviors, actions or practices which are likely to be exhibited by school principals. A more in-depth and detailed examination of these leadership styles as well as the school level intermediate variables, is presented in the following Figure 4. It should be stressed on the outset that the **Leadership Radius** (middle column in red on the Figure depicting the framework) is the epicenter of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. By Leadership Radius we mean all that a school leader does in order to create a well-functioning school which is able to accomplish its mission. Across the leadership radius five styles may be distinguished which are as follows: (1) Instructional Style, (2) Structuring Style, (3) Participative Style, (4) Entrepreneurial, and (5) Personnel Development Style (Pashiardis, 2014a).

However, it should be noted that the sum of the five styles does not equal the Leadership Radius; this concept is more than the sum of its parts and it really revolves around the leader's personality and moral purpose in order to make this complex concept operational. Moreover, the five styles partially overlap and are congenial to each other when in full motion and operation. This Leadership Radius is what we came to call the "**Leadership Cocktail Mix**" (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011).

In the framework, however, it is also acknowledged that school leaders do not operate in a vacuum. On the contrary, their actions greatly depend on their perceptions of the particular context in which they work, that is how they (the school leaders) interpret the external environment and legal framework which relate to their practices. The context, as we define it, is divided into two main levels, the System Level Variables, and the School Level Variables. It should be noted however, that school leaders are both influenced and they themselves also influence the context in which they operate. This is why the two arrows on the diagram connecting the Leadership Radius with the Context point in both directions.

Figure 4: The Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework



Furthermore, it is interesting to bear in mind that the leadership for change is exercised through Intermediate School Climate Variables with which school leaders affect the final student outcomes and any attempt for change. Some of the most prominent school climate variables found in the literature include: A learning and orderly climate; personal achievement orientation; evaluation and feedback practices; teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to the school; teacher-student interactions; students' opportunity to learn; explicit teaching strategies; and parental involvement. Next, we provide a brief description of each leadership style as conceptualized in the specific Pashiardis-Brauckmann framework.

Instructional Style

This leadership style has a strong focus on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. According to Hallinger (2005), school principals lead through building a learning mission and aligning teaching and learning activities with the defined purposes. In addition, effective instructional leaders develop a climate of high expectations for teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005; Nettles, & Herrington, 2007) and engage in monitoring and evaluation activities (Nettles, & Herrington, 2007; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Finally, effective school leaders are constant stimulators of instructional innovation. According to Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2003), the "optimizer role" adopted by school leaders contributes to an increase in student achievement.

Structuring Style

The structuring style of leadership concerns the aspects of providing direction and coordination to the school. Research has shown that the principal's vision positively affects their instructional and strategic behaviour (Kruger, Witziers, Steegers, 2007), the task focus goals and the use of innovative and professional teaching practices (Barnett, & McCormick (2004). The study of Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2003), also indicates that the leadership responsibility of establishing standard procedures and routines, in order to secure order and discipline is positively associated with an increase in student achievement. According to Pashiardis (1998), effective structuring leaders manage all school facilities effectively as well as efficiently supervise their maintenance to ensure clean, orderly, and safe buildings and grounds.

Participative Style

The participative style recognizes that leaders can organize their management activities through others in many different ways according to their own preferences, the types of people with whom they are working and the culture of the organizations in which they work (Pashiardis, Thody, Papanauom, Johansson, 2003). Much empirical evidence points to the importance of the specific

style. For example, Pashiardis (1995) found that elementary school principals in Cyprus consider their active involvement in decision making and team building as the most important component of leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, Mulford & Silins (2003), within the LOLSO project reached the conclusion that effective school principals promote administrative team leadership and teacher leadership which in turn affect student outcomes through the mediating effects of organizational learning and the teachers' work. As a result, the members of the school develop greater commitment to accomplish organizational goals (Leithwood, Jantzi, Earl, Watson, Levin, Fullan, 2004).

Entrepreneurial Style

The entrepreneurial style concerns the creative utilization of external networks and resources in order to aid the implementation of the school mission. Firstly, effective school leaders create partnerships with the parents and the wider community of the school. In the study of Pashiardis (1998), effective principals created a positive climate between parents and the school which was conducive to learning. The principals stressed the fact children improved their behaviour in school once they sensed that their parents had a close interaction with their teachers and the principal. Also, Dinham's (2005) detailed analysis of the case studies of secondary schools in Australia revealed that one of the components of effective leadership is the external awareness and engagement of the wider environment of the school. The external environment included other schools and systems, the community, society, business and government. External networks are also likely to secure adequate resources for the school activities. In a meta-analysis of 19 studies, strategic resourcing was identified as having a moderate indirect effect on students (Robinson, 2007).

Personnel Development Style

Developing school personnel constitutes a major area through which school leaders can influence school performance outcomes. Youngs and King (2002) assert that one of the ways "principals shape school conditions and teaching practices is through their beliefs and actions regarding teacher professional development." (p.644). In this effort, they provide intellectual stimulation and individual support to the staff as well as appropriate models of best practice (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). In a qualitative research in two suburban Flemish elementary schools, one group of teachers maintained that the school leader creates a culture of professional development "by passing through relevant information, by allowing teachers to participate in in-service training, by buying relevant professional journals, by discussing interesting innovations at meetings" (Clement, & Vandenberghe, 2001, p.47).

Based on the above description of styles, school leaders are more able to introduce successful change management techniques and are also better in curbing resistance to change by

applying the most suitable leadership style, depending on the situation at hand. Then, following we will focus our attention to the reasons for which individuals resist change.

2.4 Reasons for resisting change³

Plant (1987), mentioned that an individual's resistance to change is based on the lack of information, misinformation, various historical reasons, fear of the unknown and failure, reluctance to experiment, as well as confronting change as a threat to the peoples' capabilities, validity and the distribution of power and authority in an organization. Furthermore, it seems that when the benefits of change are not visible to people, it affects their attitude. Also, apart from the above, the organizational climate, which is characterized by a lack of confidence or poor interpersonal relationships, in conjunction with the members' norms and beliefs, are considered as main obstacles that lead people to resistance towards change. What's more on that, according to Morrison (1998) other resistance factors could be related with the fear of failure, weakness and loss of those that have been gained. On top of that, the ignorance (insufficient information for the change), doubt (people are not sure of the value of the change), issues related to the specific change (people do not consider the proposed change as an improvement), personal concerns (stress, fear of isolation) and previous experiences (the proposed change was tested in the past, but failed) may be some of the resistance factors. These sources of resistance to change are very similar to the Table 1, presented earlier (Earley, 2013).

In general, the list of reasons for resisting change is long. Therefore, it is more useful to classify these reasons into categories based on certain criteria. Indeed, this attempt has been made by some theorists such as the Judson's (1991) criteria analysis, who included a list of factors that maximize or minimize resistance to change:

- Financial section: possible damages or possible profits
- Need for security: personal insecurity or security
- Personal difficulties/ amenities
- Job dissatisfaction or satisfaction
- Deterioration or improvement of the interpersonal relationships
- Satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding the management of change
- Changes on values and beliefs

³ A part of this section has been translated and adapted from Kythreotis, A. & Pashiardis, P. (2014). The Individual and Change. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume I)*, (pp. 122-152). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

However, Judson's (1991) list remains long. Therefore, various other attempts were made by Markus (1983), Leigh (1988), Dalin, Rolff and Kottkamp (1993) by presenting a shorter list of categories regarding the reasons for resisting change. Specifically, all of them have identified almost the same group of factors, by giving them different names. Markus (1983) refers to four reasons for resisting change. Specifically, the resistance could be focused: (1) at the people, (2) in the system, (3) in the body (4) in micro politics. Also, Leigh (1988) identified four reasons for resisting change: (1) factors related to the organizational culture, (2) social factors, (3) factors related to the organization and (4) psychological factors. Apart from that, Dalin, Rolff and Kottkamp (1993), argued that there are four different categories for resisting change:

- Reasons due to the values: a person resists to the proposed change, if the change is against his/her value system.
- Reasons due to the power: a person reacts to change, when it reduces its power.
- Psychological reasons: a person reacts to change when he/she feels threatened regarding his/her security, confidence, well-being and stability.
- Practical reasons: the person reacts to change, when the resources that will support changes are insufficient.

Comparing these aforementioned reasons for resisting change, we come to the conclusion that basically they refer to the following: (a) the structure, the organizational system and the organizational administration, (b) the individual (needs, psychological situation, interpersonal relations), (c) the games of power and politics between individuals or groups; (d) the values, norms and the general organizational culture, (e) economic factors, and f) social factors. Nevertheless, apart from the above, it is very interesting to present reasons for resisting change in education.

According to Fullan (1991; 2011), there are several reasons why teachers resist change. For instance, the norms or expectations for cooperation are not developed sufficiently. Also, the school structure can be considered an obstacle. The type, design and scale of these changes through the teachers' perspective will result in greater cost than benefit. Also, the psychological conditions of certain teachers lead to resisting change. Still, the sense of competence and self-efficacy, control, motivation and desire for change varies enormously between the teachers.

3. Principles for successful implementation of change at the national/school level⁴

The main principles of successful implementation of change at the national level are very similar to those principles that should be followed in order to encourage change at the school level. Thus, when trying to implement change, leaders should clarify that: (a) this time the change initiative is different (it is inevitable), and (b) leadership will demonstrate a strong adherence to the proposed change. In order to deal with possible diversions from the course of change, leaders should have a clear and dedicated purpose which helps them focus. They also have to prioritize things, and thus strategize. Furthermore, the leaders will have to take courageous decisions. For example, if the need arises, they could remove any members from the organization (e.g. resignations, early retirements), who constantly create obstacles during the implementation of change.

According to Fullan (1991), some of the most important principles for the successful implementation of change at the national/systemic level are:

1. Clarity on policy, on objectives and on the government's expectations in order to develop appropriate relationships with local education authorities.
2. A clear plan of implementation.
3. Proper preparation of the personnel, at the central authority.
4. Evaluating the complexity and persistence in the process of a change.

3.1 School leadership, Adjustment and the ability to implement change

Governments must emphasize the ability of other organizations to apply a change. As Elmore (1980) argued, *“there is a significant difference between the ability and desire to comply with regulations and the abilities involved to successful implementation of a change. The implementation is based more on the ability rather on the compliance”* (p. 37). Governments are legally responsible for ensuring compliance with policies, despite the fact that various restrictions on what can be achieved through regulation could be observed. If governments simply request, from others, to apply the regulations, two major things could happen.

First of all, school leaders at regional and school level are spending too much of their time and energy in order to comply with the central education's authority requirements (e.g., desk work). This is due to the educational system structure which has many layers and subsystems, as well as due to the complexity of the change implementation process.

⁴ Parts of this section have been translated and adapted from Kythreotis, A. & Pashiardis, P. (2014). The Individual and Change. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume I)*, (pp. 122-152). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

Secondly, the central authority is dealing with the individuals' span of control in order to determine whether they comply with regulations, rather than dealing with the empowerment of individuals to apply the change. Large amounts of time and energy used by the central authority for compliance hold people from engaging in capacity building for change.

Therefore, the central authority should devote less time to the formal application of the regulations, since valuable time and energy is lost to the detriment of successfully implementing change. Instead, time and energy should be devoted to strengthening the capacity of people to promote change.

3.2 School leadership and Personnel preparation for the acceptance and implementation of change

Governments should ensure at central regional and school level, staff capacity and knowledge development both on policy and program, as well as on the actual process of implementation of the proposed change. Members and staff working in the central education authority are responsible for promoting policy, objectives and expectations of the central authority to educational districts and school organizations. Therefore, members and staff hold a significant key role position in promoting change. However, several difficulties can appear along the way.

For instance, lack of school's staff training, regarding the proposed change, is a major problem. Too often school staff is not familiarized with the background and philosophy of a change. Therefore, school staff must be trained, since inadequate information is not considered a solution. On the contrary, a constant and an ongoing training of everyday decision-making, communication, planning and activities on how to implement change are needed. Finally, having established that implementing a change is considered a purely counterproductive approach, below we will make reference to ways in order to address the resistance towards the implementation of change. In summing up the ways in order to deal with the resistance to change based on the school leader's leadership styles, as mentioned previously, we can stress the following (Morrison, 1998):

- School wide effective communication
- Teachers' involvement at all stages of change
- Clarity in all the time phases and aspects of change
- Clear focus and commitment to purpose
- Encouragement to success
- Examine the causes, problems and difficulties
- Reveal the benefits of change
- Inclusion of people from outside the school
- Use of evaluation (particularly self-assessment)

- Demonstrate sensitivity to those involved in change
- Identify all possible risks
- Examine members' perceptions involved in the change
- Building trust
- Review of the school culture factors
- Provide support (including personal support)
- Examine time issues
- Exploiting the strengths of each individual
- Offer motivation and built a rewarding system
- Analysis of the duties, tasks and responsibilities.

A general conclusion derived from the above suggestions could be focusing our attention on the teachers' training needs, motivation, development of interpersonal relations and cooperation, recognition of the emotional aspects towards change and effective conflict resolution. Since these issues are very important in the process of change, following we will be discussing them in greater depth.

3.3 Emotions during the process of implementing change/innovations

According to Morrison (1998), a clear assumption in the review of the literature indicates that emotions hold a significant role in an organization. Emotions can have a positive effect such as excitement and satisfaction. However, in many cases, they can have a negative effect. For instance, self-esteem and performance are very much linked with anxiety. More specifically, when stress is growing within acceptable limits, then the efficiency and self-esteem are increasing. However, when the stress becomes excessive and higher efficiency is required, then the stress is counterproductive, resulting in reduced self-esteem. The human being's emotional path during the implementation of a change goes through various stages. Below we present some modes that support these stages.

3.4 Stages during the process towards the acceptance of change

Arroba and James (1987), argued that staff members go through the following stages in their effort: denial, trauma, uncertainty to change understanding, uncertainty about the change effects, melancholy, acceptance of change and in the end, hope. Furthermore, Adams (1976, as referenced in Arroba and James, 1987) identified seven stages of reaction to the change: (1) immobilization (2) mistrust, (3) melancholy, (4) accepting the reality of change, (5) testing the change, (6) the

examination of meaning of change (rational analysis of change) and (7) internalization of change. Moreover, Carnall (1995) identified the following stages: (1) denial (of the need for change), (2) defense (defense of the status quo), (3) sidelining (old behavior) and (4) internalization (change and new practices). Through a comparison of the above models, several findings have emerged. First of all, it seems that the personal dimension regarding a change goes through various emotional variations. Also, the management of change seems to be one of the greatest difficulties in the process of change, since it is difficult to control emotions and situations that are not easily visible.

3.5 Ways of resolving negative feelings towards change/innovation

It seems that based on the review of the literature in the management field organizations must seriously take into consideration the emotional aspects of change. According to Carroll (1996), counseling can help people deal with their problems, adopting the approach where everyone (organization and individuals) win (a win/win situation). In other words, staff members are satisfied and the organization wins too. There are two types of counseling: (1) the precautionary counseling (before various issues turn into problems), and (2) the advisory counseling used when employees have already experienced the negative emotional states of a change. Some of the practices that can be used during counseling are the following:

- Help create a more humane workplace
- Educate people in order to identify problems caused by inefficient management practices
- Advise leaders on adopting effective and humanistic approaches
- Advise the organization regarding change management
- Equip people to face all the bad news
- Teach behavioral models
- Encourage power transferring from the leadership team to staff members
- Emphasize the need for recognizing individual differences
- Emphasize the role of staff members' reciprocal improvement on the organization's development
- Help understand the organization's behavior and dynamics regarding change.

While the role of counseling is rapidly growing, few school organizations have such support mechanisms. However, a variety of approaches, methods and tools that can help address the emotional dimension of change are available. As reported by Morrison (1998), collectivity, collaboration, collegiality, participation, as well as various other consultants (e.g. pedagogical advisor, mentor) could assist and provide support in this area. At the same time, school

organizations can adopt counseling practices such as effective and active listening, reflection, support, clarification, planning, examination, as well as review and research.

3.6 Evaluation of complexity and persistence during the process of the implementation of change

Complexity and persistence go hand in hand when implementing change. In particular, the implementation of change is considered a complex process. Simple solutions cause more damage than benefit. Therefore, those who are responsible to determine the change policy should limit their desire for immediate and total change due to the complexity of the process (Wilson & Corcoran, 1988). Instead, a multidimensional, holistic, as well as short, medium and long term strategies are required, which could be applied with persistence, and which would strengthen and reconfigure constantly.

Finally, the interdependency between government, educational sectors and schools should be noted. Therefore, frequent communication must be a basic requirement in relation to dedication and involvement in continuous improvement. However, in order to achieve this objective a problem-solving process should be encouraged involving all the above aforementioned levels.

4. The importance of Professional Development for the successful introduction and implementation of change⁵

From the literature review, there appears to be a close relationship between teachers' professional development and change, as well as teachers' professional development, change, and improvement. Particularly, several authors, theorists and researchers from the field of education, such as Holly and Southworth (1989), Fullan (1991), Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) and Elmore (2007), identified the importance of teachers' professional development in relation with the successful introduction and implementation of change. Therefore, following, we discuss the reasons that make professional development a prerequisite for the effective and successful introduction and implementation of change.

4.1 Professional Development as a process of systemic transformation

As we have already mentioned before, both the school and the educational system of a country constitute open social systems. Teaching staff constitute an important element of energy, which the school or the educational system receives from the environment as an input. At the same

⁵ Parts of this section have been translated and adapted from Kythreotis, A., Pashiardis, P. & Tsiakkiros, A. (2014). The necessity for Change and Factors influencing change. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume I)*, (pp. 29-71). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

time, the environment supports changes and provides new technologies and new equipment, as well as new school curricula, and then requests from the system to be accountable for the results.

An input process as well as a transformation process which might provide better results, is linked to the teaching staff's professional development and training. Through this process the school's quality along with the educational system's quality is upgraded, so that it can respond positively to the school's demands for changes. Professional development appears to be very important to promoting changes in education either at the school level or at the education system level. It is considered of strategic importance for promoting changes and reforms within the framework of continuous development and modernization of the educational system, as well as the school organization.

Thus, for the successful introduction and implementation of change the teaching staff plays a critical role. Teachers must apply the change themselves in order to be characterized by competence and capabilities in promoting educational changes. During their professional careers, teachers, are required to understand and implement changes with regards to the school curriculum, textbooks, exams, teaching methodology, the use of technology in teaching, professional orientation, remedial teaching, environmental education, health education etc. Therefore, training and professional development is supportive in effecting the successful introduction and implementation of change.

As was stated above, a key component for the successful introduction and implementation of change is to promote successful professional development and training opportunities for the teaching staff utilizing the Personnel Development leadership Style, which require the staff to "walk" within five levels: the individual level, the school level, the country's educational system level, the EU level, and the international level. More detailed reference will be made for the first two levels, i.e., the individual and the school levels in the following sections.

4.2 Changes at the Individual level for teachers

At the individual level the training of each teaching staff is crucial, since changes are occurring constantly. According to some of the existing literature, teachers' professional development could be divided into three stages (Pashiardis & Pashiardi, 2000; Ministry of Education, 2007). The first is the stage of *survival*, the second is the stage of *adjustment* and the third is the stage of *maturity*.

(1) *Survival Stage*: At this stage a teacher feels insecure because of his/her limited experiences, especially when he/she is responsible for a whole classroom. At this stage, the aim of the training is to welcome teachers into the educational reality of the education system and the

teaching and learning process in a real working environment and working conditions. This way the teacher will feel safer inside a classroom.

(2) *Adjustment Stage*: At this stage the teacher is reinforced in order to broaden his/her educational and teaching repertoire and enrich the quality of his/her teaching activity. This is the stage when the teacher is trying to achieve excellence as a practitioner.

(3) *Maturity Stage*: At this stage a teacher acquires professional depth, forges professional sufficiency and supports his/her professional autonomy.

At this point it is necessary to stress out that the three aforementioned stages vary from person to person, depending on the personality, knowledge and skills, work experience and other experiences, the time each teacher devotes to the study of issues related to the profession and the work to be done, as well as the personal desire for improvement and professional development. Therefore, flexible professional development and training programs should be adopted, taking into consideration the individual needs of each teaching staff in the current context of changes in the wider environment, and in accordance with their level of maturation.

4.3 School leadership and Changes at the School level

The role of a school organization regarding change and improvement is very essential and significant, since change and improvement at the school level can lead to an improvement of the entire system. Fullan (1991), argued that teachers' continuing professional development is considered the cornerstone of the improvement and smooth adaptation of change. Teachers' professional development as well as the school's development as an organization are directly linked together. Having said that, teachers' professional development is not only an individual / personal matter; On the contrary, it concerns teaching staff members as well as the school's leadership team. Thus, a school's improvement plan should include the promotion of teachers' professional development as a key element of the whole program (Hopkins et al., 1994), so that change and reform can be supported. Therefore, the criteria set for promoting teachers' professional improvement are the following:

- A clear school policy on professional development.
- Frequent and systematic observation and analysis of teachers' professional development needs
- Teachers promote an active role in their colleagues' professional development status.
- Effective evaluation adjustments should be made, which have a direct effect on teachers' professional development.

- School adjustments regarding new teachers' integration in a school (whether they are newly appointed teachers or teachers who have been recently placed in a different school).
- Always make sure that personal and professional development opportunities are available for every teacher in the school, as well as guidelines for his/her work, conditions of his/her employment, as well as opportunities on his/her career.
- A professional development commitment is associated with a school's organization development and continuous improvement of practices.
- Teachers attending a professional development seminar or program are responsible to inform the rest of the teaching staff on the knowledge, practices and skills acquired through this professional training.

Also, Elmore (2007), argued that the practice of improvement is based on the entire school organization (teachers and school leaders) in order to create the necessary school culture, structure, norms and procedures that support the qualitative development of personnel both at the individual and at the organization levels, always in relation to the students' academic benefits. For instance, regarding the Cypriot context, the importance of the professional development at the school level is supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture within the framework of the on-going educational reform. Transporting all the current theoretical perspectives and research findings from the rich international literature to the Cypriot context, the Ministry of Education and Culture alongside with the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus plans to reconstitute the teachers' professional development, giving particular emphasis to the in-service training at the school level.

In conclusion, it appears that teachers' professional development is a crucial necessity regarding the promotion of a change at the school level. In particular, within school organizations' improvement plans, teachers' professional needs are considered as a basic requirement for the effective implementation of these plans.

4.5 How Professional Development assists towards school improvement

Various ways in which professional development improves the quality of teaching and students' academic achievement, are dependent both on the school's characteristics and the professional development's characteristics. The following Table 2 presents a blending of the most recent trends regarding the theory, research and practice characteristics of the teachers' professional development. According to Elmore (2007), this model, which is designed in improving student's learning outcomes, should be evaluated on a continuing and consistent basis. Primary evaluation

should be made in relation to the outcomes of teachers' professional development on students' performance. Furthermore, the practice of improvement at the individual level and at the organizational level involves at least three major areas: *knowledge, motivation and capabilities*.

Table 2: Professional Development: Views of Consensus

<i>N</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
1.	Emphasizes in a clear mission and a clear purpose statement relating to students' learning (knowledge, attitudes, skills)
2.	It is the result of the content and context analysis of students' learning
3.	It focuses on specific subjects of the school curriculum and the pedagogy of education
4.	It is the result of both research and experience
5.	It is associated with particular aspects of the teaching methods
6.	It incorporates a clear theory or a clear model of adult learning
7.	Develops, enhances and strengthens teamwork
8.	Ensures close cooperation practices within the school boundaries
9.	Networking throughout the school
10.	It involves the active participation of leaders and school staff
11.	Continuous improvement over time
12.	It provides models of good practices
13.	It is transferred to school classrooms
14.	It combines theory with practice
15.	Uses evaluation
16.	Actively monitors students' learning
17.	Provides feedback in learning and teachers' practice

Source: Adapted from Elmore (2007)

Specifically, the *knowledge* area is related to what people need to know, so that they can improve the quality and effectiveness of their practice, under better learning conditions. The *motivation* area is related with payment, encouragement and general motivation to be given to people in order to acquire the above knowledge and use it to improve their performance and support improvement. Finally, the *capabilities* area is related to the type of means and capacities (of the organization and the individual), which are needed to ensure that professional development could lead to large-scale improvement.

As regards with the above, through the list of the professional development characteristics, as well as through the three aforementioned major areas we can observe the existing close

relationship between teachers' professional development and school improvement, hence their relationship towards effective implementation of change. Therefore, the aim of teachers' professional training is to provide change, which, mainly, should be focused on the improvement of students' learning and performance outcomes through the effective utilization of the Pedagogical and the Personnel Development Styles. After all, we must all remember that schools exist because there are students who need to learn and not because there are teachers who need to be employed.

5. Strategic analysis and implementation models⁶

5.1 SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)/ SWOC Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Organizational, Competition)

According to Holmes and Davies (1994), a strategic planning process could be considered successful if it assists organizations to realize their potential, to overcome weaknesses, to take advantage of opportunities and to reduce the impact of threats. An organization's strengths could be defined as those characteristics or circumstances of the organization that contribute towards the fulfillment of the mission or as the advantages over its competitors. On the other hand, the weaknesses could be defined as those characteristics or conditions that restrict or even impede the ability of the organization to fulfill its mission, as well as distracting the organization's performance. While opportunities present achievements, usually weaknesses indicate either reduced performance or an organization's inability to perform.

SWOT analysis is considered as a very useful and effective way to learn from past analyses and combining them with key issues of the environmental analysis. With SWOT analysis, the organization can begin substantive changes and use the data in order to improve its programs (Orr, 2013). The ultimate goal of the SWOT analysis is to reveal an organization's current strategy, through the potential strengths and weaknesses, which are relevant to addressing the change needed in order to better suit its environment. The rationale is based on the necessity of a more structured analysis so that the effects are likely to contribute to the shaping of the proposed strategy. Therefore, practically speaking the SWOT analysis is a supportive tool to achieve the above objectives. Also, conducting various staff meetings, in which each individual has his/her own time sharing his/her views, is considered a supportive action that strengthens the strategic planning

⁶ Parts of this section have been translated and adapted from Tsiakkiros, A. & Pashiardis, P. (2014). Strategic Analysis II-The internal environment of organizations. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume II)*, (pp. 122-152). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

acceptance, even if some people may disagree with certain aspects of it (Glanz, 2006). According to Johnson and Scholes (1993), this process can be undertaken through a number of steps:

- (1) Recognition of the current or the prevailing strategy or strategies applied by the organization. This is considered the actual strategy of the organization. This, by itself, can be problematic because leaders do not agree on which strategy to follow. Therefore, the debate is often very important.
- (2) Identify the key changes in the environment of the organization. Although there are not a fixed number of changes that should be agreed on, it is useful if the list does not exceed seven or eight of them.
- (3) The same procedure should be taken into consideration with regards to the organization's resources. Also, here it is useful if the list does not exceed seven or eight of them.

Some of the organization's strengths may not seem as relevant in terms of the way in which the organization's environment grows. Similarly, an analysis of the weaknesses should recognize that the importance varies according to the types of strategies which will be followed by the organization. The SWOT analysis provides a mechanism for systematic thinking, to the extent to which the organization manages to cope with its environment. However, this analysis requires an understanding of both the environment and the ability to effectively use the resources of the organization. In general, SWOT analysis summarizes the important issues of the environment and the organization's strategy, which is more likely to affect the organization's developing strategy (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2006; 2008).

Dobson and Starkey (1994), also mentioned, that since the organization is able to understand the external environment, the next step should include the evaluation of its resources, in order to determine the strategic capability, based on an understanding of the strengths and the weaknesses. The organization's capability depends on the quality of coordination among all the activities. Therefore, in order to determine the organization's internal position, all the activities must be evaluated, depending on the available resources of the organization itself. The resources to be taken into account are as follow:

- Natural Resources: These include buildings, materials, instruments and production techniques, information systems, distributed networking, research facilities.
- Human resources: This includes the number of employees, their productivity, their level and balance of technical and other skills, their knowledge, experiences, attitudes, as well as their demographic characteristics.
- Financial resources: The financial capacity of the organization depends on factors such as

economic size, pattern of growth, profit and the capital structure.

- **Intangible assets:** This category is particularly important for organizations at the level of providing services, since quality depends on its reputation, which derives from the organization's name and reputation, public image and its good connections.

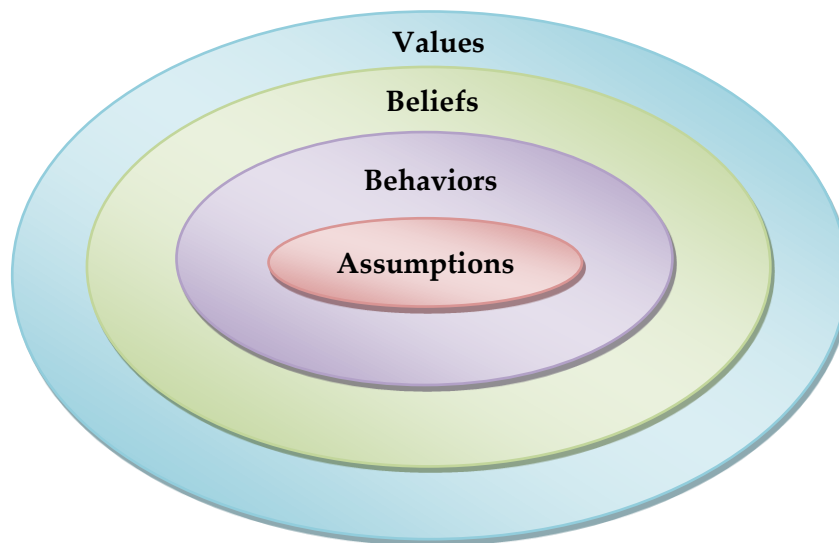
Finally, structuring an organization, is closely connected with the distribution of power and responsibilities among the members of the organization. In other words, who are responsible to lead, how many people are the responsibility of a specific individual, etc. These aspects need to be taken into consideration by those who will undertake the relevant analysis so that they can provide a comprehensive picture of the organization.

5.2 School leadership and the Building of a culture conducive to change

According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), an organizational culture can be defined as a system of shared norms, shared beliefs and values, tacit assumptions, as well as shared orientations that hold an organization together and give it a distinctive identity. Norms are usually unwritten and informal expectations that occur invisibly and influence behavior. Also, norms are communicated to the members of an organization through stories and ceremonies. For example, stories have great impact in the organization, since they can strengthen the norms that determine a large part of the organizational culture. Moreover, values are beliefs of what is desirable can be a catalyst in defining the basic character of the organization, as well as giving the organization a sense of identity. As Hoy and Miskel (2013) referred to, if members of an organization know what their organization stands for, as well as if they know what standards they should uphold, they are more likely to make these kinds of decisions that will support those standards. Therefore, they are more likely to feel part of the organization.

Although, it is relatively easier to refer to organizational culture in vague and general terms, for an in-depth understanding and analysis, we should be referred to more specific definitions. Therefore, from the following Figure 5, we can understand that this concept has four particular layers which are discussed below.

Figure 5: The four layers of organizational culture



Source: Johnson et al. (2008), p. 194.

(1) *Values*: can be easily recognized in an organization and often can be identified as general statements about the mission, objectives and strategies of an organization.

(2) *Beliefs*: even though they are more specific, a belief may be about almost everything that members of an organization can present and discuss upon.

(3) *Behaviors*: are considered as the daily functions of an organization which are visible by the people inside and outside of an organization. Behaviors can include the daily organization's routines, the organization's structure as well as various symbolic behavioral issues.

(4) *Assumptions*: Is the real core of an organizational culture. They are considered aspects of an organization's life that represent the collective experience that people find it difficult to explain. If the assumptions in an organization are not challenged and remain beneath the surface, very little should be expected to be changed in the organization.

What's more on that, Bush and Coleman (2000) argued that organizational culture is more related to the informal aspects, rather than the formal aspects of an organization, which are often formulated by the organization members' structure, values, beliefs as well as norms and how they jointly represent the organization's perceptions. Organizational culture manifests through the organization's symbols and ceremonies, as well as derives from the members' values and beliefs, rather than through the formal structure of the organization. In other words, each individual's values and beliefs shape the shared values which create an organization's culture. Also, the concept of strategy and organizational culture are very closely linked together, since leaders need to be sensitive on their members' values and beliefs that shape the organization's strategy (Bush, 1998).

Finally, the vision, objectives and policies that match with the organizational culture, are much more likely to be accepted, in spite of specific strategies that are incompatible with these values.

Apart from that, Deal and Kennedy (1982) suggested that successful organizations share some common cultural characteristics. More specifically, they stressed the following:

- There is a widely shared organizational philosophy (*how things are done*)
- There is a concern for individuals who are more important than organization's formal rules and policies
- Rituals and ceremonies build a common identity (schools which are celebrating their students' academic achievement through ceremonies, given trophies etc.).
- There is a well- understood sense of the organization's informal rules and exceptions.
- There is a belief that whatever members of the organization do, it is important to others too.

In particular, beliefs and assumptions are regarded as the suggestions and proposals, revealing the fundamental organization's beliefs, values, as well as the character or the personality of the organization. These assumptions are considered as the organization's main core, leading to the fulfillment of an organization's goals and objectives. Basically, assumptions suggest the overall organization's moral values and priorities, which guide all the members' actions. At this point, it is important to mention that these kinds of assumptions are not considered just simple comments or suggestions, but deep and sincere beliefs which have particular importance for the organization. Some examples of such assumptions that could be mentioned are the following:

1. All teachers have the skills to succeed.
2. All teachers have the ability to learn more, through various ways and at different time.
3. The quality of the provided services in a school organization depends on the quality of the members.
4. The education of future citizens is worth any cost that may arise from investing in the country's educational system.

At the school level, school culture refers to all the school members' characteristics, as well as what distinguishes one school from another. At the same time, it provides a sense of identity to the school organization, develops a sense of loyalty and strengthens the stability of the school system. Also, it helps to bind all the components of a school organization together and provides the desired levels of behaviors, by guiding and shaping all the members' attitudes (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). A school principal, is responsible to incorporate all school's core values such as the following: schools are for students, experiment with your teaching, stay close to your students, provide academic success, aim high realistically, and be professional. Additionally, it is important

to achieve a balance between control and autonomy as well as between innovation and tradition. For these reasons, a lot of what happens in a school should be interpreted within the context of culture.

Apart from that, strategic analysis can help us understand all the factors and processes that guide the strategy of an organization. This can be done in two ways. First, by analyzing how organizational culture drives organizational strategies, and secondly, by the systematic analysis of the political processes that shape the strategy.

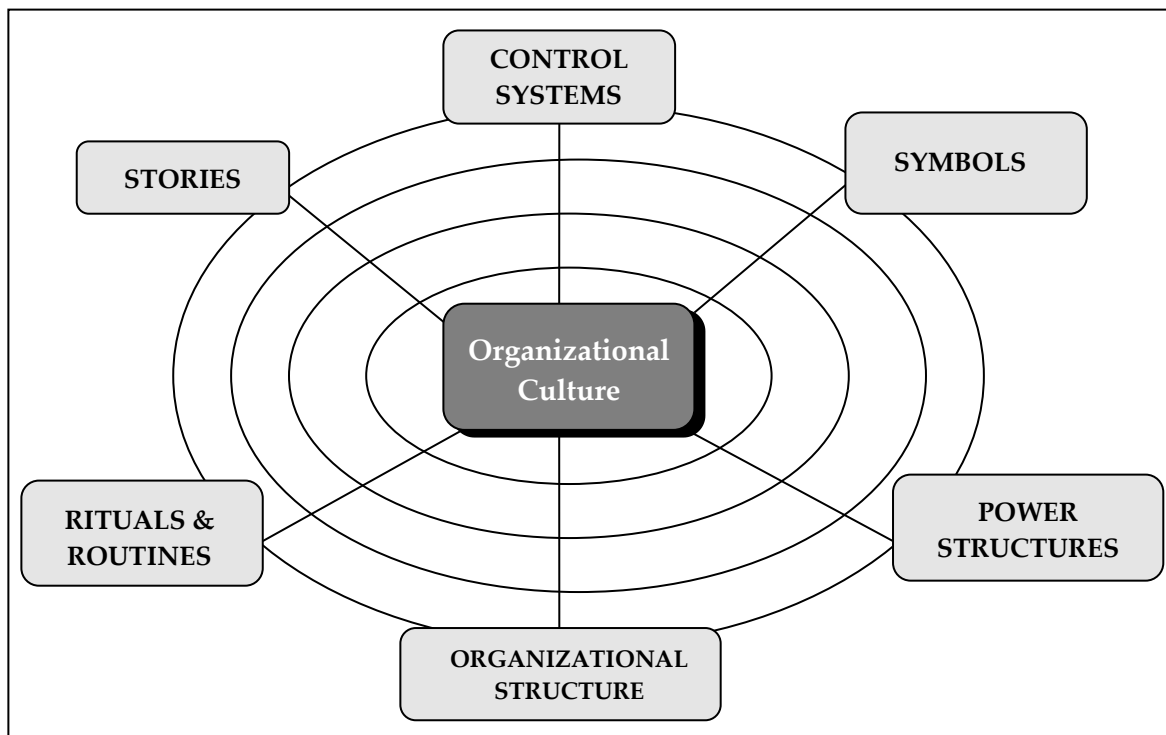
The context of the organizational culture is something that needs to be further analyzed. Externally, it could be understood through the dominant values of the society and the influence of the various organized groups. Internally, the context of an organizational culture could be understood through the analysis of the culture, which reflects the common beliefs of individuals, both within and around the organization. The analysis of the political context could be carried out by an evaluation of how the expectations of individuals and groups affect the organization's main purpose. Also, by analyzing all the involved stakeholders it is very helpful in understanding this process. For example, stakeholders could be groups or individuals who have an interest or expectation on the performance of the organization, including employees, managers, customers and the wider community. As Dobson and Starkey (1994) explained, stakeholders could be considered any group or individuals having legitimate expectations of an organization. As a consequence of this approach, the organization must be concerned about the extent of the stakeholders' involvement and the power that they can acquire. Several stakeholders are recognized through the formal structures of the organization, because they are involved in a joint project. However, stakeholders may arise as a result of certain events beyond the formal structure of an organization. In any case, we have to bear in mind that power is the main mechanism through which stakeholders influence the strategies of the organization.

Organizational aims are often expressed through mission statements or through specific objectives. Organizational objectives traditionally have a dominant role in influencing strategy. In other words, strategy is seen as a means of reaching predefined objectives. While organizations have objectives which are often important in formulating the strategy, they should not be considered as unchangeable. Instead, they must be considered as an important part of the overall strategy, open to any modifications and changes as they develop to specific strategies. The objectives usually refer to stakeholders' desires, with the greatest influence, who is usually the manager of an organization. However, by trying to achieve these objectives, members of the dominant group are heavily influenced by how they see the political situation. Hence, it is very likely to put aside some of their expectations, in order to improve the success of others. Finally, another important question which

ought to be answered is how organizations influence the behavior of individuals and social values (Johnson et al., 2006).

Another area of the strategic analysis refers to the organizational culture and the expectations of stakeholders. Organizational culture refers to “... *how things are done in an organization*” (Byars, 1991, p. 9). Using through the organizational culture web, which includes six different elements and is presented in Figure 6, we can examine the current organizational culture of an organization.

Figure 6: Elements of the Cultural Web



Source: Boyett (1996), p. 80.

Johnson et al. (2006; 2008), considered that the organizational culture web is a way of illustrating the various elements within the organization, who maintain and uphold the common basic assumptions, the suggested behaviors, as well as the physical and symbolic manifestations of a culture that affects and is affected by the organization’s state of affairs. The elements in Figure 6 can be analyzed as a way of understanding the organizational culture framework through which new strategies could be developing. This is an important background which can help us make an assessment of the future options in relation to the options of the existing situation, and in situations which need more significant changes. Where change may be required, the analysis, through the cultural web, provides the background for evaluating on how to achieve this change. What must be remembered is that the relations between these elements are the most important.

The cultural web provides an approach for describing the organization culture, as a whole, and helps us decide in what ways things must be changed, in order to achieve the objectives set by the management (Boyett, 1996). Also, the expectations of all the organization's stakeholders should be examined. Thus, opinions and ideas should be considered when thinking about forming a possible future strategy. Following, on Table 3 we present the elements of the cultural web through some useful questions.

Table 3: Analyzing the Cultural Web through Questioning

<p style="text-align: center;">A. Stories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kind of beliefs do these stories reflect? 2. How pervasive are these beliefs (through levels)? 3. Are these stories relevant with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abilities or weaknesses? • successes or failures? • compliance or not? 4. Who are the protagonists?
<p style="text-align: center;">B. Routines and Rituals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kind of routines is emphasized? 2. What kind of routines would seem strange if they change? 3. What kind of behavior is encouraged? 4. What are the main rituals? 5. What kind of beliefs these stories and rituals reflect? 6. What is emphasized in the educational programs? 7. How easy is it for routines and rituals to change?
<p style="text-align: center;">C. Symbols</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any particular symbols referring to the organization? 2. What language is used? 3. What strategy aspects are underlined in public? 4. What are the social status symbols?
<p style="text-align: center;">D. Organizational structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How mechanistic / organic are the organizational structures? 2. How flat / hierarchical are the organizational structures? 3. How formal / informal are the organizational structures? 4. The organizational structures encourage collaboration or competition? 5. What kind of power structure is supported?
<p style="text-align: center;">E. Control Systems</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is controlled / monitored more carefully? 2. The emphasis is given on rewarding or punishing? 3. The control systems are related to history or current strategies? 4. How much control is available?
<p style="text-align: center;">F. Power Structures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In which ways the leadership within the organization is distributed? 2. What kind of beliefs is reflected through this leadership? 3. How loud are these beliefs being held (idealistic or pragmatic)? 4. What are the main barriers to change?
<p style="text-align: center;">G. Total</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can you describe the current organizational culture? 2. How easy is it to change it? 3. Are there any connections between the different elements of the cultural web figure?

Source: Adapted from Johnson et al. (2008), p. 203.

More specifically, Johnson et al. (2006; 2008), analyzed the cultural web as follows:

Stories: The stories offer significant information for the organization's beliefs and assumptions. The stories begin and evolve over time, through the experiences of individuals and groups which carry out the daily operations of the organization and typically deal with people, successes and failures which deviate from the usual course of events. In other words, stories are the means to tell people what is important to an organization and probably what should be avoided.

Routines and rituals: The routines of an organization represent the way in which significant activities are performed through the delivery of the organization's strategies. Routines are organizational aspects of life that are often taken for granted as "the way we do things here." They also describe how they should be doing things, which is extremely difficult to change. People outside the organization may be able to distinguish the details of the organization by giving attention to the way in which managers describe routines. Rituals are deeper than routines. More precisely, are specific events or incidents through which the organization emphasizes as something important. Examples of rituals may be the way in which the organization welcomes the new members, the evaluation procedures as well as the negotiations.

Symbols: are the visual representations of an organization. Most of the times the importance of symbols in an organization is underestimated, both in understanding the organizational culture as well as in the case of the organization's changing strategy. Also, symbols can be important means of understanding regarding the expected behavior of the members of the organization, as well as part of an organization's rewarding system. Apart from that, the type of language used in an organization may also be useful in understanding the organizational culture. Furthermore, even though symbols are presented separately in the cultural web figure, it should be noted that many of the cultural web elements are symbols, since despite their functional purpose, they can transmit messages. In other words, routines, control systems and structures are symbols in terms of the type of behavior which is expected by the organization.

Organizational structure: The organizational structure often reflects the organization's strengths and reveals the important roles and relationships developed within the organization. Organizational structure along with the strategic planning is critical for the successful implementation of the strategy. Therefore, it is important to understand how the organization structure is associated with the organizational culture, and how easy or difficult it is to change or support new strategies. Also, the way in which responsibility and authority are distributed through its organizational structure is also an important part of the organizational culture.

Power structures: Power structures are likely to influence the basic beliefs of the organization. Power gives shape to the organizational culture and it is also the means by which

certain expectations affect the strategy more than others. Also, change within the organization may result in a confrontation with the power structures that protect and legitimize the organizational culture.

The cultural web has been used, so far, to analyze the organizational culture through the various elements presented in the cultural web figure. However, it is important to be able to describe the organization culture as a whole, as well. For example, a method, which can achieve an overall view of the organizational culture, is to monitor the way in which the strategies developed historically. Organization's stories are a strong influence on the organizational culture and influence the strategic choices of an organization. In particular, stories and tradition are forces which prevent organizations from recognizing the need to respond to major changes in their environment, such as the introduction of new technologies for instance. The extent, to which this is a potential problem for the organization, needs to be evaluated, since there is a possibility to create a strategic shift regarding the strategic planning within the organization.

When attempting to classify organizations based on how they behave strategically, this provides a means of assessing the organization culture within the organization. By examining the historical choices of the strategy, someone can distinguish the differences between organizations that defend themselves and the organizations that investigate, in order to judge the extent to which new strategies can be adjusted on the current organizational culture. Also, the extent to which a coherent culture is being referred to as an ability or inability for the organization, needs to be evaluated. A coherent culture almost demands, and often produces a situation where more and more people with the same views are selected in key leadership roles or socialized into the prevailing beliefs and approaches of the organization (Johnson et al., 2006).

6. Analysis of Resources and Strategic Ability of the Organization⁷

Apart from that, another area of strategic analysis refers to the various resources (human, financial, natural), whose quality and quantity should be continuously reviewed and analyzed, as well as the organization's strategic capability. The management of resources includes specific administrative, pedagogical, organizational and technological aspects in order to strengthen the organization (Stukalina, 2013). This is necessary for the selection of the future strategy to be followed by the organization. It is particularly important that the organization's strategies are

⁷ Parts of this section have been translated and adapted from Tsiakkiros, A. & Pashiardis, P. (2014). Strategic Analysis II-The external and antagonistic environment of organizations. In Pashiardis, P. (Ed.). *Management of Change, School Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (Volume II)*, (pp. 122-152). Nicosia: Open University of Cyprus.

keeping up within the environment in which it operates. However, every organization should pursue strategies which could be supported and implemented in a realistic way. Understanding the organization's strategic capacity and the ways in which the analysis of resources can contribute to this understanding is the next step in this particular process.

Then, we examine the reasons in which the resource analysis can assist in understanding the organization's strategy. Firstly, we must take into consideration that simple possession of resources (including human resources) cannot, in any way, guarantee the success of a strategy. The strategic ability is related to the available resources which are developed, managed, operated and controlled, and in the case of human resources, are motivated in order to develop their skills in those activities and processes that are needed to run the organization more effectively. At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that human resources are not like any other resources, since they have the potential to affect the strategy both through their individual capacity and through their collective behavior that shapes the organization's culture (Johnson et al., 2008).

In order to achieve this, an assessment of the basic competences is required, through the old organization's strategies tradition. It is more likely that leaders prefer new strategies, which exploit these abilities, rather than strategies that would be suggested by the market analysis. The resource systems management, as well as the organization's legacy reinforces this tendency since they are dependent on the current management. A good management strategy should give adequate attention to each of these dimensions (Johnson & Scholes, 1993).

The internal analysis examines the basic skills and key resources of the organization. It includes natural resources (such as the infrastructure), financial resources (existing and future budget allocation), as well as human resources (including support staff, voluntary assistance). Additionally, a comprehensive internal analysis must include a careful consideration of the existing services offered by the organization. The senior management team should devote considerable effort in the internal analysis, as well as to devote time by bringing together all the involved stakeholders in order to share their views (Holmes & Davies, 1994). It is important to remember that not everyone sees the organization in the same way. Holmes and Davies (1994) refer to a checklist with specific strategies key questions, as follows:

- What is our main business / job?
- Where are we going for now?
- How successful is the organization in achieving its objectives?
- How suitable is our organizational and administrative structure?
- What kind of staff are occupying management and leading positions, people who implement policies that lead or innovate?

- Staff have adequate experience or skills for their working performance?
- Do we have the resources needed?
- What is the financial situation of the organization?
- Do we have a strategy that is clear and appropriate for today and for the collective period of five years?
- Do we offer our customers and the community, in general, all the appropriate services?
- How do we perceive our customers?

To better understand the strategic capability it is necessary to study organizations in detail. There are capacity issues that are relevant to the organization as a whole. These issues are relevant with the overall balance of resources and the various activities. Also, evaluations should be available on the quantity and quality of each key area of these particular resources. Nevertheless, the biggest issue is the ability of any organization to be determined by the different activities undertaken in the design, production, promotion, delivery and support of products or services. The crucial point in assessing the suitability strategy is to understand these various activities and all the links between them.

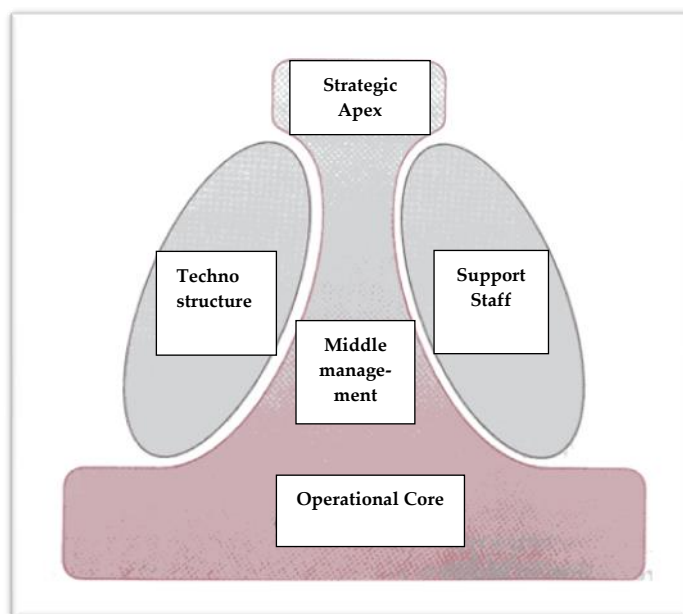
The interest of an organization's resources profile is not limited to strategic analysis. It must be a decisive factor during the selection strategy, helping to identify directions that match the strategic capabilities of the organization. The detailed planning of the resources' development is an important component of the organization's successful implementation strategies. Typically, the resources of an organization can be integrated under the following four broad categories: physical, financial, human resources and intellectual capital. Johnson et al. (2006) argued that the resources of an organization are not limited to those that the organization "*owns*".

The strategic ability is heavily influenced by the resources outside the organization and which plays an important role regarding the products or services, through the production and promotion, as well as the use of these products or services by the customers. Before examining the methods that can be used to analyze the role of the organization in terms of resources, we need to understand how the various analyses contribute to the overall assessment of the strategic capacity. Organizations must be able to integrate the resources and skills between different areas to support existing strategies or develop new strategies (Johnson et al., 2008).

7. Decision Making during the implementation of change⁸

Apart from the above, an important factor to be considered, within a strategic analysis process, refers to the organizational structure adopted by each organization, as well as the decision making processes. The analysis of these two dimensions provides a more comprehensive and objective view of the strategic position of the organization. In particular, with regards the first dimension, Mintzberg (1979; 1983) argued that any organization can be referred to as an organizational structure consisting of five basic parts. Each of these five basic parts are considered significant elements of the structure, each with a critical function to perform. In Figure 7 these parts are presented, followed by their description.

Figure 7: The Five Basic Parts of Organizations



Source: Adapted from Mintzberg (1979), p. 20.

- *Strategic apex:* consists of the ones responsible for the strategic planning of the organization's policy and set up the organization's vision. This is the top leadership (i.e., Minister of Education, top ministry officials, etc.).
- *Middle management:* consist of those who connect the apex with the operating core. Very important for the implementation of policies i.e., school principals, deputy principals).

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- *Operational core*: comprise those who perform the organization's basic work. This is the front line personnel (i.e., teachers).
- *Support staff*: anybody who provides support for the organization (i.e., secretaries, custodial staff).
- *Technostructure*: is charged with the responsibility of planning, as well as support the organization to adapt to its environment as well as offer all the necessary technological means (i.e., computer experts, technology experts).

The above model which can be applied to all organizations, presents all the necessary proportions to maintain the balance within the organization. In case this balance is damaged, various problems are created. The structural model changes shape and faults are occurring regarding the organization functioning. Therefore, when parts are deformed and malfunctioning, the pathology of the organization must be examined. Basically, Mintzberg's framework refers to the quest of the organization's purpose.

In an effort to present Mintzberg's five basic parts model applied in the Cyprus Educational System we could say, for instance, that the *strategic apex* consists of the Minister, the Director General and directors of departments and services of the Ministry. The *middle management* refers to the school inspectors and school leaders, the *operational core* is composed by teachers involved in the actual teaching and learning support, the *support staff* is supplemented by psychologists, social workers, health visitors, the auxiliary and secretarial staff, technical services and school committees, and finally the *technostructure* consists of the technological means, the media, the Curriculum Development Service and the Pedagogical Institute.

Hoy and Miskel (2013) define the decision making process as a general pattern of chosen and implemented actions which affects the whole organization. Although full rationality in decision-making is impossible, leaders need systematic ways in order to enrich the selection of satisfactory solutions. Decision making is one of the main responsibilities of all of the organizations' leaders. However, until decisions are converted into actions and implemented they remain good intentions. The school, like all other organizations, consists, essentially, of a decision making structure.

The decision making process is perceived as a circular process with clear procedures related to the recognition and definition of a problem, analysis of the difficulties in determining success criteria, the development of an action plan, as well as implementing and evaluating the project. The above decision making process is suitable for most of the problems. However, when a set of options is undefined or the consequences of an alternative decision are unpredictable, then a gradual

strategy is more appropriate. Such a process is a method of successive limited comparisons. In that case, only a limited set of options are examined, similar to the existing situation, comparing successively the consequences of such options until there is agreement on a course of action. But the incremental decisions made without basic guidelines may lead to action without direction (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

Research suggests that the quality of the administrative action must be judged by the size of the preparation for the course of implementation and the amount of work done for the decision. Those who take effective decisions involved in substantial groundwork, seeking more information, distinguish facts from opinions and often encourage participation in the existing process. In some cases, participation improves the quality of decisions, sometimes not. In complex organizations, motivation, communication along with leadership are necessary elements which transform the decisions into concrete actions (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

In some cases, subordinates accept some decisions without really questioning them because they are indifferent to them. As Barnard (1938), argues there is this “*zone of indifference*” in each individual, within which orders are being accepted without really questioning their authority. Apart from that, Simon (1947), prefers a more positive term the so-called “*zone of acceptance*”. Nevertheless, both terms are used interchangeably in the literature. Therefore, leaders’ main issue is to determine which decisions fall inside and which outside this “*zone*”. Hoy and Tarter (2008) suggested submitting three critical questions that could assist in this effort:

- Do the subordinates have a personal stake in the decisions’ outcomes? (the question of relevance)
- Do the subordinates have the expertise to make useful contributions to the decision making process? (the question of expertise)
- Could you trust the subordinates to make decisions in the best interests of the organization? (the question of trust)

When leaders decide that subordinates should be involved in the making of the decision process, the next question is how to move the process forward. The effectiveness of the decisions is determined both by the quality of the decision, as well as by the subordinates’ acceptance and commitment of each decision. Collective decisions typically require more time, whilst neither the efficiency is considered as an advantage of the collective decision making. In addition, there is the risk of team members to develop the “*syndrome of groupthink*”, in which the group presents a barren uniformity, which merely reproduces the views, and are not the product of critical thinking.

Hoy and Tarter (2008), propose a participatory decision-making model, which is presented in Table 4, and can be used by leaders when they have to decide whether they should involve their staff in the decision making process or not. According to this model, leaders can decide under

which conditions it is important to involve their staff members, to what extent should they be involved, and how the group decision-making can be structured and operate.

Table 4: The Zone of Acceptance and Involvement

		Do subordinates have a personal stake?	
		Yes	No
Do subordinates have expertise?	Yes	Outside zone of acceptance (probably include)	Marginal with expertise (occasionally include)
	No	Marginal with relevance (occasionally include)	Inside zone of acceptance (definitely exclude)

Source: Adapted from Hoy & Miskel (2013), p. 374.

Glanz (2006) argues that effective school leaders take into consideration appropriate information in order to make decisions covering various aspects of school life. More precisely, nowadays school leaders can gather information and data through a variety of sources such as the following: test results in various school subjects, tests created by the teachers, school – based learning activities, as well as through portfolios and research. Therefore, it is expected by school leaders to use this information in order to support their decision regarding the promotion of students’ successful learning outcomes in the best possible way. What is expected from school leaders is to use these data in order to support their decisions, so as to promote, in the best possible way, the success of all their students. Today, things are quite different, in relation with the old days when a school leader took decisions without even considering the gathering of information. Therefore, it is expected from the 21st century school leaders to possess the knowledge and skills to analyze and interpret this kind of information. What is certain is that in today's world of accountability, school leaders should lead in the process of collecting information, based on the decisions taken, in order to build on and strengthen school improvement (Young, 2004).

The best strategy regarding the decision making process is the one that best suits the current circumstances. In other words, the appropriate decision making model depends on the amount of information and the complexity of the current situation. The subordinates’ involvement in the decision making process improves productivity. Therefore, teachers should be empowered to participate in the decision making process, taking into consideration the nature of the problem and specific circumstances. Hoy and Miskel (2013), making an overall review concerning the amount of decision making participation in the organizations, lead to the following conclusions:

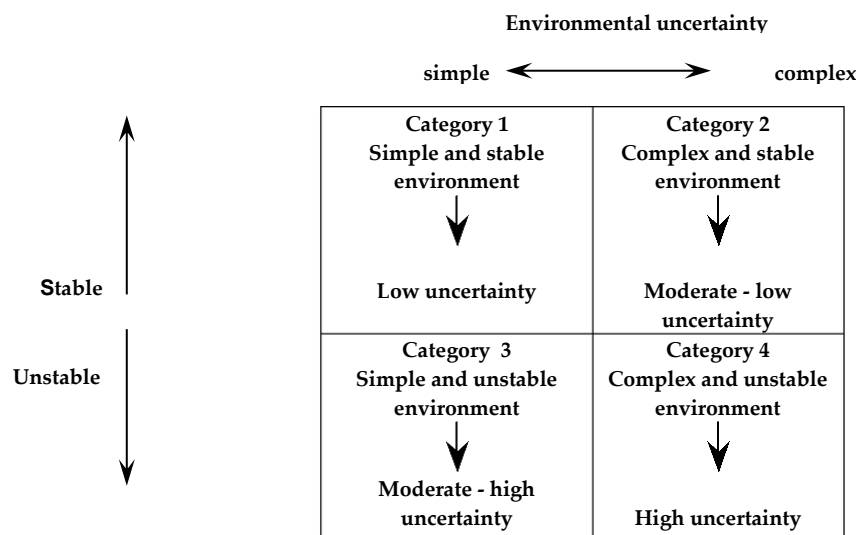
- The opportunity to participate in decision making is essential to the teachers’ enthusiasm and morality.
- Participation in decision making is positively related to the teacher’s individual satisfaction for the profession.

- Teachers prefer leaders who engage them in decision making.
- Decisions fail either from poor quality or because subordinates do not accept them.
- Teachers do not expect, nor do they want to be involved in every decision since too much involvement can be just as damaging as the minimum.
- The roles and functions of teachers, as well as administrators in making important decisions, need to be varied according to the nature of the problem.

8. School leadership and Systemic Response towards Environmental Uncertainty

In concluding this report, we considered it appropriate to examine a number of ways in which open systems react to the uncertainty of the environment, since this will help determining their future course. Environmental uncertainty is defined as the inability of individuals, which make decisions in organizations, to make accurate predictions, since external environment conditions prevent them from taking adequate information (McCabe & Dutton, 1993; Milliken, 1987). Duncan (1972) classified the environment in four categories, as shown in Figure 8, assuming that the degree of uncertainty increases sequentially from Category 1 (simple and stable environment) to the Category 4 (complex and unstable environment). The framework was based on two pillars: the environmental stability and environmental complexity.

Figure 8: Framework for assessing environmental uncertainty



Source: Pashiardis (2014), p. 34 (adaptation from Duncan, 1972)

8.1 Internal Systemic protection mechanisms

Various organizations, being open social systems, are developing different “*self-defense*” mechanisms in an effort to confront their environment’s change and uncertainty. These mechanisms are divided into two categories. The first category refers to the internal systemic protections mechanisms, which activate the system and influence all the system’s parts, such as the procedures and staff. According to the literature, there are three ways in which the systems can be protected internally and survive:

1. With protective mechanisms and forecast techniques such as the econometric models or the Delphi method (Stylianides & Pashiardis, 2007; Theodorou & Pashiardis, in press). Many organizations have a special scientific team, which deals with the various changes observed in the wider society and, based on these changes, as well as other constant changes (value of the land and gold) and their evolution in time, try to predict “*the future*”.
2. By testing the system borders and the systematic overview of the environment. The system or else the organization develops mechanisms and organizes structures, such as the complaint department, surveys and other monitoring systems ideas in order to be timely prepared to meet the needs of society, which are expected to occur (Pashiardis, 1996). Also, Goldring (1997) argues that the systems’ border control is a major concern of a leadership strategy, since it is related to the flexibility of the organization, so that they can achieve an appropriate balance between independence and dependence on the environment. Finally, systems border control involves a preventive role for organizational leaders in the analysis, as well as responding and influencing all stakeholders’ needs and expectations.
3. By adjusting their internal processes, such as decentralization. For instance, decentralization and school autonomy in the Cyprus Educational System considers a subject which drives the attention of a lot of researchers for many long years (Theodorou & Tsiakkiros, 2014). The system, based on the data derived from the above two mechanisms, develops flexible mechanisms that can differentiate internal procedures by making the organization more effective. The more unstable and complicated the surrounding environment is, the more flexible and changeable should the internal structures of the system become.

8.2 External Systemic protection mechanisms

The second category of mechanisms refers to the external systemic protection mechanisms. These mechanisms, activate the system and affect the outside part of the system. There are three ways on which open systems can be protected externally and survive within the uncertainty of time:

1. By establishing external links with other similar or related organizations and agencies. For instance, this is confirmed by the relations observed to be developed by large organizations nowadays. Banking organizations develop close cooperation, despite the fact that a competitive relationship exists between them, in order to deal with issues of mutual interest, such as the height of interest rates.
2. With partnership and cooperative relationships. In particular, organizations faced with today's uncertainty and changes in the environment, engage in various partnerships. For instance, insurance and banking organizations build a partnership in order to promote common interests. Apart from that, cohabitation is also another phenomenon which grows strongly nowadays. For example, the big competition has led to the creation of shopping malls where various stores coexist and offer the consumer a variety of available services. Also, another example, is the creation of the polyclinics as an opportunity for many doctors to work together under one roof.
3. With the continuous efforts to change the environment by creating and influencing special interest groups. This is achieved mainly with advertising, whether it is available through the media or from qualified personnel who promote the organization's products and ideas. Modern organizations invest large funds on market research departments and public relations, since their importance is very essential to the viability of the organization. Also, these days lobby groups are actively present, as well as non-governmental organizations promoting the interests of their members.

With the aforementioned internal and external mechanisms, systems and organizations' efforts respond to the uncertainty of the environment in which they operate in order to survive.

Finally, as a conclusion it should be emphasized that the underlying basis for our education systems must be imbued with the philosophy of "*We*" and not just the philosophy of "*Me*". Moreover, those who are entrusted with the difficult task of reforming our education system should be trained on subjects such as the effective communication, the successful resolution of disputes and conflicts, the effective exercise of leadership, decision making, and general interpersonal relations. Only then, this group of individuals will assist our teachers and educators to become more successful, and having the best possible results for our students in the 21st century, in an era where constant change is the norm.

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