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Policy and Development of Boarding School

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Abstract

The first years of sovereignty of Slovenia the number of pupils residing in boarding schools has decreased. The gap between the capacities and numbers of places taken has appeared as a result of the planning in 80s which was based on the then expected influx of pupils from other regions of former Yugoslavia and on the vision of economic development of individual areas which however was not realized. The number of places taken in the boarding schools dropped dramatically upon Slovenia becoming an independent country. The decrease was caused by several factors simultaneously. The management of boarding schools in Slovenia can choose between two extreme alternatives: abolishment of the boarding schools as such or finding a way of their development by forming new models. This article discusses the mission of boarding schools as organizations, the policy of their management and governance and provides data on the tendency of the number of pupils residing in boarding schools and finally we also got the answers what advantages bring information technology in the boarding schoos.,

Key words: *boarding school, development, changes, vision, information technology, management.*

1. Introduction

Boarding school is additional offer to quality of education. The main problem of boarding schools that appears in European environment, is that development of boarding school is not strategically incorporated in vision and policy of development of Slovenian education system. The boarding schools in Slovenia are in a turning point of development: in a new European environment their existence in present organizational form is under question. The causes for this situation are different. One among them is that in 70s the goals of the state were different, because the policy of development of boarding schools did not anticipate some of later political changes. Planning was based on then expected influx of pupils from other regions of former Yugoslavia and on the vision of economic development of individual areas. So in the period of 1976 – 1985 the renovation of all boarding schools in Slovenia had been in progress that included building of new boarding schools in renovation of schools with altogether capacity of more then 18.000 beds. With independence of Slovenia the political, economic and social environment of boarding schools had altered. Parallel with changes in environment also the organizational structure of boarding schools had changed. Boarding schools develop parallel with development of Slovenian educational system; they are part of this system and have long history in this space. In their basic organization they are public establishment, governmental and non profit organizations. Their primal mission is to offer a possibility of accommodation to pupils in second phase of education that enter the process of education outside of their place of residence.

2. Boarding schools in Slovenia

Boarding schools are organized institution that which enable pupils' satisfaction of their basic existential and social needs and at the same time take care for their development, personal growth and progress in accordance with their individual possibilities, intentions and educational purposes (Skalar, 2004, 28). Pšunder and Klapan (1992, 12 v Starkl, 2005) define boarding school as pedagogical-educational institution of special social meaning that offers pupils, who are getting their education outside of their place of residence good condition for life, study, creative spending of free time and take care for their development. Rosić (2001, 56 v Starkl, 2005) of cooperation with environment and define boarding school as place different from school which has a special organization and technology of work. Most of 41 boarding schools in Slovenia are in accordance with establishment act nonprofit organizations; they are public institutions and their mission is education and upbringing of pupils, educated outside of their residence. Boarding schools have more roles and tasks.

Boarding school can be classified by different categories. With regard to number of pupils, accommodated in boarding school, they are divided to small (to 200 pupils) and big (above 200 pupils). With regard to manner of financing and organizational structure, boarding schools can be divided to independent boarding schools, boarding schools with operates together with schools and to concessionary boarding schools. In concessionary relationship with a state there are three boarding schools. Abroad there are also three Slovenian boarding schools (Dečman Dobrnjič, 2002, 8)

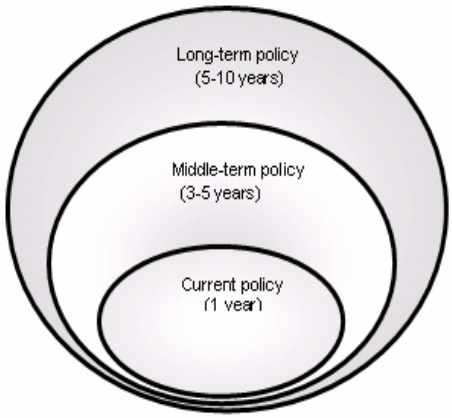
Boarding schools are organization of special social meaning, which operates in different environment. Environment can be more or less turbulent or stable. The fasts the environment is changing, more unstable is. With stability the other characteristic of environment is connected – predictability. The demands that market environment is setting up to the organization are essential different from demands of social and political environment (Černetič, 2004, 119).

3. Policy of development, vision and goals

In some decades the society is altered completely – their view to world, their basic values, their social and political structures, their arts, their key institutions. Policy of organization is dependent of environment in which is operating. Environment is changeable; therefore the organizations have to alter their policy (Drucker, 2004, 128).

Planning of policy in the most cases is gradual, taking into concern circumstances and activity of boarding school, regarding demographic index, with collection of all needed information and with research needs, wishes and capabilities of environment and market. Policy is planned in short-term, medium-term and long-term, and for every planning a sufficient knowledge of environment, from which we get key and necessary information is needed. A policy of organization is composed from aims and goals, which come from the vision of organization, defined by the interest of participants. Frame model of policy of organization presents fundamental, evolutional and current policy of organization; for every of them present aims, goals and strategy that includes activities, order and means (Tavčar, 1999, 37). Ever since organizations exist, leaders and managers are trying to get a model, which would enable reliable, effective and successful management of organization. The picture 1 above shows frame model of policy of organization.

Picture 1: Frame model of policy (Source: Černetič, Dečman Dobrnjič, 2006, 512)



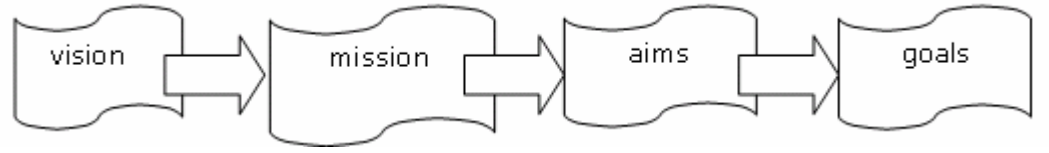
A **vision** is also a structural part of policy of organization, which organizations follow in accordance with aims and goals of operations and development. From a vision fundamental policy of organization arises; its content is the interest of important participants of organization. Vision has to give answers to the questions: who we are where we are going, what we want. Vision is a review of values, goals and mission; it is a start of a process of policy of organization planning. It is necessary that is in accordance with needs of environment and organization. It has to take into consideration contents from environment that is of priority with selection of strategy for development of organization (Bush in West - Burngham 1994, 95).

Aims are the most fundamental and permanent goals of organization, presenting succession of the vision and are in accordance with a vision on one side and between themselves on the other. They have to measurable, reachable, simulative and accordant. They have to be developing and innovative oriented. Aims should be market oriented; they have to lead toward success and open new possibilities of development of organization in a new environment. An environment is those, who define goals and aims. With definition of aims, the measurement of success, with which the success is measured, has to define. Beside aims, this can be measured in material sense, also the others as education, innovation, competitiveness, which can be valued differently, have to be incorporating into policy of development (Tavčar, 1999, 42).

In organization with well planned policy of development, the **goals** are subordinate to the aims and are staken in the way that they form hierarchy and progressively in regard to importance with realization of the vision of organization. The goals of organization are achieved with many activities, time scheduling, adjustment of organizational groups and individuals in organization (Davies in Ellison 1992, 6). Aims are achieved with strategies, which are models of organizational behavioral patterns for achievement of aims and goals of individual and organization. Strategies for achievement of aims and goals are chosen in consideration to the conditions of organization.

When planning of pedagogy-educational work and execution of other services in boarding school a different criteria as access to information, communication with environment, introduction of employees with aims and goals has to be take into consideration; it has to be differ between strategic, tactical and operational goals, perform effective professional proceeding of aims and goal, include evaluation in planning and so on (Davies in Ellison, 1992, 5).

Picture 2: Levels of planning in boarding school (Source: Černetič, Dečman Dobrnjič, 2006, 511)



Picture 2 shows levels of planning in boarding school, because this is organization, which adapt to environment and develops policy of development in accordance with interests and relations of internal and external environment. Boarding schools and participants are connected through exchange process, activities, in which people are collaborating to achieve common goals; goals of organization and personal goals. A mission of boarding school is to educate, to perform public service. It may, with accordance with establishment act, offer also other services to the market.

4. Reduction of pupils in Boarding schools

Boarding school was not involved in the strategic development plans of Slovenian educational policy. As consequence in boarding schools in Slovenia a key problem appears: reduction of pupils registered into boarding schools. Parallel with this problem, there is a problem of too many employees, problem of unexploited capacities, which causes a crisis of management in majority of boarding schools in Slovenia.

Table 1: A number of registered pupils in boarding schools

School year	Number of pupils
1990/91	9321
1991/92	8721
1992/93	7871
1993/94	8217
1994/95	8626
1995/96	9012
1996/97	7855
1997/98	9067
1998/99	8649
1999/2000	8148
2000/01	7774
2001/02	7314
2002/03	7012
2003/04	6770
2004/05	6248
2005/06	5783

Source: Ministry of education and sport (Zobec, 2006)

A number of pupils, registered in boarding school are decreasing every year. According to data of ministry of education and sport (table 1) in the school year 1990/1991 the number of pupils registered in boarding school was 9321 and approximately 100 pupils were placed in dormitories, 877 pupils of School of cadets in Tacen were statistically guided elsewhere. In the year 1990/91 there were approximately 10.298 pupils in need of accommodation in boarding schools in Slovenia. In the school year 2005/2006 in boarding schools is 5783 pupils. A number is being almost cut in two in the last 15 years. In this period 6 boarding schools were abolished and 2 were connected to a centre of scholar activities. In the year 2005 activity of another boarding school connected to the school was abolished (Zobec, 2006).

For nowadays it is safe to say that school administration passed from state regulative to regulative of free market. That is seen as one of the main changes which accompany a constitution of market niche in the field of education. Pedagogical-educational policy is trying to develop autonomy, originality and diversity of educational institutions that would therefore be more suitable different demands of users, which would have an option to freely choose services most attractive to them. Presumption of this system of education is diverse supply and free demand (Laval, 2005, 165). In such changed environment socialistic model of boarding school became improper. Spontaneously in accordance with market supply, boarding schools start to perform other services beside education. Simultaneously with this phenomena and as a consequence an organizational form of boarding schools start to alter. Changes in particular boarding schools are consequence of changes in environment, in which boarding school is operating. Therefore boarding schools, operating in different environments, have been changed differently.

5. Information technology in Boarding schools

Information technology and learning how to use a computer have become an important part of development of human resources in boarding schools and of the general education process and of the social development as such .The headmasters of boarding schools were given an opportunity to state the advantages that in their opinion are brought by the information technology into the schools. They decided for the following advantages that IT provides (Černetič, Dečman Dobrnjič, 2006):

- A speedier and more efficient access to information, it makes work easier and it facilitates essentially the running of records of pupils and employees.
- A simpler and less expensive access to up to date information.
- Less time is consumed for filling of forms, better transparency, speedy communication.
- Better organization and less clerical work, speedier transmission of data.
- Better transparency of organizational processes.
- Speedier carrying out of work of better quality.

The replies show that the headmasters are aware of the essential advantages of IT in education system. The fact is that the informatization of society is a global phenomenon resp. environment change to which the education system must adjust. We must always be aware of the changes that IT brings into the system. The learning and education will not be confined to school only but will be resp. has already been extended to different media. (Batagelj et al. 1998, p. 433).

6. Conclusion

Because of change of environment and inclusion Slovenia in European Union conceptual modernization of Slovenian educational system, which influences the boarding schools that in the concept of secondary education presents additional offer of quality and enables

advantageous possibilities for pupils educated outside the place of residence. Global changes (demographic, social, migration, etc) cause decrease registration in boarding schools, therefore boarding school are looking for suitable exchange relationship in global informational society in broadened European society. Boarding school as organizations is evolving in different directions. Different models of boarding school are appearing.

With good policy making and management, with unified policy boarding schools and state boarding schools can take advantage of key sources in environment as knowledge, intellectual, social and cultural capital of employed and suitable infrastructure - economical capital of boarding schools. To achieve that and to offer a European environment new services it is important to identify collective advantages and disadvantages of boarding school and state, find possible solutions, make selection and evaluation of solutions and to accede to unified policy of boarding schools.

Fundamental meaning and influence to the development of boarding schools has a state as a founder of public institutions with its policy of development. As long as media will operate partially (as an organization instead as an institution) we all are loosing: educational system, boarding schools and at last state itself. For total, global solving of problem of boarding schools the active cooperation between different ministries, regions, local communities and boarding schools has to be established. Information technology and learning how to use a computer have become an important part of development of human resources in boarding schools, too.

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Strokovni življenjepis

Olga Dečman Dobrnjič *je specialistka menedžmenta v izobraževanju, educirana realitetna terapevtka, učiteljica biologije, gospodinjstva in profesorica razrednega pouka. Tretje leto vodi LAS Litija - lokalno akcijsko skupino za preprečevanje odvisnosti od prepovedanih drog. Je glavna urednica strokovne revije ISKANJA Raziskovalno področje, kjer je bila in je vodja projektov, so odnosi med vzgojitelji in dijaki v dijaških domovih, konflikti v dijaških domovih, sodelovanje s starši, organiziranost, vodenje, motivacija, izobraževanje in organizacijsko vedenje zaposlenih, nasilje v družini, v družbi in menedžment preventive v šolstvu. S teh področij objavlja analize raziskav, članke in strokovne knjige, v domači in tuji strokovni literaturi.*

Metod Černetič *je dolgoletni učitelj na Fakulteti za organizacijske vede Univerze v Mariboru in na drugih fakultetah. Diplomiral je iz sociologije na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani, magistriral in doktoriral je s področja razvoja človeških virov na Univerzah v Ljubljani in v Mariboru. Oblikoval in izvajal jeveč študijskih programov, na matični fakulteti in na drugih fakultetah. Je avtor učbenikov, monografij in soavtor knjig. Bil je nosilec in sodelavec raziskovalnih projektov in programov s področja razvoja visokega šolstva, razvoja podiplomskega študija, teorije organizacije in menedžmenta. Objavlja v domači in tuji strokovni literaturi iz navedenih znanstvenih področij. Objavil je preko 260 bibliografskih enot. Sodeloval in objavil je referate na preko 70 domačih in mednarodnih znanstvenih in strokovnih srečanjih. Je mentor študentom na dodiplomskem in podiplomskem študiju.*