

## Using Student-Centred Assessment Methods in High Schools: Is It Really Possible?

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### Abstract

*Problem Statement:* Most research studies carried out on the use of student-centred learning (SCL) have mainly focused on the implementation of student-centred teaching and learning methods ignoring other main components, particularly assessment. There has been little empirical research published which focuses on the degree to which student-centred forms of assessment are utilized. As literature on SCL has demonstrated, assessment is an important ingredient of SCL and thus, should be explored while assessing the extent to which SCL is implemented in teaching and learning.

*Purpose of Study:* The purpose of this study is to examine the degree to which student-centred assessment methods and strategies are employed in high schools in North Cyprus and further explore whether teachers' implementation of these methods and strategies vary regarding their characteristics including gender, subject taught, teaching experience and pedagogical knowledge.

*Methods:* Sequential explanatory design, within mixed-method research was carried out in this study. Student-centred assessment scale was administered to 309 high school teachers followed by semi-structured interviews with 33 teachers chosen purposefully from the scale sample. The data from the scale were analysed using statistical tests on the SPSS program and data obtained from interviews were analysed through content analyses.

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*Findings and Results:* Although the results obtained from the scale indicated variability regarding the degree to which student-centred assessment methods and strategies are used in schools, the interviews demonstrated that student learning is mostly evaluated through traditional paper and pencil tests through midterm and final exams. Alternative assessment methods such as portfolio, projects and performance evaluation that focus on the process rather than product are not included in the assessment system.

*Conclusions and Recommendations:* Although SCL has been implemented in high schools in North Cyprus since 2005, traditional paper and pencil tests still dominate the assessment system. Exam-oriented assessment used in Turkish Cypriot education system, including 'university entrance exam', was found to be the main barrier that hinder the use of student-centred assessment methods and strategies in high schools. Consequently, there is a need for certain amendments in the way students are assessed in high schools. Adopting innovative student-centred forms of assessment such as portfolios and peer- and self-assessment will help maximize the use of SCL in schools.

**Keywords:** Student-centred learning, student-centred assessment, assessment, high schools,

#### North Cyprus

The adoption of student-centred learning (SCL) in schools that aim to enhance the quality of instruction has necessitated the use of student-centred forms of assessment as opposed to traditional paper and pencil tests (Blumberg, 2009; Weimer, 2002; McCombs & Miller, 2007). SCL is a learning approach which is supported by constructivist theories of learning. It uses innovative teaching and learning methods that aim to enhance student learning through actively interacting with teachers and peers. It takes students seriously as active participants in their own learning, fostering transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical and reflective thinking (Attard et al., 2010).

Assessing student learning is an important ingredient of SCL. Therefore, the methods and strategies used to assess and evaluate students' progress should be tailored to reflect the philosophy and the goals of SCL. As Ingleton (2000) remarks "if we really believe in student-centred learning, then we must work hard to ensure that our assessment practices reflect, encourage, and reward this belief" (p. 17).

In traditional teaching, the main aim of assessment is to assign grades based on the abilities and skills students perform in written tests at the end of the course. The purpose of assessment in SCL on the other hand, is not only to assign grades but to promote student learning through the use of alternative assessment methods that mainly focus on giving students feedback on the learning process. It is also important to inform students of the assessment methods that will be used, what will be expected of them and also the criteria that will be used to evaluate their performance (Attard et al., 2010).

Student-centred assessment methods are included in the process of teaching and learning (Blumberg, 2009). Therefore, student progress is not assessed at the end of the semester but throughout the semester with the use of different methods. According to Brooks and Brooks (1999) separating teaching and assessment from each other is unnecessary and counterproductive. Assessing student progress through teaching, observing their interaction with each other, watching them work on tasks tell teachers much more about their students than traditional paper and pencil tests.

As opposed to traditional teaching that focus on product assessment through the use of summative methods, SCL gives emphasis to continuous assessment or process assessment comprising of both summative and formative methods (Arends & Kilcher, 2010; Attard et al., 2010; Blumberg, 2009; Ingleton et al., 2000; Lea et al., 2003; O'Neill and McMahon, 2005; Özer, 2008). Formative assessment refers to both formal and informal assessment methods used during the period of instruction covering written tests as well as alternative techniques such as portfolios (Arends & Kilcher, 2010; Oliva, 2003). Formative assessment allows teachers to provide students with feedback making suggestions for improvement rather than assigning a single grade (Arends & Kilcher, 2010; Attard et al., 2010; Blumberg, 2009; Doyle, 2008; Marsh, 2007; Weimer, 2002). Formative assessment focuses on giving constructive feedback whose effectiveness is enhanced when it is immediate and well timed. Hence, it should be provided as soon as students demonstrate their understanding of particular knowledge or perform a target skill to be able to improve their work (Arends & Kilcher, 2010; Blumberg, 2009).

In SCL, students are actively involved in the process of assessment. As Blumberg (2009) puts it, SCL gives students a more empowering role in the assessment process. It is not only the teacher who is responsible for assessing student progress but students are also expected to assess their own progress as well as their peers' (Blumberg, 2009; Weimer, 2002). As Özden (2003) argues, in SCL, there should be a good amount of peer- and self-assessment. However, Weimer (2002) advocates that current education system does not offer students many opportunities to develop their skills in self- and peer-assessment, underestimating their value by excluding students from the assessment process.

Although there has been a growing interest in student-centred forms of assessment and claims for its implementation by institutions and teachers, in reality, traditional assessment methods and strategies still dominate instruction. Eberly et al. (2001), for example, examined the nature and content of 145 general education syllabi covering 100 general education courses at a state university in Michigan reporting that traditional methods, mostly multiple choice tests, are used extensively with very little inclusion of alternative assessment methods such as projects and presentations. Marsh (2007) reviewed the literature focusing on the use formative assessment in schools reporting very little evidence of the use of formative assessment in classrooms. He points out that too much focus on summative assessment, pressure from principals to obtain high scores, high stakes examinations and cultural factors were reported to be the main barriers that hinder the use of formative assessment. Brumen et al., (2009) examined assessment system in foreign language courses in primary ed-

ucation in three different countries: Slovenia, Croatia and Czech Republic. The results demonstrated that traditional written-oral tests with numerical grades dominate while student-centred assessment methods and strategies such as portfolios, projects and self and peer assessment are rarely used. The results of a descriptive study carried out in 16 primary schools in Diyarbakir, Turkey, indicated that English language teachers tend to test grammar and vocabulary ignoring language skills, particularly listening and speaking in achievement tests (Bekleyen, 2010).

In North Cyprus, SCL was put into practice in schools as part of the educational reform that started in 2005 (Ministry of National Education, 2005). Through its implementation, the Ministry of National Education aims to improve the quality of education through equipping students with necessary competencies to access, evaluate and generate knowledge, with the use of lifelong learning skills that enhance critical thinking, effective communication, collaboration, creativity, productivity and problem solving. Before 2005, the teaching and learning in schools can be described as wholly teacher-centred in which teachers spend most of class time transmitting knowledge while students sit passively and take notes. With the adoption of SCL in schools, some minor changes were made to school curricula and some course books were revised to better suit the principles and characteristics of SCL putting more emphasis on higher order cognitive skills. In addition, certain in-service training programs were offered to school teachers by the Ministry to ensure the effective use of SCL in schools. Concerning the assessment system, the Ministry has provided some theoretical knowledge on its website (<http://talmterbiye.mebnet.net>) including performance evaluation and alternative assessment methods such as portfolio, projects and group work. The information included also underlines the fact that the assessment used in schools should focus on process rather than the product, encouraging teachers to use alternative assessment methods and not rely only on traditional methods such as multiple choice tests.

According to the Ministry of National Education (2005), today SCL is implemented in classroom practices in schools. However, the extent to which it is implemented, including its main components such as instructional strategies, teacher and student roles and assessment, is an under-researched area and therefore, is of concern for many educators, researchers and also for the Ministry of National Education in North Cyprus. This has emphasized the necessity to conduct research which would enable further improvements on the use of SCL.

Current research has indicated serious problems in the effective implementation of SCL in teaching and learning both in developed and developing country contexts. (Altinyelken, 2011; Güneş & Baki, 2011; Chiu & Whitebread, 2011; Hardman et al., 2008; Mtika & Gates, 2010; Mustafa & Cullingford; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005; Schweisfurth, 2011; Yilmaz, 2009). Most of these research studies, however, have mainly focused on the implementation of student-centred teaching and learning methods. There has been little empirical research published which focuses on the degree to which student-centred forms of assessment are utilized. As literature on SCL has demonstrated, assessment is an important ingredient of SCL and thus should be explored while assessing the use of SCL in the teaching and learning process. Blumberg (2009) states "assessment is the driver for learning. Therefore changes to your

assessment will influence the rest of the course and especially students' behavior in the course" (p.158). Büyüköztürk and Gülbahar (2010) argue that certain assessment methods facilitate student learning improving higher order thinking skills. Kane (2007), on the other hand, cautions that although a course is run through the use of student-centred teaching and learning methods, the assessment system used may still be based on traditional tests which results in students not taking active methods seriously. Moreover, studies (Altinyelken, 2011; Bolden & Newton, 2008; Marsh, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009) in which barriers that hinder the effective use of SCL are investigated reported 'assessment system' as one of the impediments. Assessment gives important information at all stages of the learning process and thus, should be explored in assessing the degree to which SCL is implemented (McCombs & Miller, 2007).

The purpose of this study is to examine the degree to which student-centred assessment methods and strategies are employed in high schools in North Cyprus based on teachers' perceptions and opinions, and further explore whether the implementation of these methods and strategies vary regarding teachers' characteristics including gender, subject taught, teaching experience and pedagogical knowledge.

## Method

### *Research Design*

Sequential explanatory design, within mixed-method research (Creswell, 2003), was carried out in this study. Thus, the collection and analysis of quantitative data was followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. The purpose of using this design was to make use of the qualitative results in order to better understand the quantitative ones. As Neuman (2003) states, the quantitative part is appropriate for investigating teachers' behaviours. However, it is not suitable for investigating the reasons for their behaviours. Sequential explanatory design was used in order to gather more in-depth data concerning the use of student-centred assessment methods in high schools. The findings obtained from both quantitative and qualitative data were integrated and discussed at the end of the study.

### *Sample*

*Participants of student-centred assessment scale (SCAS).* The population of the SCAS included all general high school teachers ( $n= 430$ ) working for the Ministry of National Education in the 2010-2011 academic year. The researcher tried to reach all general high school teachers due to the small size of the population. Out of 430 high school teachers, 370 volunteered to participate in the study, however, 61 of the scales were disregarded because of missing data. Consequently, the sample composed of 309 high school teachers. Regarding the characteristics of the teachers, 66.3% of them were female and 33.7 were male. With respect to the subject taught, 43.7 % were teaching social sciences, 27.8 % science, 17.5% foreign languages, and the remaining 11.0% fine arts. Regarding experience, 45.6% had 1-10, 39.8% 11-20 and the rest had 20 or more years teaching experience. In terms of pedagogical knowledge, half of them were graduates of teacher education programs and the other half were graduates of other departments with teaching certificates.

*Participants in the interviews.* Semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out with individual teachers. The participants were drawn purposively (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006) from the sample of SCAS with the aim of constituting a sample that would best represent the characteristics of the teachers of the SCAS. In total, there are 11 general high schools in North Cyprus so the researcher decided to interview three teachers from each school. Therefore, the interviews were carried out with 33 teachers.

#### *Research Instruments*

*Student-centred assessment scale (SCAS).* The SCAS was developed and administered by the researchers. The SCAS consists of two sections; the first section includes demographic data and contains five questions about participants' gender, subject taught, teaching experience, level of education and pedagogical background. The second section, which was developed after conducting an extensive research on related literature in the field, consists of items that aims to investigate teachers' perceptions of their use of student-centred assessment methods and strategies, and further examine whether teachers' use of these methods and strategies vary with respect to their gender, subject area, teaching experience and pedagogical knowledge. Since the participants were native speakers of Turkish, the SCAS was designed in the Turkish language.

*Student-Centred Assessment Interview Form (SCAIF).* SCAIF was designed and used to complement and elaborate the results obtained from the SCAS. The SCAIF was designed in a semi-structured way with open-ended questions which was prepared considering the items used in SCAS and also the results obtained from SCAS. The researchers made use of a list of general questions in order to make the interviewing systematic but they probed and explored various sub-questions to gather more in-depth data. The interviews were conducted in teachers' native language, which is Turkish.

#### *Validity and Reliability*

*The validity and reliability of research instruments.* Both the content and face validity of the SCAS were established through receiving expert opinion and piloting the scale with 10 high school teachers which resulted in some modifications such as rewording and omission of some of the items. The construct validity of the scale that composed of 16 items was ensured with the use of an exploratory factor analysis that included a principal component with Varimax rotation. The criteria of factor loadings of at least 0.30 and variance explanation rate of 0.40 or over were used in factor analysis. Kaiser Criteria were adopted and the items with an Eigenvalue of over 1.00 were included. Then, the factors were rotated by using Varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was calculated as 0.80, which was well above the commonly recommended value of 0.60, and Barlett's test of sphericity was found significant ( $\chi^2 (36) = 537.59, p < .01$ ) indicating that the data are suitable for factor analysis. The results of exploratory factor analysis are given in Table 1.

**Table 1***Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis of the SCAS*

<i>Factor</i>	<i>No of items</i>	<i>Factor loads and *Item test correlations</i>	<i>Eigen value</i>	<i>% of Variance</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha Coefficients</i>	<i>% Total variance explained</i>
Alternative Assessment methods	5	0.53 – 0.76 (0.48 – 0.68)	3.077	34.190	.81	.49
Providing feedback	4	0.54 – 0.78 (0.48 – 0.68)	1.278	14.197	.83	

Note \*Item-test correlations are given in parenthesis

As shown in Table 1, the SCAS had a two-factor solution. The total variance explained for the scale is 0.49%. Factor loads of the items ranged from 0.53 to 0.78. Factor 1 included 5 items related to "alternative assessment methods" and the factor 2 included 4 items related to "providing feedback". The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency values (Hair et al., 2009) for the sub scales are 0.81 and 0.83 exceeding the minimum alpha of 0.6. Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the SCAS is proven to be a valid and a reliable instrument to be used in this study. The final version of the SCAS consists of 9 items, all in the affirmative, on a 6-point Likert Scale ranging from 0 to 5 where (0) refers to never, (1) almost never, (2) seldom, (3) frequently, (4) almost always and (5) always.

The validity and the reliability of the SCAIF were established through receiving expert opinion and conducting a pilot study (Silverman, 2004). After the preparation of the questions, expert opinion was received in order to ensure the validity of the SCAIF. The questions in the form were modified based on the feedback received. Following that, pilot interviews (Silverman, 2004) were employed with 5 high school teachers. Pilot interviews enabled the researcher to practise her questioning skills as well as to find out whether the questions asked are capable of gathering the kind of data the researchers intended to collect. After the pilot interviews, certain amendments were made to the questions.

*The validity and the reliability of the analyses of interviews.* In order to increase the validity and reliability of the interview results, the researchers kept a detailed record of the methods and procedures of the study to be followed as an 'audit trail' (Bryman, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The audit trail enabled the researchers to address the issue of confirmability of results with respect to the process and the product of the study. Therefore, the researchers recorded the whole process including how the data were collected, the categories were formed and the conclusions were drawn, and then an expert was consulted to comment on the stages of the process in order to ensure that the results were consistent with the data collected. The results were found to be consistent with the data collected.

With respect to increasing the dependability/auditability of the study, 'getting feedback from the informants' (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was carried out. As the findings began to take shape, the researcher checked it out with data gathered from other participants usually called 'confidants' (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As advised by Cohen et al. (2007), the researchers asked the same questions in the same order to all participants so as to increase the comparability of the responses obtained from the participants. The obtained findings showed meaningful parallelism across informants.

'Coding checks' (Cohen et al., 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994) were also made in order to ensure whether there was adequate agreement between two different coders in terms of codes and themes generated from the same set of data. Therefore, after coding the data obtained from the interviews, the transcriptions were given to an outsider who was an expert in qualitative data analysis to be coded. Finally the codes were compared. The intercoder agreement (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was found to be in the 90% range.

#### *Procedure*

Before the study, the teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was sought. The teachers were also told that their participation in the study is of crucial importance in examining the use of assessment methods and strategies in schools. The study protected the anonymity of the teachers throughout the study.

The SCAS was administered to 309 teachers followed by semi-structured face-to-face interviews with 33 teachers teaching in 11 high schools. Each interview took approximately 40 minutes. All the interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed verbatim and translated into English. Both instruments were administrated by the researchers.

#### *Data Analyses*

Data collected via the use of SCAS were analysed using statistical tests on the SPSS program. To find out the extent student-centred assessment methods and strategies are used, descriptive statistics were applied, and means and standard deviations were calculated. Regarding how teachers' implementation vary with respect to gender and pedagogical knowledge, independent samples *t* test was utilized, and for subject area and teaching experience one-way ANOVA test was administered. The data gathered from the interviews, on the other hand, were analysed through the use of content analyses (Miles & Huberman, 1994) which consisted of three stages as 'data reduction', 'data display' and 'conclusion drawing/verification'. The researchers preferred to do 'manual coding' (Miles & Huberman, 1994) which enabled them to take note of both implicit and explicit messages maximizing their control and ownership over the analyses process.

#### **Results**

Teachers' perceptions of their use of student-centred assessment methods and strategies based on the data gathered from SCAS are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
*Teachers' Perceptions of their Use of Student-centred Methods and Strategies*

<i>Student-centred assessment</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Alternative assessment methods	.00	25.00	15.10	[14.60, 15.60]	4.50	Heterogeneous
Providing feedback	4.00	20.00	14.24	[13.90, 14.57]	3.02	Heterogeneous
Assessment Total	12.00	45.00	29.34	[28.63, 30.04]	6.29	Heterogeneous

As shown in Table 2, the results revealed variability regarding the implementation of student-centred assessment methods and strategies by high school teachers. This showed the heterogeneity of the teachers employing student-centred assessment methods and strategies at different frequency levels. Similarly, the two factors *alternative assessment methods* and *providing feedback* factors were also reported to be used at different frequency levels. The factor of *alternative assessment methods* include items regarding the use of portfolio, self and peer assessment and the *providing feedback* factor contains items about giving immediate and constructive feedback to students, commenting on students' weaknesses and strengths on a regular basis and helping students diagnose the gap between their goals and their present performance in the teaching and learning process.

Regarding teachers' opinions about their use of student-centred methods and strategies, the categories emerged from content analysis included *traditional assessment methods*, *alternative assessment methods* and *self and peer assessment*. The categories emerged are presented and discussed below:

*Traditional assessment methods.* The data gathered from in-depth interviews clearly demonstrated that teachers are stuck to traditional assessment methods in assessing student learning in high schools. The most widely used methods include written exams and homework. As teachers argued, assessment in high schools is mainly based on student performance in written tests that consist of a midterm and a final exam administered per semester. The content of these tests comprise mostly of multiple choice tests since teachers feel obliged to prepare their students for the university entrance exam which is solely in multiple choice test format. This is reinforced when a physics teacher comments on the type of questions he asks in the exams:

*In the midterm exam I usually ask open ended questions but in the final I mostly use questions previously asked in the university entrance exam. My aim is to prepare students to this exam. Only few students could go to private tutoring institutions.*

To reach the total grade at the end of the semester, the midterm grade, the final grade and a grade given for homework are used. The midterm grade is multiplied by two, the final by three and the grade for homework by one. As reported by all teach-

ers, this is the common procedure used in all high schools. Most teachers ( $n=23$ ) assign regular homework usually from course books. However, homework grade does not only include work done outside class but also student behaviour. Regarding giving feedback, as student learning is mostly evaluated through written tests, teachers tend to assign numerical grades to students. Some teachers ( $n=13$ ) remarked that they give students feedback commenting on areas need to be improved for homework done, underlining the fact that most students do not do regular homework.

The findings also revealed that there is a focus on the product rather than the process of learning. An English teacher, Rose, criticized the assessment system underscoring the negative backwash effect of tests on the teaching process and recommended focusing both on product and process:

*We definitely need to change the assessment system. We evaluate student progress based on their exam grades. That's why students do not want to take part in class activities. They don't get any credit for that.*

*Alternative assessment methods.* Interview results indicate that alternative assessment methods such as portfolios, research projects, and performance evaluation are not employed. As teachers emphasized, according to the regulations in Cyprus Turkish education system, they need to administer two written exams: a midterm and a final per semester. There was absolute unanimity among teachers that they feel the need to prepare students to the university exam which consists of multiple choice tests. Therefore, as stated by teachers, the education system in North Cyprus does not encourage them to use alternative assessment methods.

*Self and peer assessment.* With respect to the use of self and peer assessment, only few teachers (6) mentioned using them. Only Star, a Turkish language and literature teacher, mentioned about the presence of self-assessment tasks in course books but contends her disbelief in their effectiveness. She remarked her opinion as follows:

*There are self-evaluation tasks at the end of each unit asking students to evaluate their progress. There are also self-evaluation criteria for homework ...I don't think they are very effective, I believe that exams better serve the aim of highlighting student weaknesses and strengths.*

Concerning whether teachers' implementation of student-centred assessment methods and strategies vary with respect to their characteristics, both independent-samples  $t$  test and one-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) test results were non-significant ( $p>.05$ ). Hence, gender, subject taught, teaching experience and pedagogical knowledge do not seem to have an impact on the use of student-centred assessment in high schools in North Cyprus.

The results obtained from SCAS including its two factors indicated variability regarding the degree to which student-centred assessment methods and strategies are used in schools. Although the data from SCAS revealed heterogeneity among teachers, the interviews demonstrated that student-centred assessment methods and strategies are not implemented at all. The in-depth data obtained showed that student learning is mostly evaluated through traditional paper and pencil tests through mid-

term and final exams with numerical grades assigned. Homework and also student behaviour in class are considered but not regarded very important. Teachers tend to give more valuable feedback for homework done but most students do not do regular homework as grade assigned for homework comprises only 10% of student total grade. Alternative assessment methods such as portfolio, projects and performance evaluation that focus on the process rather than the product are not included in the assessment system. Moreover, self and peer assessment, important ingredients of student-centred assessment, are not used in classrooms at all. The obtained findings are in line with previous studies (Bekleyen, 2010; Brumen et al., 2009; Eberly et al., 2001; Marsh, 2007) providing evidence that, traditional assessment methods, mostly multiple choice tests were found to dominate with very little inclusion of alternative assessment methods such as projects and presentations. The findings also indicate that gender, subject taught, teaching experience and pedagogical knowledge do not have an impact on the use of student-centred assessment in high schools in North Cyprus.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

To sum up, in the light of the data gathered, it can be concluded that student-centred assessment methods and strategies are not implemented in high schools in North Cyprus. Although the data collected from SCAS indicated variability in the frequency level of teachers' use of these methods and strategies, in-depth interviews clearly demonstrated that traditional paper and pencil tests with numerical grades assigned to students still dominate the assessment system in schools. Alternative assessment methods such as portfolio, projects and performance evaluation that focus on the process rather than product are not included in the assessment system. Moreover, self and peer assessment, important ingredients of student-centred assessment, are not used in classrooms at all. Feedback is given for homework done but most students do not prefer to do regular homework. Therefore, it can be said that, although SCL has been used in schools since 2005, assessment component of SCL is not employed in the process of teaching and learning in high schools.

According to the results, the most important reason why teachers are still stuck to traditional tests is the exam-oriented assessment system used in Turkish Cypriot education in which entrance to secondary schools and higher education are determined by nationwide exams in multiple choice test format. "University entrance exam", being the most important one, determines the future career of students in high schools (Yilmaz, 2009). This exam, which traditionally evaluates knowledge acquisition (Altinyelken, 2011) through multiple choice questions, is very important as students are selected and placed in universities in Turkey and North Cyprus based on their performance in this exam. This aligns well with previous studies (Altinyelken, 2011; Bolden and Newton, 2008; Marsh, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009) which highlight the fact that high stakes examinations create an important barrier in implementing SCL in schools. High-stakes examinations, which are now widely used to evaluate public education in many countries as well as in Turkey and in North Cyprus, require teachers to prepare students for traditional ways of assessment in their classrooms (Marsh, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009).

In the light of the data collected, the current form of assessment system within Cyprus Turkish education system is found to be incompatible with the use of SCL. The way teachers are supposed to assess student performance in schools, which is based on written paper and pencil tests and also the university entrance exam, is reported to be an impediment which hinder the use of student-centred assessment in schools. Although the Ministry seems to encourage the use of alternative assessment methods within SCL, in reality, teachers do not have much flexibility in implementing the kind of methods they prefer to use as they are expected to use two exams, one midterm and a final, and also consider homework done throughout the semester. Moreover, due to the university entrance exam, which is in multiple choice test format, teachers feel the need to do exam preparation and tend to ask multiple choice questions in the exams. Apparently, there is a contradiction regarding what is expected from teachers. On one hand, the Ministry wants teachers to implement SCL, but on the other hand, it requires them to assess student performance based on traditional written tests. Consequently, there is a need for certain amendments in the way students are assessed in high schools. Student progress should not be determined only by written tests since methods used to assess student performance have a direct impact on instruction offered to students. Adopting innovative SCL forms of assessment has the potential to urge the use of SCL in teaching and learning. Hence, alternative assessment methods such as portfolios and group projects should be integrated into the teaching and learning process and both teachers and students should be assisted in using them.

The findings also highlighted the issue of in-service training. Teachers definitely need to be trained on the use of student-centred assessment methods and strategies. Although some course books contain student-centred assessment methods, teachers do not seem to implement them. The Ministry has provided some useful information regarding student-assessment on its web-site but this does not ensure the use of student-centred assessment in schools. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing SCL and thus it is of utmost importance to provide teachers the necessary training, guidance and support in the process of transforming from traditional teaching to SCL.

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### Öğrenci-Merkezli Değerlendirme Yöntemlerinin Liselerde

#### Uygulanması: Gerçekten Olanaklı Mı?

##### Atıf:

- Aliusta, G.O. & Özer, B. (2013). Using student-centred assessment methods in high schools: is it really possible?. *Egitim Arastirmalari-Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 53/A, 205-220.

### Özet

*Problem Durumu:* Öğrenci-Merkezli Öğrenme (ÖMÖ) yaklaşımının, öğretim kalitesini artırmak amacıyla okullarda uygulanmaya konması, geleneksel yazılı sınavların aksine, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanmasını gereklili kılmaktadır. ÖMÖ, öğretimde öğrenciyi merkeze alan, öğretme öğrenme sürecinde öğrenci gereksinme, ilgi ve özelliklerini göz önünde bulunduran, karar verme sürecinde öğrencilere söz hakkı tanıyan ve öğrencileri etkin kıلان öğretme ve öğrenme yaklaşımıdır. Öğrencilerin öğrenmelerinin değerlendirilmesi, ÖMÖ'nin önemli bileşenlerinden biridir. Geleneksel öğretmen-merkezli yaklaşımın aksine, ÖMÖ, öğrencilerin öğrenmesinin değerlendirilmesinde yalnızca yazılı ve sözlü sınavlara yer ver-

mez, onun yerine, ürün dosyaları, grup çalışmaları ve projeler gibi öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinden yararlanır. Öğrencilerin öğrenmeleri, sadece dönem sonunda yapılan yazılı ve sözlü sınavlarla değil, öğrencilerin öğrenme süresinde yaptıkları tüm çalışmalarla değerlendirilir. Öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirmeye, öz ve akran değerlendirme yöntemleriyle öğrenciler de etkin bir şekilde katılırlar. ÖMÖ, öğretim kalitesini artırmak amacıyla, 2005 yılında Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki okullarda uygulanmaya konmuştur. Bu alanda yapılan araştırmaların olmayışı, ÖMÖ'nin uygulanmasının geliştirilmesine olanak sağlayacak bilimsel çalışmaların yapılması gerekliliğini ortaya koymuştur. ÖMÖ yaklaşımının kullanılmasını inceleyen bilimsel araştırmaların büyük bir çoğunluğu öğrenci-merkezli öğretim ve öğrenme yöntemleri üzerine odaklanmış, değerlendirme gibi, önemli bileşenler göz ardi edilmiştir. ÖMÖ'nin değerlendirme bileşeni üzerine yapılan sınırlı sayıda yayınlanmış bilimsel araştırma vardır. Alanyazının da ortaya koyduğu gibi, değerlendirme, ÖMÖ'nin uygulanmasında önemli rol oynamaktadır, bu bağlamda, ÖMÖ'nin öğretme ve öğrenme sürecinde ne ölçüde uygulandığı incelenirken değerlendirme bileşeninin göz önünde bulundurulması önem taşımaktadır.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:*Bu araştırma ile öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki liselerde ne ölçüde uygulandığının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Ayrıca, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanmasında cinsiyet, öğretilen ders, öğretme deneyimi ve pedagojik formasyon değişkenleri açısından öğretmenler arasında anlamlı fark olup olmadığı da araştırmanın amaçları arasında yer almaktadır.

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi:*Araştırmada, karma araştırma yöntemi içerisinde yer alan sıralı açıklayıcı desen kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada iki ayrı aşamada gerçekleştirilen, hem nicel hem de nitel olmak üzere iki tür veri toplanmıştır. İlk aşamada, öğretmenlerin öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanmasıyla ilgili algılarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlayan, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme ölçeği (ÖMDÖ), liselerde görev yapan 309 öğretmene uygulanmıştır. İkinci aşamada ise, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanması ile ilgili derinlemesine veri elde etmek için, 309 öğretmen içerisinde amacsal yöntemle seçilen 33 öğretmenle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. ÖMDÖ'den elde edilen verilerin analizinde, aritmetik ortalama ve standart sapmaların hesaplanması kapsayan betimleyici istatistik kullanılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, tek yönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA) ve t-test uygulanmıştır. Görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler ise içerik analizi yoluya analiz edilmiştir.

*Araştırmanın Bulguları:*ÖMDÖ'den elde edilen veriler öğretmenlerin, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanması ile ilgili farklı algılara sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler ise, ÖMÖ'nin değerlendirme boyutunun Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki liselerde uygulanmadığını göstermiştir. Öğretmenlerle yapılan görüşmeler, öğrencilerin öğrenmeisinin, ara sınav ve final sınavlarından oluşan geleneksel yazılı sınavlarla değerlendirildiğini, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerden olan ürün dosyaları, projeler, sunumlar, öz ve akran değerlendirme mesmesine yer verilmediğini göstermiştir. Kıbrıs Türk eğitim sisteminde yer alan sınav-odaklı değerlendirme yaklaşımı

ve de bunun bir parçası olan üniversite yerleştirme sınavı, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki liselerde uygulanmasını engelleyen ciddi etmenler olarak saptanmıştır. Kıbrıs Türk eğitim sistemi, öğrencilerin öğrenmelerinin yazılı sınavlarla değerlendirilmesini gerekliliğinde bulunmaktadır. Öğretmenler dönen boyunca bir ara sınav bir de final sınavı yapmak durumunda kalmaktadırlar. Lise öğrencilerinin yaşamlarında çok önemli olan üniversite giriş sınavı ve bu sınavın tamamen çoktan seçmeli sorulardan oluşuyor olması, öğretmenlerin sınıf içerisinde yaptıkları değerlendirmelerde bu tür sınavlara ağırlık vermelerine sebep olmaktadır. Araştırmada elde edilen bulgular, *cinsiyet, öğreten ders, öğretme deneyimi ve pedagojik formasyonun öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanmasında herhangi bir etkisinin olmadığını ortaya koymuştur.*

*Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri:* Araştırmada elde edilen tüm veriler sonucunda, ÖMÖ'nin, 2005'den beridir okullarda uygulanmasına rağmen, geleneksel değerlendirme sisteminin ana özelliklerinin, genel liselerdeki öğrenme ve öğretme sürecine hakim olduğu sonucuna varılabilir. Öğretmenlere göre, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki liselerde uygulanmasını engelleyen ciddi etmenler bulunmaktadır. Sınav-odaklı değerlendirme sistemi ve üniversite giriş sınavı bu etmenlerin başında gelmektedir. Sonuç olarak, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığının uygulanmasını istediği değerlendirme yöntemi ÖMÖ ile bağdaşmamaktadır. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, bir taraftan öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirmenin uygulanmasını özendirmeye çalışırken, öteki taraftan ise, öğretmenlerden öğrenci değerlendirmelerini geleneksel yazılı sınavlarla yapmalarını istemektedir. Bu bulgular eğitim bakanlığının kendi içerisinde çelişğini göstermektedir. Öğrencilerin öğrenmelerinin değerlendirilmesinde kullanılan yöntemler öğretimi doğrudan etkilemektedir. Bu yüzden, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntem ve stratejilerinin uygulanması, öğretme ve öğrenme sürecini olumlu yönde etkileyip, ÖMÖ yaklaşımının kullanılmasını artıracaktır. Elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda, liselerde uygulanan değerlendirme sisteminde değişiklikler yapılması, ürün dosyası, sunumlar, grup çalışmaları ve grup ve bireysel olarak yapılan projeler gibi alternatif değerlendirme yöntemlerinin eğitim programlarına entegre edilmesi ve öğretmenlerin hizmet içi eğitimden geçmeleri önerilmektedir. Özellikle, hizmet içi eğitim programları, öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme yöntemlerinin öğretmenlere tanıtılmasında ve uygulamalarının özendirilip desteklenmesinde önemi rol oynamaktadır.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* öğrenci-merkezli eğitim; öğrenci-merkezli değerlendirme; değerlendirme; liseler; Kuzey Kıbrıs