

SUMMARY

The book *Educational Effectiveness of Primary Schools: The example of empirical analysis of Istrian County schools* is the result of the work of the research team that has been involved in the planning and implementation of comprehensive scientific research projects in the field of education for more than ten years. The motivation for this book is the fact that, by their educational effectiveness, the elementary schools of the County of Istria do not correspond to the economic development of the County and thus do not fulfil their full educational potential. The book consists of two main parts.

The first part describes and defines theoretical concepts of quality, effectiveness and efficiency of education. It outlines various approaches to measurement and reporting the quality of education on individual-, school-, regional-, and national-level. Besides, in this part of the book, a broader overview of the possible determinants of educational achievement of students and schools are given. The impact of different characteristics of the schools, the teachers and the school processes are covered, as well as the importance of student's individual characteristics and the features of their social environment.

The second part of the book focuses on the findings of an empirical study of the achievement of students and schools in the County of Istria. This research aimed to identify the key determinants of the educational achievement of elementary schools in the County of Istria. The results are presented in four sections. The first section presents the empirical results of the educational achievement of students and schools in the County of Istria, which were obtained through an external evaluation of the educational achievements of all primary schools in the Republic of Croatia. The second section presents possible determinants of students' and schools' achievement in the County of Istria. The third section presents the results of the quantitative study involving the school principals and administration, while the last part of this chapter presents the findings of the SWOT analysis, which sought to identify the strengths of the schools in County of Istria and the difficulties that they face.

The value of this book is reflected in the theoretical overview of the concepts of educational quality and effectiveness, the review of previous research findings in the area, and in the practical guidelines obtained from the empirical research findings. We hope that all elements of the book can serve as guiding principles for creating better working and teaching conditions in primary schools in Croatia. We found the book useful for educational researchers, as well as for all actors in the educational process, from teachers and school staff to educational policy-makers. We consider it as a small step toward enhanced cooperation between educational researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in creating better educational quality.