

## MANAGEMENT EXECUTED BY THE PRINCIPAL IN STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

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## MANAGEMENT EXECUTED BY THE PRINCIPAL IN STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

### Abstract

The objective of this work is to analyze the management executed by the principal as a tool for educational strengthening in elementary schools. This research is descriptive, non-experimental and cross-sectional. The population comprised 26 principals and 119 teachers. A Likert-type questionnaire was used, providing 3 alternatives for the answers, it was validated by experts, showing a reliability of  $r_{tt} = 0.87$  for principals and of  $r_{tt} = 0.89$  for teachers. Results showed that principals promote a set of activities aimed at transforming institutional values in concrete actions at medium level. On the other hand, students' needs are not acknowledged, the teacher is not intended to provide context, teachers needs are seldom taken into account and there is lack of recognition of their expectations in terms of reflecting on their practice, there is lack of promotion of equal opportunities and of an articulation between the institution and the community resulting from the inexistence of a proposal to promote conditions that allow healthy coexistence, since the school's principal's office fails to deploy efforts to achieve an improvement of the community's sociocultural system.

**Key Words:** management executed by the principal, elementary schools, Likert-type questionnaire, educational strengthening, institutional values.

## 1.- Introduction.

Education faces many challenges through time, and it is liable for training capable, productive and functional people in a socially-changing world. To this regard, Lepeley (2006, p. 5), suggests: “we must acknowledge it: the challenges faced by education worldwide are enormous, which is why it must be a top priority in the development of countries, societies and organizations”.

To this respect, educational institutions expanded their infrastructure to accommodate a mass of students that crowded the spaces, even today, with the immediate consequence of an increase in teaching staff to meet the demand. In cooperation, principals must try to keep the school running well, regardless of what is happening in its surroundings.

In the case of education in Venezuela, Article 19 of the Organic Education Law (2009) contemplates that the role of the principal is the most strategic administrative function, since he/she must invigorate institutional functioning, and since he/she conducts it with personal influence over the teaching and non-teaching staff, with the intention to provide proper guidance for an enthusiastic yet efficient function performance that leads to achieving established objectives. In this context, guidance relies on the management executed by the principals.

Management executed by the principals in Venezuela’s educational context is implemented in schools that are denominated national and of the state; national schools depend administrative-wise on the Ministry of the Popular Power for Education (*Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educacion*, in Spanish), meaning, their guidelines are dictated by this governmental body. The latter are schools that belong to the state and are managed by each particular federal Office of the Secretary of Education (*Secretarias de Educacion*, in Spanish), although their actions must abide by the National Constitution (1999) and the Organic Education Law (2009), their regulations and other legal documents.

The Elementary schools that belong to the Governor’s Office of the state of Zulia apply the same pedagogical and administrative methodology as schools at central level. From this perspective, Alvarez (2008) states that the management executed by principal in Venezuelan elementary schools acquires certain specific traits, for instance, the fact that he/she works with sectors of the population that have larger scarcities compels the creation of an environment (not just at an institutional level, but on a deeper level, in the classroom) that allows students not to feel excluded, meaning, to fully develop their potential according to behavior rules that have been consensually assumed.

Which is why for those requirements and as proposed by Borjas (2004), a school principal must execute management aimed at achieving significant change, not just at personal level, but to influence the behavior of the members of the school community to

(with proper guidance) conduct their functions with enthusiasm and efficiency, with the objective of achieving objectives and goals. With this in mind, Lopez states that:

The management executed by the principal is dependent on his/her own behavior to conduct administrative and pedagogical functions, meaning, knowing how to delegate responsibilities, supervise and assess the institution and the staff's functioning, organizing each activity to be developed, among other aspects, as well as on being focused on the optimization of the quality of teachers' learning and development (2010, p. 16).

In agreement, Martin (2008) highlights that the key of successful educational institutions is founded on its members' high level of motivation and participation, in which management, above all human resource, constitutes a qualitative leap in the conception of people as an important part of the organization, it considers them the most important asset, above other aspects. This approach shows how transcendental it is to achieve the motivation, participation and commitment of the school's principal and teachers, to join forces in developing the competences, attitudes and behaviors that are necessary for the job.

The aforementioned drives the character of this research, which is to determine if the elementary schools in the parish of Altagracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia, have a proper management executed by principals; since the researchers' opinion, subject of a previous diagnosis, is that there is an overall weakness in the performance of principals' activities in said institutions in terms of planning, resource organization and assessment, which is merely dependent on a quantification of the task developed by the workers.

On the other hand, teaching practices tend to be very traditional and rudimentary, since the principal is not motivated and does not participate in what the teacher does in the classroom, and due to a lacking supervisory role. Jointly, the principals' pedagogic management does not reinforce acknowledgement of students' needs in teachers, likewise, it fails to reinforce expectations to promote equal opportunities. There is evidence of lacking determination of objectives, as well as of promotion of activities that reinforce the teaching-learning process, leaving out the school's organizational structure design.

The following question arises: How does the management executed by the principal influence educational strengthening in elementary schools? With this in mind, the main objective of this research is to analyze the management executed by the principal as a tool for educational strengthening in elementary schools, with the purpose of providing theoretical fundamentals that contribute to the performance of teachers.

## **2.- Theoretical Fundamentals.**

### **2.1.- Management of the Principal for Educational Strengthening.**

According to Ramirez (2007), educational management comprises a set of organized processes that allow institutions to fulfill objectives and goals. To do so, proper management goes through stages of diagnosis, planning, execution, follow-up and evaluation, nurturing each other and leading to the results defined by principal's teams. Indeed, "good management is the key to provide the actions of each team member with meaning and sense of belonging within an adequate context", says Romero (2005, p. 39). In other words, the principal must be open to actions, changes and transformations proposed in favor of the educational setting.

### **2.2.- Principal's Administrative Management.**

According to Alvarado (2008), administrative management is a fundamental part in school improvement because it is developed within the framework of design, execution and assessment of actions that intend to support the institutional mission through an effective use of resources, with processes and procedures that are susceptible to continuous improvement. In this respect, Borjas (2004) refers to the functional use of diverse types of resources and aid available to develop curricular pedagogical processes, the sphere of administrative resource management, materials and use of time, including those relating people and that influence efficiency and efficacy of the curricular pedagogical processes.

#### **2.2.1.- Strategic Planning Focused on the Institution.**

Strategic planning is built, Ramirez (2007, p. 85) says, "by entirely thinking about the actions that are needed to reach certain objectives or to fulfill a mission". Consequently, this implies exercising judgement and discretion to address possible situations or problems. Whereas Robbins (2006, p. 111) states that "planning is, aside from the definition of goals, establishing the strategy and developing the plans to coordinate the activities".

## **Design of the School's Organizational Structure.**

According to Martin (2008), the aspect corresponding to the school's organizational structure design is understood as a managerial function that allows the principal to organize institutional resources as per the needs presented and the capacity of permanent change of the school's internal structures. For Lepeley (2006), the management executed by the principal must focus on strengthening educational quality and in aligning the mission and vision oriented towards enriching the teaching-learning process of the educational institutions. On that subject, Carreto (2012) states that the principal's functions contemplate the fulfillment of the strategic planning stages, such as formulation, roll out and assessment.

### **2.2.3.- Supervision of the Schools' Activities.**

Elementary schools and other educational institutions, Lopez (2010) says, have a pedagogical or academic subsystem, concretely alluding to the verification of a technical and pedagogical function, specifically to the tasks, actions or processes involving the educational fact at classroom level and of the school as an organized whole. In that regard, the principal must be the guarantor of all activities, both undertaken and planned, within educational institutions; the principal must also supervise the planning, organization, direction, control and assessment processes that are required to execute systematic and scientific work, aside from empiricism and improvisation, focusing on a suitable methodological sequence. For Tavarez (2012), the principal's supervision must be fixed on fulfilling the institution's goals, with previous review of the results obtained and paying attention to the performance of the people that work in the school.

### **2.3.- Principal's Pedagogical Management.**

Lopez (2010) says that the pedagogical management executed by a principal is a process that must accomplish curricular improvement of the teacher's profession and aimed at internal and extra-curricular innovation and at professional and personal development. At the same time, Siliceo adds:

the pedagogical management executed by the principal is the essential axis in the students' training process, which is why its actions emphasize on making them learn and develop the necessary competences for their social, professional and personal performance, therefore, the principal must provide the means required to achieve it (2007, p. 41).

### **2.3.1.- Acknowledgement of the Students' Needs.**

It is important to take into account the students' needs within the teaching-learning process, with the intention of adapting and contextualizing programmatical contents, as mentioned by Gonzalez (2001, p. 25), "study programs and content must be appropriate for the students' needs"; in that regard, in these programmatical contents teachers should consider the immediate surrounding, students' characteristics, expectations and preferences with the aim of achieving significant learning and to positively favor the training process.

### **2.3.2.- Acknowledgement of the Teachers' Expectations.**

According to Lepeley (2006), the acknowledgement of teachers' expectations is a strategy applied by the principal to get to know their personal needs in order to channel their purposes or goals from a working perspective, dependent on the institution's needs or the merit of an administrative figure. In that sense, the principal has the power to propose the school's needs to the immediate organism and to suggest the creation of new positions in favor of the institution.

On the other hand, the principal must be aware of the teaching staff's expectations, since these may drive situations that, one way or another, may hinder the staff's appropriate performance. Accordingly, part of the management executed by the principal is to look after and to guarantee a good working climate, which is why it is commendable to apply strategies to ease groupwork or individual work to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process that must prevail on each classroom in any institution.

Likewise, Arancibia (2006) shows four determining factors that condition improvement in classroom work and that streamline teachers' expectations, as follows: existence of positive relationships, defining the teacher's limits and expectations, fulfilling planning and adaptation processes for each student's teaching. In that respect, Franklin (2006), coincides in stating that these factors are needed to effectively satisfy staff's needs.

### **2.3.3.- Promotion of Equal Opportunities.**

Education is a human and social right of every citizen, also, it is democratic, free and mandatory, as per Article 102 of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (CRBV) (1999); Article 6 numeral 1 literal (a) of the Organic Education Law (LOE) (2009), notes that each citizen has the right to a comprehensive, permanent, continuous and high-quality education for all, taking into account gender equality and equal conditions and opportunities. Based on these principles, the principal of educational institutions must abide by the law and avoid gender and age discrimination, among others, since education is not to be restricted from any citizen on any basis or grounds.

On that subject, the principal (as the guarantor of education performance in the institution) must look after the fact that teachers are receptive to the attention and training of their students, in accordance with the law. In addition, and according to Espinola (2007), the management executed by the principal will foster continuous education in teachers, so that they may apply the best strategies to the students in conditions of equal opportunities.

### **2.4.- Community Management Executed by the Principal.**

According to the Ministry of the Popular Power for Education (2008), community management refers to the way in which the school, the principal and the teachers know and understand not only the conditions but the needs and demands of their community. It can also be understood as the way in which it integrates and participates in culture. Community management also refers to the relationships of the school with the social and institutional settings, taking into account the students' families, neighbors and community organizations, as well as other municipal and regional institutions taking part in education.

Community management promotes participation and coexistence, prevention and belonging, community inclusion and projection in the educational institution. In that sense, the educational management executed by the principal must be prone to it and must integrate with the community, encouraging the teaching staff to link the educational activities with the social reality of its setting.

#### **2.4.1.- Articulation Between the Institution and the Community.**

Community management includes promotion of the educational community participation, design, execution and assessment of prevention strategies, provides



conditions for healthy coexistence between members, makes room for different types of people (regardless of origin, gender, creed or race), while delivering the necessary actions for them to remain in the education system. Similarly, according to Lepeley (2006), the articulation between school and community is a necessary interdependence between the school and the community, driving results and performance in the first as an organization and in the latter as a direct beneficiary of the educational process.

#### **2.4.2.- Promotion of a Preventive Culture in Different Sectors of the Community.**

Utges (2012) asserts that community management refers to the set of activities that promote participation of different actors in each school's decision-making process and activities, aiming at relationships between the local community and the school with the student's parents and other community sectors. Additionally, the community dimension encompasses social activities of institutional actors, as well as the demands and problems in terms of the institutional setting. Moreover, the sphere in which the management actions are developed intertwine community actors and the institutional organization with its setting in order to strengthen identity and belonging with the institution and its community Comprehensive School Project (PEIS – *Proyecto Escolar Integral*, in Spanish).

### **3.- Methodology.**

#### **3.1.- Type of Research.**

This is a study with quantitative focus, within the positivism paradigm, which functions with the strict laws of logic, truth, rules and predictions. Researchers uphold the fact that truth is absolute and that the sole reality may be defined with careful measurement. To pursue the truth, the researcher must set aside all personal values, beliefs, feelings and perceptions, since there is no place for them in the measurement (Hurtado, 2010). The evolution of the phenomenon is cross-sectional, and this study only “measures the variable once, group criteria are measured in one or more unit groups in a given moment, without the intention to assess the evolution of the units” (Chavez, 2007, p. 134).

According to the method, the research is descriptive because it is limited to a precise description of the characteristics of the problem in the study, since it is based on the collection of information regarding the management executed by the principal to strengthen the educational process in elementary schools; the presented reality is described with concrete results that assess the most outstanding and essential aspects of

the management executed by the principal in strengthening the educational process in elementary schools, without any kind of interference or verification of the hypothesis.

In that sense, Mendez (2009, p. 55), says: “descriptive research is oriented to the collection of information related with the real status of people, objects or phenomena, as presented in the moment of its collection”. Moreover, Hernandez *et al.* (2010, p. 65) state that “descriptive research has the objective of precisely describing the event of the study, it works with one or several events of the study in a determined context, but its intention is not to establish causality relationships among them, thus there is no merit for hypotheses formulation”.

### **3.2.- Population.**

According to Hernandez *et al.* (2010), population is the set of all things that coincide in a series of specifications. Likewise, Pelekais (2012) confirms that the population which is the object of the study is the universe of the research upon which the results are intended to be generalized. It is constituted by characteristics or socioeconomical levels that allow a distinction of the subjects. Taking into account what has been highlighted by the aforementioned authors, the population that is the object of the analysis was constituted by 26 principals and 170 teachers working in national elementary schools in the parish of Altigracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia, with a census sample for the principals and 119 for teachers applying the Sierra Bravo formula (2002).

### **3.3.- Information Collection Instrument.**

Information was collected using a questionnaire, defined by Arias (2010) as “the survey method conducted in a written form through an instrument or paper format containing a series of questions. It is also known as a self-administered questionnaire because it must be filled by the respondent without any intervention of the interviewer”.

Taking this into account, the data collection instrument in this research uses a Likert-type questionnaire, which allows measuring the variables that are the object of the study using three alternatives always (3), sometimes (2) and never (1). The questionnaire contains 24 items and two versions were applied, one for the principals and one for the teachers among the population in national elementary schools in the parish of Altigracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia.

### **3.4.- Statistic Data Handling.**

For data analysis, a double-entry chart or matrix was designed to locate the information provided by the subjects. Variable systematization required the use of descriptive statistics, it allowed to determine behavior of the variables, Sabino (2002). Moreover, to establish the results a scale was made to convert alternatives to categories, described as follows.

### 3.5.- Description of the Scale.

Scales are tools that are made with the basis of statistic distribution of values, between which the available options in the research instruments fluctuate. Consequently, the scale regarding the management executed by the principal to strengthen elementary schools was assessed as follows:

MEASUREMENT SCALE

Percentage	Level	Category
70% - 100%	High	Appropriate
34% - 69%	Medium	Slightly appropriate
0% - 33%	Low	Inappropriate

**Source:** calculations conducted by the authors (Valles, Rodriguez, Giraldoth, Rojas and Jimenez, 2014).

### 3.6.- Validity and Reliability.

According to Pelekais *et al.* (2012), validity confirms whether an instrument measures what it is intended to measure or not, an expert determines the level of validity by judging if it has the pertinent items. In that aspect, content validity was applied to this research's instrument based on analysis and discernment needs, and on independent judgement. Likewise, a format was built based on the variable and its operationalization, subject to the valuation of five subject matter experts, who assessed the pertinence of the items regarding what was developed by the research.

Next, Cronbach's alpha formula was used to calculate the reliability of the instruments for principals and teachers in the elementary schools of the municipality of Miranda; for Hernandez *et al.* (2010, p. 350) said formula "is applied to calculate reliability in a Likert-type scale". The reliability test applied to the variables showed the following result  $r = 0.87$

for principals and  $r= 0.89$  for teachers, indicating that the instruments were reliable because they approached the maximum value of one (1); this implies a level of acceptance and it is estimated that repeated application to the same subject will produce equal results.

#### 4.- Discussion of the Results.

Table 1 shows the behavior of the dimension of Administrative Management executed by the principal for educational strengthening in elementary schools in the parish of Altigracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia.

Table 1

#### Distribution of Percentage Frequency of the Dimension of Administrative Management Executed by the Principal

Alternatives Subjects	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers
Strategic planning focused on the institution	65%	0%	15%	19%	20%	81%
School's organizational structure design	46%	0%	54%	76%	0%	24%
Supervision of the activities in the institution	15%	13%	69%	66%	16%	21%
$\bar{x}$ %	42%	4%	46%	54%	12%	42%
<b>Average per groups</b>	23%		5		27%	

**Source:** instrument applied to principals and teachers (Rodriguez and collaborators 2014).

As it can be seen, there is a discrepancy in the principals and teachers' answers for the indicator of strategic planning focused on the institution: directors recorded 65% in the answer alternative 'always', unlike teachers who recorded 81% in the answer alternative 'never', leading to infer that there is a lack of accurate and meaningful compliance of this management by the principal, since teachers are the immediate evaluators of the principal's actions.

However, in terms of the indicator of school's organizational structure design, it is clear that principals and teachers recorded elevated values in the answer alternative 'sometimes', with 54% for principals and 76% for teachers, signifying compliance by the

principal. The same behavior is observed in the indicator of supervision of the activities in the institution, with the answer alternative 'sometimes' recording the highest score: 69% by principals and 66% by teachers.

Determining the values of the indicators' total mean both for principals and teachers, it is possible to see that the highest values appear in the answer alternative 'sometimes', with 46% for principals and 65% for teachers. An extrapolation of these values in the measurement scale established by the researchers allows to determine that the administrative management executed by the principal for educational strengthening in elementary schools in the parish of Altigracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia, is performed at medium level within a slightly appropriate category.

However, a comparison of the results of the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) per groups led to a higher percentage of 50% for the answer alternative 'sometimes' regarding the dimension Administrative Management by the principal. Comparing this percentage value with what is established in the proposed measurement level allowed to confirm that the selected population identified the administrative management by the principal executed by principals in elementary education is performed at medium level and in a slightly appropriate way.

The results obtained allowed to determine that principals in the parish's elementary schools promote a set of activities oriented to the transformation of institutional values in concrete actions performing at medium level, because sometimes, when planning takes into account the school's mission and vision, it is considered to be slightly appropriate for their position, which may be analyzed as a disadvantage for national schools since the school's principal had to be trained for successfully implementing an administrative management in any context, meaning both at administrative and pedagogical levels.

This situation identified significant contradictions in terms of the proposal of Alvarado (2008), for whom administrative management is a fundamental piece in school improvement because it is developed in the within the framework of design, execution and assessment of actions that intend to support the institutional mission through an effective use of resources, with processes and procedures that are susceptible to continuous improvement, because it basically encompasses strategy planning as well as the necessary human, financial and physical resources (whether available or not) with the intention of their acquirement, distribution, articulation and optimization.

Table 2 shows the behavior of the dimension of Pedagogical Management executed by the principal for educational strengthening in elementary schools in the parish of Altigracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia.

Table 2

## Distribution of Percentage Frequency of the Dimension of Pedagogical

## Management Executed by the principal

Alternatives	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers
Acknowledgement of students' needs	19%	0%	69%	33%	12%	67%
Acknowledgement of teachers' expectations	46%	0%	23%	27%	31%	73%
Promotion of equal opportunities	19%	0%	35%	16%	46%	84%
<b><math>\bar{x}</math> %</b>	28%	0%	42%	25%	30%	75%
<b>Average per groups</b>	14%		34%		52%	

**Source:** instrument applied to principals and teachers (Rodriguez and collaborators 2014).

Regarding the indicator of acknowledgement of students' needs for principals in national schools in the parish of Altagracia, municipality of Miranda, the highest percentage value was recorded by the answer alternative 'sometimes' with 69%, for teachers that higher percentage value was recorded by the answer alternative 'never' in 63% of the answers, evidencing significant discrepancies between both groups.

It was also confirmed that the indicator of acknowledgement of teachers' expectations recorded 46% of the total percentage in the answer alternative 'always' with principals, showing certain divergence in both groups. Likewise, in the indicator of promotion of equal opportunities, results veered to the answer alternative 'never' for both groups, with 46% and 84%, respectively, thus evidencing some similarity.

Therefore, since it is necessary to compare the results of the percentage mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) per groups, there is an indication of contrariety in terms of the selected alternative, principals tended to record the answer alternative 'sometimes' with 42%, while teachers leaned towards recording the answer alternative 'never' with 75%. However, the average per group kept the trend on the answer alternative 'never', with 52% of the answers recording it.

The aforementioned allows describing the pedagogical management executed by the principal as slightly appropriate, with its actions performing at medium level; when this is compared with the measurement scale established by the researchers, it displays significant differences between the values given by principals to the characterization of the principles of pedagogical management to be implemented in the national schools that are

the object of the study and the values given by teachers, students' needs are simply never acknowledged.

This measurement intends the teachers to take into account curricular content, provide context to the content and consider the students' needs, but teachers' personal needs are seldom acknowledged, nor are their expectations in terms of reflecting on their own practice.

Therefore, the principals' characterization in terms of the behavior shown by the results is considered slightly appropriate, with close discrepancy with the suggestions of the Pedagogical Proposal of Bolivarian Comprehensive Schools (*Propuesta Pedagógica de Escuelas Integrales Bolivarianas*, in Spanish) (1999), which was presented by Funda lecura and that highlights that guidance and change stem from turning schools into participation and democracy centers, where all its members may take part in decision-making, executions and assessment of school activities in time and space frames.

Along these lines, Table 3 showcases the behavior of the dimension of Community Management executed by the principal for educational strengthening in elementary schools in the parish of Altagracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia.

Table 3

### Distribution of Percentage Frequency of the Dimension of Community Management Executed by the principal

Alternatives	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers	Principals	Teachers
<b>Subjects</b>						
Articulation between the institution and the community	65%	0%	25%	40%	10%	60%
Promotion of a preventive culture in different sectors of the community	23%	0%	42%	30%	35%	70%
<b>Σ %</b>	44%	0%	34%	35%	23%	65%
<b>Average per groups</b>	22%		35%		44%	

**Source:** instrument applied to principals and teachers (Rodriguez and collaborators 2014).

As observed, there is discrepancy in the answers recorded by principals and teachers regarding the indicators of the dimension of Community Management by the principal. In the indicator of articulation between the institution and the community, for principals the predominant answer alternative 'always' with 65%, compared to that of teachers which

was the answer alternative 'never' with a percentage value of 60%.

The same happens with the indicator of promotion of a preventive culture in different sectors of the community, for principals the predominant answer alternative 'sometimes' with 42%, compared to that of teachers which was the answer alternative 'never' with a percentage value of 70%. The results of both indicators evidence significant divergence between both groups, which may lead to an indication that there is no link between principals and teachers on terms of the joint work with the community.

Therefore, since it is necessary to compare the results of the percentage mean per groups, there is an indication of contrariety in terms of the selected alternative, principals tended to record the answer alternative 'always' with 44%, whereas teachers were inclined towards the answer alternative 'never' with 65%. However, the average per group kept the trend on the answer alternative 'never', with 44% of the answers recording it.

However, an extrapolation of the values obtained in the proposed measurement scale allows to determine that the community management executed by the principal is considered slightly appropriate, and its actions are performed at medium level. Yet, the significant discrepancy between the values of the answers recorded by principals and teachers illustrate that rarely do principals comply with community management that is oriented to generating an articulation between the institution and the community. In that respect, the odds of healthy coexistence amongst community members and of encouragement and support to make families a part of the students' teaching-learning process are slim.

Likewise, a scarce promotion of a preventive culture in different sectors of the community became evident, the school's principal's office fails to deploy efforts to achieve an improvement in the sociocultural system of communities neighboring the schools. Accordingly, said claims contravene what was proposed by Utges (2012), who expresses that community management refers to the set of activities that promote participation of different actors in each school's decision-making process and activities, aiming at relationships between the local community and the school with the student's parents and other community sectors

Next, Table 4 shows the result of the analysis of the management executed by the principal for educational strengthening in elementary schools in the parish of Altagracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia.



Table 4

**Distribution of Percentage Frequency of the Variable of Management Executed by the Principal for Educational Strengthening in Elementary Schools, Established by the Dimensions**

Alternatives	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Administrative management by the principal	23%	50%	27%
Pedagogical management by the principal	14%	34%	52%
Community management by the principal	22%	35%	44%
$\bar{x}$ %	20%	40%	40%
Average	33.3%		

**Source:** instrument applied to principals and teachers (Rodriguez and collaborators 2014).

In terms of the variable of Management Executed by the Principal for educational strengthening in elementary schools, established by the dimensions, the highest percentage value ( $\bar{x}$  %) was recorded in the answer alternative 'sometimes' and 'never', both with 40% of the answers, which proved significant weaknesses in the managerial function to be fulfilled by the principals.

A comparison between the aforementioned results of the percentage mean ( $\bar{x}$ %) per groups indicated similarities between the groups, therefore it was possible to determine that elementary schools located in the parish of Altigracia, municipality of Miranda, state of Zulia have inappropriate management by the principal, confirming what the researchers have stated in terms that these schools have a disintegrated management system, originated by lacking strategic planning and disorganization of resources, whereas the assessment is dependent on a mere quantification of the tasks developed by the staff.

An absence of plans oriented towards strengthening the educational process was evident, the process is based on aging teaching practices, and there is no sign of motivation by the principal to get involved in what the teacher does in the classroom. In these elementary schools, the pedagogical management executed by the principal fails to encourage teachers to consider and prioritize students' needs and expectations in order to promote equal opportunities. Also, promotion of activities to strengthen the teaching-learning process is absent, omitting the school's organizational structure. These situations arise from poor managerial functions executed by these principals.

## 5.- Conclusions.

Principals in elementary schools in the parish of Altigracia promote a set of activities such as talks and workshops (aimed at turning institutional values into concrete actions) at medium level, because planning takes into account the school's mission and vision only sometimes. In terms of pedagogical management, the students' needs are never acknowledged; the teacher is not intended to consider the curricular content with the students' setting, and to contextualize knowledge. Likewise, teachers' personal needs are rarely acknowledged, which in turn causes a failure on the acknowledgement of their expectations in terms of reflecting on their own practice.

Additionally, seldom does the community management exercised by the principal is focused on generating an articulation between the institution and the community, a proposal to encourage the right conditions to drive healthy coexistence of community members is non-existent, failing to motivate the support of family to the students' learning process.

It was also evident that there is little promotion of preventive culture in different sectors of the community, the school's principal's office does not deploy efforts to improve the sociocultural system of the community neighboring the institution. Therefore, the research determined that elementary schools located in the state of Zulia have an inappropriate management system that has no integration, which originates from the lack of strategic planning and of resource organization; also, assessment is dependent on a mere qualification of the task developed by the workers.

There is also an absence of plans directly aimed at educational strengthening in elementary schools, since the teachers' practices tend to be traditional and habitual, and there is no sign of motivation by the principal to get involved in what the teacher does in the classroom. The pedagogical management executed by the principals in elementary schools does not encourage the teacher to acknowledge students' needs and expectations, which would aid in the development of a teaching-learning process under equal opportunities.

Evidence also shows that institutional objectives are not determined, activities to reinforce the teaching-learning process are not promoted, perhaps to the extent of ignoring the school's organizational structure. These situations indicate poor managerial functions performed by principals. In sum, the management system is far from holistic, and it fails to have an innovative an integrating participation. In consequence, this is an obsolete administrative and pedagogical management that simply stuffs students with knowledge, possibly resulting from inappropriate assessment and control of teachers' performance.

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