

Discrimination in education of adults

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Abstract

There is a problem of unemployment, but also a problem of education of adults in BiH. It is evident that lack of social care and interest for education of adults caused reduction and complete change of programmatic activity of adult education institutions. The goal of research is to identify the problem the employers' encounter when hiring labor, and problems workers encounter in search for re-qualification and employment.

Keywords: unemployment, re-qualification, education, labor force

Introduction

Education of adults has become a topic of very vigorous discussions in the 21st century. On the one hand we have a system of education that is not strategically designed and population of over 40 does not find the adequate employment in line with their education. They see their prospect in additional education and re-qualification, which leads to life-long learning.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina this problem is recognized and noted in Strategic platform of developing the adult education in the context of life-long learning in BiH for the period 2014-2020. However, it was also noticed that absence of social care and interests for adult education caused reduction and complete change of programmatic activities or closing of a number of forms and institutions for adult education. On the other hand, there emerged a number of schools for re-qualification, where it is noticeable that there is no network of schools and there is non-systemic solving the unemployment problem and desire for advancing in another field. In this paper we will consider a problem of adult education and discrimination in the mentioned sector, while lack of systemic approach to this problem in BiH and lack of expert cadre will be mentioned as problems. The goal of research is to identify the problem the employers' encounter when hiring labor, and problems workers encounter in search for re-qualification. We can also add that highest number of employed today is in the sector of services, and adult education is mainly developing in the field of services in BiH. Under the term services there is a wide spectrum of very heterogeneous activities that take up large percentage of overall economic activity in the world ^[1], while they are significant potential for development in the third world countries and developing countries such as BiH ^[2].

Basic terms

Discrimination means to separate, make a difference on the count of social, racial, ethnic, religious, individual, gender, language, age or other characteristics. Discrimination limits or disables application of human rights and is a very frequent phenomenon in education and business. Considering that workers are entitled to equal treatment, discrimination in education, firing, or promoting based on criteria not related to work, is immoral.

Despite that, we can hear results of research in many organizations that prestigious and better paid jobs are dominated by men. However, there is a new phenomenon in studying business ethics and management of human resources, supported by research in the past few decades that attractive people are, in average, more successful in career than people who are naturally less attractive.

Considering that workers are entitled to equal treatment, discrimination in hiring, firing, or promoting based on criteria not related to work, is immoral. Very few dispute this statement, which is quite easy to prove ^[3].

If we take, nevertheless, that two of many laws of success in business are law of differentiation and law of persuasiveness, perhaps discrimination has its justification. According to Brian Tracy, Law of persuasiveness says that a proof that other people, similar to your buyer, have bought that product creates a certain credibility, decreases resistance and increases sales.

On the other hand, one of important laws of business success is law on differentiation. According to it, in order to succeed on the market your product or service must have special advantage, something that will make them supreme compared to products and services of competition. Therefore, if employers decide to employ only young and handsome people, or only men, or women, because it proved more profitable with competitor company, does it mean that norms

¹ Metters, R., & Maruchek, A. Service Management—Academic Issues and Scholarly Reflections from Operations Management Repretragaers. Decision Sciences, 38

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³ Trejsi B., 100 apsolutno neoborivih zakona poslovnog uspeha, Sentiment, Beograd, 2007., str 199.

of business ethics crush the staircase of success? Frequent discrimination in business is based on gender^[4].

There are, however, countries in which law prescribes that females cannot be on managing positions. That brings multinational companies to ethical dilemmas. If a woman some multinational corporation promotes to a director's position has problems in cooperating with other companies that cherish the tradition of male domination, the company comes to a dilemma between discrimination and securing the profit. Therefore, the company has to invest maximum efforts to secure balance between fair treatment of a woman-director and its financial interests. In some cultures it will be easier to achieve, in some more difficult, but in no case (country) a company should simply assume that women cannot be successful on high positions^[5].

Traditional determination of education start from the understanding of education as a systematic acquisition of learned knowledge about nature, society and human thinking and mastering working skills and habits that develop and shape certain character lines of a person and a certain point of view on the world. More recent understandings of education start from the position that education is a system of institutional acquisition of knowledge and making people able to acquire skills, knowledge and habits they need.

Starting from up to date determinations and respecting all so far approaches to education, modern education, from sociological point of view, is defined as a social process for acquiring knowledge-knowledge from the standpoint of its significance for civilization changes on a global scale and needs of population for developed personality that is the basic factor of knowledge as a resource for development. In that sense, education as a development resource should enable, through education system and its content, realization of basic goals that relate to development of a personality, preservation of human natural environment and creating consciousness about global problems of contemporary mankind.

Education of adults is a part of a unique system of education of every country that secures the adults acquiring life-long competences and qualifications needed for personal and professional development, work and labor, as well as socially responsible behavior. Adult education is realized as formal, non-formal and informal education.

Formal education of adults encloses primary and secondary education. Formal education of adults are organized processes of learning realized on the basis of teaching plans and programs of primary and secondary education and programs of other forms of technical education, adjusted to the needs and abilities of adults and demands of labor market, in compliance with the law.

Non-formal education of adults are organized processes of learning on the basis of special programs, for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, values, attitudes, abilities and skills directed to personal development of adults, work and employment, and social activities.

Methodology of work

Data used in research were collected by polling employers from 20 municipalities and cities in BiH. We also polled unemployed qualified workers who decided to go for re-qualification. In order to realize the goals of research according to defined subject of research, we used the following methods: method of description and classification of data, method of analysis and synthesis, and statistical methods. To achieve versatility and getting results from more differently developed local communities, we conducted the poll in 20 municipalities/cities: Banja Luka, Berkovići, Bijeljina, Bileća, Bratunac, Brod, Čelinac, Derventa, Gradiška, Kostajnica, Laktaši, Milići, Novi Grad, Prijedor, Ribnik, Srbac, Šamac, Teslić, Višegrad and Zvornik.

The poll was conducted among employers and potential workers, and we surveyed a total of 200 employers and 400 citizens. The poll contained three questions, and subjects were asked to select one of offered answered to those questions.

System of education

Absence of social care and interest for education of adults caused reduction and complete change of programmatic activity or closing a number of institutions and forms of adult education.

The consequence, on the one hand, is that there is a growing need for adult education, and on the other, that institutions that could satisfy those needs are being closed. A number of institutions for adult education started to engage in commercial activities outside the field of education and culture^[6].

The number of public institutions for adult education has significantly increased in transitional countries over the past decades. In such countries it is necessary to establish adequate network of institutions and organizations for adult education.

Experience of transitional countries showed that adequate support to institutions for adult education and preservation of this network, exactly in the reforming period, is necessary to keep the infrastructure and potential that can be successfully used in the period of growing social and personal needs for knowledge and education.

Absence of adequate workers

Experts emphasized that a large number of people active in various organizations and institutions in BiH (education institutions, culture institutions, HR departments in large companies, NGOs, etc.) are engaged in adult education, but with their basic professional skills they do not have the appropriate andragogic-didactical-methodology knowledge necessary for such activity. Bearing this in mind, we can assume that in this way the basic precondition for quality performing of educational programs for adults is not secured, and often their andragogic role is not recognized.

In education institutions, this activity is usually performed by professionals from other fields who do not know the particularities of the process of learning and teaching of adults, or modern methods of working with adults. There is no

⁴ See more at <http://www.businessinsider.com/beautiful-people-get-more-job-interviews-2013-9>, accessed on 20 May 2017.

⁵ Dušanić Gačić S., "Dušanić Gačić S., "Poslovna etika u zapošljavanju: Ljepši lakše dolaze do novca", *Aktuelnosti* 2012. Banja Luka, str 107, ISSN 0354-9852

⁶ See more at Društvo za obrazovanje odraslih: www.aes.rs/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/FOOO-CIP.pdf, accessed on 27 February 2017.

systemic solution or institutional framework of training and advance for either of these categories, nor clearly defined standards for work in this field. Full de-professionalization of this field also came due to not recognizing the specifics of education work with adults, its principles, content, organization, forms and methods.

Considering the large number of people dealing with adult education in various institutions, who do not have the appropriate andragogic training, it is necessary to provide a system for their andragogy-methodical-didactical training and advance.

To have relevant information about adult education is the basic condition for realization of goals of education policy in this field, for analysis and improvement of work, planning and undertaking systemic measures and bringing strategic plans, their follow-up and evaluation.

Models of adult education

Depending on a wider social-economic context, it is possible to differentiate 'free-market model' and 'centrally-planned model' of adult education [7].

Free-market model is based on a doctrine of liberal capitalism, i.e. on an assumption that men are free, rational and able to follow their interest. It means that users of adult education are capable to choose courses that serve their interest, so less popular courses would cease and the whole system shall develop in the direction of satisfying their 'awakened' needs. Education under centrally-planned model believes that free market in education does not function. It is based on an assumption that education planners could better assess the real education needs of particular groups of population, secure creation and implementation of quality education programs and optimal network of education institutions, avoid unnecessary overlapping, commercialization, deception of potential beneficiaries of education and secure more just approach to attractive programs [8].

Discrimination in Education

One of key factors that influence additional education of adults, which is being talked about in the recent years, is discrimination. It can be very visible, i.e. open, or closed, invisible, so that it cannot be spotted immediately and responded in the right way.

One of gravest forms is certainly institutional discrimination the adults are exposed to in the system. The truth is that discriminating system usually does not admit that it discriminates, but considers such a behavior self-explanatory within the context. Stereotypes and prejudices related to adult population certainly contribute to social isolation and maintenance of discrimination as a right of majority.

Some demand for each company to have representation of women or persons of other race proportional to their representation in overall population. Other advocate the idea that proportions in any type of employment should be equal to proportion of each group that acquires qualifications for the given employment [9].

However, what kind of compensatory justice is it at present, if certain persons were driven to the other job exactly by discrimination? Certain social categories are more vulnerable or endangered than other, either by nature of things, or due to discrimination they have been exposed to as a social category. In order to enable these groups more equal position in the society, the state undertakes different protective measures and aid that include special rights in the field of rights of unemployed and employed, and, in certain cases, advantage at employment. Such measures are called positive discrimination.

Solving the issue of prejudice and discrimination and raising awareness about anti-discriminatory measures and significance of rights, is necessary on every level. Current shortcomings reflect the way in which systems have been developing with noticeably less attention dedicated to adults than to interests of those who dealt with them.

Presenting results

Research results presented below, are divided in two parts. The first part gives an overview of employers' answers, and in the second part review of answers of unemployed labor force. The goal of the first survey (200 employers, 10 from each municipality/city) was to determine whether employers have adequate candidates available for employment, and the second survey should answer if the workers have adequate education when re-qualified and whether they were exposed to discrimination.

Poll survey showed that with 140 polled subjects (70%) believed that employees' expertise impacts the business of the company, while 60 of them (30%) did not feel that way. Also, in this research we could see which are the recognized problems for further development of the company. It is interesting to note that employers do not feel that expertise of employees influences the export and promotion of products. Among the employer's comments we noticed there was a concern about health care of low-expertise cadre, mainly in view of fear from paying the employees on sick leave and additional legislation measures.

Another survey is conducted among labor force (total of 400, 20 from each municipality/city) who have decided to re-qualify, or consider to go for it. Elimination ballots were those where answer was they would never go for requalification.

Survey results show that only 25,25% of polled subjects were satisfied with offered vocations at adult education institutions, while larger part (74,75%) were not. From a total of 400 polled, 161 of them were ready to start own business (40,25%), while 59,75% of them were not ready to take that endeavor. Speaking of discrimination at the work post, 198 of polled answered affirmatively, while 202 of them (50,5%) answered negatively.

Results obtained show that labor force in BiH recognize the need for re-qualification and possibilities offered by it. However, less than half are ready to start their own business within the course of re-qualification.

When it comes to discrimination at workplace, half of the polled were exposed to discrimination at workplace, during performing some of their regular tasks.

⁷ Pastuović. N., (1999) *Edukologija*, Zagreb:Znamen, str. 360

⁸ Ibidem

⁹ Di Džordž R. T., *Poslovna etika*, Filip Višnjić, Beograd, 2003., str. 433.

Table 1: Results of a poll conducted among employers

Municipality / city	Does the expertise of your employees impact your business?		What are the obstacles for further development of company due to lack of expert cadre?					Would the adequate education policy influence the work of your company?	
	YES	NO	Inability to catch-up with competition	Products not attractive for exporting	High costs of health care	Inability to realize extra profit and efficient price of work	Paying various experts	Yes	No
Banja Luka	8	2	4	2	1	1	0	9	1
Berkovići	7	3	4	1	2	2	2	9	1
Bijeljina	6	4	3	1	1	1	2	8	2
Bileća	8	2	2	0	2	2	3	10	0
Bratunac	5	5	4	0	2	2	3	10	0
Brod	6	4	2	1	3	3	2	9	1
Čelinac	4	6	1	0	4	4	5	7	3
Derventa	5	5	3	1	2	2	3	6	4
Gradiška	6	4	2	0	2	2	4	8	2
Kostajnica	8	2	5	1	1	1	1	10	0
Laktaši	6	4	0	0	5	5	4	8	2
Milići	9	1	3	2	2	2	2	10	0
Novi Grad	8	2	2	1	2	2	3	9	1
Prijedor	9	1	2	1	3	3	2	9	1
Ribnik	7	3	1	1	4	4	2	10	0
Srbac	8	2	3	1	2	2	3	10	0
Šamac	6	4	4	2	0	0	2	10	0
Teslić	7	3	2	0	3	3	2	9	1
Višegrad	9	1	1	3	4	4	3	10	0
Zvornik	8	2	3	2	2	2	2	10	0
TOTAL:	140	60	51	20	47	47	50	181	19

Table 2: Results of a poll conducted among labor force

Municipality / city	Do the re-qualification institutions offer necessary vocations?		Would you start your own business after re-qualification?		Were you exposed to discrimination on a working post?	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Banja Luka	8	12	10	10	12	8
Berkovići	4	16	14	6	15	5
Bijeljina	8	12	12	8	12	8
Bileća	5	15	4	16	8	12
Bratunac	4	16	5	15	8	12
Brod	7	13	7	13	8	12
Čelinac	3	17	8	12	11	9
Derventa	4	16	4	16	6	14
Gradiška	7	13	13	7	15	5
Kostajnica	2	18	9	11	12	8
Laktaši	8	12	16	4	16	4
Milići	3	17	7	13	9	11
Novi Grad	4	16	6	14	8	12
Prijedor	9	11	15	5	15	5
Ribnik	8	12	3	17	6	14
Srbac	3	17	8	12	10	10
Šamac	4	16	4	16	5	15
Teslić	5	15	7	13	9	11
Višegrad	4	16	6	14	8	12
Zvornik	1	19	3	17	5	15
TOTAL:	101	299	161	239	198	202

Conclusion

This modest research brought out the conclusion that labor force in BiH is aware of inadequate education system that does not enable people for the jobs demanded on labor market. We could also see that employers are aware of that fact as well and they see their own low competitiveness in the bad education system.

Modern education contributes to realization of social life, it is basic social process of advance of mankind and continuation of culture. Modern education is also a key factor of economic development and knowledge, and all other social processes depend on it.

In the modern world, education follows changes occurred by developments in the world. Therefore, education of adults in the 21st century will be directed towards acquiring knowledge that becomes significant factor of social development and will have a decisive value both for the individual and for the civilization.

Key component of economic development is quality of labor. In BiH we have a paradox where the unemployment rate is high, while at the same time employers complain they cannot fill all their posts as there are no adequate candidates.

One of reasons for such a situation is education system which, as in many other countries, is behind the changes of the labor market, and the other reason is that the labor market is based exclusively on formal qualifications and does not take into consideration the skills and competences the workers acquired in some other way.

The goal of our society should be reforms that will improve employability of the job seekers by strengthening the life-long learning and introducing of an instrument 'Passport of competences for employers and job seekers', to facilitate the use of competences in the processes of finding new workers.

It is also necessary to introduce functional laws that regulate the field of adult education and qualifications framework, and, the foremost, to work on creating awareness with wider public about the significance of life-long learning.

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