

THE APPLICATION OF EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT IN SCHOOLS IN MACEDONIA AND ITS EFFECT ON STUDENTS' SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

The educational process is a dynamic process that is changing continuously. Assessment is the final and an important part of this process. As part of the educational process that is involved in applying new methods of teaching and learning, assessment is changing, too. The Government of Macedonia had approved the application of external examination in primary and secondary schools. Besides the final grades, that the students take regularly at the end of the school year now they enter also in the external exam in two school subjects. The aim of the study is to test the effect of external examination on the process of teaching and learning. To achieve this aim primary school teachers and pupils in Struga region will be asked to fill in the questionnaires that will be prepared for this study. In order to examine the issue from two perspectives two different types of questionnaires will be designed; they will be called as Teachers' Questionnaire and Pupils' Questionnaire. Both questionnaires will contain multiple-choice questions, so the participants of the study will have just to circle the option that they think is closer to their opinion. Since the questionnaires will be anonymous, the participants will not have to give personal data. The teachers and pupils might have different opinions about the use of external examination since they see the issue from two different positions. Therefore, the analyses of both questionnaires will show valuable results of the application of external examination because the data will be gathered from two sources that see the issue from two different points of view.

Keywords: External Examination, Teachers' Questionnaire, Pupils' Questionnaire, Assessment.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, innovations are part of pupils' life. Changes that are occurring in every field of life are considered as common things since they are happening very often. Live exist based on the system that it has created. All fields of life are connected. The existence of the whole is as a result of the connection and the harmony of the parts. Moreover, the changes that are occurring in other fields of life affect the teaching and learning process. Things that students learn at schools have to fit with the requirement of the life after school. So the knowledge they get from schools has to be applicable to students' professional and everyday life in the future. Therefore, new methods are applied in education. Assessment as one part of education is changing continuously. The application of external examination is one of the recent changes in the assessment process in Macedonia. Innovations have new impact on the existed process. Therefore, the application of the new things has to be observed and tested in order see their effects on the process that they are applied.

The Study Hypotheses

- The application of external examination has affected teaching and learning process

LITERATURE REVIEW

Assessment is an important part of the process of education. People are used to consider it as the last part of the process of education. However, it is not the less important part. As Garo (2013) claims that assessment is a difficult part of teaching; moreover, it makes the teachers take a big responsibility when they give grades. Schools aim to raise pupils success and the key for this is assessment because "assessment lies at the heart of this process" (Weeden, Winter, & Broadfoot, 2002 p.12). According to Shermis & Di Vesta (2011) assessment should be viewed as an "intrinsic part" of teaching not as a "separate attachment" from teaching (p.83)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A short description of the study

The objective of this study was to examine whether the application of external examination has affected the teaching and learning process. To get information about this issue a study took place in one of the primary schools in Struga region. In the study participated teachers who work in the primary school *Nuri Mazari*, in Dollogozhda, Struga. Nevertheless, pupils who participated in this study were students of the same school. Both teachers and pupils were required to complete the questionnaires.

Participants

The participants in this study were divided in two groups. Participants in the first group were teachers who work in primary schools in Struga. On the other hand, the other group consists of primary school students. In this study participated eighty-four participants

Teachers

Twenty out of eight-four participants of the study were primary school teachers. They teach different subject at school and they completed the questionnaire voluntarily

Pupils

The number of the students who participated in this study was bigger than the number of the teachers who participated in the same study. There were sixty-four pupils who were part of this study. They were not the same class. Some of the pupils were seventh grade students and the others were eight grade students. But they all completed the same questionnaire, Pupils' Questionnaire.

Instruments

Questionnaires were the instruments that were used to get data about this study. Questionnaires often are used as practical instruments to gather data about similar studies. There are three main reasons why researchers use questionnaires to get information. The first reason is that questionnaires are easy to design. The second reason is that it is easy to complete them; even if, the participants are not used with questionnaires they find it easy to complete the questionnaire. And, the third reason is that the data gathered from the questionnaires is easy to be analyzed; the researchers can easterly organize and analyze the information gathered from the questionnaires. Questionnaires are time consuming. The

researchers save time in preparing the questionnaires, in using them during the study, in working with them during the analyzes of the data gathered from them and also in organizing and showing the results of the questions in the questionnaires.

Teachers' Questionnaires and Pupils' Questionnaires

There were used two types of questionnaires: Teachers' Questionnaire and Pupils' Questionnaire. Both questionnaires were designed in the same way. They contained multiple-choice questions. There were three questions in the Teachers Questionnaire and three questions in Pupils Questionnaire. It was easy for the participants to complete the questionnaire because they just had to circle the answer that they think is closer to their personal opinion about the issues. The questionnaires were anonymous; therefore, personal data were not required.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

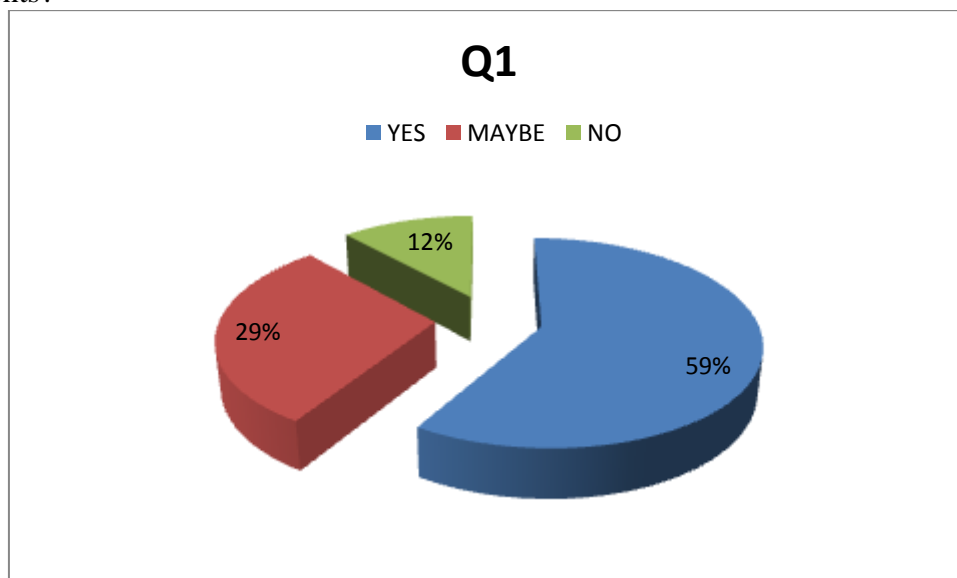
Results of the Questionnaires

The computer program, Excel, was used to analyses the results of the questions of the both questionnaires

Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire

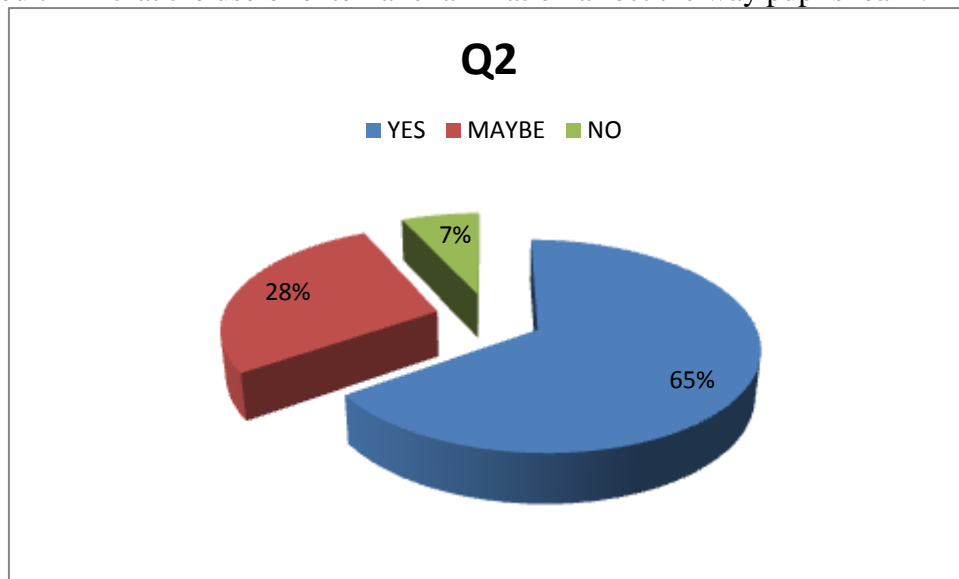
Charts were used in order to give a better visual view of the results. The charts bellows show the results of the teachers' questionnaire.

1. Do you think that the use of external examination effect the way teachers assess students?



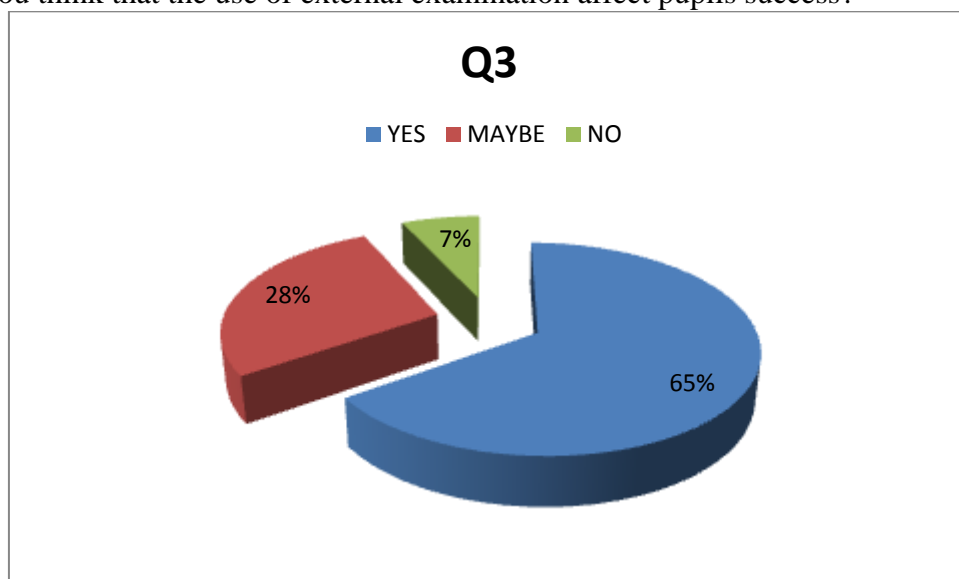
Graph 1 the results of the first question of the teachers' questionnaire about the application of external examination in primary schools in Struga region.

2. Do you think that the use of external examination affect the way pupils learn?



Graph 2 the results of the second question of the teachers' questionnaire about the application of external examination in primary schools in Struga region

3. Do you think that the use of external examination affect pupils success?

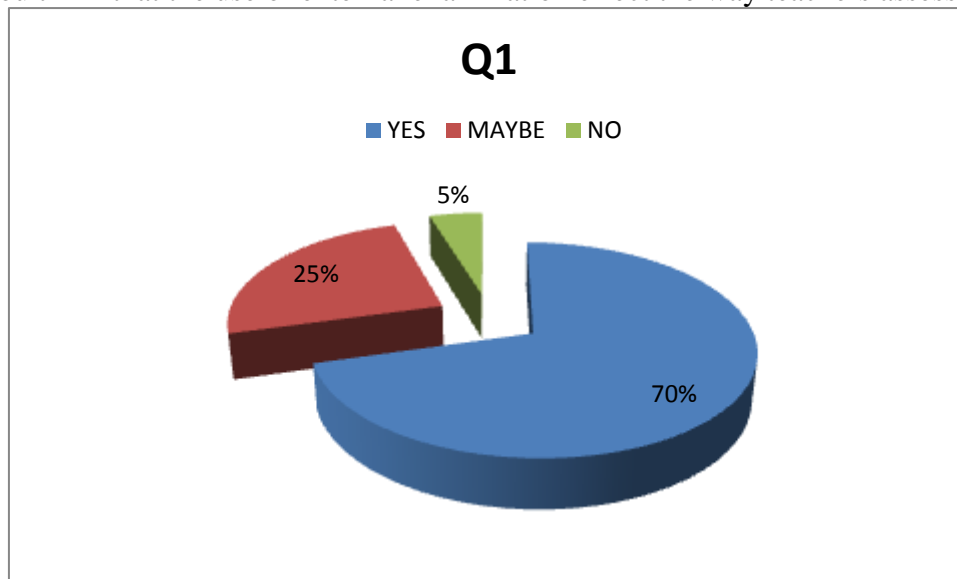


Graph 3 the results of the third question of the teachers' questionnaire about the application of external examination in primary schools in Struga region

Results of the Pupils' Questionnaire

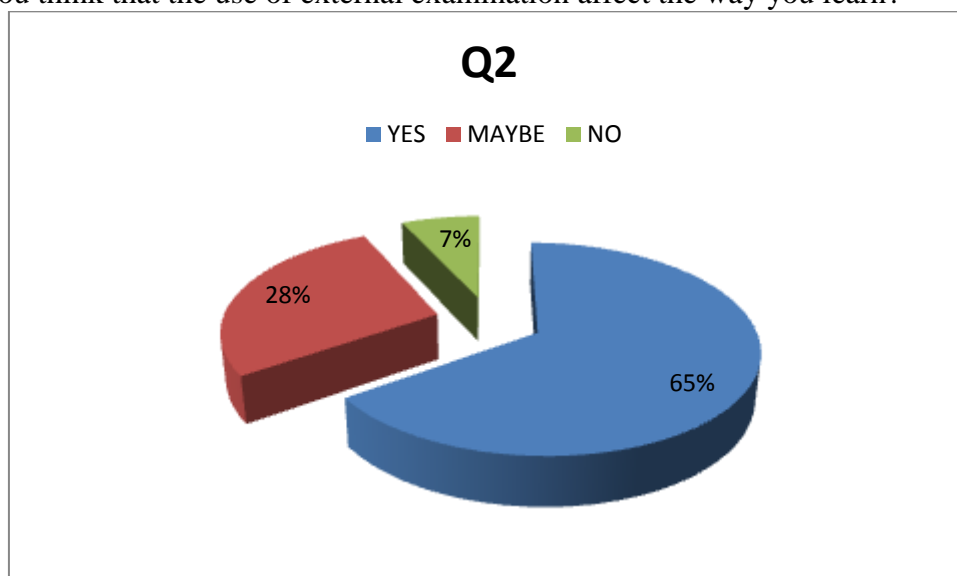
The results of the pupils' questionnaire are also analyzed with the same computer program, and there were used charts to show the results. The charts that are given bellow show the results of pupils' questionnaire

1. Do you think that the use of external examination effect the way teachers assess you?



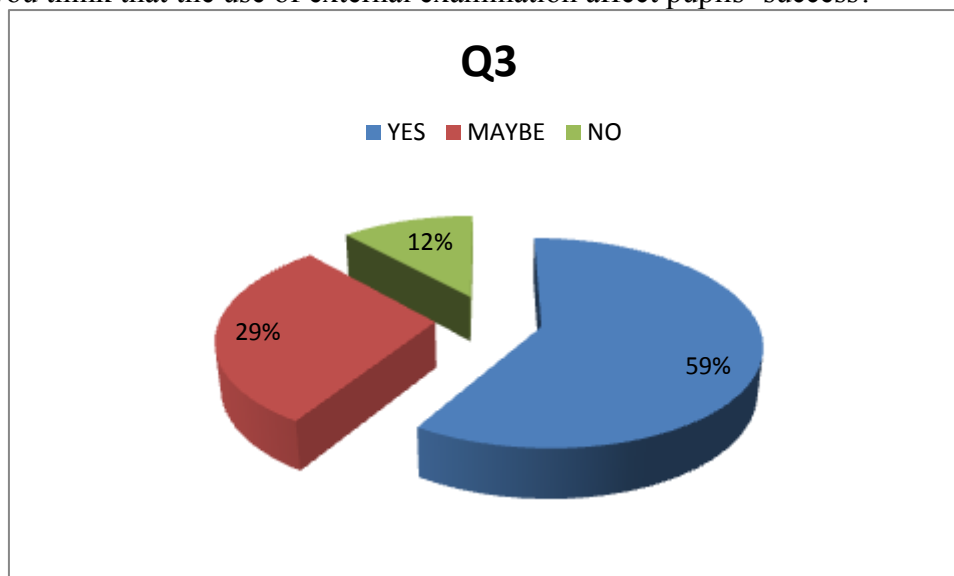
Graph 1 the results of the first question of the pupils' questionnaire about the application of external examination in primary schools in Struga region

2. Do you think that the use of external examination affect the way you learn?



Graph 2 the results of the second question of the pupils' questionnaire about the application of external examination in primary schools in Struga region.

3. Do you think that the use of external examination affect pupils' success?



Graph 3 the results of the third question of the pupils' questionnaire about the application of external examination in primary schools in Struga region

DISCUSSIONS/ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The charts given in the previous session show the results of each question of both questionnaires. The first chart shows that most of the teachers who participated in this study (59%) think that external examination effect the way teachers assess their pupils. On the other hand, some of them (12%) think the opposite. However, there were some others, (29%) who are not about it and they had chosen the option *Maybe* to answer this question. A high percentage of participants (65%) think that external examination effect also the way pupils learn. Just some of them (7%) thinks that it does not affect the way pupils learn, and (28%) of participants are not sure about it. Moreover, most of the participants (65%) think that the application of external examination affect pupils success. There were some others (28%) who were not sure about it. Just some of them (7%) think that pupils' success is not affected by the application of external examination.

The charts of the Pupils questionnaire show somehow the same results. Most of the students who participated in the study (70 %) think that the application of external examination affect the way their teachers assess them. There were some others (25%) who are not sure about it. Just some of them (5 %) think that it does not affect the way teachers assess them. Moreover, most of them (65%) think that the application of external examination also affect the way then learn. Some of them (7 %) think the opposite, that the way they learn is not affected by external examination. And there are some others (28%) who think that maybe it affect the way they learn. A high percentage of the participants (59 %) think that external examination affects their success. On the other hand, some of them (12%) think that it does not affect their success. However there were also some others (29%), who are not sure about it.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMANDATIONS

From all things mentioned above, it is concluded that the hypotheses of the study is true. Based on the results of the both questionnaires the external examination affects the teaching and learning process. Both teachers and students share the same opinion that the application

of external examination affects the way teacher assess pupils, the ways pupils learn and pupils' success. In all the question of both questionnaires, most of the participants had chosen the option Yes to answer the questions. New things always affect the process, in which they are applied; therefore, the application of innovations should to be tested. Moreover, their effects on the process that already exist should be observed.

REFERENCES

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