

Entrepreneurship – cross-curricular and interdisciplinary topic in Elementary School

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Summary

National Curriculum specifies entrepreneurship as a cross-curricular and interdisciplinary topic aimed on interconnection of educational areas and subjects in a harmonious whole with the aim of linking the different competencies of students. Entrepreneurial learning specifics are clear links between the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, and their practical application.

University College of Economics, Entrepreneurship and Management „Nikola Šubić Zrinski“ conducted project named Introduction of Entrepreneurship as a Cross-curricular Theme in Primary Schools in order to develop the curriculum for entrepreneurial learning. Project was held in the school year 2013./2014. in Elementary School Prečko, Zagreb. The project was attended by the school principal, pedagogue, professional staff, all the teachers, students and their parents. Project was implemented in every classroom and integrated across all subjects with special attention to psycho physical development of students. The professors were grouped in educational areas like language and communication area, mathematics, science, technology and informatics area, social sciences area, humanities area, art area, and physical and health area. By interactive teaching methods pupils adopted basic economic concepts: entrepreneurship, procurement of material resources, production, creation of new value, selling, price, distribution of income, consumption, advertisement etc., and produced a final product presented by School to the general public, parents and the local community.

Key words: entrepreneurial learning, school curriculum, cross-curricular and interdisciplinary topic

1. Introduction

The Council of Europe states entrepreneurship as one of the eight key competences and as such entrepreneurial learning has become part of all levels of education and the national curriculum EC, 2006). The introduction of entrepreneurship in elementary school has a special significance, since individual knowledge, skills and attitudes acquires at an early age and that is why primary school, which is also mandatory, is ideal to start introducing entrepreneurship and systematic acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. The main reason for introducing entrepreneurial competence is the development of enterprising and innovative individuals, capable of identifying the circumstances in which your ideas can be turned into specific products in different life situations.

During the school year 2013. /2014. Project “Excellence to Entrepreneurship - Entrepreneurship as a Cross-curricular Theme in Elementary School” was conducted and funded by the Minis-

try of Science, Education and Sports. The main coordinator of project activities was Private Grammar School and Economic School Katarina Zrinski in Zagreb.

The main objective of the project is to improve the entrepreneurial competence in gifted children through the implementation of entrepreneurship as a cross-curricular subject at all levels of primary school.

Specific project objectives are:

- ✓ forming a detailed plan for the implementation of action research to test the experimental program and the evaluation and
- ✓ adjustment of the experimental program for use in primary schools.

School partners:

- Elementary School Prečko, Zagreb
- Elementary School 22. lipnja, Sisak
- Elementary School Dvor, Dvor
- Osnovna škola Luke Perkovića, Brinje
- Elementary School Ljubo Babić, Jastrebarsko
- Private Grammar School and Economic School Katarina Zrinski, Zagreb
- Association Gačanka, Otočac

2. School Curriculum

Knowledge, skills and attitudes predicted by entrepreneurial competencies needs to be implemented to the education from an early age. Croatian school system includes preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education and adult education. Primary school is the foundation of the education system in the Republic of Croatia, it is mandatory and lasts eight (soon 9) years. That is why it is important to start with entrepreneurial learning since the first grade, as a continued activity from the preschool and continue throughout the lifelong education. Schools have the ability to implement entrepreneurship into particular teaching subject as a joint projects or modules.

Incorporation of entrepreneurship into the school curriculum depends on the educational needs and interests of students and school, as well as the local community.

Excellence to the entrepreneurship project was made to explore the possibility of introducing entrepreneurship as a cross-curricular theme and also to interest students from first to eighth grade for entrepreneurship as a fundamental premise of building a new society based on human capital, education and innovation.

3. Entrepreneurship as a cross-curricular theme in lower grades of elementary school

The objectives of entrepreneurial learning in the early school age are encouraging and developing self-reliance, self-confidence, responsibility and creativity as well as training students for lifelong learning and the acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Since the early school age students (sixth and seventh years) are characterized by increased muscular control - fine motor skills, teachers should enable students different activities, interaction with environment and also developing communication skills. In the period from eight to ten year the body's growth slows, so it is necessary to enable a lot of meaningful exercises that will enhance the development of fine motor skills (Andrilović, V., Čudina-Obradović, M., 1994). Students of this age have a strong need to move so they should be allowed to actively participate in the educational process.

In the end of the project students adopted elements of entrepreneurial competencies:

KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students will understand economic concepts: purchasing, material, price, sales, earnings, profits, advertising • to interpret the emergence of profit • to interpret the resulting product price by calculation • to interpret the importance of advertising
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students will be able to publicly perform and present their product • be able to calculate the price of the product • be able to distinguish between income from earnings • be able to communicate within a team • be able to create an advertisement
ATTITUDES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will develop a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship • Develop a positive attitude towards the native language • Overcoming the fear of public speaking • To gain self-initiative

Classes are organized in such a way that the students within the regular education acquire certain elements of entrepreneurial behavior. Teachers and students created workshops where they made a specific product and thereby adopted the basic economic concepts. Students have learned to notice connections and relationships in the production process while adopting basic entrepreneurial skills in accordance with the principles of universal human values.

During the Natur class, students discussed the various professions and work itself, detected different materials in the immediate environment and the possibility of their application. On school subject Croatian language students exercised public presentation, and on the Math they calculated the price of the product.

Using active methods of teaching and practical work, students have created specific products: a collection of class poetry, apple juice, spring pictures, licitar hearts, necklaces ect.

4. Daylong teaching

Daylong teaching provides quality and organized care for early school age children after regular classes. Daylong teaching program allows filled life for children, discovering their potential and cooperate with others and prepare for further education and lifelong learning (Urek, S., Petrak Jakunić, B. Rad u produženom boravku).

Daylong teaching program offers multiple opportunities for acquiring entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and attitudes through the key areas of students development. Teachers selected those items which mostly emphasize the development of social, communicating and labor-technical competencies. Students produced flowers, magnets, decorative bottles and muffins during workshops.

5. Teaching methods and strategies

Dinamic of the teaching process was achieved by active teaching methods:

- ✓ Answering questions
- ✓ Explaining the processes or events
- ✓ Making a mental map
- ✓ Making summaries of the discussions
- ✓ Asking key questions for individual facilities
- ✓ Presenting and interpreting the results
- ✓ Process analysis and synthesis

The students were allowed to work independently on the sources of knowledge, to research, analyze, discover, correct and supplement each other while communicating, and to shape new knowledge by sharing their discoveries. Teachers were taking care of the space organization and its adaptability to the needs of learning.

6. Teachers workshop

Workshops for teachers named Introduction to the concept of entrepreneurship were held as a part of project. Teachers were introduced to enterprise-economic concept that rests on the foundation of creating new values. Every process of reproduction begins with the initial investment and acquisition of production factors. Entering production factors in the production process, while investing the human labor, creates a new, increased value of manufactured goods. Such goods are realized in the market, which leads to financial resources and profit which is the main generator of the following, larger reproductive cycle. In this way students acquire necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for successful leading of an entrepreneurial project. Teacher's workshop concept is based on the adoption of these economic-entrepreneurial postulates. Teachers, divided into teams, created methodical scenario and acquired knowledge on the application and realization of the teaching content.

7. Conclusion

Excellence to the entrepreneurship project aim is to raise awareness of gifted children for entrepreneurship, and research the possibility of introducing entrepreneurship as a curricular subject in primary schools. Students received new approaches to learning exceptionally well, as well as active methods of work and work on new technologies. During the project realization almost all school activities were in entrepreneurial spirit: teamwork, teaching in the form of workshops, public presentation of work, practical work, making certain tasks on the computer, and many other forms of active learning increased the dynamics of work and demonstrated effectiveness in raising students' motivation and educational learning outcomes.

Teachers consider entrepreneurial teaching content to be appropriate, but for its systematic implementation in their subject they consider appropriate permanent training to be necessary.

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