

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Organizational evaluation and human resources behavior

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Abstract: Internal evaluation is inextricably linked to increasing the efficiency of a school unit. The collection and evaluation of data on the performance of the school unit, the school class, and student potential is critical to increasing the effectiveness of a school structure. The purpose of this study is to determine how significantly a school's efficiency increases at all levels of its organizational structure when self-evaluation is used. According to the study's findings, the implementation of assessment within the context of the school classroom, lesson preparation, proper utilization of teaching time, and the use of alternative and innovative methods appear to have a direct impact on learning outcomes. Furthermore, feedback obtained through assessment aids in the improvement of learning performance and the design of lessons aimed at developing students' critical thinking, digital and soft skills.

Keywords: learning outcomes, innovative educational methods, digital and soft skills

1 Introduction

Data utilization at all levels of the school unit is thought vital to secure desired results and optimal growth as long as schools seek to be defined as "smart" organizations that react to modern society's needs. This implies that at the school unit level, learning performance data is utilized to identify teaching staff members who serve as role models for other educators (Reynolds et al., 2015).

Individual student development statistics involving academic and social outcomes, which are often evaluated in order to form judgments about student awareness, are given specific emphasis. The data assessed in the setting of the school classroom principally involve the diverse performances attained by distinct subgroups of pupils (e.g., boys/girls, foreigners/citizens, etc.) and the reasons for the divergence of these performances (e.g., teachers/lesson) (Reynolds et al., 2015).

Earlier researches appear to have incorporated the regular use of grade-level diagnostic exams and achievement assessments, as well as inputting children's grades into a computer program to make conclusions about children's performance during their schooling (Scheerens, 1990).

According to the most recent OECD research (2020), the efficacy of school units rises when student assessments are utilized to a) enhance both the teaching process and the program timetable and b) notify parents about their children's development. Furthermore, the recording of students' performance, initiated by the teaching staff and school administration, appears to have a beneficial impact on learning outcomes. It is also worth noting that school performance increased in nations where school principals requested feedback from students, whether it was obligatory or instigated by the school (Vlachoudi et al, 2022a). Finally, according to the findings of the OECD research (2020), it is suggested that school units engage meetings on the activities that need to be taken for school development at least every six months.

It is should be taken into consideration that monitoring a school unit's data essentially refers to the implementation of the evaluation process (Thoma, 2010), which aims to a) expand knowledge about the work done in each school, b) develop each school unit through the implementation of innovative initiatives, c) promote decision-making within rational frameworks, and d) adopt a change policy in order to improve the educational unit (Solomon, 1999).

Furthermore, via self-evaluation of the school unit, the generated educational work may be assessed, which is the primary focus of current research on school effectiveness (Vlachoudi, 2021). According to Pamuktsoglou (2001), in recent years, academics have focused their attention on assessing the "added value" or efficiency of school systems using efficiency indicators in order to assure educational quality (Vlachoudi et al., 2023). Quality indicators are the primary instrument used by researchers to evaluate the subsystems of an educational unit while also collecting data for the goal of improving the school, program hours, and teacher

work (Maniati, 2016). The objective is thus to find those solutions that will assist educational units in either upgrading or developing even more (Vlachoudi & al, 2021).

2 Literature review

2.1 The effective teaching approach

It is undeniable that successful learning occurs in effective educational units. According to research, the teaching process that takes place inside the environment of the classroom has a significant impact on learning results and students critical thinking (Susilawati & Supriyatno, 2023). As a consequence, in order for a lesson to be effective, the following requirements must be met: a) All available time should be devoted to learning; b) incidence that disturb the smooth flow of the lesson should be avoided; and c) teaching time entirely and totally should be devoted to educational activities (Reynolds et al., 2015).

Furthermore, using instructional tactics that encourage cooperative learning and combine a number of different learning models (Kalogiannakis M. & Papadakis, 2019) is very beneficial since it promotes student participation in training (Reynolds et al., 2015). More specifically, based on the nature of the course to be taught, the age and ability of the students, the instructor should select the right teaching approach that, in his opinion, would provide the best learning results, developing students' communication skills (Sukmayasa & Sudiana, 2023). Although, during children's early years, it is beneficial to engage in group activities (Tsekouropoulos et al., 2022b), it is ideal to assign individual and more difficult tasks being older and having developed more talents and skills (Vlachoudi et al., 2022a).

Furthermore, a comparative evaluation of the best teaching strategies may be carried out either by monitoring teaching in the school classroom (Sholekah et al., 2023) or through teacher collaboration, aiming at providing the best learning outcomes (Vlachoudi, 2021). The cooperative lesson study approach might also be employed in this way (Hiebert, Stigler & Manaster, 1999).

According to Kyriacou (1997), the study framework of effective teaching includes three categories of variables: a) variables related to the learning activity, b) variables related to the educational process, and c) variables related to the produced product. The researchers are interested in these characteristics because they are closely tied to the function of the teacher, who is also the primary organizer and facilitator of efficient instruction (Tsekouropoulos et al., 2022a).

Learning outcomes, according to Scheerens (2004), are dependent on learning approaches and learning engagement. Because achieving optimal learning outcomes is dependent on a number of elements, Scheerens (2013) compiled a list of the variables that impact successful teaching, as well as three primary teaching factors, which are depicted in Figure 1.

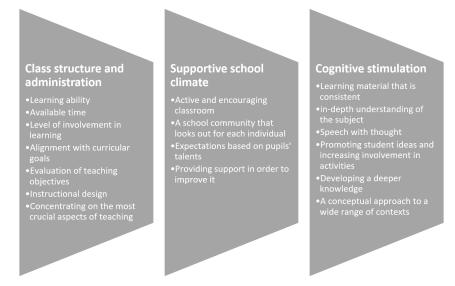


Figure 1 Learning variables and essential didactic aspects are compared. (Scheerens, 2013)

As previously stated, the teacher's involvement in the arrangement of effective instruction is critical (Vlachoudi et al., 2023). Teacher traits appear to have a direct impact on both learning activities and learning outcomes (Scheerens, 2004). Furthermore, a teacher's attributes contribute to the completion of a beneficial instruction, adequate time management, and the maintenance of a proper organizational structure (Scheerens, 2004).

Hammond (1999) observed in research conducted in the United States that instructors with extra credentials had a beneficial influence on learning outcomes when compared to teachers not having received any further training. Experience, on the other hand, appears to have a beneficial influence when teachers have many years of teaching experience as opposed to those who have worked in school units for less than 5 years (Vlachoudi & al., 2022b).

Effective teaching is an important component of an educational organization's collective effectiveness because the assistance of each member of the educational community will contribute to the achievement of the school unit's intended goals, and there will be a corresponding evaluation based on the produced learning results (Hatzipanagiotou, 2008).

2.2 School effectiveness as a component of school's overall quality

A fundamental system model, which depicts the operation of educational systems and schools as organizations, is an analytical tool that can throw light on quality characteristics that require additional empirical investigation and verification.

When educational outcomes serve as the foundation for quality control in schools, educational programs, or even the operation of national education systems, they can be claimed productive (Scheerens, 2013). Productivity is regulated by international organizations such as PISA, which aims to assess students' knowledge and skills, identify effective educational systems, and extract information from each educational system, identifying its strengths and weaknesses in order to provide feedback on the level of achievement of its effectiveness.

When effectiveness is used to assess the quality of a school unit, the primary focus is on making the best use of inputs in order to achieve the best possible outputs (Scheerens, 2013). The school administration's purpose is to find areas for improvement. As a result, attention is focused on creating the finest educational outcomes in terms of quality by employing the proper methods, whether they concern organizational behavior or instructional approaches.

Not only is accomplishment dependent on both the relationships that the school unit forms with the community, including parents, but on teachers' commitment to the educational achievements fulfilled. In order to satisfy the needs of modern society, the outcomes of a school unit must be compatible with the rules of supply and demand in a broader context (Scheerens, 2013).

Since the 1970s, international organizations have been looking for components that might help to the improvement of educational quality. From the early 1990s, the European Union has prioritized both quality improvement and the assessment of educational institutions. Under these circumstances, and while the question of efficiency and quality preoccupies many scholars worldwide, the European Community institutions stress the importance of human resources as an essential resource, the development of which may be achieved through the quality education supplied (Vavouraki et al., 2007).

As a result, the goal of this study is to determine the role of the human component in enhancing the efficiency of a school unit. More specifically, the goal is to explore instructors' perspectives on their role in the axis of teaching, learning, and assessing students as well as the learning process. The study of educational staff perspectives will help to determine to what extent the effectiveness of a school structure, and thus the quality of educational work provided, increases when the teaching process is pre-planned and responds to the development of students' critical thinking, soft and digital skills.

3 Methodology

In modern research, the multimethodological approach is the one adopted by academics since it allows them to choose the type of approach dependent on the study's target area (Paraskevopoulos, 1993). The interpretative technique was used for this study because it highlights the causality between the items under consideration. Furthermore, it should be noted that the usage of an electronic questionnaire contributed to the quantitative data gathering approach.

In terms of the study's target demographic, it should be emphasized that the questionnaire was issued to teachers working in public primary schools in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki. The technique of probability sampling was chosen to be representative of the complete educational population of the specified location. It should also be mentioned that the sample's composition was stratified based on the subjects' occupations first, and subsequently on their permanent residency. The application of this strategy aided in the acquisition of a representative sample of the population.

Participants are requested to provide demographic information at the start of the questionnaire. Gender, age, specialization, years of employment, degree of education, permanent residence location, and position of responsibility are all gathered in more detail. The second section included closed-ended questions that were graded on a five-point Likert scale.

It should be noted that the quality indicators for the self-evaluation of the school unit, as presented to Y.A., were used in the questionnaire's composition. No. 6603/GD4/2021 (Government Gazette B' 140/20.01.2021), which states that high performance in each of the functions of education will contribute to improving the quality of educational work provided and, as a result, to increasing the effectiveness of the school unit.

After collecting the questionnaires, the findings were exported in Excel format, and the data was analyzed and processed using the SPSS statistical analysis tool. Descriptive statistics were used to arrange and present the study data, whereas inductive statistics were used to generate more precise findings. The axes under consideration were shown to have a normal distribution at the individual levels of the categorical variables using a Kolmogorov - Smirnov test, which led to the use of parametric analyses.

The survey was carried out between 1/5/2021 and 30/5/2021. Since the school units were closed at the time due to the Greek government's efforts to restrict Covid-19, the design of an electronic questionnaire was the appropriate solution for the continuation of the current research.

The validity of the study was assured by administering a pilot survey to a limited number of persons in order to refine the questionnaire items. After piloting the questionnaire and finalizing its design, the Google Forms-created questionnaire was sent. More precisely, the questionnaire was distributed by e-mail to the addresses of the educational units of Primary Education in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki, with the intention of promoting it to the teaching staff of each school by the respective directors or supervisors. The comments of participants were incorporated, and certain questions were rephrased for clarity. The computation of the Cronbach alpha coefficient resulted in the control of the research's reliability by assessing the existence of internal consistency between the questions (Ursachi et al., 2015). In this study, the value of the specific coefficient was 0.915.

4 Results

5 Descriptive characteristics

Regarding the gender distribution of the sample, of the 150 respondents, 33 (22%) are male, and 117 (78%) are female (Figure 2).

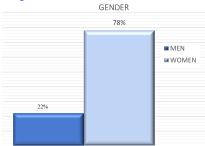


Figure 2 Gender distribution in the sample (N = 150)

In addition, 56 (37.33%) teachers were 51-60 years old, 48 (32%) were 41-50 years old, 37 (24.7%) were 31-40 years old, 7 (4.7%) were 22-30 years old, and 2 (1.3%) were above 60 years old, according to Figure 3. In terms of specialization, Figure 4 shows that the majority of participants were teachers on elementary schools (62%), pre-schools teachers (17.3%), and teachers of minor subjects (20.7%).

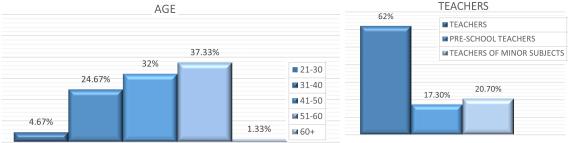


Figure 3 Age distribution in the sample (N = 150)

Figure 4 Distribution of teachers in the sample (N = 150)

Furthermore, according to Figure 5, 75 (50%) participants had 11-20 years of service in

education, 35 (23.3%) had 21-30 years, 24 (16%) had at least 30 years, 10 (6.7%) had 1-5 years and 6 (4%) had 6-10 years.



Figure 5 Distribution of years of teaching experience in education (N = 150)

Also, according to Figure 6, 80 (53.3%) participants reported that they serve in Western Thessaloniki and 70 (46.7%) stated that they serve in Eastern Thessaloniki. Finally, regarding the position they hold, from Figure 7, it was observed that 104 (69.3%) were teachers, 14 (9.3%) were vice principals and 32 (21.3%) were principals.

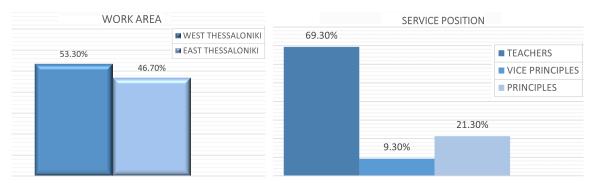


Figure 6 Distribution of answers regarding the area Figure 7 Distribution of service position in the sample where the participants work (N = 150) (N = 150)

According to the findings in Table 1, teachers "use a variety or combination of assessment methods depending on the objectives and content of the lesson", "plan the overall instructional strategy", "make optimal use of teaching time for the fulfilment of the Study Program's goals and content", "use evaluations to give instructional feedback and to enhance student performance", "support the development of critical thinking in pupils during the learning process" and "enhance students' development of soft and digital skills during the learning process" (Average price= 4). Moreover, according to the participants, the teaching fulfills the students' needs and expectations (Average price= 4). Furthermore, educators appear to employ "a variety of innovative/alternative teaching approaches" and "alternative forms of assessment, depending on the aims and content of the session" (Average price= 3).

6 Conclusions

Conducting out a lot of study on the efficacy of educational units in recent years has helped to obtain useful data that may contribute to improve the quality of educational work given. Yet, the need to investigate how the various levels of the educational system interact, using new statistical approaches, will lead to new, more secure results that may be utilized as a model for school units to boost their efficacy. The paucity of research that investigates the interplay between the elements that determine the success of a school, particularly in the Greek area, was the impetus for undertaking this study.

According to the demographic data acquired in said survey, the majority of the subjects being questioned belongs to women (78%) while in terms of age, most participants (69%) are between 40 and 60 years old. Additionally, the bulk of participants (62%) is teachers and 75% of those who participated to the poll had 11 to 20 years of service. Lastly, the participation of numerous instructors in positions of authority (30.6%) allows us to draw conclusions about whether their perspectives differ from those of the rest of the educational staff after commenting on the results.

Proceeding with the analysis of the prior findings, it should be mentioned that according to the answers of the respondents, the educational staff uses a variety of evaluation methods as well as alternative forms of it depending on the teaching objectives and course content, confirming the findings of the OECD survey (2020), which states that individual evaluations

Table 1 Distribution of sample responses to questions regarding teaching, learning, and assessment, along with the descriptive measures that were utilized.

Teaching, learning and assessment	Frequency (%)					A.P.*
	Very low (1)	Low (2)	Normal (3)	High (4)	Very high (5)	(I.R.)
Use a variation or combination of methodological approaches depending on course objectives and con	- tent	10 6.7%	62 41.3%	63 42.0%	15 10.0%	4 (1)
Plan the overall instructional strategy	-	5 3.3%	53 35.3%	63 42.0%	29 19.3%	4 (1)
Make optimal use of teaching time for the fulfilment of the Study Program's goals and content	-	5 3.3%	42 28.0%	69 46.0%	34 22.7%	4 (1)
Utilize a wide range of innovative/alternative instructional approaches	-	14 9.3%	66 44.0%	53 35.3%	17 11.3%	3 (1)
Utilize multiple evaluation methods depending on the objectives and content of the course	1 0.7%	22 14.7%	67 44.7%	46 30.7%	14 9.3%	3 (1)
Use evaluations to give instructional feedback and to enhance student performance	1 0.7%	12 8.0%	47 31.3%	64 42.7%	26 17.3%	4 (1)
Support the development of critical thinking in pupils during the learning process	-	6 4.0%	52 34.7%	61 40.7%	31 20.7%	4 (1)
Enhance students' development of soft and digital skills during the learning process	1 0.7%	17 11.3%	56 37.3%	56 37.3%	20 13.3%	4 (1)
Tutoring fulfills the requirements and aspirations of the students	1 0.7%	3 2.0%	35 23.3%	93 62.0%	18 12.0%	4 (1)

Note: A.P. - Average price; IR - Interquartile range.

(student evaluation) contribute to the improvement of the teaching process. Furthermore, the preparation of teaching work as well as the effective use of teaching time in order to achieve teaching goals appears to be a priority for teachers, which is consistent with the findings of Reynolds et al. (2015), who suggest that it is vital to make the most of teaching time. Moreover, the planning of teaching work as well as the effective use of teaching time in order to achieve teaching goals appears to be a priority for teachers, which is consistent a) with the findings of the researches of Reynolds et al. (2015), arguing its necessity to make the most of both teaching and learning time, as well as b) Sheerens (2004), highlighting the importance of instructors planning their teaching activities and managing their teaching time as effectively as possible.

The use of innovative/alternative teaching methods is a practice embraced by a substantial proportion of educators, validating Reynolds et al. (2015) findings, who believe that selecting a suitable teaching style based on the subject being taught, the age of the pupils, and their talents is a prerequisite for getting the best learning outcomes. Teachers continue to be leading minds to select educational software that will help pupils build their soft and digital skills (Papadakis et al, 2020). In terms of teacher evaluation, it should be emphasized that most utilize it for both instructional feedback and student improvement, as stated by Scheerens (1990), Reynolds et al. (2015), and the OECD (2020) in their separate surveys.

Teachers' perspectives on their role in the development of critical thinking as well as students' soft and digital skills are consistent with the findings of Ofsted (2009), stating that teaching staff should focus on learning knowledge necessary for children, and Scheerens (2013), who emphasizes cognitive activation of children in order to achieve maximum learning results regardless of the existing conditions. Furthermore, the vast majority of those surveyed stated that their teaching meets the demands and expectations of the children, which is supported by the research of Reynolds and his colleagues (2015), stating that the use of educational strategies and the integration of a variety of learning models into teaching contributes to increasing the engagement of the classroom's student potential.

7 Discussion

Furthermore, it should be highlighted that the implementation of various assessment methods to collect data on learning outcomes adds to the development of teaching practice. At the same time, full utilization of teaching time in conjunction with lesson preparation can only benefit both the student potential of the school class and the teaching staff themselves. It should also be mentioned that the majority of the teachers adopt innovative and modern teaching methods, focusing on both the learning level and the anticipated teaching goals.

It is also important to note that establishing a methodology that satisfies the learning level and

the specified teaching goals constitutes current teaching methods, which are regarded innovative and are preferred by the majority of educators.

Assessment is now an essential aspect of the educational process, as teachers obtain information about both the educational process and student performance through data collecting and processing. Finally, it should be noted that by focusing on the development of students' soft and digital skills, a dual goal is achieved: on the one hand, learning outcomes improve, and on the other hand, the teaching process meets the needs of the majority of students through the use of alternative learning models.

The present study might serve as a springboard for bigger-scale research, in which it would be suitable to include a broader sample from all Greek regions in order to compare the results and make generalized conclusions.

Furthermore, conducting the research with the participation of teachers from both former and litter schools would allow the researchers to compare the data and see if the teachers' perspectives differed depending on the educational level they are serving.

To conclude, participation in the survey of private school teaching staff would contribute to a comparative study between public and private schools, allowing for a comparison of the results of different educational units.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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