

Challenges of Teaching Career Management in Romania

Maria-Andra, CIOBANU¹,
Camelia-Delia, VOICU²

Abstract

The paper addresses the topic of teaching career management, a topic of major importance for the contemporary educational field. In the context of continuous changes in society and educational systems, the efficient management of teachers' careers becomes an essential condition for ensuring the quality of the educational process and for the sustainable professional development of teachers. The purpose of the research paper is to highlight the main factors that support or hinder teachers' efforts in developing their careers, from the perspective of existing policies. Starting from the content analysis of the normative acts in force in the field and supplemented with self-reflection on the process of training in the teaching career, the particularities that are described in the current context of professional development and the construction of the teaching career in pre-university education are identified. The analysis revealed that in Romania, the professional path of teachers is regulated and structured, each stage being intended to validate the acquired skills and to encourage professional and personal development. Still, there are many gaps in the implementation of the normative prescriptions to provide better support in career management and professional development for teachers in pre-university education.

Keywords:

teaching career management, professional development, teaching career stages

¹ MA student, Valahia University of Targoviste, Educational Management and Curriculum Development Master Programme, Targoviste, Romania, amdraciobanu6@gmail.com

² corresponding author, PhD., Lecturer, Valahia University of Targoviste, Educational Sciences Department, Targoviste, Romania, camelia.voicu@valahia.ro .

1. Introduction

Teaching career management is a crucial aspect of teachers' professional development, directly influencing the quality of education and, in turn, the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of students. In a constantly changing educational environment marked by frequent reforms, curricular changes, and rapid technological advancement, teachers must remain adaptable to effectively meet the demands of a modern, dynamic, and complex society.

The teaching career should not be viewed solely through the lens of classroom instruction; rather, it is a multifaceted professional journey that includes initial training, ongoing development, the acquisition of transferable skills, and the assumption of various roles within the educational community. Today's educators are expected to be mentors, innovators, researchers, advisors, leaders, and agents of change both within and outside the school setting.

The stages of a teaching career—beginning, consolidation, affirmation, and professional maturation—each come with unique challenges and specific support needs. This makes a strategic and personalized approach to career management essential.

In this context, teaching career management involves not only the thoughtful and responsible planning of one's professional path but also robust institutional support. This support should include coherent educational policies, training programs tailored to actual needs, and mechanisms to recognize performance. It is equally important that the process is guided by values such as equity, inclusion, innovation, and collaboration to foster an organizational culture that prioritizes learning and continuous development.

The new law on pre-university education, adopted in Romania in 2023, highlights these goals by placing the development of teachers' professional competencies at the core of educational reform. It emphasises continuous assessment, rigorous initial training, and ongoing improvement programs tailored to the evolving needs of the education system. However, several challenges persist: insufficient

financial and logistical resources allocated for training, significant disparities between urban and rural educational contexts, limited access to professional development opportunities in disadvantaged areas, and systemic resistance to change in certain sectors of the education system. To address these challenges effectively, solutions must be both adaptable and sustainable. Implementing effective continuous training strategies, diversifying professional development opportunities, establishing functional mentoring programs for novice teachers, and intelligently integrating educational technologies can significantly strengthen the teaching career. Consequently, career management should no longer be viewed as solely an individual responsibility; it should be regarded as a collective effort shared by teachers, educational institutions, and policymakers to create a modern, equitable, and efficient educational system.

2. The revision of the speciality literature.

In the past, the term "career" was closely linked to professional activities, referring primarily to an individual's career path. It was understood as a linear progression of jobs, positions, or roles within a specific profession. However, over time, this concept has evolved significantly. Today, a career is recognized as an integral aspect of human life that goes beyond professional boundaries, incorporating personal, community, educational, and economic dimensions. This reflects the diversity and dynamism of individual development.

As a result of this broader perspective, the traditional notion of "school and career guidance" has been replaced with a more holistic vision. This new approach encompasses all stages of a person's life—from schooling and vocational training to professional activities and post-professional involvement in volunteer projects, mentoring, or community engagement. According to Butnaru (1999, p.89), a career can be defined as a “succession of professions, occupations, and positions” that constitute a person’s professional and social journey. This definition includes transitional periods and stages of pre- and post-vocational activities.

Hăhăianu (2000) reinforces this understanding by noting that professional experiences and positions held within an organisation significantly contribute to the development of an individual's skills and attitudes. This underscores the importance of continuous learning and adaptation. Thus, a career becomes a fluid process shaped by the interplay of education, work, interpersonal relationships, and civic involvement. It is a personalised journey influenced by conscious choices, opportunities, social contexts, and the pursuit of self-realisation.

Consequently, the concept of career encompasses a wide array of roles and identities that individuals assume throughout their lives, such as student, employee, parent, community member, and active citizen. According to Jigău (2001), these roles should not be viewed in isolation but rather in their interdependence, forming an indivisible whole that includes natural life stages such as marriage, retirement, professional reorientation, and post-active engagement.

In this dynamic view, a professional career, defined by Tăsica (2003) as the progression of a person within a particular field, includes not only the practice of a profession but also all forms of professional development, such as specialisations, improvements, reconversions, and advancements.

From this broad perspective, a career should also be examined from economic, sociological, and psychological viewpoints since professional choices and paths influence an individual's social status, inner balance, aspirations, and level of personal satisfaction. This comprehensive theoretical framework lays a solid foundation for understanding the specifics of careers in the educational sector, especially in teaching, which presents unique challenges and significant responsibilities in shaping future generations.

In light of this, effective teaching career management becomes a crucial element in establishing a modern, efficient education system. It represents a continuous process that involves planning, organising, monitoring, and evaluating the professional development of teachers in accordance with educational objectives and the actual needs of schools and communities.

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Career management aims not only to promote teaching credentials or accumulate years of experience but also to foster continuous training, self-assessment, participation in innovative educational projects, and active involvement in school and community life. involves an integrative vision, focused on developing the full professional and personal potential of the educator. This means institutional support for continuous training, access to mentoring and professional counselling, but also recognition and valorisation of the efforts made. Such an approach is not limited to hierarchical advancement or the accumulation of certifications, but involves a genuine process of reflection, adaptation and lifelong learning. Teachers must be encouraged to develop their skills, assume roles as educational leaders and actively respond to changes and challenges in the system.

Teaching career development involves a planned and continuous approach, in which each teacher takes responsibility for improving their professional skills. In this sense, effective strategies for career development include professional planning, continuous assessment and the use of personal and professional development tools.

Professional planning is essential for teaching careers, being a method through which each teacher sets clear development objectives, taking into account the stages of their career and the skills they want to improve. This involves identifying specific areas of training and development, along with planning educational activities and the necessary resources. In this context, teachers can use personalised professional development plans, adapted to their specific needs and current educational requirements (Butnaru, 1999).

Continuous evaluation plays a crucial role in the development of teaching careers, as it allows for self-reflection and the identification of strengths and areas for improvement. Periodic evaluations, carried out within the school or through external tools (such as self-evaluations or peer evaluations), are important tools in this process. These evaluations can include feedback from students and parents, which is essential in adjusting pedagogical approaches and teaching techniques (Hăhăianu, 2000).

Personal and professional development tools are multiple and varied. Among the most used are continuing education courses, specialisation seminars and participation in educational conferences, all of which aim to improve pedagogical, digital and educational management skills. Modern technologies also provide access to online learning platforms and educational resources that allow teachers to continuously update their knowledge and apply innovative teaching techniques (Butnaru, 1999).

Therefore, teaching career management has the role of creating a favorable framework for sustainable professional development, promoting a culture of continuous learning, collaboration and innovation, for the benefit of the entire educational ecosystem.

A teaching career involves a rigorous professional path, built through careful planning, based on clear and coherent development objectives. This planning is not limited to the accumulation of experience, but aims to form a solid professional identity, capable of responding to the challenges of modern education. Teaching career management involves establishing a clear evolutionary path, which begins with the initial stage in education and continues with the stages of training, evaluation and promotion, until assuming leadership and mentoring roles within educational institutions. In this process, teachers establish individual professional objectives, depending on their own interests, needs and aspirations. These may include improving digital skills, exploring niche curricular areas, developing communication skills with parents and students, or engaging in innovative educational projects. Setting such personal goals contributes not only to improving individual performance, but also to increasing the quality of the educational act as a whole. Policy changes in the field of education are also found in the area of human resource training and development, and concrete evidence in this regard is Order No. 7.386/11.11.2024, which brings a redefinition of the profile and professional standards specific to the teaching profession in pre-university education. This represents a first step in harmonising national practices with European ones and especially in harmonising and ensuring a unity of perspective and analysis at the national level. In this context of educational policy, the

question arises as to what the elements found at the level of normative acts that support this new profile are and what the gaps or weaknesses may be that may affect the management of the teaching career.

3. Research methodology

Starting from this question, we established the following research objectives: O.1. to identify factors that support teaching career management; O2 to identify weaknesses/factors that negatively influence teaching career management, found or absent from specific legislation. The research methodology used in this paper involved analysing social documents and self-reflection on the processes of initial and continuous training in the teaching profession. The social document analysis focused on educational policy documents related to the training and development of human resources in pre-university education. These documents were selected from the National Ministry of Education's website using keyword tags such as "human resources," "continuous training," and "teaching career." In addition, self-reflection served as a complementary qualitative method, drawing on one of the authors' personal professional experiences (C.M.A.) within the educational system, particularly regarding initial and continuous training. This reflective approach was of the peer critique or supervised reflexivity type (Patnaik E., 2013) developed during seminar activities that included discussions facilitated by the second author (V.C.D.), aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of how educational policies are perceived and implemented at the ground level. During the seminars, the first author presented the draft of the social document analysis, and she received feedback from colleagues and the coordinator, engaging constructive criticism to identify insights and blind spots that helped her to challenge and extend her thinking. By integrating these two methods, the study offers a more thorough

analysis of the challenges and opportunities involved in teaching career management. Through combining the analysis of social documents with self-reflection, researchers achieve a deeper understanding of the phenomenon by considering both internal and external perspectives.

The analysed documents included national laws and ministerial orders that regulate methodologies, standards, and accreditation procedures in Romanian pre-university education: Law No. 1/2011 on National Education; Law No. 199/2023 on Pre-University Education; Order No. 5561 of October 7, 2011, approving the Methodology for the Continuous Training of Pre-University Education Personnel; Order No. 5485 of September 29, 2011, approving the Methodology for Establishing the Body of Mentor Teachers to Coordinate Practical Internships; Order No. 4831 of August 30, 2018, approving the Framework Code of Ethics for Teaching Staff in Pre-University Education; Order No. 4223 of 2022, regarding the organization and implementation of didactic and methodological support activities, as well as didactic mentoring in pedagogical practice schools during the 2022–2023 school year; Order No. 7386 of November 11, 2024, approving the Profile and Professional Standards of Teachers in Pre-University Education, categorised by career stages and education levels. The document analysis employed a deductive approach (Kyngäs, H., Kaakinen, P., 2020), guided by the following themes:

a) the pillars of the teaching career in Romania, with the subthemes: initial and continuous professional training of teaching human resources, periodic assessment of professional performance and the stages of teaching career development.

b) the challenges in developing a teaching career with the subthemes: specific obstacles to the infrastructure of initial and continuous professional training, and performance management in the teaching profession.

4. Analysis and interpretation of the research data

The data resulting from the content analysis of the mentioned documents are presented below with regard of the two research objectives.

A. Concerning objective one, the following factors that support teaching career management were identified:

1. A fundamental pillar of teaching career management is the initial and continuous training of teachers. Initial training refers to the training of teachers before starting actual teaching activity. It includes educational programs that provide teachers with the theoretical and practical foundation necessary to become professionals in the educational field. In Romania, initial training is now regulated by the Pre-university Education Law no. 199/2023, which brings important changes in terms of the initial training of teachers, ensuring a clear transition towards a modernised model, focused on the professionalisation of the teaching career from the moment they enter the system. The stages of this training, provided for by the new law, involve: graduation with a diploma from a bachelor's degree program (in a specialization corresponding to the level of education at which one is to teach), followed by graduation from a teaching master's degree program (2 years) of pedagogical training and supervised practice (with the exception of early childhood education teachers for whom the teaching master's degree is not mandatory).

The beginning of a teaching career is made by participating in the job vacancy competition (tenure) - national exam including a practical and a written test, followed by an internship period (1-2 years) under the guidance of a mentor and the final exam.

Therefore, the new legislative regulations bring important changes in initial training: the introduction of the didactic master's degree as the main stage and the gradual elimination of the previously existing psycho-pedagogical module programs for the training of middle school and high school teachers, the updating of training standards for bachelor's programs and the introduction of the specialization of teacher for early education, the emphasis on the role of pedagogical practice and the minor for the initial training of teaching staff.

In an educational system undergoing constant transformation, teachers must constantly update their knowledge and develop their professional skills. Continuous training is carried out both formally — by

participating in accredited courses, methodological workshops, conferences or postgraduate programs — and informally, through the exchange of good practices, peer learning or mentoring. The emphasis is particularly on the consolidation of professional skills (pedagogical, digital and socio-emotional, etc.), which allow adaptation to the diversity of students' needs and the requirements of a student-centred education.

Professional training and development is a continuous learning process throughout the teaching career, designed to support teachers in improving their skills and helping them respond to changes and challenges in education. At the national level, in Romania, continuous training is regulated by the same laws that regulate teaching careers, and teachers must participate in continuous training courses to maintain and expand their professional skills. There are also currently educational policies that promote the use of technologies in education, which encourage teachers to participate in digitalisation courses and to develop adaptive teaching skills within the new educational forms. The Ministry of Education and educational authorities develop and implement continuous training programs, including through online platforms, which are increasingly used for the professional development of teachers. Beyond the normative acts in force, the continuous training of teachers in Romania is influenced by the sustainable development objectives provided for by the UN 2030 agenda, by establishing a strategic framework regarding quality, equitable, inclusive and 21st century education. . Thus, educational policies at the European level focus on the development of professional and transversal skills that support sustainable development through a sustainable, inclusive and equitable school, through modern pedagogies, digital skills and innovative approaches in teaching, national and international cooperation for the dissemination of good practices in education.

Continuing education is reflected in the evolution of the teaching career, by obtaining new career steps and possibly new professional-organizational roles. Hierarchical progress is an important dimension in the career of teachers. Obtaining teaching degrees (level II and level

I) signals both an advanced level of professional training and an active involvement in educational life. Moreover, teachers can access leadership or coordination positions, becoming directors, inspectors, mentors or trainers. These roles contribute to the development of a dynamic, competitive, professional educational climate, in which experience and advanced skills are valued for the benefit of the school community. Given the dynamic nature of the educational system, teachers must demonstrate a constant capacity to adapt to changes such as the digitalization of education, curricular changes, the diversification of student profiles or the implementation of new pedagogical approaches. Effective career management supports this adaptation by facilitating access to training programs focused on inclusion, educational leadership, digital education or personalized learning.

The teaching career is not only the result of a vocational choice, but also of a progressive construction, based on commitment, continuous improvement and adaptation to the requirements of a dynamic educational system. Therefore, a teaching career involves a succession of well-defined stages, each of which has the role of supporting and strengthening the professional training of teachers.

The first stage is the tenure exam.

The tenure exam represents the first major stage in the teaching career, being an essential condition for the professional stabilisation of the teacher. This exam is not just an administrative threshold, but a symbolic and practical stage that marks the transition from the status of a beginner to that of a fully-fledged teacher. This exam has double importance. On the one hand, it represents an official form of validation of the pedagogical, methodological and psychodidactic skills acquired in the first years of activity. On the other hand, it offers a framework for professional reflection and self-evaluation, encouraging teachers to systematically develop their own professional identity. Passing this exam provides access to teaching positions of indefinite duration, consolidating the status and professional security of teachers in the education system.

In order to be able to take the tenure exam, teachers must meet the following essential conditions:

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- Completion of a minimum one-year internship of effective teaching, in which they demonstrate adaptability and teaching efficiency.
- Participation in school inspections, which provide a direct assessment of methodological skills, the relationship with students and the ability to manage educational activity.
- Passing a written test, which verifies both theoretical knowledge in the specialty field and the ability to apply it in concrete educational contexts.

These requirements emphasize the fact that the tenure exam is not a simple bureaucratic obstacle, but a complex approach, oriented towards quality and responsibility in the teaching act.

Once passed, the tenure exam brings with it a series of significant benefits: professional stability, access to higher teaching degrees and increased confidence in one's worth. It is also a starting point for future career stages, such as obtaining the Didactic Degree II and subsequently the Didactic Degree I. The final degree thus marks the end of the initiation period and the beginning of a committed career, based on professionalism and commitment.

After passing the tenure exam and accumulating a minimum of four years of experience in education, teachers can access the Didactic Degree II. This second stage marks a period of professional consolidation, in which the emphasis is on deepening knowledge and diversifying teaching methods. The Didactic Degree II involves going through a new training and evaluation process, in which theoretical skills, didactic planning skills and the capacity for pedagogical innovation are analyzed. Special inspections, participation in training courses and taking a written test contribute to shaping a mature professional profile, capable of meeting the complex demands of the educational process.

Obtaining the Didactic Degree II brings not only formal recognition, but also an increase in responsibility and involvement in the educational community. Teachers at this stage can become role models for younger colleagues and can be involved in internal training activities, curricular projects or extracurricular activities with educational impact.

The last stage is represented by the Didactic Degree I. This degree represents the highest level of professional recognition in the teaching career. Obtaining it requires a minimum of four years of teaching activity after obtaining the second degree, during which the teacher must demonstrate professional excellence, initiative, research and significant contributions to the development of education.

The process of obtaining it is a complex one, which includes:

- Participation in special inspections, to evaluate classroom performance;
- Development and public defense of a methodological-scientific work, which reflects research skills and the ability to generate innovative solutions in the educational process;
- Defense of a demonstration lesson, intended to highlight the originality and adaptability of the pedagogical act.

This stage confirms the status of an expert in education and offers the opportunity to contribute to the training of other teachers through mentoring activities, coordination of educational projects or participation in strategic initiatives of the institution.

The new legislative documents bring changes in terms of roles and the level of skills specific to each stage of the teaching career. For example, teachers with teaching degrees II and I have additional responsibilities that require their active involvement in managing and improving the educational process. For example, mentoring is an important responsibility, with experienced teachers having the role of guiding new beginners. In addition, they are encouraged to participate in applied research, having the role of identifying educational needs and creating innovative strategies for teaching. Another important role they can play is that of educational leaders, coordinating teams of teachers within educational projects and adapting the curriculum to support educational inclusion. Thus, experienced teachers have a significant impact on the development of the entire educational community.

The teaching career takes place in a complex and dynamic universe, in which the teaching staff plays a fundamental role. The teacher is, at the same time, a guide to knowledge, a mentor, but also a moral model for students. In this capacity, his professional profile is

defined by clearly delimited competencies and standards that guide his activity, thus ensuring that the educational process meets the current and future demands of society. At each stage of the teaching career, from debut to leadership roles, clear milestones are drawn regarding the necessary skills and responsibilities. At the beginning of the journey, the novice teacher is first and foremost a learner of educational practice. He gradually builds his self-confidence and ability to manage the classroom, often under the guidance of mentors. Reaching the first threshold, obtaining the final qualification, marks the entry into a new phase of professional maturity, in which a greater degree of autonomy and involvement is expected.

As the teacher advances in his career, his responsibilities become increasingly complex. Teachers with advanced teaching degrees, such as Degree II or Degree I, are not only experienced practitioners, but also leaders in the educational community. They become points of support for less experienced colleagues, taking on roles such as mentoring, project coordination and innovation in teaching. Leadership positions, such as school principal, require an advanced level of managerial skills, along with pedagogical ones.

Beyond career stages, professional standards also vary depending on the level of education at which the teacher works. In kindergartens, teachers create a safe and stimulating environment, laying the foundations for children's cognitive, emotional and social development. In primary education, they focus on literacy and the development of fundamental skills. Middle school is a transitional stage, where teachers stimulate critical thinking and social adaptation, and in high schools, the role of the teacher is to prepare students for professional life or further studies.

This diversity of responsibilities requires clear and adapted professional standards. A teacher is not only a transmitter of knowledge, but also a facilitator of learning and a support for the development of students as complete individuals. Therefore, the standards emphasize skills such as adapting to classroom diversity, using technology and promoting inclusion.

New legislation brought to the education field focuses on the digital skills of teachers, promoting the transformation of education and reducing the technological gaps between schools. Also, increasing the responsibilities of advanced teachers contributes to a positive impact on the school community, but also imposes the need for better resources for continuous training. The integration of formal mentoring and support structures for beginners has a significant impact on the quality of education, helping new teachers to integrate more easily and improve their professional skills.

2. A second essential factor of career management is the periodic assessment of professional performance, which has a dual role: to validate the progress made and to guide the establishment of new development directions. This process includes self-assessment, analysis of feedback received from colleagues, students and parents, as well as the results obtained in the stages of professional promotion — such as the final examination in education and teaching degrees. Assessment thus becomes a tool for reflection and adjustment, designed to support continuous learning and increase professional performance. In the context of the new educational regulations, the process of evaluating teachers will change. For example, the final examination will be replaced by the licensing process by 2028, facilitating a clearer transition for beginners. At the same time, the initial and continuous training of teachers will be reorganized to meet updated professional standards. The new educational structures encourage the development of personalized training programs through the Faculty Houses and other authorized centers, with a focus on inclusive pedagogy and the use of data in the decision-making process. These changes are intended to support the development of an educational system more adapted to the needs of students and modern educational requirements.

B. Regarding the second objective of the research, the following aspects were identified as weaknesses of the policies on teaching career management:

One of the biggest challenges encountered in teaching career management is the lack of a clear and uniform system of support for continuous professional development. Although there are possibilities for continuous training for teachers, not all teachers benefit from the same resources or development opportunities. In many cases, teachers have to invest their own time and resources to access professional training courses, and this can lead to a feeling of isolation and frustration.

Another significant challenge is the absence of an effective mentoring and support system for beginners. Although beginners are at a stage where they should benefit from constant guidance, many of them face the lack of a dedicated mentor to provide them with constructive feedback and guidance during the first years of their career. Thus, beginners may encounter difficulties in managing relationships with students, the teaching program or integrating into the institutional culture.

An additional challenge is the great diversity of students' needs, which requires teachers to be continuously adaptable. Whether we are talking about students with special educational needs, students from disadvantaged backgrounds or students with different learning rhythms, teachers must be able to personalize teaching approaches, create an inclusive environment and apply differentiated strategies to respond effectively to these challenges. Furthermore, in educational contexts where material and financial resources are limited, teachers face difficulties in implementing innovative teaching methods and educational technologies that could improve students' learning experience. Lack of resources can restrict teachers' access to modern technologies, and this affects the efficiency of the educational process.

Professional stress and burnout are also major challenges in teaching career management and are not addressed by existing legislation. Teaching involves a high level of responsibility and emotional involvement, and teachers are often exposed to a busy schedule and multiple demands. This can lead to physical and mental exhaustion, especially in the absence of a work-life balance.

To address these challenges, there are several solutions that can be implemented to support the professional development of teachers. Creating a unified and accessible system of continuous training is essential. Educational institutions must ensure access to professional development opportunities for all teachers, through online courses, workshops, exchanges of good practices and collaborative educational projects. These must be aligned with current educational needs, taking into account the social and technological demands of modern society. In addition, continuous training should be supported and rewarded by educational institutions, and teachers should have a clear evaluation system for their progress.

To support novice teachers, it is necessary to implement effective mentoring programs. Experienced teachers can play an essential role in integrating new teachers into school life, providing them not only with pedagogical support, but also with help in managing interpersonal relationships and developing leadership skills. A dedicated mentor can significantly contribute to increasing the beginner's confidence in their own abilities, improving the quality of teaching and preventing professional dropout.

Regarding student diversity, teachers must be supported through additional training that allows them to apply differentiated learning methods and develop classroom management strategies for students with special needs. Educational institutions can also encourage collaboration between teachers, school counselors and psychologists to create an inclusive environment in which each student feels safe and benefits from a personalized educational plan.

Regarding the lack of educational resources, the solution can come through the use of technology and free online resources. Even in the context of limited budgets, teachers can access online educational platforms that allow them to create innovative teaching materials, apply interactive teaching methods and capitalize on accessible technologies for students. Also, another important aspect is the training of teachers in the effective use of technology, not only as a learning tool, but also as a method of saving time and resources.

To prevent professional burnout, it is essential that schools promote a culture of work-life balance. A flexible schedule, adequate vacations and access to psychological support services can help maintain a high level of motivation and energy. In addition, teachers should be supported by developing a system of recognition and reward for professional performance, which appreciates not only their educational results, but also the effort put into improving their own teaching activity.

5. Conclusions

The analysis revealed that in Romania, the professional path of teachers is regulated and structured, each stage being intended to validate the acquired skills and to encourage professional and personal development. Still, there are many gaps in the implementation of the normative prescriptions to provide better support in career management and professional development for teachers in pre-university education. The teaching career management is an essential element in the architecture of a modern educational system, capable of meeting the demands of the present and anticipating the needs of the future. The teaching career, in its current meaning, is no longer perceived as a linear path, but as a flexible and complex path, which requires careful planning, increased adaptability and continuous reporting to the professional standards in force.

The role of career management is not limited to individual professional progress but has broad implications for the entire education system. Through effective management of career stages – entry, consolidation, advancement, mentoring and professional development – the conditions are created for the training of competent, reflective and innovative teachers, who can actively contribute to institutional development and the improvement of students' academic results. In this sense, the teaching career must be accompanied by coherent, continuous training policies, objective and formative evaluation mechanisms, but also by clear opportunities for professional development and career advancement.

Continuous training and self-training are key components of this process. They allow teachers to update their knowledge, improve their pedagogical, digital, leadership and communication skills, and respond effectively to diversity in the classroom. At the same time, by integrating modern teaching strategies, developing inclusive educational practices and using digital resources, teachers become active agents of change in education.

Moreover, effective career management also contributes to reducing burnout, increasing job satisfaction and developing a sense of belonging and usefulness among teachers. It provides clear directions, support at critical moments in their careers and recognition of professional merits, factors that increase intrinsic motivation and commitment to the profession.

On a broader level, the implementation of such management directly contributes to the consolidation of human capital in education – a decisive factor in any successful educational reform. Teachers represent the link between educational policies and the reality in the classroom; thus, investing in their career is an investment in the future of society. In a world marked by rapid changes – technological, social, cultural – education systems must become more resilient, and this cannot be achieved without well-trained, emotionally balanced and professionally supported teachers.

Therefore, teaching career management is not just an administrative or bureaucratic concern, but a strategic mission, which directly conditions the quality of education. It must be approached in an integrated way, from the perspective of continuous professional development, the quality of professional life, institutional progress and equity in education. Ultimately, the success of an educational system is not measured only by academic results, but also by its capacity to train and support teachers who inspire, innovate and shape future generations.

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ORDIN nr. 4.223 (2022) privind organizarea și desfășurarea activităților de suport didactic și metodic precum și a celor de mentorat didactic în unitățile de învățământ componente ale bazelor de practică pedagogică în anul școlar 2022-2023 (ORDER No. 4.223/ 2022 regarding the organization and implementation of didactic and methodological support activities as well as didactic mentoring activities in the educational units that are components of the pedagogical practice bases in the 2022-2023 school year). Monitorul Oficial al Romaniei, Partea I nr. 725 din 19 iulie 2022

ORDIN nr. 7.386 (2024) pentru aprobarea profilului și standardelor profesionale ale cadrului didactic din învățământul preuniversitar, pe etape de carieră și pe niveluri de învățământ (ORDER No. 7.386/2024 for the approval of the Profile and professional standards of teachers in pre-university education, by career stages and by education levels). Monitorul Oficial al Romaniei nr. 1158 din 20 noiembrie 2024