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The Schools Organization between the territory and the value of network
La scuola come organizzazione tra il territorio e il valore della rete

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Abstract

Educational agencies are going through a difficult transition period, with important consequences in terms of de-legitimacy of the social mandate historically assigned to the school. The reason of this widespread uneasiness can be traced in the fact that today we live in a complex system where traditional school cannot live in an isolated way.

The following contribution arises within this problematic framework with the aim of outlining the most important patterns of change affecting education agencies during the last fifteen years in Italy, paying particular attention to the new institutional and legislative framework which redefined the whole educational structure in this country and which had to be realigned to agreements between European countries such as the Bologna Process.

The objective of this essay is to contribute in the development of a new vision of the education system, in line with the challenges posed by the global and complex society that emphasizes both the importance of evaluation of education agencies, in a logic of a more attentive Quality

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Assurance, and networking, an instrument which can cultivate the responsible participation of the entire community in the education project.

Key words: school organization; education policies; network; education community.

Abstract

Le agenzie educative stanno attraversando un periodo di transizione difficile, con conseguenze importanti in termini di delegittimazione del mandato sociale storicamente assegnato alla scuola. La ragione di questa diffusa diffidenza può essere fatta risalire al fatto che oggi viviamo in un sistema complesso in cui la scuola tradizionale non può vivere in modo isolato.

Il seguente contributo nasce all'interno di questo quadro problematico con l'obiettivo di delineare i più importanti modelli di cambiamento che hanno interessato le agenzie educative negli ultimi quindici anni in Italia, prestando particolare attenzione al nuovo quadro istituzionale e legislativo che ha ridefinito l'intera struttura educativa in questo paese per allinearla agli accordi dei paesi europei in relazione al cosiddetto Processo di Bologna.

L'obiettivo di questo saggio è di contribuire allo sviluppo di una nuova visione del sistema educativo, in linea con le sfide poste dalla società globale e complessa che enfatizza sia l'importanza della valutazione delle agenzie educative, sia la crescente rilevanza di un approccio volto a valorizzare una logica di networking come strumento per promuovere la partecipazione responsabile dell'intera comunità nel progetto educativo.

Parole chiave: scuola come organizzazione; politiche educative; network; comunità educante.

1. Introduction

In the traditional communities socialization and education were realized inside families. But with the transition through modern society the important functions of socialization and education have been incorporated in the growing role taken by school. This balance between school and society has remained unaffected until the '70s when the big crisis and a critical revision of the society emerged the deep inequalities and the perverse effects which characterized the education system. The sociology of education has explained the importance of the education in the individual and social improvement with meritocratic theories and human capital (Schultz, 1961) whilst many others demonstrated their perverse effects (Collins, 1979), the inequality in access (Bourdieu, 1970; Bernstein, 1971), the selection function of the school, caused by discrimination (Althusser, 1970) and the control of mass media (Adorno, Horkheimer, 1947). We have no doubts in the fact that education agencies have an essential aim in the society, to accompany persons to find their place in the community, through the interiorisation of norms and values (Durkheim, 1987; Parsons, 1951) and the acquisition of knowledge and skills (OECD, 2006, 2010, 2011, 2012/a, 2012/b) expendable in social and work life. But, with the advent of postmodern society and a global and complex system, the educational agencies show the great difficulty in facing this transition in a territory which appears fragmented, trapped in the risk of centrifugal forces that produce schools similar to decomposed and isolated atoms, inside a social system that does not recognize their value. For this reason, we observe the necessity to invent different organizational models for the school of the XXI

century, where we need to recompose the educating community with the postmodern society through the functional specialization of subsystems (Parsons, 1951).

The starting point of the study is the important role played by the networks such as new organization models for the school. The aim of the essay is to show the emerging education organization model through the Italian case study which outlines the recent education policies realized in the last 15 years in the country to respond to this social complexity.

The essay draws on extensive research (qualitative and quantitative), training and consultations carried out in schools, and for schools, over the past ten years, converged in publications² and research reports³ to which we refer to study empirical data in depth. (Here, we report only the most relevant considerations, in line with the aim of this reflection).

In keeping with this intent, the essay is articulated as follows: a brief presentation about the most important reform which has interested the Education system in Italy in recent years (§ 1); a reflection about a new educational model closer to the contemporary (§ 2), also to regard to the professional needs of those who work, at different levels, within educational agencies (§ 3); a brief presentation of results useful to understand the way in which network among school takes shape in our country (§ 4), the European perspective. In conclusion, the essay focuses on the responsibility of the community to promote positive results in education and learning.

1 . The scenario of the change

Today, we are dealing with an extraordinary social change. For many years, the idea of a linear progress development accompanied the West. Since the oil shock of the 70s, this concept is in serious crisis. So, we measure ourselves with a social and economic crisis that seems to have no end (OECD, 2013), instilling the seeds of doubt regarding the validity and sustainability of a completely liberal and consumerist model⁴ which complements the decline of communist ideology.

Every day, we can observe classes of our schools and universities⁵ composed of a multicultural mixture where horizontal (between students) and vertical (teacher-student) dynamics can be very difficult, not only for the constraint of the language but also because we face differences in cultural, religious and gender order, which can weigh variously, depending on the culture.

The education system, in the third millennium, has no longer its protective boundaries but lives in a global world, where, through Internet (Castells, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009), everyone can compare him/herself directly with the world, without any mediation. Anybody can experiment this stage of unease in the over-communication offered by the evolution of Information Communication Technology (ICT). Without wishing to reconstruct in detail these changes, we can remember how the development of ICT modified the telecommunications landscape.

² Capogna, 2002; 2004/a; 2004/b; 2006; 2007/a; 2007/b; 2008/a; 2008/b; 2008/c; 2009/a, 2009/b; 2010; 2011/a; 2011/b; 2014/a; 2014/b.

³ We refer to the reports made by the Observatory on autonomy school regarding "Autonomy of research and evaluation" (Osservatorio sulla scuola dell'autonomia, 2004); "Educational institutions and training systems at regional and local levels" (De Martin, Coccozza, Porrotto, 2008); "Educational institutions and autonomy: from regional frameworks to a national perspective" (Osservatorio sulla scuola dell'autonomia, 2010).

⁴ See for example the critique of the neo-liberal model Tony Judt (2011).

⁵ On the changes that have interested the University in recent years, see also: Capogna 2008, 2009/a, 2009/b, 2011/a; 2011/b

In the last fifty years, the web revolution has radically altered our cultural and social structures, redesigning, completely, the framework of relations that moves within the space-time continuum where time is timeless (Castells, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009). All this has expanded more and more our way to communicate, acquire information and be in contact with others, changing anthropologically our "being" in the world (Heidegger, 1927). Moreover, education agencies have to make a comparison with other, more attractive, socialization agencies (peer group, media, music, fashion, Internet etc). Inevitably, this creates a challenge for educative agencies founded on the priority of the 'high culture' (Gellner, 1983). Finally, very often, in our post modern society, we can observe a variety of different kinds of families⁶, where the young risk growing up in the absence of significant family figures, in a condition of isolation, and with no adults to refer to who are able to listen to them and to educate them to a global identity (Morin, 1999).

In the face of all these changes, only briefly sketched here, educational agencies are struggling to rethink their social mandate. Consequently, we note the difficulty to reach a new organization shape, able to respond to this complex challenge with new pedagogical, didactic, communicative and relational solutions through which to achieve the school of the third millennium. For this reason, some authors refer to this period as the "crisis of the myth of education" (Dubet, 2002).

We are within a social system that considers the information (Castells, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2009), the knowledge (Foray, 2006), the self-affirmation (Tourain, 1997, 2003) and social relationships developed in contemporary society⁷, in a very different way in comparison to fifteen years ago, so as 'to shout' to the "end of the social" (Tourain, 2012). But we know that we cannot imagine any real change if this does not happen from the inside, and if we do not take into account specific and targeted problems; that is, if we do not assume a situated, proximal and incremental perspective. And this is particularly true with the school, formed by a disarticulated, disjointed, composite and internally differentiated institution, in terms of resources, visions, people and expertise. The reason for which Granovetter speaks of "weak ties" (1983).

Educational agencies may face and survive these changes only if they are located inside the social context, with the intent to "surf" this tidal wave that sweeps away every previous balance. Today, we need new creative and passionate skills to guide this challenge. Accompanying the change, in this perspective, means to develop a new vision of the educational mission, closer to the vocational skills of people (Capogna, 2011/a), immersed in an open and turbulent environment, more attentive to the outcomes of what happens and deeply rooted in the territory with which the school exchanges resources and legitimacy. A school like this, therefore, cannot be a centralized bureaucracy but it needs to be located in the socio-cultural context in which it is inserted⁸. This means, as clearly highlighted by research reports, (Centre for the autonomy school, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2012) to develop new organizational and professional competencies, at all levels and in all roles, for those who work in the educational institutions and administrative apparatus connected to it (Capogna, 2007/a). For this reason, in the last few years, with regard to the processes of evaluation of the overall performance of the school system, the Finnish system is considered as a good practice in all

⁶ On the transformation of family units in post-modern society see, among others, Chambres (2012).

⁷ The scientific literature offers an important debate regarding the contemporary society, defined post-modern society (Tourain, 2006), reflexive society (Beck, Giddens, Lash, 1999, Archer, 2006) and risk society (Beck, 2000).

⁸ On the important leadership role of the institution of local implementation to promote the social and economic development refer to Capogna (2007/a, 2012).

OECD surveys. The observation of this educational model highlights four key factors for the success of educative agencies. The relevance of a “glocal” vision, accompanied by the enhancement of local autonomy. The interpretation and responsibilities of all actors are related to the evaluation of results. The synergic interaction of these factors help to create a conducive environment which spreads the social capital (Putnam, 2001), that is essential to the development of community and human capital.

2. The most important reform which reshaped the Italian Education system

The school of the third millennium is, but overall needs to be, an integrated system (Capogna, 2006; 2007/b; 2008/b; 2009/a), in constant and positive inter-relationship with the training, the work and guidance services, in a virtuous circle that is self-perpetuating without end, where each component cannot be separated from each other. This is the logic of lifelong learning, which aims to recognize and appreciate every experience of formal, non-formal and informal learning, where people grow and forge themselves, developing vocations, knowledge, abilities and skills, which are useful to the identification process (Touraine, 2003), and to the formation of a "tête bien fait" (Morin, 1999), to move independently and critically in a complex society. For this reason, career guidance is crucial to educate those emotional skills (Goleman, 2011) so important today to move in a turbulent environment characterized by high relational and communicative density, which implies a significant emotional stress.

In the new framework and institutional regulatory, school autonomy has meaning and value only if anchored in a system of local self-government. It has to be embedded, actually incorporated in the local territory, to respond both adaptively to training needs that come from the world of work, and creatively to trends and emerging lines of development that are expression to the socio-cultural context. The school cannot be taken out of this framework, and especially it cannot be left alone, abandoned by the indifference of other institutional actors that together contribute to the construction and growth of a community. It can express its independence of government only within a framework of equal virtuous relations with all social actors with which it interacts, where each one fulfills its responsible institutional and social role. This observation introduces another important problem, the necessity to always operate in a partnership logic. In the complex system in which we move now, "no one wins alone." For this reason in the last years Italy started a process of reforms aimed to reshape the entire education system and all its interaction with all other actors which crowd the governance space. Thanks to these important Reforms in the field of Education, we can observe relevant mutation which are briefly summarized here. The first delegation to the Govern, with regard to Education, is dated 1995. But the decentralization process has emerged by the Law 59/1997 and the Constitutional Law 3/2001 which started a decentralization process from the central Ministry to the local Institutions. This process founded the first systematization with D. Lgs. 275/1999 which signed the starting up of the autonomy for Italian schools. This autonomy was recognised in the fields of: didactics organisation, finance research and experimentation. One of the most important points introduced by this Law refers to the network of schools (article 7) which authorizes schools to make networks, associations and cooperation agreements. Successive reforms have also insisted on the opportunity to network focusing on specific aspects of the educational process as the stages (L. 53/2003) and the orientation (D. Lgs 76; 77/2005). The transition from the

school of curricula, expression of a centralized system, to the customization of the curricula school, expression of a system of autonomous schools, is based on certain keywords inherited directly from Europe: centrality of student, customized learning plans tutorship, certification of credits, portfolio skills, transition from school to training-job. All these activities aim at communicating in a new way with the territory.

All activities which call to school to leave their own self and communicate in a new ways with the territory.

The theme of complexity so far mentioned, allows us to introduce another thorny issue, i.e., the evaluation. In fact, the affirmation of powerful software analysis has permitted the development of what is known as “the big data society” (Halford, 2014). The possibility to manage huge amounts of data, accompanied by the increasing desire to check the outcomes of investment in higher education, has produced a wide movement of ideas regarding the necessity of the evaluation. In many countries the culture and the practice of evaluation has spread since the 80s, contrarily to Italy where it looks like a recent conquest with the Italian DP 80/2013 which focuses on the theme of self-evaluation process of educational institutions. Indeed, we agree on the centrality of the process of self- analysis of educational institutions, but we also believe that in terms of evaluation we cannot and we must not improvise. These skills in schools and in universities should be guided and trained, so that the evaluation can truly become a lever of development inside the education system. In a manifold society, the strategic assessment is essential to the functioning of the organization, in particular those with a public purpose, and social development (not only, therefore, those in education and training but also for those working in the health services, rehabilitation, nursing etc.). Surely, we must be careful of both the risk of economistic and reductionist tendencies, and of the denigration against any form of assessment. For this reason, the formation of specific knowledge and skills is essential to accompany a new culture on this issue.

Alongside, we note the importance of ethical behavior of all the actors who make up the school (teachers, administrators, technical and administrative figures) and contour actors such as stakeholders (such as entrepreneurial) and shareholders (such as, for example, families) with whom the school must interact. The ethical issue affects every segment of our society and refers to the recognition of the value of the person as such in its historical and cultural specificity. It is important to retrieve the value in the school of the centrality of the person as such (student and teacher), sometimes sacrificed behind the standardization of bond programs, objectives and regulations, with the risk of destroying the value of creativity and innovation. In an educational system that, in the post-modern society, must form the subject to solve problems that are still unknown, the size of the creative and divergent thinking acquires a new value. And emotional intelligence becomes a new resource.

3. The school organization

This altered context needs to change radically coordination mechanisms within the educational institutions. For decades, these systems have worked in a standardized professional way; to the present day it is required that these systems, more and more, turn their expertise to the mutual adaptation, better defined by Mintzberg (1985) as "adhocracy." The conditions to work properly in these kind of organizations are the ability to set up specialist working groups which are able to work on "projects", avoiding the "crystallization"; emphasizing the flow of information throughout the

whole structure, with respect to recipients, their culture, their needs and the results of processing and project achieved by each working group; enhancing the image of collaborators; generating in the organization the "culture" of flexibility and adaptivity, and transparent organizational solutions. The "adhocratic" model is characterized by the presence both of a close-knit core of specialists and consultants, to conduct non-formal behavior, and a new way to conceive the hierarchy. This vision of innovative and flexible organization encourages the exploration of new solutions on a variety of routes that are not defined beforehand, and that recognize the emotional skills as keys for the success of individuals, groups and organizations. This requires every person who works in educational agencies to preside know-how and a set of professional, communicative and emotional skills that were unimaginable only up to fifteen years ago. Anyone who wants to work today in educational agencies (with which we intend the integrated school-job-training system), at any level and in any field, requires a new vision of the educational mission. So, this necessity to develop new paradigms to think and "put into practice" (Latour, 1998) education, as new and more complex skills of planning, management, evaluation, communication and relationships which allow us to move with greater ease, and less emotional and cognitive stress, within organizations where professional and personal relationships expose us to a work system more and more multiplex.

We are in "midstream". This can lead us toward a new way to imagine the whole educational didactic and teaching system at all levels. There are no simple solutions.

The room for enhancement of these complex skills are varied and require constant effort, patience and the desire to really 'get into the game', because they invest also, directly, the intimate spaces to manage the emotions, the uncertainty and the stress that comes from an organizational and professional system more and more characterized by high density of communication and relationships, and the increasing dematerialized of the organization (Sennett, 1998). This means that, as well as changing the educational goals of the school and the way in which we translate them into practice, we have to modify the way through which we assess needs of professional and personal training for those who work in these environments (teachers, administrators, middle management etc.). So, consequently, we need to revise methods and places through which these people can find appropriate opportunities and training to improve/empower themselves. All this, inevitably, spills over into the policies of recruitment, re-training and career development through which these skills are recognized, valued and promoted within that variety of contexts in which they operate. Then, to adapt educational agencies to this enormous change (school, university and vocational training), it passes through a significant reinterpretation of the traditional personnel policies. In Italy, these policies have often been characterized both by political patronage and by the guarantee of job position, without the promotion of merit and individual responsibility. Maybe, it is time to overcome the ideological clashes and interests of category that have always accompanied the debate on these issues. Nowadays, we need to move the focus on the idea that education, in its various forms, can be a real resource for all only if everyone assumes its part responsibly, also for this the European Community urges member states to promote the excellence in teaching and learning (CC.EE. 2013).

4. The case of study: The Italian schools through the network

It is not easy to build, manage, operate and communicate within networks, because this necessarily requires the development of new skills in leadership, management, action, evaluation and planning. Research conducted by the Observatory on autonomy school (2002, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2012) demonstrates extensively the variety of experiences that can be counted under the logic of the network, and the complexity of interactions and processes that are triggered by these. So, the question, for the education system, is to act as an intricate organization within a just multiplex framework of inter-organizational relationships. It is necessary they know how to network, through networking and bridging policies, so as to be capable to produce a positive ‘sum-game’, both to add value to the community development and to be a multiplier of resources through the sharing of goods, services, infrastructures and skills.

The ability to act in a logic network amplifies the possibilities to improve, if it is able to engage on that vision defined commonly “glocal”. Namely a vision able to activate a perspective of a global system, a system of the world, able to contextualize, root, develop and implement within the territory opportunities that, in a globalized society, are on the web (Foray, 2006) and in the world.

To mature perspectives and new skills to move into a logic of the network it is important also to face another crucial problem with which today we have to deal, the gradual and inexorable reduction of resources, the end of indiscriminate funding, separated from any form of evaluation and reporting ex post, and consequently the deviation towards forms of funding “for projects”. Decades of bureaucratic and administration traditions, based on a centralized and top-down logic have deprived the educational agencies of an entrepreneurial spirit. Also this requires to rethink and evolve new and more articulate skills for those working, in different positions, in educational institutions. Probably, also for this reason, in Italy we observe, at all levels (central government, schools, universities and businesses), a serious skills gap to access, submit, manage and report on projects, particularly those promoted by the European Community. This is confirmed by the fact that we are among the European countries, as many authoritative sources have reported⁹, the one that returns the largest share of funds.

We move now as people, organizations and institutions within a multi-faceted and complicated system that requires to mature complex skills, so traditional organizational and education models are no longer adequate.

The research above cited had the purpose of studying the orientation and purposes of the networks of schools; the motivations that guided their actions; and the kind of organization structure. With regards to the first dimension (orientation and purposes), the analysis seems to confirm, once again, a trend largely self-referential, characterized by a predominance of actions directed to the staff, i.e. the updating teaching staff or emergency management and actions focused in the short term. Compared to the motivations, the research results show that L. 275/99 has had the opportunity to spread networks of school and new way to cooperate. Mainly, they appear networks of self-support and solidarity, that is constituted by a logic of short-term, aimed to the acquisition of

⁹ For more informations on the Italian difficulties to commit and spend EU funds see, among others, eNews.it:

- <http://www.eunews.it/2012/09/27/fondi-ue-per-litalia-di-29-miliardi-ne-abbiamo-usati-solo-7/1892>
- Table FERS: <http://www.eunews.it/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Tabella-FESR.pdf>
- Table ESF: <http://www.eunews.it/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Tabella-FSE1.pdf>

<http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/SoleOnLine4/Economia%20e%20Lavoro/2009/03/fondi-europei-italia-eurispes.shtml>

resources or to solve specific needs. Broader alliances with different stake holders appear less spread and characterized by the presence of Public and institutional entities. As regards to the organizational and managerial processes, we observe a poor structuring of relationships and decision-making. This issue presents a certain ambivalence. It is true that helps to maintain a flexible organization, but we can not ignore the risk related to the excessive fluidity, i.e. the instability and lack of organizational vision and shared strategies.

Multivariate analysis of the results obtained in quantitative research allowed to set up a typology consisting of three different clusters oriented to outline the nature of the networks analyzed and their specific purpose. We say the first typology *networks of purpose* (40.1%). These are constituted to improve access to finance. Generally, these networks are created to solve generic needs and to seize opportunities of various kinds. The second typology is defined *advocacy networks* (32.1%). These network aim to improve the interaction and communication with, and from, various local actors. These are "open networks" differently by the first typology these network do not include only schools. The group maintains a strong focus on initiatives aimed both to students and the internal staff. In this type of cluster a significant role is played by the school administration (provincial and regional offices) which support the development of education systems through the sharing of guidelines and strategies funding to promote networks. The third typology is the *mixed networks* (27.8%). These networks operate both functions and are characterized by the most advanced experiences of innovators network. We can observe their effort to innovate, improve and try a new reposition in a polycentric education system where school can play a role as actor of local development. The set of data shows that, generally, these networks have difficulty extending their links to different segments. Then, the goal to build a larger collective actors, able to integrate resources previously disconnected (Granovetter, 1983), is not realized. In other words, it does not appear to overcome the inter-systemic fragmentation. This criticism is further confirmed by the poor structuring of the networks, both in terms of formalization of inter-organizational relationships and in relation to the fragility and fluidity of decision-making. This weakness could result in a limit to the construction of a stable model of cooperative transactions between all parties involved. The results of the research show that many efforts have been done to provide support and tools to realize a new education systems based on the network logic but we observe a different distribution on the territory and the necessity to help the evolution of the model through new form of representation.

5. The European Perspective

With regards to the education sector, the line of action Community in respect of national policies, is based on the principle of subsidiary and promoting cooperation between Member States, respecting the responsibility of the Union. The Lisbon European Council in 2000 has opened a new phase characterized by greater political awareness about the centrality of education policies and training as part of a wider strategy aimed at ensuring the realization of sustainable economic growth and a greater social cohesion. The enthusiasm of Lisbon seems to run aground at the turn of 2010 and put into question the prospect of a resumption of cooperation.

International experiences show that also in other European countries, there is a wide-ranging debate on the subject of networks. In recent decades, within the European context, we have

observed a reform process aimed at enhancing the principle of school autonomy. These reforms began in the eighties and it has been accelerated in the nineties. The European states involved (i.e. United Kingdom, Sweden, Spain, France) adopted different instruments referred to the regulatory instruments; the degree of autonomy outlined; the jurisdiction and the role conferred to stakeholders etc. Despite this difference, we can recognize some common trends. The first one refers to the need for greater democratic participation closely related to the search of a major efficiency of public management and the necessity to improve the quality of the school system. The second one concerns the high initiative and planning capacity expressed by several schools which, thank to the new autonomy granted them, have show a relevant ability in cooperation, through networks, or other forms of association, to reach common goals like better resource management; experimentations, and a training offer closer to the needs of the territory. The third one is the absence of detailed regulation regard the phenomenon of networks and different kind of partnerships between educational institutions (with the exception of Spanish regional legislation). Despite the important spread of these forms of association, generally, the regulation is attributed to the same school autonomy. Last but not least, it is the strategic importance taken by tools of horizontal cooperation between schools. A phenomenon that spreads across borders as the result of Community policies which encourage the international schools networks.

Schools, more and more, are called to handle complex phenomena, such as the globalization and the multiculturalism. For these reasons, the European and international schools networks appear like a source of new knowledge and innovative technologies. The issue of school networks is one of the most interesting prospects of development of education policies because:

- a) on the one hand, the network of schools promote the spread of initiatives created from below, and, on the other hand;
- b) they reduce the fragmentation of parties, giving greater responsibility to regions and, in general, to decentralized levels.

In other words, networks not only produce confidence and responsibility between the participating schools or between different networks and the territory, but they are also able to create positive connections with local institutions (the world production, of social and professional), doing so grow and develop actions of horizontal and vertical subsidiary. This trend based on an increasing cooperation among schools and other stakeholders outlines the centrality of education as a key tool for the development of the European citizenship and a common space for the European education and work.

Conclusions

If we still believe that education is the principle way to promote in people an active, responsible and global citizenship, and the participation in a democratic life (Dewey, 2004), we have to accept the challenge of a change conceived as an opportunity. This means accepting the waiver to personalistic and particularistic interests, as Parsons already explained in 1937, in place of universalistic and collective interests, which are an essential foundation for the community. The education road also passes by the educational right of all to access to the democratic life but also to the duty of everyone to participate responsibly towards this recognition.

The objective of this essay is to contribute to the development of a new vision of the education system, more in line with the challenges posed by the global and complex society.

Schools networks, recognized by all recent Reforms as a resource for the territory, become a way to replay in a new way to ancient questions to favour the transition from education to the social and work life. The network expresses the idea of school like an educational community founded on social capitalism (Putnam, 2001) and trust (Schrader, 2004), capable of recognising the value of emotion to favour positive relationships and the success of individuals, groups and organizations (Ashkanasy, 2011). But we observe the difficulty in moving from a traditional organizational school, based on the logic of functional differentiation, to a new model able to ensure services (guidance, counseling, school-work etc.), and to value the relational nature of educational action.

We can say that the educational challenge of the XXI century is the recognition of the role and function of the "educational of the community". A community with which the education system is profoundly anchored. An educational community in this sense cannot be reduced to the space of education institutions, nor can we delegate this responsibility only to teachers. Everyone is called to assume a responsible role in an educational community (parents, institutions, political, economic and productive system, social partners, etc.); each according to their role, because education cannot be delegated, nor derogated, but it is essential to promote self-reliance and self-determination of the people (independently to the person's age). In this sense, education is not limited to a simple and impersonal transfer of knowledge, made by tired and disinterested teachers. But it refers to the original etymology of the term "e-duco" which means "to lead out", to accompany subjects through support, exercise and discipline to cultivate and train their faculties, their inclinations, the potential of mind, to combat negative inclinations and elevate the soul toward self and the higher morality. The "educating community" is not only referred to the educational system on which we reverse every failures of our society, it includes all other relevant educational reference, each with its own peculiarities, mission and educational obligations. So the "educating community" is possible only if it is based on the recognition and appreciation of authentic relationships where prevail the effective mutual listening, respect, personal responsibility and solidarity, In other terms relationship of trust. The educational community draws, next to the institutional mission to promote learning, that much more important to "teach to be" and to pursue social justice. Goals that is not simple to reach in our social complexity, and respect to which no one should feel indifferent. Going through an "educating community", therefore, does not mean only to follow an educational model opened to the community and to the plethora of institutions with which is in relation. But it means to call the entire community, in the variety of expressions that nowadays characterises it, to recognize and take on the role and the educational responsibility which it bears.

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