

## EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION

Nevena ĆURIĆ  
Dina LAZAREVIĆ  
Pavle BRZAKOVIĆ

***Abstract:** Sustainable development implies such a development of a society that satisfies human resources with available resources, not endangering natural systems and the environment, thus ensuring the long-term existence of human society and its environment. The concept of sustainable development represents a new strategy and philosophy of social development. Education, as a key factor for the development and competitiveness of the modern economy, plays an essential role in the socio-economic development of the economy and society. The experience of the developed countries shows that education is directly linked to economic development. Development of the concept of education for sustainable development, unlike most other initiatives, was run independently by professionals who are professionally engaged in education and education, so in many countries education for sustainable development is created outside the educational and pedagogical communities. Management in education should be viewed as an integral part of the movement towards the goal of reforming education. It is necessary to find effective coordination of state bodies and to harmonize it with pedagogical and other processes within educational institutions. Experts from all fields are needed to implement a new understanding of school management and find ways to organizations that not only teach but also learn to learn.*

***Keywords:** sustainable development, education, management in education*

### 1. Introduction

Sustainable development implies such a development of a society that satisfies human resources with available resources, not endangering natural systems and the environment, thus ensuring the long-term existence of human society and its environment. The concept of sustainable development represents a new strategy and philosophy of social development, (Štrbac *et al.*, 2012:18).

Sustainable development is most often associated with environmental protection, that is, the effort to connect the concern about the survival of the living world on the planet Earth with the conservation of natural resources and the numerous environmental challenges facing every society, state and mankind as a whole.

The term sustainability, English sustainability, denotes the ability of duration and originates from the Latin word essentially, sustent, in the sense of sustaining, supporting, resisting, lasting.

What is sustainable development, which is very important for us today?

When sustainable development is mentioned, many have the idea that this is simply something that concerns only ecologically acceptable projects, (Pejanović, 2014:5-18). In this regard, individual actions for environmental protection, recycling, waste management and / or conservation of biodiversity have been intensified. The smaller the number of those who realized that sustainable development is the concept that emerged from the need to remedy things on a global scale by bringing economic indicators into line with environmental goals and social conditions of life. Sustainable development is, in this sense, a generally usable socio-economic concept that should be a potential conflict of economic goals of increasing income, employment, standards of people and general well-being of society with the interests of people to live in an acceptable or preserved environment, in conditions of balance with nature and socially tolerable conditions, (Negovan, 2017:106). It is therefore a socio-economic and cultural development that is in line with conditions, constraints and capacities (including the principle of rationality) and which does not disturb the survival conditions for future generations (principle of solidarity). Namely, it is about human development, in response to the profound and comprehensive crisis in which modern society is located, (Mankiw, 2004:4).

There are three dimensions of the meaning of sustainability:

- The first, the oldest and the most general is the natural ecological sustainability, which represents the capacity for self-renewal and life-span and complex ecosystems that include both the living and the inanimate world;
- Second, it makes the sustainability of renewable resources in terms of their equal use in time and space;
- The third, to which sustainability most often applies in our time, makes more rational disposal of non-renewable resources and their substitution with renewable resources.

The first and partial insights into the idea of sustainable development in university education in Serbia show that these processes are initiated, but that there is a wide area and an evident need to expand this field significantly.

In implementing the idea of sustainable development through curricula and syllabuses at our universities, two complementary strategies need to be used:

- By integrating themes on education for sustainable development through all relevant subjects, programs and courses in basic and postgraduate studies, and
- Through the introduction and development of specific programs and courses focused on the complex issues of sustainable development.

## 2. Education in the function of sustainable development

The education system is an institutionally systematic system that involves systematic learning and transfer of knowledge, which has an important social, economic and cultural dimension. Education, as a key factor for the development and competitiveness of the modern economy, plays an essential role in the socio-economic development of the economy and society. The experience of the developed countries shows that education is directly linked to economic development, (Pejanovic, 2014:5-18).

The Sustainable Development Education Initiative has come from international economic forums and organizations. The documents of the UN Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 clearly determine the place and role of the education system in achieving sustainable development. Chapter 36. Agenda 21, which represents a concrete action plan adopted at the Conference in Rio, refers to the promotion of education, training and raising public awareness. The objectives and activities of different program areas and the agenda (reorientation of education towards sustainable development, strengthening of public awareness and improvement of training) relate to the preparation of national strategies for harmonizing education at all levels with the principles of sustainable development and a new philosophy of life, the spreading of public awareness of the importance sustainable development and promotion of labor adjustment needs, strengthening national capacities and governance in that area (UNCED, 1992), (Radivojević *et al.*, 2011:101).

The key principles of education for sustainable development, promoted at the Johannesburg Summit, are as follows:

- Economic, environmental and social problems are part of the concept of sustainable development, therefore education for sustainable development is cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary and requires a comprehensive and global approach;
- It is essential that teachers at all levels of education encourage and encourage students and students in a critical way of thinking and reacting, thus developing their vision of future sustainable development as a prerequisite for undertaking appropriate concrete activities;
- Sustainable development should be included in educational programs at all levels, including education in nature and lifelong education; education takes place throughout human life including formal, informal and any other education;
- The primary goal of education on sustainable development is to enable people to fight for positive changes in the environment, which implies their dedicated, committed and active approach to this process, (Radivojević *et al.*, 2011:102).

In the framework of the Global Education Agenda, UNESCO published its publication Education for Sustainable Development: Learning Objectives, which is based on 17 global goals for sustainable development in 2017. It was emphasized that education is a key instrument for achieving these goals.

The research that was conducted was based on the extent to which students in Serbia developed competences for sustainable development based on knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and emotions, but also imply functional approach and outcomes achieved through actions, choices and behavior. There is also an effort to include a wider context of sustainable development, looking at three perspectives: sociocultural, environmental and economic perspectives. This research is aimed at students who complete a non-university education and who until then developed competencies for sustainable development through the systematic impact of school in this field. Although most of them declare that they intend to continue their education at the university, among the faculties that the students choose only one (Faculty of Medicine) potentially enables the continuation of systematic education in this field.

In this context, the obtained data can be considered as the output level of the competence development with which our students enter the adult age, because for the above reasons further development of their competencies in this area (if it happens) will mostly not be the result of systematic learning in the education system, but the result of the informal learning (Maksimović *et al.*, 2017).

This is only one indicator of insufficient representation of the topic of sustainable development within higher education in Serbia. Solving the problem can be seen through the introduction of compulsory education throughout the entire education, starting from the primary, through secondary and later higher education.

Education for the support of the whole is partly embedded in the curriculum of elementary and secondary schools in Serbia, as part of some teaching subjects and, to a lesser extent, cross-curricular. Also, in schools, various extracurricular and extracurricular activities are planned and realized, which should contribute to achieving the outcome of education for sustainable development. So far, there has not been enough research in our educational system on this topic, so there is no valid data on what knowledge and attitudes of students are. The most important problem in the process of developing a scenario can be expected from the diversification of knowledge and redesigning education for sustainable development, (Grujović *et al.*, 2017:323-327).

Sustainable development as a concept implies a social, economic and environmental component that, in its cooperation, is focused on preserving natural resources. It can be described as satisfying the needs of mankind without compromising possibilities and natural potentials for future generations. The company should develop with the idea of well-being for most

members, while minimizing the negative impacts on the environment. Given that sustainable development is a changing concept, which largely depends on these components, but also affects them, education for sustainable development should focus on acquiring competences that will enable the youth to live in their everyday lives. Therefore, in relation to sustainable development, attitudes about general well-being, consumerism, social responsibility, habits, family values and similarly essential elements of knowledge.

Based on the research conducted in secondary vocational schools at Belgrade's tertiary level, with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, recommendations have been proposed to improve the education issue in the function of sustainable development.

In this regard, the recommendation for the education system is to strengthen the cross-curricular links of the content of education content for sustainable development, accommodated in different teaching subjects. Such an inevitable approach would contribute to the students forming a comprehensive picture of sustainable development and supporting their better understanding of the concept of sustainable development. Also, individual results indicate which parts of the curriculum need to be specifically reinforced.

The second recommendation refers to the teaching process, or the way in which students learn about sustainable development. The more students know more and understand the problems of sustainable development, the greater the likelihood that they will develop positive and proactive attitudes and habits, and that they will behave more responsibly. In this regard, it is important that students in the school also get the opportunity to develop appropriate habits and behaviors, that is, not to learn about sustainable development only through lectures and lessons, but also through practical activities on time and outside hours.

The third recommendation relates to the inclusion of various aspects of non-formal and informal education in order to continue and support the development of competences for sustainable development, initiated within the framework of the system of education, (Maksimović *et al.*, 2017).

### **3. The importance of management in education in the function of sustainable development**

Management in education should be viewed as an integral part of the movement towards the goal of reforming education. It is necessary to find effective coordination of state bodies and to harmonize it with pedagogical and other processes within educational institutions. Experts from all fields are needed to implement a new understanding of school management and find ways to organizations that not only teach but also learn to learn.

Under the management in education, it is understood that the application of characteristics and functions of management in the educational / educational activity. It must not be forgotten that management is based on innovations that encourage more efficient work of organizations, institutions and the very activities themselves.

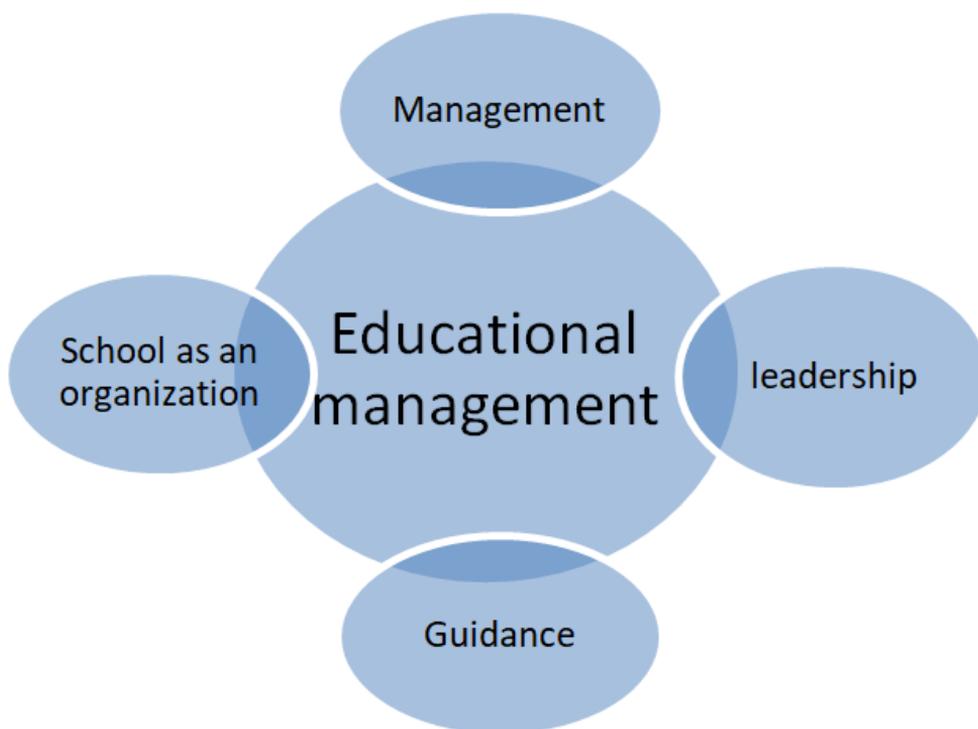
In the meantime, in the meanwhile, the degree of education is significantly "transformed" by a wide range of learning in the non-formal institutions, as noted by Gidens (2005). "The concept of education - which, in the sense of the most structured knowledge in the framework of the formal institutions - takes place in the very broadest concept of 'learning' that takes place in different environments. The life of a lifelong person should, and must, play a role in the transition to a longer transport. Learning does not need to be educated in the context of a profoundly educated, motivated adult, a multidisciplinary system that is viewed in the context of wider human values, (Gidens, 2005: 533).

Educational management is an important innovation in the education of the 20th century. At a time when the school consisted of one classroom, she was led by a teacher. With the emergence of schools with a large number of classrooms in industrially developed cities and consolidated rural areas, systematic coordination of work was needed. This has created a need for a full time manager - a manager responsible for the financial, educational, human and physical potential of schools. (Hebib & Spasojevic, 2011:3)

In spite of the small shifts, the school is still a rigorously controlled state institution where there is little room for independent decision-making and innovative leadership, and therefore for school management - serious warnings by a distinguished Slovenian expert for this area of Rasman. He believes that the school is a monopolistic non-profit organization that for its functioning uses the funds allocated to it from the state budget on the basis of political decisions, and not directly by the users of its services. The introduction of management into the education of the developed Western states can be largely attributed to their connection with the economy, powers and responsibilities that the central education policy conveyed to the local environment and schools (School-based management) (Resman, 1993: 458).

### **3.1. Elements of management in education**

In order to better understand management in education, as a professional area, it is necessary to specify its elements or subsystems. In the following figure, we can see from which elements it consists and further clarify in the text.



**Figure 1.** Educational management elements

### 3.2 Management

Management is one of the key elements of educational management. It refers to the alignment of the potentials (physical, financial and human) in the school system with the aim that the individual elements of the system, as well as the system as a whole, optimally achieve their goals. Management is the function of the owner (usually the state), and because of its social and political importance, it is based on extensive legal regulations, and by its nature it is an administrative (administrative) function. Education is mainly managed by the educational authority, that is, the institutions to which it grants authority. (Staničić, 2011:33). In the framework of school management, a number of issues related to the school system and its subsystem are addressed. The importance of this element is reflected in the creation of preconditions for the growth of national cultural development and economic growth with the help of culture, knowledge, values and habits.

### 3.3. Leadership

Management as a subsystem of educational management is an executive management function. Management refers to matching potentials to achieve the goals of an educational or educational institution. Leading role is played by everyone who plays a role in the functioning of the institution, striving to use

resources more rationally. Successful management is based on making the right decisions regarding the appointment, training and improvement of personnel.

### ***3.4. Human resources management in an educational institution***

The most important issues pertaining to this element relate to social relations, which significantly influence educational outcomes. Professional problems are related to the characteristics of communication among the employees in the institution, how and how to motivate employees, how to solve possible conflicts, create teamwork and a positive work environment.

### ***3.5. Educational institution as an organization***

All of the elements that make up the education system process exist due to the educational institution, all in order to achieve the need for education and culture. What sets this organization apart from others are numerous issues relating to the quality of operation and efficiency itself. The main issues are the need to achieve the mission, vision and objectives of the institution as well as effective quality management, evaluation and self-evaluation of the work of the institution.

### ***3.6. The relationship between theory and practice of management and leadership in education***

As in all areas of management and leadership, there is a discrepancy between theory and practice. Practitioners are generally not willing to analyze and accept theoretical approaches, while theorists are uncertain about the effectiveness of practice in this area. Although the foundations are trying to make a balance, theory and practice for now seem to work remotely. Between theory and practice there is an obvious gap that "stands as the Gordian knot of educational administration", (English, 2002:1-3).

Educational management theories generally have three main characteristics, (Bush, 2003:27):

- They tend to determine norms of the nature of educational institutions;
- Theories tend to be selective or partial in highlighting the safe features of institutions;
- Theories are often based on practice observation or practice support.

Educational management theories are therefore based on a normative or selective approach, and most often on the observation of school practice. These approaches, however, coincide with each other.

## **4. Conclusion**

On the road to the development and prosperity of modern society, attention is increasingly focused on the skills of aligning human and material resources in the function of achieving the planned goals. This skill is called management. We can safely say that its importance has been accepted as a function of connecting people with different expertise, skills and experience. It is necessary to try to incorporate the principles of sustainable development into as many curricula as possible through various management functions, rather than treating sustainable development as a separate topic through special teaching subjects. Educational institutions have an important role to unify individual learning in a global context and enable learners to understand their impact on local and global connections. In addition, existing social habits need to be replaced by those that are more sustainable, which will not be quick or easy.

## References

1. Bush, T. *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management (Third edition)*. London: SAGE Publications, 2003.
2. English, F. Cutting the Gordian Knot of educational administration: the theory-practice gap. *The Review*. 44(1), 2002:1-3.
3. Gidens, E. *Sociologija*. Ekonomski fakultet (Beograd). 2005.
4. Grujović, M., Mihajlović, D., Petrović, G., Krušković, T. Upravljanje u osnovnom obrazovanju kao funkcija održivog razvoja. *Ecologica*, Beograd. 86., 2017: 323-327.
5. Hebib, E., Spasojević, V. Školski sistem Srbije - stanje i pravci razvoja. *Pedagogija*. 66(1), 2011:3.
6. Mankiw, N.G. *Principi ekonomije*, Ekonomski fakultet, Beograd, 2004.
7. Negovan, Z., Đukić, K. Privredni sistemi i ekonomska politika. Univerzitet u Novom saadu, poljoprivredni fakultet, 2017.
8. Vidojević, J. Obrazovanje za održivi razvoj. *Centar za ekološku politiku i održivi razvoj*, Beograd, 2011:141-161.
9. Pejanović, R. Održivi razvoj i visoko obrazovanje. *Letopis naučnih radova*, 38(1), 2014:5-18.
10. Maksimović M., Đukić T., Brzaković P. Indikatori kvaliteta u obrazovanju. *Evropska nedelja kvaliteta – JUSKENK2017*, Beograd., 2017:29-32.
11. Radojević D., Radović, N., Džepina M. Nacionalna strategija održivog razvoja - obrazovanje za održivi razvoj. *Centar za ekološku politiku i održivi razvoj*, Beograd, 2011:99-112.
12. Resman, M. Management, školstvo in šola. *Sodobna pedagogika*, Ljubljana. 110(9-10), 1993: 457-473.
13. Staničić, S. *Menadžment u obrazovanju*, Centar za marketing u obrazovanju, Gornji Milanovac, 2011.
14. Štrbac, N., Vuković, M., Voza, D., Sokić, M. *Održivi razvoj i zaštita životne sredine*. Institut za tehnologiju nuklearnih i drugih mineralnih sirovina (ITNMS), Beograd, 2012.

**NOTE ON THE AUTHOR**

**Nevena Ćurić**, University Business Academy in Novi Sad, Faculty of applied management, economics and finance, Belgrade, Jevrejska Street no. 24, 11000 Belgrade, Phone: +381 62/8386428, E-mail: nevena\_curic@yahoo.com. Areas of research: Economy, education, development, management

**Dina Lazarević**, University Business Academy in Novi Sad, Faculty of applied management, economics and finance, Belgrade Jevrejska Street no. 24, 11000 Belgrade, Phone: +381 63/700 8049, E-mail: lazarevic.dina@gmail.com

**Pavle Brzaković**, University Business Academy in Novi Sad, Faculty of applied management, economics and finance, Belgrade, Jevrejska Street no. 24, 11000 Belgrade, Phone: +381 64/3290255, E-mail: pavlebrzakovic@yahoo.com.