Entrepreneurial Orientation of School Principals and Principalship in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina: Psychological, Educational and Social Perspectives[1]

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Izvorni znanstveni rad
UDK: 371.2(497.5+497.6)
doi: 10.3935/rsp.v25i1.1461
Primljeno: ožujak 2017.

The entrepreneurial involvement of educational institutions at the elementary and the secondary educational levels has not been systematically analyzed in the existing body of literature, although the decentralization and autonomy of educational institutions have been emphasized in educational policies since the 1980s. This study provides an empirical analysis of the entrepreneurial orientation, as related to the schools in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina and their principals. The influence of this orientation is analyzed from the perspectives of principals' personal job satisfaction, perceived contribution to the society and the perception of the social role/influence of principalship. The empirical findings show that the entrepreneurial orientation of schools and their principals in Croatia and B&H are closely inter-related.

[1] The extended abstract of this paper has been presented and discussed at the Management international conference 2016: "Managing global changes", Pula (Croatia), June 1-4, 2016. The authors would like to express their gratitude to the participants of the conference for their discussion and contribution to formulating the final version of the paper.

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More enterprising principals are also more satisfied with their jobs, and they feel to be contributing to the society more. However, the same does not apply to their perceived social standing/status, which could be attributed to their intrinsic motivation, but such a conclusion needs to be verified by further research. The results of this study show that the entrepreneurial orientation(s) of schools and school principals should be considered as useful descriptors of individual and institutional behaviour in the educational systems of South-East Europe.

Keywords: school principals, entrepreneurial orientation, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of school administration/management and leadership has emerged in the 1950s and the 1960s (Vican, Alfirević & Relja, 2016), with the understanding of principals' role in organizing and coordinating processes in schools, coordinating and motivating teachers and students, as well as providing instructional leadership, which has lately become a significant topic in the field (Wills, 2015). Based on their instructional leadership, principals are expected to positively influence the learning outcomes (Branch et al., 2012; Chiang et al., 2016; Coelli & Green, 2012; Dhuey and Smith, 2014; Grissom et al., 2015), as well as other objectives of an educational institution, i.e. to achieve the desired level of school effectiveness. The paradigm of school leadership goes through another change, with the introduction of distributed leadership, implying the team-based management and co-operation within the school community (Harris & Spillane, 2008), as well as the shared design and implementation of school policies and the shared responsibility for school effectiveness (Harris, 2004; Martin, 2009).

These developments are also relevant for new EU member states and the transition countries in the same region, such as Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina. In the region of South-East Europe, there are renewed calls for cuts in public sector spending and 'experiments' with the well-known concept of new public management, characterized by the introduction of market logic and the orientation toward the clients'/users' needs (Shawn, 2009). Such a context creates a special focus for entrepreneurial solutions of public problems in all aspects of society, including education.

The existing research has not been especially focused on the topic of entrepreneurial orientation/behavior in schools (Leffler, 2009). Previous empirical studies concentrated mostly on the assessment of different educational practices and the resulting pupils' entrepreneurial attributes (e.g. Baranović et al., 2007; Vican and Luketić, 2013), i.e. educational outcomes (e.g. Johansen and Schanke, 2014).

Nevertheless, the theoretical development and empirical research under the concept of personal entrepreneurial orientation have been growing steadily, since Miller (1983) proposed the three relevant dimensions: innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking. Based on Miller's classification, Dess and Lumpkin (2005) explored and refined the entrepreneurial orientation into five dimensions: autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness.

To some extent, as Yemini et al. (2015) state, school principals can, in practice, enjoy a high level of autonomy, as long as the school effectiveness is being achieved, within the framework prescribed by the educational authorities. This makes it possible for principals to use the opportunities in their school environments, obtain resources in innovative ways, promote and lead changes in their schools and local communities/society. Within this context, principals are regarded to be *entrepreneurially oriented,* if they *achieve the educational objectives, within the institutional accountability demands and stakeholders requirements, by using the proactive and innovative approaches.* A range of relevant objectives may include the visibility and the market success of the school (if the social environment focuses on the school choice); improving the student learning and achievements; obtaining resources in innovative ways, such as through project management, fundraising, special events, etc.; engaging and co-operating with the local community and the external environment, etc. (cf. Goldring and Schuermann, 2009).

Conceptualization of the entrepreneurial orientation of schools and their principals

In the private/enterprise sector, entrepreneurial orientation is focused on finding and proactively exploiting market opportunities through innovation (Miller, 1983; Monsen, 2005). Although the majority of schools in the South-East European region belong to the public, or the non-profit sector, in recent decades, some of them have increasingly been acquiring features of entrepreneurially oriented organizations and have adopted entrepreneurial management practices. Literature search shows that such attempts are not rare in the global educational practice. Some authors try to address the entrepreneurial orientation of schools and their principals (Inbar, 2009; Borasi & Finnigan, 2010; Yemini, Addi-Raccah & Katarivas, 2015), as well as to analyze its potential social impact (Omer Attali & Yemini, 2017; Yemini, 2017). The most obvious avenue of academic inquiry is related to the school response to the introduction of market logic in education (van Zanten, 2009).

Another dimension of the principals' entrepreneurial orientation is related to their borrowing of the practices and tools that originated in the private (enterprise) sector as potential solutions to problems in education (Rigby, 2013). The driving forces for such practice(s) are varied. They include: the parents' empowerment and a greater amount of freedom in choosing different forms of education for their children; the influence of local communities; the need for local adaptation of schools, in order to address those diverse individual and community needs; economic and social shocks, leading to cuts of public budgets and lower amounts of resources available; distributed leadership, involving teachers and other school staff into educational leadership, etc. (Caldwell, 2009, p. 56).

On the other hand, the essential difference between entrepreneurs and managers is that managers behave according to the traditional, routine concepts, while entrepreneurs rely on creativity. Entrepreneurial principals will, therefore, implement innovation, critical thinking, adaptability and creativity, while simultaneously ensuring that governmental regulations for accountability and standardized educational outcomes are met (Inbar, 2009; Schoen and Fusarelli, 2008). In entrepreneurially oriented schools, innovation will be promoted and entrepreneurial ideas rewarded, while the school will be open for partnerships

with communities and businesses in the region, and beyond.

There is a largely unexplored similarity of the construct, related to *entrepreneurially oriented schools/principals* to the *'Triple Helix' model of entrepreneurial university*. It emphasized the relationship amongst three factors that are important for the development of entrepreneurial solutions and applied knowledge: education and research, the business environment and government (Etzkowitz, 2013). Each of these three components is independent from the others, but they commonly overlap in terms of innovation and knowledge transfer, and each of them represents a generator of entrepreneurship and innovation. A similar triangle of relevant relationships could be observed in schools as well, with the national/regional Ministry of Education, business community and schools being the major actors, while the principals, acting as entrepreneurial managers, should be delivering inspiration and support for the development of actors' co-operation.

Support for entrepreneurial orientation of schools and principals is especially important for countries in all kinds of economic/social transitions, since there may be a great number of educational professionals in such an environment, with a largely unused and unaddressed entrepreneurial orientation. This has been demonstrated by an empirical study, conducted in Russia in the mid-1990s, classifying 40% of its respondents as independent, focused on the best types of administrative practices and willing to innovate and work under a high degree of uncertainty (Bayburin et al., 2015).

METHODS

Based on common themes of how entrepreneurship is practiced in Israeli schools (Yemini, Addi-Raccah & Katarivas, 2015) and the key themes from previous research, relevant items for the measurement of entrepreneurial orientation were identified (see Table 1).

Table 1
Survey items

Entrepreneurial orientation of the school	Entrepreneurial orientation of the principal
Support to staff to innovate educational and other practices	Principal is able to evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities
Support to staff for continuous education	Principal perceives him-/her-self as a creative person
Proactive behavior of staff is supported and rewarded	Principal perceives him-/her-self as a good problem-solver
Educational governance support to school in innovation and stakeholder management	Principal perceives him-/her-self as a leader and communicator
Proactiveness and risks acceptance	Principal is able to develop new, market-based offers
Active co-operation with entrepreneurial institutions	Principal perceives him-/her-self as a success-oriented person
	Principal is able to develop new business contacts
	Principal accepts risk
	Principal is able to control the processes in the school
	Principal perceives him-/her-self as a thorough and responsible person
	Principal perceives him-/her-self as skilled in financial issues and motivated to earn additional school income.
	Principal perceives him-/her-self as a person, oriented toward innovation

The principal survey, using the previous operationalization of entrepreneurial orientation, has been conducted in late 2015 and early 2016 in B&H and Croatia, on a random sample of 369 school principals (B&H, N=123 and Croatia, N=246). Both primary and secondary schools were included into the survey. The list of population has been obtained from the Internet, both for B&H[2] and Croatia[3], with the 20% of schools being randomly selected for data collection from these lists. In the case of B&H, along with the personal permission from the principal, permission from the administration was required, as well. This was a lengthy process, which required contact with multiple, canton-level educational administration(s). Such a complexity of data collection was the reason for the lower response rate from the principals in B&H (55 schools in Federation B&H - FB&H and 68 schools in Republic of Srpska - RS, i.e. 15.22% of the entire population), as compared to Croatia (246 schools, i.e. 19.03% of the entire population). Provided that previous studies operated with samples ranging from N=38 (Trnavčevič & Vaupot, 2009), N=82 (Alfirević, Pavičić, Mihanović & Relja, 2011), N=59 (Blažević, 2014), to N=186 principals (Petrović, 2015), the sample size can be considered as adequate.

The research instrument (questionnaire) has been tested for internal consistency, with the entrepreneurial orientation constructs being internally consistent (with the Cronbach alpha value of 0.876 for surveyed principals and 0.731 for schools). The study also operates with the constructs of principals' social status, as well as their personal satisfaction and the perception of the own contribution to society. While the psychological items had high values of Cronbach alpha (0.865 and 0.888 - respectively), the social status variable has been placed on the low level of acceptability, according to the Cronbach alpha value of 0.569. All items were measured on the standard, 5-level Likert scales.

To offset this methodological limitation of the study, an additional stream of data, related to the public perception of principals' social status, has been collected. It was based on a nationally representative public opinion survey of 591 households in Croatia. The survey has been conducted by using the Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) approach, which guarantees that the sample is random and nationally representative in terms of age, gender, education and the geographical location of surveyed households. The traditional methodology, based on the telephone directory as the population list, has been used (Groves et al, 2001), in order to establish the public opinion on the social status of the school principals. Unfortunately, such a study was extremely difficult to be operationalized in B&H, due to the complexities of the institutional environment. All collected data were anonymized and entered into the IBM SPSS/PASW software system, which was used for statistical analysis.

[2] For Bosnia & Herzegovina, due to the complex system of government, with three levels of governance (cantons, entities and the state level), the population data from the independent portal *skolegijum.ba* were used. The lists, obtained from all government levels, contain data on 205 primary schools in Republika Srpska (RS) and 418 in the Federation of B&H (http://skolegijum.ba/static/pdf/5204c52864f20.pdf). The list of secondary schools in B&H (http://skolegijum.ba/static/pdf/5208e83558b90.pdf) contains data on 185 schools, regardless on the region.

[3] For Croatia, population lists are available from the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia (www.mzos.hr) in Excel format. They list 887 primary (http:// www.mzos.hr/datoteke/Ustanove/USTANOVE_OS.xls) and 406 secondary schools (http:// www.**mzos**.hr/datoteke/Ustanove/USTANOVE_SS.xls).

The research question has been formulated as follows: Is there preliminary evidence on the usefulness of the *'entrepreneurial school/principal'* concept in educational research in South-East Europe?

As to operationalize the research question, the following hypotheses were developed:

Hypothesis 1. *The constructs of schools' and principals' entrepreneurial orientation(s) are mutually related and can be used to provide empirically relevant groupings of principals.*

Hypothesis 2. *The constructs of school and principal entrepreneurial orientation(s) provide empirically relevant differentiation of selected principals' characteristics.*

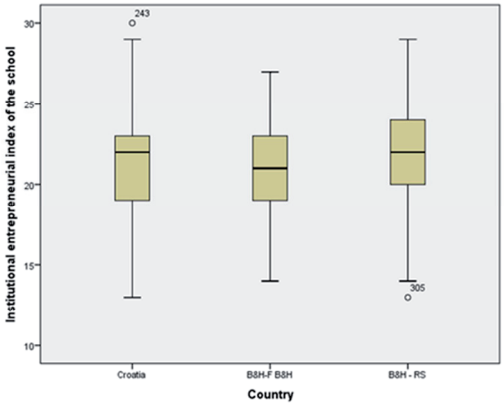
RESULTS OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Demographics and key constructs

The majority of surveyed principals were middle-aged (46.74% of respondents were between 50 and 59 years old, 30.98% in the age bracket between 40 and 49 years), while 10.05% were older than 60. Only 0.03% of them were recent college graduates (24-29 years old) and 11.96% were in their 30s. The sample is balanced in terms of gender (51.52% of female and 48.48% of male respondents). The structure of schools included into the sample is approximately balanced to the structure of the educational system in B&H and Croatia, with 76.71% of elementary (public), 22.47% of secondary (public) and 0.82% of secondary (private) schools. The share of small schools (with less than 200 students) equals 26.7% of the sample, middle-sized schools (200-400 students) represent 27.79% of the sample, while large schools make the remaining half of the respondents (23.16% for the schools with 400-600 students and 22.34% for the schools, larger than 600 students). Distribution of the constructs, related to the *entrepreneurial orientation of the schools and principals* is rather similar (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1

Entrepreneurial orientation of the schools – statistical distribution

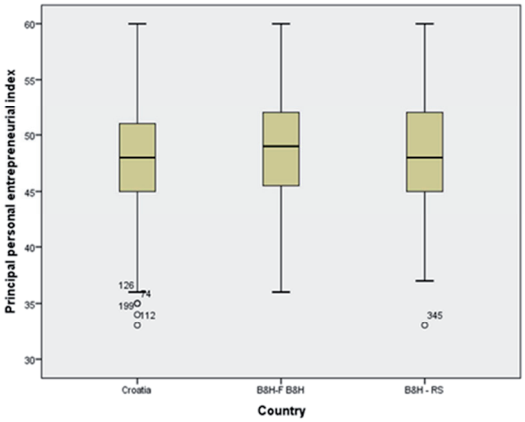


Note: Mean for both countries = 21.46; HR = 21.45; B&H/FB&H = 20.92; B&H/RS = 21.95

It is interesting that the mean value for the entrepreneurial orientation is rather high, both for the schools, as well as for the principals surveyed. The empirical distributions of those variables did not conform to the presumptions of normality, as demonstrated by the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (p=0.000), involving the need to further use the nonparametric methods.

Figure 2

Entrepreneurial orientation of the principals – statistical distribution



Note: Mean for both countries = 48.09; HR = 47.89; B&H/FB&H = 49.13; B&H/RS = 47.98

The nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test confirms the absence of statistically significant differences between the two countries for the entrepreneurship constructs. For the *entrepreneurial orientation of the responding schools, the absence of national and regional differences* is confirmed by the empirical test value = 2,688, df = 2, Sig. = 0.261 and for the *entrepreneurial orientation of principals* by the empirical test value = 3,706, df = 2, Sig. = 0.157. It is interesting to note that the unstable institutional environments of Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina are associated with relatively high levels of entrepreneurial orientation. Thus, it would be interesting to put this finding into the context of other countries, with different levels of institutional development of the educational system and the public sector.

The social status of principals, their personal satisfaction and the feeling of contribution to the society are average (see Table 2), with a single statistically significant difference between the two regions/ entities (FB&H, RS) within Bosnia and Herzegovina. This has also been confirmed by means of the Kruskall-Wallis test, due to the absence of conformity of these variables' distributions to the assumption of normality.

Table 2

Principals' perception of own social status, personal satisfaction and the perception of social contribution – statistical distribution(s)

Country		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Croatia	Social status	245	3	12	7.74	1.926
	Satisfaction	243	2	10	7.86	1.427
	Contribution	245	2	10	8.57	1.225
	Valid N (listwise)	241				
B&H-F B&H	Social status	55	3	11	7.64	2.076
	Satisfaction	55	2	10	7.75	1.456
	Contribution	55	7	10	8.82	.983
	Valid N (listwise)	55				
B&H - RS	Social status	68	3	12	8.49	2.026
	Satisfaction	68	3	10	7.85	1.417
	Contribution	68	6	10	8.57	1.069
	Valid N (listwise)	68				

The obtained results demonstrate that the lack of differences for the principals' personal satisfaction (empirical test value = 0.393, df = 2, Sig. = 0.822) and their feeling of contribution to the society (empirical test value = 1,861, df = 2, Sig. = 0.394). On the other hand, *significant differences seem to be confirmed for the social status of principals among the two regions of FB&H and RS* (empirical test value = 8,520, df = 2, Sig. = 0.014), although this finding needs to be verified, due to the low Cronbach alpha of the construct measurement scale.

Relationships among key constructs

All key constructs are inter-related, which can be concluded from correlation analysis, conducted by using the ranks-based, Spearman coefficient (see Table 3).

Table 3
Correlation among key research constructs

	Social status	Personal satisfaction	Social contribution	School entrepreneurial orientation	Principal entrepreneurial orientation
Social status	1,000	,229**	,031	,140**	,036
Personal satisfaction		1,000	,391**	,186**	,304**
Social contribution			1,000	,250**	,462**
School entrepreneurial orientation				1,000	,566**
Principal entrepreneurial orientation					1,000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

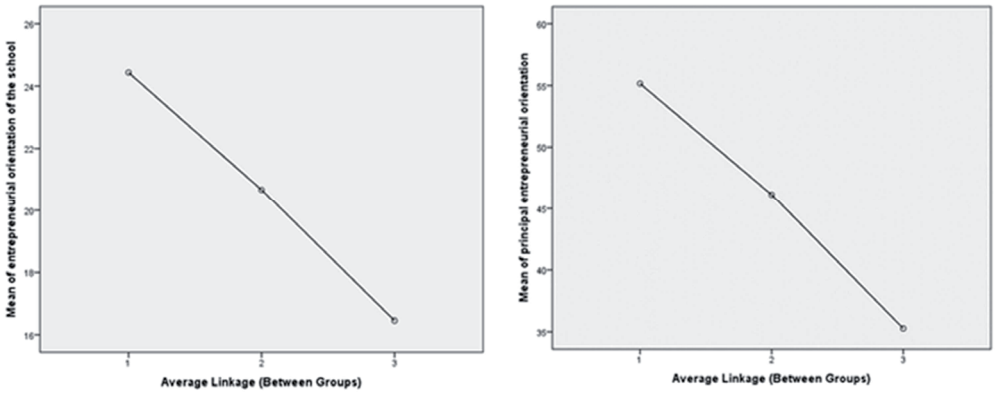
The results show that the *entrepreneurial orientation of principals is closely aligned with those of their schools,* which is not surprising, due to the presumed central role of a principal in creating an innovative and entrepreneurially centered educational institution. In addition, there are correlations of low to medium strength between the selected psychological characteristics of the principals (including their personal satisfaction and the feeling of social contribution) and both indicators of the entrepreneurial orientation. However, this is not the case with the principals' perception of their social status.

Relevance of the entrepreneurial orientation construct for empirical grouping of principals has been analyzed by the hierarchical cluster analysis, which is justified, as the potential number of principal clusters has not been known in advance. The existence of three principal clusters has been estimated by visual inspection of the dendogram, produced by empirical data. The cluster membership variable has been computed by the SPSS/PASW statistical software packaged and entered into the dataset. It was used to describe the clusters in terms of low, medium and high entrepreneurial orientation (see Figure 3)[4]. The dif-

[4] The entrepreneurial orientation values for the three clusters were as follows: School ent. orient. = 24.44; Principal ent. orient. = 55.16 for the high orientation cluster; School ent. orient. = 20.67; Principal ent. orient. = 46.14 for the medium orientation cluster and School ent. orient. = 16.45; Principal ent. orient. = 35.27 for the low orientation cluster.

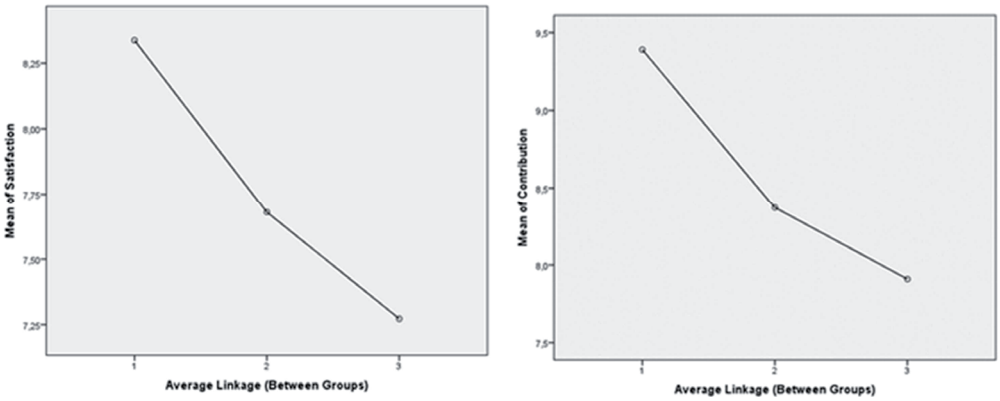
ferences among the levels of entrepreneurial orientation can also be confirmed by the nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis statistical test. It demonstrates *the significant differences of the school's* (empirical test value = 108,612, df = 2, Sig. = 0.000) *and principal's orientation toward entrepreneurship* (empirical test value = 205,167, df = 2, Sig. = 0.000) *across clusters.*

Figure 3
Differences in entrepreneurial orientation across the principal clusters



Cluster membership has also been used to statistically test the strength of the entrepreneurial orientation in describing different principal characteristics. For the cases of perceived social status and the two analyzed psychological features (personal satisfaction and the perception of social contribution), the Kruskal-Wallis test demonstrates *the significant differences among clusters, as related to personal satisfaction* (empirical test value = 17,411, df = 2, Sig. = 0.000) *and the perceived social contribution* (empirical test value = 58,844, df = 2, Sig. = 0.000).

Figure 4
Differences in psychological characteristics across the principal clusters



Visual inspection of means plots (see Figure 4) confirms the *positive relationship between the entrepreneurial orientations with the principals' psychological characteristics*[5]. No significant cluster differences were established for the social status construct.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A high level of correlation among the analyzed constructs of entrepreneurial orientation, at the organizational (school) and personal (principal) levels, shows that they can be consistently used. In this study, such usage has provided empirically relevant groupings of principals in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Some of their characteristics, such as personal satisfaction and the perception of social contribution have also been successfully linked to the entrepreneurial orientation. This has not been the case with the perception of principals' social status, which could be attributed either to the need to develop a more comprehensive measurement of the construct, or the (mis)interpretations of the principals' profession, caused by the specific, South-East European circumstances.

These empirical results demonstrate that both working hypotheses should be accepted, which has an important consequence for educational research. The construct(s) of *school/principal entrepreneurial orientation(s),* arising from the entrepreneurial dimension of educational management, seem to be significant descriptors of principal's and institutional behavior in the educational systems of South-East Europe. Further studies should demonstrate how useful they are in describing the key constructs in educational research and what is the level of their generalizability, outside of the regional context.

In practical terms, this paper seems to mirror the results of a previous study, conducted in the for-profit sector, in which Alfirević, Gonan Božac & Krneta (2013) suggest that innovative start-up entrepreneurs need to 'patch up' the deficiencies of the institutional infrastructure, by leveraging their own competences and networks. With principalship being a formally unrecognized profession and schools being rather underfunded, but, simultaneously, social expectations from principals being set rather high, those often describe their job in terms of serving as a 'Superman/ Superwoman' (Vican, Sorić & Radeka, 2016) – to the educational authorities, local community and other stakeholders. In such a socio-economic environment, entrepreneurial solutions seem to be an adequate short-term answer to urgent issues, which cannot be addressed by the formal system and its actors. This could explain a rather high level of the entrepreneurial orientation (both for the schools, as well as for the principals themselves), but it also raises questions of the efficiency of the educational governance and the need for its further reform, in both Bosnia & Herzegovina and Croatia. If such a presumption is verified by further research, it could be a useful input for educational policy, in the fields of principal development and school governance.

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[5] The personal satisfaction and perceived social contribution values for the three clusters were as follows: Satisfaction = 8.34; Contribution = 9.39 for the high orientation cluster; Satisfaction = 7.68; Contribution = 8.37 for the medium orientation cluster, and Satisfaction = 7.27; Contribution = 7.91 for the low orientation cluster.

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Sažetak

PODUZETNIČKA ORIJENTACIJA ŠKOLSKIH RAVNATELJA I RAVNATELJSTVO U HRVATSKOJ I BOSNI I HERCEGOVINI: PSIHOLOŠKE, OBRAZOVNE I SOCIJALNE PERSPEKTIVE

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Uključenost obrazovnih institucija u poduzetništvo, na razini osnovnoškolskog i srednjoškolskog obrazovanja, do sada se nije sistematično proučavala u znanstvenoj literaturi, iako se decentralizacija i autonomija odgojno-obrazovnih ustanova naglašava kao značajan dio obrazovne politike, još od 1980-ih. U ovom se radu iznose rezultati empirijske analize poduzetničke orijentacije škola u Hrvatskoj te Bosni i Hercegovini, kao i njihovih ravnatelja/ica. Djelovanje poduzetničke orijentacije utvrđuje se u odnosu na osobno zadovoljstvo ravnatelja/ica poslom, percipirani doprinos društvu i društvenu ulogu ravnateljskog posla. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da su poduzetnička orijentacija škola i ravnatelja/ica u Hrvatskoj i BiH usko povezani. Poduzetni ravnatelji/ce su i zadovoljniji sa svojim poslom te osjećaju višu razinu doprinosa društvu. Međutim, isto se ne odnosi i na njihov percipirani društveni status, što bi se moglo pripisati intrinzičnoj motivaciji, pri čemu takav zaključak treba potvrditi budućim istraživanjima. Rezultati ovog rada pokazuju da se poduzetnička orijentacija škola i ravnatelja/ica može smatrati korisnim deskriptorima individualnog i institucionalnog ponašanja u obrazovnim sustavima u jugoistočnoj Europi.

Ključne riječi: školski ravnatelji(ce), poduzetnička orijentacija, Hrvatska, BiH.