

# ISRG Journal of Education, Humanities and Literature (ISRGJEHL)



## ISRG PUBLISHERS

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Edu Humanit Lit

ISSN: 2584-2544 (Online)

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

Volume – II Issue- Issue -I (January- February) 2025

Frequency: Bimonthly



## Teachers' views on the selection and training methods in Second Chance Schools

Anastasia Papadopoulou<sup>1\*</sup>, Manolis Koutouzis<sup>2</sup>, Antonios Bouras<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Candidate postdoctoral student at the Hellenic Open University, General Secretary of the Greek Educational Evaluation Society, PHD of educational evaluation

<sup>2</sup> Rector of the Hellenic Open University, Professor of the faculty of humanities of the Hellenic Open University

<sup>3</sup> DR, Teacher in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

| **Received:** 15.12.2024 | **Accepted:** 21.12.2024 | **Published:** 07.01.2025

**\*Corresponding author:** Anastasia Papadopoulou

Candidate postdoctoral student at the Hellenic Open University, General Secretary of the Greek Educational Evaluation Society, PHD of educational evaluation

### Abstract

*The innovative institution of Second Chance Schools is a relatively modern educational intervention that aims at the social and economic inclusion of adults. Greece does not have a long tradition in non-formal education for adults. Until the 1980s, adult education and training activities in Greece were embryonic, sporadic and without a central plan. The teachers of the Second Chance Schools play a fundamental role in the achievement of the above goals. Second Chance Schools are schools that aim to offer a second chance to adults who did not complete the three-year attendance in the high school in order to acquire knowledge, skills and an equivalent diploma that will allow them to get more easily included in economic and social life. In most European countries, Second Chance schools offer evening courses and education lasts two years. The curriculum is based on the principles of multiliteracies, according to which literacy is not only the ability to read, but the ability to control our lives and our environment and to deal with our problems in a rational way (European Commission, 1997)<sup>1</sup>. Based on the above, the aim of the present research is to record, highlight and analyze the attitudes and views of teachers of all specialties of the Second Chance Schools regarding the institution of educational assessment, while at a later stage the aspiration is to investigate the proposals of the teachers in Second Chance Schools regarding the improvement of the evaluation process. This publication presents the teachers' views who serve in the Second Chance Schools on their selection method.*

<sup>1</sup>European Commission. (1997). White Paper on "Teaching and Learning" transformed into action [IP/97/457/, 29-5-1997]. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-97-457\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-97-457_en.htm)

*Methodologically, the research was based on the processing of primary data collected through the completion of questionnaires, which were sent electronically.*

*The reference population of the research consists of the total of teaching staff – hourly paid and seconded teachers – of Second Chance schools in Greece.*

**Keywords:** *Second Chance School, Learning Theories, Adult Educators, Educational Assessment.*

## 1.0. Introduction

The main trigger for my involvement in this specific research was given in the context of my successive meetings with teachers who have worked in Second Chance Schools. These meetings took place during training seminars on teacher evaluation.

After discussions with the teachers, I became interested in the study of the development and implementation of the institution of teachers' assessment who serve in the Second Chance Schools.

The institution of assessment is an integral part of the educational function and is linked to various parameters of education such as the identification of positive elements and weaknesses, identification of problems, prioritization of goals, assessment of educational planning, utilization of the research efforts of the scientific and educational community, assessment of educational work, professional development of teachers, etc. (Andreou and Papakonstantinou, 1994).

According to Koutouzis (2008), assessment as a systematic administrative process is part of the activities of administrative practice with the aim of review and report of 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 to improve the education provided are strengthened.

However, the issue of assessment raises concerns and provokes discussions among those who directly got involved in the process. These concerns are about a range of issues related to the means and bodies of teacher assessment, the person who will have access to the results of the assessment process, while they create skepticism about the way in which the results of this process will be utilized. In this way, it becomes clear that, based on the above, there is a need to highlight the teachers' views on the above issues.

### 1.1. The concept of assessment

The problem of a universal definition about assessment has existed for decades. Multiple definitions of assessment have been proposed over the years. A notable definition is formulated by Scriven (1991) and later adopted by the AEA (American Evaluation Association) (2001) which states that: "Evaluation is a systematic process through which the value or importance of an action or an individual is determined". To a large extent, this definition had gained wider acceptance, because almost all evaluation theorists give special importance to this definition, as they believe that evaluation is connected to the assessment of value. However, as Patton (2004) emphasizes, the concept of evaluation is something deeper. It is a process that requires a specific methodology and has a multifaceted and multidimensional character.

Within the same context, according to Kapachtsi (2008) the concept of evaluation constitutes a process of collecting data based on specific criteria, and has as its ultimate goal the attribution of value to something. So, evaluation aims to express an evaluative judgment or assessment about something. Subsequently, Deligianni

(2002) states that evaluation is a process that aims to assess the effectiveness of a systematic activity. For the reliability of this process, clear criteria and procedures must be defined for its conduct. Subsequently, as Tsopanoglou (2010) states, the term evaluation refers to the process and product of using an ordinal scale. The ordinal scale is a tool for hierarchical ranking of subjects in relation to some of their properties. The use of the ordinal scale may be aimed at making important decisions or selecting some people over others.

From the above conceptual approach to the term evaluation, certain findings emerge. A first observation is that evaluation is a two-dimensional concept. Namely, as Kassotakis (2013) states, the evaluation is perceived both as a process and as a final product. Another ascertainment is that evaluation is also perceived as a result that arises based on the interpretation of specific measurements. The question that arises here is whether the interpretation of the measurements is clear of subjective reports.

In other words, as Kassotakis (2013) states, the evaluation is difficult to be completely objective. Finally, another observation is that since evaluation is a process that aims to assess the effectiveness of an event, situation, program or individuals, this means that evaluation is an excellent tool for highlighting factors and practices that will lead to an improvement in the outcome of the goals that have been set each time (Kassotakis, 2013)

### 1.2. Educational Assessment

The term educational assessment is a multidimensional and broad field of reference. Both in the international and domestic literature, a multitude of definitions regarding the content of the concept are found, which are interdependent and complementary (Masters, 2013).

Most definitions have in common that they define educational assessment as a systematic process, which aims to evaluate and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all those parameters that participate in the functioning of education and constitute its main body. Thus, in this context, the evaluation of learners, the evaluation of teachers, the evaluation of the teaching process, the evaluation of educational programs are encountered. However, the most common approach to the term, as mentioned by Dimitropoulos (2004), is that educational assessment is a process that concerns an educational effort that aims to achieve specific pedagogical goals. Although educational assessment has generally been synonymous with the evaluation/examination and grading of learners in recent years, the concept, as already mentioned, has expanded to include other fields of educational operation. More specifically, as Dimitropoulos (1999) states, the evaluation of educational staff in the broad sense has been placed at the center of evaluative interest. Thus, in the evaluation process both the different groups that are directly involved with teaching, but also

groups that are indirectly involved with education such as the administrative staff or the political staff of the Ministry of Education take part.

The present research project will concern, as mentioned above, the evaluation of the teachers and their work. The main objective of this form of evaluation is the need for feedback to the entire educational system and aims to increase the effectiveness of teachers' performance, that is, their educational work. According to Markopoulos and Louridas (2010), the evaluation of educational work is distinguished into three forms. 1) The first form is Formative. This form of evaluation aims to improve the efficiency of teachers in a school unit. According to Markopoulos and Louridas (2010), this form of evaluation does not pose a threat to teachers in the event that errors, gaps or omissions are identified. On the contrary, this form aims to provide opportunities to cover the weaknesses mentioned. 2) The second form is Comparative. This form aims to promote those teachers who appear more efficient and effective compared to others. In this form, as mentioned by Markopoulos and Louridas (2010), particular importance is given to the goals of the educational organization conducting the evaluation. 3) The third form of evaluation is Criterion-based. This type of evaluation aims to evaluate teachers for permanent employment. In another case, it is carried out in order to select specific schools with specific characteristics for the implementation of an educational program or other purpose.

Another distinction that can be made in evaluation is based on the way it is carried out. Thus, according to Doliopoulou and Gourgiotou (2008) an evaluation can be characterized as self-evaluation or peer-evaluation. Self-evaluation is carried out by the teachers themselves who participate in the educational work and aims to (self) evaluate their work. Peer-evaluation is carried out by another person or a competent group and aims to evaluate the work of another person.

## 2.0. Adult education from 1988 to the present

Until 1993, the largest volume of funding coming from the European Social Fund was largely channeled into the General Training system which consisted of 300 adult training centers operating throughout the country. Between 1994 and 1999, adult education was fully coordinated in the direction indicated by the European Social Fund.

The main objective was to secure public funding in order to develop a system that would ensure continuous vocational training. This system was the System of Continuous Vocational Training (Karalis & Vergidis, 2004). It was shortly before the end of the 20th century when Adult Education was diagnosed as an institution that had been affected by serious pathologies. The most important of these was the fact that Adult Education had as its main goal to absorb community funds, while it had put in second place the primary goal of its creation, which was its connection with the economy, the labor market and society.

At the same time, among its most important disadvantages was that the bodies that had undertaken its central administration as well as the implementation of its programs were lacking in know-how and above all did not have the culture of lifelong vocational training. The result was that this institution received severe criticism and pressure by the European Commission in order to get rationalized. However, in this case as well, these efforts were unsuccessful. The

main reason was the existence of the often conflicting and contradictory political measures that were implemented and due to the generally problematic characteristics that had been engraved in the specific field and whose transformation was extremely difficult (Karalis & Vergidis)

## 3.0. Research originality

The originality and importance of the study is that it will investigate for the first time the establishment of the evaluation system of the teachers who serve in the Second Chance Schools in Greece.

The originality of the present research project lies in filling this research gap, especially at the present time when the implementation of teacher evaluation is imminent. For the first time, the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports is systematically preparing for the establishment of an evaluation system about educational work and teachers.

In particular, as there were no previous relevant researches that capture teachers' views on their assessment. This gap was called upon to be covered by the present research.

### 3.1. The purpose and goals of the research project

In connection with the previous ones, it becomes clear that the main purpose of the present research effort is to identify, collect and then study the attitudes and teachers' views in Second Chance Schools regarding the institution of their assessment. Specifically, the goal of the research is to capture the views of teachers on the institution of assessment in order to draw conclusions regarding the adequacy of the institution and its usefulness.

The present publication presents the views of teachers in second chance schools on the method of selection and their role.

### 3.2. Research Methodology

This research will be based on primary data, which will be collected using an electronic questionnaire. For the purposes of the research, a structured questionnaire will be created exclusively with a combination of closed and open questions.

### 3.3. Reference Population and Sample

The reference population consists of all teaching staff - hourly and seconded - of all Second Chance Schools in Greece.

## 4.0. Results

### Views of teachers in Second Chance Schools on their role

#### 4.1. Hierarchy and Analysis of Teachers' Views in Second Chance Schools on their Role

##### Hierarchy of Objectives

**Objective 1: To what extent do you consider that the role of the teacher in Second Chance Schools differs from that of the teacher in High Schools?**

From the table, we observe the following:

- Frequency: 195
- Percentage: 100%
- Relative percentage: 100%
- Cumulative percentage: 100%

**Distribution of the Hierarchy of Objective 1**

Ranking order	Frequency	Percentage	Relative percentage	Cumulative percentage
Extremely	99	50.8	50.8	50.8
Very	79	40.5	40.5	91.3
Moderately	7	3.6	3.6	94.9
Slightly	2	1.0	1.0	95.9
Not at all	8	4.1	4.1	100.0

**Objective 2: To what extent do you believe there is a need for training of teachers in Second Chance Schools in adult learning theories?**

From the table, we observe the following:

- Frequency: 195
- Percentage: 100%
- Relative percentage: 100%
- Cumulative percentage: 100%

**Distribution of the Hierarchy of Objective 2**

Ranking order	Frequency	Percentage	Relative percentage	Cumulative percentage
Extremely	111	56.9	56.9	56.9
Very	48	24.6	24.6	81.5
Moderately	16	8.2	8.2	89.7
Slightly	10	5.1	5.1	94.9
Not at all	10	5.1	5.1	100.0

**Objective 3: To what extent do you consider yourself to have been trained in adult education?**

From the table, we observe the following:

- Frequency: 195
- Percentage: 100%
- Relative percentage: 100%
- Cumulative percentage: 100%

**Distribution of the Hierarchy of Objective 3**

Ranking order	Frequency	Percentage	Relative percentage	Cumulative percentage
Extremely	72	36.9	36.9	36.9
Very	74	37.9	37.9	74.9
Moderately	29	14.9	14.9	89.7
Slightly	19	9.7	9.7	99.5
Not at all	1	0.5	0.5	100.0

**Objective 4: To what extent were you satisfied with the seminars you attended?**

From the table, we observe the following:

- Frequency: 195
- Percentage: 100%

- Relative percentage: 100%
- Cumulative percentage: 100%

**Distribution of the Hierarchy of Objective 4**

Ranking order	Frequency	Percentage	Relative percentage	Cumulative percentage
Extremely	51	26.2	26.2	26.2
Very	93	47.7	47.7	73.8
Moderately	35	17.9	17.9	91.8
Slightly	4	2.1	2.1	93.8
Not at all	12	6.2	6.2	100.0

**Objective 5: To what extent were you satisfied with your performance in conducting teaching in the classroom following the training you received?**

From the table, we observe the following:

- Frequency: 195
- Percentage: 100%
- Relative percentage: 100%
- Cumulative percentage: 100%

**Distribution of the Hierarchy of Objective 5**

Ranking order	Frequency	Percentage	Relative percentage	Cumulative percentage
Extremely	49	25.1	25.1	25.1
Very	109	55.9	55.9	81.0
Moderately	22	11.3	11.3	92.3
Slightly	8	4.1	4.1	96.4
Not at all	7	3.6	3.6	100.0

**Objective 6: If you disagree with one or more of the above, write down what you disagree with and give a brief reason**

	Frequency	Percentage	Relative percentage	Cumulative percentage
The trainings are theoretical and usually out of place and time	37	19.0	54.4	54.4
The hourly workers who work at Second Chance Schools are certified adult educators and most have been	31	15.9	45.6	100.0

involved in adult education for years. This does not apply to permanent seconded workers.				
Partial total	68	34.9	100.0	
No answer	127	65.1		
Total	195	100.0		

## Analysis and Importance of the Objectives

### Importance of the Objectives

The importance of the above objectives is underlined by the necessity of specialized training of teachers in Second Chance Schools in adult learning theories and the differences between the roles of teachers in Second Chance Schools and High Schools.

#### Objective 1: Differentiation of the Teacher's Role in Second Chance Schools

The significant differentiation of the teacher's role in Second Chance Schools in relation to High Schools reflects the necessity of adapting teaching practices to the needs of adult students. Adult students have different motivations, experiences and challenges compared to younger students (Knowles et al., 2005).

#### Objective 2: Need for Training in Adult Learning Theories

Training in adult learning theories is critical, as teachers need to understand the specific needs and learning preferences of adult students (Brookfield, 2005). This need is evidenced by the data, with 56.9% of teachers considering this training to be very important.

#### Objective 3: Level of Training in Adult Education

Teachers' self-assessment regarding their training shows that there is room for improvement. With only 36.9% of teachers feeling very well trained, it is clear that additional training programs are needed.

#### Objective 4: Satisfaction by the Seminars

The satisfaction by the seminars attended by teachers is relatively high, with 47.7% stating that they are very satisfied. However, the presence of a percentage of 6.2% stating that they are not at all satisfied indicates that these seminars can be improved.

#### Objective 5: Satisfaction by the Performance after Training

Satisfaction with post-training performance during teaching is also high, with 55.9% stating that they are very satisfied. This indicates that the training has a positive impact on practical implementation.

#### Objective 6 : Degree of agreement and disagreement

Teachers expressed disagreements on specific issues, and these disagreements have been categorized and evaluated.

## 5.0. CONCLUSIONS

Second Chance Schools are an innovative institution in Greek education, offering adults the opportunity to complete compulsory education. The role of the teacher in Second Chance Schools is multidimensional and requires specific skills and knowledge,

especially in adult learning theories. This analysis focuses on the views of teachers in Second Chance Schools on their role, based on the data provided by the ranking tables of their views.

Teachers in Second Chance Schools recognize the need for specialized training and the differentiation of their role in relation to teachers in high schools. Training in adult learning theories is considered particularly important, while self-assessment shows that there is room for improvement. Finally, satisfaction by the seminars and performance after the training indicate positive results, but also the need for continuous improvement of the training programs. The training is theoretical and usually out of place and time.

Frequency: 37

- Percentage: 19.0%
- Relative percentage: 54.4%
- Cumulative percentage: 54.4%

This response demonstrates a significant concern among teachers that the trainings provided are inadequate and do not meet the practical needs of teaching in adult education. The theoretical nature of the training suggests a lack of adaptation to the real conditions of adult teaching, which is often referred to the literature as a critical element for effective teacher assessment (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011). Hourly paid teachers working in adult education are certified adult educators and most have been involved in adult education for many years. This does not apply to permanent seconded teachers.

Frequency: 31

- Percentage: 15.9%
- Relative percentage: 45.6%
- Cumulative percentage: 100.0%

This disagreement highlights the inequality between hourly and permanent seconded teachers. Hourly teachers are seen as more qualified and experienced in adult education than permanent seconded teachers, which affects the quality of teaching. Recognizing and valuing the experience of adult educators is crucial for the success of Second Chance Schools (Brookfield, 2013).

Teachers in Second Chance Schools recognize the need to improve their training and equalize the rights and obligations between hourly and permanent seconded teachers. To achieve these objectives, the following are proposed:

1. **Revision of the Trainings:** The trainings must be adapted to the needs of teachers in Second Chance Schools, with an emphasis on practical skills and implementations.
2. **Continuous Professional Development:** All teachers, regardless of status, must have access to continuous professional development and training in adult education.
3. **Recognition and Utilization of Experience:** The experience of hourly teachers must be recognized and utilized, and it must be ensured that permanent seconded receive appropriate education and training.

The implementation of these suggestions can contribute to improving the quality of education in adult education institutions

and ensure that all teachers are adequately prepared to face the challenges of adult teaching.

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