

Summary

Opportunities and challenges of education oriented towards the development of students' competencies

Alena Letina
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Croatia

This paper attempts to provide overview of the opportunities and challenges of education oriented towards the development of students' competencies. Based on a description of attributes of contemporary society, where educational policies and their systems are become focused to the development of students' competencies, and considering the complexity of this concept and attempts of its determination in the context of education, author considers fundamental characteristics of education and curriculum oriented towards the development of students' competencies, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of this approach to education. Based on a review of literature on the subject of competencies in education and meta-analysis of previous papers, the author finds that the holistic approach to competencies, wherein they are defined as multidimensional and transferral quality of action, is the most suitable for the context of primary and compulsory education, and represents a unique potential to raise its quality. The challenges of this approach and its implementation in Croatian educational context is a complex duty for the upcoming curriculum reform. The main goal should be achievement of positive characteristics and potential that this approach offers, particularly in terms of its contribution to lifelong learning and education.

Keywords: competence, curriculum, curriculum reform, holistic approach, lifelong learning.