

## LEADERSHIP IN CROATIAN SCHOOLS: THE ACTUAL SITUATION AND CHALLENGES

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**SUMMARY:** This paper is directed towards the research of the leadership in Croatian schools. The changes are happening at a great speed in all the fields of Croatian reality, as well as in schools. New tasks are set before schools, demanding that they train pupils for living in the contemporary society, as well as for realization of different demands of the Croatian economy. The changes in schools today are directed towards the changes of the organizational development of the school, as well as towards the changes of the pedagogical leadership. Are the head teachers of today ready to meet those demands and do they have the adequate competencies for the efficient leadership of the school development?

While doing this research we have been searching for the answers to the previous questions. In this paper it is being researched how teachers and school pedagogues perceive the quality of school leadership, and the hypothesis about the connection between the leadership variables and the following variables is being questioned: the effectiveness of the school, school atmosphere and job satisfaction. The empirical research has been conducted on the specimen of 265 subjects: 85 expert assistants – school pedagogues and 180 teachers from 48 primary schools in the area of eastern Croatia. A four-scale instrument has been used in the research: the scale for evaluation of leadership efficiency, IPOE scale – Perceived Leadership Effectiveness index and the items for evaluation of the satisfaction with relationships and jobs at school.

The research results indicate the inter-connection among the researched variables. The subjects are not satisfied with the quality of the school atmosphere and the organizational effectiveness of the schools, but they express satisfaction with their jobs. The needs of the head teachers for the education and improving in the field of leadership have been established, which has not been systematically organized nowadays. Regarding the acquired results, the existing system of training and further education of head teachers is analyzed, and the solutions for the new educational models in the field of educational and pedagogical leadership in the Republic of Croatia are suggested.

### Introduction

The market competition in Croatia has forced economy organizations in Croatia to engage all their potentials in the race for higher quality and effectiveness. Schools, which should be guides on the way to the "knowledge-centred society", are being transformed slowly. The range of analyses (Mijatović 2002; Strugar 2002; Vican et al. 2007) indicated the weaknesses and suggested improvements which have started the process of more intense changes in education in the Republic of Croatia recently. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – OECD analyzed in 2001 the Croatian educational system. The analysis has manifested Croatian educational system as being too centralized in the field of financing, leadership and determining and implementation of the curriculum. The evaluation of the work quality was decentralized within the curriculum. The changes in the Croatian educational system are in fact heading towards the levelling of the Croatian educational system with European Union educational systems, towards the increase of decentralization and school autonomy, as well as the implementation of educational standards and external evaluation of education.

In such circumstances, the responsibility for the quality and effectiveness is transferred to schools, particularly to head teachers who lead schools. A direct consequence of such a concept is a more prominent manager role of head teachers. From the former executor, a head teacher turns into a school reformer. The school quality becomes to a greater extent dependent on the management, particularly on the head teacher, their qualification for school activity organization, their professional-pedagogical leadership, their personal characteristics, as well as other potentials. In order to professionally execute leading functions in the administrative and pedagogical field of school activity, the head teacher must possess certain competencies. In many countries they are called competency standards which should be met by present and future head teachers. They involve a rich inventory of knowledge, abilities, skills and values which should be possessed by every head teacher in order to successfully accomplish the goals, tasks and programme of the school. The standards are roughly determined on national level and they represent the base for qualification, assessment and evaluation of head teachers. In correspondence with the standards for head teacher competencies established by many countries, a research on the competency profile of head teachers was conducted in Croatia as well. Staničić (2000) has established a model for competency profile of head teachers based on conducted theoretical and empirical research

and consisting of five key competencies (personal, professional, developmental, social and action competencies) which have proved to be very important for successful school leadership. The developmental competency has proved to be the most important for head teachers (the skill of developmental activity in the dynamics of the educational process), within which the creation of school development vision and the implementation of innovation have manifested to be the most important abilities. Social competency follows, which is noticeable in the skill of working with people, of motivating school staff and in conflict and misunderstanding resolution that appear during the working process. It has become evident in the research that personal, professional and action competencies are equally important for a successful head teacher. Based on the research results, Staničić (2000) states that a successful head teacher could simply be described as a person with a clear vision permanently implementing positive changes with the goal of vision realization. They know how to work with people and how to successfully solve conflicts which interrupt the realization of school programme. Apart from that, they are honest, trust their people and are intensely dedicated to work. Furthermore, a successful head teacher is familiar with the principles of educational process in general, as well as with didactic principles of teaching as a fundamental segment of educational process. Finally, a successful head teacher is open for cooperation with people and is capable of providing optimum professional and working conditions. Pedagogical component is particularly emphasized in head teacher's role. Pedagogical leadership is based on dialogue, not monologue (Evans 1999; Macneill et al. 2005). The leader is directed at the encouragement of critical thinking and must be the "head student" (Day and Harris 2008). Former research of school management and leadership were heading in several different directions, depending on the starting point in the explanation of leadership function represented by their authors. A part of the research (Adair, 1984; in Armstrong, 2001) has been directed at the identification of personal skills and characteristics of head teachers. The other researches (Likert 1967; Fiedler 1963; Hous and Aditya, 1997; Elmore 200; Fink and Resnick 200) are rather directed at leadership strategies, concepts and models. More recent research (Hoyle et al 1998; Staničić, 200; Chin et al. 2001; Goleman et al 2002; Bueno and Tubbs 2004; Jokinen 2005, Pagon et al 2008), on the other hand, is directed at analyzing the competencies necessary for leadership. Regardless of the approach, all the researchers stress the importance of pedagogical factors for the effectiveness and quality of educational work, and they have great significance for leadership functions as well. The results of the research conducted in Croatia (Staničić, 2003; Hitrec and Blankov, 2005; Stilin, 2005; Puzić, 2006) have indicated a high level of importance of the stated competencies, as well as their correlation and dependence.

In fact, head teachers complete tasks in three areas: national educational system, school as organization and pedagogical institution, as well as in management in leadership and work (Puškar 2006). More specifically, that means that they should be well acquainted with the contents of the educational system, that they should understand contents of school as organization and pedagogical institution, as well as know how to apply management and leadership in school. An adequate election, qualification and professional development system for head teachers is needed for completion of these tasks.

Apart from the results of scientific research on the importance of head teacher competencies (Staničić, 2002; Domović 2003; Puzić, 2006), the statistical data on the head teacher structure in the Republic of Croatia point at the need of the implementation of head teacher qualification and professional development:

- there are 1172 head teachers in primary and secondary schools
- there are 828 head teachers in primary schools (15,2% with masters degree, 46% with faculty education, 52% with college education, and 2% with secondary school education)
- work experience of head teachers ranges from 5 to 40 years (50% with work experience between 30 and 40 years)
- head masters are 26 to 66 years of age (58,2 between the age of 50 and 60)
- with the title of teacher mentor 3,7% of head teachers, 6,4% with the title of teacher counsellor

The last analysis of professional development of head teachers published in the framework of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (IDIZ, 2004) has indicated numerous weaknesses in the election and professional development system. The former professional development system has not been sufficiently theoretically organized and purposeful, has not met actual educational needs of head teachers, and has required greater engagement of different institutions and specialists on certain topics. The programmes and contents of professional development over-emphasize the normative side (regulations and instructions), and neglect professional-pedagogical knowledge and working with people. The administrative support has been developed at the expense of the research and developmental support (Staničić, 2004). It is evident that the administrative role prevails over the professional-pedagogical one. Along with the school autonomy, the head teacher's responsibility for the excellence of human potential increases, therefore they need training in this field. The human potential is undoubtedly the determining factor of success in the market conditions of all working activities.

## **Towards the effective school leadership**



Since the school is a part of a huge and complex system whose activity is coordinated by the state educational administration, a continuous theoretical organization, directing and assessment of realization of national educational interests is needed (Resman, 2001; Staničić, 2006). A continuous change of education has been present in the last decade in the Republic of Croatia (2002, 2005, 2007), and the changes have been initiated by the Ministry, which is the founder of educational institutions. The proposition for changes in school leadership, made by the Ministry of Education and Sports in 2002, had a tendency towards the implementation of such a way of leadership that would improve the quality of education. The changes should have encompassed the way of head teacher election, their training, professional development and work assessment. Despite good intentions, only some minor steps in professional development of head teachers have been made. Only the Education Sector Development Plan from 2005 to 2010, made by the same Ministry in 2005, has assumed certain activities oriented to the leadership of educational institutions. The Plan pays special attention to head teachers. It is stated in the Plan that head teachers must become executors of changes, leaders, providers of means and material improvements, innovators, and in correspondence, they should develop good communication skills. By increasing the leadership skills of head teachers, the leadership of educational institutions will be improved. The Plan anticipates the development and implementation of a national strategy and school leadership system. It is planned that by 2010, 10% of pre-school head teachers, 50% of primary school head teachers and 75% secondary school head teachers will have finished a minimum qualification level for the leadership of an educational institution. The implementation of the licence for head teachers of educational institutions is also assumed. The Ministry of Science and Education has therefore suggested the foundation of an institution for the implementation of the programme for head teachers training in the Republic of Croatia.

There are specific factors for determining of the qualification programme, apart from the leadership functions and the school activity field, which result in corresponding competencies. These are: educational needs for each of the head teachers (first or second mandate, completed basic education); knowledge of the goal vision and of the task of programme realization; new comprehensions in scientific disciplines, particularly in pedagogy, psychology, as well as in didactics and teaching methodology, information technology, management, economy...) and specific goals that result from the nature of the role of a leader of an educational institution.

Former instructive leadership (supervision of head teachers critically focused on teachers' work and their influence on students' development) has gradually been altered by transformational, cooperative, team leadership (the change of "bottom to top" power relations). A head teacher, therefore, promotes the ability of others in learning community, so that they would influence the quality of the curriculum and classes. The research results (Bogler, 2001; Fullan, 2002; in Hallinger, 2003) acknowledge the fact that the transformational leadership of head teachers influences teacher perception of school conditions, their readiness for changes and permanent professional development, but also the fact that some teachers avoid participating in joint school leadership. Transformational leadership creates conditions where it is possible to increase dedication to work and self-motivation of teachers, without specific directives "from the top". Communication is improving and the process of joint decision-making is being developed. Dalin (1998) states that a head teacher has a dominant role in such a leadership, directed at providing material conditions necessary for continuous improvement of the teaching process via administrative-organizational jobs (chief leading professional role) and for professional-pedagogic school leadership (chief executive role). Nevertheless, the results of Puzić research (2006) on the evaluation of the professional work of head teachers, on the sample of 120 head teachers in 121 primary schools in the Republic of Croatia, indicate that head teachers are primarily directed towards the providing of material and organizational basics for school activity (60,42%), while professional-pedagogical jobs are paid not enough attention to (39,61%).

Many school results and students' achievements depend on head teacher's competencies. The school of today functions in more complex social conditions, which make the realization of educational tasks more and more difficult. The responsibility of head teachers has particularly been stressed after the international examination and comparison of students' knowledge and skills (<http://dokumenti.nevvo.hr/PISA/PISA/-kompetencije.pdf>). In such a constellation, a head teacher needs to find the ways of leadership that will affirm the school, not only as a place of learning and teaching, but also as a life-long learning organization (New School Management Approaches, 2001)

The significance of leadership in the realization of such a school is unquestionable. The research on effective schools stresses the head teacher's role as being the key to the school effectiveness (Anderson, 1991; Foster and Hilaire, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2004; Mulford, 2003; 2006). Nevertheless, the research results of Bosset et al. (1982) and Domović (2003) lead to the conclusion that school leadership does not influence the perceived effectiveness directly, but they point at the presence of an indirect influence of leadership through the influence on the atmosphere in general. Regardless of the question whether leadership and school effectiveness are correlated directly or indirectly, the majority of researchers of effective schools believe that the head teacher is the major factor of quality and the school effectiveness itself. The implementation of new ideas, the modern school organization, and particularly the modern teaching process, along with the requirements for the development of responsibilities of each staff member, are present in an effective school. By the realization of the above stated a "parallel leadership" is encouraged,

and cooperative human relations are particularly nourished. Deputy leadership, along with head leadership, is important for school success (Foster and Hilaire, 2003). Parallel leadership is defined as a process in which teachers and their heads participate in common activities. Head teachers, as well as teachers, need to be encouraged for such a leadership (Peko et al. 2007). Actually, the determining factor that makes the difference between successful and unsuccessful organizations is – leadership (Smith and Piele, 1997). Since we are particularly questioning the importance and the correlation between the leadership, school atmosphere, organizational effectiveness of the school and the job satisfaction in this paper, it is necessary to define them more closely.

By the term effective leadership we define the particular part of the leadership that involves motivation, vision creation, development leadership, team leadership, encouragement of professional development, authority delegation and respectability/influence. We believe that a successful school leadership positively influences the staff so that they readily and enthusiastically contribute to the achievement of educational goals.

By school atmosphere we mark the characteristics of school environment, i.e. of interpersonal relations part of school life, consisting of a broad range of correlations among school leadership, teachers, students and all the other staff members. It involves attitude towards the school, encouragement of professional development of teachers, ways of decision-making and implementation, student support, and freedom of decision-making (Zabukovec, 1997).

The organizational effectiveness of a school characterizes a school in which the atmosphere is signified by the feeling of dedication to work, i.e. where work takes great effort. New approaches are appreciated; new ideas are applied, as well as new methods and procedures, along with a good organization and responsibility of all staff members, and with warm and informal relationships.

The job satisfaction is determined as a pleasant or positive emotional state which results from work evaluation or work experience. It represents a subjective attitude towards the effectiveness of the organization, of the quality of school atmosphere, as well as of the effectiveness of school leadership.

The research goal of this paper is to examine the state of leadership effectiveness based on examinees' evaluation, as well as to study the link between leadership, school atmosphere, general organizational effectiveness and job satisfaction in the schools of Eastern Croatia.

## METHOD

### Participants

The research involved 265 examinees. The examination encompassed 85 expert assistants (school pedagogues, psychologists, rehabilitation teachers), which makes 53% of the population of expert assistant, and 180 teachers, which makes 3% of the total population of Croatian teachers. Teachers and expert assistants that form the sample come from 48 primary schools, i.e. from 27% of all primary schools in Eastern Croatia. Examinees are 30 to 60 years old and they have 10 to 30 years of working experience. The research encompassed 230 female and 35 male examinees.

### Instruments

The correlation among the variables of: school leadership, general organizational effectiveness of the school, school atmosphere, and job satisfaction was examined by means of specially adapted scales. Four scales were used in the research: Scale for the evaluation of leadership effectiveness, Scale for the evaluation of school atmosphere characteristics, IPOE scale – Index of Perceived Organizational Effectiveness and the item for evaluation of job satisfaction of teachers. The mentioned scales have been merged into one instrument with the purpose of functionality.

**The leadership effectiveness** was evaluated by means of the Scale for evaluation of leadership effectiveness which consisted of eight subscales. They were used to measure basic leadership dimensions (motivation, communication, vision, and developmental leadership, encouragement of professional development, authority delegation, as well as respectability and influence). The final form of the scale for examination of the perceived leadership effectiveness, after the preliminary check, consisted of 56 statements (eight statements were formed for each of the subscales). All the subscales that evaluate leadership effectiveness have shown a high reliability ratio (from 0.64 to 0.88).

**The school atmosphere** was evaluated by means of the Scale for evaluation of school atmosphere characteristics which consisted of 15 statements related to different dimensions of atmosphere: relationships, personal development and system change. The reliability ratio (Cronbach alpha) for this scale was 0.89.

**The organizational effectiveness** was evaluated on IPOE scale - Index of Perceived Organizational Effectiveness. *Index of Perceived Organizational Effectiveness* (IPOE) instrument was used for the evaluation of general organizational effectiveness of the school, i.e. as a proportion for subjective experience of school effectiveness, and it was modified for the use



in schools. This instrument was slightly modified for this research, in the way that the original particles were reshaped into Likert-type scale. The reliability ratio for this instrument was 0.90.

The general job satisfaction of teachers was evaluated on the basis of an item presented as a question, which was answered by the examinees on the enclosed Likert-type evaluation scale, with five verbally described scale points. The question was: Consider the job you are doing at the moment, consider its advantages and disadvantages, and afterwards evaluate how satisfied you are with your job in general (from very satisfied (5) to very unsatisfied (1)).

The final form of the whole instrument consisted of 90 statements on the Likert-type evaluation scale, which were evaluated anonymously by examinees. The total value of the instrument has shown a high reliability ration (0.81) and was the base for acceptable conclusions in the further analysis.

The analysis of the data acquired in the research involved the calculation of basic descriptive indicators, the calculation of the reliability ratio by means of Cronbach alpha and the calculation of the level of correlation by means of Pearson's correlation coefficient.

## Results and discussion

The results of this research provide indicators of the way the examinees perceive the effectiveness of leadership, school atmosphere, organizational effectiveness of the school and job satisfaction. They also enable the determination of the correlations among the stated variables.

Table 1. illustrates the descriptive data on average values (arithmetic mean, mode, median, standard deviation and reliability ratios of the scales).

Table 1. Basic descriptive indicators of all the used proportions

	M	Median	Mod	Frequency	Min.	Max.	SD	Alpha
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>								
ability/influence	3,70	3,71	4,00	24	1,7	5,0	0,75	0,78
professional development	3,65	3,75	4,25	22	1,3	5,0	0,79	0,81
communication	3,45	3,50	3,37	18	1,0	5,0	0,94	0,88
developmental leadership	3,43	3,50	4,12	17	1,1	5,0	0,89	0,86
delegation	3,39	3,37	3,87	23	1,0	5,0	0,79	0,79
encouragement	3,35	3,50	3,62	19	1,0	5,0	0,90	0,88
leadership	3,33	3,37	4,00	18	1,0	5,0	0,90	0,88
motivation	3,28	3,25	3,25	22	1,0	4,8	0,69	0,64
<b>JOB SATISFACTION</b>	4,10	4,00	5,00	53	1,6	5,0	0,73	-
<b>SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL</b>	3,36	3,37	3,75	18	1,0	5,0	0,85	0,90
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>								
<b>SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE</b>	3,26	3,26	2,50	12	1,4	4,8	0,75	0,89

The analysis of the descriptive indicators has indicated that the majority of leadership subscales (motivation, team leadership, vision, decision-making, development leadership, communication) have achieved average values (3.28 to 3.45), as well as variables for school atmosphere (3.26) and organizational effectiveness (3.36). Unexpectedly, the highest value was achieved on the job satisfaction variable (4.10).

Among eight leadership subscales, only two have achieved higher value. These are encouragement of professional development (3.65) and creation of school respectability (3.70). These results were expected, with regards to the professional development (professional training) being obligatory for all teachers. Therefore, the positive experience of the state of this variable is not surprising.

By question related to the respectability and influence variable, we have attempted to find out in what way the examinees perceive the successfulness of head teachers in creating and reflecting a positive school image in public and of establishing good relationships with different factors outside school. The results (3.70) lead to a conclusion that head teachers carry out this leadership aspect more successfully. Schools, by their nature, possess certain respect in their environments, particularly in the smaller ones; therefore we expected such a result.

The quality of communication was evaluated by statements related to the level of tolerance and appreciation of different opinions, encouragement of open and sincere communication, getting clear and understandable direction and constructive conflict solving.

The results of the perception of this leadership aspect (3.45) indicate that the internal communication system in schools is on a level held moderately desirable and adequate.

The leadership of school development and the attitude towards innovation and changes is an important area in the range of school leader. Schools need to be leaders in social changes and development, and head teachers examples of professionalism and enthusiasm in leadership. By the statements of this scale the examinees evaluated to what extent head teachers professionally and enthusiastically create conditions and invest their time in the efforts to introduce innovations and changes in educational activity, as well as to encourage teachers to improve school quality. The examinees' evaluation regarding this variable is moderate – 3.41. The reason could be looked for in the fact that Croatian schools have development and innovation specialists, i.e. school pedagogues and psychologists, who primarily work in this field. Nevertheless, school development is also head teacher's field of work and their attitude towards changes and innovation fundamentally determine change-friendly climate.

Authority delegation represents the level of leadership democracy. It is evident in freedom, independence and appreciating of teachers' initiatives, availability and punctuality of information, appreciation of different opinions and suggestions, as well as in trust in teachers. The results on this subscale (3.39) indicate that head teachers are not to a greater extent ready to share their authority with teachers.

The value of vision subscale (3.35) in terms of school development can be linked with previous results. Leadership is a process directed towards future, and the vision represents an image of desirable future towards which we are heading. If we do not possess a vision and a goal, if we do not know where we are heading to, we will not get anywhere. It is evident that our schools do not have a completely clear vision of their future. It is therefore clearer why the results for the discussed variables have moderate values. Nevertheless, this state can be a consequence of developmental changes in the Croatian society as well. Democratization, decentralization and autonomy increasing processes, taking place in the society, have affected the schools, that up to recently worked according to the instructions of the Ministry of Science and Education.

School leadership has to a great extent characteristics of team leadership. With consideration to the fact that the goal accomplishment is achieved through different work groups (teachers, professional associates, students, different project groups, etc.), we were interested in the way the examinees perceive head teachers' competencies for initiating, forming, encouragement, directing and evaluation of team work. The data indicate a lower estimate of these competencies (3.33). It can be evidence of parallel presence of the instructive and transformational leadership style.

Using motivation subscale we attempted to find out in what way the examinees perceive the ability of head teachers to recognize teachers' needs and to help fulfil them, praising them for well completed work, appreciating their work and effort, acknowledging the right to mistakes, creating a pleasant and friendly atmosphere and avoiding supervision and control. The lowest estimate on this scale indicates that not enough attention has been paid to the motivation of teachers and to the appreciation of their needs in schools. Head teachers should take that into account. Head teachers who understand what motivates people, possess the most powerful "tools" for working with them. If they are able to direct that understanding in the right direction, they will not lack in leadership effectiveness and realization of developmental school vision (Staničić, 2006).

We start with the assumption that the atmosphere is to a certain extent determined by the way of school leadership. The fact that this variable has achieved the lowest result (3.26) of all the evaluated variables is unexpected and concerning. If we know that social climate is one of the most important factors influencing the realization of innovations implemented into schools (Staničić, 1999), we can state that the atmosphere in our schools is not yet change-friendly to a great extent.

One of the areas we were particularly interested in, in terms of the research topic, was the perceived organizational effectiveness of the school, measured by IPOE scale, which represents the subjective proportion of effectiveness. By the statements related to the evaluation of quantity and quality of service offered by school (usefulness of the existing resources in school, assumption of possible problems, availability of innovation information, the pace of accepting and adapting to new ways of work, as well as the successfulness of school staff in facing the immediate crises and obstacles), we have tried to find out in what way the examinees perceive their schools. The evaluation of this variable is in line with the evaluation of the former ones (3.36), therefore, we can conclude that the examinees experience their schools as moderately effective.

Job satisfaction is also one of the subjective indicators of the school effectiveness. Different approaches from the theory of organization state the fact that job satisfaction is one of basic criteria for the effectiveness evaluation and an important indicator of quality of processes taking place within the organization. Considering previous results, the result on this variable is also expected to be low. Nevertheless, the examinees have, despite the fact that the school leadership, atmosphere and effectiveness have been evaluated low, expressed a relatively high level of satisfaction with their jobs (4.10). It has again become evident that the job satisfaction is a complex construct influenced by numerous factors and increasingly under the influence of the intrinsic, rather than extrinsic motivation.



The next goal was directed at the determining of the correlation among examined variables. The results presented in the inter-correlation matrix prove the correlation statistically (Table 2).

**Table 2. The correlation among the used proportions**

Proportions used	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Motivation	-									
2. Communication	.70	-								
3. Authority delegation	.70	.86	-							
4. Development leadership	.60	.84	.81	-						
5. Vision	.59	.81	.77	.86	-					
6. Encouragement of professional development	.59	.78	.74	.81	.82	-				
7. Team leadership	.50	.72	.65	.75	.81	.74	-			
8. School atmosphere	.64	.81	.75	.81	.84	.78	.78	-		
9. Organizational effectiveness	.50	.70	.64	.77	.83	.73	.74	.81	-	
10. Respectability, influence	.50	.72	.65	.77	.80	.72	.72	.76	.77	-
11. Job satisfaction	.33	.44	.40	.46	.42	.42	.34	.48	.44	.47

Note: all the correlations are significant on the level  $p < 0.5$

Based on the examination of the correlation level by means of Pearson's correlation coefficient, a statistically significant and positive link of all the examined variables has been found.

The most significant correlations have been noticed between school atmosphere and leadership subscale: vision (0.84), development leadership and communication (0.81), encouragement of professional development and team leadership (0.78). These findings indicate the existence of the connection between the quality of school atmosphere and perceived school leadership. A clear purpose and goal, open and democratic communication, professional development leadership in schools and the possibilities for promotion and professional development of teachers are attractive and appreciated working conditions in the given school context. The results also illustrate the fact that the schools, whose head teachers possess vision and attempt to transfer it to their staff, positively affect the school environment and the conditions for good mutual communication. Generally, the vision subscale points at a significant correlation with many variables: organizational effectiveness (0.83), encouragement of professional development (0.82), team leadership (0.81) and respectability (0.81), which illustrates the fact that the formation of vision for the future school is one of the important tasks of pedagogical school leadership.

It is interesting to notice a high level of correlation between the perceived organizational effectiveness and school atmosphere (0.81), which acknowledges the findings of other research on the correlation of these variables. Domović (2003) also reaches the conclusion that the following four atmosphere aspects have the highest value in the predicting of the effectiveness: staff cohesion, clarity, task and innovation orientation, which together explain even 79,4% of the general school effectiveness variance. Therefore, based on certain atmosphere indicators, it is possible to a greater extent to assume in what way the teachers will evaluate the school effectiveness in general.

This research has validated the relation between the organizational effectiveness and leadership. The findings confirm that leadership subscales play a significant role in perceived organizational effectiveness: development leadership (0.77), team leadership (0.74) and encouragement of professional development (0.73). Professionalism and enthusiasm with which head teachers introduce changes and innovations, lead teams and encourage teachers to develop and train, influence the perception of school as being effective. Taking into account the link between the other leadership subscales and organizational effectiveness subscales, the findings of other authors (Edmonds, 1979; Levin and Lezotte, 1990; Sammon et al., 1995) on the significance of leadership in the realization of the school effectiveness can be validated. Domović research (2003) confirms this hypothesis as well, although its results do not provide the evidence of direct correlation. Namely, the author reaches the conclusion that school leadership does not directly affect perceived effectiveness, but it is rather an indirect effect of leadership through the influence on the atmosphere in general.

As some of the previous research, this one has also confirmed the correlation among job satisfaction, school effectiveness and school atmosphere. Although the job satisfaction has achieved a lower level of correlation with other variables, it is nevertheless statistically significant (0.33 -0.48). The correlation ratios between job satisfaction and school atmosphere (0.48), as well as leadership subscale: respectability (0.47) and development leadership (0.46) point at the probability of teachers' satisfaction with their jobs. A pleasant and friendly atmosphere is present in school if their school owns certain respect in local

community and if they perceive their school as an institution aspiring for progress and development. The results on this variable also correspond to the findings of other authors (Hoy and Miskel, 1991; Miskel et al. 1979; in Domović, 2003) which assess the correlation between job satisfaction and school atmosphere, but also suggest that job satisfaction is influenced by some other factors as well (e.g. direct teaching and class-teaching climate). The lower level of correlation, realized between job satisfaction and motivation subscale (0.33) confirms the theoretical explanations according to which job satisfaction is more internally correlated to the intrinsic, internal sources of satisfaction, rather than to extrinsic rewards.

By analysing the relationships among the examined variables, the assumption on their mutual correlation has been validated. All the variables have achieved a significant statistical correlation in this research. The correlation coefficient levels refer to the actual high correlation, which confirms the findings of previously mentioned research, but also to the need to further develop and examine the instrument used in this research, especially the factor analysis. Taking into account the fact that this research has primarily been conducted as a preliminary research of quality of leadership in schools in Croatia, we plan a further development and improvement of the instruments, as well as the application of the research on a bigger sample.

## Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, leadership, school atmosphere, organizational effectiveness and job satisfaction represent important constructs of effective leadership in Croatian schools. Their mutual correlation is evident. We can not be satisfied with the acquired results that have average tendencies. We would be satisfied with the result "if this were 1965", as Stoll and Fink (1996) say, but this is 2008, and the schools are expected to lead us into the "society of knowledge", towards changes and development, to possess a vision, knowledge and readiness for changes, not mediocrity.

The above stated can be a basis for further research related to the effectiveness of school leadership, that can contribute to the long-term and systematic improvement of this educational segment.

The research results suggest the need for training of head teachers. It is necessary, therefore, to create and organize the education of head teachers that would satisfy the required modern standards. The qualification of head teachers should be conducted in the environment where a head teacher would not avoid experiments and mistakes. It is necessary, apart from traditional lectures, to use modern teaching forms and strategies during the education (outdoor learning, project and research classes, as well as seminars, counselling, round tables, discussions,...). It would be good to use methods that provide direct experience of school practice in school environment, e.g. simulation, case studies and role playing. These methods should be enriched by those developed in the area of information and communication technologies (on-line learning, e-learning, etc.)

Head teachers should receive constant support during the education. Therefore, we consider necessary the need for the establishment of the Educational centre for acquiring head teacher's licence, as well as the starting of graduate and post-graduate studies.

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## 制度创新语境下课程领导的转型与超越

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## The Transformation of Curriculum Leadership in the Context of Institutional Innovation

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**摘要：**制度创新的核心内容是支配人们行为和相互关系的规则的变更。显然，制度规约的变更会引发具体管理行为和管理内容的转变，这是制度创新的必然结果。在当前我国教育制度创新的语境下，校长的课程管理应转向更具有专业化的课程领导，由此导向了课程领导对传统课程管理的超越。课程领导的要义，在于改变传统的“行政中心