

Participatory Management and Functional Competence in the School Environment

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Abstract: This article aims to identify and map the functional competencies of servers in the school environment, in a participatory manner to suggest a proposal, movement or reallocation of the middle activity, in its function within their functional framework of origin. In this way, it will be possible to exploit to the maximum and in a satisfactory way this very valuable intellectual and human capital, and, therefore, verify if it is in a process of overload and functional stress, not presenting results. The problem is to raise the perceptions of the difficulties in the middle activity of public school administration, bringing a possible application of innovative tools of competence management, of the new face of public management. The methodology used was qualitative research, followed by a mapping of the functional competencies of the middle management staff of a high school institution in the State of Paraná. With documentary theoretical foundation, it is believed that, in light of this study, it is possible to suggest subtle management movements, in the trialed environment, transforming the organizational culture and improving public school management, since the middle activity is little cited and explored in this sense.

Keywords: Competencies, Participatory Management, Middle Activity

1. Introduction

This study aims to bring the perceptions and the difficulties faced by the servers of the middle activities, in school management in public state schools in the state of Paraná. The middle activity is characterized by those who have the function of performing educational purposes and are of extreme importance as to the final activity. This school mediator has a fundamental role for the organization's day by day, it is in this activity that the representation of management by competencies and the applicability of participative management is made in a more notorious way "Ferreira (1998)" [13].

The methodology employed was qualitative theoretical-documentary research, followed by document analysis, based on "Paradela's [14]" vision of management and structuring models, followed by theoretical referential, analysis of results, and conclusion with an opening for future research in the area.

The school as a living organism needs a specific functioning. For Paro:

"The mediating character of administration manifests itself

in a peculiar way in educational management, because there the ends to be achieved relate to the cultural emancipation of historical subjects, for whom the apprehension of knowledge presents itself as a decisive element in the construction of their citizenship. "Paro" [24].

Therefore, to actively manage the school is something complex, because it involves many subjects and, specifically, regarding the middle activity employees, who complement and assist the school administration. Their emancipation may or may not occur and it is suggested that they be involved in a participative management.

Participatory management has, in its essence, a model that was born in methodologies based on the principles of administration [10], such as those of Taylor or Ford "(Maximiano) [23]". These theories generated mechanistic management, with principles that have influenced public management today."

Not being very old, participatory management has its birth and application right after a critical period in history. In the school environment, this occurs around the years 1980, during the fall of the Military Regime, anchored in the premise of the Federal Constitution of 1988, in article 205, which states:

"Art.205. Education, a right of all and duty of the State and of the family, will be promoted and encouraged with the collaboration of society, aiming at the full development of the person, his preparation for the exercise of citizenship and his qualification for work." [5].

Moral and ethics are linked to the basic principles of the civil service, which, supported under Decree 1171/94, excels in participative management, counts on processes and has an ideal format to be followed.

Paro defines the middle activity as follows:

"Activities-means: "are those that, although referring to the teaching-learning process, do not do it in an immediate manner, but rather, are placed as facilitators or preconditions for the direct realization of the school pedagogical process that takes place predominantly in the classroom. Among these, the operations related to school management, secretarial services, and complementary activities and assistance to the schoolchildren stand out. (Paro, 2002b, p. 72) [25]"

Management by competence is characterized by identifying the best professional profiles, using their points of excellence and maximizing opportunities for improvement, filling gaps and adding knowledge with continuous training, thus keeping the intellectual capital satisfied and healthy. [6].

In this study, the focus is to map, analyze, rethink and suggest possible improvements in the existing system. And based on decision making, according to Simon (1965) [19] "Each decision level is an end, with respect to the lower levels it is a resource for achieving the higher means." This method needs the full cooperation of the middle activity, being trained at its maximum level of potential, perhaps reallocated within its functional framework, which relies on great cooperation from its managers.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. History of Bureaucratic Management

Management was born based on the findings and discoveries of several revolutionary thinkers as they rethought the way to manage their business or enterprise. Paradela, [14] cites that "These people take their social and ethical scale with them wherever they go." The process of management, as well as life, can be analyzed based on this question of ethics and values, René Descartes, Isaac Newton and Francis Bacon have greatly influenced management as we know it today. Each philosopher applied a particular method in a very important period of his era. Descartes, in his book *Discourse of Method* (Descartes) [8] states: "I think, therefore I am", this greatly changed the way of looking at organizations.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) based on the paradigm construction of negative and positive, suggests collecting as many examples of a given phenomenon as possible (BACON) [2]. Isaac Newton was a mathematician, physicist and astronomer and his major influence on management was the change in the structural approach to management as we know it. In view of these influences, some management approaches are perceived years later. Frederick Taylor (1856-1915), in the

year 1911, portrayed a revolutionary methodology known as the Taylor Method or Taylorism, [28] which changed the factory landscape, and such method still exerts influence today.

Henry Ford (1863-1947) was a leader who brought management in his assembly process in the production lines presenting to mankind a different way of managing, although he did not achieve the expected profitability, a balance was missing (apud Maximiliano) [23]. Henri Fayol, in his classic administration theory [9], presented management methodologies that were revolutionary, creating the mechanistic basis that is closely linked more compact, you may use the solidus, the exp function, or appropriate exponents. Italicize Roman symbols for quantities and variables, but not Greek symbols. Use a long dash rather than a hyphen for a minus sign. Punctuate equations with commas or periods when they are part of a sentence, as in to the state's work system, its way of working management and its corporate way of presenting itself.

Fayol was the founder of tools such as division of labor, authority and responsibility, discipline, unity and command, unity and direction, subordination to the general interests, personal remuneration, centralization (FAYOL, 1994) [12] This approach culminated to the bureaucratic methodology, when Max Weber (1864-1920), [31] with the growth and creation of the public functional framework, generated a new need and a new managerial logic, and from this point is that our need to rethink management as it presents itself. In that period, the tool already presented difficulties with bureaucracy, and not in its healthy and necessary form to public agencies, but in the decision making processes, instead of practicing rationality and impersonal rules, as exposed in his work in the 1920's Weber [31] cites:

"Obedience is founded, rather, in two kinds of motives that are related to personal interests: material retribution and social prestige. On the one hand, the homage of the vassals, the prebend of the dignitaries, the salaries of the present public servants, and, on the other hand, the honor of the knight, the privileges of the orders, and the dignity of the servant constitute the expected reward; and the fear of losing the whole of these advantages is the decisive reason for the solidarity which binds the administrative staff to the holders of power." (Weber) [31].

This action shows that bureaucracy has its healthy and negative side, the bureaucratic management that came from the evolution of mechanistic management, demonstrates pillars of solid foundations for the present day such as: separation of property in the administration, hierarchy of authority, legal character of the rules and regulations, impersonality in relations, standardized routines and procedures, technical competence and meritocracy. The dysfunctions of this model can compromise what should bring both the effectiveness and the efficiency that the public domain needs so much.

What we see in turn is inflexibility, fragmented vision, excessive concentration of decisions in one actor or strict hierarchy, depersonalization of the relationship, lack of

commitment, excessive formalism, overvaluation of the means, favoring corruption, corporativism. (Paradela) [14]. In analysis of these difficulties, participatory management was adopted in some departments, with a more humanistic approach, even if it is in the bureaucratic field, using the theory of decision making.

Herbert Simon (1916-2001) conceived a decision-making system, where each person participates by making individual decisions regarding behavioral alternatives that impact the organization. This system is composed of a sequence of steps that impact the decision-making process, leading to decision making in the organization (MARCH and SIMON) [19].

- 1) Perception of the situation involving some problem;
- 2) Problem definition analysis;
- 3) Goal setting;
- 4) Search for alternative courses of action;
- 5) Evaluation and comparison of alternatives;
- 6) Choose the most suitable alternative;
- 7) Implementation of the chosen alternative.

This decision-making methodology brought a real watershed in terms of management, because it showed that the decentralization of power and participation could contribute to the growth of the organization, adding intellectual capital in a new humanistic approach, and also participatory management for employees, as Taylor initially tried to eliminate, but spread by Hawthorne and Mary Parker Follett (SOUZA and FERREIRA) [27].

2.2. History of Participatory Management

Participatory management had its beginnings with the Hawthorne experiment with its humanistic approach to management. Elton Mayo, an Australian social scientist who died in 1949, was considered the founder of the human relations movement, which opposed Taylor's work principles, active as a professor and director of research at Harvard Business School, Mayo directed the Hawthorne plant research project between 1927 and 1932.

Elton's experiment at Harvard, about quality of life, demonstrated that the smallest things can influence and bring quality of life to the worker, such as lighting, adequate seating, and a ventilated environment. Together Elton and Hawthorne were active in the transformations, especially in the work environment, with biological and physical factors in the work environment, having their theories validated.

The implementation came through studies and tests, such as the use of proper lighting, introducing rest periods, providing snacks, reduction in the workday and other modifications that would leave the work more human. This construction was started in the Harvard laboratory through test groups, through this study came the full change to the humanistic approach, more collaborative and informal for these findings, presenting its milestones in the year 1932 (Souza and Ferreira) [27].

Mary Parquer Follett (1868 - 1933) had such an important role that she became known as the "prophet of management", she had ideals ahead of her time and generated Participative Management with its principles of effective leadership and decentralized (Souza and Ferreira) [27]. Follett understood that

conflicts in the organization could be managed in three ways: by domination, which imposes another party to their wishes; by conciliation, which would be based on the total or partial resignation of one of the parties, and by integration, which represents the best strategy, because it promotes an appropriate solution to conflicts.

Based on this line of thought, the leadership model emerges with open debates and personal empowerment, and not power over people, rebuilding the bases and structures previously known in organizations. (SOUZA and FERREIRA) [27]. Rensis Likert (1903 -1981) deserves great attention, as he conducted major studies in the field of Administration, on a humanistic basis. His studies pointed out characteristics that guided and changed the participative management scenario, in such a way that they are still known and applied today, as an example:

"A communication flow with subordinates so that everyone knows what is happening and what tasks they must perform, and superiors develop a receptive posture to the information; Decisions should be taken in a participatory manner consulted all involved in the process; The search for the welfare of the individual needs to be sought and offer him good working conditions and humanitarian; Satisfaction in the work environment and conditions to feel comfortable and satisfied with colleagues, superiors, tasks should be thought of when compared to remuneration." (PARADELLA) [14].

Abraham Harold Maslow (1908- 1970) developed a major study regarding work motivation, focusing on the investigation of human needs, their reflection on the motivational process, and the impact of this on the job function (Maslow) [21].

The hierarchy of needs had a great influence on later studies of his time. Maslow always emphasized that motivation was one of the factors that drove the worker's choices. Based on this thought, he developed the pyramid of needs as shown in the figure 1 [22].

This pyramid allowed the reflection that the worker searches for satisfaction in priority scales, making him divide himself into two types of search degrees, primary and secondary. In humanistic management, such as participative management, we look at these scales of needs not only in a rigid way, only at the physiological level of the human being, but also in its totality, in the format of well-being and completeness. Some say that this study was conducted in such a way as to look at the human being by layers of rigid needs and not in its amplitude, confusing will with desire.

This study has been of great and fundamental help to explain the behavior and the search of each worker. Maslow in his work shows that the worker needs quality in his work environment to reach new stages of development of his competencies, so he feels part of a larger objective and purpose.

For each need satisfied a higher level can be thought and desired, then the commitment of the employee changes, including their values and beliefs. Following the humanistic precepts, we realize that participative management has this

identity, of not just an order from the top, cancelling out the other employees and their needs. The school environment is a broad field of research for the scale of needs, because the collaborators of the middle activity, whether hired or under contract, aim to achieve something in their lives that goes

beyond their physiological needs. However, sometimes dissatisfaction leads them to stay at the first base of the pyramid. Participative management is based on its fundamentals, humanizing the work, without removing its effectiveness and efficiency.

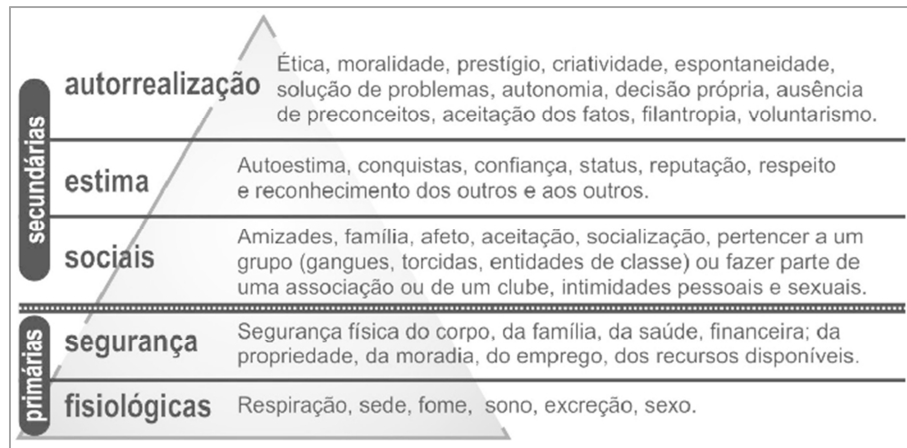


Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid. [22].

2.3. Competency Management History

In the historical survey of the Management by competencies we will take a look under the knowledge management, analyzing historically its creators and thinkers in its theoretical root, and contemplation of fact, that human knowledge is a concern. Since antiquity and one of the most addressed topics since the Bronze Age.

According to writings from the mythology of the Celtic civilization, around the 14th century B. C. this people were known as the gods of religion and science, they used magic prophecies and unlike our contemporary civilization, there was no separatist vision between actions of thought and action itself, for them it was all a "unison thing" Barros [3]. This action of being unison, as quoted, lasted until pre-Socratic Greece. About 700 years later, with the birth of the philosophers, there was a separation, the city from the house. Discerning matters between communion (oikos) where the woman and slave stayed, producing for the sake of the economy, and politics for the (polis) city, thus separating public space with discourse of persuasion, 'Vernant [29]' cites:

"What the system of the polis implies is first of all an extraordinary preeminence of the word over all other instruments of power. It becomes the political instrument par excellence, the key to all authority in the state, the means of command and dominion over others."

The polis was the space of safety and publicity of human achievements where they could gain the narration and admiration of their deeds through philosophy and human thoughts, which would be passed on to the next generations. Wagner (2000, p 41) [30] cited that this function "transcended mortality to be present in the becoming, in the form of a remembrance." All of these philosophies shaped society by applying a justified true belief, to which Plato cites in his work

"Knowledge, Language and Thought in Plato." (PLATO) [17].

Among the Socratic philosophers I highlight Plato, Aristotle and Socrates himself, who with indignation at the whole scenario left, the city and with it, the life and way of living of the polis. Separating thought from the human side began the contemplative life or contemplation and the active life, which in their eyes was superior to action. (apud, ARENDT) [1]. After this separation of contemplation and action, there was an attitude of change in men, in which Christianity played a decisive role. Fundamentally, a large part of the thinkers of the time addressed the layers of power in all its spheres, thus encompassing the base of the capitalist system. What we need to understand is that the Christian era did indeed lay the foundation for much of what we are as people, socially speaking, today.

St. Augustine (354-430), considered a heretic man, was a North African philosopher, writer, bishop, and important Christian theologian. During the Roman domination, he was also the originator of the foundations of modern capitalism. Hirschman brings an explanatory fragment about the philosopher demonstrating his importance in this context:

"At the beginning of the Christian Era, Augustine denounced the desire for money and possessions as one of the three main sins, the other two being the desire for power and sexual desire. Augustine conceived of the possibility of one vice suppressing another." "(Hirscschman) [16].

Soon, as the years passed, Karl Marx (1818-83) who was a fierce critic of Adam Smith's work, understood in his philosophy and theory, that the value of labor results or corresponds to the amount of labor put into it. Work is the source of all its productivity, being the ultimate expression of man, for Marx "it was work that created man, not God". [20].

These concepts brought a vision that it was time to change the world from *vita contemplativa* to *vita activa*. Marx and Engels in their communist manifesto quote "all that is solid

crumbles into air" (anput, PARADELA,) [14] and Marshall Berman makes a deep analysis of their thought, we can abstract this by highlighting a passage from the myth of Faust, the symbolism of an entrepreneurial businessman, a kind of creative destruction:

"Faustus returns once again to his lonely room to meditate on the human condition. He opens the Bible, at the beginning of the Gospel according to St. John: "In the beginning was the Word." Considering this principle cosmically inadequate, he looks for an alternative and finally chooses and writes a new principle: "In the beginning was Action." Through the primordial act of creating the world, he is enlightened with vibrancy by the spirit and power of this God, and declares himself ready to reconsecrate his life the widely creative actions." (Berman) [4].

From these acts everything was questioned and brought back to a new way of doing management. This movement came about through thinkers and several classical authors who were enlightened with new precepts that *vita contemplativa* was no solution and *vita activa* is human action. In this same vein, politics did not distinguish work from labor. Politics is associated with the precept between freedom of birth and singularity as beings. Arendt defended this discourse:

This imprint of surprising unpredictability is inherent to every beginning and every origin (...) The new always happens in spite of the overwhelming force of statistical laws and their probability which, for practical and everyday purposes, is equivalent to certainty; thus, the new always appears under the guise of miracle. The fact that man is able to act means that the unexpected can be expected of him, that he is able to accomplish the improbable. (ARENDT, 1995, 190-191). [1].

This new management format that was born in this period has guided and shaped the way we do management up to the present time and has shaped the management within the school institutions as we know them today.

3. Analysis and Discussion

3.1. The History of School Management and Its Changes

The Federal Constitution of 1988, in Article 206, establishes that the management of Brazilian education must be based on a democratic and participatory model. Article 14 of the Law of Directives and Bases for National Education [18] (Law no. 9.394/1996) and article 9 of the National Plan Law refer to the democratic and participatory model of educational management.

- I. Participation of education professionals in the elaboration of the school's pedagogical project;
- II. Participation of school and local communities in school councils or equivalent. (BRAZIL) [5].

Through these premises, the school systems are formed, as it is inserted contextually, the decisions in the school context in the world and in our country, which are taken in good part with a certain freedom and autonomy. The school community is designated to take care of one of the greatest goods of

humanity, teaching and education. The mechanism begins with the choice of the maximum school manager, the "principal".

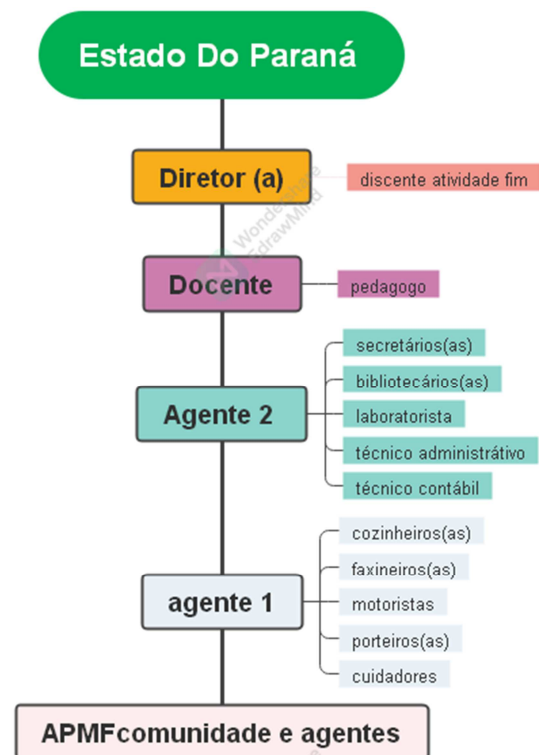
3.2. School Management and The Manager

The principal has the function of managing the school pedagogically and administratively.

Their choice is made through political elections with involvement of the school community, except when in specific situations the State is indicated. Gadodotti and Romão (2001) [15] talk about the constant change in the school scenario and its management, being the current standard that of a manager, who is in front of this community and to bring balance and engagement.

The school principals are teachers who have been approved for the position by the community and the executive branch. They have pedagogical experience, but many times, none in management or specific training for the position; not being the ideal for the community, but it is the best model for the moment. Correa [7] says that the election of the principal may be the first step towards democratic management, but in some cases, managers use authoritarianism and abuse instead of mature leadership, whose authority is of a shared management.

But this is a fine line, because several management methodologies are considered democratic and participatory, including the community in the process, however, others are relatively fulfilling the real social role they should fulfill, being a quality education and a correct management.



Source: Own production watermark referring to the software [11]

Figure 2. Functional Organization Chart.

3.3. Participative Management and Functional Competence of the Middle Activity

The school environment is formed by several actors, such as school councils, collegiate boards and APMF (Association of Parents, Teachers and Staff), which emerged in the 1980s. For Libâneo [26], the school needs not only teachers for its operation, but also the middle activity, which is widely inserted in the context of participatory democratic management.

"This relationship between the purposes of the school and the activities carried out to achieve them gives the school management a mediating character: "both the activities-mean (direction, secretarial services, assistance to the school, and complementary activities [...]" PARO, [24].

Figure 2 shows the structure of the school: directors, teachers, Agents 2 (administrative technicians, library, school office, laboratory assistant), functional sector agents 1 (kitchen, cleaning, reception), and APMF - these activities are of utmost importance in the school's daily routine, and are positions taken on via public competition or temporary selection process (PSS).

The school principal has a fixed term of office, works under the supervision of the state, and the school community is governed by a participatory Political Pedagogical Project (PPP). The problem that is in our focus is the functional management of agents 1 and 2. The screening of a specific group of employees denounces the lack of clarity in the work bases for these agents, since the PPP guides the pedagogical guidelines of the school, and not the administrative part as well as cited.

The school bylaws are not as clear and accessible or republican for the functions of the middle activity, thus including its norms and methodologies of work within its framework.

The functional management for an agent 1 and 2 should be mixed of PPP and business administration to maximize the functionalities and skills that this server can perform in his function, however the manager has not been prepared for such proposed challenges, according to Souza [27]. The construction of a reinvented education, or differentiated organizational functional management, requires that school management and its managers receive new cognitive-attitudinal skills.

The reconstruction is necessary, because even though the law is based on the premise of a participatory democratic education, which agents 1 and 2 do not effectively participate in, when the socio-historical context of the school is analyzed, the middle managers do not understand that they are an integral part of the school. Even the agents that 1, abstain from the training for continuous improvement offered by the State, because they don't understand that this is a necessity, after all, the stability keeps them in their position, where they were assigned by the State. Their condition is widely differentiated from the corporate market, as well as in the private sector, or even if this function were outsourced.

The initial functional competence, to change the labor

context of the middle activity is the Metanoia, that is, a conversion of look, a revolution in thinking, the manager or director needs to be in constant change, otherwise he or she will not be reappointed to a new managerial management. What is the necessary provocation to change these servers, who have apparently parked on Maslow's pyramid?

In observance of the functional framework, as we brought the vision of Maslow's pyramid [21], it could be considered the fact that rarely the middle activity manages to overcome the second layer of this pyramid. The level of security is the only one that is desired and conquered; the other layers can be worked on through a participative and competence-based management exercise. For a public servant of the middle activity there is little to expand, they stay twenty years in the same function, full of discontent, without challenging themselves. There are elements within the middle activity that can bring some benefits to those who are hired, such as the progression through courses and pedagogical training, bringing a challenge to climb this chain of needs, leaving the first basic layer.

Systematization is a fundamental functional competence for the middle agent, the knowledge of the systematics of his function, which makes him effective and efficient, recognize his limitations and learn and relearn daily, becoming a constant evolution. The middle activity is of utmost importance for the fulfillment of the end activity, if their skills are molded to the new management model, because times have been changing, not only for the teachers, that the education in the classroom is renewed every day, but for the system as a whole. *A life long learning system* is needed.

People management is renewed every day, its tools used in the business world are being widely applied in the school functional background and reinventing the context of school management. After all, new ideas are born inside the school institutions through scientific research. In the context of Public School Institutions of the State of Paraná, the function of middle activity is as important as the teachers in the formation of students.

This activity receives training twice a year, in the model of pedagogical weeks, in an isolated way, that is, a training language specifically focused on the sector and its improvement process, Paro [24] cites that:

"When one dissociates activities-mean from the purposes of education, both the bureaucratization of school activity and the reduction of school management to a technicist dimension can occur, with the introduction of managerial tools for solving educational problems."

The middle activity with its training and study offers opportunities within its functional framework to broad national and state projects for career advancement. The quality of life can be improved as a two-way street between the public servant and the State, with a healthy mediation. The middle activity also has great potential to welcome the school community, since it has greater contact with parents, and the first contact with students, the need to identify the correct competence to the employee, can totally influence the end of the process (RCP, PR, 2018) [26].

The social evolution and the evolution in participatory democratic management and functional management of the middle activity depend on several factors, starting with the expansion of school autonomy and the real democratization of the school. [32] The management team, being prepared not only pedagogically, but also with administrative skills to deal with the middle activities, because the *vita activa* is different from the *vita contemplativa*, the educational practices are completely different from the management practices. The middle activity needs an awareness as a social-political practice of its function and the relevance of its role in the school, to cross the frontier and effectively enable a functional participatory democratic management in its sector, stopping wasting its capabilities, being able to carry out large projects of impact on society and contribute to an interventionist tomorrow of historical production in human existence.

4. Conclusion

In recent years the School institutions of the State of Paraná have been going through several transformations, so that Participative Management with the application of Functional Competence Management is practicable. In this environment it is necessary that a mapping of functional competencies occurs from the development of a de-essentialized structure, with administrative, financial and pedagogical autonomy on the part of the management team, without "unnecessary bureaucracy", as Paro states, to start the movement for improvement in the school organizational system.

Managing a public body is a great challenge, especially in the school environment, since it is the one that educates new citizens. For a continuous improvement in school management, the implementation of an early training system for the position of principal of the institution would be a kind of basic competence for the position. And the offer of school management courses as a minimum requirement for election, which would generate a better use of the competences of all education collaborators, in all school sectors, reducing several problems of the middle activity, in favor of the end activity.

Training of specific functional competence focused on the middle activity, training and updating these servers for the position and the possible rotation if necessary, according to the needs survey during the training.

The management team prepared not only pedagogically, but also technically and administratively to manage the middle activity, and the educational practices of the institutions, which are completely different from the day-to-day management practices.

The Secretariat of Education of the state of Paraná has several projects of continuing education and training for the middle management staff. What is really missing in the school scenario, as already mapped by Paro, is a better administration of the intellectual capital and the allocation of these resources. The social evolution, the evolution of participatory democratic management and the functional management of the middle activity depend on several factors, starting initially with the

expansion of school autonomy and the real democratization of the school.

The representations objected in this study demonstrate that the middle activity employees have skills and intellectual capital to achieve a higher level of quality of professional life. Even if the school institution has a systemic organizational structure, structured by a series of documents that legally support its way of managing, bringing the guidelines and institutional principles, there are the rights of the servers to participate directly in institutional decisions, characterizing the participatory management, bringing this openness to allocate each server in its functional framework as represented in figure 2, acting in their best performance to reach the end activity effectively.

The solutions pointed out in this study are the result of documentary findings, and it is believed to be possible to carry out, at a low cost, such management movements, which can be applied based on scientific research, on official documents configured in public policies, on actions within the institutional environment, and on practical knowledge about public management with emphasis on people.

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