



**ISRG PUBLISHERS**

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Arts Humanit Soc Sci

ISSN: 2583-7672 (Online)

Journal homepage: <https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjahss>

Volume – I Issue-VI (November – December) 2023

Frequency: Bimonthly



## Evaluation and Life Long Learning

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| **Received:** 14.11.2023 | **Accepted:** 17.11.2023 | **Published:** 27.11.2023

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### Abstract

*The views of the Greek teachers of the Second Chance Schools on their evaluation*

*Studying the Greek and international bibliography, we notice that there is an agreement regarding the need and value of lifelong learning and adult education. A process necessary for the society and the personal and professional development of individuals. After all, if we want to talk about a healthy education system, it should be open and provide incentives for development and lifelong learning as well as ways to overcome obstacles. One such example is the Second Chance Schools in order to handle the educational and consequent social exclusion of young people from underprivileged social strata. In this context, the role of the adult trainer is characterized by complexity and increased demands, as his entire participation in Adult Education is of strategic importance. Therefore, in the present research, which is in progress, we focused on capturing the views of the instructors working in the Second Chance Schools regarding their evaluation. The survey tool was designed in such a way as to meet its objectives. It consists of closed and open type questions. The processing of the data of the teachers' questionnaire regarding the implementation of the institution of evaluation in Greek education will be done through the statistical program SPSS PC (Statistical Package for Social Science of SPSS). Regarding results in an indicative way, teachers have a positive view of evaluation in general. They are also positive regarding the evaluation of all the factors that affect the efficiency and proper functioning of Second Chance Schools.*

**Keywords:** Evaluation, lifelong learning, adult education, Second Chance Schools

### 1. The conceptual clarification of evaluation

The institution of evaluation is an integral part of the educational function and is linked to various parameters of education (identification of positive elements and weaknesses, identification of problems, prioritization of goals, evaluation of educational planning, utilization of the research efforts of the scientific and educational community, evaluation of educational work, improvement of the quality of educational work, professional development of teachers, etc.) (Andreou and Papakonstantinou,

1994). Evaluation as a systematic administrative process (Koutouzis, 2008: 15) is included in the context of the activities of the administrative exercise with the aim of reviewing and reporting on what has been done. In this way, the process of identifying positive and negative issues, the achievement or not of initial goals and the identification of new practices for the improvement of the education provided is strengthened.

The design and development of a reliable evaluation system is deemed necessary for the modernization of education and the improvement of the quality of the educational work. The establishment of an evaluation system presupposes the examination and definition of its main characteristics, the utilization of historical experience from the efforts to implement corresponding systems in Greece and internationally, as well as the educational and strategic options that have to be served. The evaluation system is linked to many parameters and contributes positively to critical issues such as improvement of the education's quality, educational modernization, economic development and social cohesion.

### 1.2 Evaluation of teachers

The methods applied to the evaluation of teachers are many and differ between countries. The evaluation can be internal (by the school's principal or governing body of the school) or by an external inspector. However, the trend is self-evaluation and evaluation by a colleague (peer evaluation) with the aim of facilitating the principal who has the final responsibility. The usual form is either through interviews with the teacher or through observation of his teaching in the classroom. Very rarely, students or parents are involved in this evaluation process.

The evaluation is linked both to the evaluation of the teachers' performance which can lead to advisory recommendations regarding possible change of methods, additional education etc. as well as the professional development of the teachers. In some cases, the results of the evaluation are linked to salary improvement, while in cases of inadequacy or identification of a serious problem, penalties such as reprimand, temporary suspension or even dismissal may be applied.

[1] The evaluation of teachers is linked to various parameters of the educational system (Papadopoulou & Bouras, 2022). According to Kassotakis (2022) "*the evaluation of the educational work is not limited only to the evaluation of the teachers but covers all the factors of the educational process*". He proposes that the evaluation criteria for teachers should cover areas such as: scientific and pedagogical, didactic, the area of relationships he creates with all the factors of the school, the interest he develops in his educational work and also in the initiatives he undertakes and for the results of his students. He states that the evaluation process must be accepted by those who are evaluated, gather the views of different people, and also use multiple methodological approaches. The complexity of the parameters has created a dichotomy in the community of teachers on evaluation. There is a widespread opinion among teachers that the way the evaluation was carried out in our country was scientifically invalid, since it was not based on objective pedagogical and psychological criteria, did not have clear objectives and was not carried out by specially trained evaluators (Papadopoulou, Bouras A. & Barkatsas, 2022).

## 2. Adult education

As Knowles (2011) points out, the education and learning style of adults differs from that of minors, as adults have a different way of thinking and behaving.

It is important that adult education takes into account all the parameters that characterize the students' profile, with the aim of adapting to the changing reality and dealing with the problems that arise (Kokkos, 2017).

Adult Education is equivalent to an educational field in which multiple challenges dominate. It needs to be a space open to all

those who are interested, mitigating any possible obstacle and any form of exclusion (CEDEFOP, 2000). The target population is not homogeneous and traditional (EdAdvance, 2016), as there is diversity in terms of the characteristics and needs of the trainees (age, needs, experiences). For this reason, educational programs include scope in their targeting and structure (UMass Donahue Institute's, 2020).

### 2.1 The characteristics of the adult education teacher

In recent years, several reform initiatives have taken place in the field of adult education. (Alsaadat, 2020). The action of the adult education teacher is characterized by complexity and increased demands as his entire participation in Adult Education is of strategic importance (Vergidis, 2006; Koutouzis, 2020).

In particular, the role of the adult education teacher should be outlined in the light of provision of a quality education for students, (Kokkos, 1998). The provision of quality education does not only focus on specific aspects of the teaching procedure but also on the general education system as a whole Jain & Prasad (2018). Recipients of all these actions are all those who are involved in the learning process, trainers and trainees. For trainers, it has been established by the Law on Lifelong Learning (Government Gazette 171/vol.A'6-7-2005) that "educational proficiency" and "continuous training" are two strong standards, which they must satisfy inevitably, in order for both themselves and their work to be governed by efficiency and not to be subject to the standardization and barren reproduction of finite concepts, methods and practices.

Adult educators according to Eisner (2002) organize their methodological approach based on their experiences and not on the didactic methodology of adult education. It is required as a common goal of the trainer and the trainee as "subjects of knowledge" (Freire, 1974), to maintain an equal and cooperative relationship in the realization of learning.

The trainer, due to his multifarious role, is called upon to combine many disparate variables. To realize his dual role, which makes him simultaneously a carrier of knowledge (Bigge & Shermis, 2014). He must also be aware of his dual status regarding knowledge management, so that he can cope with every challenge (Symonds, 1959). Mezirow, (1991), emphasizes the responsibility and duty of the trainer, who acts as a "model" and facilitator of the educational group, and aims for a genuine and democratic dialogue. It is therefore important to be aware of his role and the heterogeneous characteristics of the target group in order to achieve this (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001).

The adult educator must be able

- Not to rest on his simple physical presence in the class, but with clear boundaries to be mentally and emotionally involved in the entire educational act, giving value to the cooperative mood.
- To become a fruitful recipient of potential criticism from the trainees.
- To recognize and highlight the uniqueness of each student by giving priority to their individual biography and experiences.

### 2.2 The Second Chance Schools

The function of Second Chance Schools (SCS) with the aim of dealing with the educational and consequent social exclusion of young people from underprivileged social strata has been a central

political objective of the European Union since the 1990s (European Commission, 1995). In this context, in the period 1997-2000, Second Chance Schools were established and operated in thirteen (13) cities of the European Union (European Commission, 1999, 2001a, b).

In Greece, through the educational reform of 1997, the institution of lifelong education was established and the options for access of adults to educational structures were expanded. The Second Chance Schools were instituted by Law 2525/1997 as an expression of the right to acquire educational knowledge and skills, the possibility of access to higher levels of education (Arsenis, 2015, 209-210) and the treatment of school failure and dropout (Kassotakis, 2022). According to the relevant legislation, the Second Chance Schools are public schools for adults and provide, through fast-paced programs, the opportunity for adult citizens over 18 who have not completed compulsory education to obtain a title equivalent to a high school diploma. The supervision of the institution was entrusted to the Institute of Continuing Education for Adults (IDEKE) which, in cooperation with the Local Government Organizations (OTA), undertook the establishment of Second Chance Schools (law 2525/1997, article 5) while later the responsibility was assigned to the General Secretariat of Adult Education and the IDEKE, which is now subordinate to it, has as a task the absorption of European funding and the implementation of the program of the Second Chance School (law 2909/2001, article 3).

During the period 2000-2003, five (5) Second Chance Schools were established and operated in Greece. The establishment of the first Second Chance Schools was included in the framework of programs financed by the European Union with the aim of developing and exploiting an appropriate curriculum and teaching methods for adult citizens. For the formation of the curriculum and the organization of the operation of the institution, the formation of scientific groups was envisaged with the simultaneous participation of the educational community and the responsible executives of the implementation body of the Second Chance Schools. The frequent organization of training meetings and the parallel formative evaluation of the program were key points of action and made it possible to form a participatory model of co-shaping the organizational framework of the Second Chance Schools and collective reflection of the course of the program. The experience from the pilot implementation and especially the project of the Coordination Team, which was implemented in collaboration with the monitoring committee (Project Team) of the Second Chance Schools, as well as with the scientific group of collaborators (scientific and thematic managers and principals of Second Chance Schools), reflected in Ministerial Decision 2373/2003 on the organization and operation of Second Chance Schools.

The Second Chance Schools were defined as alternative schools of formal education with particularly innovative elements, such as the decentralization of decision-making processes and the formation of curricula based on the needs of the target population that takes into account the socio-cultural context of the school (Vekris, 2004, 20-21).

### 3. Methodology

The present research is based on primary data, which are collected through the use of a questionnaire. For the purposes of the research, a structured questionnaire was exclusively created with a combination of closed and open questions.

There is a correlation between the individual and professional identity of teachers in Second Chance Schools.

The reference population is the entire educational staff, hourly workers and seconded teachers from all Second Chance Schools in Greece.

The aim of the research is to record, describe and analyze the perceptions of the teachers of all the specialties of Second Chance Schools in relation to their evaluation.

This recording aims to the exploitation of teachers' opinions for the improvement of the institutional framework for the operation of Second Chance Schools.

### 4. Reliability and validity

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research data, an attempt was made to structure the questionnaire in such a way that there is homogeneity in terms of the questions asked. At the same time, an attempt was made to structure the questions in a "closed type" format to make the production of the respondents' answers easy, as mentioned above. In addition, both the anonymity of the questionnaire and the importance of reliability of the declared data were emphasized to the participants, through the introductory text on the first page of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the concept of reliability is aimed at the extent to which a set of variables is consistent with what it seeks to measure. It also refers to the "representativeness" of the result found in the specific sample and extended to the entire population.

As mentioned above, during the process of preparing the content of the questionnaire, a test application (Pre-test) was carried out through the distribution of 62 questionnaires in order to establish and check its reliability. The trial application was carried out by the researcher herself, through personal contact with the respondents, explanations and clarifications were given for the questionnaire, while at the same time a short discussion was held with them, from which additional useful information emerged.

The distribution of the questionnaire to 60 colleagues during the pre-research aimed at checking a number of elements and data, such as the wording of the questions, the possible ambiguities in the wording of the questions. At the same time, it was sought to check possible problems in the process of answering, coding and analyzing the questions, which were important to get corrected before the prosecution of the research. Besides, the trial research is an important stage that must precede the main research, since it aims to identify:

- a) whether the questions are understandable,
- b) whether each question provides the information for which it was designed and
- c) whether it ensures the interest and the cooperation of the respondents.

That is, it allows to the researcher the possibility to carry out a preliminary analysis of the answers and problems, at the stage of analyzing the main information and contributes to the improvement of a series of issues (clarity of the questions, coherence and continuity in the order of wording, determination of the completion time), so that the participants in the main research avoid such difficulties when completing it.

In addition, at the stage of the preliminary research, the relative timing of the time needed for its completion was made. After the



final corrections and final configuration of the questionnaire, its distribution began.

### Statistical analysis

After the collection of the data, the relevant codification, the statistical processing and analysis of the data were done, and their results are listed in the relevant section.

The stage of the process of measurements and statistical analysis of the data included entering the data into a database. After the registration was completed, it was considered appropriate to carry out a recheck to establish the accuracy of the data entry, with the aim of identifying possible entry errors and correcting them.

The statistical processing and analysis of the empirical data of the research was done with the statistical package SPSS 25 for windows (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The following methodological approaches were used in the statistical processing of the data:

- a. Detailed presentation of descriptive statistics (distributions and frequency tables, averages, etc.), in order to establish the level and the degree of variation of the various variables.
- b. Analytical investigation of the correlations between independent and dependent variables (using statistical indicators and criteria) in order to establish the relationship between the qualitative characteristics of the sample population and to test the hypotheses of the research.

Various descriptive and inductive statistical techniques were used for the statistical analysis. For descriptive statistics, simple distribution tables were used that include the absolute numerical values and the relative frequencies in each category of the variables, pie charts, bars or columns for their visual display as well as numerical descriptive measures.

In inductive statistics, double entry correlation tables (Cross tabulations), ANOVA, correlations (Pearson r correlation) between variables were used to test the relationships between the independent and dependent variables, while to test the significance, the  $\chi^2$  (chi square test) independence test was applied.

The research significance level was set at 0.05. Where the level of significance was found greater than 0.05 it was considered that the difference is not statistically significant and essential. Statistical significance is a statement of the probability that a particular correlation coefficient would occur for a sample of data if there was no correlation (that is, if the correlation were 0.00) in the population from which the sample was drawn.

The correctness of all questions and the participation of all questions in the main research were confirmed. In all questions the corresponding value was 0.00.

### Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	62	100,0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	,0
	Total	62	100,0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,818	72

## 5. Results - conclusions of the research

### Description of the sample

The pilot phase of the research was conducted in six schools and 62 subjects in total.

We notice that the corresponding percentage of participation ranged from 12.9% to 24.2%.

Sxoleio (school)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	7	11,3	11,3	11,3
	2	10	16,1	16,1	27,4
	3	13	21,0	21,0	48,4
	4	15	24,2	24,2	72,6
	5	9	14,5	14,5	87,1
	6	8	12,9	12,9	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

Regarding the gender of the subjects, it was seen that the corresponding percentage of participation was 69.4% women and 30.6% men.

Accordingly, in relation to their studies, we observe that the majority, in a percentage of 93.5%, were postgraduate graduates and only 6.5% did not answer.

As far as the work status is concerned, we find that most of the teachers who serve in the second chance schools are hourly paid compared to the teachers who are seconded and have an organic position in them. The specialties of the teachers, who participated in the research, as we can see, cover a wide range of teacher specialties.

The work experience of the teachers in secondary education who participated in the research was not long. The largest percentage was 3 years of work experience with 12.6%. Corresponding percentages are also observed in the work experience in the Second Chance Schools with a percentage of 22.6% with zero work experience and 22.6% in 3 years.

A1_sex					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	19	30,6	30,6	30,6
	2	43	69,4	69,4	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

A2_spoudes (studies)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	4	6,5	6,5	6,5
	2	58	93,5	93,5	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

A3_apospas (seconded teachers)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	5	8,1	8,1	8,1
	1	19	30,6	30,6	38,7
	2	38	61,3	61,3	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

A4_oremisthios (hourly worker)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	9	14,5	14,5	14,5
	1	36	58,1	58,1	72,6
	2	17	27,4	27,4	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

A5_eidikotita (specialty)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	4	6,5	6,5	6,5
	2	19	30,6	30,6	37,1
	3	3	4,8	4,8	41,9
	4	4	6,5	6,5	48,4
	6	12	19,4	19,4	67,7
	8	1	1,6	1,6	69,4
	23	3	4,8	4,8	74,2
	58	1	1,6	1,6	75,8
	78	4	6,5	6,5	82,3
	86	5	8,1	8,1	90,3
	87	3	4,8	4,8	95,2
	88	3	4,8	4,8	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

A6_eti (years)					
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		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	21	33,9	33,9	33,9
	1	3	4,8	4,8	38,7
	2	7	11,3	11,3	50,0
	3	8	12,9	12,9	62,9
	5	1	1,6	1,6	64,5
	6	2	3,2	3,2	67,7
	14	3	4,8	4,8	72,6
	15	2	3,2	3,2	75,8
	16	1	1,6	1,6	77,4
	17	1	1,6	1,6	79,0
	18	3	4,8	4,8	83,9
	19	1	1,6	1,6	85,5
	23	1	1,6	1,6	87,1
	24	2	3,2	3,2	90,3
	25	2	3,2	3,2	93,5
	28	1	1,6	1,6	95,2
	35	3	4,8	4,8	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

A7_xronia (years)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	14	22,6	22,6	22,6
	1	3	4,8	4,8	27,4
	2	6	9,7	9,7	37,1
	3	14	22,6	22,6	59,7
	4	2	3,2	3,2	62,9
	5	5	8,1	8,1	71,0
	6	2	3,2	3,2	74,2
	7	8	12,9	12,9	87,1
	8	1	1,6	1,6	88,7
	9	3	4,8	4,8	93,5
	11	2	3,2	3,2	96,8
	14	2	3,2	3,2	100,0
	Total	62	100,0	100,0	

The validity of the tool has been confirmed and we are proceeding with the main research in order to have representativeness from all Second Chance schools in the country.

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