

Teachers' Appraisal in Model Experimental Schools

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Abstract: The evaluation of the teacher is a part of the general spectrum of the evaluation of the educational work, which aims to improve the education that is provided for students. This improvement results from the self-improvement of the teacher, who in combination with the improvement of other coefficients of educational work (manpower and material) aims to more qualitative and more efficient teaching to students. For this reason, the evaluative process does not focus on teacher by grading and classifying his efficiency, but it focuses on his work and especially in evaluation of the quality of his work.

Taking into consideration the general theoretical framework and the social context, in the present study, we try to capture a part of the ongoing research concerning the views of teachers in the Experimental Schools for their evaluation. In this study we present the views of teachers in Experimental schools for their evaluation. The searching approach that will be followed in the particular study is the inductive and descriptive approach. The inductive method consists in starting from a particular specific position and the generalization of this specific position in a way that it will become general.

Key words: evaluation in education, teachers' appraisal, experimental schools, role of school counselor

1. The Meaning of Evaluation

The meaning of evaluation has many dimensions and operates on multiple levels. Not only the context, the process and the object to be evaluated, but also the concerns, are set by the definitions of evaluation. The concern lies in the correlation and relevance, as well, of the term evaluation and other similar terms. A definition that could include all the aspects of the evaluation's meaning focuses on the estimation of the value of a person and a process in general, determines the value of a thing, the identification, clarification and implementation of main criteria, so that the evaluation of the value of a thing is going to be determined based on the above criteria (Scriven, 1967, p. 140; Scriven, 1991, p. 139; Dimitropoulos, 2010, p. 25). During the evaluation process, information is collected, analyzed and synthesized, aiming ultimately to right decision making (Demunter, 2001, p. 28). We perceive it as an obvious and de facto social phenomenon, associated with any individual or collective activity and certainly with its outcome (Konstantinou, 2000, p. 78; 2002, p. 38). The method and criteria under which a process or a person is evaluated, ensure the quality and reliability of the results as "a process of identification, determination and implementation of specific measurable criteria, in order to determine the real value of an object in relation to predetermined criteria" (Kassotakis, 1984, p. 15, p. 19; Georgousis, 1999, p. 50; Pasiardis, 2014, p. 448) and to "gather useful information about the estimation of alternative information" "regarding the effectiveness of a program or a process" (Kassotakis, 1981, p. 16; Pasiardis, 2014, p. 28). It is found that the formulated definitions

reveal the breadth of the evaluation's meaning and its multiple dimensions as well. There are questions related to the evaluation's objects, procedures, methodology, criteria. The answers to these questions vary according to the political and ideological context (Mpagakis, 1999; MacBeath et al., 2005; Koutouzis, 2008). Evaluation, however, should be related to scientific knowledge and should not serve political or other purposes.

1.1 The Meaning of Educational Evaluation

The meaning of educational evaluation is often confused with the evaluation of teachers' work and the evaluation of educational project, which are only a part of it and refer to teaching and the teacher in particular, "educational evaluation is as old as education itself. Anyone who plans his teaching is also interested in determining his effort's effectiveness" (Kapsalis & Chaniotakis, 2011, p. 17). The meaning of educational evaluation is comprehensive and includes areas, processes, human resources involved in educational activity and the underground relationship between the meaning of educational evaluation and any educational activity is emphasized (Worthen & Sanders, 1987, p. 22). "Educational evaluation is described as a systematic process with specific axes, criteria, means, methods, in order to have the efficiency of the educational system and the aims that had been defined in advance checked and it could lead to decisions and recommendations on the improvement of the educational institution" (Kassotakis, 1980, p. 22; Dimitropoulos, 1998, p. 30). Regarding the objects of educational evaluation "The animate and inanimate factors that are involved in the educational process and any other factor that intervenes in the educational process are included (Kassotakis, 1981, p. 22; Kiriazi, 2002, p. 23). Regarding the process followed in the educational evaluation, the evaluator systematically collects the data in order to analyze them and to have the necessary feedback of the evaluated person, whether the evaluation refers to the educational system, the school unit or the educational project (Katsarou & Dedouli, 2008, p. 115). It is considered as a "systematic and organized process, in which procedures, systems, people, means, frameworks or results of an educational mechanism are evaluated on the basis of predetermined criteria and means and predetermined aims" (Dimitropoulos 1991, pp. 19, 21; 1998, p. 30).

The evaluation's meaning and the interpretation of educational evaluation are confused with other similar terms such as measurement, grading, examination, assessment (Kassotakis & Flouris, 2005, p. 423; Xirotiri-Koufidou & Petridou, 2001; Matsaggouras, 2000, pp. 304–305; Verdis, 2001, p. 99; Verdis, Kriemadis, & Pashiardis, 2003, p. 155). The evaluation of the educational project and the teacher's is included in educational evaluation.

1.2 The Teacher's Evaluation in Greece

Teacher's evaluation is a comprehensive meaning that includes all aspects of the teacher's educational, teaching and administrative work, because the professional role of teachers and their efficiency are widely examined. The teacher's actions that are related to spatio-temporal contexts and conditions are calculated through evaluation (Athanasiou, 1993; Loukeris et al., 2009, p. 181). The systematic use of the term "evaluation of teachers' work" has been used in Greece since the mid-1980s, in an attempt to reduce the negatively charged term "teacher's evaluation", but also to give a disorientation to the evaluation's processes resulting from the evaluation's effort to serve more pedagogical, social and professional demands (Pasiardis, 2007, p. 42). It is a fact that Greek teachers are suspicious and cautious about the evaluation of their work and this is due to factors related to the past of evaluation and not only (Kassotakis, 2003, p. 6). However, the suspicion with which teachers handle the evaluation of their work does not imply the rejection of their evaluation (Kassotakis, 2003, p. 6). Papakonstantinou (1993, p. 35) states that the teachers' profession in a specific control context is ensured when the evaluators' estimations are based on subjective perceptions of the events that take place during the teaching. Thus, teachers feel that their professional autonomy is limited, that they become those who complete the Curricula and that their role as teachers is degraded. Evaluation is considered a

bureaucratic process, which leads to their professional alienation and ultimately to the reduction of their efficiency (Papastamatis, 2001, p. 43). Therefore, in order to reduce the teachers' doubts, the evaluation should have the feedback, the strengthening, the information and in general the contribution to the improvement of the teachers as the main aims (Papastamati, 2001, p. 57). The necessity of teacher's evaluation is reflected in research texts (Kassotakis, 2003, p. 7; Katsarou & Dedouli 2008, p. 171). The implementation of the evaluation of teachers' work in order to ensure the quality of educational work, to monitor the level of effectiveness of the educational system, to support the professional development of teachers and to improve the quality of education provided is considered to be necessary. Most of the teachers are receptive to the evaluation of their work (Kapsali & Chaniotaki, 2002, p. 28), and the evaluation of teachers' work is not a generally disputed process, as the teachers' objections are located mainly in the aims of the evaluation, its bodies and in the ways of completion as well. The scientificity of the evaluation is ensured when it is based on theoretical and research background, has a valid and reliable methodology and is implemented by adequately and specially trained evaluators. In this way and with the simultaneous cooperation with the teachers, there may be a consensus of the educational world (Dimitropoulos, 2010, p. 226). Evaluation is not an instantaneous fact that reflects a temporary situation, but it is a continuous process that includes methodology, tools, criteria, indicators based on which data are collected and analyzed. The evaluation's implementation to all of the teachers in the same way and by using the same tools is the basic prerequisite.

1.3 The Model Experimental Schools in Greece From Their Foundation Until Now

The first Experimental Schools in Greece started in 1929 with law 4376 (Law 4376/1929) "On the foundation of Experimental Schools in the Universities of Athens and Thessaloniki". The Prime Minister of Greece was El. Venizelos and Costas Gondikas as the Minister of Education. The mission of this School was, according to its founding law, the theoretical and practical education of future teachers of Secondary Education and the treatment of Science Education.

After the first experimental school of the University of Athens, the Experimental School of the Aristotle University, the Experimental School of the University of Crete, the corresponding one of Macedonia and Patra were founded.

In the 2011, through law 3966, the institutional framework about the Model Experimental Schools was established. School units of public general or vocational education may be defined as Pilot Experimental Schools. The school units are designated as Model Experimental Schools, following the judgement of the Administrative Committee of Model Experimental Schools and this is published in the Government Gazette. Regarding the formulation of the judgement, the Administrative Committee of Model Experimental Schools evaluates the school units, upon the request of School Counselor, accompanied by a dossier with the relevant supporting documents, based on criteria such as teaching staff, participation in educational programs and innovative actions, cultural and social events in national and international competitions as well, logistics infrastructure, connection with institutions in accordance with Article 46, and other information. Through Ministerial Decision of the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religions, that was published in the Government Gazette, the evaluation criteria are specified and the supporting documents accompanying the application are determined.

In the context of this determination of the school units in model experimental ones, the evaluation of the teachers who will work there is included. It is the first time in Greece that teachers' evaluation is carried out with a specific and systematic process.

1.4 The Educators' Evaluation in Model Experimental Schools

The teachers' evaluation in the Model Experimental Schools was a research concern as it is the first time that

it is applied in Greece. The procedure was defined and strictly predetermined for all the teachers who wished to work in the Model Experimental Schools.

Their evaluation concerns in particular the didactic and pedagogical competence, the efficiency of the students based on the objectives of the curriculum, the development of innovative educational actions, the use of new technology and the utilization of various materials and resources in teaching, the application of differentiated pedagogy, the teaching practice and the development of collaborative actions in school and in the community. By the 30th June of every second year, the Scientific Supervisory Board, based on the personal file of each teacher and the observation in the classroom by the responsible school counselor, prepares a relevant evaluation report. If the evaluation is not positive, through the judgement of the Administrative Committee of Model Experimental Schools, the service of the teacher in the Model Experimental School is terminated. Three months before the end of the five-year service, the Scientific Supervisory Board prepares an evaluation report in accordance with the above. The positive evaluation by the Scientific Supervisory Board leads to the renewal of the teacher's service, if he wishes it too, for another five years, without the possibility of further renewal. The terms of the positive evaluation and any issue related to the implementation of the procedure are determined by a decision of the Minister of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religions, published in the Government Gazette.

The process of Teachers' Evaluation in Model Experimental Schools — A brief presentation of the areas and criteria of teachers' evaluation in Model Experimental Schools.

In this presentation we focus on a part of the teachers' evaluation by the school counselor and on the views that the teachers have expressed about the role of the school counselor.

The teachers who have the right to submit their dossier for the Model Experimental School are defined by the Government Gazette 2788/TB/15-10-2012. There are two categories: a) the teachers who served during the school year 2011–2012 in the Model Experimental School either in their organic position or through secondment or service and continue to serve for the school year 2012–2013 (article 329/L.4072/2012). b) teachers who have organic positions in Model Experimental Schools and were seconded during the school years 2011–2012 and 2012–2013, for the needs of the service, in non-Model Experimental Schools or are on educational or sick leave or maternity leave (article 329, L.4072/2012).

Teachers submit their three-part structured dossier. The first section refers to the relevant documents of their qualifications with reference to studies and trainings (certified degrees, certifications, certificates). The second part refers to his scientific and didactic competence and is evaluated by the school counselor of his specialty who attends at least two of his teachings. The third part of the dossier refers to the teacher's presence in the school and is evaluated by the director of Model Experimental School and the school counselor. The deliverable data must be classified according to criteria, as they are defined in Ministerial Decision. The teachers, in parallel with the submission of their dossier fill in a relevant electronic form, which includes the evaluation fields corresponding to the dossier (passage 5, par. 4a of article 329 of law 4072/12).

During the process of gathering the necessary material for the creation of the dossier, the teacher should take the following two specific axes into consideration a) Training in his Scientific work and b) Work-experience.

Regarding the second axis, in which the present research is focused, the scientific and didactic competence of the teacher is evaluated by the school specialty counselor or by the school counselor, who is a member of the Scientific Supervisory Board. The evaluator and in this particular case the school counselor evaluates the level of competence of the evaluated teacher in terms of teaching. The teaching-learning process is evaluated with two observations in the classroom. The observation key used by the school counselor when observing the teachings

made by the teacher, examines 11 areas: 1) The lesson plan; 2) The classroom's organization; 3) The forms of teaching, teaching tools and strategies; 4) the cognitive competence; 5) the involvement/participation of the students in the lesson; 6) The clarity in communication; 7) The didactic flexibility; 8) The Pedagogical/learning climate; 9) Classroom Management; 10) Students' Evaluation in all phases of teaching; 11) The internal coherence of teaching and management of teaching time. At the end of the teaching the evaluator analyzes the teaching and leads the evaluated person to self-reflection.

The total presence of the teacher in the Model Experimental School is evaluated by the director of the school unit and the school counselor. They fill in the electronic form taking into consideration the level of competence in the following 9 areas: 1) The Implementation of innovative programs and actions; 2) The Organization and operation of educational groups; 3) Professional Development Actions, in-school and inter-school training or other training; 4) Sampling teaching to students; 5) Participation in educational networks; 6) The organization or participation of the teacher in educational visits; 7) The field research of the teacher in the school unit; 8) The participation in self-evaluation programs; 9) The distinctions, the awards, praise from educational and scientific bodies. These 9 areas are evaluated with the consistency in the performance of the tasks and the response of the teacher to the institutionalized framework of operation of the school unit in addition to the teacher's cooperation with the other educators of the school and the development of actions and initiatives.

2. The Research

2.1 Research Method and Technique

The research technique is the use of a closed type questionnaire. A questionnaire with appropriate structure and appropriate questions was used, which are of closed type, so that it can give information regarding the asked research questions.

The questionnaire consists of three parts. Part I deals with information that constitute the individual/demographic profile of the respondent, information of his job and his general views about the evaluation and it is categorized into:

- A) General information
- B) Teachers' views regarding the evaluation

In the questions of the B section of the first part, the teachers are asked to express their position and their perception regarding the purpose and the necessity of the evaluation to them.

Part II of the questionnaire concerns questions that detect the teacher's attitude towards the applied evaluation process and it is categorized into:

A) The aim of the teachers' evaluation in the Model Experimental School. The teachers are asked through the questions of this part to take place towards the aim of the teachers' evaluation in the Model Experimental School.

B) Process of the teachers' evaluation in the Model Experimental Schools. These questions concern the teachers' view about the process of their evaluation in specific sections: a) Individual dossier, b) Evaluation by the school counselor, c) Evaluation by the School Principal d. Interview.

C) Results of the teachers' evaluation in the Model Experimental School. These questions concern the results of teachers' evaluation and teachers have to express their opinion about the results and their utilization.

The views of teachers about their evaluation by the school counselor are presented in this dissertation.

The observation key of the lesson by the School Counselor examines 11 areas:

- 1) The lesson plan
- 2) The organization of the class
- 3) The forms of teaching, teaching tools and strategies
- 4) The cognitive competence
- 5) The involvement/participation of students in the lesson
- 6) Clarity in communication
- 7) Teaching flexibility
- 8) The Pedagogical/learning climate
- 9) Classroom Management
- 10) The students' evaluation in all phases of teaching
- 11) The internal coherence of teaching and management of teaching time

The reference population is the total teaching staff of all the Model Experimental Schools in Greece. The presented sample presented concerns 110 people.

The followed sampling procedure was the double layered simple random sampling (Levy & Lemeshow, 1999, pp. 143–174, 207–230). The term double layered because an attempt was made to obtain a sample with representation on two levels: the level of geographical coverage and the level of teacher's specialization. Namely, a sample was taken from each geographical area where there is a school of interest (practically this means that a sample was taken from each school) and from each specialty. The term simple random sampling because within each unique school/specialty combination the available teachers were sampled randomly (Levy & Lemeshow, 1999, pp. 47–58).

The distribution of the questionnaire was done by personal delivery or sending to the respondent, after personal communication, while the final distribution of the questionnaire was preceded by a pilot distribution to a sample of 30 people.

2.2 Results

The statistical analysis of the research data was done through the statistical package SPSS v.21. The analysis concerns sections C3 and C1 of the questionnaire. In section C1, teachers are asked to note on a five-point Likert scale their degree of agreement with the respective statement of the questions in section C1. In Table 1 descriptive statistical indicators from the sample responses are depicted.

Table 1 Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Median Values for the Sample Teachers' Answers in Section C1 of the Survey

Question	Mean value	Standard deviation	Median value
C1.1 Do you agree with the importance given to the field of Scientific and Teaching Competence?	3.57	1,221	4.00
C1.2 Do you think that the time given to you was enough to organize and complete your dossier?	2.64	1,159	3.00
C1.3 Do you agree with the content of the observation key by the School Counselor?	2.68	1,117	3.00
C1.4 Do you agree with the importance given to the evaluation by the School Counselor?	2.99	1,225	3.00
C1.5 How satisfied were you with the collaboration with the School Counselor before observing the lessons?	3.39	1,303	4.00
C1.6 How satisfied were you with your performance in the classroom about the presence of the School Counselor?	3.94	1,016	4.00
C1.7 How satisfied were you with the feedback you received from School Council or after completing his observations?	3.10	1,427	3.00

In Figure 1 the teachers' answers to questions C1.1 to C1.7 are presented in a Boxplot.

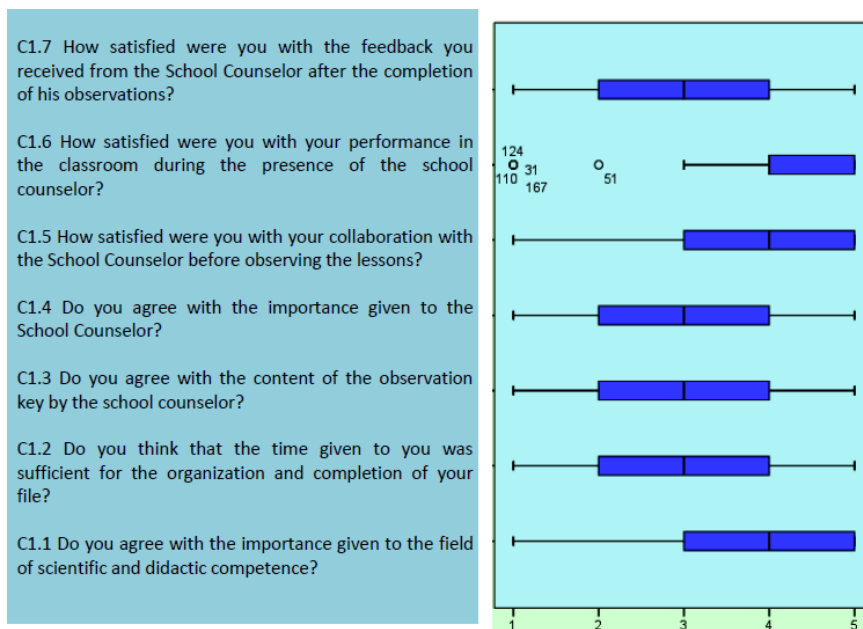


Figure 1 Boxplot Regarding the Teachers' Answers to Questions C1.1 to C1.7 of the Research

The review of the results of the table and the boxplot depicts that the teachers are satisfied with the collaboration they had with the school counselor before the process, with their performance in the classroom in the presence of the school counselor and they agree with the importance given in the field of pedagogical and cognitive competence. Teachers are dissatisfied with the time given to them to prepare their dossier and disagree with the content of the school counselor's observation key.

Specifically for question C.1.5 which concerns the satisfaction from the collaboration with the school counselor before the observation of the lessons, the detailed results are presented in Figure 2:

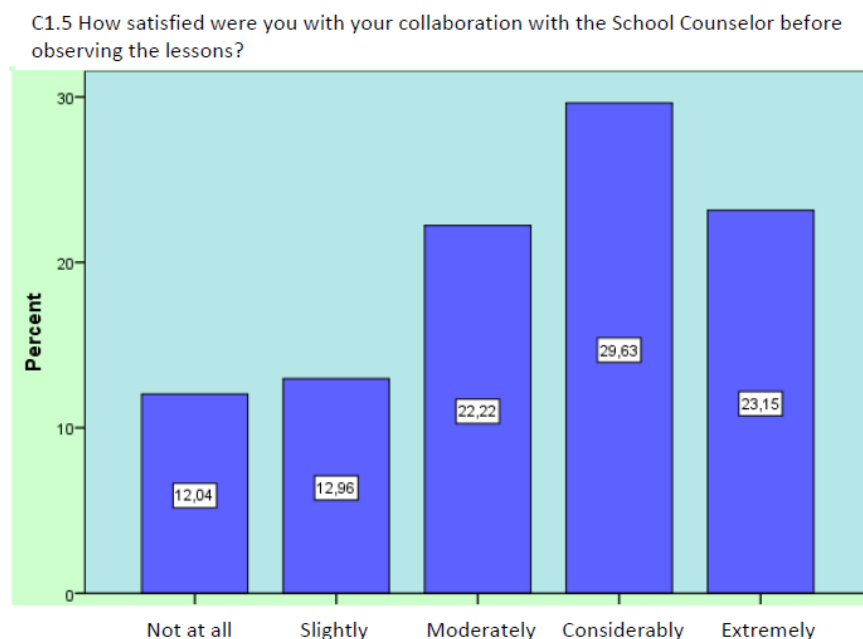


Figure 2 Teachers' Answers to Question C.1.5 Which Concerns Their Satisfaction From the Cooperation With the School Counselor Before Observing the Lessons.

The vast majority (55%) of the respondents are satisfied with the cooperation they had with the counselor before observing the lessons. Nearly 20% of them expressed a neutral attitude while the remaining 25% were not satisfied. Overall the image created is positive and the large mass is satisfied with the collaboration.

In section C3 of the questionnaire the teachers were asked by the school counselor to prioritize their evaluation criteria. The table below depicts the descriptive statistical measures of the teachers' answers of the sample to the questions of section C3. The answers here are not meant in the form of Likert scales but vice versa. When a criterion is very important, it is expected to get ranked higher and therefore to receive a lower ranking than another less important one. The criteria are 12, so the minimum hierarchy that can appear is 1 (corresponds to the most important criterion) and the maximum is 12 (corresponds to the least important criterion). Table 2 depicts the criteria in order of importance by mean value, i.e., by decreasing mean value.

Table 2 Mean values, Standard Deviations and Median Values for the Sample Teachers' Answers in Section C3 of the Survey

Question (Hierarchy of evaluation criteria by the SS:)	Mean Value	Standard deviation	Median value
C3.4 Cognitive competence of the teacher	3.63	3,265	1.00
C3.8 Pedagogical/learning climate	3.88	2,861	3.00
C3.7 Teaching flexibility	4.25	3,108	3.00
C3.5 Involvement/participation of students in the lesson	4.28	2,985	3.00
C3.6 Clarity in communication	4.38	3,110	4.00
C3.9 Classroom management	4.91	3,013	5.00
C3.3 Forms of teaching, teaching tools and strategies	5.46	3,370	5.50
C3.2 Class organization	5.82	3,461	6.00
C3.1 Lesson plan	5.94	3,666	5.00
C3.11 Internal coherence of teaching	6.31	3,768	7.00
C3.12 Management of teaching time	7.37	3,728	8.00
C3.10 Students' evaluation in all phases of teaching	7.96	3,804	10.00

The following figure (Figure 3) depicts a grouped horizontal bar graph of the sample teachers' answers for section C3 of the questionnaire. The rounded hierarchical mean value is written inside each bar.

An overview of the results of Table 2 and Figure 3 shows that according to the ranking of evaluation criteria, as stated by the sample, the five most important criteria are the following:

- Pedagogical/Learning climate
- Cognitive competence of the educator
- The participation/involvement of students in the lesson
- Clarity in communication
- Teaching flexibility

The three least important criteria are:

- Internal coherence of teaching
- Management of teaching time
- Students' evaluation in all phases of teaching.

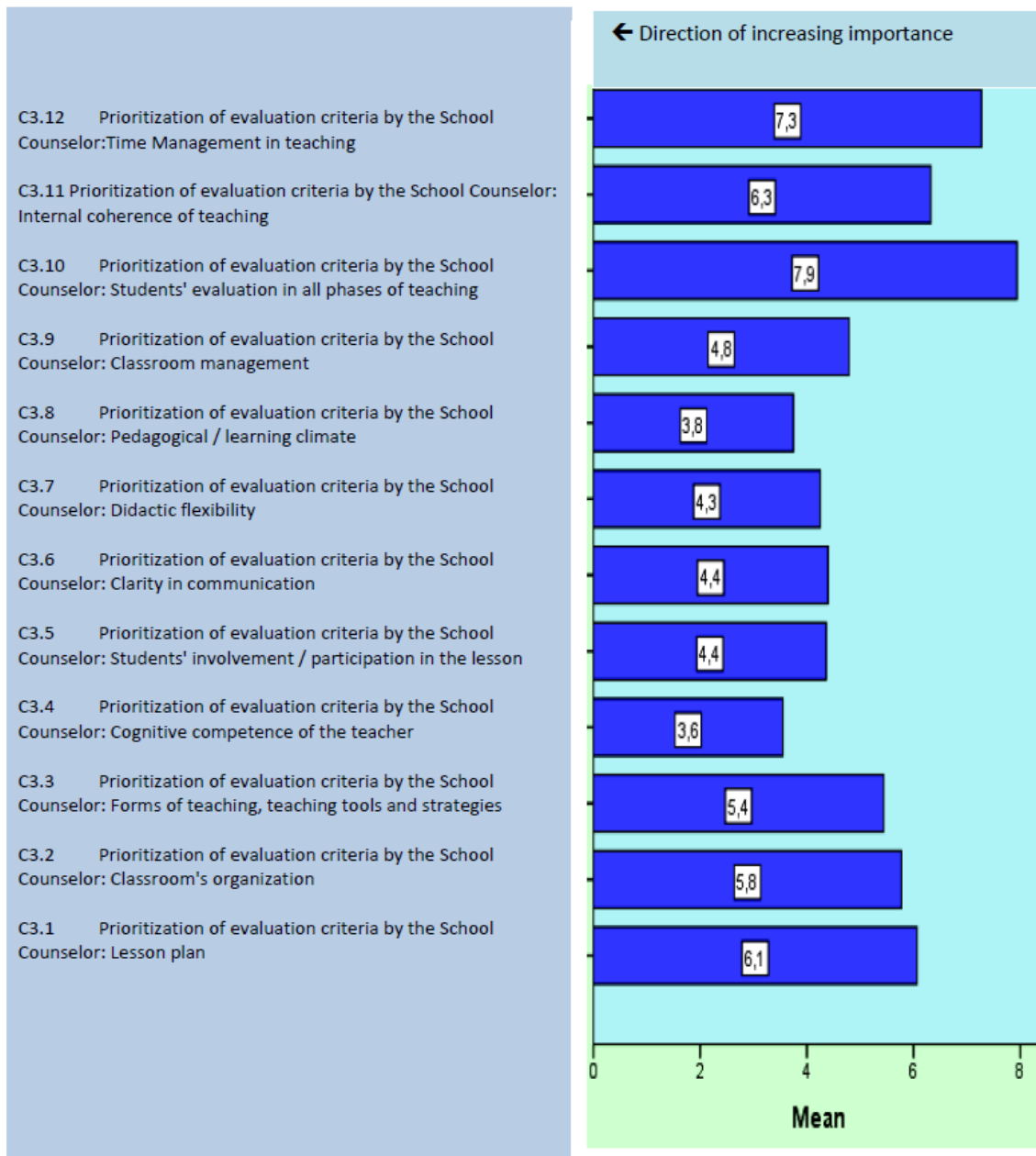


Figure 3 Grouped Horizontal Bar Graph of Teachers' Answers to the Questions in Section C3 of the Questionnaire

Finally, it is noted that the most important criterion on Mean Value, the teacher's cognitive competence, is not a commonly accepted first criterion as it has an average score of about 3.6 while approximately the 50% of the sample considers it as the most important criterion (if the median value is equal with 1).

Regarding the differences in the hierarchy of criteria between the two sexes, it is found that the two sexes share a common system of criteria (the first six most important criteria are the same for both sexes), with the difference that these criteria are hierarchically different for men and women. For example, the pedagogical learning climate is the most important for men, while it is the fourth in the hierarchy for women, the cognitive competence of the teacher is the most important criterion for women while it is the third most important for men.

The hierarchies of the criteria for the two sexes are depicted in more detail in Figure 4.

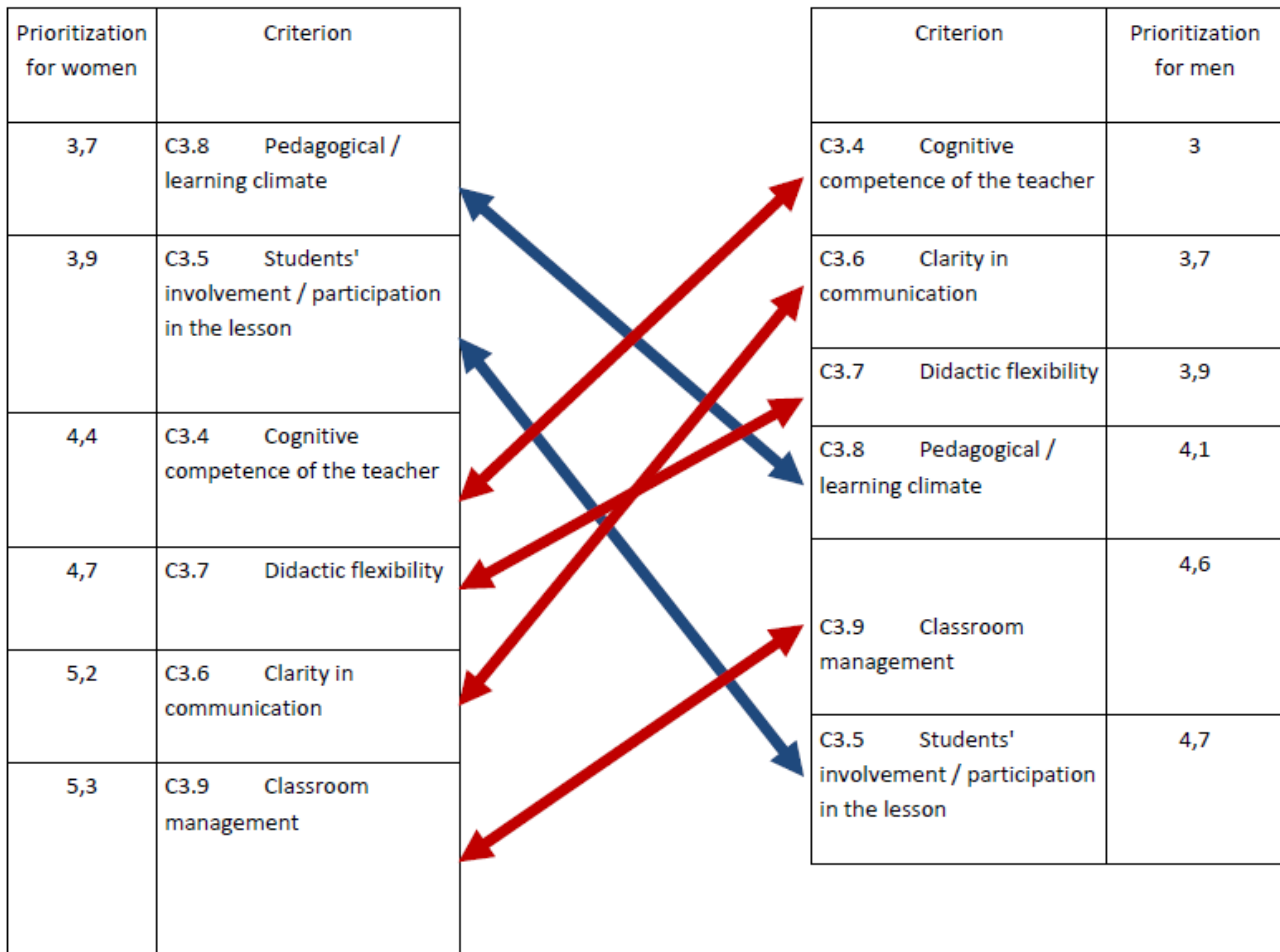


Figure 4 Matching of the Six Most Important Evaluation Criteria for Men and Women

3. Conclusions

The first and general picture of the results is that the teachers' attitude is positive towards their evaluation.

Regarding the evaluation by the school counselor, most of the teachers emphasize the collaborative atmosphere that existed both before and after the observation of the lessons. More than 50% of the teachers collaborated very and very well with the school counselor.

Teachers are not satisfied with the time given to prepare their dossier. They consider that in a very short period of time they had to gather their material for the delivery of their dossier to the school counselor.

Teachers as a whole seem to disagree with the content of the school counselor's observation key.

The teachers in the hierarchy of the most important criteria regarding the key of observation of the school counselors propose the pedagogical and learning climate that is formed in the school classroom and their cognitive competence as well. Therefore, the combative teacher gives priority to those "tools" that promote knowledge and the classroom's climate as well.

Most of the educators in the hierarchy of the least important criteria of the key of observation of school counselors refer to the management of teaching time and the students' evaluation in all phases of teaching. They believe that the standardization of teaching does not help the aims and objectives of the course. Although they

consider the active participation of students as a very important criterion for the effectiveness of the course and their own as well, they do not consider the evaluation of the students in every phase of their teaching as necessary. In addition, men and women share a single system of prioritization of the most important criteria with small differences in hierarchy.

Regarding the choices of the criteria between the sexes, we realize that there is a common value system in which they differ in the degree of criterion's importance and not in its existence, the pedagogical learning climate is the most important for men, while it is fourth in the hierarchy for women, the cognitive competence of the teacher is the most important criterion for women while it is the third most important for men.

Therefore, in conclusion, it seems that the teachers collaborated effectively with the school counselor, who in most cases acted as a "critical friend". This also helped teachers to easily "open" their classrooms. We should take better account into the criteria of the observation key. The teacher promotes those elements that have to do with the "essence" of the didactic and educational act (pedagogical climate, teacher's cognitive competence, involvement of students) and not with the strict and predetermined teaching schemes (student's evaluation in each phase of teaching, internal coherence of teaching).

What emerges from the teachers' answers is their positive attitude towards the evaluation by the school counselor as long as there is planning, objectivity and scientific tools useful for the evaluation's process.

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