

LIFELONG LEARNING AND ADVANCEMENT IN A COMPANY: EXPERIENCE FROM SERBIA***

Lifelong learning concept is the concept that brings humanism in both everyday and business life of people. It promotes education, learning, cooperation and advancement in people's lives. During last two decades it became obvious that it is important to implement this concept, particularly in the field of economy in order to achieve better economic results.

The aim of this paper is to find out if there is an actual implementation of lifelong learning concept in Serbia. Besides that it will also show if there are instances of advancement for employees in the companies that are implementing lifelong learning concept.

The paper contains empirical research that was conducted in 15 companies in Serbia, primarily state-owned. This research gathered the opinion of 492 individuals, both female and male, with every type of education possible in Serbia.

By analyzing the given results, the authors of this paper will give a proposal for future improved implementation of lifelong learning concept in Serbia.

Key words: lifelong learning, advancement, company, Republic of Serbia

1. Introduction

Lifelong education as a term and concept is not something new, since the Plato's *The Republic* has. However, it was not until the mid seventies of the 20th century that it became important for substantial development of society, while it flourished during the nineties. It must be pointed out that the concept was first called lifelong education, and it was later changed to lifelong learning. This change of the term was not only the result of semantic but also an essential change, which indicated a shift from the field of humanism to the field of enabling employees for better competitive conditions. It seems that at that time

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people finally came to realize that rapid development of technology and communication system, which is very important for business in the globalization era, cannot be fully realized without permanent advancement of employees. Thus, lifelong learning does not only mean advancement through formal education, but also through various forms of informal learning and skills acquisition, both through everyday work and leisure.

What is lifelong learning exactly and how is it defined? There numerous definitions in accordance with different views on it, and we will present some that contribute to understanding of the above mentioned topic.

According to Mocker and Spear¹: „Lifelong learning is a system consisting of four generic types of learning:

- 1) Type one – formal learning: acquired during primary, secondary and higher education or through military training. *What* is learnt and *how* is controlled by those who teach, while those who learn. i.e. acquire knowledge have little or no control over what is learnt.
- 2) Type two – nonformal learning: here individuals decide about *what* they want to learn, and those who organize some form of learning (e.g. seminar or workshop organizers) control *how* it is learnt.
- 3) Type three – informal learning: here individuals control *how* they will learn something and someone else (e.g. a company or a manager) controls *what* should be learnt.
- 4) Type four – self-directed learning: here individuals have a complete control over *what* and *how* they will learn.”

In that respect, in the document passed by the Great Britain government called UK Government’s Green Paper on Lifelong Learning, The Learning Age (Secretary of State for Education and Employment, 1998) it is written: In future, learners need not be tied to particular locations. They will be able to study at home, at work, or in a local library or shopping centre, as well as in colleges and universities. People will be able to study at a distance using broadcast media and on-line access. Our aim should be to help people to learn wherever they choose and support them in assessing how they are doing and where they want to go next.²

In 1996, UNESCO’s Delors Report acknowledged the need to „rethink and update the concept of lifelong education so as to reconcile three forces: *competition*, which provides incentives; *co-operation* which gives strength; and *solidarity*, which unites”. It further contended that: “There is a need to rethink and

¹ Donald W. Mocker, George F. Spear, “Lifelong learning: Formal, Nonformal, Informal and Self-directed”, Information series number 241, National Center Publications, National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Columbus , Ohio, 1982, 2

² Mike Sharples, “The Design of Personal Mobile Technologies for Lifelong Learning”, *Computers and Education* (34), 2000, 177-178

broaden the notion of lifelong education. Not only must it adapt to changes in the nature of work, but it must also constitute a continuous process of forming whole beings—their knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the critical faculty and ability to act. It should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role and work in the community”.³

Thus, the above mentioned implies that the education system of the employed is becoming a very topical issue. The process of education, professional training and advancement of employees is considered a very complex and responsible activity. That activity takes place within human resources management system. Furthermore, it is regarded as one of the most important sub-functions of that system, i.e. one of the most significant managerial activities.

The process of education and professional training of employees is realized in various ways. Thanks to that fact, we can talk about different programs and trends in the field of education of employees. Everything is focused on exerting the best possible effects of education.

2. Modern trends in education of employees

It has already been pointed out that modern organizations increasingly focus on education, professional training and advancement of their employees. Accordingly, they invest more in the process of expanding the knowledge, skills and abilities of their employees. For this purpose, organizations provide various educational programs for them. Positive experience of many successful companies speaks in favor of this fact.

It is quite obvious that education is no longer a duty and privilege of only those who have higher positions in the company hierarchy or those who perform complex and technical tasks in an organization. In years, it has become a right and privilege of all employees, regardless of the job they perform or where they work. In simple terms, a modern man needs to learn, i.e. he needs to educate himself and professionally advance from the first to his last working day, particularly if he wants to be successful, have good results, successfully build up and develop his professional career, generate high income, provide good living conditions for his family, etc.

The bigger an organization is, the greater costs of education and professional training of employees it will have. Educational programs are various, irrespective of the fact that they are often customized for advancement of managerial and leadership skills, computer training of employees, improvement of commu-

³ Carolyn Medel-Añonuevo, Toshio Ohsako, Werner Mauch, "Revisiting Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century", UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg, Art Angel Printshop, Philippines, 2001, 4

nication skills, enabling staff to perform the technical tasks successfully, etc. Table 1 verifies the above mentioned.

Table 1: *Common types of educational programs in modern organizations*

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	ORGANIZATIONS (percent)
Managerial and leadership skills	91
Basic computer skills	90
Communication skills	87
Supervisory skills	86
Skills necessary for performing technical tasks	82
New methods, processes and procedures	80
Professional development of managers	77
Customer relations	76
Professional development of employees	73
Skills necessary for performing administrative activities	73
Skills and knowledge necessary for performing activities in the field of working relations	67
Sales skills	56
Basic education	48

Source: Michael Harris, *Human Resource Management: A Practical Approach*, Forth Worth, TX, The Dryden Press, 2003, p. 308

It is interesting to point out that certain organizations provide numerous other educational programs for their employees. For example, a lot of companies are interested in programs which improve customer relations. As this is becoming an increasingly topical issue, the programs related to it are up-to date. However, besides the programs shown in Table 1, modern organizations are also interested in realizing educational programs for employees in specific fields. Accordingly, it should be pointed out that the educational programs provided for employees in a large number of companies are related to the following fields:

- employee performance assessment (75%);
- leadership skills improvement (73%);
- interpersonal skills (71%);
- affirmation and improvement of the concept of team work (71%);
- use of personal computers (71%);
- solving problems in the recruitment field (70%);
- time management (67%);
- sexual harassment at work, and partially out of work (64%);
- stress management (60%);
- management of differences at work and those related to work (47%);
- ethical values and moral understanding of things (41%);

- learning foreign languages (35%);
- acquisition of basic knowledge in the field of mathematics (32%).⁴

It is obvious that modern organizations put a lot of effort in providing high quality education and professional training for their employees. Surely, they do not do that in order to simply satisfy their needs, but to satisfy the needs of their employees, too. In other words, that is in the best interest of both an organization and its employees. Thus, it is not surprising that all the categories of employees are involved in the education process. This is shown in Table 2.

The organizations which provide diverse types of education and professional training are on the increase. Virtually all successful companies devote maximum attention to it. The number of hours intended for education and professional advancement of employees increases. Even job advertisements specify that performance of some jobs requires previous completion of a certain number of days or hours of training or other forms of professional advancement. The aim of this is to attract skillful and development-oriented staff, i.e. future employees interested in development of their professional career.

Thus, it is obvious that permanent education, professional training and advancement during working life are duties that we all have. A growing need for additional training and retraining of employees, i.e. acquisition of new skills and competences increases the need for permanent training of not only managers and experts, but also production workers. The fact that an increasing number of organizations chooses quality management concept speaks in favour of this. That concept, among other things, means familiarizing employees, both production workers and other staff, with rules, procedures and standards, which need to be fulfilled when it comes to the quality of products and services.

Table 2: *Categories of employees, i.e. managers who are most commonly included in the programs of education and professional training*

CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEES, I.E. MANAGERS	Organizations that realize the programs (percentage)	Average number of hours by an employee, i.e. manager
Experts	70	36
Junior managers	66	36
Sales staff	41	33
Middle managers	76	33
Senior managers	74	32
Production workers	37	32
Employees who work with customers	52	29

Source: Michael Harris, p. 308

⁴ Michael Harris, *Human Resource Management: A Practical Approach*, Forth Worth, TX, The DrydenPress. 2003, 307-308

2.1 Investing in education and professional training of employees

Current trends in the field of education and professional advancement of employees are a subject of various scientific disciplines. Modern organizations invest more and more money, time, information, energy and other resources in education, professional advancement and training of their employees. It has become evident that education and advancement of employees are the most efficient and important factors of successful business, competitive advantage, strong competition for the trust of customers, i.e. service users, etc. In other words, education and professional development of employees are becoming the key preconditions not only for further development but also for survival of modern organizations. This is more and more evident from day to day.

As knowledge and skills are becoming key preconditions for survival and development of modern organizations, it is not a surprise that investing in education of employees is a significant indicator of understanding the rules and principles which are a basis for current conditions of economy and work. The fact that investing in education of employees, i.e. managers is increasing only affirms this. For example, American companies spend more than 3,000 dollars per employee a year for that purpose, while Japanese expend more than 6,000 dollars per worker. Investing in education of employees in certain countries rises by about 3-5% every year, which was almost inconceivable in the past. But, times have changes.

The research revealed that the total amount of investment in education of USA employees exceeds 250 billion dollars annually.

Organizations commonly invest 3-5% of their income in realization of different programs for education and professional advancement, not only in the USA but in other countries as well. It has become a rule that every employee, i.e. a clerk spends a certain number of days 'in the classroom' during a year. Their training, i.e. education and advancement, usually lasts between 10 and 20 days, on annual level.

However, company investment in education and career advancement of managers are by far greater. Recent studies testify about the fact that managers should spend about 20% of their work time on education, training and career advancement. In other words, it means that they should, on average, spend every fifth work day, i.e. one day a week in the 'classroom'. This illustrates how much is invested in their education and advancement. This was inconceivable in the past. However, the conditions of business operations are becoming harsher from year to year, resulting in the need to invest in knowledge and skills of employees and their managers. Without it, companies cannot be successful and survive on the market.

2.2 Reasons for investing in education and professional training of employees

The reasons for investing in education, professional training and advancement of employees, i.e. managers, are numerous and diverse. We have mentioned many. Despite that, it is useful to go into a greater detail about them and give thorough and comprehensive data about them. Accordingly, it is not hard to conclude that the most important reasons for investing in education and professional advancement of employees, i.e. managers are the following:

- rapid development of science and technology;
- more complex conditions of work and business operations;
- human tendency to forget acquired knowledge relatively fast;
- changes in the environment (effects of internal and external factors of the environment);
- changes in the requirements of workplace (modern business requires a good knowledge of interpersonal and communication skills, conflict management skills, etc.);
- an increasing gap between the requirements of working process and current knowledge on the labour market;
- gap between the education system and requirements at work ;
- shorter span of usable knowledge;
- intellectualization of work (work is based on knowledge and intellectual abilities rather than physical strength and activities);
- fiercer competition on the market;
- increased requirements of consumers, i.e. service users, etc.

The above mentioned reasons are a result of the fact that among employees there are those who are almost completely illiterate. For example, in the mid nineties of the previous century there were more than 25 million employees in the USA who lacked basic knowledge and skills in the field of writing, reading and computers, despite the fact that they needed these skills to perform the tasks at work . Meanwhile, this did not change significantly. The situation is similar in many other countries, both rich and poor.

A very significant is also the fact that a large number of organizations are not able to considerably improve their business and technology due to the lack of qualified workers. That problem is particularly present in organizations that specialize in highly technical jobs, i.e. the jobs that require specific knowledge and skills. It is not easy to find employees with such knowledge and skills on the labor market. They must be 'produced' by an organization itself. It can only be achieved by education, professional training and development of employees, i.e. managers.

2.3 Potential effects of education and professional advancement of employees

Numerous effects are exerted by the systems of education and professional development of employees and their managers. They can be regarded in different ways: a) from the point of view of an organization; b) from the point of view of employees; c) from the point of view of organizational unit, group or team and d) as the final effect. The effects regarded from the point of view of an organization are considered organizational effects, the effects from the point of view of employees are individual effects, while the effects from the point of view of organizational unit, group or team are group effects, which is shown in the following graph.

Thus, it is obvious that potential effects of education and professional advancement of employees are great, not only for an organization, but for employees as well. Besides the effects shown in the picture, education of employees can result in many other positive effects. In that respect, it is necessary to point out the potential effects related to:

- familiarizing employees with competitive organizations, both in their country and abroad, which can be of crucial importance for increasing competitiveness of the organization and its performance in international market;
- acquisition of new knowledge and skills necessary for working with new technologies;
- enabling employees to work in a team;
- enabling employees to improve the quality of products and services;
- developing the organizational culture which encourages innovation, creativity, permanent learning and professional development;
- reinforcing job security, through continuous adjustment and expansion of knowledge, skills and abilities of employees;
- creating a climate where good interpersonal and cooperative relations are nurtured, etc.

Together with all the above mentioned, it is perhaps the most important to point out that the process of education and professional advancement of employees generates key preconditions for increase of organizational and individual gain, which is a 'dream' of every organization and each employee. Besides, companies exist precisely because of that 'dream'. The dream is the reason why people get hired in the first place. Thus, it is quite clear why its fulfillment is of great significance.

Figure 1: Possible effects of education and professional advancement of employees



Source: Goldstein Irwin, Gilliam Patrice, "Training Systems Issues in the Year 2000", *Amerikan Psychologist* 45 (2), 1990, 134-143

3. Characteristics of the current state in education in the Republic of Serbia

Educational system in the Republic of Serbia includes preschool, primary school, secondary school and higher education, which represent the formal education system. According to the latest data, there are over than 1,300,000 pupils and students within the educational system and about 110,000 employees working in this field. It is about 20% of the total population, which a very low percentage. According to the data from 2002, almost 22% of population older than 15 have not completed primary schooling, while 24% of them have completed it as their educational maximum. Thus, almost 46% of population live on the very basic educational minimum of life and working habits.⁵ All of the above

⁵ Despotović Miomir, Aleksandra Pejatović, Centri za kontinuirano obrazovanje odraslih u srednjim stručnim školama – koncepcija i strategije razvoja, Beograd, 2004, 6 http://www.vetserbia.edu.rs/CentrizakontinuiranoKoncept_nacrt_cir.pdf (25.07.2013.)

mentioned, together with the fact that there is a large number of illiterate people, implies that the total educational structure of the Serbian population is still unfavourable and lags behind many developed countries.

The situation is the same when it comes to the educational system of employees, which is largely informal and also much undeveloped compared with other countries. The principal developing resource in developed countries is human capital, whose quality is mainly defined by education and training. Besides contributing to the national development, they also contribute to the permanent development of individuals. This is the reason why all the countries that have a high standard of quality and living give the highest priority to education and development of human resources. They adopt education and development strategies which make the substantial contribution to economic, social and cultural development of society and personal development of its individuals. This explains why it is right to measure the degree of development of a society by the level of education and quality of its members.

The education system of employees in our organizations should be given a greater importance and it should be involved in the process of reforms in accordance with the needs and interests of Serbian citizens and modern world trends in the field of education of employees. Ignoring education of employees in Serbia would undoubtedly have a negative effect on the development of our economy, culture and society in general. That is why this process requires maximum attention.

Nonformal education as a segment of education in Serbia has for a long time been neglected by both the state and society. There are centers for adult education and numerous language and computer training schools which issue certificates that are not officially recognized. On the other hand, formal system is not flexible enough to adjust to the needs on the labour market and provide a wide range of competences and skills. As the trends in economy, technology, IT and all other fields are unpredictable; an increasing number of people in our country is made redundant. One of the greatest challenges of Serbian economy and society is decreasing the unemployment rate. Solution of current problems requires the reform of the system of education of adults.

Modernization of the country and its orientation towards modern technologies must affect innovation of objectives of professional education and getting closer to developed countries. Hence, it is necessary to carry out the reform of extending professional knowledge and greater flexibility for complying with ever changing requirements of work and acquiring key skills for professional development of employees. Having in mind that our society is moving towards the knowledge society, it is necessary to raise awareness of, primarily young population, about inevitability of individual advancement, so that we could keep up with the trends.

Acquisition and use of knowledge, especially in adulthood, has become the key to solving crucial social and individual problems. This is precisely why per-

permanent education of adults and employees is the basic factor of modern development. Permanent education of employees is becoming increasingly important in organizations and institutions worldwide and in our country as well, and is most commonly implemented through so called courses of functional education provided for employees, managers, and those who do not have complete degrees of education, with the aim to acquire knowledge and skills needed for successful performance of work tasks. The concept of permanent education of employees in our organizations has started recently and is becoming a fundamental factor of development and success of companies.

4. Impact of education on progress in companies in the Republic of Serbia

The presented survey included 492 respondents working in 15 public and private companies. It was conducted during 2011 and 2012 on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, for the needs of PhD thesis of Olivera Milutinovic titled "On-The-Job Learning as a Basis of Human Resource Management". The basic indicators of the sample structure, taking into account the characteristics of respondents, are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: *Indicators of the structure of respondents sample*

No	Indicators	Respondent characteristics
1	Sex	male respondents female respondents
2	Age	from 20 to 30 from 31 to 40 from 41 to 50 over 50
3	Years of employment	from 1 to 10 years from 11 to 20 years from 21 to 30 years over 30 years
4	Degree of professionalism	3 rd degree 4 th degree 6 th degree 7 th degree
5	Ownership structure of an organization	public company private company

The respondents were asked to fill in the following questionnaire.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How much time does your organization spend on training of employees on weekly, monthly and annual basis?	from 1 to 3 hours a week	from 3 to 8 hours a month	from 3 to 10 days a year
2. How much working time do employees spend on learning and professional advancement?	from 1 to 3 hours a week	from 3 to 8 hours a month	from 3 to 10 days a year
3. How much does your organization invest in your professional advancement on annual level?	10-30 thousand dinars	30-100 thousand dinars	Over 100 thousand dinars
4. To what extent do newly acquired knowledge and skills affect a more rapid advancement and career development of employees?	It does not affect at all	It affects inconsiderably	It affects significantly
5. Is it possible to improve the existing system of work by lifelong learning and professional advancement?	Yes	No	Partially
6. In what way could the existing system of work be improved by lifelong learning and advancement?	By lifelong learning and advancement	By occasional learning and advancement	By participation at seminars and conferences

Table 4 shows a list of companies that agreed to participate in the survey. The survey included fifteen organizations, both public and private. Public companies accounted for 96.08% of respondents in the survey, and 3.92% were private companies. The respondents were permanently employed workers.

The largest number of respondents were from Ministry of Interior (79), Telekom Serbia (78), Rusanda Spa (52), Vinca (43), which is logical, having in mind that those are large companies.

The survey included 492 respondents- 47.56% of which were male and 50.81% female, Out of 50.81% of women, 37.75% were aged between 31 and 40, while 14.46% of them were older than 50. Male respondents accounted for 47.56% of the total number of respondents, and 32.62% of them were between 31 and 40 years old, while 12.02% were men older than 50.

Out of 492 respondents, 32.11% have between 11 and 20 years of employment, and 30.89% between 1 and 10 years. Comparing the age, we found that only 13.21% of respondents are older than 50, i.e. 9.95% have more than 30 years of employment. This implies that the staff working in the surveyed organizations is predominantly young.

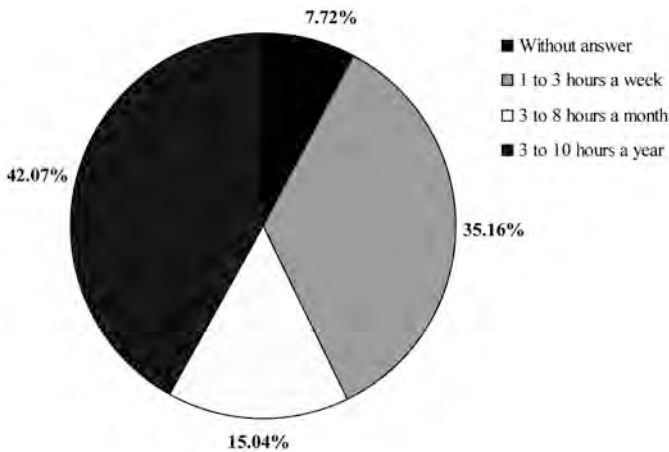
Out of the total number of respondents, 42.07% had a high school diploma, 19.72% had a college degree, while 28.05% were with a university degree.

Table 4: Companies and employees that participated in the survey

Companies	Number	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Municipality of Smederevska Palanka	36	7.3%	7.3%
Kolubara	19	3.9%	11.2%
Water Management	6	1.2%	12.4%
Primary School „Vojvoda Stepa“	8	1.6%	14.0%
Intesa Bank	13	2.6%	16.7%
Elektromorava	10	2.0%	18.7%
Belgrade electric power plants	16	3.3%	22.0%
Institute Vinča	43	8.7%	30.7%
Tax Department	25	5.1%	35.8%
Telekom Serbia	78	15.9%	51.6%
Serbian Army	49	10.0%	61.6%
Rusanda Spa Melenci	52	10.6%	72.2%
PTT Serbia	23	4.7%	76.8%
Ministry of Interior of Serbia	79	16.1%	92.9%
Jugoinspekt	35	7.1%	100.0%
Total	492	100.0%	

The following graphs (2,3,4,5,6,7) show the results of the survey. The interpretation of the obtained results is also given.

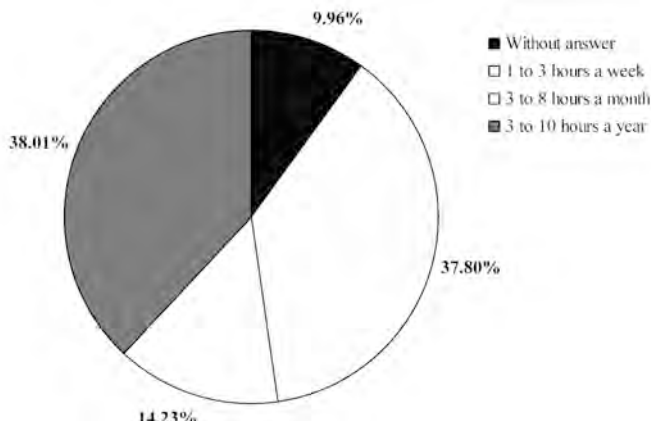
Figure 2: Graphic display of the answer to the question: „How much time does your organization spend on training of employees on weekly, monthly and on annual basis?“



The graph shows that out of 492 respondents, 42.07% spend from three to ten days on trainings on annual level, while only 15.04% does it between 3 and

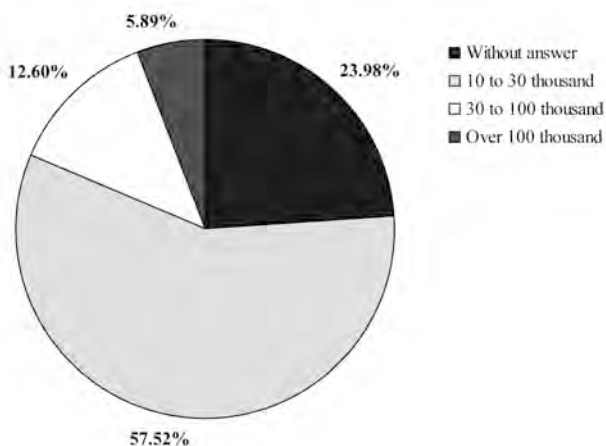
8 hours a month. This leads to a conclusion that little time is spent on training of employees in the organizations where they work.

Figure 3: Graphic display of answer to the question: “How much working time do employees spend on learning and professional advancement?”



As shown above, 38.01% of respondents answered that they spend between three and ten days a year on professional advancement during working time, while 9.96% of them did not have any attitude about it, which can be explained by the fact that they do not engage in job-embedded learning or advance professionally during working time. This is supported by the fact that the majority of respondents have the third and the fourth degree of professional qualification, i.e. 51.01% of respondents.

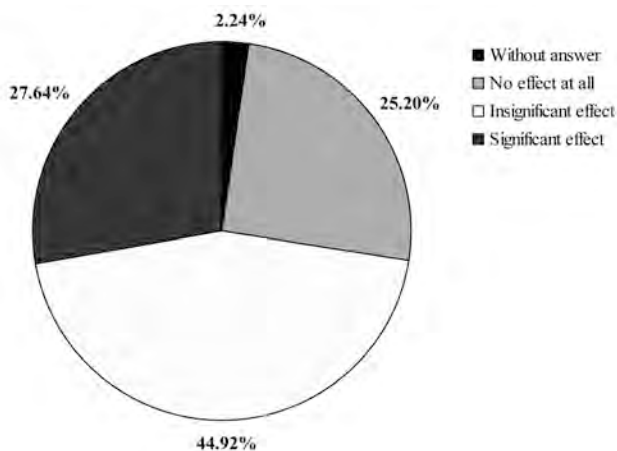
Figure 4: Graphic display of the answer to the question: “How much does your organization invest in your professional advancement on annual level?”



Even 23.98% of respondents did not give an answer to this question, which implies that the organizations they work for do not allocate funds for their education. Only 5.89% of respondents said that their companies spend over 100 thousand dinars on annual level. Vinča Institute is a leader in this field, which is reflected in its overall percentage. The surveyed organizations spend 57.52% of their funds yearly in the amount ranging from 10 to 30 thousand dinars on education and professional advancement of their employees.

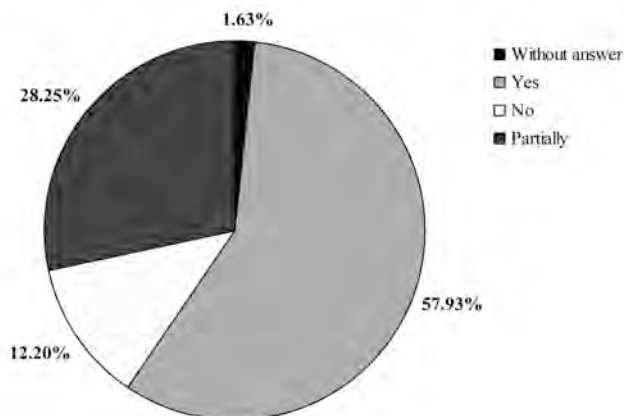
Figure 5. *Graphic display of the answer to the question:*

„To what extent do newly acquired knowledge and skills affect a more rapid advancement and career development of employees?“



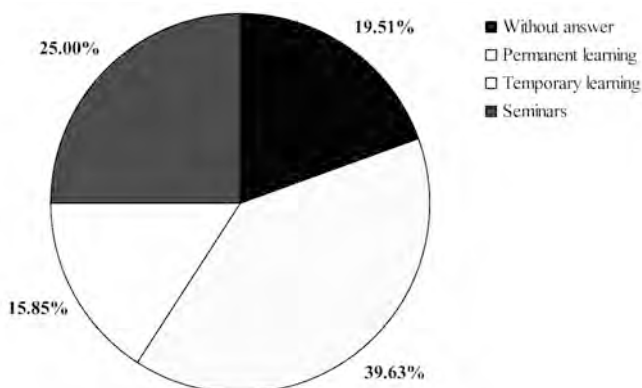
The percentage of respondents who think that newly acquired knowledge and skills do not at all affect a more rapid advancement and career development is 25.20%, while 44.92% of respondents think that it has an insignificant effect. The fact that a majority of respondents works in state-owned companies implies that employees who acquire knowledge during their working life, attend courses, seminars, study for further education while working, etc. are not accordingly awarded or appropriately systemized-the time invested, money spent (either personal or that of an organization), and effort are not followed by material satisfaction. Only 27.64% of respondents think that newly acquired knowledge affects a more rapid career advancement and development.

Figure 6. Graphic display of the answer to the question: "Is it possible to improve the existing system of work by lifelong learning and professional advancement?"



Only 12.20% of respondents gave a negative answer. The fact that 57.93% of respondents think that the existing system of work in their organizations could be improved by permanent learning and advancement, and 28.25% of them think that it brings about a slight improvement, implies that the respondents, employees working in state-owned companies, organizations and private companies are dissatisfied with the existing system of work and results achieved in their companies and think they can perform better, be more successful and more competitive. If 86.18% of respondents said they are ready to learn, and think it can contribute to their personal success and success of the organization they work for, then it means that organizations can put more effort in further education, professional advancement and training of their employees.

Figure 7. Graphic display of the answer to the question: "In what way could the existing system of work be improved by lifelong learning and advancement?"



As it is shown in the graph, 19.51% of respondents did not provide an answer to the question, which meant that they are not ready to engage in job-embedded learning. The following percentage is also quite impressive: 25% would go to seminars organized by their companies, 15.85% are in favour of temporary learning, while 39.63% are ready to engage in permanent job-embedded learning. The conclusion is that our employees do not avoid professional advancement and further education, but they yearn for it and think that it could result in success of their organizations and their personal success.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to show how accepted the concept of lifelong learning in the Republic of Serbia is, how employees see it and whether they think it is necessary for their advancement in a company.

The results showed that the situation is not satisfactory regarding the quantity of money Serbian companies spend on professional advancement of employees and their satisfaction with rewards for the effort they put in further education. Thus, Serbian employees do not have a good experience with additional professional training or learning. However, it is interesting that 80% of them think that the system of work could be improved through their training.

The conclusion is that although economic situation in Serbia is difficult, the motivation for different concepts of lifelong learning is low and rewards minor or none, there is awareness that it is immensely important.

What could be done about this? Firstly, employees should be provided with some techniques of education and professional advancement, which do not necessarily need to be expensive, as they would be trained by their superiors or other employees who have the required qualifications.

Second, despite the difficult situation, companies should make it possible for their employees to advance professionally and allocate a fund for promotion and rewarding of their staff.

Last, and perhaps the most significant, it is necessary that CEOs and senior managers understand that improvement of education of employees will have multiple results, the most important being the increase of company profits.

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DOŽIVOTNO UČENJE I NAPREDOVANJE U KOMPANIJU: ISKUSTVA IZ SRBIJE

S a ž e t a k

Doživotno učenje je koncept koji unosi humanizam, kako u svakodnevni, tako i u poslovni život ljudi. On promovise obrazovanje, učenje, kooperaciju i napredovanje u životima pojedina. U toku poslednje dve decenije postalo je jasno da je važno implementirati ovaj koncept, pogotovo u oblasti ekonomije, kako bi se postigli bolji ekonomski rezultati.

Cilj ovog rada je da otkrije da li postoji stvarna primena doživotnog učenja kao koncepta u Srbiji. Takođe, on će pokazati da li postoji mogućnost za napredovanje zaposlenih u kompanijama koje primenjuju ovaj koncept.

U ovom radu je sadržano empirijsko istraživanje koje je sprovedeno kod 15 kompanija u Srbiji, koje su uglavnom u državnom vlasništvu. Istraživanje je obuhvatilo 492 pojedinca, kako žena, tako i muškaraca, sa svim tipovima obrazovanja koji postoje u Srbiji.

Analiziranjem dobijenih rezultata, autori ovog rada će dati predloge za buduće poboljšano implementiranje doživotnog učenja kao koncepta u Srbiji.

Ključne reči: doživotno učenje, napredovanje, kompanija, Republika Srbija