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**THE COMMUNITY READING CENTERS AS A FACTOR
FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN POTENTIAL**

**CENTROS DE LECTURA DE LAS COMUNIDADES
COMO FACTOR PARA EL DESARROLLO DEL POTENCIAL HUMANO**

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Abstract

In the contemporary conditions the Community reading centers play an important role for the development of the human potential, appearing to be the most valuable resource for each state. In this context, the aim of the present paper is to evaluate the activities of the community reading centers, regarding the point of view of the possibilities for development of the human potential. For reaching this purpose a proper enquiry study has been conducted among 26 community reading centers in the region of Blagoevgrad, in the period August–September, 2018. On the bases of the analyses and the evaluation, general conclusions and results have been made.

Keywords

Community reading centers – Human potential – Development – Activity

Resumen

En un contexto contemporáneo, el lector desempeña un papel importante para el potencial humano, que es el recurso más valioso de cada país. En este contexto, el propósito del desarrollo es evaluar la actividad del lector en términos de oportunidades para el desarrollo del potencial humano. Para lograr este objetivo, se realizó una encuesta entre 26 lectores de la región de Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, durante el período de agosto a septiembre de 2018. El procesamiento esta realizado sobre la base del análisis y evaluación de los resultados obtenidos.

Palabras Claves

Centros de lectura de las comunidades – Potencial humano – Desarrollo – Actividad

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Introduction

In modern conditions, the human potential is the foundation of the national wealth and the most valuable resource of any society¹.

At the same time, the modern state must create conditions for the development of the human potential². The Cultural Policy in Bulgaria report states that the Community Reading centers should focus its efforts not only on cultural development but also on the development of civil society, because they represent a comprehensive and very democratic institutional form distributed through out the country³. That is why, it is necessary more attention to be payed to the Community reading centers as one of the possibilities for development of the human potential. Moreover, the Community reading centers` activities are related to the creation of a variety of cultural products useful to the society. In turn, the cooperation with various organizations and institutions plays an important role in creating and offering these products. In this connection, one of the main functions of the Community reading centers is the enrichment of the cultural and educational life of the local community.

The creation or existence of Community reading centers, which can be considered as the only socio-cultural institution, especially in the small settlements, is important for the development of the human potential. In addition, they help to ensure that people from the small settlements are not isolated, they have access to a variety of information and relationships with other settlements. Moreover, one of the main activities of the Community reading centers is related to the increase of the human potential as a result of the accumulation of knowledge, experience and the acquisition of such important skills in the society as improving the communication between the people and their ability to express themselves to a larger audience. With this important emphasis put by R. Lukos is, that the human capital has been accumulated in the process of work, because the work is both learning and experience⁴.

In the same direction are the arguments of K. Vladimirova, who points out that "the human capital includes the knowledge, skills and work experience of people. It is the property of individuals ..."⁵.

In this context, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the activities of the Community reading center, in terms of the opportunities for the development of the human potential.

¹ A. Revko, "The Role of Human Potential for Sustainable Development in the Chernihiv Region of Ukraine", *Studia Periegetica* num 1 Vol: 15 (2016): 100. https://papers.wsb.poznan.pl/sites/papers.wsb.poznan.pl/files/StudiaPeriegetica/SP15_Revko.pdf

² Tsv. Tsvetkov, *Macroeconomic environment for human potential development in Bulgaria*, In: *Human Potential Development for an Innovative Socio-Cultural Sphere* (Santiago: Editorial Cuadernos de Sofía, 2018), 27.

³ Ch. Landry et al., *Kulturnata politika na Bulgaria. Doklad na evropeiski eksperten ekip*, Sofía. 1995.

⁴ Robert E. Lucas Jr., "On the Mechanics of Economic Development", *Journal of Monetary Economics* Vvol: 22 num 1 (1988): 3-42.

⁵ K. Vladimirova, *Choveshkiyat potentsial za ikonomicheski rastezh i konkurentosposobnost na bulgarskata ikonomika*, *Godishnik na UNSS*, 2007, s. 136, http://departments.unwe.bg/Uploads/Yearbook/Yearbook_2007_No4_K%20Vladimirova.pdf

Methodology

This study has used the primary data. The primary data was collected through a survey, which was distributed to 26 community reading centers. The survey was a sample one of representative character. Direct survey in which respondents themselves fill in the questionnaire was used as a data collection method.

The study was limited in time and place. The survey was conducted between August-September 2018 in Blagoevgrad region in Bulgaria. Statistical methods were used to analyze and evaluate the results obtained in the study as the observation method and the method of grouping, the method of analysis, table method.

Using questionnaire as research instrument enables the collection and analysis of quantitative data using descriptive statistics. Data were collected from these enterprises using an own questionnaire, which included also Likert-scale questions, due to the fact that it corresponds to a high degree to the goals set for this current research.

Results and discussion

In connection with a more complete and accurate discovery of the problem, we believe that it is necessary to outline the profile of the Community reading centers from the point of view of their location in Blagoevgrad district. The survey results show that 18.8% of the community reading centers surveyed, are on the territory of the cities and the predominant share of them (81.2%) are in the villages (fig. 1).

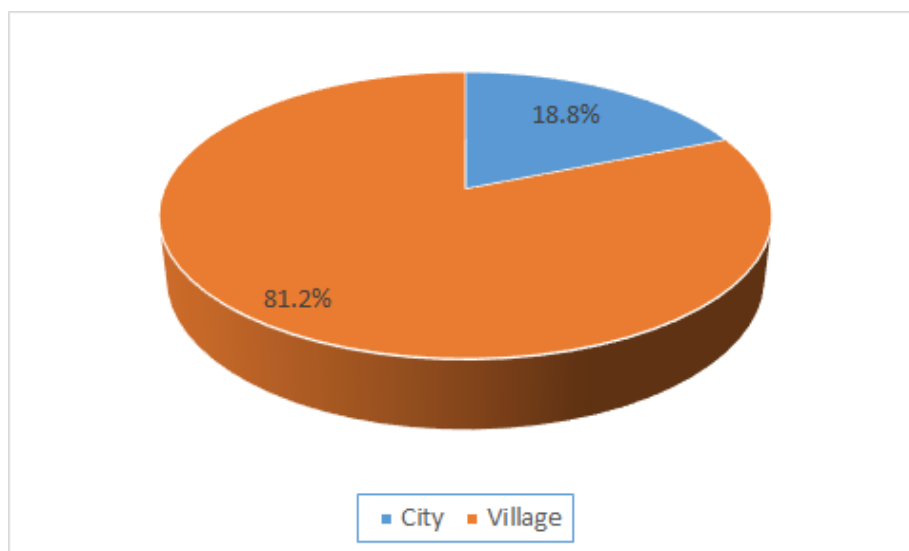


Figure 1
Distribution of the Community reading centers by location
Source: authors' own research

The activities of the community reading centers are important. In this regard, it is noted that all the community reading centers provide library services and organize cultural holidays (table 1).

The share of the Community reading centers (87.5%) and Internet access (75.0%) is also significant. It is observed that the share of the Community reading centers (56.3%), which organize club activities and provide information services, is the same. 43.8% of the respondents have identified as an important activity the provision of the social services. Relatively low is the share of the respondents (18.8%) who have indicated that they perform other activities such as festivals, competitions, children's lessons and online Maths courses. It is noteworthy that none of the Community reading centers organizes sporting activities, but we think this is one of the important Community reading centers' activities related to the development of the human potential.

Activities carried out by the Community reading centers	Ref. share, %
Provides library services	100.0
Organizes cultural holidays	100.0
Organizes club and club activities	56.3
Organizes holidays dedicated to the traditions and history of the settlement	87.5
Provides social services	43.8
Provides information services	56.3
Provides internet access	75.0
Others	18.8

Table 1

Activities carried out by the Community reading centers

Source: authors' own research

Note: The answers exceed 100%, because the respondents gave more than one answer

However, the objective assessment, which is assessed, is to what extent the activities to calculate the return on the human potential have been taken into account. According to 62.5% of the respondents give a Very good estimate. 25.0% rated the grade as Good and 12.5% as Excellent. The positive point is that there is a lack of satisfactory and unsatisfactory assessment of the rate of recovery of the funds on human potential.

Regarding the visitors to the Community reading centers, it is established that all the respondents indicate that they are children and students. 81.3% say that the share of the people in active working age and retirees is also prevailing. As important visitors, 68.8% of the the Community reading centers, identify the young people and 56.3% - the students, as it is shown in Table 2.

Visitors	Ref. share, %
Children and students	100.0
Young people	68.8
Students	56.3
People in active working age	81.3
Retirees	81.3
Others	12.5

Table 2

Visitors of the Community reading centers

Source: authors' own research

Note: The answers exceed 100%, because the respondents gave more than one answer

Proceeding from the assumption that "knowledge and skills must be seen as one of the most important modern resources"⁶, there is an interest to what skills are being developed as a result of the readers' notification. This, in turn, we believe, contributes to the sustainable development of the human potential. The data in Table 3 show that, as a result of the activities carried out by the Community reading centers, almost all users (93.8%) have acquired the skills of "joining people". 81.3% of respondents say that the activities carried out by the community reading center have enabled the improvement of their dance, singing, theatrical and sports skills. Significant is the share of respondents (75.0%) who have acquired skills to improve communication between people, transferring the experience of the old generation to the young and developed sense of responsibility and empathy. Important skills that the users claim to have acquired are the team work and expressing in front of a larger audience.

Acquired skills	Ref. share, %
Bringing people together	93.8
Improving the communication between people	75.0
Improving the ability of expressing in front of a larger audience	50.0
Improving the development of their dancing, singing, theatrical and sporting skills.	81.3
Language skills	6.3
Skills for working with computers and other technics	43.8
Skills for team working	68.8
Transmitting the experience of the old generation to the younger people	75.0
Sence of responsibility and empathy	75.0
Others	6.3

Table 3

Skills acquired by the users as a result of the Community reading centers' activities

Source: authors' own research

Note: The answers exceed 100%, because the respondents gave more than one answer

Further analysis shows that all respondents consider that they have carried out a review of the activity that leads to the gathering of people from the local population.

Innovations	Ref. share, %
Repair and/or other improvements to the building stock	56.3
Implementation of new technical suppliences	18.8
New means of communication have been implementd	6.3
A new information technology has been implemented	25.0
New computer programmes have been implemented	12.5
New methods of management have been implemented	18.8
Organizational events have been carried out	37.5
New methods of marketing have been implemented	6.3
New forms of informing the public have been introduced	12.5
The quality of the services offered has been improved	31.3
Others	12.5

Table 4

Innovations made by the Community reading centers

Source: authors' own research

Note: The answers exceed 100%, because the respondents gave more than one answer

⁶ R. Madgerova, Ikonomicheski i sotsialni izmereniya na predpriemachestvoto (Blagoevgrad: Universitetsko izdatelstvo „N. Rilski“, 2013), 206.

Considering that regarding the innovative activities, the Community reading centers "create something new, something different, they change or transform values"⁷, one of the important aspects for the development of the human potential and the cultural and educational activities, is the innovation made by the Community reading centers. The results of the study presented in Table 4 show that more than half (56.3%) of the respondents have repaired and/or improved the building stock. The share of the Community reading centers' organizations, which have implemented organizational measures (37.5%) and improved the quality of the offered services (31.1%), is significant. Only 6.25% have introduced new marketing methods or introduced new communication tools. The cooperation with different organizations and institutions is important in the implementation of the activities of the community reading centers. This, in turn, contributes to the development of the human potential and the cultural and educational activities in the region of Blagoevgrad. The data on the implemented partnerships of the community reading centers surveyed, are presented in Table 5.

Partners	Ref. share, %
Educative institutions	66.8
Research organizations	12.5
Non-government organizations	50.0
Municipal administrations	87.5
State institutions	43.8
Representatives of the business	37.5
Others	12.5

Table 5

Partnerships with organizations and institutions

Source: authors' own research

Note: The answers exceed 100%, because the respondents gave more than one answer

From the Table 5 data, it is evident that the largest one is the share of the Community reading centers (87.5%), that realize partnerships with municipal administrations, followed by those partnering with educational institutions (66.8%). Many of the Community reading centers have been functioning in cooperation with non-government organizations, state institutions and the representatives of the business. Only 12.5% of the respondents point out that their research partners are the research organizations.

Conclusion

Presentations of the results of the investigation of the problem, have shown uneven distribution of readers by location. It is noted that at present, the readers have focused their efforts mainly on providing library services and organizing cultural holidays. More and more readers yet, do not pay enough attention to the revival that needs to be done on the human potential. It is imperative that the readers do not take action that should be applied to the young people and the students. Neither enough attention is paid to the development of the language skills. Language skills, obviously, are essential to enable communication between speakers of different tongues. And the good language skills are necessary in all activities⁸. It is installed if it is not used to an accessible degree to provide information about new communication tools and new marketing methods. It is important for the human

⁷ P. Drucker, *Novatorstvo i predpriemachestvo*, izd. „Hr. Botev“, S., 1992, s. 32

⁸ L. Ivanova, "Language competences – an important element in the business management", *Entrepreneurship*, Issue 2 (2015): 178.

potential to have a partnership between the readers and different organizations and countries.

In conclusion, we think that it is necessary for the Community reading centers to focus their efforts on the creation of effective partnerships and the offering of more and more diverse, unique social-cultural services.

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