



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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**Curriculum overload - impact on the achievement and
welfare of students and teachers**

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Scientific Board

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About the conference

In the current discourse of education reforms, there is a constant demand to improve the quality of education and to enable positive change.

Nearly a decade after the beginning of the curriculum reform, and five years since the start of its implementation in all schools, the students', teachers' and parents' challenges and complaints are still common. There are uncertainties and dilemmas for specific aspects of the content, approach and implementation of the new curriculum

Recent studies related to curricular reform in Kosovo, mainly focus on thematic treatment of aspects related to preparations of curriculum implementation, its piloting, the scope of implementation, the challenges in its implementation, etc., without a in-depth focus on dealing with aspects of curricular overload.

OECD countries have conducted an analysis of curriculum overload in education (Curriculum Overload: A Way Forward, OECD (2020). This study addresses aspects of curriculum overload in four dimensions, which can also serve as a guide for other contexts and educational systems.

Kosovo Pedagogical Institute in collaboration with the University of Mitrovica organized this conference in order to deal with curricular overload and its impact on the student's achievements, on the well-being of students and teachers, in various thematic aspects, practical and theoretical, providing evidence scientific and the opening of the professional and scientific debate on the strategies and possibilities of influence in the determination of the following policies on this issue.

In this international conference, we aim to understand the issue of overload by experts in the fields of curriculum implementation and reform, university professors and school teachers. A real overview of these aspects is added value for decision makers and the directions of the development of the education system.

In this conference, the Kosovo Pedagogical Institute will present the report with the results of the study: Curricular overload in primary and lower secondary education in Kosovo - (reality or perception?).

The study of this topic is a proof of the Institute's efforts to support new developments in education, with the aim of informing and guiding educational policies and practices.

Keynote presentations

Armend Tahirsylaj

Schools and curricula between expectations and possibilities

Summary

Reforming education systems is a recurring task of every modern democratic state. In particular, curriculum reforms detail educational aspirations and expectations, often with reference to and as a result of influence from international education trends. Schools, as public institutions, have the task to implement the curricula so that education fulfills its social mandate. Nevertheless, schools function in complex ways far removed from international trends and deeply grounded on local challenges as well specific political, social and cultural contexts. By examining international trends in education, primarily from the OECD and European Union perspective, the latest curriculum reforms in national contexts, with Kosovo and Norway as examples, and competence-based curriculum implementation efforts in Kosovo context, the keynote offers theoretical and empirical insights into understanding schools as places where curriculum reforms are re-contextualized, negotiated and contested.

Short biography

Armend Tahirsylaj is an Associate Professor of Education at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Norway. He obtained his PhD in Educational Theory and Policy from Pennsylvania State University, USA in 2015. His current teaching and research focuses on curriculum theory, Didaktik/Bildung tradition, education policy, teacher education, international large-scale assessments, international comparative education, and research methods. His latest publications have examined teacher autonomy and

responsibility across Didaktik and curriculum education traditions, spread of competence-based curricula internationally, curriculum reforms in Kosovo over past 20 years, Bildung in Continental and Nordic Europe contexts, and the role of transnational and national education policies on mastery of key competences within national contexts. His research work has been published in leading international peer-reviewed journals such as *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, *Comparative Education*, *Curriculum Inquiry*, *Curriculum Perspectives*, *European Education*, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *Nordic Studies in Education*, and *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*. He serves as a reviewer in a number of international education journals, while in Kosovo he is a member of National Research Council.

Osman Buleshkaj

Researcher in educational sciences and educational policy

Curriculum implementation: the role of leadership

Studies within the professional literature have dealt with the importance of school principals for the success of a school system and an individual school. Researchers highlighted the important role a school principal had in the school's success and how it influenced student achievements. School principals are considered change leaders in organizations aiming to create a culture of shared and collegial leadership that engages teachers to become members of professional teams. School leadership practices are constantly changing and being restructured so that external expectations, such as curriculum implementation, can translate into successful school leadership practices.

This study was an attempt to explore educational leadership developments in Kosovo education over the last two decades, with a focus on leadership practice that influenced curriculum implementation and policy change in Kosovo. Practical approaches used for leading school-based curriculum implementation were investigated, and efforts of educational leaders in envisioning and leading the curriculum implementation in Kosovo schools were highlighted.

International studies show how distributed leadership must be linked with leadership for learning and professional collaboration. Thus, leadership and learning become critical components for improving the system. The concept of leadership for learning is explained as a research-and- data-driven network of professionals, and as a set of frameworks, programs, and processes used by school principals to improve student achievements and quality of learning.

Models of leadership which look at the role of school principals have recognized the importance of distributed leadership and leadership for learning regarding successful implementation of new policies, and school improvement overall. The growing role of school-based leadership teams, such as curriculum department heads, can be considered a great

example of a distributed leadership practice that enables school staff to learn and assume leading roles. Therefore, study found that sharing of experiences (local and international), learning from each other (schools learning from schools), and overcoming of challenges through sharing of resources have been a priority for education leaders leading curriculum implementation in Kosovo.

Finally, six steps were identified as critical to improving the current practice and enhancing Kosovo educational leadership for successful national curriculum implementation.

Short biography

He is a full-time lecturer at the Faculty of Social Sciences at AAB College and a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Education. He completed his Master of Science in the field of education at the University of Calgary, Canada, while he completed his doctoral studies at the ISSBS University in Celje, Slovenia, in the field of social sciences and knowledge management. His activity is focused on the development of capacities for educational leadership, educational policies, and knowledge management. He has been a member of the mechanisms within MESTI (the Steering Board of the National Qualifications Authority, the Steering Board of KPI, the Council of Experts for Programs and School Textbooks) and is a member of the State Council for Teacher Licensing. He has been a professional collaborator and consultant for teaching, teacher performance evaluation, capacity building for educational leadership, educational policy and strategic planning with various local and international organizations that support educational reforms in Kosovo in the last 16 years. The area of interest in the research work focuses on the study of educational policies, with an emphasis on the role of leadership in the development and advancement of school performance.

Selim Mehmeti

Researcher in educational sciences and educational policy
Kosovo Pedagogical Institute

Curricular overload in elementary and lower secondary education in Kosovo - Reality or perception?

Overview

Different educational systems, in response to society's demands to adapt the curriculum applied in schools to the rapid social, technological and economic developments, choose different approaches to curriculum revision. These approaches can result in curricular overload, the impacts of which are reflected in the well-being of students, teachers, and teaching effectiveness.

In order to find action strategies and appropriate measures to minimize the impact of curricular overload, professional literature studies that have dealt with this problem, show the need for exploring curricular overload as a special research topic, from different dimensions and perspectives, as well as from various research approaches, depending on the contexts of the educational systems.

This qualitative case study examines curriculum overload in the context of elementary and lower secondary education in Kosovo. The study aims to explore if the contents of the curricula in relation to the expectations and teaching time, present any aspect of overload for students and for teachers, as well as to outline orientations for addressing curriculum overload, to ensure the well-being of students, teachers and to support effective instruction.

For this study, the analysis of the content of the curriculum documents in primary and lower secondary education is used, with a special depth in the subject curricula. In addition, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions were used to examine the opinion of curricular overload, of those who have seen and experienced curricular overload and its impacts (teachers, students, parents, school leaders, coordinators of quality, experts and coordinators for curriculum development)

Findings from this study show how important such a case study was, for the context of pre-university education in Kosovo. The results of the study confirm elements of curricular overload in primary and lower secondary education, with differences between education levels and classes, which come from multiple overload factors. Some factors present are: curriculum expansion, content overload and high expectations for students in relation to the available teaching time, perceived overload of curriculum documents, use of textbooks, homework and student assessment. Also, the results of the study confirm the impact of curricular overload on the well-being of students, teachers and on teaching effectiveness.

The significance of the study is practical and theoretical. The recommendations of the studies help to establish an educational policy that basically has a functional strategy for the treatment and prevention of curriculum overload. This approach can be applied when revising the curriculum, but also when guiding its implementation and the learning processes that influence and have further encouraged the perceived overload. The well-being of students and teachers should be the primary reference in these processes.

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Integrating personal development and transversal skills in different subjects in the competency-based curriculum

Abstract

The current study is a quasi-experimental design, exploring the development of life/transversal skills of children from third to ninth grade before and after the implementation of a life/transversal skills development intervention program. The study was carried out in Kosovo, in three urban and rural schools, which were part of the program for the development of life skills and personal development. A total of 1022 children and 50 teachers participated in the study, who implemented the FACE and PEACOCK programs prepared by the Faculty of Education in Zurich, Switzerland. Assessment of life skills was based on the Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS), developed in India by Kennedy et al. (2014). The LSAS itself is based on 10 essential life skills, developed by the World Health Organization for children's specific self-perception, the LSAS was adapted by the Zurich Faculty of Education with the LSQC - Life Skills Questionnaire for Children. The LSQC and LSAS specify five life skills that can be observed in children and young people: interacting with others; overcoming problems and finding solutions; taking the initiative; conflict management; and understanding and following instructions. The LSQC is a short questionnaire, consisting of 20 statements, to which children give their ratings (indicating their self-assessment of specific life skills). Teachers were guided through a brief introduction on how to administer LSQC in their classrooms by the Faculty of Education in Pristina, who led the entire research. In addition to distributing the LSQC to all children in

the classroom, teachers (N=50) selected a sample of children for closer observation. The observation was made by the class teacher through the original LSAS (Life Skills Assessment Scale). The teachers observed each individual child and rated each of the skills on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Throughout the school year, the intervention program was implemented in three schools selected by all trained teachers who followed the FACE and PEACOCK program for life skills and personal development. In addition, the research study also assessed the life skills development of the teachers themselves, using an online questionnaire to determine whether the use of life skills materials in their classroom also had an impact on their life skills competencies.

The study data shows that the students from the third to the ninth grade, who during one school year have learned the content of life skills through different subjects/curricula, have shown an increase in their development in some of the measured life skills, such as: interaction with others; overcoming problems and finding solutions; taking initiative; conflict management; and understanding and following instructions.

The teachers' observations showed some of the strengths and weaknesses in relation to the students' life skills. Understanding and following instructions appeared to be the most difficult aspect for students of all ages, based on their teachers' observations, interacting with others was the most prominent life skill.

There are significant differences between boys and girls in relation to all five life skills as observed by teachers. After being trained in a school-based teacher development program and using the life skills materials, teachers believe that they increased their life skills, they would also recommend the material to other teachers, and they also identified that they needed more training in the areas of coping with stress and emotions, creative and critical thinking, and interacting with others.

Key words: transversal skills, subject curriculum, integration, personal development

Merita Shala & Fatbardha Hoxha

University "Isa Boletini" Mitrovica

Disproportionate prioritization of certain areas of the curriculum at the expense of others – the case of pre-school teacher training programs

Abstract

The imbalance of certain areas of the curriculum is presented as one of the dimensions of the curriculum overload.

In this research, we have extended this concept and the relevant analysis to the curriculum that is offered in the programs that prepare preschool educators in Kosovo.

To examine this distribution and prioritization, a significant number of pre-school program subject syllabi were analyzed. The syllabuses were presented on the web pages of the public universities that offer the preschool education program, being the only institutions that prepare preschool educators in Kosovo.

During the analysis, the name and content of the subjects were examined, as well as the specific wording within these contents. Also, 163 students of the preschool program and 10 professors were asked the open question of what is the curriculum overload and how the curriculum areas are balanced.

Over 78% of the reviewed contents have a disproportionate prioritization of certain areas of the curriculum at the expense of other areas. The difference between university institutions was quite small.

Students see the curriculum of their preparation as busy and especially poorly distributed in content or fields. According to them, the focus is on the theoretical content, which they find very difficult to apply in practice. The contents that provide the development of skills are very little presented and these contents are seen by the students as very important. On the other hand, the professors perceive the curricular content as balanced, and 8 of them referred to the fact that the program is accredited as such.

A broad and deep discussion should be organized at the level of stakeholders who contribute to the preparation of preschool educators.

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The overload curriculum of the child in the Albanian pre-university system, the child's mental well-being and the deficit in training as an active citizen in a functional democracy.

Abstract

Universities among many representative standards during their mission in society (the production of intellectualism, the formation of national elites, but not only, the idea project of the functionality of the model of society and the state in 10, 20 years later, etc.), have and should also function as a measure of the competencies acquired by students from the pre-university education system, while in feedback universities can also ideate and scientifically program the improvement of its quality as well as its policy-making and decision-making.

The study continues and follows for the last 5 years (2017-2022) the community of students who started studies in philosophy (Bachelor level) such as those in the Scientific Master's degree "Teacher of Social Sciences", at the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology, in the Faculty of Social Sciences, of the University of Tirana.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants in the study. The data were collected while using interviews with semi-structured questions using first-hand sources for qualitative analysis. The study also analyzed the tests used in the State Matura on the group of subjects that produce data on the research thesis.

The study affirms the curricular overload in the pre-university system (with differences between the levels) but at the same time affirms the deficit created between theoretical knowledge and direct participation in school democracy, phenomena that directly affect the mental well-being of the new citizen generations and the functional democracy in the country. The recommendations of the study provide opportunities for the reconceptualization of the school curriculum also in order to reduce pre-university overload and functional implementation of school democracy. These two standards will undoubtedly affect a much better quality of mental well-being of the new generations as if they were prominent civic activism for a functional democracy.

Key words: children, students, students, active citizens, mental well-being, overload curriculum, deficit in school democracy

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Approaches to reducing curriculum overload in the implementation of curricular reform in high schools in Slovenia

Abstract

The Slovenian education system faces pressure from society to expand the curriculum by adding new subjects, content and/or competencies (digital literacy, sustainable development, civic competencies, globalization issues, etc.) to the curriculum. Therefore, we have started with a systemic approach to developing the gymnasium program, whose purpose is to maintain the existing coherence of the curriculum and prevent the expansion of subjects and content/competencies, considering the needs of modern society. Therefore, the gymnasium curriculum reform is based on:

- a) strengthening interdisciplinary integration between subjects through an interdisciplinary thematic package (ITP),
- b) introducing an active and authentic approach to the development of civic competencies,

c) linking key aims of specific competencies/literacies with the aims of specific subjects.

ITP is a coherent whole, where the interrelated goals from the curricula of different subjects are realized. It is based on modern didactic approaches, complex student achievements, development of competencies and the school as an open learning environment.

Civic competencies are developed within the independent content section, Active Citizenship, based on a different organization and implementation of lessons. The focus is on active learning and an authentic approach. Through the setting up of authentic learning situations and providing quality feedback to students, the teacher encourages his/her active role, planning and reflection on learning.

The third approach links key process aims and competencies/literacies with subject-specific aims. It is crucial that the aims of these domains are not embedded in all subjects and not in the same way, but reasonably and professionally justified.

Keywords: curriculum overload, competence, interdisciplinary, active and authentic approach

Zoran Lalović

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The impact of reducing the number of lessons and textbook content reduction on the quality of teaching and student workload

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine the effects of the education reform implemented in Montenegro in 2017, using the example of the subjects of Biology, Mathematics, and Informatics with technology. The key assumption of the reform was that reduction in the number of lessons and textbooks content reduction would improve teaching quality and decrease student fatigue and workload.

In order to test this assumption, the results of empirical research conducted by the Bureau for Education Services and the Institute for Textbooks in Podgorica during 2021 and 2022 were used. Those research studies investigated the effects of the implementation of a new curriculum and reduced content of textbooks on the quality of teaching and student workload. The research presented in this paper has shown that a reduction in the number of lessons and curriculum content as well as textbook content reduction does not directly lead to improvement in the quality of teaching or a decrease in student workload. There is also evidence that instead of improving the quality of teaching and reducing student workload because of undertaken measures there is a decline in teaching quality and an increase in student workload.

This paper recommends a different approach to solving the problem of student workload. Instead of taking learning time as a burden to be reduced, on the contrary, learning time should be seen as an opportunity to improve the quality of teaching, and thus as an opportunity to reduce student fatigue and workload.

Keywords: student workload, curriculum, textbook, quality of teaching

Bekim Morina

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Lesson Planning by High School Teachers

Abstract

Lesson planning is an important part of the teaching process, through which the teacher determines the goal, the learning outcomes and the learning activities that will be carried out with students during the lesson or during a teaching unit.

New demands and expectations of the curriculum, requests for change to the approach to lesson planning and to teaching are seen as challenges in the lesson planning process. This research examines teachers' lesson planning in light of the implementation of a competency-based curriculum

The purpose of this research is to analyze the content aspects of curriculum requirements and activities with students, in the lesson plans used by high school teachers in Kosovo, as well as to examine the opinions of teachers and quality coordinators regarding the challenges that teachers face during lesson planning. The research used qualitative and quantitative data, collected through content analysis of lesson plan templates, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires with teachers and quality coordinators.

The population consists of teachers and quality coordinators in high schools in Kosovo (gymnasium), from which a research sample of 58 teachers of different subjects and fields and 6 quality coordinators at school level was randomly selected. The sample was selected in six gymnasiums in different municipalities.

The results of the research show that the challenges faced by teachers during lesson planning are many, such as: planning learning outcomes for each lesson, setting success criteria, curricular connection, student assessment, tasks and work independent, self-esteem, etc. As a result, some teachers are reluctant to prepare the lesson plan according to the requirements of the planning form and there is also a tendency to provide them ready-made or to repeat the lesson plans.

To overcome the challenges, we recommend providing teachers with ongoing support in lesson planning, based on findings from plan analysis and monitoring, as well as simplifying the lesson planning form or designing a template that exceeds technical aspects and puts in the foreground the elements of creative engagement of teachers in the planning and realization of teaching processes. The findings of the research will be of help to teachers and educational institutions in their institutional commitment to improve future lesson planning practices.

Key words: curriculum, learning planning, planning model, lesson, teaching.

Implementation of learning planning in primary education

Abstract

Learning planning is a very complex process, which addresses and integrates three main components: outcomes, activities and assessment. The research is mixed, quantitative and qualitative. The aim of the study was to analyze the logical and content connection of the lesson plans, starting from the annual planning to the practical implementation of the contents planned in the lesson plans. In order to see their connection, we carried out a case study, through which we present important data related to the lesson plans designed by primary education teachers and their implementation in practice.

The study was carried out in 12 schools where 26 teaching hours were observed. Since there was observation, the sample is small, however, the study provides important data related to the way of planning of primary education teachers, the connection between the teaching contents included in the annual, monthly, weekly plans and daily preparations, the harmonization between teaching topics with teaching units, the activities planned with the learning outcomes as well as the implementation in practice of the learning planning.

The results of the study show that teachers make annual, monthly, weekly and daily plans. Annual and monthly plans are drawn up at school level, while weekly and daily plans are drawn up by the teachers themselves. The contents included in the daily plans are related to the teaching contents in the yearly and monthly plans. Teachers clearly plan and describe the methodology that will be developed within the lesson but deficiencies were identified in the alignment of learning outcomes in daily plans, their connection to the topic and the

outcomes of the topic. Most of the teachers conduct the lesson based on daily plans drawn up in advance.

The recommendations of the study are addressed to teachers and responsible actors within the school regarding the preparation, analysis, evaluation of lesson plans, as well as monitoring during the practical implementation of the lesson plans drawn up by teachers.

Keywords: educational planning, implementation, primary education, results, students

Murteza Osdautaj,

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Backwardness in reading literacy and the effect of subject curricula on student achievement

Abstract

The PISA test, for all educational systems participating in the test, presents a general overview of student development in the three testing areas. In this aspect, the area of reading literacy represents the main area of testing and the area which fulfils the basis of the overall academic development of students.

Considering the fact that in the reading literacy area, our students have shown extraordinary difficulties, we have investigated the connection between the curricula and the results achieved in PISA testing. Due to this reason, the study aims to determine the level of implementation of the curricular subject contents, the required results and the competences that are planned to be achieved by 15-year-old students and if the same are in function of their general academic development. Moreover, the study is focused on establishing the facts if the subject curricula of the Albanian language have problems in their implementation in school and if the curricular contents, which we are talking about, are in function of the development of the reading literacy and other academic skills of the students. All the findings of the study, from the literature and from the work done in the field, were accomplished based on PISA results in the area of reading and project findings of 2021, realized by KPI and financed by MESTI.

The research has highlighted the relevance of the curricula and the achieved results in PISA in understanding of the nature of the curricular content, their implementation, the

achievement of learning outcomes and the benefit of planned competencies by students, imposing the need for the functional rearrangement of all factors mentioned above.

Key words: subject curricula, reading literacy, PISA test, learning contents, accessibility, results, competence.

Teaching practices in the implementation of the optional curriculum in the higher secondary school

Abstract

Elective curriculum is part of the pre-university education curriculum. Through this curriculum, for the students, the conditions and opportunities to better meet their needs, inclinations and personal interests in accordance with the demands and needs of society and the labour market are created. The implementation of the elective curriculum remains the school competence, but often the subject selection is not done for the needs of the students, as determined by the curriculum documents and the administrative instruction, but to meet the teachers' norms.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the teaching practices of teachers and principals in the selection of elective lessons in upper secondary school as well as to address the opportunities and challenges for continuous support of teachers in the implementation of the optional curriculum.

The instruments used to provide quantitative and qualitative data are the teacher questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with principals of higher education schools in the 7 regions of Kosovo. The research was carried out in 7 high schools, with 128 teachers and 7 principals.

According to the study results, in the selection of the elective subject the majority of teachers considers the students' requirements, and the school itself designs the curriculum in accordance with the students' requirements, whereas some schools are doing the selection

from the list provided by MESTI. The most frequent form of organization of elective learning applied by teachers is the selection of the teaching subject, while the less applied is the organization of elective learning with elective projects and modules. From the results of the research, it appears that the principals fully adhere to the curriculum documents and administrative instructions in the organization of the elective subjects, take into consideration the students' demands in the selection of the elective subject and support the teachers with relevant trainings. According to the principals and teachers, the challenges faced by schools in the implementation of the selective curriculum are: lack of support from institutions, lack of sufficient spaces, lack of adequate textbooks for the subject, lack of work tools and concretization, etc.

The results of the study are expected to serve policy makers and teachers, providing recommendations related to the process of organizing elective learning, implementation of elective curriculum, and ongoing teacher support.

Key words: Elective curriculum, curriculum implementation, teachers, high school

Samire Bllaca & Merita Shala

University "Isa Boletini" Mitrovica

Curricular overload as a combination of reality and perception - does this also apply to faculties that prepare teachers for primary education?

Abstract

The central concept of curricular overload has been examined by most studies at the pre-university level, placing emphasis on teachers and students. In this study, we extended this concept to the level of university teachers and students who are involved in the primary teacher program. Perceived overload refers to the perceived or experienced dimension of overload as reported by academic staff and students.

With four focus groups, two with students and two with teachers, several questions were developed that derived from the binary question: what is curricular overload for you?

Teaching staff reported that they had sufficient time to fully implement the curriculum content and address all of their expected outcomes. However, the answers offered to the question of what is the curriculum load were so broad and scattered that it was difficult to create conceptual categories.

Students, on the other hand, reported that the curricular content was loaded and that they did not have enough time to meet their learning or skill development needs. Students referred to their professional experiences during teaching practice and expressed concern with the large volume of curriculum documentation in primary education.

Such different attitudes show the need for joint discussions on such important issues.

Key words: curriculum overload, perception, reality, student, professor

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Aspects of the developmental approach in natural science teaching: Challenges and opportunities in curriculum implementation

Abstract

The implementation of the new curriculum requires the reformation of the education system. The purpose of the research presents the aspects of the developmental approach in teaching of natural sciences, the identification of innovative challenges and opportunities during the practical implementation of the curriculum. The research is quantitative and qualitative. It was realized with 210 participants, educators, teachers (coaches, coordinators) and principals, in 50 schools of pre-university education in Kosovo.

Questionnaires for educators, teachers, and interviews with principals were used for data collection. The participants included in the research are asked to analyse 10 questions, where 36 answers are given ready for approval or not (in compliance or not), based on basic curricular issues, such as: competences, development approach, curricular burden or other factors. Based on the aspects of the developmental approach during the implementation of the curriculum, the research results in the four levels of the natural sciences field show the following data: the approved/positive answers at the pre-primary level are 16.2%, the primary level 18.5%, the lower secondary level 14.05 % and at the upper secondary level 15.47%. The obtained data in total provides 16.74% approved/positive responses.

The research identified challenges and opportunities in implementing the curriculum. The vast majority of educators and teachers present the curricular burden, the didactic materials, and the limited time as a challenge, while innovative teaching is an opportunity. The principals present as challenge the working conditions, the professional development of staff, and as an opportunity the increasing of institutional responsibility.

As an opportunity, the developmental approach eliminates the bottlenecks of the implementation of the natural sciences program, with the change of teaching strategies and additional commitments to increase the interest of students.

Key words: developmental approach, curriculum, teaching, opportunities, natural sciences.

Aspects of curriculum overload in the biology subject in lower secondary education

Abstract

The biology curriculum being implemented in lower secondary education, grades 6-9, offers a new approach within the field of natural sciences and contribution to the development of key competencies. On the other hand, the comments raised by biology teachers about the ongoing challenges, teachers and the students are facing during the implementation of the new curriculum, have laid the need to analyze the aspects of curricular overload in this field/subject. The analysis of the teaching topics in the biology curriculum - in grades 6-9, the extent and vertical connection between the teaching topics and the learning outcomes for the topics (RLN), is the aim of this study. The study has a more specific focus on the 8th grade biology curriculum, where teachers have raised their concerns about the challenges being faced with a range of outcomes that are expected to be achieved through unit themes dealing with systems of organs to the animal groups without previously teaching the animal groups. The methodological approach for the realization of this study is qualitative, based on analytical examination of the biology curriculum and focus groups with biology teachers. The importance of the study is practical, its results are expected to provide orientations and recommendations to curriculum developers and biology teachers for approaches to the development, planning and implementation of the biology curriculum.

Keywords: biology curriculum, learning topic, learning outcomes, prior knowledge connection.

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Administrative workload of teachers

Abstract

In the last 20 years, the education system in Kosovo has undergone through continuous changes, which have been discussed many times by teaching stakeholders, especially teachers, who are the main factors to implement the reforms.

In addition to working with students and preparing for the learning process, the administrative workload of teachers is an aspect that concerns the teacher's work inside and outside the school. With the concept "Administrative work of teachers" is meant the work of teachers, which is not directly related to their work with students, but has to do with its presentation on paper or anywhere else. The administrative work of teachers includes work on the school-book, annual, bimonthly, weekly plans, lesson plans, consultations with parents, completing monthly reports from professional meetings, completing reports for each teaching period, completing the E-school, gradebook, the Mother Book, etc. In recent years, teachers have expressed their criticism on the numerous demands, served to them both by the school and by the higher hierarchy levels, which they had to implement.

Therefore, with this research, we aim to stress out the teachers' position about the administrative workload during the teaching process, and to highlight the unnecessary administrative workload, which, according to the teachers, should be eased.

The research design will be quantitative and the questionnaire will be used as an evaluation instrument. The primary school teachers (1-5) in Kosovo, randomly selected, will be the research participants. The data will be analysed through SPSS (descriptive statistics, T-test, ANOVA and Correlation procedures).

Key words: administrative work, workload, quality, easing

Teachers planning, administrative load or progress in quality assurance

Abstract

Teaching process it is a complex activity with responsibility and really important. To achieve a contemporary teaching and well organized it would be essential the plan and preliminary preparation for teaching work. However, teaching work planning is a process that requires effort, dedication, time and responsibility and at the same time is a challenge for the teacher.

In our focus paper we will present the impact of lesson planning on the teacher. We will compare how the planning of the teaching process affects teachers: as an administrative burden or progress in quality assurance. Also through the descriptive and analytical method will be presented the challenges and difficulties of the teacher in planning, will be given the recommendations of teachers in the planning process. The research approach used in this study is based on quantitative and descriptive data from questionnaires. From the results we will see that planning is mainly a busy process for the teacher, therefore it is recommended to review and change the curriculum in terms of planning, reducing planning, etc.

Keywords: planning, overload, progress, teacher, quality

Analytical review of teaching planning according to maths subject curricula in grades 6 and 7 - Case study in Rahovec municipality

Abstract

Educational planning is a dynamic preparatory activity of teachers' work, which is carried out continuously throughout the school year. Through the educational planning, the curriculum or educational program is broken down into periods of implementation, and conditions and series of measures and activities are foreseen for the organization of the educational process for a successful learning of students.

The purpose of the study is the content analysis of teaching planning from the maths subject curricula in grades 6 and 7, their harmonization with the official curriculum, with the third grade of maths learning results and with the methodological requirements for the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom.

In the maths subject curriculum, the focus of the teaching plans analysis are: the extent of teaching subject in teaching periods, the learning outcomes for teaching subject (LOS/Learning Outcomes of the Subject), the breakdown of LOS into teaching units, the teaching and assessment methodology, as well as learning resources and materials in function of the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom. In addition, the relationship between annual plans, plans for teaching periods and plans for teaching units, the possibilities of implementation in relation to the available teaching time - weekly teaching hours, as well as the contribution to the development of competences will be analysed.

The methodological approach for the realization of this study is qualitative, based on a case study, with the planning analysis of math teachers in four schools of Rahovec municipality. A checklist with specific indicators for each planning level is used for the analysis of every planning requirement developed by math teachers.

The importance of the research lies on the understanding of the teaching planning practices of math teachers, in terms of harmonization of planning levels and the description of the work methodology, for the achievement of learning results, always in function of the implementation of the competence-based curriculum. This will support the improvement of lesson planning, as well as the practice of implementing the maths curriculum in the future.

Key words: Planning, learning outcomes, annual plan, lesson plan, unit plan.

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Parents challenges facing the curriculum burden of children in school

Abstract

The advancement of the education system in Kosovo from traditional teaching to curriculum teaching, brought great challenges to the well-being of all sectors in the pre-university system, including parents.

This paper aims to highlight the challenges of parents facing the curricular load of children in school. The research approach used in this study is based on quantitative and descriptive data from questionnaires. The questionnaire contains 11 questions and the participants in this research were 98 parents from different municipalities of Kosovo. Data were collected with Google Forms and analyzed with Excel. Most of the parents are partially satisfied with the transition from traditional teaching to curriculum teaching and for the rest of them, curriculum is a burden. These data results occurred even after comparing parents living in rural and urban areas, parents under 40 and over 40, parents with different number of children and parents with different level of education. For most parents, curriculum learning is quite busy, as they face various challenges as follows: children are over loaded with books, curriculum loaded, lack of textbooks to fit curricula, excessive homework, insufficient activities of children in schools etc. To overcome these challenges, some of the recommendations are: compiling textbooks adequately with the curriculum, equipping schools with inventory to remove the load from children with books, reducing the subject curriculum, etc.

Keywords: challenges, parents, children, school, workload

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The role of the school director in the implementation of the curriculum at the first and second level in the Municipality of Kaçanik

Abstract

The most important person in the curriculum implementation process is the principal. He/She has a key role in the successful implementation of the curriculum, including his/her knowledge, experiences and competencies in the fluency of the new curriculum, access to school staff as well as to show interest and enthusiasm to facilitate the implementation of the curriculum.

The purpose of the research is to identify the role of the principal, what strategies, methods and forms he/she uses to ensure an easy implementation of the new Kosovo curriculum, but also what can be done to encourage teachers to be committed and motivated to accurately implement the curriculum.

The methodology used for this research is of a mixed nature, where for the quantitative approach we used a questionnaire with Likert scale, while for the qualitative approach semi-structured interviews were used. Quantitative data were processed in SPSS program, while qualitative ones were processed on the basis of thematic analysis.

The research population consists of all teachers and principals of lower secondary schools in the municipality of Kaçanik, while the representative group consists of 150 teachers and 10 principals of these schools. The selection of population participants was done by random method.

This research will identify what school principals offer, how they alleviate challenges in effective teaching and successful teaching, how willing they are to facilitate curriculum implementation, and assist teachers in its implementation.

Keywords: collaboration, curriculum, management, teacher, implementation

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Teachers' attitudes about the administrative work overload and the challenges of implementing creative lessons with students in the classroom

Abstract

This research aims to identify and describe teachers' attitudes about their overload with administrative work and their challenges in implementing creative lessons with students.

The research methods will be quantitative and qualitative. Questionnaires and interviews will be used as research instruments.

The questionnaires will be divided into two appendices: for teachers, for school principals, and interviews for experts in the field of education.

The primary and pre-primary teachers, both genders, will be part of this research. The sample for teachers during the survey is random and will include all Kosovo regions, i.e. rural and urban. The survey is for 111 teachers with more than 5 years of work experience, while for the collection of qualitative data the sampling will be purposeful, including interviews with education experts within and outside the ministry. From this research, it is expected to identify and describe the teachers' attitudes about the administrative work

overload and their challenges for use of creativity in the implementation of lessons with their students.

The reflection of the current situation, of teachers' attitudes about the administrative work overload, can help the educational policy-makers to review the new curriculum, contribute to the modification of educational policies at the pre-university level in Kosovo, in accordance with the teachers and student's needs. Moreover, to identify difficulties and needs of teachers on carrying out of lessons in a creative way, which would help students in easier and sustainable learning of the knowledge acquired in the classroom.

Key words: teachers' administrative overload, attractive work in the classroom, teacher's role

Aspects of curriculum implementation in Hasi region: challenges and opportunities

Abstract

The study presents an analysis of the development and implementation of the curriculum in Hasi region. It identifies and evaluates challenges and opportunities, focusing on the implementation of the curriculum at the school level, identifies challenges and opportunities, as well as the need for continuous support of schools and teachers for effective implementation of the curriculum.

The study presents the analysis related to the implementation of the curriculum, the analysis of documenting the school work on the implementation of the curriculum, as well as interviews and direct conversations with teachers who implement the curriculum, those who do not implement it, and those who have difficulties in implementing it. In addition, interviewing school principals, educational officials who have a role and responsibility for the progress and implementation of the curriculum in Hasi region.

The topic of this research aims to identify the shortcomings related to the implementation, follow-up of the trainings and their effectiveness, as well as the role of the Municipal Directorate of Education in the implementation of the curriculum, not overlooking the role and autonomy, which the schools have or do not have in its implementation.

Key words: implementation, curriculum, school, analysis, training, Hasi, officials, teachers.

Teacher opportunities versus student learning: one or more teachers in the secondary curriculum?

Abstract

Kosovo has a new system of education, which has started to be implemented since 2017 throughout the country. Kosovo curricula, apart from being designed on the principles and goals of education, are oriented towards teaching and assessment based on competencies. According to MASHT (2016), competences include an integrated system of knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes that the student must have at the end of a level, namely at the end of a certain degree.

According to the Kosovo Curriculum Framework (2016), the competences are based on the results for the competence and must be achievable by each student at the end of the given level. In addition to the results for competence, the curriculum also determines the results of the field, as well as the results of the subject programs. The challenge for the teachers of the second level (grades 3, 4 and 5) remains the achievement of these results, which are escalated and interlinked.

This paper aims to see what are the possibilities of the teachers to plan and then to achieve with the students all the results foreseen in the Core Curricula (0-5) for the second degree

Also, the paper reflects the opinions of teachers and parents in the case of the distribution of the responsibilities of teachers within a certain class, namely if secondary school teachers would teach in several classes, based on their professional affinities. Data from the research show that in a fairly high percentage of teachers support teaching based on their professional affinities. Likewise, the parents' statements are in line with the teachers' statements regarding teaching with more teachers at the second level of the curriculum.

Key words: curriculum, competence, profiling, scale, teaching

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