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Business Graduate Studies in Croatia: An Exploration of Educational Needs of Working

Professionals in the City of Zagreb

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Hospitality and Service Management

Rochester Institute of Technology

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Abstract

The particular attributes of an “ideal” business graduate program among middle managers in the city of Zagreb, Croatia were investigated. A mixed method of using both survey and in-depth interviews was used to determine what specific educational needs the participants had. The results indicate that the majority of participants think the Republic of Croatia needs new business graduate programs designed in a way to develop new skills and deepen the knowledge in the new business economy. More specifically, they need programs offered by a reliable educational institution with expert professors and high face-to-face interaction. The opportunity for “networking” is stressed and highly valued by the participants of the study. The new program offered should provide knowledge and skills in the arena of General Management Studies and should be in a concentrated format based on small group discussions.

Acknowledgment

Special thank you to Mr. Dragan Bodioga for helping me post my questionnaire on the web.

Introduction

The researcher currently works with the American College of Management and Technology, Dubrovnik, Croatia, in the capacity of the Academic Adviser to the College. Being professionally and personally involved in the field of higher education the researcher chose the subject of this thesis to be an exploratory demand analysis with the purpose of determining the desired educational attributes that a graduate program must have in order to satisfy the needs of the middle managers in the Republic of Croatia.

1.1 Problem Statement

The subject of (in)adequate graduate studies and overall reform of the higher education has become one of the major topics on Croatian television and other media in the last couple of years. Newspapers bring monthly reports on new graduate studies opening up in Croatia; there are TV shows aimed at solving the mystery why the majority of Croatian managers go to the Republic of Slovenia, our neighbor, for their Master's degree.

Croatian Association of Managers (Croma), as stated in a special edition of the "Globus" magazine (January 2003) under the title "Education of managers – Croatia needs a good school for managers", surveyed 3000 Croatian CEOs and entrepreneurs. The results of that survey show that 80% of the CEO's think Croatia needs a good school for managers. The fact is that the majority of Croatian middle managers have all gone to the Slovenian school for managers in the city of Bled.

The President of Croma, Mr. Colakovic, says in the same article that "there are a couple of MBA programs in Croatia but they are academically oriented, for people just starting their careers." He continues by explaining that a working professional cannot be excused from work for a couple of years to enroll such programs. On the premises of that idea, Mr. Colakovic and

Croma Association established their own International Business Academy offering graduate programs for middle managers in Croatia.

1.2 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to determine desirable attributes of a graduate program that would be offered to middle managers (three years of experience or more) in the city of Zagreb, Croatia by finding out what factors influence their choice of continuing education after their bachelor's degree. I found that three years of experience is a minimum required to apply to a master's level program by majority of educational institutions in Croatia.

Guided by the fact that there is a lack of a "good school for managers" I found interest in exploring the educational needs of working professionals in Croatia as the topic of my thesis. I will try to find out what is it that influences their decision to continue education by doing a mixed method of both survey and in-depth interviews.

During the present research it was discovered that there was no previous work done in the direction of discovering the educational needs and desires of young Croatian managers when it comes to continuing their education.

The literature that I will examine in the following chapter will focus mostly on higher education in Croatia, adult education in general, and more specifically, non-traditional ways of teaching at the adult level.

1.3 Significance of the study

The preferred attributes become a basis for designing an ideal graduate program as a benchmark for other similar programs in the region. The students going through the program will return to their work places with a new, fresh approach to business and the way business is done

in the new economy. The program will continue to deliver a challenging educational experience not only for the business people from the region but maybe for the whole Old Continent as well.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

What all of these seven programs have in common is that they are delivered in the city of Zagreb.



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Figure 1. Map of the Republic of Croatia.

Zagreb is the capital and the largest city in the Republic of Croatia (Figure 1). As stated on the official web site of the city of Zagreb (<http://www.zagreb.hr>), the city is a cultural, scientific, economic, political and administrative center of the Republic of Croatia with seat of Parliament, President and Government of the Republic of Croatia. Economically looking, Zagreb, with its population of 779 145, is the center of the following industries: production of electric machines

and devices, chemical, pharmaceutical, textile, food and drink processing, tobacco production and processing. The city is an important international trade and business center, and represents a transport crossroad of Central and East Europe. As such, it is an ideal place for conducting any kind of survey that would be relevant to Croatia as a whole.

In the literature review done so far there was no work found in the direction of discovering the educational needs of young Croatian managers when it comes to continuing their education.

Chapter Two will provide some of the most important historical facts about the Republic of Croatia, its educational system and reform, graduate studies in Croatia, adult education, and non-traditional ways of learning.

Literature Review

Chapter One provided overview of the problem and purpose statements as well as some introductory notes about the significance and limitations of the present study. Chapter Two will provide some basic historical information about the region as well as the description of the framework of the current research as it relates to the field of adult education, higher education and higher education in Croatia in particular.

2.1 Adult Education

The Croatian Chamber of Commerce states on their official web site (www.hgk.hr) that one of the priorities of the national education system has to be to determine the framework for the development of life-long education. Life-long education or adult education is embedded in the subject the present paper. Therefore, it is important to explain some of the basic principles of the adult education and the theory behind it, also known as “andragogy”.

The history of the andragogy is fairly new (www.andragogy.com). The first document using the term “Andragogik” was Alexander Kapp’s “Platon’s Erziehungslehre, als Pädagogik für die Einzelnen und als Staatspädagogik” (1833). The word was forgotten and disappeared for nearly a hundred years. Malcolm Knowles, who is considered to be the father of andragogy, writes in his book “The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species” also about the word “andragogy” and its use through the 20th century.

The term is being used again in 1921 by the German social scientist Eugen Rosenstock. He is the first one to express the opinion that adult education needed special teachers, different teaching methods, and a special philosophy.

In 1951 the term is being used again by a Swiss psychiatrist Heinrich Hanselmann. By the end of 1950s the term started being used in other than German-speaking countries. What is

interesting for this paper is that the ex-Yugoslavia's pedagogues led the way. In 1956 M. Ogrizović published a dissertation on "penological andragogy" and in 1959 a book entitled *Problems of Andragogy*. The cities of Zagreb and Belgrade were the first to open faculties of andragogy offering doctorates in adult education. Budapest and Debrecen followed their suite.

2.2 Definitions of Andragogy

Knowles (1984) defines andragogy as "any intentional & professionally guided activity that aims at a change in adult persons". Basically, he is saying that adult education needs a unifying theory, which will take care of the "special" needs of adults as learners.

In his book *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy Versus Pedagogy* he introduces the concept of andragogy as "the art and science of helping adults learn." In the revised version of the same book (1980's edition) he goes even further and puts andragogy as a model of assumptions about all learners to be used alongside the pedagogical model.

The web site www.andragogy.com uses the term andragogy "to label the academic discipline that reflects and researches the education and learning of adults" (Figure 3).

2.3 Theory of Andragogy

According to Knowles (1984) following World War II there was a dramatic increase in the number of adults enrolling in post-secondary education. One of the causes of the high enrollment numbers among the adults can be found in the demographic shift that happened after the WW II.

1950's seem to be the years of proliferation both of the academic discipline called andragogy (professors all over Europe start using the term in their lectures) and the practical side of it, adult education (corporations started offering educational programs for employees). In 1951 the Adult Education Association was established thus marking the beginning of the adult education era.

If we take a look at the Knowles' theory of andragogy we will see that it is an attempt to develop a theory specifically for adult learning. Knowles claims that the use of andragogical theory is making a difference in the way programs of adult education are being organized and conducted. He continues his argument by stating that the field of adult education has long sought a unifying theory, one that would consolidate diverse institutions, participants, and activities into one homogenic concept of lifelong education. The understanding being that lifelong learning includes not only institutionalized forms of learning, but also self-directed and even partly-intentional or non-intentional forms of learning.

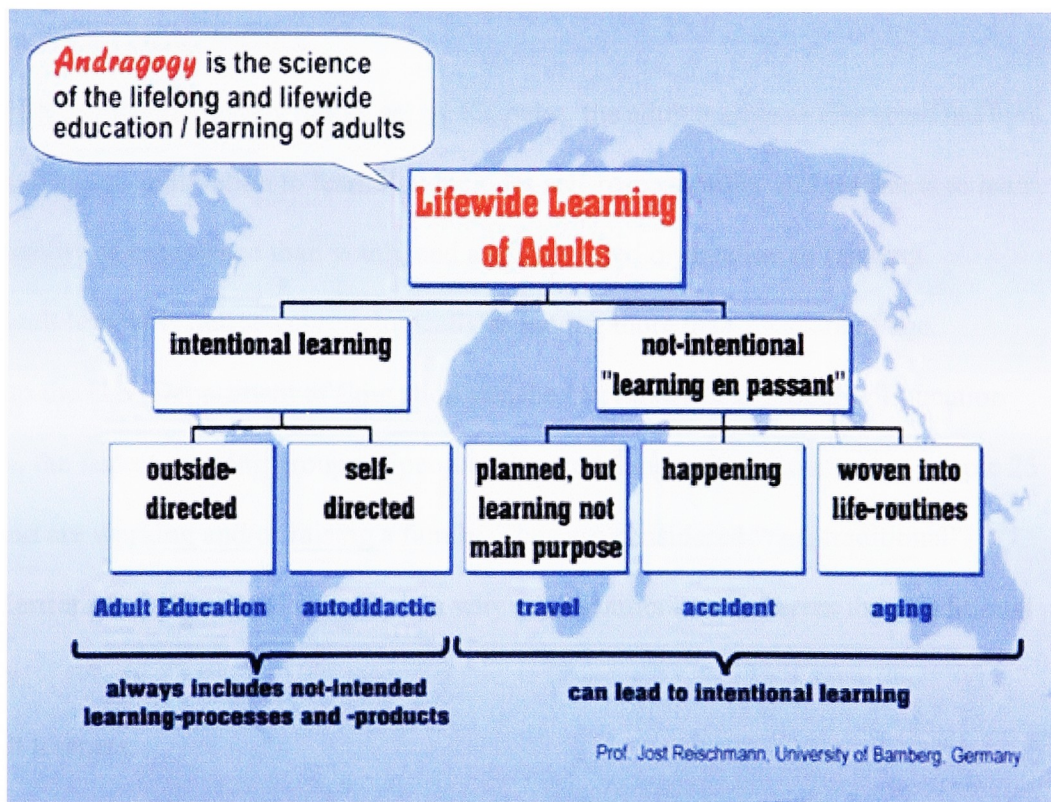


Figure 2. – Definition of Andragogy (www.andragogy.com)

Another educator, Stephen Brookfield, argues that the attempt to construct a unique theory of adult learning on the basis of age solely is a grave error. He makes a strong case in one of his

articles that as we examine learning across the lifespan the variables of culture, ethnicity, personality, and political ethos assume far greater significance than the chronological age.

In the revised version of the original *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy* Knowles puts the two models (pedagogical and andragogical) side by side and he leaves the choice of which model to use subject to the situation rather than solely the age of the learner.

2.4 The Adult Learner

If we are to speak about the adult education we must first define who the adult learner is and what are his/her characteristics.

According to the andragogy model set by Knowles, the adult learner is characterized by a strong need to know, motivation to learn that includes self-responsibility and readiness to learn, a different quantity of experience than youth, and a life-centered orientation to learning.

The adult learner is defined chronologically as having more than 25 years of age. According to the U.S. Department of Education and the University of Continuing Education Association, the fastest growing groups of people who are taking college courses are people 25 and older and are working and/or raising a family. They are considered “non-traditional” students. Merriam & Caffarella (1999) explain why adult learners are different than traditional age learners.

“Adult learners:

1. have more varied life experiences
2. motivation is more goal directed
3. prior learning influenced by more informal learning
4. may need to improve study, writing, etc. skills

5. more interested in accuracy than speed
6. are more verbal
7. are generally self-directed and more serious
8. often have more “unlearning” to do
9. are more interested in practical applications”

Patricia Cross in her book *Adults as Learners* takes these characteristics and forms a model known as CAL – Characteristics of Adults as Learners. Her model represents an attempt to combine andragogy, experiential learning, and lifespan psychology. The CAL model consists of two sets of variables: personal characteristics and situational characteristics. Personal characteristics include: aging, life phases, and developmental stages. These three dimensions have different characteristics as far as lifelong learning is concerned. Aging results in the deterioration of certain sensory-motor abilities (e.g., eyesight, hearing, reaction time) while intelligence abilities (e.g., decision-making skills, reasoning, and vocabulary) tend to improve. Life phases and developmental stages (e.g., marriage, job changes, and retirement) involve a series of transitions which may or may not be directly related to age.

Situational characteristics consist of part-time versus full-time learning, and voluntary versus compulsory learning. The orchestration of learning process (i.e., schedules, locations, procedures) is strongly affected by the first variable; the second is linked to the self-directed, problem-centered nature of most adult learning.

Although there is no known research to support the CAL model this paper is in favor of the principles Patricia Cross presented in her book *Adults as Learners*. Her advice to anybody who is designing an adult program is:

- Adult learning programs should capitalize on the experience of participants.

- Adult learning programs should adapt to the aging limitations of the participants.
- Adults should be challenged to move to increasingly advanced stages of personal development.
- Adults should have as much choice as possible in the availability and organization of learning programs.

2.5 Types of Adult Learning

As stated by Cross (1981) the adult learners are different in the way they approach the whole learning process and therefore the designers of adult learning programs have to be aware of it. UNESCO in its *Learning to Be* (“The Faure Report” from 1972) categorized the learning system and divided it on a largely administrative basis. It's best known statement comes from the work of Combs with Prosser and Ahmed (1973):

Formal education: the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programs and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.

Informal education: the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment - from family and neighbors, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media.

Non-formal education: any organized educational activity outside the established formal system - whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity - that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.

The focus of the present study is on a non-traditional learner (an adult student wanting to continue his/her education). The following is a description of the non-formal (alternative) ways of learning.

2.6 Non-Formal Learning & Modern Developments

In the USA of today, “already nearly 50% of students are over 25 and juggle family, work, and school” (www.pbs.org). To meet the demands of that particular growing student population educational institutions had to embrace new ways of delivering and designing graduate programs. The value of time and the importance of a challenging educational experience gave birth to modern developments in adult education.

Management education has long recognized the value of serving part-time students with evening and weekend courses, or abbreviating their curriculum with some sort of accelerated or executive master’s degree.

The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and New York University has been offering part-time MBA’s since the early years of the 20th century (Coulson-Thomas, 1975). Harvard was the first business school to offer an executive development program in 1943 (West & Sheriff, 1969).

In the age of information technology, online education presented itself as a logical “continuation” of the educational evolution. In the early 1990’s colleges and universities started with the concept of online courses.

Capella University, one of the first fully accredited online -universities, now has more than 1,800 students. As stated in the Westchester County Business Journal, there are more than 2.2 million students currently enrolled in online programs.

A recent survey of top administrators at 994 higher-education institutions in the US suggests online education's new respectability. The survey, conducted by Babson College for the Boston-based Sloan Consortium, found that 57 percent consider online studies to be equal to or better than face-to-face instruction.

Another non-traditional option is distance education programs. As stated in an article published in *Adult Education in the News* (1997), a number of alternatives to traditional higher education developed in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. The major reasons were broad national trends that included rapidly escalating costs of traditional resident education, interest in informal and nontraditional education, an increasingly mobile American population, the growth of career-oriented activities, necessity of learning new competencies, public dissatisfaction with educational institutions in general and the early success of Britain's Open University (<http://www.seniornet.org/edu/art/history.html>).

When asked about the future of distance education in one of the series of lectures on the educational use of ICT and virtual education, Michael Graham Moore, Director of The American Center for Study of Distance Education and editor of *The American Journal of Distance Education*, said that he sees a place for both the traditional and distance education (<http://www.uoc.edu/web/eng/art/uoc/moore/moore.html>). At the same time, he emphasizes that distance education will certainly dominate the continuing education market of the professional continuing education, liberal continuing education and vocational continuing education.

One of the most popular options among business people of today is a customized degree program sponsored by an employer. Many companies have taken a proactive role in search of a university partner that will offer customized programs to their employees. Bled School of

Management is often called by Croatian companies (such as Pliva, IBM, VIPnet, to name just a few) to create a customized program or series of programs for their employees.

In a recent article on higher education, Carol Twigg (2004) talks about a “hybrid model” of higher education: online instruction combined with the traditional face-to-face sessions. Carol stresses the importance of using technology as an aid and not a means in itself.

2.7 Political Overview of the Republic of Croatia

In its 2004 Edition, Country Watch (www.countrywatch.com), a world leader web site in providing country specific geopolitical intelligence on each of the 192 countries of the world, provides an extensive profile of the rise of the independent Republic of Croatia. Here is just a brief outline of the events that led us to where we are today:

Year	Month	Event Description
1990	April/May	The first free elections since 1938 were held for the “sabor” (the assembly or legislature) of the Croatian republic. The “Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica”, Croatian Democratic Community or HDZ, led by Franjo Tudjman, won a majority.
	September	The Republic of Croatia was declared autonomous, and a new constitution was adopted in December 1990, which included a clause declaring Croatia’s right to secede from the Federal Yugoslav Republic.
1991	February	The Serbian Autonomous Republic, or SAR, of Krajina, a majority Serb enclave in Croatia, announced that it was seceding from Croatia and would join Serbia.

(cont.)		
1991	May	94 percent of the Croatian republic backed independence from the Yugoslav federation in a referendum.
	June 25	Croatia, along with another Yugoslav republic, Slovenia, declared independence and the beginning of its secession.
1992	January	A cease-fire was signed.
	May	European countries gradually recognized the Republic of Croatia, which joined the United Nations and came under its protection.
1992 - 1995		“After declaring independence an escalation of tensions between Croatia and Serb-led Yugoslavia followed and resulted in great conflict in which 6,000 people died and 400,000 were displaced.” (www.countrywatch.com)
	November	Negotiations between Croatian President Tudjman, Serbian President Milošević, and Bosnian President Izetbegović culminated in Dayton, Ohio. The Dayton Accords, signed by all three presidents, represent the final document of agreement for peace initiatives in the region.

2.8 Economic Impacts

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), published in its 2001 CCNM/DEELSA/ED paper a statement about the war damage in Croatia and how it produced differing patterns of economic development since 1995. According to the same source the tourist industry in the region of Dalmatia has yet to fully recover. Also, Eastern areas of Slavonia are depopulated and economically depressed. The OECD paper states that the heavy war debt has led to cuts in spending on health, education and social welfare. The same paper informs that in 1999 the unemployment rate was 20%, and almost a fifth of the population was below the poverty level with the average monthly salary is 400 USD, higher than in some other countries in the region, but buying only a minimum food basket for a family with two children.

2.9 The Educational System in Croatia

The Croatian Ministry of Education and Sports publishes information on their web site (www.mzt.hr) about the educational system in Croatia. The following information can be helpful in understanding what the current state of the educational system in Croatia is:

Age at which compulsory education starts:	7 years
Age at which compulsory education ends:	15 years
Levels of education governance:	<p>Central: Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Science and Technology.</p> <p>Regional: 21 counties (<i>županije</i>). There are 5 regional units focused on quality control (inspection) and evaluation.</p> <p>Local: Schools. The decline in the birth rate, and abandonment of particular areas by the local population due to the war, were the main reasons why some schools closed down.</p>

(cont.)

<p>Structure of the education system:</p>	<p>Pre-school education: ages 2-7 years; participation rate 34.9%. Compulsory basic education: ages 7-15 years; the current structure is 4+4; participation rate 98%. Secondary education: ages 15-19, 3 and 4 years (short programmes 2 years); participation rate 63%. Tertiary education includes non-university education (2 to 4 years) and university education (4 to 6 years); participation rate 31.3%, of which 22.9% in university education.</p>
<p>Examinations/transition points:</p>	<p>No formal exams at the end of the grade 4, 94% of the students continue into grade 5, cohort size 56 231(1998/99). At the end of grade 8, there is an internal school-leaving test leading to a certificate of completion, cohort size 52 285 (1998/99). At the end of gymnasium (grade 12) there is a maturity exam (<i>Matura</i>), cohort size 11 871 (1998/99). The receiving institution or faculty sets entrance exams for tertiary education.</p>

2.10 Description of the educational system

As stated in the document on the thematic review of national policies for education, the education system in Croatia is highly centralized with many elements inherited from the Yugoslav approach in which education was considered a “science”, led by the government. Tight administrative control measures by the Government through records and reports limit schools’ flexibility in defining policy based on final results and performance criteria.

In Croatia, governance of the tertiary level was the responsibility of the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), while the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) was ultimately responsible for the pre-tertiary level. Today, after the newest elections, the two Ministries have joined into one: the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Science and Technology.

The reason why the two Ministries joined together was based on the fact that the contacts between the different departments of Government were limited. The new Minister in his recent

appearances on the Croatian National Television announced that by joining the two Ministries he wants to make “a properly functioning education system that will have coherence between the primary and secondary schools and higher education.”

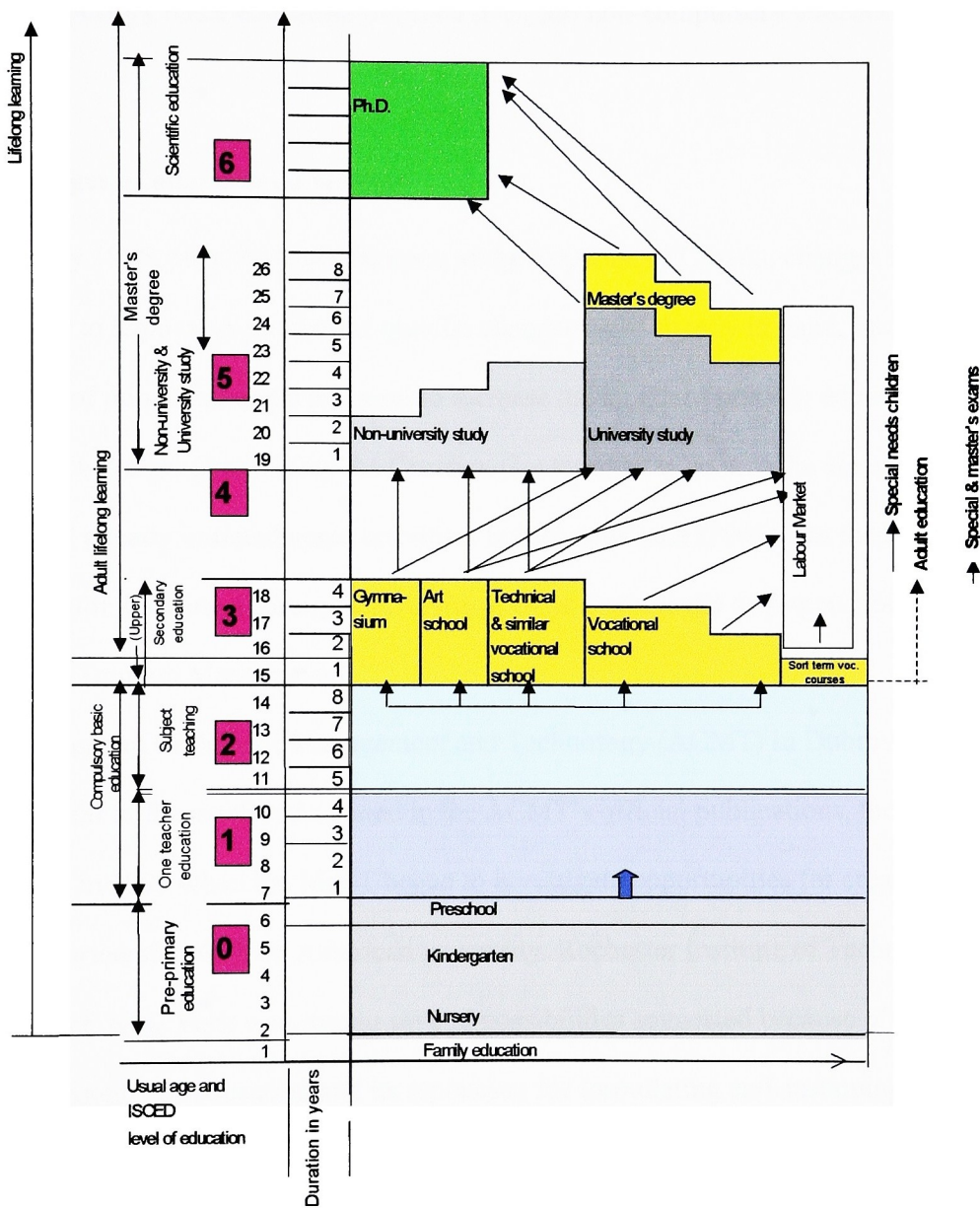


Figure 3. Educational System in Croatia

Figure 3 depicts the educational system in Croatia as a hierarchical system, starting at the pre-primary level (level 0) to the Adult lifelong learning (levels 3 to 6). The division is also made between Compulsory basic education (levels 0 to 2) and non-compulsory education (levels 3 to 6).

2.11 Stages of educational reform

In early 1995, after the Independence of the Republic of Croatia, changes in the education system started to happen. A number of specific changes were already in hand, including a law on the education of minorities and a proposal to increase the length of primary education.

There was a genuine will by the Croatian Government to reform the educational system, and the MoST already initiated some activities. In that same year (1995), the then active MoST initiated talks for allowing a foreign University to enter into Croatia and open a new program in Hospitality & Tourism Management.

The American College of Management and Technology (ACMT) in Dubrovnik, Croatia emerged a result of those talks. As stated in the ACMT's official publications, the foundation of ACMT began in 1995 when the MoST began to investigate opportunities for creating an educational partnership with an American university. Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) from Rochester, New York was among several possibilities suggested because of its applied, practical philosophy of education and its reputation for formulating and sustaining successful international partnerships. ACMT is an institution of higher education offering a 2 and 4-year undergraduate program to students who wish to pursue their careers in Hospitality and Service Management.

In its 8th year of operation ACMT has over 800 students. In the academic year 2000/2001 the first generation of ACMT's 4-year students graduated. 70% of them got permanent

placement positions while still senior students at ACMT. The reports from the employers show that the characteristics they value in an ACMT student are: “self-confidence, competence, excellent presentation skills, new approach to dealing with problems and work environment” (www.acmt.hr/co-op/index.htm).

The vast majority of these students found permanent placement in service companies ranging from hotel industry, telecommunications, and food manufacture to banking.

2.12 Trends in Higher Education in Europe – the Bologna Declaration

In order to better understand the reform suggested by MoST it is important to take a look at the trends in higher education in a larger context, the context of Europe. As stated in the document prepared by the Confederation of European Union Rector’s Conferences and the Association of European Universities (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf>) the Bologna Declaration represents a key document which marks a turning point in the development of higher education in Europe. As stated from the same source, it is a commitment freely taken by over 30 countries of Europe to reform their own higher education system or systems in order to create overall convergence at European level.

The National Unions of Students in Europe’s official web site (www.esib.org) provides some examples of the importance of the Bologna Declaration and offers some of the possible causes of this initiative: the emergence of a real European market, the end of a strong numerical expansion of universities, the considerable growth of new educational providers, the emergence of more accountability of universities for the use of public funds and lack of competitiveness of the European Higher Education Institutions.

As stated on the European Union Portal (<http://www.europa.eu.int/>), the Declaration reflects “a search for a common European answer to common European problems.” The process originates from the recognition that in spite of their valuable differences, European higher education systems are facing common internal and external challenges related to the growth and diversification of higher education, the employability of graduates, the shortage of skills in key areas, the expansion of private and transnational education, etc. The Declaration recognizes the value of coordinated reforms, compatible systems and common action.

In order to respond to the invitation contained in the Bologna Declaration, universities and other institutions of higher education are invited to be active players rather than passive bystanders. The Declaration is giving them an opportunity to profile their own curricula, in accordance with the emerging post-Bologna environment, in particular through the introduction of bachelor courses in systems where they have not traditionally existed, and through the creation of master courses meeting the needs of mobile postgraduate students from around the world. In addition, it will enable networks in key areas such as joint curriculum development, joint ventures overseas or worldwide mobility schemes and contribute individually and collectively to the next steps in the process.

The Association of MBAs published in its April 2004 issue of *Business Leadership Review* (www.mbaworld.com/blrissues/article2) an article that summarizes the significance of the Bologna Declaration. The author states that the introduction of the Bachelor's – Master's progression (3 or 4 + 1 or 2 years), instead of the previous Master's only system (5 years) lies at the heart of the Bologna Declaration. In the same article the author is very critical toward the approach to the whole process stating that the European countries are expecting students to

simply see the new educational model as “new clothes for the new season”. The same article refers to this new initiative as an adoption of the Anglo-American model.

One of the objectives of the Bologna Declaration is establishment of a system of credits, European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognized by the receiving universities concerned.

The same article touches upon the question of the consequences of the Bologna Declaration for Business schools in Europe. The author states that “these changes will radically alter the landscape of European education, and will have tremendous, and little understood, consequences for Business Schools in Europe and around the world.” Since Croatia follows the same path of reforms the present paper will address the state of the current graduate education in Croatia as well.

2.13 Graduate Education in Croatia – present day

The Croatian Ministry of Science and Technology in its «Strategy of Science Development» (issue of September 2002) started the paper with this introductory statement: «There has been a noticeable connection between the development of a society and its knowledge base in the last decades of the 20th century. A successful future is to be found in **societies of knowledge** or, to be more specific, in a *culture of knowledge* (education, civility, and cooperation) and *economy of knowledge*. «

The same paper states that the current situation in the academic world of Croatia is stagnating, and in some elements even going backwards. That is why the MoST initiated the talks for reconstructing the system of higher education in Croatia with the new principles of the European ideal as a goal.

The need for highly educated professional individuals is probably best seen in the proliferation of MBA programs as well as professional development seminars in that field during the last decade. According to the Association of MBAs (www.mbaworld.com) the MBA (Master of Business Administration) degree is internationally recognized and is seen as a passport to a successful management career. The same site states that MBA is the world's most popular postgraduate degree. The Association says that around 90 000 MBAs graduate in the US each year. The UK, with over 10 000 graduates annually, produces the highest number of MBAs outside North America.

By the end of year 2002, Croatia had only three MBA programs delivered respectively by Economics University in Zagreb, Hita Consulting Company, and the International Business Center. Presently, there are seven different MBA programs available for Croatian working professionals. For the purpose of better understanding of the research all these programs will be described in further text.

In the last year Croatia has seen a rise of a new market – education of managers. Along with the traditional university graduate programs, business education has been expanded by cooperation with world-renowned educational institutions. The European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) in cooperation with the Croatian government has announced the opening of a new Croatian business school. The most recent developments in the area of education of managers confirm my opening statement that there is a need for higher diversity in the offer of graduate programs: International Graduate Business School (IGBS) as well as the American College of Management and Technology (ACMT) from Dubrovnik launched their programs in Zagreb at the beginning of the year 2004.

“Poslovni tjednik”, a Croatian business weekly magazine, in a special edition entitled “*Who is ready for success?*” describes the today’s school “as a business” but with a focus on the development of management and advancement of a quality managerial experience.

The most recent update on the education in Croatia (done by the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, www.hgk.hr) shows that “Croatia is also facing the challenge of adapting its educational system to altered economic and social needs”.

The same institution recognizes the fact that “the priorities for the national education system have been determined and they are:

1. The reform of primary and secondary school education – the Croatian Chamber of Commerce recognizes the fact that the system has to be changed in order to be more open to the student mobility;
2. Development of a dual education system, which stems from the recommendations of the Bologna Declaration;
3. Innovation of university programs;
4. Flexibility of the educational system so that it enables vertical and horizontal mobility of students;
5. Determining the framework for the development of life-long education (informal education).”

The identical direction is supported by MoST, the institution in charge for higher and adult education in Croatia.

The basic recommendations that the Ministry suggested in its September 2002 issue of “Strategy of Science Development in the Republic of Croatia” (p. 8) were to:

- Develop educational programs that incite mastering of basic categories of natural sciences;
- Increase quality, flexibility, and efficacy of higher education;
- Promote mobility of highly educated young people, especially in the relationship science;
- Help scientists get employment after their doctoral programs;
- Structurally reform undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs in order to increase efficacy of learning and education for science;
- Inform and educate the public to understand usefulness and importance of knowledge and science;
- Increase awareness and social impact of scientific work.

2.14 The existing Business Graduate Programs in Croatia

A special edition of the Croatian periodical *Poslovni tjednik* (issue 2004 - Who is Ready for Success) gives a comprehensive, yet short description of business graduate programs in Croatia. The following represents just a brief description of programs opened in Croatia to date of the issuing of the article:

- **Institute for Management Development (IMD)** is a joint project between the European Foundation for Management Development, INSEAD, a graduate business school based in Fontainebleau, near Paris, France and Bocconi University from Italy aiming at opening short executive programs in the next three to five years in Croatia. Those short executive programs would be a basis for launching eMBA and regular MBA programs. The main focus of this Institute would be with the needs of the economy, The European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) standardization and international

approach to management development. The aim is to make IMD a regional center of the education for managers.

- **American College of Management and Technology (ACMT)** started its Master of Science in Service Management Program in January 2004. The program aims at attracting working professionals from the area of marketing, PR, human resources and sales. It is a joint venture between ACMT from Dubrovnik and Rochester Institute of Technology from Rochester, New York. This program fills an emerging need in the many service businesses and industries that focus on customer satisfaction. Such businesses will find this program in tune with their educational and training investments. Attention is focused on the management interface between the customer and the service provider. Problems in such areas as measuring customer satisfaction, empowering front-line employees, developing a teamwork environment, benchmarking, etc., require the employee to be skilled in different analytical techniques. This program gives individual student's access to the interdisciplinary expertise of a technological university.

- **Croma Business Academy (CBA)** started with its first generation of students in September of 2003. CBA started big by introducing as lecturers people like Barry Merkin, a well-known US businessman, Richard Teerlink, former Harley Davidson CEO and Toke Moller, creator of the “open space” method. Coca-Cola and Levi's, for example, use some of the methods that CBA advocated and teaches its students. CBA prides itself on being different by customization of its program to suit the individual needs of its students and by following the progressive methods in today's management.

- **International Graduate Business School (IGBS)** is a result of cooperation between the Kelly School of Business and the Economics College from Zagreb. They are

starting with the program January 2005. The length of the program is 16 months and the participants can choose from three possible specializations: finance, marketing and IT.

- **Henley MBA: distance model.** International Business Center delivers the Henley distance MBA in a three-year format with a focus on managing corporate changes and projects, human resources, corporate finances and entrepreneurial management. This program has already been recognized by numerous Croatian companies, including Zagrebačka banka, Privredna banka, HT Mobile, Siemens and Pliva.

- **Croatian Universities,** or to be more precise the Economics College in Zagreb, holds the supremacy in the number of different MBA programs it offers. The popularity of one of its programs, Master of Science in Organization and Management, lies in the fact that you, as a student, have the right to choose your own professors. Usually participants of this program are young working professionals sponsored by companies they work for. Another program, the International MBA program with the focus on corporate management, requires from its participants to have at least five to ten years of work experience.

- **Hita Consulting Company** delivers its specialized MBA program since 1992. It is an off-site program focused on mentorship and consulting sessions in a period of 15 months requiring from its participants to have at least five years of work experience.

Figure 4 presents a comparison between each of the above mentioned programs:

Name of the institution	Traditional	Distance	Executive	Customized	MBA
Institute for Management Development			•		•
American College of Management & Technology	•		•		
Croma Business Academy				•	•
International Graduate Business School	•				
Henley MBA		•			•
Croatian Universities	•				•
Hita Consulting Company		•			•

Figure 4. Types of Business Graduate Studies in Croatia

Chapter Two described the theory behind graduate programs in general and more specifically in Croatia as it relates to the research. Next chapter will present the methodology and the process of obtaining data.

Method

Chapter Two addressed the broader context of graduate education and the state of the higher education in Croatia. The main characteristics of non formal adult education were described since they relate the best to the modern trends in adult education. Chapter Three will describe the methodology used in the research.

The present paper focuses on exploring the educational needs of the middle managers in the city of Zagreb by the use of a structured survey and a focus group. The choice of the city of Zagreb was not guided solely by the fact that it is the capital of Croatia. More importantly, it was chosen because of the highly concentrated headquarters of most (if not all) major companies in Croatia. The questionnaire was distributed to the working professionals holding the middle managers positions with the minimum of 3 years of experience. The main focus of the paper is to determine what type of a program would appeal to the young working professionals in Croatia.

3.1 Apparatus and Materials

A pilot was done on a group of five individuals from the city of Dubrovnik before it was sent out to the actual list of middle managers. The suggestions obtained from the pilot were used in the final version of the questionnaire.

The survey (Appendix 1a and 1b) was distributed in a web-page format via e-mail to potential participants.

The participants were asked to indicate on their questionnaire if they were willing to be involved in a follow-up interview, the second type of data collection. The reason for choosing a mixed method (both quantitative and qualitative) was based on the following reasons:

1. It is cost effective and
2. The research shows a higher response rate when using web based questionnaires.

The possibility of using the mailing list from the American College of Management and Technology facilitated the direct contact with the potential participants.

The follow up interviews (Appendix 2) were conducted over the phone individually. The interviews were structured in the sense that the questions were asked after reviewing the survey and targeted particular “gray” areas of the survey. For example, one of the questions directly tried to pin point the exact date and time of a possible graduate program since the questionnaire results did not provide with a clear answer.

3.2 Procedures

Responses were gathered on a home server and exported to an excel spreadsheet for further statistical analysis. Responses to the open-ended questions on the questionnaire were evaluated for additional information. Transcription of the interviews was reviewed to identify key issues that would add to the information gathered through the survey.

Chapter Three described the methodology and the procedures in obtaining the information. The next chapter will describe in detail the results obtained from the survey and the in-depth interviews.

Results

The previous chapter explained the methodology and procedures used in the present research. Chapter Four will describe the results obtained from the analysis of the survey and in-depth interviews.

4.1 Participants

A random sample of 130 middle level managers working in the city of Zagreb was selected from the list of potential contacts. The city of Zagreb was chosen since it is the capital of the Republic of Croatia and the center of the economic activity in the country. The overall return rate was 33%. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

4.2 Demographics & Background

Out of 130 surveyed, 33 participants returned the questionnaire. The overall return rate for the survey was 33%. In terms of gender, 64% of the respondents were female and 36% were male. The age range was from 24 to 46.

The highest level of education was Bachelor's (91%), Master's (6%), and AAS (3%). The work experience range was: 0 to 5 years, 36%; 5-10 years, 49%; 10-20 years, 12%; more than 20 years, 3% (Figure 5).

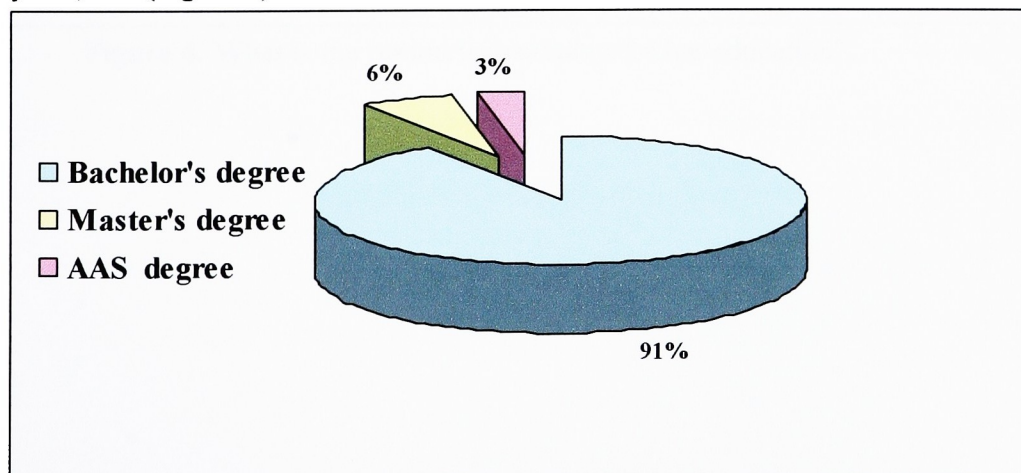


Figure 5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

4.3 Motivation

When asked about their reasons for continuing education (respondents could select more than one option), 88% reported that gaining new knowledge and skills was of major importance to them, 64% were fulfilling a personal dream, 15% stated other reasons (“new knowledge needed, successful career demands it in today’s world, expanding employment possibilities, change of profession”), 6% needed a Master’s degree, and only 3% wanted to continue their education because they wanted to change their current job (Figure 6).

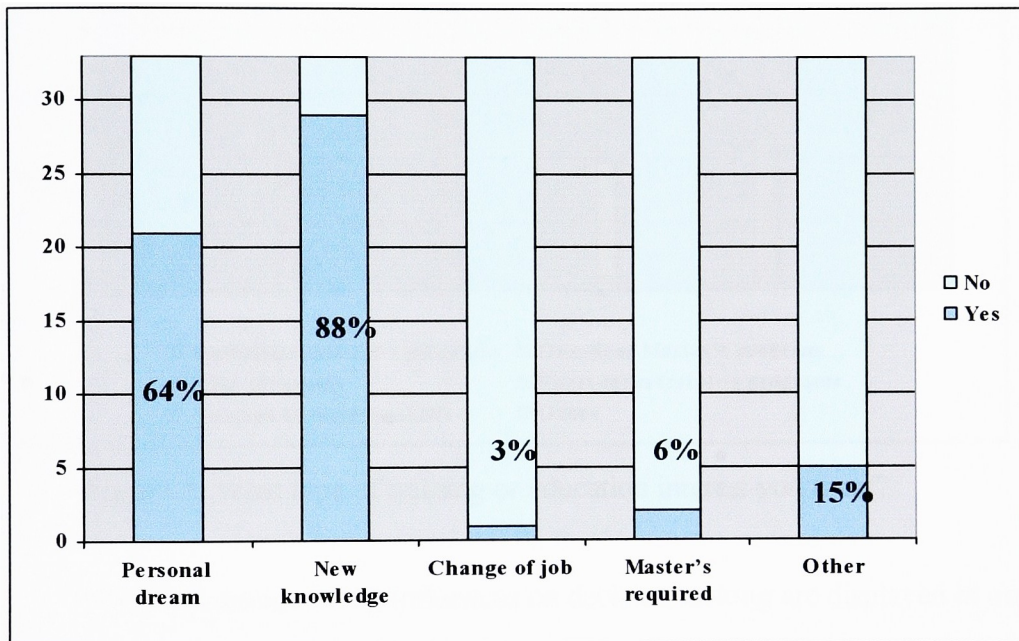


Figure 6. What is the reason for pursuing further education?

When asked about the type of training that interests them the most (respondents could select only one option), 34% of the respondents said MBA, 18% chose traditional programs, 15% opted for individual courses, 12% wanted 1 year-programs, 12% chose certificates, and 9% said other (Figure 7).

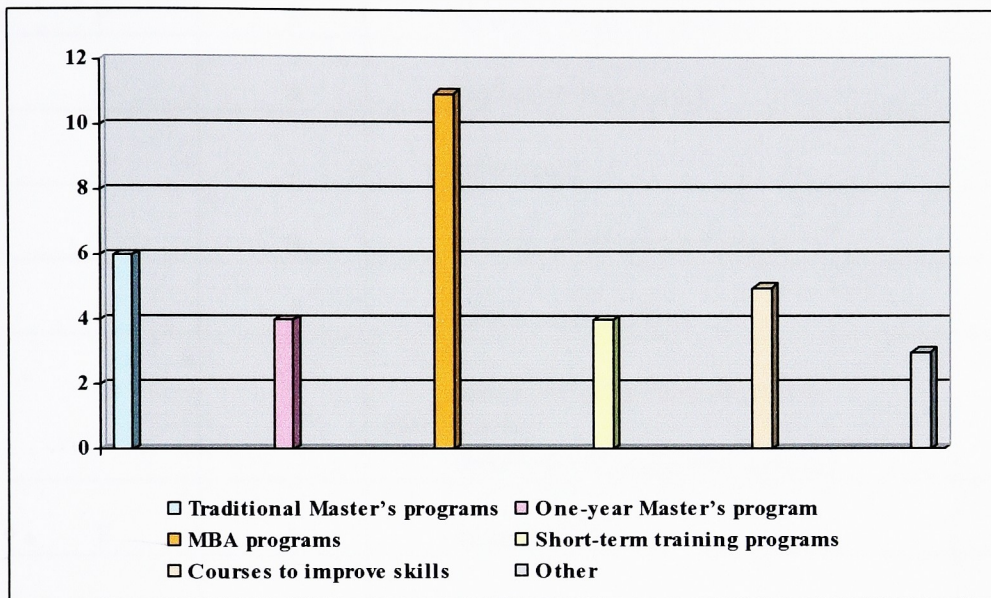


Figure 7. What type of training or education interest you **most**?

The mean scores for 12 influences on decision making are displayed in order of rank for the entire group (see Table 1). The response scale ranged from 1 (the least important) to 5 (the most important). The major influence (as stated by the respondents) on the choice of the program is the quality of the professors followed by the class days and times.

Table 1: Institutional and Program Influences on Continuing Education

Type*	Rank	Item	Mean
P	1	Professors/experts in field	4.242
I	2	Class days & times	4.152
P	3	Specific Degree Offered	3.970
P	4	Duration of program	3.939
F	5	Sponsored	3.909
F	6	Fees (tuition, related costs)	3.879
P	7	Online instruction	3.879
O	8	Other (courses offered, other participants, flexibility of program, quality)	3.600
F	9	Scholarship	3.545
I	10	Class size	3.485
I	11	Location	3.424
I	12	Private vs. Public	2.788

N=33

* F = Financial, I = Institutional, P = Program, O = Other

4.4 Training Opportunities

For the data on in-house training three questions were asked:

1. Is your company providing any in-house training?
2. How effective that training is in terms of your current job?
3. Has the management of the company expressed a desire to sponsor your further education outside the company's in-house training?

76% of the respondents replied that their company is providing in-house training. The effectiveness of that training was tested on a ten-point Likert scale of agreeability, ranging from “extremely not effective” to “extremely effective”, where one stands for “extremely not-effective” and ten “extremely effective”. Results showed a mean value of 4.5, mode 3, and median 4.

When asked to state the willingness of the company to sponsor those types of training 61% of the respondents replied that the company is not sponsoring them at all, 30% said the company is sponsoring partially, and only 9% said the company is sponsoring them fully (Figure 8).

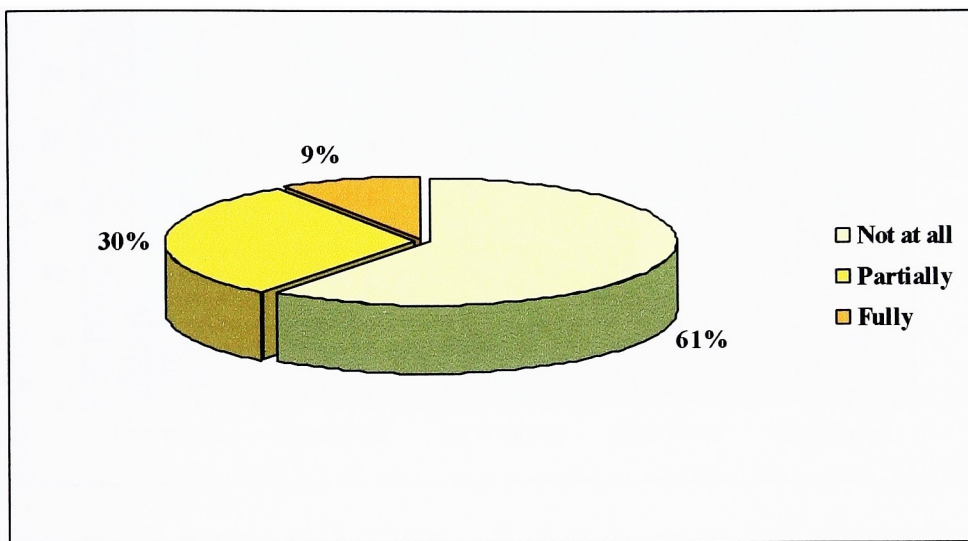


Figure 8. Has the management of the company expressed a desire to sponsor your further education outside the company’s in-house training?

4.5 Learner’s Needs

This section probes the needs of adult learners when it comes to formats of the program delivery, classroom style, days and times of teaching sessions, preferred degrees, and other related topics.

When asked about the most desirable learning format (respondents could select more than one option), 64% reported that face-to-face on campus delivery is the most desired format

followed by face-to-face at another location and scheduled online session (42%). 21% chose not scheduled online sessions, while only 3% chose other formats (workshops).

In terms of most desirable classroom style, 70% of respondents chose small group sessions, 61% opted for team based activities, 58% reported interactive format to suit their needs the best, 24% like the individual style the best, while only 21% remain with the traditional teaching style (Figure 9).

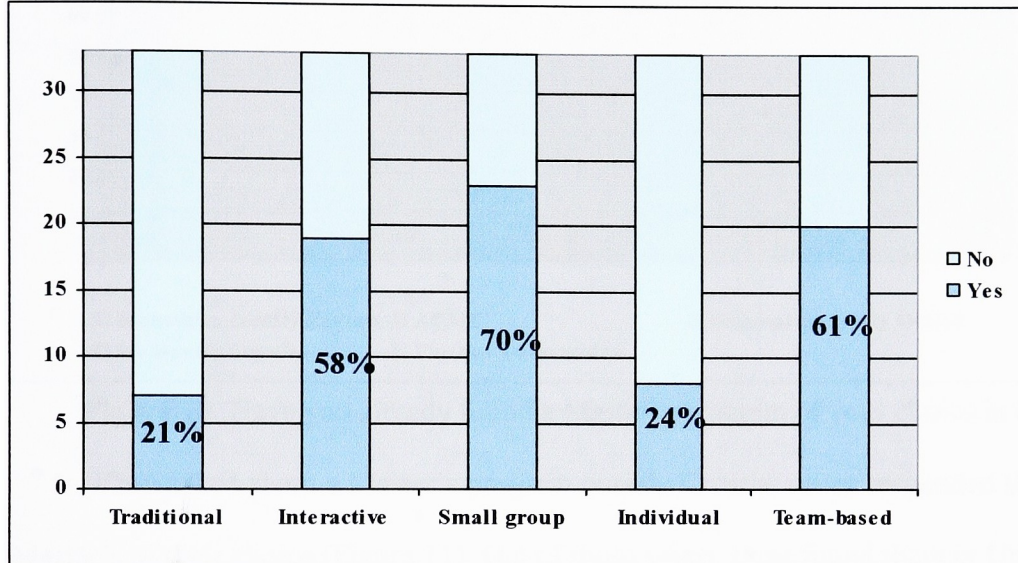


Figure 9. What kind of classroom environment you work best in?

When asked about preferred days and times of program delivery, 52% opted for online (on their own), 45% reported weekend and intensive format of classes to be the preferred ones, 27% opted for a regular, two-years graduate program, 9% chose night classes and other types (one or two-week courses, one week courses, everything outside the regular working hours).

Next set of questions addresses the existing choice of Master's programs. 36, 36% of respondents reported that they found a Master's of their choice in Croatia (Figure 10). Out of those 36, 36%, 58, 33% found it at the Economics Faculty in Zagreb (Organizational Management, Information Management, MBA). Other responses (8, 33% each): American

College of Management and Technology, Dubrovnik (Service Management), Economics Faculty in Osijek (Entrepreneurship), Political Sciences (International Relations), Liberal Arts Faculty in Zagreb (Psychology) and various Universities (specialized courses).

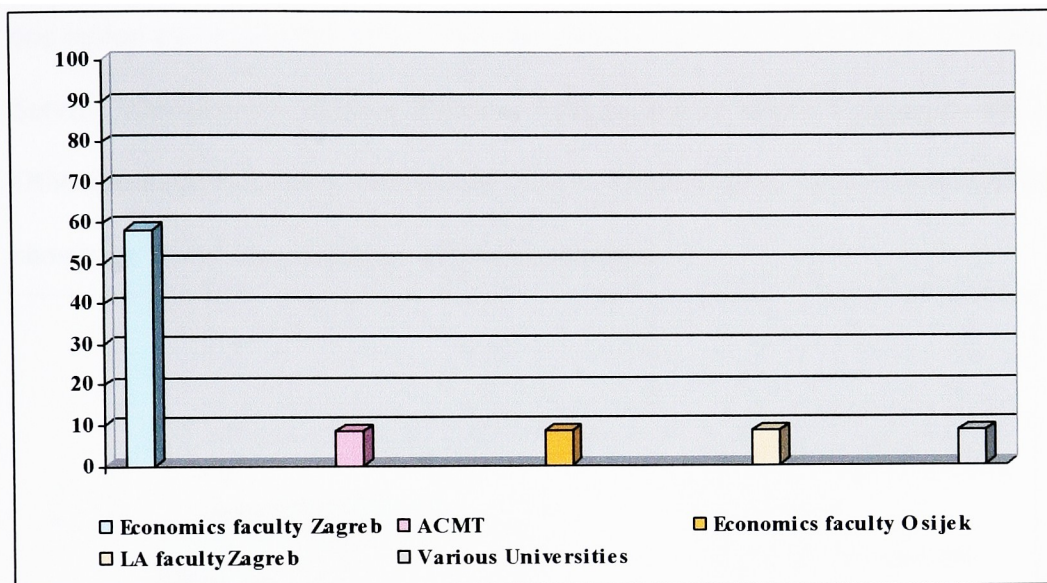


Figure 10. Have you already found a Master's program of your choice in Croatia?

When asked about a Master's program outside Croatia, seven responded that they found a Master's of their choice (Figure 11). Out of those seven, three found them in United Kingdom (MBA programs and Young Professional Programs), one in Slovenia (MBA), one in Belgium (MBA), one in European Union (Project Management), and one in the USA (Leadership).

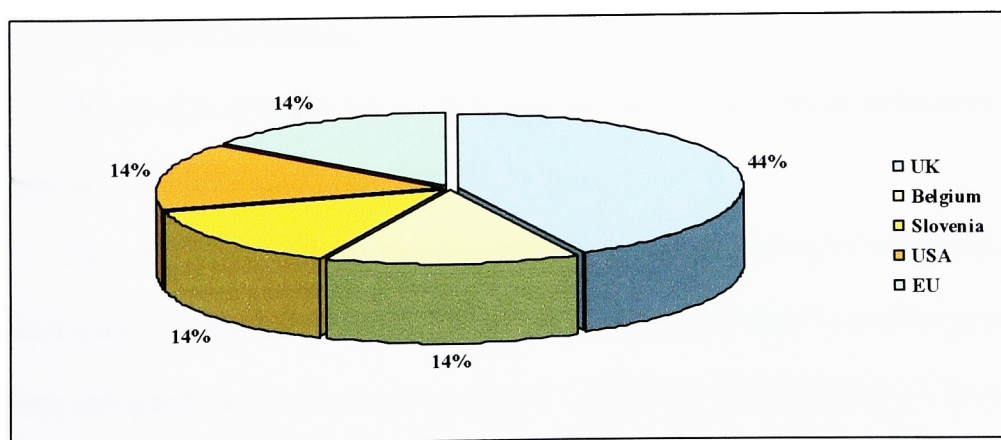


Figure 11. Have you already found a Master's program of your choice abroad?

When asked about the preferred language of instructions, English was by far the most preferred language (97%), only 3% responded on behalf of Italian.

When asked about the area from which they would like to get their Master's degree (only one option was available) 34% of the respondents opted for General Management, 15% opted for Service Management, 12% for Business Administration, 6% for Economics while 24% opted for Other (strategies in M&A, Intellectual Capital, Organization, International Relations). Figure 12 shows the visual representation of the percentages.

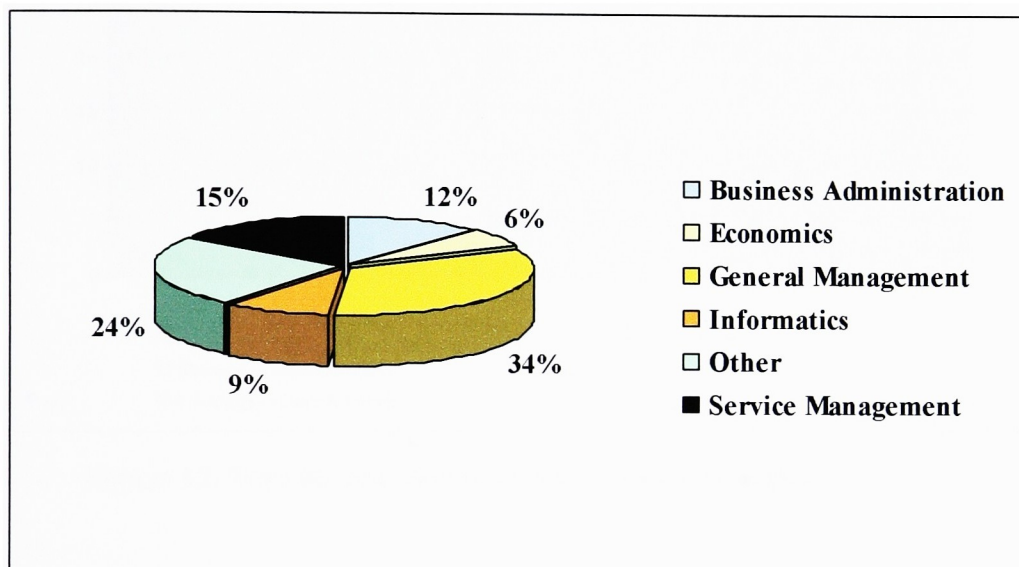


Figure 12. What is the preferred major of your Master's degree?

4.6 General Satisfaction

This portion of the survey presents answers to general types of satisfaction questions when it comes to graduate studies in Croatia.

The satisfaction with the existing graduate programs in Croatia was tested on a ten-point Likert scale of agreeability, ranging from "extremely dissatisfied" to "extremely satisfied", where one stands for "extremely dissatisfied" and ten "extremely satisfied". Results showed a mean value of 3.6, mode 3, and median 3.

When asked about the reason for continuing education, 22 out of 33 respondents reported that the main reason was personal satisfaction (Figure 13). Four of them stated that it is connected to the promotion at work; three stated the reason being increased level of job satisfaction. Under “other” respondents said “all of the above, professional development, gaining new knowledge”. Only one person is doing it because of the change of profession.

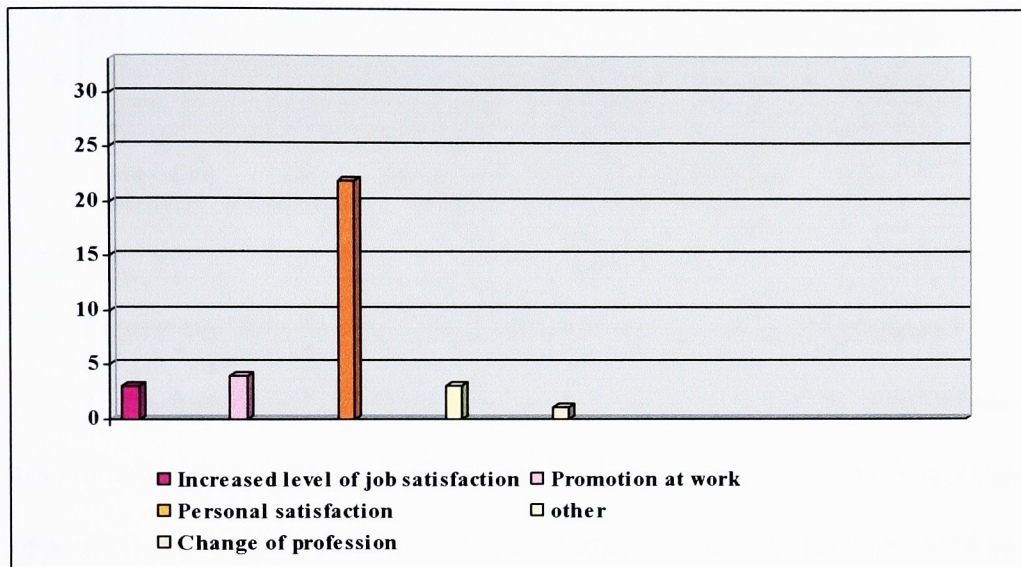


Figure 13. Why do you want to continue your education?

46% of the respondents need from 1-6 months to choose a Master's, 24% needs 7-12 months, 18% take longer than a year, and 12% less than a month.

When asked who they consult before deciding on a particular educational program, 67% responded friends and family, 45% consult educational institutions, 42% use Internet as a resource, 24% consult HR department within their company, 18% use other means of advice (colleagues, professors, the Embassy, do not need advice, different sources). Only 3% use specialized counseling services (Figure 14).

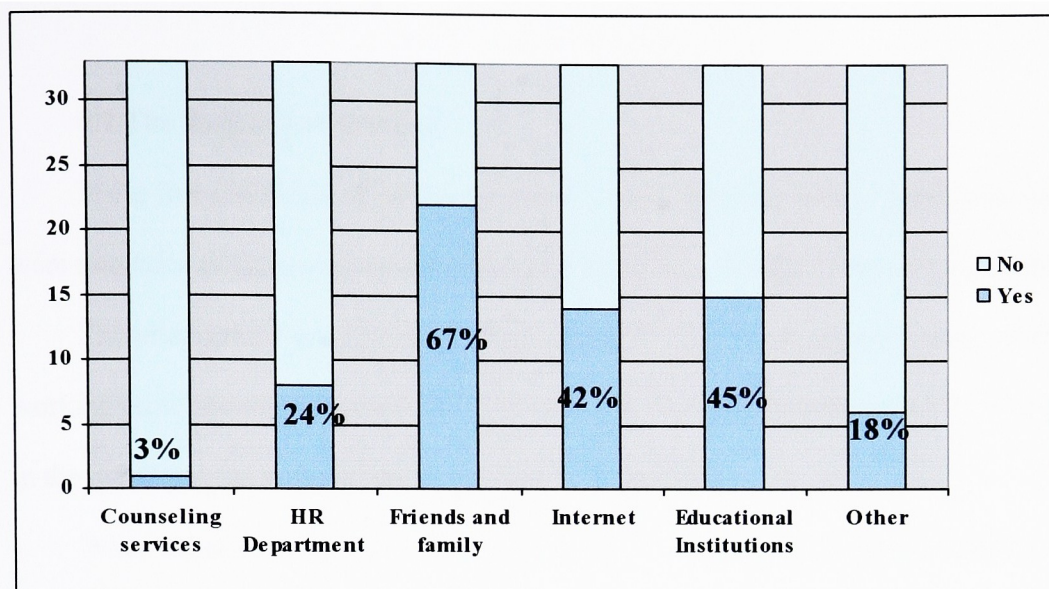


Figure 14. Who do you consult before choosing a Master's program?

Three open-ended questions invited respondents to comment on influences on their academic decision making not already covered by this survey. A couple of respondents took this opportunity for input, but in main, they elaborated on items already included on the questionnaire. The first question probed the influences that affect their decisions. Additional motivating factors, for example, possibility of employment, were evident in comments such as: "One of the most powerful stimulation for me to enroll a Master's program would be if I were offered a job with it as well."

The second question called upon the respondents suggestions on services they would like to receive in future when choosing a Master's. Some of the comments were: "Let the participants talk about their experience," and "I would like to see some comparative analyses between different Master's offered in Croatia."

The third question did not receive any additional comment.

4.7 The in-depth interviews

In the five individual interviews, each of which lasted for about 15 minutes, participants were reminded of the questionnaire items and asked to comment further on some of them.

The interviews were conducted over the phone since it felt appropriate to contact these working professionals when they had enough time. Five respondents out of 33 who participated in the questionnaire voluntarily agreed to do the interviews.

When asked to comment further on the choice of the program three out of five replied that the most interesting program (both professionally and personally) is the MBA program. This finding corroborated the facts from the questionnaire in which 34% of the participants opted for MBA programs as their preferred educational model.

The second question about the most important factor in choosing a particular program unified four respondents around the program characteristics (value of degree, length of the programs, professors who are teaching, the group of students). Only one respondent explained that the most influencing factor is the “value” of the institution offering the program and its reputation. Again, this proved to back up the information displayed in Table 2. The program characteristics were amongst the top five most important factors when choosing a business graduate degree program.

The one thing that stood out when asked about the way of delivery/teaching was the importance of “face-to-face” versus on-line learning. All respondents preferred the face-to-face interaction due to reasons such as better student to student interaction, student to faculty interaction, more information received through body language, networking, and the notion that “management is not IT” (stated by one of the interviewees).

All five respondents agreed that the format of business graduate studies should be concentrated, one week in a month or similar. The weekend classes were asking for too much of a sacrifice, the after work is not always applicable (“when does after work start?”), and the traditional model is not realistic in this time and age.

When asked about the areas of interest there was no major consensus although the trend is leaning towards general management and business administration. Those two areas have been identified as the most interesting and providing the most general skills needed for the middle managers in Croatia.

The answer to the question number six: “How much do you know about programs offered currently in Croatia?” presented an overall very good knowledge among the interviewees. The respondents knew some of the programs, if not all, partially because of their own interest and partially because of their work involvement in the area of graduate studies.

When asked about the means of receiving information respondents were divided: presentation and brochure won over e-mail (only one respondent chose e-mail). The way presentation is delivered and the type of person who is delivering the information are crucial in the way the program is presented.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Chapter Four presented the results obtained through the questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Based on the findings the researcher came to the following conclusions about the educational needs of the middle managers in the Republic of Croatia:

- Middle managers in Croatia still lack some basic and general management skills and knowledge; therefore, they need a business program that would teach them those skills. In particular, financial management and general management courses were mentioned in the in-depth interviews.
- Middle managers in Croatia do not believe in online learning when it comes to business studies; therefore, they need face-to-face programs. Also, the middle managers value participants from different working backgrounds;
- Middle managers in Croatia still believe that the MBA type of the program meets the best their educational needs.

The current choice of business graduate programs in Croatia shows that out of seven programs five deliver MBA programs and state that that kind of a program is what the current market needs. The MBA model is still the preferred business graduate studies program in Croatia.

The present study shows that the major factors influencing the choice of a business graduate program are the profile of the instructors in the program (their expertise and reputation) as well as class days and times of delivery of the program.

My first recommendation would go towards possessing a deeper knowledge of the values associated with a particular type of a business graduate study of a particular country where you wish to open a new program. The research shows that the possibility of having a reliable

educational partner in Croatia would assure an immediate recognition in the market. The participants of the in-depth interviews also state that the value of having expert and renowned professors lies in the fact that they assure the quality of the program as well. The same participants seek a general management degree due to their lack of knowledge from that same field of study.

My second recommendation goes toward establishing a connection with a pool of companies willing to sponsor their employees since the present study shows that today's companies in Croatia are not still ready to sponsor further education of their employees. By influencing the company's perspective on investing into further education of their employees you broaden the possibility of presenting your particular business graduate program as the "ideal" business graduate program both for the company and the employee.

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Appendix 1a



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Public Serv

"Demand Analysis of the Graduate Studies Among Adult Learners in Croatia: Personal and Institutional Factors"

To begin your questionnaire, please read the following informed consent information.

Part I. Introduction

You are being asked to participate in a questionnaire to support research for a master's study entitled "Demand Analysis of the Graduate Studies Among Adult Learners in Croatia: Personal and Institutional Factors". The research is part of the requirement for the Executive Leader Master of Science Program in Service Management at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York. The student is Milena Kužnin, B.A. (Filozofski fakultet, Zagreb), M.S. candidate in Service Management. The chairman of the Master's committee is Dr. Damon A. Revelas, Associate Dean of the American College of Management and Technology, Dubrovnik, Croatia, a division of the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY.

Part II. Study Description

In this study, I am asking working professionals with minimum 3 years of experience from the city of Zagreb region about their expectations, perceptions and preferences when it comes to choosing a master's program. I am primarily interested in finding out what are the factors that influence the decision-making processes when choosing to continue your further education.

I am also interested in surveying employers of these working professionals to determine their opinions about how interested they are in sponsoring their employees to continue their education.

The questionnaire will take less than 15 minutes of your time.

The information you provide will be used for scholarly purposes only. For this Web-based questionnaire, electronic data will be stored on a private server in the researcher's home and will not be accessible by outside parties. If you fulfill the above mentioned criteria (minimum 3 years of working experience, currently employed in Zagreb area) please fill in the following questionnaire.

Thank you for your kind participation.

Milena Kuznin
Candidate, MS

Damon A. Revelas, Ph.D.

Chair

To participate click [here](#).

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Public Service

Demographic & Background Information

A1. Age:

A2. Gender:

Female Male

A3. Company with whom you work: A4. Position you currently occupy: A5. Duration of your work experience so far (in years):

A6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

College

Bachelor's (university)
degree

Master's degree

Other Education:

 if other what:

Motivation

B1. What type of training or education interest you most? (check only one)

if other what:

B2. What is the reason for pursuing further education? (check all that apply)

 Personal dream Gaining new knowledge and skills Change of my current job requires a Master's degree My current job requires a Master's degree Other (please specify): B3. How important is each of the following when you look at choosing a program or a school?
(check one box for each item)**One of the least
important****Not very
important****A little
important****Important****One of the most
important**

Financial

Tuition or fees

Scholarships

Company sponsored
program

Institution**Characteristics**

- Geographic location
- Private vs. public
- Class size

Program**Characteristics**

- Specific degree or certificate offered
- Class days and times
- Online instruction available
- Length of time to earn degree or certificate
- Professors (experience, degree, etc.)
- Other (please specify)

if other what:

Training Opportunities

C1. Is your company providing any in-house training? Yes No

C2. How effective that training is in terms of your current job:

Extremely Not - Effective 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Extremely Effective

C3. Has the management of the company expressed a desire to sponsor your further education outside the company's in-house training?

Fully Partially Not at all

Your needs as a learner

D1. What learning formats interest you most? (check all that apply)

- Face-to-face, on campus
- Face-to-face, other location in my community
- Online, with scheduled times for discussion
- Online, without scheduled times for discussion
- Other (please specify):

D2. What kind of classroom environment you work best in? (check all that apply) Traditional (teacher speaks - students listen and take notes)

- Interactive (teacher as a facilitator only)
- Small group sessions
- Individual projects
- Team-based learning
- Other (please specify):

D3. What are your preferred class days and times? (check all that apply)

- Traditional (over two years)

- Weekend classes
- Late afternoon classes
- Intensive (concentrated schedule in one year)
- Online (at your own time)
- Other (please specify):

D4. Have you already found a Master's program of your choice in Croatia? If, yes please indicate the institution offering the program and the type of the program:

Institution:

Program Type:

D5. Have you already found a Master's program of your choice outside the borders of Croatia? If yes, please indicate the country, institution offering the program, and type of the program:

Country:

Institution:

Program Type:

D6. Would you choose a program that was not delivered in your native language? If yes, which language would be your preferred language of program delivery?

if other what:

D7. What is the preferred major of your Master's program of choice:

if other what:

General Satisfaction Questions

E1. Please identify your general overall satisfaction with the current selection of Master's programs in Croatia:

Extremely Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Extremely Satisfied

E2. Please specify one characteristics of the current selection that you are most satisfied with:

E3. Please specify one characteristics of the current selection that you are the least satisfied with:

E4. Please indicate why do you want to continue your education:

if other what:

E5. When deciding on a Master's program how much time do you spend?

E6. Who do you consult before choosing a Master's program? (check all that apply)

Specialized counseling services

- HR Department inside the company
- Friends and family
- Internet
- Educational Institutions
- Other (please specify):

Open-ended questions: (your input is highly appreciated)

Please comment on influences on your academic decision making not already covered by this questionnaire:

Please suggest services that could help with academic decision making that are not currently available:

Please add any additional comments you would like to provide on this topic:

If you are interested in being a part of a focus group, which will discuss the same topic, please fill in following:

name:

e-mail address:

phone number:

Appendix 1b

Sponsored Links

Save Endangered Wildlife

We take action to protect & educate worldwide. Learn how you can help!

America's Second Harvest

Create a hunger-free America. Your donation will help feed millions.

NBTF - Get Important Info

Brain tumor diagnosis, treatment, support groups, news and more.

The Green Guide

The Source for Eco-F Product Reviews, Shc

"Analiza interesa i cimbenika koji utjecu na odluku pri izboru poslije-diplomskog studija u Hrvatskoj medu odraslim studentima"

Prije same ankete molim Vas procitajte opis i uvjete sudjelovanja u anketi.

Prvi dio Uvod

Ova anketa je dio magistarskog rada pod nazivom "Analiza interesa i cimbenika koji utjecu na odluku pri izboru poslije-diplomskog studija u Hrvatskoj medu odraslim studentima". Anketa je obvezni dio poslije-diplomskog "executive leader" studija u Managementu uslužnih djelatnosti, pod programom Rochesterskog instituta za tehnologiju (RIT), Rochester, New York. Moje ime je Milena Kuznin, profesorica sam engleskog jezika i književnosti i talijanskog jezika i književnosti i kandidat za magistricu iz Managementa korporativnih usluga. Mentor mog rada je dr. Damon A. Revelas, Prodekan za nastavu na American College of Management and Technology, Dubrovnik, Hrvatska, koji je podružnica RIT-a.

Drugi dio Opis ankete

Kao dio svog magistarskog rada zelim ispitati zaposlene profesionalce s područja grada Zagreba s minimalnim radnim stazom od 3 (tri) godine kakva su njihova očekivanja, percepcije i vrijednosti koje uzimaju u obzir prilikom odluke o nastavku školovanja nakon 4-ro godišnje diplome, tj. pri upisivanju poslije-diplomskog studija. Prvenstveno me zanima otkriti koji cimbenici utjecu na odluku izbora nastavka školovanja. Također, zanima me i provesti anketu medu poslodavcima te vidjeti dali su oni zainteresirani sponzorirati svoje uposlenike pri odabiru nastavka školovanja.

Ispunjavanje ankete traje nepunih 15 minuta.

Informacije iz ankete ce biti upotrijebljene samo i isključivo u svrhu ispunjavanja uvjeta mog magistarskog rada. Buduci da se radi o web anketi, svi podaci biti ce sacuvani na privatnom serveru u domu istraživaca te nece biti dostupni vanjskim strankama. Ukoliko zadovoljavate gore navedene uvjete (3 godine radnog staza, zaposleni u području grada Zagreba) unaprijed zahvaljujem na sudjelovanju u ispunjavanju ankete.

Milena Kuznin
MsSci Kandidatkinja

Dr.Damon A. Revelas

Mentor

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*Opci podaci*A1. Dob:

A2. Spol:

 Zenski Muski

A3. Ime tvrtke za koju trenutno radite:

A4. Radno mjesto: A5. Radni staz do sada (u godinama):

A6. Koji je najvisi stupanj obrazovanja koji posjedujete?

VI stupanj

VII stupanj

Poslije-diplomski

Drugo :

 molimo navedite koje:
Motivacija za nastavak studija

B1. Koji oblik profesionalnog usavršavanja vas najviše interesira? (izaberite samo jedan)

molimo navedite koje:

B2. Koji je primarni razlog nastavka Vaseg školovanja? (izaberite sve koji zadovoljavaju)

 Osobna zelja Stjecanje novih znanja i vjestina Promjena sadasnjeg posla zahtjeva visi stupanj obrazovanja Trenutni posao zahtjeva visi stupanj obrazovanja Drugo (molim naznacite):

B3. Koji vaznost pridajete sljedecim cimbenicima pri odabiru programa ili obrazovne institucije? (izaberite jedan odgovor po redu)

Jedan od najmanje bitnih

Nebitan

Malo bitan

Bitan

Jedan od najbitnijih

Troskovi

Skolarina i ostali izdaci

Mogucnost stipendije

Program sponzoriran od strane kompanije

Znacajke obrazovne institucije

Geografski položaj

Privatna ili drzavna	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Velicina radnih grupa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Znacajke programa					
Odredena diploma koja se nudi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vrijeme nastave i datumi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mogucnost "on-line" rada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Duzina programa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Izbor profesora (iskustvo, titula, itd.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Drugo (molim naznacite)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

molimo navedite koji:

Prilike za profesionalno usavršavanje

C1. Nudi li Vasa tvrtka programe profesionalnog usavršavanja unutar same organizacije za koju radite? Da Ne

C2. Ako nudi, jeste li zadovoljni ucinkom programa na Vas posao?

Izuzetno nezadovoljan 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Izuzetno zadovoljan

C3. Da li je uprava tvrtke izrazila zelju za sponzoriranjem nastavka Vaseg skolovanja izvan vec ponudjenih programa unutar tvrtke?

U potpunosti Djelomicno Jos ne

Vase studentske potrebe

D1. Kakav oblik učenja Vas najviše zanima? (izaberite sve koji zadovoljavaju)

- Licem-u-lice, unutar nekog sveucilista
- Licem-u-lice, izvan svucilista
- Online, s određenim rasporedom za diskusije
- Online, bez određenog vremena za diskusije
- Drugo (molim naznacite):

D2. U kakvom okruženju najbolje radite? (izaberite sve koji zadovoljavaju)

- Uobicajeni (profesor predaje - studenti slusaju i zapisuju biljeske)
- Interaktivni (profesor samo kao pomoc pri obradi novog materijala)
- Male grupne diskusije
- Individualan rad na projektu
- Timski rad
- Drugo (molim naznacite):

D3. Koji raspored bi Vam najviše odgovarao? (izaberite sve koji zadovoljavaju)

- Uobicajeni (dvije godine)
- Nastava preko vikenda
- Nastava u poslijepodnevним satima
- Intenzivan rad (s ubrzanim rasporedom prilagoden individualnim potrebama)
- Online (u slobodno vrijeme)
- Drugo (molim naznacite)::

D4. Jeste li već našli program koji Vam odgovara unutar R Hrvatske? Ako jeste, molim Vas da naznačite obrazovnu instituciju koja nudi program i tip programa:

Institucija::

Tip programa::

D5. Jeste li već našli program koji Vam odgovara izvan R Hrvatske? Ako jeste, molim Vas da naznačite obrazovnu instituciju koja nudi program i tip programa:

Zemlja::

Institucija::

Tip programa::

D6. Biste li izabrali program na jeziku koji nije Vas (materinji)? Ako je odgovor pozitivan, molim Vas da naznačite koji bi to jezik bio?

molim naznačite:

D7. Koji bi bio Vas najpovoljniji izbor smjera daljnjeg školovanja?

molim naznačite:

Pitanja o općem zadovoljstvu

E1. Molim Vas naznačite Vaše ukupno zadovoljstvo s trenutnom ponudom poslije-diplomskih programa u Hrvatskoj:

Iznimno nezadovoljan 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Iznimno zadovoljan

E2. Molim Vas navedite jednu karakteristiku izabranog programa koji Vas se najviše dojmio:

E3. Molim Vas navedite jednu karakteristiku izabranog programa koji Vas se najmanje dojmio:

E4. Molim Vas naznačite zašto želite nastaviti Vaše obrazovanje:

molim naznačite:

E5. Pri odabiru programa koliko vremena provedete prije konačne odluke?

E6. S kime se savjetujete pri konačnom odabiru programa? (izaberite sve koji zadovoljavaju)

Specijalizirane savjetodavne službe za profesionalno usavršavanje

Kadrovska služba unutar tvrtke

Prijatelji i obitelj

Internet

Obrazovne institucije

Drugo (molim naznačite):

Dodatni komentari: (najljepse zahvaljujem na prijedlozima)

Molim Vas da napisete par redaka o utjecajima pri odabiru nastavka studija koji nisu pokriveni pitanjima iz ankete:

Molim Vas da navedete usluge koje bi Vam mogle pomoci pri odabiru programa koje nisu trenutno prisutne u Hrvatskoj:

Molim Vas da napisete svoje komentare na istu temu:

Ako ste zainteresirani biti dijelom fokus grupe koja bi licem-u-lice diskutirala o pojedinim aspektima nastavka školovanja ispunite sljedece:

ime:

e-mail addressa:

tel. broj:

Appendix 2

The In-depth Interviews

In the five individual phone interviews, each of which lasted for about 15 minutes, participants were reminded of the questionnaire items and asked to comment further on some of them.

Participant's name: Donald Mudrinić

Position: Project Manager

Date: July 15, 2004

Time: 14:00 – 14:17

Q1. From the current offerings of business graduate programs in Croatia which one would interest you most (both personally and professionally) and why?

A. Definitely an MBA program in General management. Since I graduated from an engineering undergraduate program I lack certain skills and knowledge from the management arena and I feel that an MBA program suits my needs the best.

Q2. Which factors influence your decision about enrolling a program of your choice? Please choose one category and explain why? (Categories offered: financial, educational institution characteristics, type of program and professors)

A. I always look at the “value of the diploma” received. I guess I look at who is teaching in the program, how they relate to my career and of course I look at who is attending the same program.

Q3. If offered a choice to attend a program offered online or face-to-face, which one would you choose and why?

A. I would always choose face-to-face since I believe that the exchange of different ideas, interaction and networking is much higher when dealing with “real” people than in a virtual space. Especially in Croatia. For me it is easier attending a real class and I do not need to “adjust” to any kind of format given by online learning.

Q4. When it comes to the days and times of the delivery of the program, what is your preferred schedule? Please explain.

A. I know that classes after working hours are not successful (participants are too tired to focus on learning). I think that some sort of a concentrated schedule (weekends) works the best. I have heard about week long classes but my working schedule will not allow me to take every three months a week off.

Q5. Please choose one area that you would like your preferred program to be in and explain why:

- Economics
- General Management
- Service Management
- Business Administration
- Informatics & Technology
- Other

A. That would be General Management. Looking from the current perspective I believe that the GM will me additional knowledge and skills needed for my career.

Q6. How much do you know about programs offered currently in Croatia?

A. I really do not know much. All I know is that there are a lot of them. Zagreb School of Management called me to be a guest speaker. I also know that one of the best MBA programs is located in Bled, Slovenia.

Q7. How would you like to receive information about the new business graduate programs?

A. An info session organized in a form of an “after-work party”, with a very interesting guest speaker, evening hours also suitable.

Participant’s name: Besim Agušaj

Position: Consultant

Date: July 15, 2004

Time: 14:30 – 14:45

Q1. From the current offerings of business graduate programs in Croatia which one would interest you most (both personally and professionally) and why?

A. I would personally always opt for a traditional two-year graduate program. It is the only time when you will have a complete full-immersion and no distractions form the outside world. But, I am also realistic in seeing that the value proposition is not there for today’s market.

Q2. Which factors influence your decision about enrolling a program of your choice? Please choose one category and explain why? (Categories offered: financial, educational institution characteristics, type of program and professors)

A. I would rank them in this order: first, I look at the institution and its reputation, then I look at the program and finally the finances. I believe that the stronger the institution the more value there is to the program delivered.

Q3. If offered a choice to attend a program offered online or face-to-face, which one would you choose and why?

A. Management is not a computer science and I do believe that online learning works the best for computer based training. I think that the space and the “body language” contain much more information than computer interface only.

Q4. When it comes to the days and times of the delivery of the program, what is your preferred schedule? Please explain.

A. Definitely concentrated – week on every month or two months.

Q5. Please choose one area that you would like your preferred program to be in and explain why:

- Economics
- General Management
- Service Management
- Business Administration
- Informatics & Technology
- Other

A. General Management – Human Resources as a specialization.

Q6. How much do you know about programs offered currently in Croatia?

A. Being a consultant, I know a lot about the current programs in Croatia.

Q7. How would you like to receive information about the new business graduate programs?

A. I prefer a nice brochure.

Participant's name: Renata First

Position: ???

Date: July 16, 2004

Time: 14:00 – 14:15

Q1. From the current offerings of business graduate programs in Croatia which one would interest you most (both personally and professionally) and why?

A. I would personally opt for individual courses taken during a year.

Q2. Which factors influence your decision about enrolling a program of your choice? Please choose one category and explain why? (Categories offered: financial, educational institution characteristics, type of program and professors)

A. Type of the program and the professors that are teaching the courses.

Q3. If offered a choice to attend a program offered online or face-to-face, which one would you choose and why?

A. I would always choose face-to-face since I do not belong to the IT generation. Also, I do believe that the interaction is better face-to-face.

Q4. When it comes to the days and times of the delivery of the program, what is your preferred schedule? Please explain.

A. Definitely week long classes every two months or so.

Q5. Please choose one area that you would like your preferred program to be in and explain why:

- Economics
- General Management
- Service Management
- Business Administration
- Informatics & Technology
- Other

A. Service Management sound appealing to me since I already possess an undergraduate degree in Economics.

Q6. How much do you know about programs offered currently in Croatia?

A. I really know basic information about Croatian programs. I do not know much about the international co operations.

Q7. How would you like to receive information about the new business graduate programs?

A. A strong presentation in late afternoon hours, there should be a ‘performer’/Seller along with the professors and participants who went through the program. Also, I would like to periodically receive e-mails about any news. Brochures do fade out more and more.

Participant’s name: Zoran Sikora

Position: HR Manager

Date: July 16, 2004

Time: 14:30 – 14:47

Q1. From the current offerings of business graduate programs in Croatia which one would interest you most (both personally and professionally) and why?

A. Since my duties at work do not allow me to attend a traditional two year program I would go for an Executive Leader type. If possible, Business Management concentration would be my choice.

Q2. Which factors influence your decision about enrolling a program of your choice? Please choose one category and explain why? (Categories offered: financial, educational institution characteristics, type of program and professors)

A. Definitely type of the program comes first. The profile of professors is crucial (are they experts in the field, what is their academic background, etc.).

Q3. If offered a choice to attend a program offered online or face-to-face, which one would you choose and why?

A. I do not believe in online learning, especially on this level. The greater value lies in the interface between peers attending the program.

Q4. When it comes to the days and times of the delivery of the program, what is your preferred schedule? Please explain.

A. The preferred schedule would be some sort of a concentrated format (week long classes or evening hours). That is something that would probably suit me the best professionally.

Q5. Please choose one area that you would like your preferred program to be in and explain why:

- Economics
- General Management
- Service Management
- Business Administration
- Informatics & Technology
- Other

A. Business Administration since my future career will go in that direction. I need to be more educated in a “general” way vs. more specialized.

Q6. How much do you know about programs offered currently in Croatia?

A. I am aware that more and more international schools are coming to Croatia and opening new programs (Michigan Economics, RIT, HUP -Croatian Association of Employers- opened its own international school).

Q7. How would you like to receive information about the new business graduate programs?

A. Definitely e-mail would be the preferred way and only used in a way to provide me with the info targeted to me individually (I hate mass mailings).

Participant's name: Selma Avdagić

Position: Relationship Marketing Manager

Date: July 16, 2004

Time: 15:00 – 15:14

Q1. From the current offerings of business graduate programs in Croatia which one would interest you most (both personally and professionally) and why?

A. Definitely an MBA program in Finances and Corporate Analysis. This area is my weak spot (since my undergraduate degree did not cover that area).

Q2. Which factors influence your decision about enrolling a program of your choice? Please choose one category and explain why? (Categories offered: financial, educational institution characteristics, type of program and professors)

A. I would stress the program as the main influence and its strengths (professors, courses, applicability to real life).

Q3. If offered a choice to attend a program offered online or face-to-face, which one would you choose and why?

A. The exchange of experience is more “direct” in face-to-face environment. The value of “human touch” when it comes to having a real professor vs. a computer is a big factor for me. But, I would not mind having a “blend” – 30% online, 70% in person.

Q4. When it comes to the days and times of the delivery of the program, what is your preferred schedule? Please explain.

A. I do not like classes offered during the weekend since I do need a break from a working load. The concentrated schedule and a location that would take me away from my working environment sounds most appealing to me.

Q5. Please choose one area that you would like your preferred program to be in and explain why:

- Economics
- General Management
- Service Management
- Business Administration
- Informatics & Technology
- Other

A. Business Administration and Leadership – it would give me the general knowledge that I feel is needed in today’s corporate world.

Q6. How much do you know about programs offered currently in Croatia?

A. I have tried to get to know more about those programs in the last year or so (since I am personally interested in continuing education). I know that there are more and more international ventures.

Q7. How would you like to receive information about the new business graduate programs?

A. Brochure still works best for me (with lots of good photos, interesting articles, and a glossy touch to it). I hate e-mails since I receive too many of them on a daily basis.
