

TEACHERS FOR TEACHERS, ABOUT SOME EXPERIENCES IN THE PEDAGOGICAL VIEWS ON EVALUATION, SELF-EVALUATION AND PROVIDING QUALITY IN THE EDUCATION AND TEACHING

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Abstract

Following the tendency of globalization, and having the intention of approaching the developmental level of the highly developed countries, Macedonia takes great strides in education. One of these steps is the production of effective teachers able to implement effective teaching, and its products - creative, initiative, and able young people will be actively involved in the community taking courageous steps towards change. The effectiveness of these steps, among other things, is determined by the teachers themselves. Namely, teachers as facilitators of the teaching process and one of the direct participants are a key factor for the success and sustainability of the strategy and objectives of the national education policy. For these reasons, our objective was to investigate the attitudes and opinions of teachers regarding the evaluation of their work. The research results showed that teachers have a positive attitude towards the need and importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation of their work in order to provide feedback on it and further improvement. Research has shown that teachers have concrete proposals for improving the system of evaluation of their work, and one of them refers to linking evaluation to teachers' career advancement or career development.

Keywords: *scientific development, open schools, teacher quality, evaluation.*

Introduction

The major steps in the sphere of education in the Republic of Macedonia have the tendency to increase the quality of education. One of those steps is the production of effective teachers who will realize efficient teaching, and their products which are the productive, creative, initiative and capable young people will actively engage in the community and will confidently move toward the changes. The question for the production of effective teachers has created a number of questions such as the following: the roles of the teacher in the contemporary school, the competences of the contemporary teacher, the creation of stimulating environment for studying and also the valuation of education. The last question has been much more present in the recent years, while the numerous theoretical and empirical analysis as well as the all embracing expertise point to various findings: the valuation problem in the educational work which is very complex; which are the most adequate techniques and ways for evaluation; who has the role of evaluator; the need to evaluate the evaluator; the questions concerning the external and the internal evaluation, the functionality. All of these findings are directly or indirectly related to the teacher as a conductor of the teaching process and one of the direct participants in that process. The teachers are actually the key factor for the success and the

maintenance of the strategies and the aims of the national educational politics. These are the reasons that put the attention in our paper on the teachers and their views and thoughts about the importance of evaluating their work, as well as evaluating the effects from that process in the direction of their career development.

The importance of the teacher. The evaluation of the teachers' work in Macedonian schools

In the beginning we felt the need to point out our definition of the term of evaluation, because of the research needs in the paper. In literature there are many attempts to define this term. We have accepted the definition which says that evaluation is a process of following, measuring and evaluating the work, which means that it is a system of steps and instruments for following, measuring and evaluating that embrace the two key components: evaluation criteria and evaluation standards. Also, we were led by the findings that the noted disadvantages of the quantitative evaluation methods have shifted the attention toward the adaptation of many qualitative steps in the evaluation process, which is also a subject of interest in our research. On the other hand, there are also many researches that show the importance of the teacher in the educational work. The statements that the teacher is the main source of power in the educational environment and that its activity is the most influential among the other factors for learning is based on empiric researches, which is pointed out by Walberg and Peterson (Walberg. H., Peterson. D., 1980). In other words the work of the teacher and its increased activity and efficiency, also its quality and successful effort may influence the design and the advancement of the whole learning environment, which will also lead to acquiring good results in the learning process and in the educational process as well. Because of this, we are fully right when we say that the subject of evaluation should be all aspects in the process and all the factors that influence it (teacher, students, teaching materials and resources), and not only the results from the work of the student and the student's advancement. In order to gain quality in the school and improve the process of teaching, we need to follow measure and evaluate all of the subjects which are part of the educational process, and the teachers who are the most important link in the educational process.

The methodological framework of the research

The teacher has a special place in the educational process, because he is the conductor of the work and whose activities and specialized ability have a great influence on the future results. In order to improve the teacher, his or her work needs to be followed and evaluated and in that way the advantages and the problems and the disadvantages can be noted down. The change and the improvement of the evaluation process is chiefly determined by teachers themselves. This is the reason why we value that teacher's thoughts and views on the need of evaluating his/her work, the ways and the techniques for following and the career development have the fatal influence on the quality increase in the education. Herein, the aim of our research is to examine the views of the teachers concerning the evaluation of their work. We determined the subject in the direction of examining the views and opinions of teachers concerning the need to evaluate their work, the functionality of the evaluation related to the career development with the aim of

dividing the critical opinions which represent a barrier for the realization of the teacher's work evaluation process and for the possibility that they are the basis for planning the professional development of the teachers. In the research we set the following tasks: to examine the views and opinions of the teachers concerning the functionality of the evaluation process in context of the quality of the education and their professional and career development; to examine teacher's views and opinions for determining the basis of the evaluation process of their work in context of the self-evaluation, the external valuation of students' achievements and their final grades.

We set the general hypothesis that the teachers have equal views and opinions for different questions concerning the evaluation of their work. In the research we were led by the following sub-hypothesis: the teachers have equal views and opinions about the need to evaluate their work; the teachers have equal views and opinions about the functionality of the evaluation process of the teacher's work in context of increasing the quality of education and their professional and career development; equal views and opinions about the question of the basis for the evaluation process in context of self-evaluation; the external valuation of students' achievements and final grades.

In the research was used a poll as a research technique, and the instrument was a questionnaire with open and close types of questions. The sample of the research concerns 102 teachers from 4 Elementary schools in municipality of Stip, from which 53 are class teachers and 49 subject teachers. In the elaboration and the analysis of the data we used suitable statistical procedures of making tables, grouping and frequency.

Analysis and interpretation of the results

We asked the teachers about the need to evaluate their work having in mind the following findings: the teaching as a process of interaction between two direct participants, a teacher and a student, is not complete if the work of one of the subjects is not evaluated (in this case it is the teacher's work); the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness from learning are not being determined solely by the student, but also greatly depend on the teacher as the creator of the learning environment; by evaluating the teachers' work we can get a feedback for the success and the quality of work. The results that got are represented in the table below.

Table No. 1 *The opinion of the teachers for the need to evaluate their work*

Offered answers	Teachers	
	f	%
a) fully agree	47	46.08
b) partly agree	43	42.16
c) don't agree	12	11.76
Total	102	100

The conclusions based on the results are that 46, 08% of the teachers believe that the evaluation of the teachers' work is needed, 42, 16% partly agree, while 11, 76% do not agree that their work should be evaluated, which is not a small percentage. The teachers with the highest percentage believe that the evaluation is truly needed which confirmed our hypothesis. The data analysis didn't show important statistical differences in the views of the class teachers and the subject teachers. In the research we set the following hypothesis: teachers have equal views and opinions concerning the functionality of the process of evaluating teachers' work and context of increasing the quality of education and their professional and career development. In

this context, we put forward the statement that the evaluation of the teachers' work is in function of motivating the teachers toward greater quality in teaching, or i.e. developing the educational process. Their views and opinions are represented in table no.2.

Table No. 2 Views and opinions of the teachers about how much do they agree with the statement that the evaluation of their work is in the function for the increasing the quality of work

Offered answers	teachers	
	f	%
a) yes	41	40.2
б) partly	43	42.15
B) no	17	16.67
r) don't know	1	0.98
total	102	100

The belief that the evaluation of the teachers is in function of increasing the quality of their work is shared by 82, 35% of the teachers in this research. However the 17, 65% of teachers that do not agree with this or i.e. who do not know why this is the case, points to the question of the functionality of the current evaluation system for the Elementary school teachers, regardless of the fact that most of the teachers have similar opinions that the work evaluation process leads toward better quality of that work which also supports our supposition. Having in mind the conditions in our schools and the current evaluation system for the teacher's work, for the aims of our research are essential the views and the opinions of the teachers in several steps: self-evaluation, external evaluation of the students and their final grades as a platform for following and evaluating the teacher's work. The received results are represented in the table below.

Table No. 3 Views and opinions of the teachers about the effects from the self-evaluation of their work

The self-evaluation is an appropriate procedure which ensures teachers' career development			The self-evaluation of personal activities and achievements initiated changes in your work concerning your future professional development		
Offered answers	teachers		Offered answers	teachers	
	f	%		f	%
a) yes	14	13.72	a) yes	14	13.72
b) partly	83	81.37	b) partly	64	62.74
c) not familiar with it at all	5	4.90	c)No, I don't know	24	23.52
total	102	100	total	102	100

Table No. 4 Views and opinions of the teachers about the evaluation of students' achievements and the external valuation as a platform for evaluating their work

The external testing of students is a way of evaluating the teachers' achievements and the labor			According to the achieved grades of students for a certain subject, the teacher should award or sanction them		
Offered answers	teachers		Offered answers	teachers	
	f	%		f	%
a) yes	4	3.92	a) yes	7	6.86
b) partly	30	29.41	b) partly	31	30.39
c) don't accept at all	64	62.74	c) don't accept at all	61	59.80
d) don't know	4	3.92	d) don't know	3	2.94
total	102	100	total	102	100

As can be seen from tables 3 and 4, teachers do not accept the bases for evaluating their work that is in function of the career development, and those bases relate to self-evaluation, external evaluation of students; achievements and final grades. The largest percent of teachers (81, 37%) partly agree that the self-evaluation is an appropriate procedure that ensures teachers' career development, and 62, 74% of them partly agree that self-evaluation initiates changes in its own practice. This leads us toward the conclusion that the teachers view the self-evaluation

process as an additional work and obligation, because of not knowing or understanding it wrongly the essence and the importance of this process, which endorses our notion that we shouldn't even talk about a reflexive practitioner. For these thoughts we didn't get relevant data in the research and they are based on our presupposition that will be a subject in a future research. The percentage of teachers (13, 72%) that understood the essence of the self-evaluation process and its function in the direction of developing your own practice and with that the career development is really low. Also 28, 42% of the teachers embraced in the research are not aware that the self-evaluation is one of the steps for obtaining a career development of the teachers, but they categorically deny the fact that the self-evaluation of their own activities and achievements initiates changes in their own work, which is alarming if we have in mind the strive toward an increased quality in education. In relation to the external evaluation of the students as a platform for evaluating the work of the teacher is not accepted at all by 62,74% of the teachers. On the other hand 3, 92% of them accept it as a way of checking the labor and the achievements of the teacher, which is very little and as a platform it is unacceptable for the teachers, maybe because of the defects that the whole system identifies or the current sanctioning measures regulated by law; however, this percentage is worrying. Then we have the 29, 41% that partly accept it as an evaluation platform for their work, but not as a unique one but as an addition to the evaluation bases of the teacher's work. It is interesting to mention that 59,80% of the teachers completely overthrow the belief that the teacher should be sanctioned or awarded according to the students' achievement, and that it is the base for evaluating their work. We appreciate the fact that most of the teachers do not accept the current evaluation system for their work, because of the understanding of the process as a whole. In the end we asked the question about how much they agree that the evaluation of their work represents a strict control and search for errors in the work. As we expected, the largest percentage of teachers fully (27, 45%) or partly (57, 84%) agree with the statement that the evaluation of the teacher's work represents a strict control and a search for errors in their work. Only 14, 70% of the teachers do not agree with the statement that the evaluation of the teacher's work represents a strict control and a search for errors in their work, which is a very small percentage and an indicator that the teachers accept changes with difficulty and it is maybe as a result of their prejudices and stereotypes, and that is why we believe that it should be one of the priority aims in one of our future researches (according to table 5).

Table No.5 Views and opinions of the teachers that the valuation of the teachers' work represents a strict control and searching for errors in their work

offered answers	teachers	
	f	%
a) yes, I fully agree	28	27.45
b) partly agree	59	57.84
B) I don't agree at all	15	14.70
Total	102	100

Our supposition is that the teachers have equal views and opinions about the basis of the evaluation process of their work in the context of self-evaluation and the external evaluation.

Conclusion

The teachers believe that their work needs to be evaluated, but the basis for the evaluation shouldn't be separate aspects which are the self-evaluation, the external evaluation of the students' achievements as a platform for following and evaluating teacher's work. The teachers are not aware that the self-evaluation and the valuation of their work provides a career development and directions for professional development which leads toward an increased quality in teaching. The teachers especially do not accept the external evaluation of the students' achievements as one of the basic evaluation platforms of their work. That confirmed our presupposition that the teachers have equal views and opinions on certain questions concerning the evaluation of their work. In the research the teachers gave their suggestions for ways of improving the evaluation system for their work, and pointed out that the evaluation of the teacher can be successful only if it is an active participant in that process through continuously following the teachers' activity, by clearly defined criteria and determining if the grade is suitable to the concrete activity. These are the only circumstances in which the evaluation will create changes in practice, advancement of the teacher's work and an increases quality in education. These suggestions initiate a few crucial questions in the part concerning the evaluation of the teacher's work as: pointing the difference between "a product" and "a process" in the evaluation process that is reflected as a difference in the subject with elements of symbiosis, a combination of the quantity and quality methods through various combination models in accordance to the aspect that is being studied and the type of data that are needed. These suggestions should be a direction for the future reforms in the educational policy of our country.

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