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# School Inclusiveness and the Degree of Development of Students' Civic Competence

**Abstract:** This paper presents an empirical study on the relationship between school inclusiveness and students' civic competence conducted on a representative sample of students and teachers from the Banja Luka region of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It discusses the effect of school inclusiveness on students' civic competence, a key lifelong learning competence as defined by the EU. Earlier studies focusing on either inclusive education or citizenship education helped to conceptualise this study. Contrary to expectations, students' and teachers' perception of the key components of primary education differed considerably. In-class teaching, student-teacher rapport, communication at school, the school setting, and school overall were seen as inclusive by students at a below average rate and at an above average rate by teachers, while both perceived extracurricular activities as the most inclusive. Consistent with earlier studies, students performed better on assessments of civic knowledge compared to civic skills and dispositions. A significant correlation was found between students' civic competence and their perception of the inclusiveness of most of the components of primary education.

The paper points to possible reasons for such results, which require further research, and the possibilities for making primary school more inclusive on scientific grounds, thus enhancing the quality of primary education overall and facilitating students' acquisition of civic and other lifelong learning competences.

**Keywords:** School inclusiveness, the education system, students' civic competence, competences for lifelong learning.

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## Introduction

School inclusiveness and student citizenship education have been the focus of various theoretical considerations, teaching method choices, and educators' professional development initiatives; they have been at the core of legislative decision making and research and development projects, and the subject of scientific and professional conferences, pedagogical literature, and, last but not least, empirical research. They have mostly been studied and interpreted separately to date. However, in the reality of education, their conceptions, characteristics, processes, and outcomes are intertwined, complementary, and interdependent. This makes any investigation of the connection between primary school inclusiveness and the level of civic competence of students both scientifically and socially relevant.

Inclusive schools are those that »accept and consistently engage all students with learning and participation difficulties, i.e., students with minor developmental difficulties, gifted students as well as all other students in all forms of educational activities (in-class teaching, extracurricular activities, community service, public and cultural activities, etc.) in accordance with their potential (cognitive, conative, ethical, affective, psychomotor, etc.) and the optimal expected outcomes of learning, teaching and creative work« (Ilić 2009a, p. 445). According to this definition, the phrase *school inclusiveness* means the degree of acceptance and continuous inclusion of all students in all components of the educational process in school, as per their individual needs, interests, and potential, for the purpose of optimising the outcomes of learning, complementary instruction, and creative activities. Inclusiveness means the equitable treatment of all students in support of their achievement, while appreciating their differences (Florian et al. 2017). For some researchers, a school's ability to adapt its structures to its students' differences, and not vice versa, is what makes it significantly inclusive (Ainscow et al. 2003).

A resource called the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth and Ainscow 2008) has been empirically validated and adopted (as well as adapted) by a number of countries; it is used to monitor the degree of inclusiveness of schools—more specifically, the following three dimensions of inclusiveness:

- Creating inclusive cultures, with two subdimensions: a) building community and b) establishing inclusive values;
- Producing inclusive policies, with these subdimensions: a) developing the school for all and b) organising support for diversity; and
- Evolving inclusive practices, also with two subdimensions: a) orchestrating learning and b) mobilising resources (Booth and Ainscow 2008; Ilić 2012a).

Each of the subdimensions contains a number of indicators. They make operational a complete methodology for analysing, developing, and evaluating how inclusive a school is. An inclusive school requires the participation of representatives of all stakeholders: students, teachers, classroom assistants, the school administration, parents, other school employees, and community representatives. »From the very start, all are involved in the training, evaluation, planning of inclusive school development, implementation and monitoring of inclusive education in the specified dimensions and subdimensions. This raises the quality of work in all forms and segments of school activity—extracurricular, public and cultural, creative and recreational, community service, humanitarian and other activities of importance not only for students, but for all school employees, families and the larger community« (Ilić 2012a, p. 39).

For the purpose of this research, consistent with the respondents' (primary school, year six students) age-specific abilities, we identified the key components of formal education, the majority of which belong to the third dimension of the Index for Inclusion, evolving inclusive practices, in addition to select indicators from the first and second dimensions, creating inclusive cultures and producing inclusive policies. We analysed the relationship between the inclusiveness indicators of these key components of the educational process and primary school as a whole on the one hand, and the level of students' civic competence on the other.

### **A theoretical framework for the study of the relationship between school inclusiveness and the development of students' civic competence**

The concepts underpinning this research are based on thematically similar studies conducted since the turn of the century. It was in the early 2000s that researchers concluded there were two main obstacles to making primary school fully inclusive: teachers' lack of professional knowledge and their lack of experience regarding inclusion (Kunstmann 2003). A comparative study conducted in six countries (Nigeria, Brazil, Spain, South Africa, Japan, and Pakistan) found a strong correlation between the training of those employed in the education sector and their positive attitude to inclusion, the former being a key factor in good education (Opdal et al. 2001). Other studies also showed that specially training teachers for inclusive education contributed to their adoption of positive attitudes to inclusion in formal education (Kiš-Glavaš 1999). A round of experimental research found that teachers, after receiving six months of interactive professional training, demon-

strated their pedagogical, psychological, didactic, and methodological competence regarding the provision of inclusive education to be at a much higher level than before the training, more specifically, regarding the teaching of the mother tongue to year five students, who on average had better results on assessments of reading speed, reading comprehension, written expression, verbal creativity, and learning motivation than the control classes (Ilić 2009b). The results of these and other studies show that improving teachers' professional competence makes in-class teaching as well as extracurricular and other educational activities in school more inclusive, which in turn helps to facilitate the development of students' competence in lifelong learning, including civic competence.

Citizenship education has long been in the focus of scientific and educational communities, as well as the general public. Since the publication of John Dewey's influential *Democracy and Education* in 1916, a substantial body of scientific, professional, and instructional literature has been published on the concepts, academic status, programmes, aims, processes, and outcomes of citizenship education of children and adolescents<sup>1</sup>.

The authors who focused on the civic competence of students in their theoretical considerations are in agreement as to civic knowledge, skills, attitudes, and convictions being the core components of civic competence (Patrick 1997; Branson and Quigley 1998; Quisumbing 2002; Jurs 2014). Civic competences are »an amalgamation of civic knowledge, skills (abilities), attitudes and beliefs (virtues), and capabilities that allow an individual to participate effectively in social life« (Ilić 2012b, p. 45).

Here are some examples of civic competences:

- a) Civic knowledge:
  - i) knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities in one's own country;
  - ii) understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the government at the local, cantonal, and state level;
- b) Cognitive civic skills:
  - i) critical analysis of information about current political events or a certain activity of citizens (using thematically relevant knowledge);
- c) Participative civic skills:
  - i) interaction with other citizens in promoting general interests;
- d) Attitudes and beliefs of citizens:
  - i) willingness to volunteer and participate in civic activities.
- e) Citizens' abilities:
  - i) identification of the causes and consequences of social events and phenomena, distinguishing democracy from manipulation, arguments from indoctrination, etc. (Jerković et al. 2018, p. 56).

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<sup>1</sup> A list of noteworthy works on citizenship education must include, but not be limited to: Babić (1997); Canivez (1999); Hass (2004); Ilić (2004, 2012); Johnson and Johnson (2002); Jovanović (2006); Pašalić-Kreso (2003); Spajić-Vrkaš and Džidić (2011); Torney-Purta et al. (2001) and Vasović (1997).

These and other civic competences are functionally interdependent in the holistic profile of the ideal citizen of democratic society—one who is educated, informed, socially active, and committed to democratic values and the common good. Conditions for a more rapid development of students' civic competence are more favourable in schools where educational activity as a whole is highly inclusive. Reciprocally, the faster and greater the development of students' interpersonal and civic competences, the more it helps to raise the degree of school inclusiveness.

Social and civic competences have been listed among the eight key competences for lifelong learning, as defined by the European Union. They are:

- Communication in the mother tongue,
- Communication in foreign languages,
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology,
- Digital competence,
- Learning to learn,
- Social and civic competence,
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship,
- Cultural awareness and expression (OECD 2009; Raičević et al. 2015).

The lifelong learning competence of primary school students, which includes civic competence, has been studied in practice in schools. These studies have identified a great need among teachers and students to learn about new guidelines and approaches to the development of lifelong learning competence through adequate primary school programmes (Jakić 2006, p. 83). The representative samples of students and teachers involved helped to outline the situation, recognising the need to consistently support and enhance the development of lifelong learning competence in formal education in Montenegro (Raičević et al. 2015).

There has been very little empirical research into the process and outcomes of citizenship education or democracy and human rights education in our schools, and consequently there is insufficient data in the relevant literature. This makes it difficult to study in depth the connection between the level of development of civic competence and overall school inclusiveness. The findings of empirical research into the social and pedagogical rationale for the introduction of the new compulsory subject of democracy and human rights in primary and secondary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina are presented and analysed in an excellent paper co-authored by Spajić-Vrkaš and Džidić. Their initial study included 1505 students (the final study included 1685) in years two, three, and four of secondary school (2011, p. 7). The study confirmed that the new subject had justified its purpose by improving students' understanding of notions, principles, institutions, and practices related to democracy, human rights, and citizenship. Again, the findings showed that the secondary school students excelled at the acquisition of civic knowledge over the development of civic skills and dispositions (attitudes and virtues).

A recently conducted study (Jerković et al. 2018) showed that primary school students in Bosnia and Herzegovina (both in the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) achieved considerably better results regarding civic education knowledge compared to civic education competence, i.e. their acquisition of declarative knowledge was better than their demonstration of cognitive and participative civic skills, abilities, attitudes, moral reasoning and action, and interpersonal activities.

Although the cited theoretical considerations, research papers, and projects in development and in practice dealt separately with the subjects of inclusive schools and students' citizenship education, they contributed greatly to the preparation for and conduct of this research and analysis of the interdependence between the level of inclusiveness in key components of the educational process in primary school and the degree of the development of civic competence among senior primary students.

## **Research methodology**

The goal of this empirical, non-experimental research was to identify indicators of primary school inclusiveness and the development of students' civic competence, as well as to establish a connection between those variables, if any.

It was hypothesised that:

- Students and teachers do not differ significantly in their perception of the key segments of the educational process in primary school;
- There is a strong connection between the degree of school inclusiveness and the level of students' civic competence.

### *Research methods, techniques and instruments*

The research methods used were theoretical analysis and synthesis, survey research, and the comparative method. The research techniques used were school and student records analysis, testing, and scaling.

The method of theoretical analysis and synthesis was used to study the literature and to classify and interpret the research results. The survey research method was used to obtain evaluations of the degree of school inclusiveness and students' civic competence. The comparative method was employed to compare the findings of this study with those of earlier research.

Analysis of school and student records helped with determining the size and characteristics of the study population. The data on the number of year six students and democracy-and-human rights teachers were obtained from the Republic of Srpska Pedagogical Agency, whose records were also the source of information regarding annual work plans/curricula of primary schools in the Banja Luka region in 2018–2019.

The research instruments designed and validated for this study and employed in it were a semantic differential of students' and teachers' evaluations of school inclusiveness (SD – STESI) and a student civic competence test (SCCT).

The *semantic differential of students' and teachers' evaluations of school inclusiveness* (SD – STESI) allowed the respondents to express numerically their experience and perception of the following segments of the educational process in school:

- In-class teaching,
- Extracurricular activities,
- Student-teacher rapport,
- Communication in school,
- School setting.

The semantic differential included 50 seven-point (3, 2, 1, 0, -3, -2, -1) scales or items. For each of them, the respondents marked a point indicating acceptance or rejection of a given characteristic of that specific element of the evaluated segment of formal education. For instance, if a respondent completely agreed with the statement *in-class teaching is inclusive*, they circled 3, but if they completely disagreed with it, they circled -3. If they simply agreed with the statement, they marked 2, but if they disagreed, they chose -2. If a respondent perceived in-class teaching as slightly more inclusive than the alternative, they circled point 1, and if they found it slightly non-inclusive, they circled -1. Finally, if a respondent thought in-class teaching alternated between being inclusive and non-inclusive, they were instructed to circle 0. Each of the five segments of school work and life was worth a maximum of 10 points, and the complete differential a total of 50 points. Very few respondents scored 50 points, evaluating school as completely inclusive. For the pilot study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.893 ( $N = 100$ ) for the students and 0.862 ( $N = 40$ ) for the teachers, which confirmed the reliability of the semantic differential scale used.

The *student civic competence test* (SCCT) had three parts:

- Test of students' basic civic knowledge (11 questions, maximum 22 points)
- Student civic skills self-evaluation scale (10 statements, maximum 30 points)
- Student civic dispositions self-evaluation scale (6 statements, maximum 18 points).

The test was validated in a pilot study that included 100 students. Cronbach's Alpha reliability was calculated at  $r = 0.912$ , validating the measuring instrument as highly reliable.

### *Research sample*

The empirical research was conducted in the first half of June 2019 in primary schools in the Banja Luka region of the Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Along with the city of Banja Luka, the region includes the municipalities of Laktaši, Gradiška, Srbac, Čelinac, Kotor Varoš, and Kneževo. The population included 2902 year six primary students and 1239 subject teachers.

The sample included 310 students from randomly selected year six classes (10.68% of the total population under consideration) and 100 subject teachers from the same primary schools (8.07% of the total number of subject teachers working in the schools located in the region under consideration). In terms of the manner of class selection, the samples were chosen randomly, and an optimal number of respondents for this type of empirical research was chosen. This ensured conditions that promoted accuracy during data collection, presentation, processing, and generalisation.

### *Data analysis*

In accordance with the goal and hypothesis of this research, the following statistical procedures were used: a calculation of measures of central tendency (means) and of standard deviation, the t-difference between means (t-values), and Pearson correlation coefficients. To test the first hypothesis, t-values were calculated, which helped determine if there was a difference between how students and teachers perceived the components of the educational process. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to confirm the second hypothesis, i.e., the existence of a connection between evaluations of the inclusiveness of the studied components of the educational process and the civic competence of students. SPSS 22.0 for Windows was used to process the data and present the key findings.

## **Results and discussion**

The results of the empirical research were analysed to answer these questions:

- Do students and teachers differ in their evaluation of school inclusiveness?
- Is there a strong connection between school inclusiveness and the level of students' civic competence?

Indicators of inclusiveness in the selected segments of the educational process in primary school yielded by the study are presented in the table below.

Educational process component	Respondents	N	M	SD	t-value	Significance probability (p)
In-class teaching	Students	310	13.37	4.27	8.25	.00
	Teachers	100	20.69	3.65		
Extracurricular activities	Students	310	19.18	3.54	5.76	.05
	Teachers	100	27.74	4.36		
Student-teacher rapport	Students	310	14.29	3.41	7.38	.00
	Teachers	100	25.34	3.83		
Communication at school	Students	310	12.76	3.85	6.49	.00
	Teachers	100	20.35	3.91		
School setting	Students	310	13.82	3.62	6.65	.00
	Teachers	100	20.47	4.28		
School evaluation, total	Students	310	73.42	3.59	6.84	.00
	Teachers	100	111.60	3.81		

Table 1: Indicators of perception of quality of components of the educational process in school

The research results given in Table 1 show that students perceived four components of the educational process in school (in-class teaching, student-teacher rapport, communication at school, and school setting) as below average for inclusion, with a mean value (M) between 12.76 and 14.29 out of a maximum of 30 points for each individual component on the semantic differential scale. This was just short of a positive evaluation.

In comparison with the students, the teachers evaluated all five components of the educational process in primary school to be inclusive to an above-average degree (M = 20.35–25.35). It is likely the teachers were biased to an extent and were responding in a socially desirable way. They may have had in mind professional apparent commitments and legislation regarding inclusive schools and education formally adopted in our society's transition from totalitarianism to democracy. This was a development that occurred in our society following a strong international movement for social and educational inclusion. Some of the teachers included in this research may have responded in ways they deemed desirable, not in ways that reflected how inclusive the chosen components of primary formal education really are.

The respondents from the student sample perceived school inclusiveness as below average (M = 73.42), whereas their teachers thought it to be above average (M = 111.60). Consistent with the t-values ( $t = 6.84$ ;  $p = .00$ ) of the five components of the educational process in primary school studied and primary school as a whole, there is a significant difference between how the students and teachers perceived primary school as inclusive. This disproves our first hy-

pothesis, which proposed that this study would not find a significant difference on average between the students' and teachers' evaluation of primary school inclusiveness.

We may search for an explanation in the most dominant characteristics of in-class teaching, interpersonal relations, and communication in and attributes of the school setting. Those characteristics differ from what characterises extracurricular activities. Students make decisions individually as to what extracurricular activity they wish to participate in. With the help of a teacher/instructor, they choose what they want to study, explore, practice, or make; the time and place of activity; and how they want to present the results of their chosen extracurricular activity. These activities often allow students to develop and/or sustain personal interests or those they share with another person, group, or community; to create things; and also to improve their personal interactions, relationships, collaboration skills, interpersonal understanding, support systems, and friendships. All of this does not predominantly characterise in-class teaching, interpersonal relationships, and communication at school, or life and activities in primary school in general, which explains why these components of the educational process are inclusive to a lesser degree, as found by this research.

Next, Table 2 presents indicators of the level of students' civic competence, before a discussion of our second hypothesis.

Students' civic competence	N	Max.	%	M	SD
Civic knowledge	310	32	60.53	19.37	6.24
Civic skills	310	30	44.33	13.33	4.19
Civic dispositions	310	18	47.00	8.46	3.45
Total	310	80	50.32	17.05	4.63

Table 2: Indicators of level of students' civic competence

As shown by the research results, the students, who were then at the end of their second triad, i.e., close to finishing year six, which included democracy and human rights as a compulsory subject, scored just above average (60, 53%) on the basic civic knowledge test. This score is socially and pedagogically significant, but it is still fairly low. It is an indicator of not only how the subject of democracy and human rights is taught, but also of how key concepts are presented and discussed in lessons with homeroom teachers, in the years preceding year six, and cross-curricularly (in the teaching of other subjects, especially those in the areas of social sciences and the humanities). Lecture-style or direct instruction is what still predominates in most classrooms, including those teaching democracy and human rights, where most of the focus is on direct instruction and learning from books, with students acquiring declarative knowledge, which is easily forgotten. The results of this study indicate a below-average level of development of civic skills and dispositions (beliefs, virtues, and actual actions, or civil activism). The results of earlier research on the subject of the effects of citizenship education are

quite similar. In their study, Spajić-Vrkaš and Džidić (2011, p. 7) obtained higher average results on tests measuring civic knowledge than those measuring civic skills and dispositions (attitudes and virtues) of secondary school students. An empirical study also conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Jerković et al. 2018) found citizenship education to have better results when it comes to knowledge acquisition, compared to behaviour change, also in primary school. The students were »superior in civic and other verbal-reproductive knowledge than in the exercise of civic cognitive and participatory skills, abilities, attitudes (qualities), moral judgment and actions, and interpersonal skills« (p. 55). What accounts for the results of this and previous studies?

One of the causes may have to do with how democracy and human rights, as well as other subjects, are taught, and with the actual level of inclusiveness of schools as a whole. A great number of teachers have participated in seminars whose goal was to train them to teach democracy and human rights interactively, in a way that allows students to acquire functional and transferrable civic knowledge; develop civic skills; and adopt positive attitudes to democratic values, the common good, and civil activism. The seminars have taken the form of workshops that are methodologically grounded and inclusive. Nonetheless, although by comparison with other subjects the teaching of democracy and human rights is largely student-centred, too often it is not experiential, interactive, explorative, creative, productive, and individualised learning—as characterised by critical thinking—that is fostered, nor is it supported by creative and effective teaching carried out in an inclusive classroom and an inclusive school environment. In teaching this new subject, a more equitable balance should be achieved between acquiring declarative knowledge and developing civic skills and dispositions. Few are the situations in which students are given the opportunity to apply freely and critically principled civic knowledge and deal responsibly with the important matters of the preparation, execution, and evaluation of the teaching of this and other subjects, the non-violent resolution of conflicts between students and teachers, and the resolution of any issues between classmates in school and/or the larger community.

The second hypothesis was tested by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) for the perceived inclusiveness of the selected components of primary formal education and students' civic competence indicators. The correlation coefficients are presented in the table below.

The obtained data support our second hypothesis that there is a connection between most of the components of the educational process in primary school and the degree of students' civic competence.

Variables	In-class teaching	Extracurricular activities	Student-teacher rapport	Communication at school	School setting	Civic knowledge	Civic skills	Civic dispositions
In-class teaching								
Extracurricular activities	0.42**							
Student-teacher rapport	0.31*	0.46**						
Communication at school	0.32*	0.48**	0.47**					
School setting	0.13	0.30*	0.31*	0.33*				
Civic knowledge	0.47**	0.31*	0.21	0.23	0.22			
Civic skills	0.21	0.38**	0.29**	0.40**	0.20	0,32*		
Civic dispositions	- 0.13	0.20	0.12	0.16	0.11	0,14	0.15	

Table 3: Correlation ( $r$ ) between perceived inclusiveness of primary school and students' civic competence

\* correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) = 0.05

\*\* correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) = 0.01

The table shows a strong connection between the perceptions of the inclusiveness of most of the components of the educational process in school, as minimally inclusive as they (and thereby also primary school as a whole) were evaluated to be. Extracurricular activities were perceived as the most inclusive; consequently, the correlation of this variable with the perception of all other components of school work, civic knowledge, and civic disposition is the highest. This finding is consistent with the evaluation of extracurricular activities as the only component of schooling with above-average inclusivity. There are multiple interrelated reasons for students' and teachers' disparate evaluations of the quality of the main components of the educational process in primary school, their reception, and the socially inadequate level of inclusiveness of primary school. Such schooling does not support sufficiently or facilitate the development of civic skills and dispositions by students, nor does it optimise the acquisition of other lifelong learning competences. Perception of student-teacher rapport and communication at school is directly connected to the level of the development of civic skills, unlike civic knowledge or disposition. The coefficients of correlation between the selected formal education components and students' civic dispositions are not significant. There is no strong correlation between how a school setting is perceived and the degree of development of students' civic competence. This could be indicative of many students' lack of familiarity with or rejection of the school setting in general, because the majority of them are not involved in making decisions regarding work and life in their respective schools.

The results of this empirical research emphasise the need to consistently strengthen the connections between the examined components of the educational process in primary school, make them more inclusive, and continuously modernise

and improve the teaching and learning of democracy and human rights and other subjects, particularly those falling in the domain of social sciences and the humanities, with the aim of facilitating the development of civic competence and acquisition of other lifelong-learning skills and abilities for students.

## Conclusions

Inclusivity and citizenship education interrelate and are interdependent in the pedagogical work of any school. However, to date they have mostly been separately conceptualised, researched, and put into practice. Consistent with the approaches, experiences, and results of earlier research and projects aimed at introducing inclusion and citizen education in schools and system development, we designed and conducted an empirical, non-experimental research study with the aim of simultaneously qualifying the reception of the main components of the formal educational process and the level of development of students' civic competence, and of checking their correlation.

This empirical research yielded indicators of the inclusiveness of the key components of the educational process in primary school and the level of development of students' civic competence. The degree of inclusiveness of in-class teaching, student-teacher rapport, communication at school, the school setting and work and life in primary school as a whole are perceived as below average by students and as above average by teachers.

There is likely to be a degree of bias in teachers' evaluations. They may have reported the socially expected, not actual, degree of inclusiveness of the investigated components of the educational process, which includes their work as teachers. Both students and teachers perceive extracurricular activities as inclusive to an above-average degree, since they engage in them freely, according to their affinities, the activities are organised with greater flexibility, and the participants in them, both students and teachers, decide jointly on their preparation, execution, and evaluation, which makes them feel pleasant and self-actualising. According to the research results, it can be concluded that the inclusiveness of most of the components of primary school is not at a socially desirable level, which means its contribution to students' training for lifelong learning, including the development of civic competence, is suboptimal.

The research results indicate students are, on average, better at acquiring basic civic knowledge than at developing cognitive and participative skills and civic dispositions—attitudes; beliefs; and commitment to the common good, democracy, justice, and civil activism—which is consistent with the results of previous thematically related studies.

A significant positive correlation was found between the degree of inclusiveness of most of the components of the educational process and students' civic knowledge, but not their skills or dispositions, which also confirms the findings of earlier empirical research.

To make the results of this research more socially and pedagogically relevant, future research should explore possibilities for increasing the scope, innovativeness, and efficacy of educational activities in contemporary schooling, with the aim of facilitating and accelerating the development of lifelong learning competences to every student's full potential.

The results of this research have formal pedagogical implications. The Index of Inclusion should provide a basis for the design and implementation of two- and three-year plans—perhaps also annual plans—for the development of all primary and secondary schools, still largely traditional and autocratic, into contemporary, high-quality, inclusive educational facilities, in which all students will have equal opportunities to develop their potential through critical and creative participation and exploratory, experiential, and interactive learning supported by effective teaching. Such an increase in the quality of in-class teaching, as well as other school activities, would create the conditions necessary for students to continually build their civic and other lifelong learning competences.

Inclusivity and citizenship education should be incorporated into teachers' colleges and taught obligatorily to all students, irrespective of their study programme' and become part of the professional development plans of all teachers and classroom assistants.

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## INKUZIJA IN STOPNJA RAZVOJA DRŽAVLJANSKIH KOMPETENC UČENCEV

**Povzetek:** Članek predstavlja empirično raziskavo o povezanosti med inkluzivnostjo šol in državljanskimi kompetencami učencev, ki je bila izvedena na reprezentativnem vzorcu učencev in učiteljev s področja Banja Luke v Bosni in Hercegovini. Obravnava vpliv inkluzivnosti šol na državljanske kompetence učencev, ki so po opredelitvi EU ključne kompetence vseživljenjskega učenja. Pri zasnovi te raziskave so pomagale predhodne študije, ki so se osredotočale na inkluzivnost v vzgoji in izobraževanju ter na državljansko vzgojo. V nasprotju s pričakovanji se je dojemanje učencev in učiteljev o ključnih vidikih osnovnošolskega izobraževanja precej razlikovalo. Učenci so poučevanje v razredu, odnos med učenci in učitelji, komunikacijo v šoli, šolsko okolje in šolo na splošno v podpovprečju ocenili kot vključujoče, učitelji pa so jih kot vključujoče ocenili v nadpovprečni meri; oboji so kot najbolj vključujoče ocenili obšolske dejavnosti. Podobno kot v prejšnjih raziskavah so se učenci bolje odrezali pri ocenjevanju poznavanja podatkov in informacij s področja državljanske vzgoje, kot pri obvladovanju državljanskih spretnostih in veščinah. Ugotovljena je bila pomembna korelacija med državljanskimi kompetencami učencev in njihovim dojemanjem inkluzivnosti večine elementov osnovnošolskega izobraževanja.

Članek opozarja na možne razloge za takšne rezultate, ki pa jih je treba še dodatno proučiti, in na možnosti za povečanje inkluzivnosti osnovne šole na znanstveni podlagi, kar bi izboljšalo splošno kakovost osnovnošolskega izobraževanja ter učencem pomagalo pridobiti državljanske in druge kompetence za vseživljenjsko učenje.

**Ključne besede:** inkluzija, vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem, državljanske kompetence učencev, kompetence za vseživljenjsko učenje

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