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## Teachers' views on their individual evaluation in Second Chance Schools

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### Abstract

*The innovative institution of Second Chance Schools (SDE) is a relatively modern educational intervention that aims to achieve the social and economic integration of adults whose formal qualifications are considered deficient and insufficient within the context of the modern learning society. The teachers of Second Chance Schools play a fundamental role in the achievement of the above objectives and they are the institutional mediators between the educational system and the students of these schools. Within this context, the institution of educational evaluation works as a supplement to the improvement of the quality of education provided and not only. Based on the above, the purpose of the present research project is to record, highlight and analyze the attitudes and views of teachers of all specialties of Second Chance Schools regarding the institution of educational evaluation, while it also aspires to investigate the proposals of teachers in Second Chance Schools regarding the improvement of the evaluation process.*

*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 all teaching staff – hourly and seconded – of Second Chance schools in Greece.*

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

## Introduction

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in educational reforms that focus on the redefinition of educational systems through the improvement of the educational work provided. In particular, as Vlachos (2008) emphasizes, the main strategic goal of the European Union is the upgrading of educational systems, in order to ensure the equal participation of all in education and training, with the ultimate goal of cultivation and acquirement of skills that are required by the new, expanded labor market.

The above efforts to improve educational systems are mainly based on the strengthening of educational evaluation. The concept of evaluation at this point is considered to be of pivotal importance as through evaluation the foundations for the improvement of the educational process, the improvement of the trainees but also the improvement of the abilities of the teachers are laid. As mentioned by Zouganeli et al. (2007), in recent years, there has been an intense movement around the issue of educational evaluation, as it seems to concern the whole spectrum of those who are involved in education.

The main reason for this interest derives from the main principle of the necessity of the existence of the evaluation, as it is an important tool, a coordinated and systematic process which is carried out within the framework of an educational mechanism, based on predetermined criteria and predetermined purposes, in order to evaluate persons, situations and processes within the educational mechanism (Dimitropoulos, 2004). The ultimate goal of educational evaluation is the increase of the effectiveness of educational services and at the same time the improvement of the quality of teachers' work. It is important to note that, as Ingvarson (2008) explains, the evaluation of teachers should have a direct connection with all educational functions, as this constitutes a process aimed at upgrading the educational work provided and also at the professional development of teachers.

Within the same context, the new requirements in the entire spectrum of work and everyday life, due to the rapid changes taking place in all fields, lead to the conclusion that investing in knowledge and learning is the only way to secure work and progress. However, some population groups are out of work, as they do not have access to new knowledge. The European Union, in its attempt to prevent this phenomenon, created the institution of Second Chance Schools. According to the White Paper, Second Chance Schools give the opportunity to anyone who needs it to acquire knowledge which they will turn into skills for work and life in general (European Commission, 1999). Teachers are the connecting link between the opportunities offered by Second Chance Schools and the learners. Their role is vital for the progress of the projects of Second Chance Schools. Consequently, they must be equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes that will allow them to offer the most effective teaching to learners and at the same time will give them the opportunity for continuous learning and professional development.

Based on the above and mainly bearing in mind that educational evaluation helps the development and progress of teachers, the present research project aims to highlight and analyze the attitudes and opinions of teachers of all specialties in Second Chance Schools, regarding the institution of educational evaluation. The present aims to study the proposals of teachers in Second Chance Schools, regarding the improvement of the process of educational evaluation.

## The institution of Second Chance Schools

The innovative institution of Second Chance Schools (SDE) is a relatively modern educational intervention that aims to achieve the social and economic integration of adults whose formal qualifications are considered deficient and insufficient within the context of the modern learning society. The teachers of Second Chance Schools play a fundamental role in the achievement of the above objectives and they are the institutional mediators between the educational system and the students of these schools. Within this context, the institution of educational evaluation works as a supplement to the improvement of the quality of education provided and not only. Based on the above, the purpose of the present research project is to record, highlight and analyze the attitudes and views of teachers of all specialties of Second Chance Schools regarding the institution of educational evaluation, while it also aspires to investigate the proposals of teachers in Second Chance Schools regarding the improvement of the evaluation process.

Second Chance Schools are an innovative adult education institution in Greece, which offers citizens over 18 the opportunity to complete compulsory education and obtain a qualification equivalent to a high school diploma. Their establishment in 1989 marked a significant shift in the direction of providing educational opportunities to people who, for various reasons, could not complete their school attendance at an early age.

In the present chapter, a comprehensive overview of the institution of Second Chance Schools will be attempted, focusing on the relevant axes:

### Historical Context and Legislative Basis

The idea of the establishment of Second Chance Schools in Greece began to take shape in the late 1970s, in the context of the recognition of the importance of lifelong learning and adult education. In 1989, through the Law 1776/1989, the operation of Second Chance Schools was institutionalized for the first time and the schools were subordinated to the Ministry of Education.

Subsequently, modifications and additions to the institutional framework followed, with the aim of strengthening and modernizing it. Significant changes were brought about by Law 3094/2003, which defined the operating framework of the Second Chance Schools, the study programs, the duration of study and the method of evaluating students.

Today, the operation of Second Chance Schools is governed by Law 4673/2020, which incorporates modern trends and challenges in the field of adult education.

### The main objectives of the Second Chance Schools are:

- The provision of opportunities for citizens over 18 years of age in order to complete compulsory education and obtain a qualification equivalent to a high school diploma.
- The strengthening of the social and professional integration of graduates.
- The promotion of lifelong learning and the active participation of citizens in social and political life.
- The cultivation of critical thinking skills, autonomy and responsibility.
- The strengthening of self-esteem and self-confidence of students.

Second Chance Schools aim to provide basic educational skills and to develop personal and social competencies. Their main objectives include re-engaging with education, strengthening of basic knowledge and skills, facilitating of access to the labor market and promotion of social inclusion (Kokkos, 2005). The teaching approach of Second Chance Schools is oriented towards the needs of learners through the application of active learning and collaborative methods.

## Research

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

The main purpose of the present research effort is to identify, collect and then study the attitudes and views of teachers in Second Chance Schools regarding the institution of their evaluation. Specifically, the aim of the research is to capture the views of teachers regarding the institution of evaluation in order to draw conclusions concerning the adequacy of the institution and its usefulness in the improvement of the operation of Second Chance Schools.

The individual objectives of the research are related to highlighting teachers' views on specific issues such as: the role of the School Director as an evaluation body, the role of the School Counselor as an evaluation body, but also their views regarding the portfolio and the interview as tools for the evaluation of their work.

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

## Results

### Analysis - Conclusions and Suggestions of the teachers in Second Chance Schools for their individual evaluation

The data shows that teachers in the Education Management Systems have various suggestions regarding the evaluation of the

teacher in terms of the organization of the personal file, the evaluation by the Director and the evaluation by the learner. It is observed that teachers have more often proposed the establishment of goals and results in teacher evaluation, while also emphasize the use of technological means and formal qualifications.

The importance of these proposals can be highlighted by the bibliography dealing with teacher evaluation. More specifically, the placement of goals and results in teacher evaluation has emerged as an important tool for the improvement of the educational process. Also, the use of technological tools in evaluation can enhance the objectivity and reliability of the process. Therefore, the proposals of the teachers in Second Chance Schools are compatible with global best practice in the field of teacher evaluation.

Overall, the analysis of the proposals of the teachers in Second Chance Schools highlights the importance of supporting the teacher with goals and evaluation based on objective criteria and continuous professional development. Also, the participation of the learner in the evaluation process is an important element for the improvement of educational practice. Finally, respect for the anonymity of learners and the availability for constructive feedback are important elements for the development of the educational process.

Overall, these suggestions are important for the improvement of educational practice and enhancement of teacher effectiveness within the framework of Education Management Systems.

In order to determine and analyze the conclusions from the above tables and the proposals of the teachers of the Unified School Administrations, we will categorize the data in order of importance as derived from the following metrics: frequency, percentage, relative percentage and cumulative percentage.

### Categorization by evaluation element:

**Table 1:** What would you suggest about the evaluation of the teacher in the Second Chance Schools regarding:

#### A. The organization of your personal file (portfolio):

	Frequency N	Percentage %	Relative Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
It is very important and should be taken into account.	14	7,2	10,3	10,3
I strongly disagree with any evaluation of teachers in Second Chance Schools.	22	11,3	16,2	26,5
There is no standard portfolio because depending on the interests of the students it is formed every time.	23	11,8	16,9	43,4
Clearer instructions for organizing the material should be given by the institution.	8	4,1	5,9	49,3
Goals – results	30	15,4	22,1	71,3
Use of technological means	15	7,7	11,0	82,4
Formal qualifications	24	12,3	17,6	100,0
Partial total	136	69,7	100,0	
No answer	59	30,3		
Total	195	100,0		

**Table 2:** What would you suggest about the evaluation of the teacher in the Second Chance Schools regarding:

#### B. The evaluation by the Director

	Frequency N	Percentage %	Relative Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Continuous with suggestions	10	5,1	6,6	6,6
Collaboration - efficiency	19	9,7	12,5	19,1
Only on issues related to administrative work and presence	24	12,3	15,8	34,9
Project	11	5,6	7,2	42,1
Observation of the classroom climate and development of discussions with teachers	20	10,3	13,2	55,3
Consistency and cooperation	16	8,2	10,5	65,8
Regular meetings - discussion of pedagogical issues	30	15,4	19,7	85,5
Consistency, hard work and cooperation	22	11,3	14,5	100,0
Partial total	152	77,9	100,0	
No answer	43	22,1		
Total	195	100,0		

**Table 3:** What would you suggest about the evaluation of the teacher in the Second Chance Schools regarding:

C. The evaluation by the student

	Frequency N	Percentage %	Relative Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Become anonymous at the end of each semester	14	7,2	9,2	9,2
Students should participate	22	11,3	14,5	23,7
Continuous with explanations	26	13,3	17,1	40,8
Available time, seriousness and effort	5	2,6	3,3	44,1
Have the comfort to express themselves freely	25	12,8	16,4	60,5
Questionnaires	18	9,2	11,8	72,4
Discussion	30	15,4	19,7	92,1
Consistency, hard work	12	6,2	7,9	100,0
Partial total	152	77,9	100,0	
No answer	43	22,1		
Total	195	100,0		

## Conclusions

### A. Organization of the personal file (portfolio)

- Goals and results: 30% (Cumulative percentage 71.3%)
- Formal qualifications: 24% (Cumulative percentage 100%)

Teachers recommend that in the organization of the file, they should focus on goals and results, as well as formal qualifications, enhancing the importance of clearly record and analysis of their performance.

### B. Evaluation by the Director

- Regular meetings - discussion of pedagogical issues: 15.4% (Cumulative percentage 85.5%)
- Consistency, hard work, cooperation: 11.3% (Cumulative percentage 100%)

Teachers suggest frequent evaluation through regular meetings and collaborative work in order to improve their performance.

### C. Evaluation by the student

- Discussion: 15.4% (Cumulative 92.1%)
- Questionnaires: 9.2% (Cumulative rate 72.4%)

Teachers support frequent evaluation through discussions and the use of questionnaires, seeking to develop open and transparent communication with students.

### Analysis and significance of the proposals:

The teachers' proposals focus on continuous evaluation and collaborative work as key elements for the improvement of their teaching practice. These proposals incorporate principles from the international bibliography that highlight the importance of feedback, collaboration and continuous self-assessment for teachers' professional development (Boud & Falchikov, 2007; Guskey, 2000).