The Hermeneutic-Educational Paradigm for a Training Management in a Civic and Social Sense

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Abstract. The idea that the long-life and long-life learning are preparatory to the civic-political, economic and social development of the present society of knowledge, is now a fact. Nevertheless, in the educational process, today, complaints are still heard about an insufficient ability to interpret the change, to design training programs which can affect the civic education, the sustainable development and the welfare of an area. All that requires a managerial education, based on a hermeneutic-educational paradigm, to optimize the management of public and private educational institutions to capitalize on human resources and to direct them to the acquisition of civic-social skills to use long-life in order to promote social awareness and civic competence. This managerial training will formalize real laboratories of civic-mindedness in public and private educational institutions, it will raise the awareness of cooperative learning, it will activate some practices of responsible citizenship and will urge the civic consciousness in the European dimension. In this epistemological and practical-operative frame a research project has been structured from a few months, which has been aimed at analyzing the most common models of managerial training in public and private organizations focused on the recovery and the integration of disadvantaged people in the town of Taranto, which isliving moments of deep economic crisis with alarming social implications. We will pass from the field-study to the formalization of a hermeneutic paradigm of educational management training, which will be interpreter and promoter of the change.

Key words: long life-wide learning, hermeneutic-pedagogical paradigm, management training, civic education design.

The management of educational institutions, not only schools, asks, with no doubt, a high level of professionalism with multiple skills. These last, as they concern institutions having an educational purpose, must obviously be framed in theories and pedagogical paradigms and converge towards a practice of exclusive educational nature. In short, the management of educational institutions can not be a generic management, with only the bureaucratic-administrative competences, but it must have an educational nature and purpose both in processes and in products. What makes the manager's professionalism and the management of educational institutions even more complex, is the fact that they must meet, on the one hand, the purposes of the territory and local governments and, on the other hand, they must meet the national educational goals. This means that the manager must know how to find the right balance between local, civil society, and the national institutions. Therefore, the manager must be able to engage the participants of the educational and training process, he/she must involve them and make them jointly responsible for the choices made to meet the training needs of both the institutional and social stakeholders. The lines of managerial intervention come from different theories about management[1] and leadership[2] which explain the role of a manager in different ways.

Among the possible ways of managerial and educational leadership, we introduce the theoretical frameworks below, which are based on the paradigm of interpretation, made explicit in its practical-operative consequences.

Later, in the Ionian province a field survey with school leaders will be proposed by the research group whose supervisors are the authors of this paper, in order to analyze the status quo of managerial lines, with strengths and weaknesses, and to assume a hermeneutic professional management. The research protocol will be outlined in the following pages, it is, in fact, a hypothesis because the research is still at a starting point.

1. For a hermeneutic Manageriality

To reach a hermeneutic paradigmatic frame in managerial training, it is first necessary to recall what is well known in the scientific literature, i.e. that Manage-riality and leadership are not synonymous. The two terms have not only different etymologies[3], but they also indicate different purposes and procedures in conducting a training istitution: through management, you point to a simple management activity, while through leadership you tend to manage, and at the same time, to guide while influencing. You can base management on leadership? It is not easy to answer this question for several reasons that we can not resume for a matter of space. We simply say that in the scientific literature not only the issue, as we said, is well known but the excess of management and the lack of leadership is also pointed out[4].

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[1] See. F.W. Taylor (1911), *The Principles of Scientific Management,* New York, Harper&Row, trad. it. *Criteri scientifici di direzione e organizzazione aziendale*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 1976.

[2] Management from the Latin *manu agent* (lead by the hand, originally the animals and then humans); leadership form the English *to lead* (lead, guide). The first is related exclusively to management, the second also to the influence on others.

[3] See. P. Nico, *Manager migliori, leader fortunati*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2010; D. Carnegie, *Scopri il leader che è in te*, Bompiani, Milano 1996; C. Piccardo, *Insegnare e apprendere la leadership*, Guerini e Associati, Milano 1998; L. Guidarelli, *Come essere un leader in ogni situazione,* DVE ITALY SPA, Milano 2004; M. Bruscaglioni, U. Capucci, G.F. Goeta, M. Reggiani, *Leadership. Nuove prospettive e nuovi percorsi di sviluppi*, FrancoAngeli, Milano 2004.

[4] See G. Quaglino (eds), *Leadership. Nuovi profili di leader per nuovi scenari organizzativi*, Raffaello Cortina, Milano 2005, p. 17 .

To return to the question and to outline an answer, in the hermeneutic side of manageriality you can indicate the opportunity to mediate, or better, to include leadership in management.

Then the focus shifts, more than on the action, on the person who carries out the action of management or leadership and on what features he/she must have. It is in the person of the manager/leader that the hermeneutic attitude of his/her way of being and self-understanding must be created.

Now, this hermeneutic attitude will imply particular traits which distinguish it from the main typologies of leaders, which have been identified in the most accepted literature so far.

The hermeneutic attitude as a category of being in the situation is not new, but if you take into account those that H.G Gadamer calls extra-methodical truths[5], on which we are going to focus our attention now, we can start an innovative way of conducting management, which also wants to be leadership.

According to the German philosopher it is, of course, the way to search for knowledge (and, ultimately, for truth) neither through the scientific method, nor through the methods of the human sciences (the moral sciences or Geisteswissenschaften) modelled on the scientific one, but using a reflection on experience having its strength on aesthetics. And, in order not to misunderstand, it must avoid from the start the mistake of thinking that the Gadamerian aesthetics is the road that leads to the world of appearance and form, replacing the real world, i.e. the essence. Instead, it should at most allow the manager to find out that the real world can be taken, seized and also the context in which people operate through the maturation of an "aesthetic

consciousness" that has nothing to do with the romantic idea of the genius who sensed and established the kingdom of Beauty and Art. The concept of "aesthetic consciousness" is not only in relation to the art world. The "aesthetic consciousness" has, in our view, some wider horizons: it is the acquisition, by the subject, of a reflexive competence on experience, within the parameters of "beauty" as the search for meaning, form, harmony, balance[6].

The hermeneutic attitude of the Manager is, for us, exactly in this ability to interpret the experiential ego as a harmonious synthesis of subject and object, in the perspective of a subjectivity lived in search of beauty, but a kind of beauty that we could define in the Platonic / Augustinian way as *kalokagathia* and as "*aequalitas, similitudo; congruentia, convenientia, concord, pax, ordo; totum, omnia simul, unitas; distincitio, varietas, gradatio; mensura that is large, numerositas*"[7]. This involves, as you can guess, to consider the spectrum of the hermeneutic attitude of the leader in new forms, as tolerant, respectful, balanced, dialoguing.

It is a hermeneutic attitude which moves beyond the only contextualized and reductive dimension of existence itself, beyond the *hinc et nunc*.

As we know, the current late-capitalist society is homologating, it reduces the autonomy of the individuals invading their private sphere and misleading them into thinking they are free. It is precisely from this awareness of false freedom that the hermeneutic attitude, referring to the ability to interpret the individual, never separated by meaningful horizons , will play its cards focusing on a conscious act, neither

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[5] See: H.G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* , tr. it. edited by G. Vattimo, Bompiani, Milano 1983, pp. 25-211.

[6] See: E. Tizzi, *La Bellezza e la scienza. Il valore dell'estetica nella conoscenza scientifica*, Cortina, Milano 2001.
[7] See: J. Tscholl (1967), *Dio e il bello in sant'Agostino*, tr.it., Ares, Milano 1996, p. 40.

only driven by a structured rationality in logic diagrams of New Enlightenment or Neopositivism nor the ones of Neocriticism, but also taking into account the importance of the aesthetic perspective, however, adopted in the above mentioned lines, so that it becomes the choice of a conscious way of life, a relational mode aimed at understanding and at opening to the unusual, the unspoken, the unexplored, the "not yet reached".

It will involve, therefore, the identification of a hermeneutic attitude which is new, different and even without disavowing them, it would break away from the traditional behavioural paradigms tended towards some arrogant expressions and humoral manifestations, which are too harmful to the educational organization you have to manage. It is, in a final analysis, to find humanity, humility, to track down the visible in the invisible. So, the hermeneutic attitude connotes itself of behavioural traits deserving our attention and aimed at tracing the practical experience of historicized subjectivity, the ability to be tolerant, the will to dialogue and the tension to be well and comfortable in the workplace. Tolerance, dialogue and well-being are not taken, however, as absolutist paradigms, but only as "*philocalies*"[8] or as lenses through which to interpret the leadership in relation to the self and the others.

1.1. Manageriality and Tolerance

In a beautiful text[9] of a few years ago C. Magris focuses on two principles that, in his opinion, will save humanity from vulgarity and

irrationalism: tolerance and secularism. Well, in our view, the hermeneutic attitude finds in tolerance its almost natural way out because it is not too disposed to a strong ideological tract, it is more open to neither weak nor debolistic perspectives of thought, but, nevertheless, ready to welcome visions related to what is temporary, to read the present through historicized lens and with the disposition to understand the facts and events beyond pure factuality to guide them towards a positive dimension. We recognize that today, when we talk about extreme decisionism, facing the issue of tolerance in relation to managers and leaders may seem hasty, risky, disturbing. But, just because we talk about hermeneutics is talked about in many ways, each of which has its dignity to exist, to consider it from the perspective of an innovative and proactive leadership will not be a theoretically incorrect operation.

Tolerance is, at least in theory, deeply rooted in Western thought. It is the rational response to the conflict between the different ways of life inspired by cultures, civilizations, religions. Today, the clash between Islam and the West is under the eyes of everybody, which, as we know, not only in the deeper aspects of a theological nature, but also in the simplest events, as for example, the veil worn by women, habits, food etc. In the past, the alternative to tolerance was the war which denied and tried to destroy the others. Now society is more mature, and it refuses, at least in principle, the war as a means to solve conflicts, and some *modus vivendi*, which are respectful of multiculturalism, are even proposed. The reflection on the managerial culture in education has also opened up to these new scenarios and it goes even beyond proposing hypotheses of leadership by developing theoretically and methodologically refined models for intercultural coexistence.

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[8] The Philocalies are the interpretations of the Fathers of the Church and of the hermit monks of biblical passages collected in an anthology by a few monks of Athos , Nicodemus Hagiorite and Macarius of Corinth the second half of the eighteenth century). See: Lisa Cremaschi, *Philokalia , the love of beauty* , Qiqajon , Community of Bose, Magnano (Biella) 2006.

[9] C. Magris, *La storia non è finita. Etica, politica, laicità,* Garzanti, Milano 2006.

In the middle of Enlightenment Romilly, in the "*Enciclopedia*" states that "The man, despite his great intelligence, is so limited by his errors and passions, that there are never enough tolerance and forbearance, instilled in regard to the others, which he needs so much for himself, and without which there would be nothing on earth but troubles and divisions. " Even in the Catholic field, tolerance has its supporters. J.Guitton, the "philosopher of God" died a little while ago, in *The Book of wisdom and virtues refound* defines tolerance as a "semi-virtue", halfway between justice and love, and you don't make violence against your neighbour with it alone. But J. Guitton underlines that tolerance, while not "ideal because it is not love", is however, a first step and, as we would add, perhaps, a necessary step. It is in this dual secular and Catholic perspective that we propose tolerance as a *habitus* in the behaviour of the manager/leader.

In the relationship with others, in a society like the present one, in which "we are all mixed, as Voltaire said, with weaknesses and errors", we must learn first to put up with each other. Education for tolerance starts from this point, and this is the beginning of a training course which hasn't got tolerance as an ideal, but which recognizes its importance. Of course, we must distinguish different levels of tolerance and J. Guitton identifies at least three of them:

1) "towards the things of life, within the same group. Tolerating the others' small flaws, their character, their way of doing things differently than we do;

2) towards foreigners (i.e. not seeing them as a potential threat);

3) towards beliefs (tolerating cultural ethical, political, religious differences)"[10].

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[10] J. Guitton, *The book of wisdom and virtues refound*, Piemme, Casale Monferrato (AL) 1999, pp. 267-268.

As we see, even unintentionally, it seems that Guitton has drawn a gradual learning process about tolerance. In the hermeneutic perspective, to acquire the ability to be tolerant means to strive to understand each other, respecting the others' ways of being, their convictions, beliefs and so on. The other must not be seen as a threat and, with an overused phrase, we can say that he should be considered as a resource. However, even before being a resource, the other is a living being that is as he is, and as such, he should be respected; at first, he must be, at least, tolerated. You must train the managers to overcome the foundation of selfishness that has its origins, in our view, in the belief that "I am what I am, and the others are different."

The danger of tolerance is, with no doubt, the result of indifference; the indifferent has no prospects, no expectations, he is an individual who let himself to live. For the indifferent it is as if the other doesn't exist, and he doesn't even talk about him. Tolerance, if it is considered in its proper direction and with a touch of the needed realism, is instead a stage of waiting which can prepare other moments and ways of relating. In short, knowing how to be tolerant means merging in a dynamic dimension which tends to other much higher objectives giving a meaning to our actions. If we stay, however, on a static tolerance, it will be dangerous because it can lead to skeptical positions, if not even cynical.

1.2. Leadership and Dialogue

In the formation of managers in the educational institution, a decisive role is to be taken by the readiness for dialogue through which the relationship can be loaded up with typical values of *virtus, libertas, gravitas, beneficentia, misericordia, benevolentia, aequitas, urbanitas, honestas, iustitia, pietas, honos, fortitudo, ambitio, religio, fides, salus,*

felicitas[11]. These last should not be considered as intrinsic or even innate, but also, and especially for our purposes, as the real skills to be acquired.

Therefore: rather than point to be narrow-minded, in his point of view, or even, in his "*particulare*", the manager must change his perspective and reach an agreement, a mediation, the point of convergence, through dialogue. This last, however, in contrast to what is stated by the functionalist theories of communication, should not be considered as a means, but as a target. If the dialogue is considered only as a means, maybe you emphasize some methodologies which can be very sophisticated, but you lose sight of the goal, which is to reach an agreement that is accepted among the dialogue partners as a higher target.

At a training level it is important to point out that dialogism, before being experienced and sophisticated in dealing with others, must become the *habitus* of the subject; he must be a strong supporter and a witness of it. In his work *To himsel*[12], Marcus Aurelius teaches us that only through the daily work in a work on yourself, in a dialogue with yourself, in fact, you can educate yourself to be wise, to reflect on your life and your daily existence. Well, Marcus Aurelius' lesson is still valid and his recalls to himself ("You have to keep in mind ..."; "Dig in your inner life ..."; "Observe how..." etc.) to support that the dialogue must become for the subject an ethical / educational imperative not imposed from outside, and so not a Kantian categorical imperative, corresponding to "you must", but matured in your conscience, internalized, embraced as yours. The dialogue, as Schleiermacher and Schlegel had said,

is understanding and comprehension, and Gadamer adds, it is interpretation. The good manager, therefore, must have a hermeneutic dialogue training that, to resume Gadamer's lesson, "means not so much listening to each other, but lend an ear to each other"[13]. Lend an ear to to each other", then! The typical character of the dialogue is shown in this, that is giving help, lavishing, lending oneself (lending)in the act of listening (an ear), and this action is mutual. As we see, the dialogue is not a method of conciliation, but it is an investment, it is taking part to the other, to and of his/her human experience. It is only in the actual practice of dialogue that you can really understand, because at that time you really belong relationally to another. In the practice of dialogue you have the concrete hermeneutic situation. Each other's understanding can take place only if there is a mutual listening. "The hermeneutic understanding is not limited to noticing, it is an opening and an openness to opportunity, it is the creation of some visions of the world [...] which serve to regulate our behaviour in the practical world"[14]. Lending a ear to each other is, therefore, a practical behaviour that pushes the subject to go beyond his cognitive and interpretive narrow-mindedness. In lending an ear to each other, the question has got a fundamental role. The other asks the questions and demands the answers. The dialectic of question and answer determines understanding, which, however, takes place through language. Interpreting, understanding, speaking are, in the end, the same thing; one is not possible without the other and vice versa. The word of who dialogues-which is necessary to listen

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[11] See: G. Sola, *Genealogia dell'humanitas*, «Pedagogia e vita», 2(2006), pp. 110-129.

[12] See: Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, *Conversations to himself*, Introduction by Max Pohlem, translation by Henry Turolla, Fabbri, Milano 2003.

[13] C. Dutt (eds), *Talking to Gadamer*, Cortina, Milano 1995, p. 12.

[14] M. Ferraris, *Ermeneutica,* Laterza, Roma-Bari 1998, p. 26.

to, is a word that needs attention, it demands humanity, human enhancement. Understanding the other is not a sign of failure or weakness for you, indeed, but it is a manifestation of strength because it requires the ability to recognize the value of others' opinions and, therefore, the willingness to put yourself into question. Through dialogue, in the hermeneutic perspective, you must mature the willingness to learn from the other to get out of a private view of things, and in this regard, Gadamer affirms that: "The dialogue with the other, his/her objections or his/her consent, the fact that he /she understands or misunderstands, all that means a sort of enlargement of our uniqueness and a proof of a possible sharing and commonality encouraged by our reason"[15]. The hermeneutic dialogue is, in the end, our ability in rational intersubjectivity. In the dialogue, you are very often involved in an unexpected way and neither you know what the outcome will be, nor you will be able to say when it will really end because there is always something unsaid, and this is what stimulates getting back in the game again. The dialoguing leadership has the advantage not to withdraw into its "point of view" and it ensures that the recognition of the leader's role matures almost spontaneously, but with the possibility that it will always be increasingly questioned, because leadership needs to be acquired time after time, it is never a permanently acquired fact.

2. The decision-making competence for the creation of human value

The hermeneutical model of *Management*, as we have seen so far, recognizes the Leader's centrality as he is the main subject-person, in the educational institution, of an action characterized by responsibility, tolerance, dialogism.

This action, although more moved to a dimension, which is constructive, interactionist and which concerns values, in any case, cannot prescind from other conditions, which are the basis of the concept of *Leadership*, as well as of the same role of *Manager*. Among these, the policy-making and evaluation competence, in this case, is undoubtedly essential to respond to a mission involving, more than ever, the organizations. It covers, of course, a concept of *accountability* and an economic evaluation, but it is mainly based on the individual intended as a goal, on the construction of his ego in his working experience, on the growth and enhancement of his competences for the creation of human value.

The evaluative-hermeneutical competence implies the constant practice of an activity concerning a critical-interpretative thought made by the Manager of the formative educational service that, deciding what is more right to do for the good of the organization, will be supported and influenced by his subjectivity, historicity and framework of values[16].

The subjective conditioning the evaluative practices of the Manager are submitted to, however, does not deny the intersubjectivity. The action of evaluating, at whatever level, of course, always implies a decision process[17] which cannot occur in a social and values' void. On the contrary, it always involves a relational approach that has got a frame of values as its background.

So, if it is true that the Manager's decisions are conditioned by his subjectivity, it does not mean they will be taken out of reality, the context and the existential experiences of the

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[15] C. Dutt (eds), *Talking to Gadamer,* cit., pp. 44-45.

[16] See: M. Palumbo, *Il processo di valutazione. Decidere, programmare, valutare*, Francoangeli, Milano 2002; C. Bisio, *Valutare in formazione, azioni, significati e valori*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2002.

[17] M. Palumbo, *Il processo di valutazione,* cit., p. 143.

participants of the system (teachers, educators, students, families, local authorities, etc.), or which will be the expression of a single point of view.

The "*being*" of the subject, in our case of the Leader, takes its value justifying the role he plays if and only if, Heidegger[18] warns, he is able to perceive himself as an existential part of the "*being there*" and *exixting* in the world, into the reality in which he moves, or in the organization he represents.

The result of this is that his identity is not solved at the individual level, but he is a *being* in relationship with others, who is formed with and through the contributions of the individuals he meets in the context of his work and in a horizon of an intersubjective belonging.

Hence, there is the possibility of teaching the *Manager* the recognition of intersubjectivity, as an implicit assumption to enhance his decision-making competence and teaching him his professional role considered as a dialogic practice[19]. In Buberian philosophy, the experience of recognition is nothing but a reflection about identity; it represents a hermeneutical interpretation, for a personal and interpersonal understanding[20].

The dialogue, taken as a category in the evaluative experience, is a positive sign of involvement, affective proximity, relationship with the community. It allows you to overcome the antithetical visions, the clashes, the internal conflicts and the rivalries so as to come to a common ground, as Gadamer would say, to a "fusion of horizons" in the workplace.

The term "fusion of horizons" does not mean the sum of the Manager's truth and the reality / experience / situation to interpret, but something more: it is the birth of a *tertium*, a further level of truth which is different from the individual truths[21]. And it is towards this further perspective that the *Manager* needs to tend in his evaluation practice, to make decisions that are not only right or convenient for himself, but also useful and necessary for the organization. In view of that, he will need to develop his exercise with the awareness of being immersed in a common reality with the other participants of the organization, and all that implies dimensions such as the mutual respect, a common purpose, a constant quest of the others' promotion.

In this perspective, in particular, the Manager will develop his evaluation practice, not in an individualistic and authoritarian perspective, but within a democratic horizon, constantly looking for the understanding, the sharing, the participation by the organization's *stakeholders*[22] in the decisions concerning it and concretely experiencing the responsibility that he has towards the community in which he lives, he practices his professional role and spends his existence.

However, if the *Manager* does not learn primarily to see himself as a part of the world-organism he belongs to, it will be impossible for him to assume any decision-making process, any educational and evaluation plan or action which is effective, therefore of quality. Hev will escape his responsibilities, not only towards himself but towards the whole community he represents.

[18] Cfr. M. Heidegger, *Essere e tempo* (1927), tr. it., Utet, Torino 1969, p. 123.

[19] See: M. Buber, *Il principio dialogico*, tr.it., Ed. Di Comunità, Milano 1959.

[20] L. Fabbri, B. Rossi (eds), *Pratiche lavorative. Studi pedagogici per la formazione,* Guerini Studio, Milano 2010, p. 100.

[21] See: R. Pagano, *La pedagogia generale. Fondamenti ontologici e orizzonti ermeneutici,* in R. Pagano (eds), *La pedagogia generale. Aspetti, temi, questioni,* Monduzzi editoriale, Milano 2011, p. 106.

[22] See: P. Rossi, H. E. Freeman, *Evaluation. A systematic Approac*h, 6 ed., Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage 1999, p. 192.

In the light of the foregoing, to form the hermeneutical-evaluative competence means to prevent the *Manager* of educational institutions running into a self-referential leadership and to guide him, instead, to a new shared and collective way in the exercise of his *Governance*.

This will, therefore, imply to educate the Manager to the awareness of his historicity, together with the awareness of the value of otherness and the acceptance of the others' points of view, for the construction of any truths or to make decisions for the good of the organization.

An evaluation process, especially a self-assessment one, acquires a hermeneutical meaning when it grows the knowledge of the object to be evaluated starting from listening to the experiences and expectations of the involved parties, as well as through the recovery of the meanings they give, either to that object or to reality.

In the scientific literature, the model which best represents this kind of evaluation is the one suggested by R. Stake, not only addressed to the product – that is, to educational programs, levelled out according to the standards already established *a priori* - but also focused on arising the *issue*, i.e. the issues raised by the various *Stakeholders* involved in the processes within the organization.

In the evaluation practice, Stake states that there is the need to arrive at a judgment which is unique and representative of all the points of view of the participants involved in various ways in the organization and in the training process.

The attribution of meaning and the purpose are the two ontic levels of evaluation, which go hand in hand. The question about the reality of the educational-training organization makes at first the subject *Manager* recognize the value, and then judge it.

In order to obtain a suitable evaluation for the development of the institution, there must be, of course, the recognition or production of a judgment aimed to do, to make the decisions and the choices which have consequences on the reality of the organization itself and, as such, which are able to increase its value and to improve it.

To become a driving force for improvement, change and development in the educational-training institution, the evaluation must be done at several levels by different stakeholders cooperating there. The various forms of evaluation will be attested among the demands of *accountability* (reporting, measurement), *benchmarking* and *audit* (certification, monitoring) and needs of responsibility concerning the institution / service itself and its protagonists.

Hence, there is the recognition of the importance of combining, in the practical decision, a summative evaluation, which is more oriented to the needs of *management control*, *compliance* and *accountability*, with a formative evaluation, which is more likely to respond to the needs of *learning*, *knowledge management, policy and program design* and *performance management*.

Either at an *accountability* level, or at the self-evaluation level of educational institutions and educational-training services we recognize today the need to manage the knowledge, the skills, the experiences, the information gained by the various participants within the individual organizations; the need to share them, making them available outside and transforming them into products / services / results, so as to support a competitive advantage.

In that respect, we talk about *Knowledge Management*. This expression refers to a managerial approach aimed at encouraging the

development of individual skills of the people working within an organization, thus creating the conditions to promote the sustainable development within the organization[23].

The initiatives concerning *Knowledge Management* are directed to the development of Communities of Practice, involving the use of cooperation vehicles and portals that, in the logic of a system, merge with the processes of management and development.

The Communities of Practice are the places in which participants share their knowledge and experiences about a subject, a discipline or a project for their own interest but still supporting the organization they belong to.

All working environments, especially the more subjected to repetition, enforceability, to a mechanism of action, today, are marked by the wish to be the subject of attention and appreciation given by the *Manager*. It doesn't happen very often, and the result is that it follows the occurrence of alienation in the working place, made by those who work within the organization.

Today, one of the challenges affecting the *Manager* in schools or educational institutions, is to overcome what is described in literature such as the cancer of the organizations of the Western educational systems: the disaffection towards the institution and the difficulty to identify themselves as part of it, therefore, to belong to a system.

This phenomenon is highlighted at several levels: by the teachers / educators towards their students / their pupils, by the students / the pupils towards their school / their educational institution, but also, and this is undoubtedly the most destructive

combination, by the headmaster himself, head of the education / training service in relation to his condition as a *Manager*, his tasks and responsibilities related to his role in respect of his employees and the welfare of his institution. All of them affected by this evil in their own way, they show attitudes of irresponsibility, lack of interest and motivation towards their work, associated with a myopic view of their activity, then, to an inability to perceive themselves as the bearers of values within the system they belong to.

Among the most effective hermeneutical strategies, to fight this risk, there is the *Performance Management*, the subject of discussion in the next section, which consists of an evaluation of the performance of human capital operating in the institution / service for the purposes of its enhancement. It is, in other words, to evaluate the contribution that a human resource is able to provide the organization he/she operates with, based on skills and the role played in it.

To evaluate the performance of its employees, the *Manager* will not only weigh the degree of achievement of the objectives assigned to the expected outcome, but he will also be able to facilitate the orientation and the development of their skills and knowledge.

From the above, there is the need to train the *Manager* to a hermeneutical decision-making competence to support an evaluation practice that is based more on a human and social interest than on an economic one. Such a training, as we have seen, will be based on the dimensions related to an "ontology of humans"[24], including some aspects such as dialogicity, intersubjectivity, responsibility, care / promotion of the others.

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[23] See: A. Ceriani, *La formazione: agire la conoscenza,* in A. Bobbio, C. Scurati (eds), *Ricerca pedagogica e innovazione educativa. Strutture, linguaggi, esperienze,* Armando, Roma 2008, p. 91.

[24] R. Pagano, *La pedagogia generale. Fondamenti ontologici e orizzonti ermeneutici,* cit., p. 109.

These qualities are the foundation of a democratic-civic consciousness a real *Manager* must necessarily be endowed with, if he wants that his role is not reduced to a mere bureaucratic activity, but it becomes a valuable opportunity to contribute with the promotion of human capital, either to a strategic and sustainable development of its organization, or to overcome the passing of an anthropological and cultural crisis which affects multiple levels of our society.

2.1. The HPM (Hermeneutical Performance Management) training Project

In the epistemological framework above-described, a HPM (Hermeneutical Performance Management) research project has been structured for about a year, coordinated in the scientific part by Prof. R. Pagano and in the design of its phases and data processing, by the writer, with the collaboration of a few PhDs, all belonging to the Ionian Department of the University of Bari Aldo Moro. This study, divided into four different stages, relying on a concept of Management hermeneutic-pedagogical, is created with the aim of analyzing, at first, the most common models of Management to date, undertaken in schools and vocational and Socio- Educational institutions in Taranto and in its province, and then to spread the knowledge about HPM model and to train the staff. In the last two phases, in each organization, identified in a suitably chosen sample in the survey planning, we will proceed with the structuring of a management model, based on the priorities identified by each school and hermeneutic institution and a common strategic mission, which will consist of promoting an active citizenship in the territory.

It is not possible to report here on the results produced by the search, because we are still in a phase of investigation. In particular, after the invitation given by the Department to schools, vocational and educational-social schools in the area, and the collection of all the subscriptions by the Headmasters and Managers, we went on with the construction of the organizations' sample, which, with the wish to be representative of the reality on the Ionian area, appears to be as follows: n. 10 educational institutes, n. 5 social and educational services, and n. 5 vocational institutes.

A semi-structured questionnaire was subsequently established, composed of 21 items, addressed to 10 Headmasters and to 10 Managers of educational and training services and aimed at bringing out the management models adopted in their organizations. From an even partial analysis of the data offered by their answers, some interesting perspectives emerge: in schools, the autonomy conferred by Law 59/1997, in the last decade, seems to have centralized the governance in the hands of the Headmaster, which exerts his leadership worrying to meet mostly the economic aims and not always taking care, with concrete actions, of a performance improvement concerning his organization in terms of human capital.

However, the relationship between economic interests and pedagogical purposes results more balanced in the management of educational and training services, in which a more democratic and active management is highlighted, and among its priorities there are training, promotion and strengthening of the members-collaborators-service organization's performance, in order to respond with an increasingly refined performance to the increasingly ambitious challenges of politics, culture, society and territory.

The analysis of some of the answers given by the managers (Headmasters, Managers) to a series of questions related to the identification

of the strategic issues undertaken in recent years by the organization, showed a levelling of certain objectives such as, for example, computer literacy of teachers and students, reception and integration of disabled students and foreigners, right/duty to education, diversification and implementation of training products, guidance, evaluation, internationalization of the disciplines, consolidation of relations between school and territory, between schools and local authorities, alternation between school and work, equal opportunities, and so on. The theme concerning the promotion of a citizenship culture in the territory was less recurring. Once permanently acquired, the data will be cross-checked with the accounts given by the stakeholders of the organizations (teachers, students, families) as part of the focus groups which will be carried out in the classes of the selected schools, socio-educational and vocational institutions. Only then, we will be able to obtain a clearer and less self-referential picture about the most popular models and managerial strategies to date, in educational and training services. The discussions held in the focus groups about different management paradigms, will also allow us to bring out their lights and shadows. So, this will lead to the possibility of overcoming them carrying out some additional strategies to ensure the well-being of the Institution-service, but also its growth in terms of performance and, in the end, this is the most interesting side of it, the possibility of a higher relapse of the organizations' performance in terms of citizenship, respect for the Constitution and political action in the territory.

In order to create a synergy around this mission, after a period of training for managers and the internal staff in schools / institutions following the HPM model, we will go on analyzing the case by developing a cognitive map of the mission strategic objectives aimed at achieving the above-mentioned mission for each organization. The cognitive map will consist of a strategic plan of policies, actions, measures designed to pursue the identified mission. Each process will involve a certain time, the commitment of a budget, the use of some resources and a constant performance monitoring with a view to the results to be achieved. In this perspective, we hoped that, once acquired and metabolized by the organizations, this model could be experienced in a final phase, not only to promote in the territory a managerial training of school and socio-educational services designed to promote some experiences of citizenship in the Ionian area, but also to lay the foundations of a critical and active approach in each organizations in the Governance, based on a hermeneutic philosophy of management which is never predictable or static, but rather always open to new ideas, innovation, the dynamism of history, to the person, to the relations in the belief that each of these variables is essential to build a shared leadership and a quality management of human performances. Today, the research that is being carried on, finds its justification and corroboration in the recent school reform plan suggested by the Italian Government, "The Good School". It hopes for the centrality of the student in the educational process. In this perspective, the mission that the managers of educational institutions, as well as of socio-educational and professional ones, are asked to meet, will be the development of some models about the interpretation of leadership based on a large and shared planning, on a more active listening of the territorial challenges for the pursuit of a full citizenship in the near future.

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