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THE ROLE OF PROCEDURES IN KINDERGARTEN
MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Managerial responsibility is present in kindergarten at all levels of management: management, committees, class. Successful exercise of managerial functions (planning, organization, control/monitoring, evaluation/adjustment) involves various roles assumed at a given time, by all those involved, even within the existing documented procedures in kindergarten. The elaboration of documented procedures is a broad process, through which procedural activities become procedures. Although the documented procedures are extremely complex in structure, could they ensure the manifestation of managerial functions at all levels of management in kindergarten? In this written paper, we aimed to identify whether, for each activity, there are specific ways of manifesting managerial functions at each level of management of kindergarten, using as methods the analysis of school documents, systematic observation and focus groups. The analysis performed in kindergarten on the identified procedural activities shows us that, at the level of each documented procedure, associated with a procedural activity, the managerial functions are manifested at all levels of management. Minimizing the importance of a managerial function at any level of management can have negative consequences on the entire activity in kindergarten. Thus, if at the management level, the organizational functions were not sufficiently manifested in a documented procedure, the others functions at the level of committees and at the class level would not be you can still find in kindergarten. However, the efficiency of the documented procedures is given by their adaptation to the specific activities of the kindergarten, thus facilitating the manifestation of managerial functions at all levels there.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Managerial responsibility at kindergarten level

The kindergarten, as an educational organization, represents a “structured set of human resources and materials articulated and mobilized convergently, by capitalizing on them in structured and systematic social activities, consciously aimed at achieving previously established goals, rigorously scientifically” (Răduț-Taciu et al., 2015, p. 37).

The new approaches regarding the organization reflect the primary role that its leader has in influencing the members to achieve the established objectives (Vlăsceanu, 2003). It is obvious, therefore, the managerial responsibility of the kindergarten leader to achieve the institutional objectives, manifested by all managerial functions exercised: planning, organization, monitoring/control, evaluation/adjustment.

At the kindergarten level there are three levels of management: “top management leadership level, management by fields level of committees, class management – level of the classroom of students (preschoolers, in our case)” (Dragomir et al., 2007, p. 30). Although managerial responsibility is found at all levels of management in kindergarten, the top management largely assumes the processes carried out through managerial functions.

1.2. Duties regarding the documented procedures at the kindergarten level

The successful exercise of managerial functions involves a permanent exchange of messages, attitudes, decisions, manifested according to the roles assumed at the time by all those involved. The legislation in force requires the existence of working committees with responsibility for documented procedures. What are the documented procedures? There are tools for internal managerial control and “represent the specific way of carrying out an activity or process, published on paper or in electronic format” (Order of the General Secretariat of the Government No. 600/20.04.2018). In other words, the procedure represents the “steps” that must be followed in carrying out activities at the kindergarten level. The procedure answers the question: who does a certain activity? What activity needs to be done? How exactly is that activity performed? When and where will the activity occur? What will be the result of that activity? (“Guide of the Commission for ...”, 2007). At the kindergarten level, work the Monitoring Committee and the Evaluation and Quality Assurance Committee, under the coordination of the principal. Analyzing the attributions of those two committees, it results that they are complementary to the segment of documented procedures: the Monitoring Committee has the role of coordinating their elaboration process and the Evaluation and Quality Assurance Committee follows their application/implementation at kindergarten.

2. Problem Statement

The managerial activities specific to the kindergarten principal are correlated with the managerial functions exercises. Moreover, at the level of committees and of the classroom, the managerial functions are permanently found, implying, at the same time, managerial responsibility. For each level of management in kindergarten, the managerial functions are manifested according to their specific activities.

Consequently, the documented procedures are developed according to the specific set of activities of each level of management.

The elaboration of the documented procedures is an ample process, starting from the idea that “every action/process that takes place in the organization will have to be accompanied by a procedure” (Chină, 2019, p. 105). However, not all activities in kindergarten are procedurable. In these senses, starting from the design documents of the kindergarten, especially from the Management Plan, procedural activities are selected which represent “significant activities for which rules and general working methods can be established in order to achieve the objectives” (Order of the General Secretariat of the Government No. 600/20.04.2018). A procedural activity that is associated with a documented procedure becomes a procedure activity. The principal of kindergarten ensures the elaboration of the documented procedures, according to a unitary structure and brings to the knowledge of the personnel involved.

2.1. Documented procedures specific to kindergarten activities

The process of elaborating a documented procedure is a complex one, considering the elements that must be taken into account, the involvement of several people, and the approval of each procedure being made by the kindergarten principal. We present you the flow chart of the process of elaborating a documented procedure (Figure 1):

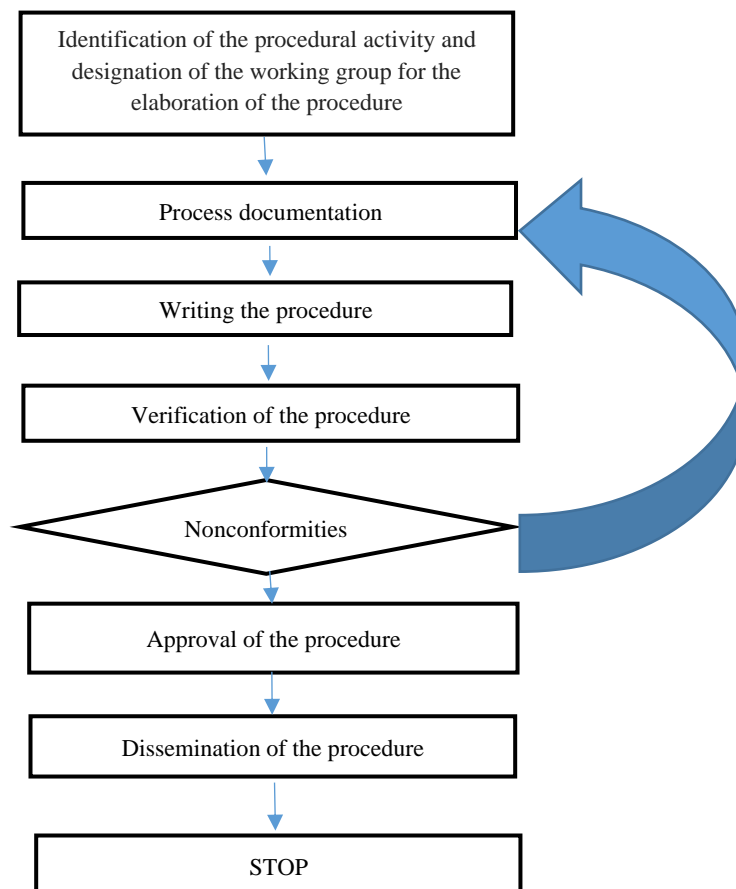


Figure 1. Flow chart of the process of developing a procedure (adapted from Chină, 2015)

As shown in Figure 01, the first step is to identify the procedural activities that require the development of procedures. This is an extremely important because it sets benchmarks in line with institutional objectives. The list of procedural activities in the Management Plan that require documented procedures and that cover all levels of management may include:

- leadership level: elaboration of the Management Plan, internal organization of the activity, control of school documents, realization of class inspections, evaluation of teachers;
- committee level: elaboration of managerial plan, development of meetings, monitoring the application of the procedures, elaboration of the activity report;
- classroom level: preparation of weekly planning, parental counselling, monitoring the progress of preschoolers, and evaluating preschoolers.

Each procedure will follow a well-defined structure, customized at the kindergarten level, with tools adapted to the activities concerned. The complexity of a documented procedure allows a detailed overview of each activity, using the same tools for all involved.

3. Research Questions

To what extent does the use of documented procedures ensure the manifestation of managerial functions at all levels of management in kindergarten?

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to identify whether for each activity there are specific ways of manifesting managerial functions at each level of management in kindergarten.

4.1. Specific ways of manifesting managerial functions at the kindergarten level through documented procedures

The manifestation of managerial functions at each level of management influences the degree of achievement of institutional objectives, there are interdependent relationships between them. We will present some examples of procedural activities, specific to managerial functions, at each level of management and how to exercise them on each level (Table 1):

Table 1. Manifestations of managerial functions associated with activities performed at management level in kindergarten

The procedure	Management level	How to manifest managerial functions
Control of school documents	Leadership level	Planning: identification of the procedural activity Organization: communication of the procedure to the responsible persons Control/monitoring: application of the procedure Evaluation/adjustment: teacher evaluation
	Committees level	Planning: identification of the procedural activity Organization: elaboration of the documented procedure and specific instruments

Evaluation of preschoolers	Classroom level	Control/monitoring: monitoring the application of the documented procedure Evaluation/adjustment: preparation of the activity report, revision of the procedure Planning: preparation of school documents Organization: application of the documented procedure
	Leadership level	Control/monitoring: regular review of school documents Evaluation/adjustment: preparation of self-evaluation report Planning: identification of the procedural activity Organization: communication of the procedure to the responsible persons
	Committees level	Control/monitoring: class inspections Evaluation/adjustment: preschoolers' behaviors Planning: identification of the procedural activity Organization: elaboration of the documented procedure and specific instruments
	Classroom level	Control/monitoring: monitoring the application of the documented procedure Evaluation/adjustment: revision of the procedure and specific instruments Planning: establishing the behaviors to be followed, according to the progress sheet Organization: application of the documented procedure, use of specific tools
	Classroom level	Control/monitoring: periodic completion of progress sheet, highlighting the progress of preschoolers Evaluation/adjustment: use of effective evaluation strategies

It can see from Table 1 that each procedure performed has implications at each management level in kindergarten and a minimization of the importance of a managerial function at any level can have negative consequences on the entire activity in kindergarten. Thus, if at the management level, the organizational functions were not sufficiently manifested in a documented procedure, the others functions at the level of committees and at the class level would not be you can find in kindergarten.

5. Research Methods

As research methods we used: analysis of school documents, systematic observations, focus groups.

6. Findings

Following the analysis on the activities performed at the kindergarten level, we found that for each procedured activity, in complexity of the associated procedure, the specific managerial functions are manifested at all levels of management. The assumed involvement of all levels of management in kindergarten activities carried out leads to the correct and timely accomplishment of the tasks and to the achievement of the institutional objectives.

7. Conclusion

Documented procedures are complex tools that require responsibility in their implementation and application. Their efficiency is given by their personalization/adaptation to the specific activities of the institution. At the same time, to permanently respond to the existing needs, they need to be revised, so that they become real tools of institutional adjustment and direction.

Acknowledgments

Following the above, we can say that the documented procedures facilitate the manifestation of managerial functions at all levels of management in kindergarten.

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