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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BOARDING SCHOOL TEACHERS AFTER INITIAL EDUCATION¹

Abstract: The technologically and scientifically impacted modern society demands a different approach to the acquisition of knowledge, its range and purpose. There is an ever-increasing demand for the integration of modern scientific achievements with educational contents. In order for educators to fulfill these educational demands, it is necessary for them to constantly develop their professional competencies so that they may be capable of expanding their field of expertise and becoming initiators, carriers, and organizers of the developmental processes and changes in education. Initial [undergraduate] education cannot answer everyday societal changes well enough, and with that in mind, it cannot prepare an individual for working effectively. The solution can be seen in permanent [life-long] learning, in the constant professional development (PD in further reading) of educators to be exact, which begins with initial [undergraduate] education and continues with the development of their professional knowledge and skills through different shapes of compulsory development of their professional competencies. In the circles of educators, besides preschool, elementary, and high school teachers, according to specific tasks in the educational framework, there are educators who work in boarding schools. Although this group is comprised of a smaller number of educators, it is equally important for boarding school teachers to continually develop their professional competencies. In the theoretical framework of the paper, an analysis of the problem of their PD will be made, while the empirical chapter of the paper speaks about the opinions of boarding school teachers, according to their PD.

Keywords: professional development, boarding school teachers, boarding schools.

INTRODUCTION

Qualitative and quantitative changes which are daily integrated into society, demand different educational outcomes from every individual (Trnavac, Đorđević 2005). Furthermore, educators constantly have to improve their competencies in

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order to efficiently respond to the determined educational outcomes, whereas other cycles of initial [undergraduate] education have become insufficient, inadequately preparing educators for their profession (Pešikan 2005). The improvement of professional competencies is possible only through the systematic, planned and continuous PD of educators on whom the complete educational process depends (The Teaching profession in Europe: the profile, trends, and concerns 2004). Moreover, PD can be presented as a continuum which begins with initial [undergraduate] education and continues through constant development; it should be a part of a consistent educational policy and part of the wider international policy on education (*Quality assurance in teacher education in Europe* 2006; *Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications* 2009). In other words, it is “a sum of all the formal and informal experiences and learning throughout the career, from the acquisition of the degree to the retirement” (Fullan 2001). Furthermore, the PD of educators represents the answer to the modern needs of students and schools. Namely, the quality of the teacher and his work represent a crucial component of the education and academic success of the student (Darling-Hammond, Rockoff, Hattie, according to Stanković, Đerić, Milin 2013).

THE EMERGING OF THE INITIATIVE FOR PERMANENT EDUCATION

During the 1970s, the initiative for a global perspective and a new direction of education began because of frequent criticism of the current school system that was a demand for the school not to be cut out of societal happenings (Horvat, Lapat 2012; Bečić et al. 2009). During that time, UNESCO initiated two large research projects searching for a solution to the global educational crisis (Faure et al. 1975; Delors et al. 1998). Both studies resulted in mutual solutions: there is a need for a thorough change – instead of “preparing for life” (schooling during childhood and youth), modern education needs to become an integral part of a person's life. The next twenty years of research resulted in the structuring of the content of the new educational concept in which the process of initial [undergraduate] education aims to develop abilities for further self-education while *competencies* become the key pointer of the quality of modern education. During their acquisition, initial [undergraduate] education has a concentric form as an assumption of the continuation of the educators' permanent education (Radeka 2007).

The EU expects educators to possess skills with which they are able to develop tolerance, encourage social cohesion, and prepare students for a *society of knowledge* while also adhering to pluralist values and human rights. The orientation defined in this manner indicates that in the initial [undergraduate] education there is a need for developing the ability to solve new problems which are brought forth by recurring changes in society and which, in order to be overcome, need

the younger generations to be prepared (*Memorandum o cjeloživotnom učenju Europske komisije* 2000). In the desire for minimizing organizational differences in the system of PD of educators, member countries of the European Council aim to create a network of scholar connections which will deal with continuous PD. By exchanging the factors of education, experiences and information are shared through conferences, seminars, exchange of European projects, educational development centers, and the support provided by “INSET In-service Education for Teachers”. Bearing in mind that the trend of modern education emphasizes the achievement of equal quality for all, the International Organization for Economic Collaboration and Development (OECD) initiated international research on learning and instruction (TALIS) which was very successful, because it contributed to the consideration of participating countries own needs in the domain of PD in terms of the improvement of the instruction quality and the position of the teachers.

The PD of educators should represent part of the system of permanent [lifelong] learning, and actualize the connection and adjustment between basic education and PD during work. The need for all educators to participate in (their own) PD, regardless of the level and segment of education that they work in, could simultaneously be considered as their right and their obligation. The concept of PD implies a system which is based on the process of planning and programming, actualization, observation, and evaluation of that process. The observation of the PD of educators has the aim of analyzing the actualization of the process, the level of achievement of determined outcomes and tasks, while ascertaining problems during the actualization, and solving those problems. (Stamatović, Rogić 2008). Among everything, the observation process of PD also constitutes the determining and synchronizing of subjective and objective needs of every individual, which creates the basis for the process of programming PD, because “adults accept learning and further development if they notice the fulfillment of their individual needs in it” (Stanojlović 1982: 27).

PD OF EDUCATORS IN SERBIA

In Serbia, the institutional framework of educator and teacher development is based on the international cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Institute for the Development of Education, and the Centers for the PD of Educators with other institutions which conduct development programs. One of the principal activities of the aforementioned Center is the assessment of the quality of the program of PD which is based on accreditation and feedback from the program instructors on the process of actualization, which indicates the assessment of the process. The systematic evaluation of the PD of educators demands the assessment of the process through the accomplishment of outcomes and tasks of the program, and self-assessment in the field of PD

(Stamatović, Rogić 2008). The overall reform of education in Serbia, after the year 2000, also suggests a unique system of “PD of employees in the field of education which implies changes in all three elements: basic education, job orientation, and PD with work” (Kovač-Cerović et al. 2004). PD encompasses activities which are self-initiated and done by the educator, PD within the school, preschool, or boarding school, as well as attendance at accredited programs of PD (*Pravilnik o stalnom stručnom usavršavanju* 2018).

According to the Law on the Bases of the System of Education, educators are required to develop themselves professionally in order to more efficiently accomplish their educational work. The plan for the PD of the educator is an integral part of the annual work plan of the institution and is adapted to its development plan and the results of self-assessment and the external assessment of the institution. As the decree on PD defines it, PD is accomplished through (1) activities performed by the institution, (2) activities which are conducted in adherence with approved training programs and professional gatherings, (3) activities that are performed by the ministry, the Institute for the Development of Education, the Institute for the Assessment of the Quality of Education, and the Pedagogical Institute of Vojvodina, (4) activities that are organized on an international scale in the field of education, (5) activities that are carried out by higher education institutions, based on the program for permanent [life-long] learning and (6) activities which are performed by the educators themselves, in compliance with their personal plan for PD. The forms of PD are: (1) the program of PD which is carried out through training and (2) professional gatherings (congresses, meetings, conferences, consultations, symposiums, round tables, forums, webinars, summer and winter schools, professional and academic travel). During his/her PD, the educator may acquire certain professional titles: pedagogical consultant, mentor, instructor, or senior pedagogical consultant. The orientation program for the intern teacher and the program for acquiring a license is appointed by the supervising body of the ministry which issues the license and runs the register of licensed educators (*Pravilnik o stalnom stručnom usavršavanju* 2018).

In Serbia, key decisions about accredited programs of PD and license issuing for educators are made on the national scale while the educators and the institutions that they work in have flexibility in choosing some of the accredited programs of PD (Pavlović, Stanković 2008). The Institute for the Development of Education accredits the programs, assembles and publishes the Catalogue of approved programs and follows the functioning of the complete system. Educators and boarding schools are able to choose the programs from the Catalogue while the funding for PD is, by law, carried out by the local government. However, it turns out that the established practice of PD through attendance at accredited programs has been encountering a series of problems – limited utility of the Catalogue (Pešikan et al. 2010), bad quality of programs and instructors (Džinović 2009), disproportion of the offer and demand of the PD programs (Alibabić, Šegrt 2010), inadequacy

of quality assurance in the system, funding problems, and low motivation for this and other types of development among teachers (Stanković 2011). Therefore, this part of the system of PD has proved itself inadequately efficient, which is also the opinion of the educators themselves (Stanković et al. 2012).

Acknowledgment of the opinions of the educators on the innovation of PD leads to an increase of the participation of boarding school employees in bringing decisions which directly affect them, which, in turn, reduces the risk of the feeling that these decisions have been forced on them. In addition, by acknowledging the opinions of direct participants in educational work, the quality of the suggested measures is improved because they become more realistic and applicable in practice (Stanković et al. 2012).

METHODOLOGICAL PART OF THE RESEARCH

The research focus is the PD of boarding school teachers. *The research subjects* are boarding school teachers' attitudes towards PD. *The aim of the research* is the analysis of boarding school teachers' attitudes towards PD. From the said aim, these *research objectives* can be identified:

- Determining how boarding school teachers assess the effectiveness of PD for their professional gain;
- Determining how boarding school teachers assess the extensiveness of the forms of PD that they have participated in;
- Determining how boarding school teachers assess the criteria by which the contents of the Catalogue are kept up to date;
- Verifying the attitudes of boarding school teachers towards the need for individual plans for PD and personal aspirations for professional gain;
- Examining the attitudes towards the necessity for teams for PD in boarding schools;
- Examining the attitudes of boarding school teachers towards groups of standards and competencies and the self-evaluation of the competencies from those groups;
- Determining whether there is a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of boarding school teachers towards PD based on their gender, age and years of service in education.

Independent variables: gender, age, years of service in education.

Dependent variables: attitudes of boarding school teachers towards PD.

In accordance with the given aim and objectives of the research, a hypothesis can be formulated: boarding school teachers who work in boarding schools have a positive attitude towards PD. Within the primary hypothesis, based on the

objectives, specific hypotheses can be formulated: boarding school teachers have a positive attitude towards PD because they mostly assume:

- that it is useful for their professional gain;
- that the contents are not too extensive;
- that the topics are appropriate for the current problems in education;
- that it is important to have a personal plan for PD as well as funding, but that they do not aspire towards gaining the title of a pedagogical consultant or other higher titles;
- that in every boarding school there needs to be a team that plans PD;
- that the most important field of PD is the K3 field, in other words, the field in which the competencies for developing and supporting student's personality are developed;
- that statistically significant differences are expected regarding the attitudes of boarding school teachers towards PD depending on: gender, age, and years of service in education.

The level and type of data analysis: Frequencies and percentages will be used from the field of descriptive statistics. The Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test will be used from the field of statistical conclusion for the testing of the null hypothesis.

The research is based on the descriptive method. The boarding school teachers' attitudes are tested by the tool which is designed for the needs of the research, and also possesses the characteristics of surveying and the attitude scales. The examination was anonymous, and the subjects were picked through convenience sample, namely, it depended on willingness of the subjects to participate. The research sample is comprised of boarding school teachers from the listed boarding schools: Boarding schools in Jagodina, Kragujevac, Čuprija, Niš and "Brankovo kolo" boarding school in Novi Sad. Furthermore, the research sample also contained boarding school teachers that were employed in boarding schools that are under the supervision of the vocational schools: Agricultural-veterinarian school in Svilajnac, "Nikola Tesla" Technical school in Kostolac and the School for the musically talented in Čuprija.

The surveying was conducted in March 2019. The sample comprises 62 boarding school teachers and the graphic representation of the sample is based on the gender (Figure 1), age, and age of working in education.

Categorizing the data into three modalities and calculating the percentage resulted in the sample structure regarding the years of service in education (Figure 2) and the age of the subjects (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Sex of the subjects

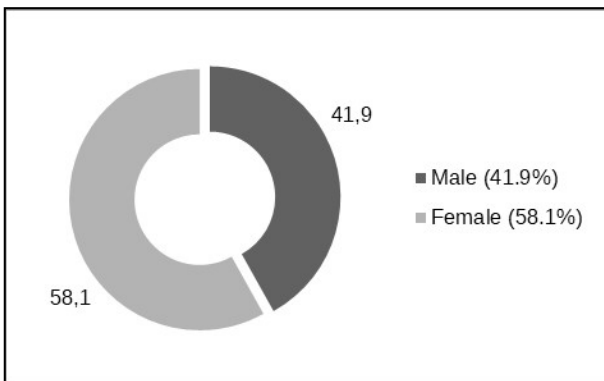


Figure 2. Age of working experience

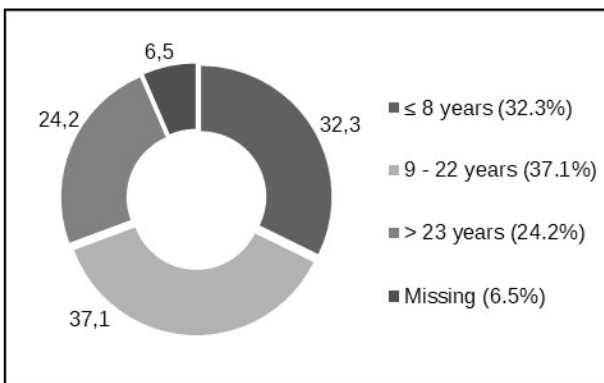
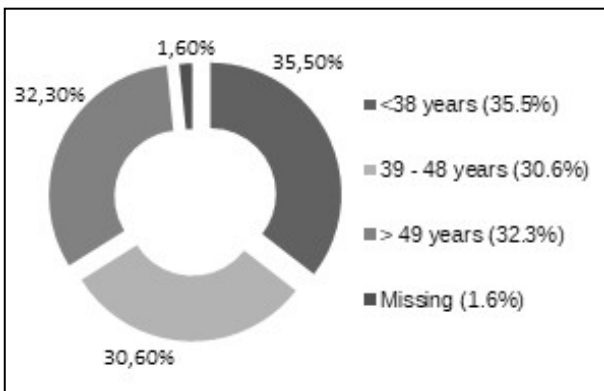


Figure 3. Age of subjects



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The results that are shown in Table 1 point out that more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the subjects recognized professional education as an important factor of their PD, which adheres to the primary hypothesis of this study, showing a positive attitude towards PD. However, there are a number of boarding school teachers who mostly agree (29%). The attitudes of the subjects towards the extensiveness of the topics are divided into three (almost equal) parts, namely into teachers who indicate that the topics are too extensive (25.8% + 11.3%), teachers who assess the extensiveness as appropriate (27.4% + 1.6%) and e teachers who are indecisive (33.9%).

Table 1. I think that PD is useful for my professional gain

	f	%
I strongly agree	43	69.4
I agree	18	29.0
I neither agree nor disagree	1	1.6
Total	62	100.0

Table 2. Topics of the attended form professional training is extensive

	f	%
I strongly agree	7	11.3
I agree	16	25.8
I neither agree nor disagree	21	33.9
I disagree	17	27.4
I strongly disagree	1	1.6
Total	62	100.0

Table 3 represents the answers of the boarding school teachers about the contents of the Catalogue. The distribution of the answers shows that a large number of boarding school teachers recognized that the topics from the Catalog are up to date with the current problems of education (32.3% + 50%).

Table 3. The Catalog of PD programs is appropriate for the current problems in education

	f	%
I strongly agree	20	32.3
I agree	31	50.0
I neither agree nor disagree	6	9.7
I disagree	3	4.8
I strongly disagree	2	3.2
Total	62	100.0

Table 4. The carried out form of professional education are useful

	f	%
I strongly agree	30	48.4
I agree	23	37.1
I neither agree nor disagree	6	9.7
I disagree	3	4.8
Total	62	100.0

The results in Table 4 point out that more than half of the subjects thought that PD is *useful* (48.4% + 37.1%) for their professional gain, which again confirms the primary hypothesis.

Table 5. There is a need for an individual PD plan education are useful

	f	%
I strongly agree	19	30.6
I agree	25	40.3
I neither agree nor disagree	13	21.0
I disagree	3	4.8
I strongly disagree	2	3.2
Total	62	100.0

Table 6. A system for stimulating the boarding school teachers for permanent PDs should exist

	f	%
I strongly agree	37	59.7
I agree	17	27.4
I neither agree nor disagree	5	8.1
I disagree	2	3.2
I strongly disagree	1	1.6
Total	62	100.0

The majority of boarding school teachers (30.6% + 40.3%) showed a positive attitude to having an individual PD plan. However, a significant number of boarding school teachers (almost 1/3 of the subjects) had an undecided or negative attitude towards an individual plan for PD (Table 5). Nevertheless, there was no disagreement on the fact that it is necessary to stimulate permanent PD in boarding school teachers in terms of paid leave and improvements in expertise. Over 85% of the answers on this matter are positive (Table 6).

Table 7. I strive towards PD and knowledge acquisition

	f	%
I strongly agree	28	45.2
I agree	17	27.4
I neither agree nor disagree	10	16.1
I disagree	5	8.1
I strongly disagree	2	3.2
Total	62	100.0

Table 8. There should be a professional development team in a boarding school

	f	%
I strongly agree	41	66.1
I agree	14	22.6
I neither agree nor disagree	4	6.5
I disagree	2	3.2
I strongly disagree	1	1.6
Total	62	100.0

Of course, there are differentiating opinions on the question of whether boarding school teachers strive towards acquiring professional titles (pedagogical consultant, independent pedagogical consultant, and others). Positive attitudes are not that reassuring when it comes to this question. In addition, the percentage of boarding school teachers who are indecisive and show a negative attitude towards acquiring professional titles should not be easily disregarded. Therefore, the hypothesis that boarding school teachers do not strive towards acquiring professional titles is somewhat confirmed (Table 7). The attitudes of boarding school teachers towards the statement that in every boarding school there should be a team for PD planning are shown in Table 8. More than 2/3 of subjects agreed with this deduction, which confirms the primary hypothesis.

Table 9. Frequency of answers about the groups of competencies

	K1	K2	K3	K4	Missing	Σ
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
To which group of standards would you like your next training to belong?	8 (12.9%)	6 (9.7%)	26 (41.9%)	20 (32.3%)	2 (3.2%)	
To which group of standards did the previous training you attended belong?	6 (9.7%)	9 (14.5%)	12 (19.4%)	32 (51.6%)	3 (4.8%)	
Which group of competencies do you think that you should improve in your work?	7 (11.3%)	10 (16.1%)	26 (41.9%)	16 (25.8%)	3 (4.8%)	
Which group of competencies do you believe that you have developed the most?	8 (12.9%)	10 (16.1%)	23 (37.1%)	19 (30.6%)	2 (3.2%)	
						62 (100)

When considering the attitudes of the subjects towards the groups of competencies that are offered in the framework of PD, we can conclude that most of the answers belong to the K3 and K4 categories, the groups of competencies which develop skills for the support of the student's persona, as well as communication and collaboration. There is an attitude among the subjects that these groups develop these skills most. However, they also assume that these categories need to be improved. In accordance with that, the subjects provide the answers to the question of which training to participate in next (Table 9). Answers like this confirm the primary hypothesis, which is expected, based on the job nature, i.e. providing support to students during their time spent in the boarding schools, which is very dynamic if we take into consideration the development period that the students are going through at that moment and the circumstance of them being away from their home. The type of support is carried out through different sorts of conversations, sections, and activities. Thus, the answers are not surprising regarding these two categories (Table 10).

Table 10. Ranking the groups of competencies

	K1	K2	K3	K4	Missing	Σ
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
To which group of standards would you like your next training to belong?	8 (12.9%)	6 (9.7%)	26 (41.9%)	20 (32.3%)	2 (3.2%)	
To which group of standards did the previous training you attended belong?	6 (9.7%)	9 (14.5%)	12 (19.4%)	32 (51.6%)	3 (4.8%)	
Which group of competencies do you think that you should improve in your work?	7 (11.3%)	10 (16.1%)	26 (41.9%)	16 (25.8%)	3 (4.8%)	62 (100)
Which group of competencies do you believe that you have developed the most?	8 (12.9%)	10 (16.1%)	23 (37.1%)	19 (30.6%)	2 (3.2%)	

K1 – Competencies for instruction, subjects and teaching methodology;

K2 – Competencies for teaching and learning;

K3 – Competencies for supporting the students persona;

K4 – Competencies for communication and collaboration.

When an opinion on how to rank the groups of competencies, according to the personal importance for the boarding school teachers, was asked of them, the answers were compatible with the answers to the previous questions. In other words, the largest distribution can be found among the competency groups labeled K3 and K4, which says that they consider these two categories as the most important ones for their professional work (Table 11).

Table 11. Ranking the groups of competencies

	K1	K2	K3	K4
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
Very important	8 (12.9%)	8 (12.9%)	32 (51.6%)	14 (22.6%)
Important	1 (1.6%)	9 (14.5%)	20 (32.3%)	32 (51.6%)
Partially important	3 (4.8%)	42 (67.7%)	5 (8.1%)	12 (19.4%)
Unimportant	50 (80.6%)	3 (4.8%)	5 (8.1%)	4 (6.5%)
Total	62 (100)	62 (100)	62 (100)	62 (100)

K1 – Competencies for instruction, subjects and teaching methodology;
 K2 - Competencies for teaching and learning;
 K3 - Competencies for supporting the students persona;
 K4 - Competencies for communication and collaboration.

The Kruskal–Wallis test (Table 12) determined that there is a statistically significant difference regarding two attitudes towards the topic extensiveness of the attended PD courses among the boarding school teachers, according to their years of service, which have been categorized into three groups (Figure 2). Additional testing with the Mann–Whitney U test found statistically significant differences in terms of said attitudes between the boarding school teachers who had spent 8 or less years in service and the ones who had spent between 9 and 22 years in service, as well as between the ones who had spent 8 or less years in service and the ones who had spent 23 or more years in service (Table 13). The differences were proven to be statistically significant even after the Bonferroni correction ($p = 0.05/3 = 0.017$).

Table 12. Results of Kruskal–Wallis test

Topics of the attended form professional training is extensive	
Chi-Square	12.898
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.002

Table 13. Results of Mann–Whitney U test

Topics of the attended form professional training is extensive	Godine rada	
	≤ 8 i 9 – 22	≤ 8 i 23+
Mann-Whitney U	126.000	55.000
Wilcoxon W	402.000	175.000
Z	-2.669	-3.300
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.001

If the distribution of the median according to years in service of the subjects, with regard to the fact that the 1 rank signified the most important element dur-

ing the ranking, it can be concluded that the statistically significant difference is larger and that the scale of influence increases in compliance with the difference between the years in service of the subjects. Thus, the subjects who had spent 23 or more years in service showed an affirmative attitude towards the PD topics being extensive (Table 14).

Table 14. View arithmetic meanings, standard deviation, medians in relation to work experience

Categories of work experience			Σ
$r = \frac{z}{\sqrt{N}}$	≤ 8 i 9–22	$\frac{-2.669}{\sqrt{43}}$	-0,41
	≤ 8 i 23+	$\frac{-3.300}{\sqrt{35}}$	-0,56

Table 15. The size of the influence by the categories of work experience

Topics of the attended form professional training is extensive				
Years of working	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Median
≤ 8	20	3.4000	.99472	4.0000
9–22	23	2.6522	.93462	3.0000
23+	15	2.3333	.72375	2.0000
Total	58	2.8276	.99363	3.0000

The value of the scale of influence between the category of boarding school teachers with up to 8 years in service and the ones between 9 and 22 years in service is $r = 0,41$. This, according to Cohen's criteria (Cohen 1988: 22), assumes the mid-level of influence with the tendency to a higher level. Between the two categories, boarding school teachers who had spent up to 8 years in service and the ones who had spent 23 or more years in service, the value is $r = 0,56$, which, according to the same criteria, represents a large influence (Table 15).

CONCLUSION

The PD of boarding school teachers is a complex process in which the fulfillment of professional educational needs of direct factors and the conductors of education in boarding schools needs to be achieved while still adhering to standards that were established by the supervising ministry and all the other circumstances that directly or indirectly affect the PD of every educator. This research aimed

to examine the boarding school teachers' attitudes towards PD, their tendencies towards the process, as well as what their position is in the system of PD. Namely, whether they are recognized in the system of PD according to the topics that are present in the Catalogue, and if these topics are directly related to their field of educational work.

The results indicate that boarding school teachers generally have positive opinions towards PD in terms of improving the activities, methods, and topics of the attended forms of PD. Boarding school teachers show positive attitudes towards PD teams being present in every boarding school. Nevertheless, they have differentiating opinions on their personal PD plans and tendencies. The boarding school teachers are mainly interested in the PD from the categories which are related to support to the development of the students' persona, and the category which develops communication and collaboration skills. Moreover, they estimate these categories to be the most developed categories in their work, which was expected, based on the characteristics of the boarding school teacher profession.

There is a statistically significant difference regarding the attitude towards the extensiveness of the topics of the attended PD programs between the boarding school teachers who have spent a different amount of years in service, namely, between those who have spent up to 8 years in service and the ones who have spent between 9 and 22 years in service, as well as between the those who have spent up to 8 years in service and the ones who have spent 23 or more years in service. Besides that, the scale of influence increases with an increase of the difference between the years in service of boarding school teachers. Ergo, boarding school teachers with 23 or more years spent in service have an attitude that the topics of the PD programs are extensive. Thus, it can be concluded that the increase of the years spent in service affects the boarding school teachers' attitudes towards the extensiveness of the topics of the PD programs. Based on the attitudes of the boarding school teachers who have spent a large number of years in service, a few assumptions that require further research can be made:

- Boarding school teachers who have spent more than 23 years in service possess substantial experience. However, the topics that can be found in the Catalogue for PD are familiar to them and based on that, they deem the topics to be extensive.
- Boarding school teachers who have spent a large number of years in service recognize the diversity of knowledge and skills that are necessary for working as a boarding school teacher, and in the offer for PD, most of the topics were processed during one segment. Therefore, they are considered extensive in terms of covering the different aspects that are important for the profession. In other words, they should be divided into different forms and topics of PD for the highest processing quality because of their importance.

Among the instructions regarding PD, it is necessary to indicate that there are few studies both theoretical and empirical that deal with boarding school education, both from the aspect of teachers and students. This implies that it is of great importance to direct the focus of researchers to this education segment, which remains scientifically “unexplored”, yet is indeed a part of the secondary school education system.

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СТРУЧНО УСАВРШАВАЊЕ ВАСПИТАЧА У ДОМОВИМА НАКОН ИНИЦИЈАЛНОГ ОБРАЗОВАЊА

Резиме: Савремено друштво, које је под великим утицајем научно-технолошког развоја, захтева другачији приступ стицању знања, његовом обиму и намени. Непрестано расте потреба за усаглашавањем садржаја образовања са савременим достигнућима науке. Како би просветни радници испунили ове образовне захтеве, неопходно је да стално усавршавају своје професионалне компетенције и проширују област свог деловања, да постану иницијатори, носиоци и организатори развојних процеса и промена у образовању.

Иницијално образовање не може адекватно да одговори свакодневним друштвеним променама и, имајући у виду ту чињеницу, не може да припреми појединца за квалитетан рад. Једно од решења јесте перманентно (доживотно) учење, стално професионално усавршавање наставника, које почиње у оквиру иницијалног обра-

зовања и наставља се развојем стручног знања и способности кроз разне облике стручног усавршавања.

У оквиру групе просветних радника, поред васпитача који раде у предшколским установама, учитеља и наставника, по одређеним задацима у оквиру васпитно-образовног рада издвајају се и васпитачи који раде у домовима ученика. Без обзира на то што ову групу чини мањи број просветних радника у односу на остале групе, подједнако је важно да се и васпитачи у домовима ученика стручно усавршавају. У теоријском делу рада анализирамо проблем стручног усавршавања, док се у емпиријском делу бавимо испитивањем ставова васпитача који раде у домовима ученика према њиховом стручном усавршавању.

Кључне речи: стручно усавршавање, васпитачи у домовима, дом ученика.