

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND STRATEGIC ORIENTATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION - CASES OF CROATIA AND BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA*

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Abstract. *The main purpose of this paper is to empirically examine the current state of higher education's social responsibility activities, their strategic orientations and linkages between them. A survey was conducted among Croatian and Bosnia and Herzegovina's students. The results are based on 219 answers from Croatia and 172 answers from Bosnia and Herzegovina students. Regarding social responsibility, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are countries that share similar pattern and where social concern is in the forefront, followed by concern for ethical working and behaviour and concern for the natural environment, while the least important is concern for economic results. Regarding strategic orientation, the pattern differs between countries, although orientation towards social goals*

is in the forefront. Regarding the linkage between social responsibility and strategic orientation, the concern for economic results is the only significant and dominant one, while other dimensions do not have a significant impact on strategic orientation. Among controls, the level of study is a significant variable as master students perceive the flexibility of education and organizations orientation towards social goals less favourably. The findings will serve higher education organizations for rethinking their strategies and actions for a better response to the environmental and societal challenges, on which higher education can base its future actions.

Key words: *Higher Education, Social Responsibility, Strategic Orientation, International Comparison.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature offers a plethora of theoretical and empirical papers about corporate social responsibility (CSR), social responsibility (SR) (Baumgartner & Ebner, 2010; Furrer et al., 2010), and sustainability (Beckerman,

1994; Clayton & Radcliffe, 1996). The majority of papers in this area focuses on business organizations, while only in the last decade has the focus also been intensively directed to the SR issues in higher education (HE) (Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015;

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Cebrián, 2016). HE organizations have a crucial role in creating a sustainable future as they educate many of the individuals who will manage and teach in our society in the future (Wright & Wilton, 2012).

Due to a constant need to improve social responsibility, there has been a substantial need for research in SR of higher education organizations. The findings about the current state of SR are the key starting point for improving SR of HE. This resulted in numerous articles on this subject (Eagle et al., 2015; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015; Shephard et al., 2015). Based on the available literature review we can argue that SR in HE has been investigated mainly through examining institutional approaches, curricula content or students' and teachers' perceptions of sustainability in practice (Viegas et al., 2016). A lot of recent papers are based on case studies (Gosselin et al., 2013; Larrán Jorge et al., 2016; Miller, 2016) developing models for sustainable HE (Dima et al., 2013; Dyer & Dyer, 2015; Warwick, 2016) or on curricula renewal (Dmochowski et al., 2016). The majority of implementations of sustainability programmes (McNamara, 2010; Larrán Jorge et al., 2016) outlined through best practices (Lourdell et al., 2007; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015; Vagnoni and Cavicchi, 2015; Warwick, 2016) originated in the well-developed part of the world, while in transformational societies around the globe, issues dealing with SR of HE are given less attention.

There is already considerable evidence from universities that have embarked on the path to sustainability (McNamara, 2010; Waheed et al., 2011), but their path is based on general assumptions of what actions and forms social responsibility should have. For instance, there are several attempts, which include students sample for

examining SR (Onur et al., 2012; Zeegers & Clark, 2014). These studies provide a starting point for improving SR, but their findings are very general. Thus, despite some evidences, there is shortage of studies examining actual states of social responsibility in higher education, which will comprehensively reflect the state of SR according to the three pillars of SR, namely natural, social and economic ones (Elkington, 2004) and provide a fertile ground for future development of SR in HE organizations.

In line with findings that SR actions become a part of organization's strategy (Baumgartner & Ebner, 2010; Foote et al., 2010; Daft, 2015) and calls for researching strategy in HE organizations (Gibbs & Murphy, 2009; Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016), a comprehensive approach to improve SR of HE thus needs to include a focus on the current state of HE and strategic orientation, in order to determine the role of SR in HE. Despite limited evidence on the importance of "strategic issues" in HE (Bugandwa Mungu Akonkwa, 2009; Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016), there are no studies that show the linkages between strategic orientation of HE and SR. Not knowing these linkages impedes possible benefits of using SR strategies and their influence on HE strategic orientation.

With this paper we empirically examine the state of SR in HE organizations, the current state of HE strategic orientation and linkages between both phenomena in two selected economies. The increased striving for improving SR of HE has highlighted the lack of knowledge about the actual state of SR actions, which is the key foundation for determining future actions regarding increasing SR of HE and in turn all key stakeholders. Having this knowledge will enable HE organizations to formulate future

HE strategies more accurately, which will also embed goals of SR, in order to act and move faster than competitors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of theory, research and practice related to social responsibility began in the mid-20th century (Carroll, 1999; Elkington, 2004). Since the 1970s, the academic and business communities have been devoting significant attention to these issues. The causes are the growing influence (power) of corporations on human everyday life, ecological problems, financial crises, widespread poverty, unemployment, etc. (Dahlsrud, 2008; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). A more responsible use of power by the business world is expected, whereby SR is introduced as a useful framework for organizational behaviour (Turker, 2009).

There are numerous definitions of corporate social responsibility (Carroll, 1999; Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). In his meta-analysis of the 37 definitions published in the scientific literature between 1980 and 2003, Dahlsrud (2008) finds a multitude of CSR definitions that are analytically unproblematic, since there is a certain correlation among them. However, a mutual understanding among business actors about the principles, tools and indicators of CSR is important in order for creative efforts to be successful (Gallardo-Vazquez & Sanchez-Hernandez, 2002). CSR can be different between cultures and in different spatial-temporal contexts. It is a reflection of “the social construction of reality”, i.e. the human negotiation (Berger & Luckmann, 1992; Dahlsrud, 2008). Regardless of the various possibilities of CSR operationalization, it is essentially the balancing of the growing economy with the possibilities of environment and the needs of community that matters, with the aim of raising

the quality of life of present and future generations (Zwickle et al., 2014).

The number of CSR reports has increased in recent decades. In 1995, only 35% of the world's largest companies published such reports. In 2005, this was done by 65% and in 2013 by 93% (Kolodinsky et al., 2010; Ceulemans et al., 2015). CSR becomes a source of competition and a market advantage. Company reputation depends on respecting the needs of all the individuals affected by the business, which may have a repercussion on the organization (Gallardo-Vazquez & Sanchez-Hernandez, 2002). Stakeholders are not just consumers and shareholders, but also suppliers, current and potential employees, investors and others. People want to do business with responsible companies, so reputation becomes an intangible resource that affects economic and financial results (Sen et al., 2006; Blajer-Gołębiewska, 2014).

Numerous research points out the link between social responsibility and the desirable behaviour of stakeholders. Nevertheless, the results increasingly show that the effect may be neutral and even negative as well (Waddock and Graves, 1997; Sen et al., 2006). Such results stem from an unsuccessful business strategy. Stakeholders should be really familiar with the activities of the SR business (as opposed to respondents in surveys whose knowledge is often superficial and whose credibility is endangered by socially desirable responses). CSR should have a visible positive impact in the community (Deshpande, 1997; Barkay, 2013).

Going beyond “business sphere” and turning to higher education, HE should promote sustainability for various reasons. Universities educate prospective leaders, experts and employers. They need to convey professional knowledge, but also awareness of the consequences of acting on others (Kolodinsky

et al., 2010). By studying sustainability issues, HE contributes to innovation and the implementation of sustainable solutions. Through daily functioning of campuses, universities can be an example of good practice for the rest of society (energy use, waste management, etc.) (Wright & Wilton, 2012). Practicing sustainability, students get used to such actions, which is important because young people are liable to shaping feelings, attitudes and behaviours (Zwickle et al., 2014; Eagle et al., 2015).

There are numerous principles for researching sustainable solutions and teaching these issues at the HE level. It is necessary to promote inter- and multi- disciplinary collaboration between universities, other organizations and the community due to a holistic recognition of the dimensions of problems as well as opportunities and positive consequences of their solution (Eisen & Barlett, 2006; Warwick, 2016). This way, the potential for creative action increases, which can be crucial. Because of the high social dynamics, we do not know what risks of sustainability we will encounter in the future.

Although sustainability and SR education are increasingly frequent at universities, there is a lack of systematics in the approach. Universities may be concerned about these issues in general, but still reluctantly take concrete steps towards social responsibility. Matten and Moon (2004) pointed out that two-thirds of business schools in Europe provide some sort of education on SR, based on teachers' individual initiatives. According to Ceulemans et al. (2015), only 33 reports on SR were submitted by universities to the *GRI Disclosure Database* by 2012, which included 3,546 reports at the time. The introduction of rankings that measure the implementation of SR among universities, and not just the quality of education and research, is

encouraging. Ten years ago, the Sustainable Endowment Institute started such a ranking practice in the US and Canada (Waheed et al., 2011).

The concern for SR is relatively new within higher education, as confirmed by research results among students. It will take time for them to become a part of practice. Students from different parts of the world, from Australia, across European countries to the United States and Canada, consider SR to be desirable in principle. However, their knowledge on these topics is weak, which is manifested by recognizing or overestimating ecological goals in relation to the economic and social ones, which are often described in contrast to environmental conservation (Kagawa, 2007; Zeegers & Clark, 2014; Eagle et al., 2015).

Research on SR business in the post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe is rare in general (Kundid Novokmet & Bilić, 2016; Potocan et al., 2016). Such studies are even less represented when it comes to higher education (Grabara et al., 2016). This also applies to the social context of our study – Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) and Croatia and their HE. Nevertheless, the widespread use of corruption in Bosnian HE (Kurtić, 2012), as well as students' negative and neutral attitudes on the personal and social benefits of education (Alfirević et al., 2017), do not encourage much in terms of the implementation of SR. By conducting this research, we strived to gain insight into students' attitudes towards SR of HE in the studied area. The results can be useful to educational planners at all levels because they report what has been achieved and suggest what should be done next (Cordano et al., 2010; Kolodinsky et al., 2010).

In line with findings that SR actions become a part of organization's strategy (Baumgartner & Ebner, 2010; Foote et al.,

2010; Daft, 2015), there is also a need to take into consideration the strategic orientation of HE organizations. There is very limited evidence on this issue. For instance, Pucciarelli and Kaplan (2016) outline that HE institutions need an appropriate strategy in order to be able to cope with complex and competitive market place. Bugandwa Mungu Akonkwa (2009) highlights the problem on the use of the market orientation strategy in HE and suggests how to improve the usability of marketing concepts in HE.

The paper provides answers to the following research questions: (1) what is the current state of SR of HE in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as perceived by students?, (2) what is the current state of strategic orientation of HE in Croatia and B&H as perceived by students? and (3) what are the associations between strategic orientation of HE and dimensions of SR of HE in Croatia and B&H?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and procedure

The sample has been selected using the non-probabilistic approach. In both countries, the survey was conducted in the academic year 2016/2017 and included students from all years, fields of study and levels of study at the surveyed HE institutions. The survey was conducted during classes by using the publicly available electronic survey system. All students participated voluntarily.

The Croatian sample consists of answers provided by 214 students. Although the survey included students from different HE institutions in Croatia, the majority are from the Faculty of Economics in Split (86%). From B&H, we obtained 172 answers from students, where the majority

of answers were from students studying at the University of Banja Luka – Faculty of Economics (93.2%). Detailed sample characteristics are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents.

	Croatia (N = 219)	Bosnia and Herzegovina (N = 177)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	30.4 %	27.7 %
Female	69.6 %	72.3 %
<i>Level of study</i>		
Bachelor – BSC	85.5 %	44.1 %
Master – MSC	4.7%	54.8%
Doctorate - PHD	6.5%	0.6%
Students who completed the master programme and do not wish to continue their studies	3.2%	0.6%

3.2. Instrument used

Questionnaire for this survey was composed from different questionnaires and consists of five parts. The first part includes a list of values from Schwartz's value survey (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz et al., 2012). In the second part there are 25 items that measure different aspects of higher education SR and related SR behaviour (Reynaud et al., 2007; Furrer et al., 2010; Ralston et al., 2014). The third part includes 18 statements of possible strategic orientation of HE organizations. The fourth part includes statements about the importance of HE in the society and expectations about the outcomes of the education. The last part includes demographic questions as used in studies including samples of students (Nedelko et al., 2011; Onur et al., 2012). For this paper, we consider data obtained from the second and third part of the survey, as well as those from the demographic part of the survey.

3.3. Measures

Statements about social responsibility aspects express possible activities that organizations can engage in. Survey participants express their views on 25 statements, regarding different duties of HE organizations regarding SR. For each statement, a 9-point scale is used, ranging from 1 – strongly agree to 9 – strongly disagree. Based on exploratory factorial analysis (KMO = 0.975; sig. = .000), using varimax rotation and principal extraction of the components, we created four variables, as outlined below.

Concern for social environment is accurately and reliably represented by four items. Sample item is – I believe it is the duty of an organization to allocate some of organizational resources to philanthropic activities. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.831.

Concern for natural environment is accurately and reliably represented by six items. Sample item is – I believe it is the duty of an organization to devote resources to environmental protection even when economic results are threatened. Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.864.

Concern for economic results is accurately and reliably represented by four items. Sample item is – I believe it is the duty of an organization to worry first and foremost about maximizing profits. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.774.

Concern for ethical working and behaviour is accurately and reliably represented by six items. Sample item is – I believe it is the duty of an organization to always follow the principles defined by the regulatory system. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.826.

Turning next to the strategic orientation of HE organizations, we considered

18 statements about the possible strategic orientation of HE organizations. Survey respondents expressed their opinion about each of the 18 statements rated on a 5-point scale used, ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree. Based on exploratory factorial analysis (KMO = 0.955, sig. = .000), using varimax rotation and principal extraction of the component, we created five variables.

Quality of education is accurately and reliably represented by three items. Sample item is - HE is oriented on creation of knowledge as a building block of knowledge society. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.820.

Fostering culture of students is accurately and reliably represented by three items. Sample item is - HE is oriented on increasing solidarity of students. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.828.

Fostering culture of HE organizations is accurately and reliably represented by three items. Sample item is - HE is oriented on fostering innovative organizational climate. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.820.

Social goals of education is accurately and reliably represented by five items. Sample item is - HE is oriented on basic competencies for every member of the society. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.824.

Flexibility of education is accurately and reliably represented by four items. Sample item is - HE is oriented on adaptation of the content of education in line with the requirements of a modern society. Cronbach's α for this scale is 0.812.

3.4. Research design and analysis

Our analysis consists of the following steps:
- Step 1 – we outlined the elements of descriptive statistics and zero-ordered correlation for the variables of interest in

the correlation table, for the aggregated sample.

- Step 2 – we outlined the state of SR and strategic orientation of Croatian and Bosnian HE organizations. We reported mean values and the results of the independent sample t-test.
- Step 3 – hierarchical regression analysis was done to determine the impact of HE’s social responsibility on HE strategic orientation. Control variables – gender, level of study and financing of study entered first, followed by the four variables regarding SR of HE organizations. Strategic orientation of HE, as the dependent variable, is considered with five

constructs; we provide five repetitions of analysis, since we used linear regression analysis.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics

Mean values, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations between variables of the interest for the aggregated sample of Croatia and B&H are shown in Table 2.

Correlations between variables reveal significant importance of country in the results and indicate the need to examine the state of SR, strategic orientation of HE and

Table 2: Means, standard deviations, and correlations.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Gender	1.71	.455	1											
2. Level of study	1.49	.947	0.049	1										
3. Funding	1.80	.400	-0.010	-0.106*	1									
4. Country	1.44	.497	0.036	0.088	0.024	1								
5. Social concerns	3.7577	.86210	0.016	0.173*	-0.060	0.291**	1							
6. Natural concerns	3.4642	.80684	-0.002	0.097	-0.036	0.189**	0.767**	1						
7. Economic concerns	2.6771	.89593	-0.170*	-0.137*	0.087	-0.067	0.218**	0.318**	1					
8. Ethical behaviour	3.5431	.77528	-0.022	0.100*	-0.014	0.198**	0.784**	0.767**	0.289**	1				
9. Quality of HE	3.1449	.99258	-0.003	-0.126*	-0.017	-0.211**	0.050	0.109*	0.260**	0.075	1			
10. Culture – students	3.1807	.94085	0.024	-0.123*	-0.061	-0.163*	0.142*	0.183**	0.234*	0.138*	0.790**	1		
11. Culture of HE	3.2225	.89678	0.040	-0.140*	-0.063	-0.096	0.102*	0.193**	0.199**	0.158*	0.723**	0.674**	1	
12. Social goals	3.4343	.83276	0.013	-0.148*	-0.063	-0.144**	0.103*	0.147*	0.177**	0.155*	0.698**	0.698**	0.723**	1
13. Flexibility of HE	3.2577	.86117	-0.040	-0.194**	-0.091	-0.200**	0.039	0.108*	0.197**	0.115*	0.753**	0.719**	0.715**	0.766**

N=391, aggregated data for Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Correlations are significant at the 0.001 level; *Correlations are significant at the 0.05 level

linkages between SR and strategic orientation of HE separately for Croatia and B&H.

4.2. Social responsibility of HE organizations in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

The results on the current state of SR of HE in Croatia and B&H, as perceived by students are outlined in Table 3.

The results of t-test indicate several significant differences in the level of SR of HE organizations between Croatian and Bosnian HE organizations. Both samples show similarity in terms of SR aspects hierarchy, and attribution of the lowest importance to the concern for economic results.

4.3. Strategic orientation of HE organizations in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina

The results on the current state of strategic orientation of HE organizations in Croatia and B&H as perceived by students are outlined in Table 4.

The results of t-test reveal several significant differences in strategic orientation of HE between Croatia and B&H. It is interesting that, on average, Croatian HE organizations emphasize higher importance for each of the five outlined strategic orientations than B&H.

4.4. The impact of social responsibility of HE organizations on strategic orientation of HE organizations in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Next, we examined the impact of SR of HE on strategic orientation of HE organizations. Accordingly, we examined the impact of social concern, concern for natural environment, economic concern and ethical behaviour on (1) the quality of HE education (see Table 5); (2) fostering culture of students (see table 6); (3) fostering culture of HE organizations (see table 7); (4) social goals of HE (see table 8); and (5) flexibility of the HE organization (see table 9).

For the Croatian sample, ANOVA results reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on quality of education, $F(3.213) = 1.896, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR reveals their significant association with the quality of education of HE organizations, $F(7.209) = 3.235, p < 0.05$. The results for B&H reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on the quality of education, $F(3.166) = 0.427, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR reveals their significant association with the quality of education, $F(7.162) = 2.393, p < 0.05$.

The ANOVA results for Croatian sample show that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on fostering culture of students, $F(3,213) = 1.871, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR reveals their significant association with fostering culture of students, $F(7.209) = 4.577, p < 0.05$. The results for B&H reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on fostering culture of students, $F(3.166) = 1.423, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR also reveal their non-significant association with fostering culture of students, $F(7.162) = 2.012, p > 0.05$.

The ANOVA results for Croatian sample reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on fostering culture of HE organizations, $F(3.213) = 2.246, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR reveals their significant association with fostering culture of HE organizations, $F(7.209) = 3.648, p < 0.05$. The results for B&H reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on fostering culture of HE organizations, $F(3.166) = 1.243, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR reveals their significant association with fostering culture of HE organizations, $F(7.162) = 2.264, p < 0.05$.

Table 3: T-test results for differences in SR of HE in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

SR aspect		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	sig.
1. Social concerns	Croatia	219	3.5354	.94192	-6.271	382.745	.000
	B&H	172	4.0407	.64816			
2. Natural concerns	Croatia	219	3.3295	.87210	-3.900	388.983	.000
	B&H	172	3.6357	.67994			
3. Economic concerns	Croatia	219	2.7306	1.01334	1.388	384.987	.166
	B&H	172	2.6090	.71643			
4. Ethical behaviours	Croatia	219	3.4072	.86853	-4.162	382.514	.000
	B&H	172	3.7161	.59616			

Table 4: T-test results for differences in strategic orientation of HE institutions in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

SR aspect		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	sig.
1. Quality of HE	Croatia	219	3.3303	.90698	4.184	339.274	.000
	B&H	172	2.9089	1.04796			
2. Culture of students	Croatia	219	3.3166	.88838	3.261	389	.001
	B&H	172	3.0078	.97929			
3. Culture of HE	Croatia	219	3.2983	.92109	1.893	389	.059
	B&H	172	3.1260	.85780			
4. Social goals	Croatia	219	3.5406	.80134	2.876	389	.004
	B&H	172	3.2988	.85443			
5. Flexibility of HE	Croatia	219	3.4098	.80539	4.018	389	.000
	B&H	172	3.0640	.89278			

Table 5: Hierarchical regression analysis of HE SR concerns on achieving quality of education in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Model	R Square		β		t		Sig.	
	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H
1. Control variables	0.026	0.008						
1. Gender			.061	.026	.897	.340	.371	.735
2. Level of study			-.134	-.045	-1.892	-.583	.060	.561
3. Funding			-.098	.026	-1.460	.347	.146	.729
2. SR of HE	0.098	0.094						
1. Social concern			-.009	.104	-.070	1.005	.944	.316
2. Natural concern			.013	.103	.096	1.053	.924	.294
3. Economic concern			.228	.257	2.879	3.355	.004	.001
4. Ethics			.077	-.036	.544	-.368	.587	.714

Table 6: Hierarchical regression analysis of HE SR concerns on fostering culture of students in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Model	R Square		β		t		Sig.	
	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H
1. Control variables	0.026	0.025						
1. Gender			.005	.132	.068	1.710	.946	.089
2. Level of study			-.155	-.026	-2.227	-.341	.027	.733
3. Funding			-.078	-.069	-1.184	-.899	.238	.370
2. SR of HE	0.133	0.080						
1. Social concern			.061	.165	.463	1.584	.644	.115
2. Natural concern			.047	.104	.345	1.052	.730	.294
3. Economic concern			.192	.149	2.478	1.925	.014	.056
4. Ethics			.099	-.096	.719	-.985	.473	.326

Table 7: Hierarchical regression analysis of HE SR concerns on fostering culture of HE organizations in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Model	R Square		β		t		Sig.	
	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H
1. Control variables	0.031	0.022						
1. Gender			.072	.090	1.075	1.177	.284	.241
2. Level of study			-.156	-.066	-2.205	-.867	.029	.387
3. Funding			-.091	-.072	-1.367	-.950	.173	.343
2. SR of HE	0.109	0.089						
1. Social concern			-.173	.046	-1.305	.440	.193	.660
2. Natural concern			.171	.171	1.237	1.748	.218	.082
3. Economic concern			.146	.147	1.857	1.909	.065	.058
4. Ethics			.155	.029	1.104	.298	.271	.766

Table 8: Hierarchical regression analysis of HE SR concerns on HE organizations orientation towards social goals in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Model	R Square		β		t		Sig.	
	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H
1. Control variables	0.040	0.012						
1. Gender			.051	.036	.759	.463	.449	.644
2. Level of study			-.190	-.081	-2.695	-1.035	.008	.302
3. Funding			-.129	-.027	-1.941	-.353	.054	.724
2. SR of HE	0.116	0.048						
1. Social concern			.031	.009	.237	.081	.813	.936
2. Natural concern			-.088	.122	-.641	1.217	.522	.226
3. Economic concern			.156	.081	1.996	1.032	.047	.304
4. Ethics			.223	.068	1.603	.678	.110	.499

The ANOVA results for Croatian sample reveal that the entry of control variables yields a significant influence on HE organizations' orientation towards social goals, $F(3.213) = 2.926, p < 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR reveals their significant association with HE organizations' orientation towards social goals, $F(7.209) = 3.915, p < 0.001$. The results for B&H reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on HE organizations orientation towards social goals, $F(3.166) = 0.691, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR also reveals their significant association with HE organizations orientation towards social goals, $F(7.162) = 1.168, p > 0.05$.

Significant differences are related to the explanation power, since SR relatively well explains the orientation of Croatian HE organizations towards social goals, while in the case of B&H their explanatory power is relatively poor. Additionally, in terms of control variables, for the first time in our analysis, the level of study becomes significant. It reveals that students' level of study has a decisive role on perceiving the impact of HE's social responsibility on HE organization's orientation towards social goals by Croatian students.

Table 9: Hierarchical regression analysis of HE SR concerns on flexibility of HE organizations in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Model	R Square		β		t		Sig.	
	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H	CRO	B&H
1. Control variables	0.068	0.024						
1. Gender			.021	-.030	.307	-.383	.759	.702
2. Level of study			-.249	-.113	-3.552	-1.465	.000	.145
3. Funding			-.148	-.090	-2.240	-1.176	.026	.241
2. SR of HE	0.119	0.077						
1. Social concern			-.062	-.026	-.468	-.247	.641	.806
2. Natural concern			.057	.068	.414	.693	.679	.489
3. Economic concern			.086	.190	1.103	2.458	.271	.015
4. Ethics			.175	.102	1.254	1.037	.211	.301

The ANOVA results for Croatian sample reveal that the entry of control variables yields a significant influence on flexibility of HE organizations, $F(3.213) = 5.202, p < 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR also reveals their significant association with the flexibility of HE organizations, $F(7.209) = 4.048, p < 0.001$. The results for B&H reveal that the entry of control variables yields a non-significant influence on the flexibility of HE organizations, $F(3.166) = 1.384, p > 0.05$. The inclusion of four dimensions of SR also reveals their non-significant association with the flexibility of HE organizations, $F(7.162) = 1.922, p > 0.05$. Again, control variables – namely the level of study and financing of study, significantly influence the flexibility of education.

5. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this paper was to examine the state of SR and strategic orientation of HE organizations, as well as the linkages between HE concern for SR and strategic orientation of HE in Croatia and B&H. In both countries, the social concern among the SR aspects dominates, while within the frame of strategic orientation, the realization of social goals of education is in the forefront.

The current state of SR of HE – by putting concern for social goals in the forefront in both countries – reflects the primary aims of HE organizations – i.e. to create and provide knowledge to the society (Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015). Turning to the strategic orientation of HE, in both countries, the main focus is on achieving social goals of the society, which again outlines the main focus of HE on creating knowledge and providing education. Based on that it would be expected that achieving social goals within the SR frame and strategic focus of HE

organizations on achieving social goals will be positively correlated, but it is not.

The linkages between SR activities of HE organizations and five pillars of HE's strategic orientation reflect the following. First, the positive association between concern for economic results and quality of HE organizations may have two facets. First, the explanation can have its roots in the fact that heightened concern for economic results (Mišura et al., 2018) will also result in high(er) quality of HE. Second, these findings are surprising, since higher striving for improving the financial performance, may have a negative impact on achieving quality (Gibbs and Murphy, 2009).

Second, regarding fostering the culture of students and the culture of HE organizations, there is again a positive impact of concern for economic results on fostering culture of students and culture of HE ($p < 0.10$), while the other three dimensions have a non-significant influence on culture. This is surprising, since ethical work and behaviour significantly contribute to better culture of organizations (Potocan and Mulej, 2007; Potocan et al., 2008; Malbašić et al., 2014).

Third, when assessing the impact of SR activities of HE organizations on achieving social goals of education, the dominant effect belongs to the level of study (for Croatian sample), where it is evident that master students perceive HE organizations' orientation towards social goals significantly lower, than their bachelor counterparts. This recognition can have its roots in students' acquired knowledge, gained experiences, and/or students' changes in value priority during their personal development (Kagawa, 2007; Eagle et al., 2015), and may emphasize more the need for more social orientation of HE organizations nowadays, than some at early stages of their

study. Also, when assessing the impact of SR activities on the flexibility of HE education, the dominant effect belongs to the level of study (for Croatian sample), where it is evident that master students perceive lower flexibility of HE organizations than their bachelor counterparts. This may be again a consequence of gained experiences during the study process.

The dominant effect of striving for economic results on the one hand, and weak attribution of social concern, concern for natural environment and concern for ethical working and behaviour on strategic orientation of HE on the other hand, can have different origins. First, the concept of SR is well developed and implemented in business organizations (Furrer et al., 2010), while in educational organizations its role has been developing in the last decade (Matten & Moon, 2004; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015). This shows that HE organizations partially achieve some SR goals, while SR is not yet well integrated in their strategic orientation (Pucciarelli & Kaplan, 2016). Second, the increased need for the rationalization and assuring financial stability of HE institutions (Kostić et al., 2017) significantly contribute to the current dominant influence of striving for economic results, which have a significant influence on HE organizations' strategic orientation.

6. IMPLICATIONS

This paper has the following implications. First, HE organizations must rethink how they (will) serve the society and what their contribution to the SR is (Gosselin et al., 2013). Knowing students' actual attitudes will enable a more precise formulation of strategies for fostering SR in HE and enhancing curricula, since students are crucial agents of education change in achieving

higher level of HE (Warwick, 2016). With such an approach HE will go beyond the following general recommendations on how to foster SR in HE.

Second, least important is the concern for economic results, which reflects the “non-profit” nature of the studied HE, which are financed from state. But, recently due to restrictions and limitations of the funds for HE (Kostić et al., 2017), greater or at least equal importance should be given to the financial aspect of HE organizations. Deans of HE organizations should rethink their SR goals (Hoover & Harder, 2015) and need to put more focus on concern for financial results, due to severe conditions, in order to prevent and/or diminish the negative influence on financial performance and the results of HE in the near future.

Third, for Croatia, the greatest challenge is a relatively poor orientation towards improving the culture of HE, i.e. actions to prevent scandals and to improve the public image of HE organizations are needed. For Bosnian HE the main challenge is improving the quality of HE education, which confirms an emerging demand for quality in HE in B&H (Đonlagić and Fazlić, 2015), where HE should strive to acquire different certificates and curricula renewal (Cebrián, 2016; Dmochowski et al., 2016).

Finally, the absence of a significant association between the concern for ethical working and behaviour on the one hand and fostering culture of HE organizations on the other, calls for action, which will help to strengthen the well-recognized link between ethical working and behaviour and culture of organizations (Potocan et al., 2008). For instance, HE should put more focus on actions, which will help to improve the image of HE and its culture, which may have been involved in many public debates, due to the emergence of unethical behaviour of

HE organizations and its member (Matten & Moon, 2004; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015).

6.1. Limitations

This paper has the following limitations. First, the assessment of SR and strategic orientation of HE was done by students. This may have implications on revealing the actual state of SR practices and strategic orientation of HE – i.e. students may see SR actions less favourable than they actually are or vice versa. Second, the field study was done in two countries in South Eastern Europe that have a specific historical transition context (Nedelko & Potočan, 2016). This may limit a broader generalization of results to societies having different developmental, social and political settings, as well as preferences for HE. Third, the sample is somewhat biased, due to the non-probabilistic sampling procedure, which was not corrected for the number of students in different universities and does not reflect other regional characteristics of the two countries, either. In Croatia the answers were mostly from Dalmatia and in B&H mainly from the Republic of Srpska, which may have implications for the results.

6.2. Future research

Several direction for future research can be outlined. First, other key stakeholders in HE organizations, like teachers, staff and management should be included in the assessment of SR and strategic orientation to reveal possible differences in perception. Second, the gap between the perceived and the desired level of SR should be researched. Third, to identify congruence of current SR and strategic orientation of HE organizations with guidelines from the European Union, accreditation organizations documents (such as EFMD), national documents and HE organizations documents should be analysed. Fourth, structural

equation modelling should be used to consider the relations between SR of HE and various goals of HE's strategic orientation. Finally, a comparison of the state of SR within different regions, like Central

Europe, Baltic region, Western Europe, will also be beneficial and may serve as an important milestone for further decisions and research in this area.

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DRUŠTVENA ODGOVORNOST I STRATEŠKA ORIJENTACIJA VISOKOG OBRAZOVANJA – SLUČAJEVI HRVATSKE TE BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE

Sažetak

Temeljni cilj ovog rada je empirijski istražiti postojeće stanje aktivnosti u području društvene odgovornosti visokog obrazovanja, njegove strateške orijentacije te njihovih poveznica. Među studentima u Hrvatskoj te Bosni i Hercegovini (BiH) provedena je anketa, a rezultati rada zasnovani su na odgovorima 219 ispitanika u Hrvatskoj te 172 u BiH. U odnosu na društvenu odgovornost, rezultati u Hrvatskoj te BiH, rezultati istraživanja su slični, s obzirom da se pozornost pridaje socijalnim pitanjima, koja prate pitanja etičkog rada i ponašanja, kao i briga za prirodni okoliš, a najmanje je bitna pozornost za ekonomske rezultate. S obzirom na stratešku orijentaciju, rezultati se u dvije zemlje razlikuju, iako je i dalje u pozornosti orijentacija na socijalna pitanja. S obzirom na povezanost

između društvene odgovornosti i strateške orijentacije, pozornost za ekonomske rezultate je jedini značajni i dominantni čimbenik, dok ostale dimenzije nemaju značajan utjecaj na stratešku orijentaciju. Od kontrolnih varijabli, pokazalo se da se može promatrati utjecaj razine studija, i to kroz percepciju studenata na razini diplomskog studija, koji manje povoljno percipiraju fleksibilnost obrazovanja i organizacijsku orijentaciju na društvene ciljeve. Rezultati mogu poslužiti organizacijama visokog obrazovanja za osmišljavanje svojih strategija i aktivnosti u odgovoru na izazove iz društva i okoline, kako bi se utvrdile buduće aktivnosti u visokom obrazovanju.

Ključne riječi: Bosna i Hercegovina, Hrvatska, visoko obrazovanje, društvena odgovornost, strateška orijentacija, međunarodna usporedba