

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND STATE OF MANAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Abstract. The educational process is one of the most complex service-oriented social activities. In education, clients are not just students, but their parents, the local community, the economy, and the wider social community. Therefore, in countries with a significant degree of democracy, education is of great importance because the progress of every social community depends on quality assurance in education. It is well known that 90% of a school's quality of work is its competent employees (Ender, 2000). This points to the importance of those who guide, educate, encourage, monitor, and evaluate students. This paper deals with the status of educational management in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) from the point of view of the educational complex structure in BH, legislation, with a focus on the position of the heads of school institutions. Conclusions are based on theoretical considerations of research in the field of education management outside and within BH. In the end, based on the results of positive local practice, we indicate ways to improve the state of educational leadership, as well as education and continuous professional development of the directors of the school institutions in BH. Based on these considerations, a list of priorities for thematic areas for director training is proposed.

Key words: educational management, leadership, training and professional development

INTRODUCTION

Globalization includes economic, political and cultural processes. It is very complex but controversial as well. Education and education systems cannot exist beyond these changes. No manager can assume that his organization is isolated from global activities. No school can ignore the global perspective. Education needs to be directed towards the context in which it functions

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and to the full development of each person. The schools' tasks become more demanding, as education needs to prepare young people for new technologies and new value systems. School directors have a special role to play in accomplishing these tasks. According to Ender and Strittmatter (2004), the director must be prepared to respond to the needs of employees (e.g., development needs, new learning, support for teachers) which are arising from school development (e.g., optimization of processes, long-term school development). The teachers together with the director are the initiators of change. That is why it is said that the director must "lead, not shape" (Delors, 1998: 162).

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) school directors are being immersed in a profession for which they have not been educated. Some have a qualification as a manager in education, but very rarely. The majority of them get elected for this function based on an open tender that has very general requirements, and in no part of BH is there a demand in the procedure for management and leadership education. On the other hand, there is no supply of formats and methods of training that meet the needs and opportunities for learning of a school director. Learning styles, specific prerequisites for learning, and working conditions of a school are at the center for developing director's competences. Initial training for directors for developing competences important for business life is obtained outside the institution, by the self-initiative of appropriating knowledge, outside formal forms of education. Forms of informal learning play a major role in the biographies of directors. Standard seminar-based offerings do not meet the requirements of directors because they are not tailored to the specific and concrete needs of school directors' field of work. In BH, there are no opportunities and learning arrangements in the education system to provide quick and uncomplicated access to knowledge for the current problem. In this paper, we will address the situation in the area of education management and improvement of directors' competences in BH and on the basis of gained experience and research, in order to propose measures for the future.

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT FROM A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

By studying extensive literature in the field of management in education, it can be concluded that there is a lack of a single definition of the concept of leadership and the conceptual complexity of this phenomenon. In theoretical discussions and frameworks of conducted research, leadership is defined in various ways. As an illustration, there is data on the existence (up to 2011)

of 201 million internet sites and 6 million leadership books (Bolden, 2011). Despite being satiated with information about leadership, there are trends that are noted in the development of the concept of leadership and the common elements of its various definitions which have already been mentioned (Buchberger, 2017).

The central element of many definitions of leadership is recognizable as a process of influence. Petz (1992), Robbins (1995), Tavcar (2002) and Bush (2003), cite the influence of leader on the group as the main function and form of behavior in the process of leadership (in: Agić, 2009). Citing the authors Newman and Clarke (1994), and Gunter *et al.* (1997), Bolam (1999) defines educational management as “performing functions with the consent of politics” (in: Bush & Bell, 2002). He differentiates leadership from educational management through the core of formulating responsibility through transforming politics into the leader’s own organization. Bush, Bell, Bolam, Glatter, and Ribbins (1999) constantly emphasize that educational management should be focused on the goals of education. Goals must be measurable, realistic, focused on activities and tasks at school or colleagues. Goals, as the vital interest of education, management, and even those who set it up (politics), should be the center of attention.

Riches (in: Morrison, 2003: 209) has set five major tasks for the school leader: (1) sets clear goals; (2) serves as an example; (3) supports and respects colleagues; (4) develops and preserves culture in school; (5) sets and interprets the mission and vision into action. Bush *et al.* (1999) constantly emphasize that educational management should be focused on the goals of education. It is the subject of constant debate and disagreement. The main course of school management is activities, tasks at school, or colleagues.

THE STATE OF THE EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a specific structure of education systems, jurisdiction and governance within its constitutional structure. In BH, 12 education systems operate in ten cantons, Republica Srpska, and the Brcko District of BH. The following table presents educational institutions in BH at different administrative levels, dealing with education policy, legislation in education, and the financing of education.

Table 1. Overview of educational institutions

Name of Institution	Level of Functioning
Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has a Department for Education	state
The Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska	entity
The Ministry of Education and Sports of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	entity
The Government of Brcko District of BH, where there is a Education Department	district/local
Cantonal Ministries of Education within FBiH – 10 cantonal ministries	canton
Department of Education in Municipalities and Cities	local

The system of governance in education systems in BH implies two subsystems: managing the organization of the educational process from the financial, legal, and administrative aspect; and quality management regarding teaching content, methods of work, evaluation, continuous improvement EUICBE, and Education Development Strategy (in: BH 2008–2016: 7).

The following table gives an overview of professional education institutions in BH at different administrative levels.

Table 2. Overview of institutions dealing with professional issues in BH education

Name of Institution	Level of Functioning
Agency for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education	state
Agency for Higher Education	state
Pedagogical Institute of Republika Srpska Entity	entity
Pedagogical institution of Brcko district	district/local
Pedagogical institutes at Canton level – 8 cantonal institutes	canton

From a review of the legal regulations at all levels, Table 2 provides a list of basic functions of the mentioned educational institutions in BH (Damjanović, Suša, Škunca, Milenković, Ristić, 2012):

- Coordination of activities in the education sector including: coordination of education administration, coordination of the education system, cooperation with other sectors in BH, cooperation with NGOs;
- Planning and development of education policies including: strategic development of education, legislation, institutional development, human resource development;
- Monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of education, including: education statistics and information systems, standards of student achievement and assessment of achieved results, development of common core curricula, accreditation and certification, other tasks and tasks within the jurisdiction of bodies, agencies and other professional institutions and bodies established at the level of BH and the lower levels of government, inspections;
- Financing of education with macroeconomic planning, financing of educational institutions;
- Planning of a network of educational institutions and
- EU integration and international co-operation.

Among the authorities and bodies dealing with the issues of education and professional issues from Table 1 and 2, there is no true cooperation or binding legal regulation. There are very sporadic examples of transferring experiences from local environments to a higher level, whereas cantons and entities are responsible for all issues (apart from a few) in the field of education, practice exchange, creating joint plans, and joint projects. The only opportunity to exchange experiences and results is engagement through project activities that are funded by international institutions.

Educational management in BH is not properly set up at state level. Article 52 of the *Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in BH*¹ stipulates that “the director is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school and for the conduct of the school’s pedagogical activities”, whereas the School Board is responsible for “determining and implementing school policies, and the efficient use of human and material resources” (Article 51), whereby the school “enjoys an adequate degree of freedom [...] especially with regard to recruitment of teaching, professional and other staff, and freedom of work for teachers” (Article 41). Articles from the Framework Law become significantly transformed when they are incorporated in laws of the cantons and entities.

¹ Pronounced under Article I. IV. 4.a) and II.4.) of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the session of the House of Representatives held on 27 June 2003 and at the session of the House of nations held on 30 June 2003.

Although political interference, which should not be a subject in the area of school autonomy, is prohibited, in practice it is different. Not only is the choice of director a political matter, but also the employment of teachers is a matter of political assignment. Of course, declaratively, officially, employment is the director's responsibility; however, this is not the case in practice.

Interestingly, the last paragraph of the cited Article 108 is filled with what cannot be under the obligations of other sections of that article, which are the foundations of school management. From formal and informal conversations with the director of educational institutions, it can be concluded that the content of the indents "performs other activities in accordance with the law and school rules" refers to the following activities:

- providing additional financial resources for school work, investments and capital investments,
- procurement of funds, materials and the like,
- preparation and realization of various projects,
- supervision and control of the work of employees,
- legal affairs – interpretation of the law, legal disputes with associates,
- cooperation with parents, the local community, governmental and non-governmental organizations,
- work with students – pedagogical jobs
- professional development of teachers
- organization of competitions.

During the training sessions for school directors, an impression is gained that directors, due to lack of money for regular and extracurricular activities, spend most of their time obtaining additional financial resources for various projects, and co-operation with businesses, parents, and the local community. According to the statements of school directors, they are exhausted in unnecessary administrative and legal affairs due to improper and imprecise legislation (Agić, 2009). In this way, time, as a resource, is lost at the expense of pedagogical leadership activities. "As long as they [directors] work and hold to their administrative tasks and only take care of the school building in which their school works, we cannot expect directors to devote themselves to working with people" (Erčulj, 2001: 88).

Thus, educational management in reality is reduced to administration, transmission of information, instructions, and orders of the ministry in charge. From the jurisdiction of school directors, which is prescribed by law, the direct powers of director should be seen through the dual role – leadership and managerial, and many authors have given their theoretical contributions to explaining this role (Bell *et al.*, 1999; Bush & West-Burnham,

1994; Bush & Bell, 2002). By comparing directors' attitudes² with theoretical approaches to management (Bush & West-Burnham, 1994; Everard & Morris, 1996; Morrison, 2003), we come to the conclusion that the current state of education in BH is more oriented toward managerial than toward leadership approaches. We have prioritized tasks that directors would like to work in:

- improvement of educational work
- professional upgrading of teachers and management
- work on the motivation of employees and
- creating a favorable climate in school.³

These priorities are fully contained in a list of elements that directors, as pedagogical leaders, must take into account in their educational leadership (Bush & Bell, 2002: 73).

Thus, when it comes to educational management in educational institutions, it can be concluded that there is disagreement between the statements that define educational leadership and the actual situation of management in schools in BH. Such generalization of presented attitudes for the level of BH is justified, because the educational processes in BH are all more or less, similar or the same. Although there has been no research at BH level, it can be concluded that there are positive practices at local level in treating educational management.

One good example is the Pedagogical Institute of Tuzla, which, based on the experience of attendees of the School of Directors in Slovenia, organizes training for school directors in the Tuzla canton in a modular pattern, with topics that are suitable for adult learning (three modules per 3 days training, in total 9 days). In this canton, the education of directors and members of school boards is a legal obligation. Education is intended for new directors in the first year of their term of contract. In the Zenica–Doboj Canton, a director of a school is obliged to obtain a certificate of qualification for performing the function in the first year of his/her mandate. Training is brief, two days for legislative topics and one day for financial management. On the topic of teamwork, trainees are required to develop a project to improve the quality of educational work. The Commission consisting of 3 members conducts an interview and decides on certification.

In the following text, we will present an overview of education management in BH with a focus on leadership.

² From the Report on the training of directors of primary and secondary schools TK Module 3. 2008, Pedagogical Institute TK.

³ *Ibid.*

AN OVERVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

A more organized approach to the implementation of educational management in education institutions began after the implementation of numerous educational development projects funded by the European Commission⁴, the Open Society Fund of BH, KulturKontakt Austria, the CES project of the Finnish Government, Save The Children for South East Europe, etc. Significant project activities that had very good results were achieved in the first decade of this century. We highlight Soroš's "Model for Systemic Changes in Secondary Education in BH" project, which was accomplished in cooperation with the relevant Ministry of Education in Tuzla canton (TK). One of the results of the project was the education of 20 directors of primary and secondary schools in TK in the School for Directors of the Republic of Slovenia. After that, 17 students enrolled in postgraduate studies at the University of Kopar (Faculty of Management), in collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University. The result is that all, 10 participants obtained master degrees, and 3 completed doctoral theses in management in education. Below we will outline several research results that came from a group of authors employed in schools, the relevant ministry, and the TK Pedagogical Institute. Research is mainly focused on examining the existence of various models and leadership styles in educational institutions.

In the research among directors and teachers in 8 primary school in TK, Isaković (2007) investigated the existence of a transformational style of leadership, which is a "type of educational leadership that is necessary to introduce schools to the 21st century" (Fullan, 1991, Leithwood *at al.*, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1992; Harris, 2002; Bush, 2003; in Agić, 2009: 102). It was shown that the transformational style of leadership is not predominant in schools in BH. Hasanović (2009) in his study of 250 directors of upper secondary schools from all parts of BH showed that the general concept of transformation and transactional leadership and the transactional style of leadership individually, fall into the middle rank of development, while the transformational leadership of upper secondary school is transitioning to a high level of development in the system of upper secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hasanović, 2009: 206).

Huseinagić (2009) conducted empirical research among 60 of 120 school directors in TK, based on the Hersey and Blanchard model: situational

⁴ See in: *White Paper: A Joint Strategy for the Modernization of Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2003. Educational authorities in BH with the help of the EC-TAER program and the European Union.

model and eponymous questionnaire (Bass, 1990: 490). The research has shown that principals rarely use a “directing style”, “delegating” and “transferring responsibility”, which is a style of leadership appropriate for subordinates who are competent and consistent (R4) and capable of accomplishing the task set (Huseinagić, 2009: 158). From the tabular overview (Huseinagić, 2009: 137–138) it can be seen that 20.41% of directors were practicing “directive style” in 12 offered situations. “Encouragement to Cooperate” was used by 20.55%, “Delegating” by 11.52%, while “Teaching and Monitoring”, where the leader was highly focused on relationships and tasks perceived, was used by 47.50% of directors. It is clear that “Delegating”, where the leader is low directional to relationships as well as to tasks was very modest, with a level of only 11,52% (Huseinagić, 2009: 138).

When it comes to a situation-based approach to leadership, in his research, Avdić (2006), using the theoretical basis from Northouse (2001), showed that situation-based approach to leadership in BH, viewed through the prism of research on the Hersey–Blanchard model (in: Agić, Avdić, Bajrić, Halilović, Hasanović, 2006: 108–122) is present at the middle level of development of the directors of upper secondary schools. The most presented styles of leadership of school directors (S2 and S3) are aligned with the abilities and maturity of followers. Due to insufficiently developed “wider professionalism” of the teachers, it did not get into a high-level leadership style (S4)-delegating, which, due to the high degree of maturity of the followers, is characterized by the low level of directivity by director – leaders, both by tasks and by relationships (in Hasanović, 2009: 256).

Participatory leadership, through the level of delegating tasks by the directors of upper secondary schools to employees (Jahić, 2006; Agić *et al.*, 2006: 123–153), is at medium development, based on the survey in the TK. The level of delegation of tasks ranges from 40% to 93.50%. At the high level, tasks are delegated from the “pedagogical aspect”, but at the low or middle levels “managerial jobs and tasks” are delegated. The research did not succeed in providing a fundamental understanding of the meaning of the term delegation for all categories of respondents, i.e, whether the transfer of “jurisdiction and powers from a director to associates” is considered as a process of democratization of leadership or as a subtle control of associates (in: Hasanović, 2009: 256).

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

When it comes to the educational training of directors in BH, the situation is very colorful. It is best implemented in the TK, due to staff who participated in the mentioned projects. The training of the directors of TK started in 2004, initially in cooperation with Slovenian colleagues, and later in the regular programs of professional training of the Tuzla Pedagogical Institute, with its own forces: new trainers who had graduated from Slovenian and English universities and university professors. The training program of TK directors was accepted by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2008 as a model for other cantonal ministries. In other cantons, there is no such form of education because ministries of education have not given their approval. The educational authorities of Brcko District implemented two of the three modules of this basic training program for management in education in 2009. In addition to the above-mentioned project, which was supported by the Open Society Fund of BH, some others have also addressed the issue of education management in BH. The CES (Corporation in Educational Sector) project is worthwhile. This was supported by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by the TK Pedagogical Institute. Training of management teams from more than 200 schools was implemented by domestic staff (2004–2005). Another project was organized and supported by the Austrian KulturKontakt, and consisted of four modules (2010–2011). This training of directors from more than 100 schools across BH has been carried out, using domestic resources.⁵

Also, the Netherlands government has stimulated and helped set up a training programme for school management in many countries in South East Europe. Thus, BH was a participant of the program from 2010 to 2013, together with Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia. This program was organized and led by the Netherlands School for Educational Management (NSO) and the Agency for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education BH. Within the framework of the program, five people were trained to be school management trainers. Also, a collection of papers on this topic was issued, and a manual with created modules, lessons, exercises and tasks for future training participants were prepared. However, as with other similar projects, there was no opportunity for these trainers to gain further knowledge and competencies, as educational authorities did

⁵ These projects have weaknesses that are realized without taking into account the results of similar, already realized, projects. They are being implemented, and educational authorities have responsibility for their institutionalization. It is common practice that educational authorities do not sufficiently absorb the results of projects in the reform process of our education.

not show any interest in further activities in the area of school director training. More precisely, nothing has been done to introduce the training of the director as a systemic solution.

The projects implemented by the European Commission (EC-TAER and others), whose conclusions were accepted by all Entity and Cantonal Ministries of Education, contain statements on the need to strengthen the leadership and managerial competencies of directors of educational institutions. However, so far nothing has been done to institutionalize organized support for the management of educational institutions at state level.

The research in primary schools which was undertaken in the academic year 2010/2011 by the Agency for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (the Agency), also provides indicators for additional education of school directors. Thus, about 80% of directors had a chance to improve their management skills. However, for 85.79% of those who attended the directors' training such education was largely during their existing mandate and did not represent a prerequisite for the selection of new school directors. The largest number of directors who attended management education (66.7%) stated that these actions were not enough, and that they should be more frequent and of better quality. This should be kept in mind when it comes to designing and planning the strategy for improving the functioning of schools in BH. In all of these studies, it has been shown that investing in directors of educational institutions is highly profitable. Studies have shown that the introduction of change, the creation of a favorable school climate, the manner of decision making, and relations to employee development and self-development depend on the level of training of managers in educational management (Agić, 2010, 2011, 2012).

In almost all areas of BH, everything seems to do with politics. By dealing with school-based support and school management, we can conclude that the role and status of a director is endangered because the choice of director tends to be related to political affiliation rather than professional abilities. The future status, role and training of directors in BH must be different from the current situation. In our practice, directors have a mandate equal to the executive authorities that have appointed them. It is therefore impossible to carry out seriously long-term planning and implementation of their professional development. Directors, as an important link in the education chain, should be selected on the basis of professional competencies with the obligation of continuous professional training without the influence of political powers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After training sessions of school directors, research has shown that they have a different attitude toward change, which does not have to be introduced from top to bottom (Fullan, 2001). On the contrary, they are encouraged to change within the school with high participation of all participants in education in all segments, from planning, especially strategic decision-making, to curriculum creation and the need to institutionalize change. The aforementioned research projects took into account the programs and content directors' training, with the proposal of its thematic framework. Here are some suggestions for the priority of the thematic areas required for educational leadership in the 21st century. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Overview of priority areas for education and training of directors

Agić (2009) ⁶	Hasanović (2009) ⁷	Erčulj (2001) ⁸
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership, decision-making, planning, • Changes, management and control, resistances, • Financing, obtaining special revenues, programming and projects, • Legislation, reading and interpretation, and drafting of subordinate legislation, • Quality of education, quality school, • Staff development, teamwork, conflicts, managing meetings, communication, • Theories of organization, culture of organization and others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with people, • Employee motivation, • Culture and climate in school, • Monitoring the work and professional development of teachers, • Conflict resolution in school, • Organization theory, • Cooperation of schools with the environment, • Theories of leadership in education, • Styles of learning and ways of creating knowledge, • Delegation of duties and powers to associates, • Introduction of change in school, • Strategic planning at school, • Communication in school, • Teamwork, • Evaluation of work of the school, • Project management at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation, • Participations, • Planning (short-term and long-term planning), • Managing meetings, • Working with people (climate, professional development of employees)⁹

⁶ Agić, 2009: 206

⁷ Hasanović, 2009: 257–258

⁸ Erčulj, 2001: 87–96

The content in Table 3 can form the basis for creating training programs for directors in BH. Those areas can be grouped in specific topics and modules. It is important that training encompasses all directors because more will be then achieved than if energy is used to improve the capabilities of only some of them (Drucker, 1993).

There is no alternative to investment in the directorates of educational institutions. Research by Agić (2009) has shown that a more favorable environment is concerned with: the introduction of change (climate, communication, participation in decision-making), relationship to (only) perfecting, communication, conflict resolution etc. in schools where managers were trained with disciplines from Management in Education in an organized way (Agić, 2009: 204–205). From experience in countries with a tradition of training managers and directors in education, (Slovenia for example), it is of crucial importance that decision-makers in this area should plan the initial training of directors before they enter their first director mandate. It is known that in the first few months of the directoriate, principals tend to create their “own style of leadership” (Roncelli Vaupot, 2001: 215–228).

Like many other issues in BH, the relationship to educational management is not adequate at the level of local communities. This must be a matter of social and political agreement in line with higher education strategies. Our country has a respectable resource that is competent in planning, implementing, and continuously improving the system of continuing professional training, as well as basic training in educational management. However, measures are deployed by entities and cantons, which operate without harmonized policies. Gathering all staff into one place with joint work on improving the status of educational management in BH would be of crucial importance for future activities and trends towards managers/principals more favorable status and better positions of leadership in educational institutions in BH.

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