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ABSTRACT

In Greece, self-evaluation has been treated with skepticism by teacher unions and several political parties. Self-evaluation has to be promoted, according to the Ministry Decision 6603/ΓΔ4/20.01.2021. Investigating factors associated with teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation might be vital to successfully implement self-evaluation. To investigate the effect of attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment on attitudes towards self-evaluation in Primary and Secondary Education teachers in Greece. This quantitative study is part of a larger project, investigating several parameters as for their association with self-evaluation in 1.000 teachers in Greece. The independent variables analyzed were attitudes towards the educational environment (N=13 items), instruction preparation (N=18 items) and instruction delivery/ student assessment (N=24 items). The dependent variable analyzed was attitudes towards self-evaluation. The potential association of these three independent variables with attitudes towards self-evaluation was investigated after controlling for confounding variables. Attitudes towards the educational environment ($F=38,672$), instruction preparation ($F= 20,492$) and instruction delivery/ student assessment (41,419) had a strong and significant effect on attitudes towards self-evaluation ($p=0.000$). Educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment are related to attitudes towards self-evaluation. It is possible that the overall climate of school environment, as well as the climate of school class, shape the teachers attitudes towards self-evaluation. The effect of instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment could possibly explain by the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers, leading them to a more positive perception for self-evaluation.

Keywords: attitudes; barriers; Greece; school; self-evaluation; teaching

INTRODUCTION

Self-evaluation is clearly different from the external evaluation of a school organization. The foundation of external evaluation is the idea that a higher governmental body sets the standards that an educational organization must adhere to. Self-evaluation, on the other hand, is controlled by the educational institution itself, and no higher governmental authority is in charge of how the evaluation is conducted because it is done by internal evaluators, or the teachers themselves (Hofman et al., 2009).

According to Patton (1991), there are three key benefits of self-evaluation. It first serves the objective of democratizing the evaluation procedure. Education will undoubtedly become more democratic if we, as well as parents and students, have a voice in organizational matters. As a result, there are more evaluators overall. However, the people who interact within the school organization—the evaluators—are also the ones who are most concerned about the issue, not the higher state authority that decides on significant issues of a school unit. Therefore, democracy is promoted through self-evaluation.

Our responsibility to parents and students is the second objective it serves. Through self-evaluation, we do in fact hold ourselves more accountable to parents and students, which makes us feel more responsible for them. We, and not some higher regulatory authority, are therefore far more in control of the planning and evaluation of the school's work, and we are also accountable for the accomplishment or failure of this management. As a result, parents hold us, as instructors, to a higher standard of accountability. However, if we believe in our own abilities, we have nothing to fear from this process (Patton, 1991).

Our personal professional improvement is the third reason we should self-evaluate. To be able to continuously grow in order to meet new problems, learn new things, and continue to progress throughout our professional

careers is undoubtedly a task for us as instructors. It is a question of self-respect for our very professional identity as well as a strategy to increase our effectiveness as professionals. Therefore, by evaluating ourselves, we can identify our areas for improvement (Patton, 1991).

We may investigate the differences between these two evaluation methods further by looking at the results that each method produces, rather than necessarily whether instructors or the government maintains control. We can see how self-assessment has a variety of advantages for us, our students, and society that would not be available if the evaluation were conducted by outside evaluators. According to Kyriakides and Campbell (2004), the following are the primary advantages:

1. improving social interactions between members of the educational organization and contributing to a more positive school climate
2. the improvement of the decision-making process
3. improving the school organisation's response to internal and external challenges
4. improving the effectiveness of the teaching work improving the effectiveness of the school organisation

We might review pertinent instances of global practice to better comprehend what self-evaluation is. Scotland's educational system serves as an example of this type. In Scotland, self-evaluation was encouraged by pertinent legislation during the 1990s, and from 2000 on, it was implemented systematically and widely. In fact, Scottish educators saw the desire for self-evaluation as a means of recovering their independence from the UK education system's central governing authority. As a result, it was an act of liberation against a centralized educational system that teachers in the nation believed to be enslaving them. The self-evaluation of educational institutions, however, was not carried out as would have been anticipated and did not produce the greatest benefits, as subsequent experience has demonstrated. The country's teachers themselves, despite their initial intentions, did not support the project to a substantial amount, according to research into the potential causes of this (Croxford et al., 2009). Therefore, it appears that even in situations where self-evaluation has not produced the desired results, such as in the Scottish educational system, this can be attributed to teachers' lack of support for the project rather than to inherent issues with the self-evaluation process itself.

In Greece, teachers' evaluation consists a controversial issue, since evaluation was dealt up with skepticism by teacher unions and several political parties (Papakonstantinou&Kolympari, 2019). Self-evaluation has been promoted in schools by the current government through the Ministry Decision 6603/ΓΔ4/20.01.2021. Highlighting the parameters that are associated with teachers' attitudes might be important in order to detect relevant barriers and to improve their attitudes towards self-evaluation.

Base on the aforementioned data, the aim of this study was 1) to investigate the effect of attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment on teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation.

METHODS

The data analysed in this paper are part of a larger study which concerned issues related to teachers' self-evaluation in Greece. The overall study has been carried out as a requirement for the Phd of the first author at School of Early Childhood Education / Faculty of Education of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. It is therefore a secondary data analysis.

Three stages of the research procedure were completed. A pilot research was carried out in the first stage with teachers at a private school in Greece. Using Google Forms, this was disseminated electronically. The distribution was made to a group of 40 individuals chosen at random. Participants had the option of reporting any feedback they had on the questionnaire after completing it. Two questions' contents were slightly changed and a few typos were fixed as a result of their suggestions. A total of 120 questions made up the questionnaire for the pilot phase, which focused on the sociodemographic traits of instructors and numerous evaluation-related factors. All of the relevant measures given to pilot test participants showed adequate psychometric qualities, according to Cronbach's (1951) α .

In the second stage, a sample of 100 participants was included. These teachers were drawn from the first author's close-knit, professional, and larger interpersonal networks. The sample size was increased in a later phase because it was felt that this sample was too small. Internet-based sampling was used in the third phase. A total of 900 Primary and Secondary Education teachers completed the related assessments. The study's nature and aim were communicated to participants, and it was made clear that their participation would remain anonymous and confidential. The enrolment process of those two stages started at 03.01.2022 and ended at 09.26.2022.

This paper analyses data obtained from these last two phases of the distribution of the measurement tool. There were therefore 1,000 participants in the final database. For the purpose of this article, only the questions of the scales concerning attitudes towards the educational environment (N=13 items), instruction preparation (N=18 items) and instruction delivery/ student assessment (N=24 items) were analysed as independent variables. The α level for those three scales was 0.93, 0.89 and 0.93, respectively. The participants' overall attitude towards self-

evaluation was analyzed as a dependent variable (N=9 items). All questions had items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's α for this scale was 0.92.

Data analysis was performed through ANCOVA analysis. Attitudes towards self-evaluation were treated as the dependent variable, attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment were analysed as independent variables and all sociodemographic variables as confounding. This analysis was also used in the Primary and Secondary Education Teachers. The significance level was set at 0.05 for all analyses.

RESULTS

The participants' sociodemographic data are presented followingly. As indicated by the Table, there were slightly more females (51.4%) than males (48.6%). Concerning the year of birth, high proportions concerned those born between 1975-1979 (41.4%) and those born between 1980-1984 (24.3%). Most of the teachers that participated in the study had only a BSc degree (55.6%), while 33.6% helded and MSc and 10.8% helded a Phd degree. Most participants were primary education teachers (60.9%) and a smaller proportion were secondary education teachers (39.1%). Regarding their family status, most participants were married with children (53.5%). As for their monthly family income, 43.8% of the participants earned 1.501-2.000 euros and 37.9% of the participants 2.001-2.500 euros. Additional information concerning the sociodemographic data of the participants can be found at the following Table.

Table 1: The sociodemographic data of the study sample

Gender	N	%
Male	486	48,6
Female	514	51,4
Year of birth	N	%
1955-1959	1	,1
1960-1964	12	1,2
1965-1969	173	17,3
1970-1974	40	4,0
1975-1979	414	41,4
1980-1984	243	24,3
1985-1989	89	8,9
1990-1994	28	2,8
Degree	N	%
BSc	556	55,6
MSc	336	33,6
Phd	108	10,8
Primary / Secondary education teacher	N	%
Primary	609	60,9
Secondary	391	39,1
Family status	N	%
Unmarried without children	124	12,4
Unmarried / widowed with children	104	10,4
Widowed without children	101	10,1
Married	136	13,6
Married with children	535	53,5
Monthly family income	N	%
0-1000€	6	,6
1001-1500€	73	7,3
1501-2000€	438	43,8
2001-2500€	379	37,9
2501-3000€	97	9,7
3001-5000€	6	,6
5001+€	1	,1

The inductive analysis for the total sample is presented at Table 2. As indicated by the table, all the controlled variables, except gender, had a significant effect. All three independent variables as well as their interactions also had significant effects on attitudes towards self-evaluation. Hence, attitudes towards the educational

environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment had a significant impact on attitudes towards self-evaluation.

Table 2: The effect of attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment and teachers attitudes towards self-evaluation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	20437,485 ^a	147	139,031	183,012	,000	,991
Intercept	344,852	1	344,852	453,945	,000	,651
Gender	49,978	1	49,978	65,789	,000	,213
Data birth	6,248	1	6,248	8,224	,004	,033
Educational level	1,623	1	1,623	2,137	,145	,009
Family status	10,864	1	10,864	14,300	,000	,056
Monthly family income	1,143	1	1,143	1,505	,221	,006
attitudes towards the educational environment	440,675	15	29,378	38,672	,000	,705
Instruction preparation	217,938	14	15,567	20,492	,000	,541
Instruction delivery/ student assessment	503,437	16	31,465	41,419	,000	,732
Total	905240,000	391				
Corrected Total	20622,087	390				

a. R Squared = ,991 (Adjusted R Squared = ,986)

The relevant analysis only for Primary Education Teachers is presented at Table 3. As indicated by the table, family status was the only controlled variable which did not have a significant effect. All three independent variables as well as their interactions also had significant effects on attitudes towards self-evaluation. Hence, attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment had a significant impact on attitudes towards self-evaluation in Primary Education teachers.

Table 3: The effect of attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment and Primary Education teachers attitudes towards self-evaluation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	42102,749 ^a	173	243,368	156,143	,000	,984
Intercept	420,788	1	420,788	269,974	,000	,383
Gender	10,137	1	10,137	6,504	,011	,015
Date of birth	75,188	1	75,188	48,240	,000	,100
Educational level	54,930	1	54,930	35,243	,000	,075
Family status	1,515	1	1,515	,972	,325	,002
Monthly family income	15,121	1	15,121	9,702	,002	,022
Attitudes towards the educational environment	801,063	24	33,378	21,415	,000	,542
Instruction preparation	298,429	20	14,921	9,573	,000	,306
Total	1154591,000	609				
Corrected Total	42780,752	608				

a. R Squared = ,984 (Adjusted R Squared = ,978)

In Secondary Education Teachers, educational level and monthly family income were the only covariates which did not have a significant effect. Attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment had a significant impact on attitudes towards self-evaluation in Secondary Education teachers.

Table 4: The effect of attitudes towards the educational environment, instruction preparation and instruction delivery/ student assessment and Secondary Education teachers attitudes towards self-evaluation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	20437,485 ^a	147	139,031	183,012	,000	,991
Intercept	344,852	1	344,852	453,945	,000	,651
Gender	49,978	1	49,978	65,789	,000	,213
Date of birth	6,248	1	6,248	8,224	,004	,033
Educational level	1,623	1	1,623	2,137	,145	,009
Family status	10,864	1	10,864	14,300	,000	,056
Monthly family income	1,143	1	1,143	1,505	,221	,006
Attitudes towards the educational environment	440,675	15	29,378	38,672	,000	,705
Instruction preparation	217,938	14	15,567	20,492	,000	,541
instruction delivery/ student assessment	503,437	16	31,465	41,419	,000	,732
Total	905240,000	391				
Corrected Total	20622,087	390				
a. R Squared = ,991 (Adjusted R Squared = ,986)						

DISCUSSION

Based on the above, it appears that the educational environment, preparation for teaching and effective implementation of teaching are related to teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation.

These findings need to be studied in relation to the literature to date. Based on data from the Cyprus education system, it appears that the climate in the wider school environment determines attitudes towards self-evaluation (Kyriakides & Campbell, 2004). The present research extends this knowledge by demonstrating how it is not only the climate of the school environment that is related to attitudes towards self-evaluation, but also the climate of the classroom itself. It is possible that these findings lead to a theory of concentric circles. A broader positive climate in the school environment also leads to a more positive climate at the classroom level. At the centre of these cycles is the teacher, who, as a function of the positive climate, also forms more positive attitudes towards self-evaluation.

With regard to teacher preparation, teaching practices and evaluation practices, the findings could be interpreted as a function of self-efficacy theory. According to this theory, those who feel more effective can take on more challenges in their work environment without fear of being evaluated (Steyn & Mynhardt, 2008). In the present case, therefore, it can be assumed that this is the case. Teachers who prepare and implement teaching more effectively are therefore more confident about outcomes brought about by their professional practice and as a result are not afraid of evaluation.

Overall, this study leads to the conclusion that teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation are complex. They are therefore shaped as a result of socio-demographic characteristics, classroom climate and factors related to the preparation and implementation of teaching. Moreover, from a socio-psychological point of view, no single factor can be identified as contributing to the formation of people's attitudes (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). The findings of the present study should therefore be considered together with findings from previous research, contributing to our broader understanding of teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation.

In any case, it should be noted that this study has several limitations. The size of the sample under consideration is one of the limitations. The sample size was undoubtedly enormous, but it wasn't chosen using any standard method for calculating sample sizes. A higher probability of type 1 and type 2 errors, or the wrong rejection and acceptance of the null hypothesis, respectively, is implied by not utilizing a formula to determine the required sample size (Ahmad & Halim, 2017; Campbell & Machin, 1999). Therefore, there is a chance of statistical error with this study.

The representativeness of the sample taken into account is a second drawback of the current exercise. The study's inclusion of participants was primarily conducted online, although this implies a higher risk of selection mistake given that people who use the internet typically have more advanced digital skills than those who do not. In fact, a few of the measurement tool's queries dealt with the application of contemporary technologies, particularly certification in them. Additionally, no sampling strategy, such as stratified sampling, was adopted

that might guarantee the representativeness of the tested sample in the Greek region. Last but not least, there are some traits of the examined sample that exhibit high rates, likely much greater than those reported in the larger community of instructors in our nation, most notably holding a PhD degree. Therefore, it is uncertain whether the study's conclusions may be applied generally.

The questionnaire that was administrated is the subject of a third limitation. It is desirable from a methodological perspective to use previously created and standardized measurement tools, which entails making the most of them (Babbie, 2013; Robson, 2002). The measurement in this study was not standardized. The need to construct a questionnaire that addressed factors important to evaluation specifically in the Greek reality necessitated, however, the adoption of a non-weighted measurement technique.

Based on the aim, results and limitations of the present study, some suggestions for future research can be made. In particular, this study concludes some theoretical accounts of why teachers who prepare their teaching more effectively are more positive towards self-evaluation. Self-efficacy is also a central theoretical attribution of this study. However, it is actually an interpretation of the findings of the statistical analysis by the authors rather than a certain conclusion. Therefore, it is suggested that a qualitative study be conducted to further explore this relationship, as qualitative research is appropriate for examining how a phenomenon takes place (Babbie, 2013). A second suggestion for future research is to investigate a much wider range of factors. As mentioned above, attitudes are highly complex and develop following a multitude of different factors (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). For practical reasons, this study could only examine a limited range of factors. However, the factors identified through this study are not the only ones that are associated with teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct research with a wider range of factors examined in order to more fully establish the factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards self-evaluation.

In any case, Greece is currently a country in which the educational system is undergoing change, among other things because of the Ministry Decision on self-evaluation. For optimal decision-making by educational policy makers, it is imperative that continuous research is carried out in order to increase the amount of knowledge on the issue of self-evaluation. Future research is therefore imperative in order to guide in a fruitful way those who formulate educational policies in our country.

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