

Organizational, Operational and Leadership Theories of the School Unit in Greece

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Abstract: An important reason why it is useful to analyze the organizational and operational theories of school organizations is that the effectiveness of a school unit depends on the organizational theory adopted. The ultimate goal of the research is to analyze the organizational theory and operational models of school units. The method adopted for the study was a review of the relevant literature. In light of the present study, it is evident that in order for educational organizations, or otherwise educational units, to accomplish their purpose, effective management is a prerequisite. After all, various studies have shown that both progress and behaviour of students depend on the characteristics and management of the educational unit. The leadership of a school unit plays a critical role in the quality of the education provided. Overall, research seems to show that an effective school is run by an effective school principal who works in partnership with the staff, shares a vision for the school with them, and moreover puts a great deal of emphasis on achieving goals. Many studies appear to indicate that the existence of culture at school is important for the effectiveness of the school unit. The conditions of the training unit and the goals it sets over time determine the success and appropriateness of its culture. We could say, however, that successful culture is reflected in its human potential and it is evident when the staff is willingly engaged and eagerly involved, and the school principal works outside the school boundaries, that is, with the environment in which the school unit operates, and therefore should interact with this environment.

Finally, the effectiveness of the school unit cannot be easily determined. This is mainly due to the different organization and administration model each school unit has adopted. Theoretical approaches to organizational effectiveness have led to the development of various models, each of which emphasizes different effectiveness criteria, with the main categories being adaptability, productivity, participation, continuity and responsiveness to interest groups.

Key words: Organizational Theories, Leadership, School Unit Operation

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I. INTRODUCTION

This research makes a reference to the main organizational theory models and the operation of school units. An important reason why it is useful to analyze the organizational and operational theories of school organizations is that the effectiveness of a school unit depends on the organizational theory adopted. In order for educational organizations, or otherwise educational units, to accomplish their purpose, effective management is a prerequisite. After all, various studies have shown that both student progress and behaviour depend on the characteristics and management of the educational unit. Leadership plays an important role in the management of school units, while at the same time it is a significant factor in connecting the school with the local community and in achieving school effectiveness. As regards the factors that contribute to school effectiveness, the above analysis has shown that there is an inseparable link between school unit leadership and school effectiveness. Leadership should no longer be seen as having only a direct impact on learning outcomes but also having an indirect impact on the school unit through its influence on school organization and school culture (Krüger, 2009). An effective school principal-leader assists and supports teachers, while overseeing the educational work and also encouraging and promoting the involvement of teachers and parents in the decision-making process, which leads to the commitment of teachers to the school organization and increases their job satisfaction and performance (Hulpia and Devos, 2009). School principals are considered to be the most critical factor contributing to the reorganization of the school (Heng and Marsh, 2009), based on changes in the external environment of the school unit, as well as on the demands of parents, students and the local community. Indeed, Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) report that school improvement has been associated with school and educational system change activities, which enhance school effectiveness by increasing the desired outcomes for learners.

According to surveys, school principals are responsible for four main areas. The first is to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers, the second is to provide a supportive climate, the third is to convey the mission and purpose of the school to those involved in the educational process, and the fourth is to provide a climate that encourages learning. In addition, school principal's responsibilities include team orientation and encouraging professional development (Cotton, 2003).

In addition to the principal, the school culture is also an important factor contributing to the effectiveness of the school unit. The conditions of the educational unit's existence and the goals it sets over time determine the success and appropriateness of its culture. We could say, however, that successful culture is reflected in its human potential and it is evident when the staff is willingly engaged and eagerly involved in it. Another factor is the school management model. The decentralized management model has the advantage of leading to speed and flexibility in the decision-making process (Cunningham and Cordeiro, 2006).

II. METHODOLOGY

The present research is a bibliographic review study, presenting the critical points of the existing knowledge on the theories of organization, operation and leadership of the school unit in Greece. There is no specialized and comprehensive work on this subject in the relevant literature. This work endeavors to cover this gap and will perhaps also be a useful aid for those who in the future will attempt similar efforts. The main aim of the bibliographic review is to frame the study within the "body" of the relevant literature. The review of the current study concerns clearly formulated questions and uses systematic and explicit criteria for critically analyzing a body of published papers by summarizing, sorting, grouping and comparing.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS OF SCHOOL UNITS

3.1 Economic rationality model

The economic definition of effectiveness stems from the idea that organizations behave rationally; that is having specific goals. Outflow goals form the basis for selecting effect criteria, which are essentially the variables used to measure outcomes, such as student success. The effectiveness defined in terms of economic rationality can also be interpreted as the productivity of an organization. However, this model is too simple to fully explain the concept of effectiveness, especially in a school organization, where variables other than productivity are equally important (Scheerens, 2000).

3.2 Organic system model

According to this model, organizations can be seen as biological organisms that adapt to their environment. The main characteristic of this approach is that organizations are seen as interacting with their environment. As a result, they should not be passive recipients of the changes that take place in their external environment, on the contrary they could also influence the environment themselves. This approach is more closely linked to the need for organizations to survive in a hostile environment, implying that organizations need to be flexible and adapt quickly and easily to any changes that occur. Flexibility and adaptation are the two key elements in achieving effectiveness. This theory is related to the microeconomic theory as regards the public sector, in which public organizations, including schools, have no external incentives to increase their effectiveness and efficiency, and therefore other elements can contribute to this direction. (Scheerens, 2000).

3.3 Human relations approach

While in the previous model there was a relationship of the organization with its external environment, in this model there is a relationship with its internal environment. In this approach the emphasis is put on the well-being of employees in the organization and on the relationships among them. Thus, the satisfaction the employees get from their work and their involvement in the organization are those criteria that are appropriate for measuring the organization's characteristics, and which are characterized as effectiveness criteria (Scheerens, 2000).

3.4 Bureaucracy

The biggest problem for organizations like schools is the creation of a harmonious collectivity. One way to achieve this is through appropriate social interaction and opportunities for personal and professional development. A second way is to organize and define these social relationships. Based on the above, in the bureaucratic model the effectiveness criteria are the certainty and continuity of the existing organizational structure of the school organization (Scheerens, 2000).

3.5 Political model

According to this model, organizations are seen as a field in which both the employees and management use tasks and goal to advance their own interests. For this reason, good contact with powerful people outside the organization is very important for their own survival and that of the organization. However, the concept of effectiveness in this model is difficult to define. Therefore, the question that arises is to what extent the internal groups comply with the requirements of the external groups concerned. In the case of a school organization, these may be parents, school management bodies and / or business operators from the local community. The above models can be used to interpret the effectiveness of the school unit, as discussed earlier, with this relation summarized in the following table (Scheerens, 2000).

Table1. Organizational theory – effectiveness models

Theoretical background	Effectiveness criteria	Level at which effectiveness is requested	Main areas of attention
Economic rationality model	Productivity	Organization	Outflow and its determinants
Organic system model	Adoptability	Organization	Acquiring significant inflows
Human relations approach	Participation	Individual members of the organization	Motivation
Bureaucratic model	Continuity	Organization and individual members of the organization	Organizational structure
Political model	Response to external groups	Subgroups and individuals	Independence, strength

(Scheerens, 2000, 27)

3.6 The decentralized administration system

Good education is not just about inflows, such as classrooms, teachers and school textbooks, but also about the incentives that lead to improved teaching and learning. Training is too complex to be effective within a centralized management system (King and Cordeiro-Guerra, 2005). Due to the complexity of today's society, and the demand for quality education, executives who constitute a school unit are required to take on a more complex role. This means that "efforts should be made to ensure quality management practices and processes of modern MANAGEMENT development". This implies the need to "become familiar with the basic principles and practices of educational MANAGEMENT, human resources management and administration, as well as management and administration of educational systems" (Fasoulis, 2001, 192). In essence, the above system is nothing more than the decentralization of the power from the government at a school level (Caldwell, 2005). According to Malen et al. (1990), the decentralized administration system can be seen as a formal change in government structures; as a form of decentralization, which recognizes the autonomous school unit as the dominant unit for improvement and relies on the redistribution of the power for decision-making as the main means of reinforcing sustainable school unit improvement. Therefore, the decentralized administration system proposed and implemented in several countries is an example of the link between school leadership and its effectiveness, as the autonomy of school organizations, through the decision-making procedure, with the cooperation of principals, parents and the local community, enhances the learning process and improves students' school performance while contributing to better management of school resources (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2007). More specifically, members of the local community have an incentive to improve the quality of education provided and, consequently, a decentralized management system can lead to this through closer monitoring of teachers, better association between school unit needs and policies to meet these needs, and more efficient use of resources (Patrinos and Kagia, 2007). Another benefit of such a system of administration is the transparency in the management of the school unit and thus the reduction of corruption. Transparency is accomplished by monitoring teacher actions, improving student assessment and achieving the best possible association between school unit needs and policies (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2007). At the same time, it also improves the leadership and interpersonal skills of principals, teachers, and members of the decision-making community, further maximizing social benefits (Briggs and Wohlstetter, 1999). Decentralization of decision-making power to parents and communities reinforces demand and ensures that schools provide the social and economic benefits that best reflect the priorities and values of local communities (Lewis, 2006). Some of the features of this strategy are increased school autonomy, greater responsiveness to local needs, and the overall goal of improving students' academic performance (OECD, 2004). Finally, there is evidence that simply increasing the allocation of resources will not improve the quality of education in the absence of institutional reforms (Hanushek and Woessmann, 2007).

Governments around the world are introducing a number of strategies aiming at improving school unit funding and the quality of education provided, with a focus on improving quality and increasing quantity (student enrollment) in education. The strategy that can lead to this direction is to decentralize decision-making in education by increasing the active involvement of parents and the local community in schools. This strategy is known as school - based management (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2007). The decentralization of power essentially leads to the implementation of a participatory model of governance.

3.7 The participatory management model

The participatory management model requires the involvement of all school community members in the decision making and implementation process. Under this model, power is not only the privilege of the school principal but of all its members, and as a result, its function is based on the common values, the culture of the educational organization and the vision for its future and development, as one of the most essential educational institutions (Hatzipanagiotou, 2008). Participatory management is that model of governance that ensures "the creative involvement of teachers, contributing to a mutual understanding of school goals" (Bush, 1995, cited by Koussoulos et al., 2004, 35). The adoption of a participatory management model in which the principal enables teachers to express their views and participate in the decision-making process of school operation and the educational process is an important element that should distinguish a school principal - leader. The latter is the one who demands and also supports a decentralized system of administration involving both teachers and parents in the decisions making process (De Grauwe, 2005). The participatory management model provides an improved learning process leading to school effectiveness (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2005). In addition, according to Glickman (1998), participatory and community democracy are the two essential elements needed to enhance school's role as a learning organization and its effectiveness.

In the light of a more decentralized and participatory management system, the school principal should follow these steps in the decision-making process (Res, 2004):

1. Identify the problem. It is the principal's duty to identify the problem facing the school unit, to describe it clearly and comprehensively, and to set the policy goals in order to resolve it.
2. Identify the needs of the school unit and the performance criteria.
3. Production of alternatives.
4. Evaluate alternatives and find the most appropriate one.
5. Implement the solution.

In addition, the participation of teachers in the management of the organization through their involvement in the decision-making process is justified on the basis of international literature with three arguments. Firstly, that teachers themselves want to be involved in the decision-making process of the school unit. Secondly, that teacher involvement contributes to improving the quality of decisions, and thirdly, that teachers can more effectively apply what is decided when they themselves are involved in the process (Koussoulos et al., 2004).

IV. SCHOOL UNIT OPERATING ISSUES

4.1 Communication within the school unit

According to Kontakos et al. (2002, 251), communication is described as "the transmission of messages (conceptual or emotional) from a transmitter (source) to a receiver (target), directly, or through the mediation of some means of communication, with a specific intention (purpose)". Kontakos and Stamatis (2002) point out that the existence of interlocutors is a prerequisite for any successful communication process, and the base of this process is the knowledge of at least one common code of communication. The linguistic code alone is sufficient to transmit only phrases with a particular conceptual content. The basic theoretical approaches that interpret human communication are those mentioned in the table below.

Table 2. Theoretical approaches to communication

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE			
THEORY	REPRESENTATIVES	COMPARATIVE REVIEW	CONTRIBUTION
H.D.'s Lasswell theory and its extension by R. Braddock	H.D. Lasswell & R. Braddock	Lasswell has also been criticized for having omitted the feedback element. In this way his model reflects the general perception of the time in which it was formed.	Even today Lasswell's model is an approachable and understandable way to begin studying the communication process.
The theory of C. Shannon	C. Shannon & W. Weaver	Technological problems of course differ from the human	The receiver decodes the "information" into a "message", which becomes a

and W. Weaver and the addition of De Fleur		ones; however, it is easy to find the traces of Shannon and Weaver in a number of later models of human communication.	"meaning at the destination stage ". If there is a response between the two messages, the result is communication, which, according to De Fleur, is rarely perfect.
The theory of Osgood and Schramm	Osgood and Schramm	A possible point of criticism of this model could be related to the argument that the model assigns a sense of equality to communication. On the contrary, communication is very often unequal in terms of resources, power and the quantity of time it takes place.	The model is particularly useful for describing interpersonal communication but is less useful in cases where there is little or no feedback.
The approach of J.W. Riley and M.W. Riley	J.W. Riley και M.W. Riley	The social structure consists of primary and secondary groups.	The communicator and the receiver are described as elements of the two broader structures, which are affected, for example, by feedback mechanisms.
The helical model of F.E.X. Dance	F.E.X. Dance	The concept of the "communicating human" is more positive than other models.	Individuals are constantly acquiring better communication skills and information on the subject that concerns them, other people's views, knowledge, etc.

(Stamatis, 2007)

Communication is one of the critical factors in creating a positive school climate and it is the school principal's concern. More specifically, it is the principal's responsibility to create those channels of communication between management, teachers and students (Passiardi, 2001), while Saitis (2008) mentions that frequent communication with parents, informing them about the general functioning of the school and working well with them is a concern of the school unit principal, which can lead to the achievement of the school's goals. Communication between those involved in the education process but also between them and others concerned in the local community creates a favourable climate that promotes reward and praise, and affects positively student performance (Saitis, 2005).

According to Passiardi (2004), effective schools ensure effective communication with parents by informing them of the goals set, their expectations from their children, and their progress in the various areas of the curriculum.

Communication with parents is divided into two categories: school-level communication and classroom-level communication (Zavlanos, 2003).

In relation to school-level communication, the school principals should:

1. Be active. This means preparing a booklet showing the school curriculum and answers to various questions, as well as organizing meetings with parents, lectures, etc.
2. Focus on the student. Parents want to know everything that happens to their child at school. For this reason, principals should provide information with objectivity and honesty. If parents are pleased with their children's progress, then they will be satisfied with the school program as well.
3. Be realistic. This means that school principals should not promise what they cannot achieve, but rather less than they think they can offer.
4. Be sensitive to conflicts. School principals need to be aware of and sensitive to conflicts that can occur between parents and teachers, while at the same time they should find ways to resolve them.

As regards classroom communication, the teachers should (Zavlanos, 2003):

1. Organize a meeting with parents. A meeting with students' parents should take place in the first week of the school year. An information and guidance program can also be organized.
2. Clearly state the goals. The goals should be explained to parents, and they need to be clear, specific and measurable.
3. Collect information. Maintain records of student performance in relation to goals, describe some classroom events that justify student behaviour, and finally make specific, rather than vague, reports.
4. Be responsible. Teachers should be well aware of the students in their classroom, of any problems and learning difficulties they may have, and transfer them to parents as well.

5. Help the parents. Parents do not know much about their child's development, therefore it is the teachers' duty to help and inform them.

In order for the communication to be effective within the school unit, the obstacles to interpersonal communication must be overcome. These are the following (Zavlanos, 2003):

1. Natural obstacles, such as the distance between the sender and the recipient, the processing of large amounts of information, etc.
2. Semantic obstacles, such as poor interpretation of word meaning.
3. Differences in culture, such as differences in language, values, beliefs, etc.
4. Mixing messages, in which there is a conflict between verbal and non-verbal communication.
5. Lack of feedback, in cases where the message cannot be understood without feedback.
6. Position-based influence, which refers to the obstacles created by hierarchical authority or otherwise the difference in the position of individuals in the school unit.
7. Obstacles of the process, which refers to every element of the communication model which is an obstacle, as in the case where the sender may have incorrect information, or that the student was talking to a classmate and did not understand the question.
8. Personal obstacles, which are divided into two personal characteristics that interfere with interpersonal communication:

- the tendency of the individual to evaluate or judge the sender's message.

- the tendency of the individual not to listen carefully and subsequently not to understand the message.

Careful listening reduces one's aggression and defense, and improves perception.

4.2 The climate in a school unit

Hayes (1994) defines the 'climate' in the field of education as the set of dynamic interactions between the psychological, academic and physical dimensions of the school environment, while according to another definition the climate is defined as 'a set of internal characteristics that help distinguish one school from another' (Passiardi, 2001, 15).

The positive - creative climate characterizes an effective school because, as supported by many scholars, it affects teachers' mood and enthusiasm, their attitude toward work, their productivity and satisfaction (Stephen, 1994). Teachers "work collectively for the progress of their students", who, on the other hand, "do not have the feeling or the opinion that they are being wronged" as they are "rewarded for their efforts, their school performance and their conduct" (Passiardi, 2001, 23). In addition, the school climate as "quality of the school environment has a significant impact on organizational performance" and consequently affects also teachers' behaviour, motivation and performance (Kavouri, 1996, 73), while at the same time improving the school climate "is a prerequisite for the quality upgrading of education" (Theofilidis, 1999, 110).

As regards the development of the right climate, the role of school principals is again considered to be a catalyst, as they are the link between senior education executives and existing teachers. In addition, teachers themselves should be concerned with creating the right climate in their classroom. Finally, the participation and involvement of parents in school 'activities' is a factor that positively influences the creation and maintenance of an effective communication system in a school unit. Therefore, it can be concluded that effective communication between all concerned in the educational process is a key factor in achieving a positive climate of harmony and collaboration that can make a decisive contribution to the effectiveness of the school unit. Part of this framework is also the resolution of conflicts that could arise within a school unit. Even in this case, the role of the school principal-leader is crucial, as he/she is called upon to understand the causes of these conflicts and to resolve them (Griffin, 2009).

4.3 School culture

The development of school culture is extremely important for school effectiveness (Dean, 1993). Essentially, it constitutes the quality of the organization as well as the source of its competitive advantages (Burandas, 2005). School culture is a system of shared values, beliefs, principles, assumptions, and concepts that form a common intellectual frame of reference. This framework determines how school unit members think and behave. The above are expressed through the rules that determine the decisions and behaviours of school unit members in daily practice. These rules are nothing more than expectations regarding the appropriate attitudes and behaviours that should be adopted by both principal and teachers. In relation to the effective principal - leader discussed earlier, it should be noted that it is important to understand the culture of an organization and to be able to adapt it to his/her own vision of the school unit (Burandas, 2005).

The culture of a school organization is made up of its peculiarities, which are its climate and atmosphere. The culture is shaped by both the external and internal elements of the educational unit. External

elements relate to the space, aesthetics, amenities and logistics provided by the school organization, while internal elements, which are the core of school culture, relate to human relationships and emotions (Anthopoulou, 1999). Therefore, it is understood that school culture is inextricably linked to the attitude, perceptions, and behaviour of both school principal and teachers. So, for a school unit to be effective, the external and internal elements of the school culture must be effective also as individual factors that influence the effectiveness of the school operation.

4.4 The logistical infrastructure

School facilities, i.e. equipment, lighting, temperature, ventilation, noise levels and the manner all these elements are organized, offer a variety of physical and emotional stimuli. They indirectly state what it is expected to be accomplished in the classroom and how, and finally they create the physical conditions that support the development of a particular type of social behaviour (Matsagouras, 2003).

Space is characterized as the second decisive factor in the formation of interpersonal relationships, as a cultural reference point of the local community, as a starting point for social and personal life that provides invaluable experiences (Stamatis, 2007). Spatial planning in the classroom is related to the type of interactions that develop between children, teachers and the environment (Dafermou et al., 2006).

4.5 Teachers' Association

Teachers of any secondary school are all members of the Teachers' Association. Meetings of the Association are regularly held at least once before the start of the school year and at the end of each trimester, and exceptionally whenever requested by the school principal or the teachers in writing and at hours after class. Meetings are chaired by the school principal or the vice-principal when the first is unavailable. Every decision is recorded in the association's record book and must be fully justified (Secondary Education in Greece, 2006).

The Teachers' Association among other things (Secondary Education in Greece, 2006):

1. Imposes on students the penalties provided for by the existing provisions and at the end of the school year.
2. Decides on the characterization of their conduct, substantiating its decisions with particulars and in any case justify them.
3. Decides on the justification of pupils' absences, as well as on their promotion to the next class, their graduation, referral exam or dismissal at the end of the school year, on the basis of the relevant data and grades recorded in their books and in accordance with the provisions in force.
4. Decides on pupils' excursions or walks, taking into consideration the procedure specified in the regulation of pupil communities.
5. Appoints representatives, who, in cooperation with pupil communities, as specified in the relevant regulations, monitor and control the operating conditions of the school canteen.
6. Appoints a teacher advisor to support and assist in the school publications by the pupil community editorial committee.
7. Decides to regularly inform parents and guardians on a permanent and steady basis, after school time, on pupil attendance, performance and conduct.

4.6 Duties of the vice-principal

The duties of the vice-principal are the following (Secondary Education in Greece, 2006):

1. The vice-principal replaces the principal and stays at school during all working hours.
2. He/she also signs the titles issued by the school and certifies the authenticity of the titles of other schools that have been verified.
3. Unless there is a secretary at the school, he/she has the sole responsibility of drafting and sending staff reports and statistical tables in collaboration with teachers.
4. Prepares the teachers' work schedule in cooperation with the teachers' association and is responsible for its implementation.
5. Takes care of the school correspondence and is responsible for forwarding and archiving the documents.
6. The vice-principal is the rapporteur for the characterization of pupils' conduct based on the specific elements of their individual reports and the opinions of the teachers - class advisors. It goes without saying that to propose a characterization for the pupils' conduct account should also be taken of all the information contained in the sanctions book and the relevant decisions taken by the teachers' association.
7. Suggests to the teachers' association or the principal possible solutions to problems that have been identified during class council meetings.
8. Ensures the timely receipt and distribution of school books and, in general, takes care of any outstanding issue that is relevant to the smoothest possible operation of the school.

4.7 Tasks of the teaching staff

The specific tasks of the teaching staff are the following (Secondary education in Greece, 2006):

1. Arrive at school on time and adhere strictly to the timetable without violating either the start time or the end time of a class.
2. Record the teaching material in the relevant textbooks without delay and carefully monitor students' absences by signing the daily attendance sheet.
3. They are personally responsible for discipline and order during class, and should not allow students to leave the classroom unless it is absolutely necessary.
4. They can call the parents or guardians of the students, talk to them and inform them about the students' attendance, behaviour and performance, notifying at the same time the school principal.
5. While on-call duty they remain until the end of the school's operation and they carry out what is specified by the regulations in force and the relevant decisions of the teachers' association.
6. They stay informed and abide by the laws, decrees and related decisions, and undertake the additional work of the school, thus enhancing the work of collective problem-solving.

4.8 The relationship between school and local community

The importance of the community as a concept and the need to place it within the context of education and more specifically the school unit is internationally recognized (Sergiovanni, 1993). In addition, schools can be seen as learning communities, where competence and opportunity for learning, both at individual and collective level, should be a top priority (Barth, 1993). Fykaris (2004, 19) states that society is "a set of persons with a collective identity and common bonds". This connection is expressed through the term 'social cohesion' and is reflected through collective consciousness. On the contrary, the community is "built on common origin, common settlement or common action" Fykaris (2004, 20). Thus, the community "is a framework through which its members accept one another, interact and act together in a reciprocal framework, as persons and as performers of roles" (Fielding, 2000, as cited by Fykari, 2004, 21). "The idea of community is closely intertwined with the people we know, with whom we share the same experiences, activities, stories, places. The community results from an interaction between the 'imagination' of solidarity and its realization through social relations" (Amit, 2002, 18). If there are no "shared experiences" and "integration through social relationships", then the community cannot claim to exist. What is described here is a rarity of social capital: the lower the level of commitment to a community, the lower the level of social capital, and so it is more likely that a community will be poorer not only economically but also socially (West - Burnham, 2003). For the purposes of this work, we will consider the local community as the place where the school unit is based and as society the broader context in which the educational organization exists and offers.

Mulford and Silius (2001) report that there is a direct relationship between the active community involvement in school issues and the improvement of pupils' performance. As the authors point out, if one has to choose between collaboration and influence in the community and the improvement of the school environment that can be shaped at home (meaning home education), then the second alternative would have faster and more immediate results for students. However, one cannot overlook the fact that particular emphasis should be placed on community, as it is important for other reasons, such as the development of social capital in society, especially in poor areas and rural communities (Mulford and Silius, 2001).

Increasing student performance in the context of community and school unit can also be understood through Howley (1988, as cited in Fykari, 2004), that the school should encourage students to critique the world they live in, developing their skills and their desire to contribute to the development of society and the world.

In addition, a correlation has been proven between the level of students' self-esteem, their subsequent academic success and their overall behaviour at school. Bowring and Carretal argue (2000, as cited in Gelsthorpe, 2003), that irrespective of the level of students' academic performance before entering school and regardless of the advantages or disadvantages arising from their social and economic class, in cases where the school deliberately affects the active involvement of parents and that of the local community in the daily practice of the school unit, students' confidence is significantly higher. From this it can be concluded that the relationship developed between the extrovert school unit and the local community benefits both parties. The inextricable and direct relationship between education and the school unit with the local community cannot be ignored. This relationship is clearly described by Fasoulis (2001), who stresses that education as a social organization gains its competitive advantage when it responds to the demands of society (parents, pupils, teachers), and these demands become even more pronounced as educational organizations are affected by the rapid change in socio-economic patterns. Educational goals and objectives cannot disregard major economic and social changes, and the balance between education and society should be continuous and consistent as regards social developments.

Therefore, education as a social organization gains its comparative advantages when it meets the demands of the social partners, namely teachers, pupils and parents. These demands are even more pronounced

if the school unit is affected by the rapid changes in society and the economy. Consequently, educational objectives should take into account these changes in order to achieve balance between education and society. Lukeris et al. (2005) point out another factor that links education and society, through the association of the school unit, as an educational institution with the family as a member of society. Both family and school are the main educational institutions that influence a person's upbringing. Due to the changes that have taken place in the form and structure of the family in recent decades as a result of the changes in social and economic levels, the family, compared to the past, is partially weaker in terms of educating children. Thus, school is called upon to respond to this change by replenishing as much and as effectively as possible the family's deficit in providing pedagogical and educational qualifications and skills. In addition to the above, the impact of the local community on the effectiveness of the school unit is also understood from the fact that the local community contributes to the reorganization of the school. This includes the actions of parents and other residents, usually in non-urban areas, to "transform" a poorly performing school into a higher-performing school. The aim is to increase the capacity of communities and the reorganization of schools. Improving educational outcomes is just one part of a broader project that aims to create a strong position for communities with low and moderate income per capita. Unlike parent involvement, which focuses on a particular child's school success and the reform of a particular school, the goals of these actions by the whole community focus on changing the entire education system and increasing school accountability (Lopez, 2003). From the above it is easily understood that if society wants or even demands something more 'visible' from school, in terms of effectiveness, as it recognizes the role that school plays for social good, then it should promote schools that develop the spirit of the community and its interests (Skilbeck, 1970, as cited in West - Burnham, 2003).

In fact, the relationship between the local community and school within the context of school effectiveness lies in the benefits of these interactions for both parties, as Gelsthorpe (2003) points out. More specifically, the communication and links that are developed between the local community and school contribute significantly to improving the school's management and effectiveness, as they help achieve the primary purpose of school, which is none other than enriching and improving school learning. In addition, there is a social and economic rejuvenation of the community, dictated by the functioning of the school, while another advantage is the contribution to the further development of the positive public image of the school. Finally, the relationship between education and the local community reinforces the recognition of a school's responsibility to promote partnerships with other bodies and organizations to support lifelong learning, thereby contributing to the effectiveness of the school unit. The involvement of individuals in the local community in order to improve the educational process and school effectiveness is governed by certain characteristics (Lopez, 2003). Initially, members of the local community work together to create a broad base of members who take joint actions to increase the range of their activities, to help reorganize schools and make them more equitable and effective for all students. In addition, residents of the local community build relationships and enhance collective responsibility by identifying common concerns and forming alliances that transcend the boundaries of the local community. Finally, members of the local community use strategies of adult education, citizen participation, public action and negotiation to increase the power of residents with low- and moderate-income levels.

V. CONCLUSION

Theoretical approaches to organizational effectiveness of the school unit have led to the development of various models, each of which emphasizes different effectiveness criteria, with the main categories being adaptability, productivity, participation, continuity and responsiveness to interest groups. The leadership of a school unit plays a critical role in the quality of the education provided. A qualified elementary school principal should never support the view that the school should remain stubbornly entrenched in its strictly predetermined educational tasks, dedicated exclusively to providing knowledge, and be an indifferent viewer of the rapid developments in society. Two key features that can affect the quality of education in a positive direction are on the one hand the cooperation of the school principal with the teachers' association as regards the school management, where the principal should behave as a coach, a partner, an animator, and on the other hand the existence of a clear school goal (vision) in the direction of a common perception as regards the results, priorities, evaluation and responsibility, recognizing school accountability to achieve this goal. Overall, research seems to show that an effective school is run by an effective principal who works in collaboration with the staff, together they share a vision for the school, and they put a great deal of emphasis on achieving goals. Many studies appear to indicate that the existence of culture at school is important for the effectiveness of the school unit. The conditions of the training unit and the goals it sets over time determine the success and appropriateness of its culture. We could say that successful culture is reflected in its human potential and it is evident when the staff is willingly engaged and eagerly involved, and the school principal works outside the school boundaries, that is, with the environment in which the school unit operates, and therefore should interact with this environment. This discovery brings up again the issue of the school-community relationship, and we find that an effective school relies on the interaction between the school unit and the local community. In relation to the

community, management has five key responsibilities: 1) to represent the school in the outside world, 2) to support senior management in the development of its work, 3) to encourage parental involvement, 4) to foster relationships with employers and 5) to encourage the community to learn.

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