The Interaction between Professional and Social Identity of Greek Primary School Educators

Manolis Koutouzis[1,*] & Konstantia Spyriadou[2]

[1]School of Humanities, Hellenic Open University, Greece

[2]Hellenic Open University, Greece

*Corresponding author: School of Humanities, Hellenic Open University, Greece. E-mail: ekoutouzis@eap.gr

Abstract

This article examines the interaction between Professional and Social Identity of Greek Primary School Educators. The composition of teacher population in Greek Primary Education is peculiar, as it mainly consists of primary teachers and a smaller number of specialty teachers, who teach foreign languages, physical education, music, visual arts and information technologies. A primary qualitative research was conducted by telephone interviews to 14 established, 8 new and 9 candidate school directors and 12 teachers from the 13 educational regions, while the validity and reliability of the research was ensured through theoretical triangulation and triangulation of data sources, as the participants' roles, specialties and age vary. According to the research findings, primary education consists of teachers' subcategories with different Professional and Social Identity, which are structured mainly on the basis of specialty, seniority and hierarchy. These Identities are not equivalent, but hierarchical, resulting in the reproduction of intergroup discriminations, social stereotypes and social competition due to the existence of dominant and dominated subcategories. The innovation of this article lies in that it brings forth existing social correlations in the context of primary education, which inevitably affect the content of the Professional and Social Identity of educators.

Keywords: professional identity, social identity, hierarchy, intergroup discriminations, stereotypes, social competition, self-categorization

1. Introduction

Self-perception encompasses many different identities linked to social roles and categories (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995; Stets, 1995; McEwen, 1996; Jones & McEwen, 2000; Deaux, 2001; Hecht, Jackson & Pitts, 2005; Day et al., 2006; Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Serpe, 2013). Whether intentionally or unintentionally, consciously or unconsciously, a person is integrated in those categories formulating subjective judgments about his/her individual characteristics (Scheibe, 1995; Woodward, 2004; Rosenberg, 1986).

This article focuses on the importance of educational roles in the construction of teachers' Professional Identity in Greece, while examining its impact on the content of Social Identity, the existence of intergroup discriminations, stereotypes and social competition as a result of hierarchical subcategories and finally the self-categorization based on teachers' Identities.

The composition of teacher population in Greek Primary Education is peculiar, as it mainly consists of primary teachers and a smaller number of specialty teachers, who teach foreign languages, physical education, music, visual arts and information technologies.

2. Teachers' Identities

There are two distinct identities related toy teachers. Let us discuss them in some detail.

2.1 Professional Identity

Teachers Professional Identity is a dynamic, diverse, complex and multifaceted conceptual construct (Stronach et al., 2002; Flores & Day, 2006; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Canrinus et al, 2011; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011), composed of interacting social, psychological, cultural and historical factors that mediate in its structure (Cooper and Olson, 1996), separating teaching profession from others (Sachs, 2001).

Beijaard, Meijer &Verloop (2004, pp. 122-123) state that teachers Professional Identity: 1) is (re)structured during the continuous and uninterrupted process of interpretation of, feedback from and self-reflection on teachers experiences, 2) is the result of the interaction between their individual characteristics and the social context, and consequently there is no single and unique Professional Identity, 3) consists of individual Sub-Identities, some of which are in harmony with each other, while others in conflict. Moreover, professional development is a key component, as teachers are in a constant process of development.

According to the bibliography, Professional Identity of teachers is associated with the *representations of the self* (Knowles, 1992; Kelchtermans, 1993; Beijaard, 1995; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Dillabough, 1999; Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; Samuel & Stephens, 2000; Lasky, 2005; Van Veen & Sleegers, 2009; Hong, 2010; Canrinus et al., 2011; Fotopoulou, 2013), their *biography,* linked to social background and individual characteristics (Sugrue, 1997; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004), their *emotions* (Nias, 2002; Zembylas, 2003; Hargeaves, 2004; 2005; Flores & Day, 2006; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010; Lee & Yin, 2011),

their *self-concept* (Goodson & Cole, 1994), their *self-esteem* (Kelchtermans, 1993; Beijaard, 1995; Van Veen & Sleegers, 2009), their *educational background* (Bell & Robinson, 2004; Tarman, 2012), their *roles* as educators (Preuss & Hofsass, 1991; Beijaard, 1995; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998; Gee, 2000; Roberts, 2000; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011) and finally the *social and professional environment/framework* (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Helsby, 1999; Samuel & Stephens, 2000; Stronach et al., 2002; Beijaard, Meijer &Verloop, 2004; Korthagen, 2004; Van Veen &Lasky, 2005; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Hong, 2010; Canrinus et al., 2011; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Fotopoulou, 2013).

2.2 Social Identity and Self-Categorization

Social Identity refers to the relationship between the individual and the collective, between the "I" and "we", formulating the *"collective self"* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Turner et al., 1994; Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 2002; Hogg & Ridgeway, 2003) or *"social self",* which is a part of a whole (Rousseau, 1998). Social Identity involves *social categorization, social identification and social comparison* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg, Terry & White, 1995; McNamara, 1997; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Reicher, Spears & Haslam, 2010).

According to Stets & Burke (2000, p. 225) *categorization* is the result of perceived similarities between individuals and in-group members, as well as differences with out-group members in relation to their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Social categories reflect the existing social structure, which is founded (Hogg & Abrams, 1988), constructed (Turner et al., 1987) and hierarchically graded (Stryker, 1980).

Social *identification* with the group does not solely concern the integration of intergroup characteristics, but also bears psychological content, in the form of psychological identification, which leads to a symbolic union of the group members (coherence) and the internalization of similar social behaviors (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 2002).

Social categorization, on the other hand, is a socio-cognitive process which deepens the boundaries between the groups, because of segmentation modulated by the social environment, leading to the production of stereotypes, due to the falsification of the cognitive function of individuals (Tajfel & Wilkes, 1963). Negative stereotypes are associated with prejudices, racist attitudes, social distinctions and moral superiority ideologies in the context of devaluation of the out-group on behalf of the in-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) based on which, the hierarchy between the compared groups is structured (Tajfel, 1963; 1969; Tsiolis, 2009).The formulation of the desired Self (positive Identity) is achieved through *social comparison*, based on authority, prestige and power of social categories (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Stets & Burke, 2000).

The theory of *Social Identity* was further elaborated by Self-Categorization theory (Turner 1982; 1985). Self-categorization, as a cognitive process of classifying oneself into a social category, intensifies the perceived similarities and differences between the stimuli within the in-group and out-group (Hantzi, 2013), explaining the conversion of individuals into a

psychological group with a prominent collective and consistent conscience (Haslam et al., 1997; Jenkins, 2004 & 2007; Kokkinaki, 2006; Reicher, Spears & Haslam, 2010).

Within social groups, individuals formulate cognitive models (representations) about their own group and others and that leads to depersonalization of perceptions, feelings and actions of individuals and homogenization of perceptions about members of the internal and external group (Turner et al., 1987; 1994; Brewer & Miller, 1996; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Reicher, Spears & Haslam, 2010).

This paper is trying to transfer the above discussion on teachers' professional a social identity to the context of Greek educational system. Given that Greek educational system is highly centralized and bureaucratized (Koutouzis, 2012) and therefore, teachers are centrally appointed by the State and allocated to schools by the Ministry of Education the main questions this paper in trying to address are:

1) Which factors influence the roles that teachers (in Greek primary education) undertake within their school?

2) Are there prominent subgroups among teachers?

3) Is there an informal hierarchy among these subgroups?

4) How do teachers categorize themselves in relation to the above subgroups?

3. Methodology of Research

A primary qualitative research was conducted. A total of 43 telephone semi-structured interviews were carried out with non-proportional quota sampling (Morrow et al., 2007) to 22 headteachers (14 experienced and 8 new), 9 candidates for headship and 12 teachers, who live and work in 13 educational regions, in order for the sample to be representative during the period October-November 2016.

It should be noted that researchers have been committed to protecting the personal data and anonymity of respondents and their access to research results (BSA, 2002; SRA, 2003). Thematic coding was applied in order to show identifications and differentiations between the responses of the participants (Priporas et al., 2015, p. 10), while the validity and reliability of research was achieved by double triangulation, achieved through the exploitation of different theoretical approaches (theoretical triangulation) and the use of different sources of data (triangulation of data sources), as the respondents have different profiles (experienced and new headteachers, candidate headteachers, teachers) teaching subjects and age (Meijer, Verloop and Beijaard, 2002).

4. Research Results

Table 1. Participants' Profile

Demographics														Total
13 Regional Directorates of Education	Attika	Eastern Macedonia-Thrace	Central Macedonia	Central Greece	Southern Aegean	Crete	Northern Aegean	Western Macedonia	Epirus	Ionian Islands	Western Greece	Thessaly	Peloponnese	43
Numbers (of Interviews)	10	6	5	5	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	
Position	Experienced Headteachers			New Headteachers		Candidate Headteachers				Teachers				43
Numbers	14			8		9				12				
Sex	Men						Women							43
Numbers	21						22							
Specialty	Teachers of General Courses				Specialty Teachers									43
	Primary School Teachers	Physical Education Teachers		Music Teachers		English Language Teachers	French Language Teachers		Information Technology (IT) Teachers					
Numbers	20	11		8		2	1		1					
Age	25-35 years old		36-45 years old		46-55 years old			56-62 years old						43
Numbers	3		10		28			2						
Years of service	8-15 years		16-21 years		22-31 years			32-35 years						43
Numbers	10		11		20			2						
Qualifications	Ph.D.	Master's Degree	2nd Degree	University Degree in Teaching[1]	Postgraduate degree in Educational Management		Degree in Music	Two year Teachers Training Colleges (*Academies*)[2]						-
Numbers	9	16	7	7	4		8	9						
Marital Status	Married			Single				Divorced						43
Numbers	37			4				2						

[1]It should be noted that only primary school teachers have this qualification, as specialty teachers didn't have access to it, although it affects the selection of school directors.

[2]The equation concerns primary school teachers who have attended a two-year academy.

4.1 Teaching Subjects and Educational Roles

It should be mentioned that during the last decades specialty teachers have been appointed taking a part the traditional role of primary teachers in Greece. This has transformed primary schools and significantly affected school programs and roles within the schools.

It is interesting therefore that respondents consider that the subjects teachers teach significantly influence the roles that they undertake in the school. The roles of primary teachers are described by the word *"value"* and the phrases *"primary roles", "leading roles"* (by specialty teachers),*"reference point", "reference person"* (by primary teachers), as *"the primary teacher is assigned a class and is considered responsible for it"*, while specialty teachers are *"satellites", "followers"* and *"second-class educators"*, teaching secondary lessons in many classes. It has been emphasized, that this is *"the general perception that prevails"* in the context of a *"primary teacher-centered system"*. The above perceptions are reinforced by the attitudes of parents, but also by some headteachers, as *"they don't pay much attention to the specialties as they do to primary teachers"*.

"Yes, it is certain, because we do less hours at school and our lesson is not considered primary, such as Greek language and mathematics. So students and parents first evaluate the primary teacher and then the foreign language teacher." (I (I= Interviewee)$_7$ Candidate Headteacher, Specialty Teacher)

It was mentioned by some older primary teachers that *"we are not very satisfied, now"* as specialty teachers have entered Primary Education. Consequently, teachers feel that they have lost their traditional roles, but this change has not affected their dominant role, while some of them recall the time they taught all subjects. The view of primary teachers is confirmed by headteachers who teach specialty lessons. They note that older primary teachers are resentful due to the introduction of specialty teachers. One of them emphatically stated: *"I do not want to share my class, my seat, my chair, my things"*.

Some specialty teachers believe that their involvement in primary education has led to the modification of *"a one-sided learning process"*, while teaching in many different classes provides them with a broader scope. It is interesting though that the view of specialty teachers is in complete contrast to the perceptions of the primary teachers!

"A primary teacher has a more comprehensive picture of the school function. A specialty teacher who is exposed only for one hour to each class cannot have an insight about how the school works." (I$_{14}$ Experienced Headteacher, Primary Teacher)

However, opposing views were also expressed, as some respondents stated that all teachers, regardless of their specialty, play important roles and, therefore, consistency dedication and professionalism is rather a matter of personality.

"No, I have not noticed that I play a supporting role as an organic member of the school, just because I am a musician. On the contrary, I have received respect, acceptance and special appreciation, wherever I have been." (I$_7$ Specialty Teacher)

4.3 Subgroups and Emerging Social Identities

Most respondents believe that subgroups are prominent.

"Subgroups definitely exist. After I became a headmaster, it is one of the things that made me nervous, the informal existence of groups. The older generation of primary teachers cannot appreciate the importance of being a music teacher or IT teacher. Previously teachers taught music and did everything, therefore, they think that a music teacher is inferior. On the contrary, however, music teachers have completed five years of music studies compared the two years of Pedagogical Academies." (I$_6$ Experienced Headteacher)

The various subgroups of specialty teachers are not homogeneous, but consist of subcategories, shaped according to the "relative value" of the subject (i.e teaching hours per week). In this informal ranking there are two levels of relative value: 1) subjects ranked high (English and PE), 2) subjects of secondary importance (Music, IT, French and German). On the other hand there are also subcategories within the subgroups of primary teachers, based on seniority (old, young) and employment status (permanent, temporary staff). These separations reflect conflicting relationships between primary teachers, who form instinctive Social Identities, as they identify themselves as members of different subgroups. For instance, older teachers feel that they "have priority", as for example in class allocation. Moreover phenomena of manipulation and imposition are often encountered, as they consider that they *"are more experienced, thus they are able to teach but also run the school when the headmaster is absent"*.

However, some respondents believe that separate Social Identities are a notion of the past and that, today, those differences have been diminished, as specialty teachers have been largely integrated into primary education, and *"such syndromes have been overcome"*. It seems that initially specialty teachers were not fully accepted. However, they seem to have managed to establish their role and thus their status.

"At first, in 1993, when I first joined a school, a primary teacher told me 'what are doing here? I now have to finish work at 13:15, and you are responsible for that'. Until then she would finish her work at 12.00" (I$_3$ New Director, Specialty Teacher)

4.4 Hierarchy of Subgroups

Most respondents believe that there is a hierarchical order in the subgroups.

"I think us, primary teachers, actually hold a dominant position and this is evident even in the course schedule. A two-hour Greek language lesson, for example, instantly indicates that specialty teachers enter the classroom specific hours. A closer examination of this phenomenon reveals that specialty teachers are more pressured than I am in terms of work." (I$_9$ Candidate, Primary Teacher)

The word *"minority"*, used by a specialty teacher, confirms the perceived differences between teachers who, although working at the same educational level, have a differentiated perceived social status. The phrases *"when in Rome, do as the Romans"*, *"the fact that we are specialty*

teachers is in the back of the mind of primary teachers" and *"I don't believe that their contribution to the educational community is even recognized",* reflect the low social status of specialty teachers. However, PE teachers appear to be the second dominant group in primary education, as they occupy a number of managerial positions *"due to better trade unionism."*

Apart from specialty, seniority and position held seem to play part this informal hierarchy within the schools.

"There are inequalities and they are quite intense. Headteachers have a reinforced role and want their voices to be heard. Age is also an important factor. Dominating and dominated groups exist. The headteacher, the experienced (old) primary teachers and teachers working in the same school for many years are dominant categories." (I_2 Primary Teacher)

However, the headteachers' role is catalytic and regulatory in avoiding phenomena of domination of one group over the other. According to the respondents, he/she shouldn't allow hegemonic behaviors to emerge, because *"The goal is to run the school rather than serve the teachers' petty demands" (I_3).*

Opposing views have also been expressed as some respondents consider that all teachers, regardless of their demographic and educational characteristics, are treated equally and therefore dominant and dominated subcategories do not exist. Moreover, the fact that some specialty teachers have moved to managerial positions confirms the lack of hierarchy in subcategories, as the State gives everyone the right to claim a headteacher's position.

"Based on my personal experience, I have not seen dominant and dominated groups, but I cannot talk on behalf of the system as a whole. I think it's a matter individual personalities."(I_3 New Headteacher, Specialty Teacher)

4.5 Intergroup Discriminations, Stereotypes, Social Competition

The dominance of older teachers towards the younger is obvious, as it seems that they attempt to impose their views, underestimating younger teachers. Opinions such as *"She can work in other schools, because she is young"* and *"So they expect me to work for 6 hours although I have been working here for 25 years, while the newcomer, who has only been around for 3 or 5 years will work for 4 hours only?"* reflect culturally "legitimate" discriminations against younger educators.

The existence of stereotypes for specialty teachers is related to their alleged lack of pedagogical knowledge and inefficiency in effective leadership.

"Over the years, I have noticed that specialty teachers continue to have a large pedagogical deficit. Their lessons are mostly based on improvisation. My experience indicates that primary teacher as a headteacher can effectively manage various situations, as they are not experts in just one subject, but can have a holistic perception." (I_{11} Experienced Headteacher, Primary Teacher)

It seems that in primary education there are stereotypes, a fact that bluntly depicted in phrases such as:*"Oh, you are a music teacher, play us a song and go away", "Just play your games in the schoolyard and let me do my job, which is more important", "What does it really mean, to work as a specialty teacher?"*, "*When we were in charge of all the classes it was better for the children"*. It has also been reported that some specialty teachers attempt to renounce their educational responsibilities to *"bum around"*. The phrase *"they have formed their own closed circlein which they don't allow anyone to enter and have equal rights with them"* refers to the theory of Social Identity, according to which subgroups have narrow boundaries, leading to social competition. As it was mentioned, younger primary teachers have the same stereotypes to a lesser extent, because they are influenced by the perceptions of the dominant subcategory they belong to.

"This is the situation in Primary and not Secondary Education. For primary teachers we represent specialties-a racist approach all in all since they consider us as less apt. Younger primary teachers don't feel so to the same extent, but have adopted this approach as they are affected by their surroundings."(I$_6$ Specialty Teacher)

Stereotypes regarding specialty teachers are obvious when they claim managerial positions, as some of them have experienced racist attitudes during their assessment from selection councils. Even if they manage to take on a director's position, they don't always succeed in enhancing their Social Identity, as they belong to the *"minority"*and are not treated as leaders, confirming that social stereotypes originating from Professional and Social Identity are strong, which indicates that a great effort should be made to overturn them.

"Primary teachers, who are the majority in the school, disregard my position as a school director." (I$_6$ New Headteacher, Specialty Teacher)

4.6 Self-Categorization

Although most respondents believe that there are subcategories in primary education, most of them are not integrated because this separation has a major negative impact, undermining the school's climate, harmony, solidarity and unity. Most school directors are not self-categorized, confirming that their role *"spreads beyond informal subcategories"*, as they act in a unifying, stabilizing, smoothingand balancing manner. Some educators feel "*equal to others*", as they don't find characteristics that differentiate them, but on the contrary, elements that unite them, such as common pedagogical goals and the achievement of school improvement.

"There are no dominant and dominated subcategories. I think we are a team with a common purpose. The purpose is the children, the pupils and everything must rotate around this axis." (I$_7$ Specialty Teacher)

However, some respondents believe that they belong to a dominant subcategory, as it is dictated by their Social Identity and/or by their hierarchical role, which is not stable but can change at any time, transforming their Identity. As an Established Director/Primary Teacher (I$_{11}$) said: *"I belong to a dominant category"*. Specialty teachers due to their educational roles, could be considered as a dominated group. However:

"When I noticed that a colleague's behavior was not right I talked about it. So, at least on a personal level, I didn't feel dominated. Specialties do unfortunately." (I₃ Candidate Director, Specialty Teacher)

Some respondents stated that they feel dominated due to limited experience and/or their specialty, but they believe they will be able to strengthen and transform their Identity into a Leader Identity, while a Headteacher feels dominated because of her role, as she exercises servant leadership.

"The director has no rights. He must be present at all times to ensure smooth conduct of operations. I feel dominated, because of my managerial role." (I₁₄ Experienced Headteacher, Primary Teacher)

Others consider themselves to be both dominant and dominated. More specifically one Headeacher feels dominant because of his hierarchical position, but also dominated because of his specialty, as he thinks that not all primary teachers are ready to accept a specialty teacher as a Head. Some specialty teachers because of their increased relative autonomy (English language teacher)-or personality (physical educator teacher) feel both dominant and dominated. According to their responses *"first the primary teachers' programs are arranged and then we see what the specialty wants"*, while an old primary teacher does not feel overly dominant owing to her temperament, though she has a powerful Social Identity. Finally, two primary teachers (director and candidate) place themselves in *"rational"* and "*autonomous domination*" categories.

5. Discussion-Conclusions

As Znaniecki (1939), Messick & Mackie (1989), Ramsey et al. (1994), Hogg & Terry (2000), Maddox & Chase (2004) and Blanz et al. (2005) claim, general social categories are composed of several, arguably more coherent, subcategories, (Crocker & Park, 1988, cited in Messick & Mackie, 1989, p. 52). According to Jenkins (2004/2007, pp. 138-139) *"although (individuals) may ignore their categorization, the fact that they have been categorized always causes at least by its nature, consequences for members of a category"*. The Professional Identity of teachers is the result of individual characteristics interacting with the social, institutional and cultural context (Van Den Berg, 2002, p. 579; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, pp. 122-123),which is associated with the findings, since institutionally delimited course assignments, affect the content and strength of the Professional Identity of separate subcategories (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

Primary education –unlike secondary – is a coherent community, where the multitudinous subcategory of primary teachers dominate due to their *"leading educational roles"* having a powerful Professional Identity, which strengthens their Social Identity in terms of their self-image and social image, in contrast with the low status Social Identity of specialty teachers, who are *"satellites"*, *"followers"*, *"second- class"* and dominated eachers and have a degraded working relationship. As Matsaggouras (2004, p. 10) reports, in Greece *"Secondary school educators have been receiving university education since the 19th century,*

mainly focused on their teaching subject and ensured higher status than that of primary teachers". However, specialty teachers who work in primary education not only have a lower status than secondary school educators, but also lower than primary teachers, as the status of their Professional Identity is undermined.

Our research revealed some interesting findings. Primary education includes subcategories structured on the basis of specialty, seniority, hierarchical role, working relationship, salary and gender, though some respondents claimed that Identities tend to be unified and others don't support their existence. According to the responses, a headteacher appears to have stronger Social Identity due to his Leader Identity that requires the approval of the social context (DeRue & Ashford, 2010), while the more experienced primary teachers follow, having a dominant role, because the Greek educational system is characterized by seniority, even in the case of the headteachers' selection (Kalogiannis, 2013, p. 173).

In accordance with the findings, there is a divergence of views among the subcategories, because some primary teachers consider that specialty teachers are pedagogically inadequate and ineffective in leadership. These attitudes are associated with the theory of Social Identity, as the members of a group, sharing the same principles, values, and beliefs, face social reality from a group perspective (Stets & Burke, 2000), aim at the satisfaction of its interests (Hogg, 2006) and defend their Identity, when threatened as in the case of the introduction of specialty teachers - because in the occasion of competition between social groups, Social Identities become more prominent(Turner et al., 1994, pp. 455-456). The stereotypical perceptions are ideological constructions that don't accurately reflect social reality(Hogg, Terry & White, 1995, p. 260), since those belonging to a group of high social status tend to underestimate and degrade members of lower-ranking groups(Tajfel et al., 1971; Billig &Tajfel, 1973; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; 1986; Tajfel, 1982; McNamara, 1997; Haslam, 2001; Ferguson & Ford, 2008; Hantzi, 2013), expressing intra-group favorable behaviors (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002), as through preserving and positively enhancing Social Identity, the reinforcement of the self is certified (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995, p. 260).

As expected, specialty teachers have a different view, considering that they have a pedagogical and managerial advantage due to teaching in different classes. These views are linked to social identification with the group, even if that group has low prestige and power. Its members still feel committed to it (Ellemers, Spears &Doosje, 1997). Specialty teachers, belonging to the *"minority"* find it difficult to construct Leader Identities due to their precarious Professional and Social Identity, as their skills are questioned (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Scott & Brown, 2006) within a coherent community, where members of dominant groups *"have formed their own exclusive group"*.

The question is how educators themselves are categorized based on existing subcategories. Although most respondents support the existence of subcategories, they are distanced from them. Others believe that they belong to a dominant subcategory, because of their Social and/or Leader Identity, others feel dominated due to their few years of service, specialty, or managerial role (servant leadership), while others believe that they belong to both subcategories, as the domination that arises from the hierarchical role, the pedagogical

autonomy (specialty teacher) and the personality conflict with their dominated Professional Identity.

However, these distinctive Identities are negotiable (Burke & Stets, 2009), as their transformation depends on their handling by teachers. They can be strengthened in the case of constructing a Leader Identity and/or having a strong personality or weakened because of temperament. Social Identity has a dialectical relationship with Personal Identity, being complementary concepts, as they reveal separate aspects, dimensions and levels of the Self (Stets & Burke, 2000; Verkuyten & Hagendoorn, 2002). The role of the school director in maintaining the effective function of the school, the non-conflict culture and organizational effectiveness is of great importance (Van Gils, Van Quaquebeke, & Van Knippenberg, 2010), as he/she can lead these separate identities to unity.

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