Escola de Sociologia e Políticas Públicas

Portuguese teachers' beliefs on assessment and grade repetition

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Junho, 2019

Acknowledgments

To my nieces and nephews,

who, thanks to school, still have all the opportunities and dreams ahead of them.

If you had been born when my grandmother was, your great-grandmother Bárbara, you would be already working in the countryside with a great regret of never having attended school and never having learnt how to read or write. If you had been born when my mother was, your grandmother Odete, you would already be working as a housemaid in some rich house with the 4th grade only. If you had been born when I was born, you would have been one of the first children in Portugal to have compulsory education until the 9th grade, as some of my school mates. Thankfully, you were born this century and you will attend school at least until you are an adult.

It is impressive how much has changed in four generations. But this achievement is not only a consequence of a different era. More than 230 million children worldwide that are not attending school in the present can tell you that. This achievement is the product of many people's dreams and fights to have all children in school in Portugal. To all of those who dared to dream, to fight and made it possible for me to arrive here, I can only express my full gratitude. I will keep the dream and the fight on!

To my supervisor Prof. Susana da Cruz Martins, my life partner António, and to professor David Cranmer, a profound acknowledgment for all their support and wisdom.

Abstract

Grade repetition has commonly been used in Portuguese schools as a form of intervention for students that have been evaluated as a low achievers. With grade repetition being used so frequently, it is necessary to reflect as to whether it is being used appropriately. Hence, the present research aims to understand what are the perceptions that teachers have about assessment, what they believe are the purposes of assessment in compulsory school, and whether their beliefs about assessment are in line with the guidelines on national education policy. Moreover, it also aims to understand why Portuguese teachers use grade repetition as a common resource when it is not scientifically recommended, it finds no support as the best procedure in national educational policy and it is not cheaper when compared with other more efficient solutions.

With evidence that suggests that Portuguese teachers are underassessing their students, or at least they are doing so with criteria different from teachers in other countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it is important to understand if the Portuguese teachers' assessment criteria are suited to their students and how Portuguese teachers perceive new approaches.

To do so, a focus group was created and a survey carried out of a representative sample of Portuguese teachers' population, with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 2.3%. These procedures led to the conclusion that Portuguese teachers have personal beliefs towards assessment and grade repetition that interfere with the assessment they make on their students. The respective beliefs and conceptions have an impact on their practice and succeed in superimposing themselves on national educational policies, educational laws and scientific recommendations.

Keywords

Assessment, Teacher beliefs and practices, Teacher decision-making and Grade repetition.

Resumo

A retenção escolar tem sido comumente usada nas escolas portuguesas como forma de intervenção junto dos alunos com baixo aproveitamento escolar. Sendo a retenção escolar usada de forma tão recorrente nas escolas portuguesas impera refletir se está a ser usada de forma correta. A presente pesquisa tem como objetivo compreender quais são as conceções que os professores têm sobre a avaliação, o que acreditam ser os propósitos da avaliação na escolaridade obrigatória e se suas crenças sobre a avaliação estão alinhadas com as políticas públicas nacionais. Para além disso, pretende também compreender porque é que os professores portugueses utilizam a retenção escolar de forma tão recorrente quando não é cientificamente recomendada, não é defendida como o melhor procedimento por parte do ministério da educação e não é mais barato em comparação com outras soluções mais eficientes.

Com evidências que sugerem que os professores portugueses estão a subavaliar os seus alunos, ou pelo menos estão a avaliá-los com critérios diferentes dos professores de outros países da Organização para a Cooperação e Desenvolvimento Económico (OCDE), é importante procurar perceber se os critérios de avaliação e a forma como os professores portugueses avaliam os seus alunos são apropriados e como encaram os professores portugueses diferentes abordagens.

Para tal, foi realizado um grupo focal e um inquérito a uma amostra representativa da população docente portuguesa com um grau de confiança de 95% e uma margem de erro de 2,3%. Estes procedimentos permitiram concluir que os professores portugueses têm crenças pessoais em relação à avaliação e à retenção, crenças essas que interferem na avaliação que fazem dos seus alunos. Essas crenças e conceções têm assim impacto na atividade docente e conseguem sobrepor-se às políticas educativas nacionais, às leis da educação e às recomendações científicas.

Palavras chave

Avaliação, crenças e práticas do professor, tomada de decisão do professor e retenção escolar.

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Acronyms

ASA – American Statistical Association

CNE – Conselho Nacional de Educação [National Council of Education]

DGEEC – Direção Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência [General Department of Statistics in Education and Science]

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics]

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Introduction

Grade repetition has commonly been used in Portuguese schools as a form of intervention for students that have been evaluated as a low achievers. With grade repetition being used so frequently, it is necessary to reflect as to whether it is being used appropriately. Hence, the present research aims to understand what are the perceptions that teachers have about assessment, what they believe are the purposes of assessment in compulsory school, and whether their beliefs about assessment are in line with the guidelines on national education policy. Moreover, it also aims to understand why Portuguese teachers use grade repetition as a common resource when it is not scientifically recommended, it finds no support as the best procedure in national educational policy and it is not cheaper when compared with other more efficient solutions.

With evidence that suggests that Portuguese teachers are underassessing their students, or at least they are doing so with criteria different from teachers in other countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it is important to understand if the Portuguese teachers' assessment and evaluation criteria are suited to their students and how Portuguese teachers perceive new approaches.

To achieve that, in chapter 1 the research topic of this dissertation is presented, through a contextualization of Portuguese grade repetition rate within a comparative perspective of the Portuguese performance and other countries from the OECD at PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). This analysis will point out the central role that teachers have in assessment processes in schools, and thus, the main research question is formulated.

In order to find answers to this research question, in chapter 2 a literature review is conducted on assessment, school failure and teachers' beliefs.

Moreover, in chapter 3, the limitations of using secondary data for this study are presented and the need to collect primary data with a focus group and a survey for this research will be explained. The focus group has allowed a broader qualitative understanding of teachers' beliefs towards assessment and evaluation processes, while the survey has supported quantitative considerations of a representative sample of the Portuguese teachers' population.

In chapter 4, the information collected through the focus group and the survey is analysed and, in chapter 5, an extensive discussion is provided on the collected data, through a statistical approach and a contextualized analysis.

Finally, in chapter 6, the conclusions of this study are presented, and future research is outlined.

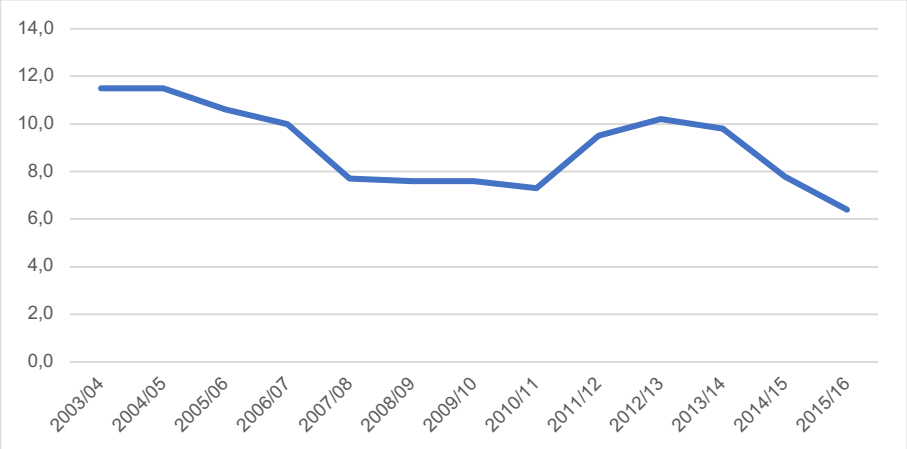
Chapter 1 – Context

This first chapter provides a brief contextualization through a survey of the literature on grade repetition in Portugal and other countries of the OECD, defining the main research question.

1.1 – School retention in Portugal

In 2009, it was approved in Portugal the extension of compulsory education for all children until the age of eighteen years old with the law nº 85/2009. Aiming to have all children in school and to increase the level of qualifications of the Portuguese population (Rodrigues, 2015: 23), this extension brought to the Portuguese educational system new challenges. Several studies have shown that ensuring access to education does not result automatically in the enhancement of social and racial equality (Van den Branden et al., 2010: 3). It was clear by then that it was not enough to force children to be in an educational system until they are eighteen; it was necessary to ensure they had opportunities to achieve success in this system (Justino, 2015: 13). However, as figure 1.1 shows, the historically high repetition rates in Portugal might undermine any idea of equality of opportunities of the Portuguese compulsory educational system.

Figure 1.1. Grade repetition rate in Portugal from 2004 until 2016 (%)



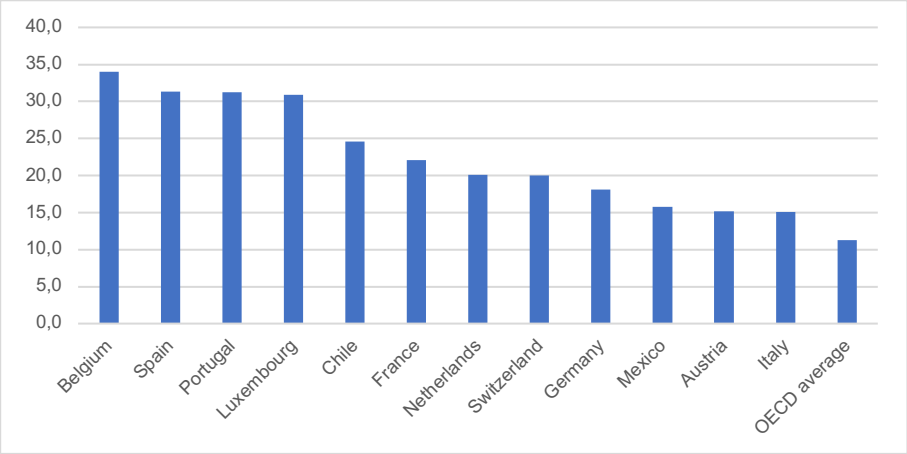
Source: DGEEC

Grade repetition is commonly used as an educational intervention for low-achieving students, consisting of requiring a student to remain at the same grade level for the subsequent school year (Allen et al, 2009). Such high levels of grade repetition in Portugal reveal that compulsory education is not being able to promote opportunities of success for all students as

it was supposed to. And even if grade repetition might be regarded as a new opportunity for success, research has shown that grade repetition has negative effects on academic achievement (Jimerson, 2001) and any positive short-term effect tend to disappear over time (Allen et al., 2009; Nunes et al., 2018). It is fair to say that compulsory school with such repetition rates is a wicked system that, in addition to not being able to ensure opportunities of success for everyone, it does not allow those who do not achieve success to leave a system that does not suit them. It is no longer a vehicle that promotes equality of opportunities but a place that enhances social inequality.

As figure 1.2 shows, in 2015 Portugal had high levels of grade repetition in his educational system comparing to the average of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

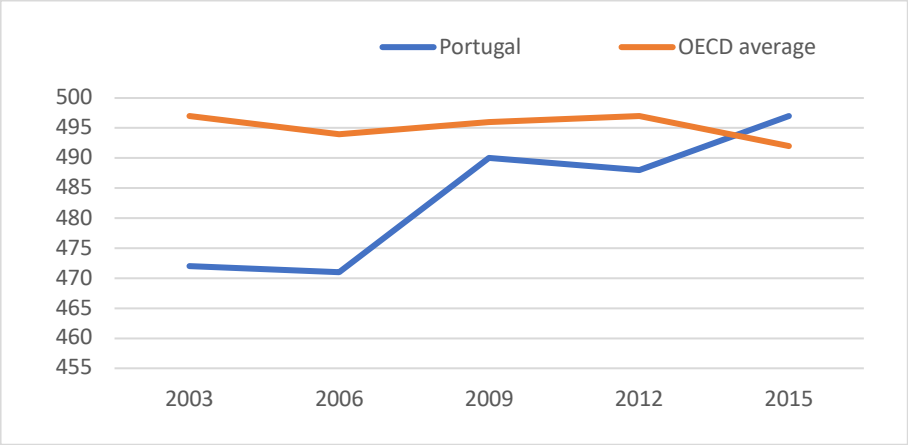
Figure 1.2. Students who reported that they had repeated a grade at least once in primary, lower secondary or upper secondary school in 2015 (in %)



Source: OECD – PISA 2015

Despite the high repetition rates in Portuguese schools shown in figure 1.2, figure 1.3 reveals that Portugal has continuously improved its overall average in matters of success in international tests, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) converging to the OECD average (Lemos, 2014: 320). It is reasonable to say that a consistent evolution of Portuguese performance at PISA tests cannot be regarded as a punctual achievement, but as a true improvement of performance of the Portuguese educational system.

Figure 1.3. Averages for PISA overall on mathematics, reading and science scales, 2003-2015 (scale ranges from 0 to 1000)



Source: OECD – PISA 2015

In 2015, for the first time, Portuguese students were even able to score above the average of OECD in PISA results. While Portugal was ranked under the OECD average in terms of overall success on mathematics, reading and science, it could have been reasonable to consider that the high repetition rates in Portugal compared to other OECD countries might have been a consequence of an effective lower performance and results of Portuguese students. However, evidence has showed that there is no relation between the use of grade repetition and the improvement of students' skills (Martins, 2017). Moreover, data also shows that despite the continuous improvement of Portuguese students' performance in PISA, overcoming the OECD average, they still have higher grade repetition than other countries. So, why do they have so much more grade repetition in their educational system compared with the OECD average?

In order to understand why Portugal has such a high grade repetition rate, it is important to analyse how the Portuguese educational system is organized and in which grade repetition most often occurs. The Portuguese compulsory educational system is structured in basic and secondary schools. The basic school is composed of three cycles: the first cycle, or primary school, which includes grades 1 to 4 (lower ISCED 1); the second cycle, or middle school, which includes grades 5 and 6 (upper ISCED 1); and the third cycle, or lower secondary school, which includes grades 7 to 9 (ISCED 2). The secondary school includes grades 10 to 12 (ISCED 3) (Barata et al., 2015: 151). The basic school is characterized by a common path for all students adapted to the profile and characteristics of students. Different paths are only available at upper secondary school and it is organised into different forms according to different objectives, either focusing on access to further studies or preparation for working life.

The Portuguese Educational Law establishes that education is universal to all children and has to promote equity and inclusion of all students. To do so, school programmes should

be flexible and personalized using a large number of measures and resources expressed in the law (Decree 54/2018). The Portuguese National Council of Education (Conselho Nacional de Educação – CNE) holds that diversification, flexibility and quality of tracks are relevant for a true universalization of compulsory school (Miguéns, 2015: 8). It is reasonable to consider that an earlier tracking, as it happens in the German or Austrian educational systems, instead of upper school only, as it happens in Portugal, would be a more suitable measure to promote equality of opportunities rather than making programmes more flexible and personalized. However, there is no clear evidence that placing students in different tracks at an earlier stage is related to higher performance, though some studies have shown that early tracking increases the impact of socioeconomic background on performance (Zimmer et al., 2010: 44).

The Portuguese legislation also indicates that grade repetition in basic school should happen preferably at the end of a cycle of studies, and it should only occur in the middle of a cycle under exceptional circumstances. Despite those recommendations towards grade repetition, table 1.1 shows that grade repetition is not an exceptional procedure in the middle of a cycle, but a quite common and generalized practice through every cycle of studies.

Table 1.1 Grade repetition rates in Portugal from 2004 until 2016 (%)

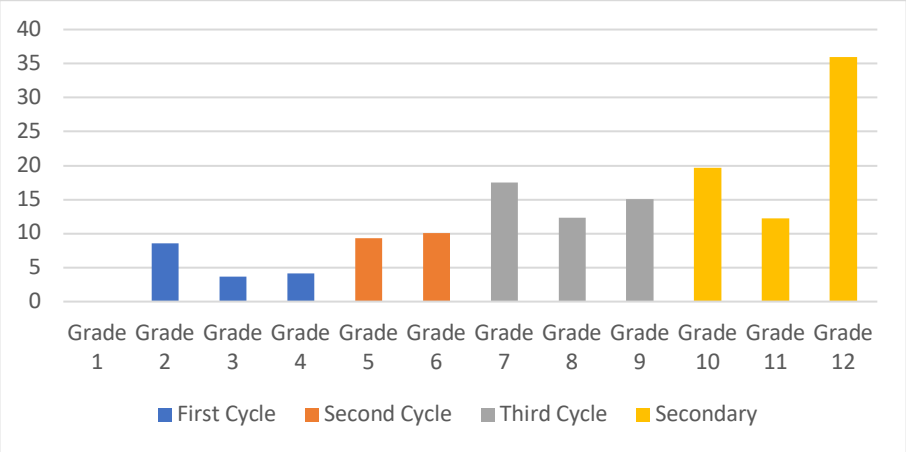
	Basic School									Secondary School		
	First Cycle			Second Cycle			Third Cycle			Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9			
2003/04	0,0	11,6	5,2	7,2	13,5	13,4	22,4	16,2	12,5	36,5	20,4	49,8
2004/05	0,0	10,6	4,1	5,6	12,8	12,2	21,9	15,9	19,9	32,5	18,1	51,1
2005/06	0,0	8,8	3,3	4,8	10,8	10,2	21,1	14,9	21,1	29,0	19,0	45,8
2006/07	0,0	7,5	3,2	4,5	10,0	10,5	20,6	14,1	20,2	23,3	15,7	36,8
2007/08	0,0	6,8	2,9	4,1	7,8	7,8	16,7	10,8	13,2	21,1	12,1	32,6
2008/09	0,0	6,9	2,9	3,7	7,4	7,5	16,7	11,1	13,1	16,7	9,9	29,1
2009/10	0,0	6,8	3,0	4,0	6,9	8,0	15,8	10,9	13,4	17,5	9,8	29,5
2010/11	0,0	6,4	2,4	3,6	7,2	7,1	15,0	10,0	13,6	17,4	10,3	33,8
2011/12	0,0	8,1	3,7	4,6	9,2	12,7	16,7	12,3	16,7	14,9	10,8	33,3
2012/13	0,0	9,3	4,8	3,8	10	14,7	16,1	13,5	17,5	12,3	10,0	34,4
2013/14	0,0	10,2	4,9	3,3	10,8	11,6	16,6	13,0	15,0	11,6	8,9	33,8
2014/15	0,0	9,3	3,9	2,2	8,3	8,6	15,1	10,2	10,6	11,2	8,0	29,8
2015/16	0,0	8,6	2,8	2,3	6,8	6,6	12,4	7,8	9,0	11,6	6,5	27,7

Source: DGEEC

In fact, by calculating a mean of grade repetition rates from 2003 until 2016, it is possible to observe in figure 1.4 that, with the exception of the first grade where by law it is not possible to repeat the grade, the biggest humps in grade repetition rates happen in the beginning of a cycle comparing to previous grades (grade 2, grade 5, grade 7 and grade 10) against the recommendations of the Ministry of Education. On the second grade, as it is not possible to repeat a grade on the first grade, the grade repetition rate is very high comparing

to other grades from the first cycle; showing a possible accommodation of first and second grade together. On grade 12, the end of compulsory school, the rate is the highest among all grades, revealing that for a vast majority of Portuguese students it is not possible to finish compulsory school before the age of 18 years old without a grade repetition.

Figure 1.4. Means of grade repetition rate in Portugal from 2003 until 2016 (in %)



Source: DGEEC

The common practice of grade repetition in Portugal is excessive and outside international norms (Conboy, 2011). With scientific evidence about the disadvantages of grade repetition, with evidence that Portuguese students are performing better than the OECD average but having more grade repetition than OECD average, and with an educational system that aims to promote higher levels of success, recommending that grade repetition should only occur in exceptional circumstances, it is fair enough to ask: Why do Portuguese teachers use grade repetition so frequently with their students? Are Portuguese teachers assessing students appropriately?

1.2 – Research question

The above-mentioned research questions have the following associated sub-questions:

a) What are the purposes of assessment in compulsory school?
b) How do teachers perceive assessment in compulsory school?
c) What is the perception of Portuguese teachers towards grade repetition?
d) Does their personal experience as a student influence the way they assess?
e) How do Portuguese teachers perceive the existence of National Assessment Tests and National Assessment Exams?

Chapter 2 – Literature review

This second chapter provides a literature review on main causes of school failure, on the main reasons behind student assessment, on the influence of educational policy in school failure and the reproduction of stereotypes and teachers' personal beliefs. The last section identifies the main research gaps and opportunities.

2.1 – Causes of school failure

Grade repetition is commonly used as an educational intervention for low-achieving students that consists of requiring a student to remain at the same grade level for a subsequent school year (Allen et al, 2009). There are several theories to justify school failure and grade repetition. One of the oldest theories is the theory of "gifts", based in individual psychological explanations. Success and failure are explained by bigger or smaller capacity of students, for their intelligence and for their natural gifts. (Benavente, 1991: 54).

By the end of the 1960's, there were new theories about social and cultural handicap: The success or failure of students depends on their social background, the community where they come from and belongs. The reproductive role of school was highlighted with these theories, where social inequality is transformed into school inequality, which will produce social inequality once again (Benavente, 1991; Bourdieu, 1975). From this point onwards, schools started questioning their own acting mechanisms and practices, and their own role in producing school failure and grade repetition.

None of those theories can be excluded or pointed out as the only reason to school failure. However, it is important to note that school failure and grade repetition is an outcome of an assessment process involving all the stakeholders in the teaching/learning process, from the conception of an educational system until the individual responsibility of each student. Therefore, we cannot neglect the essential role carried out by public policies, schools and teachers in assessing their students and setting the high rates of school failure and grade repetition in Portugal.

2.2 – Why do we assess students?

"In education, assessment is amongst the most useful things that we do for ourselves and our students. It is also amongst the most harmful thing we do – the best and the worst" (Holmes, 2010: xiii).

The assessment processes in a school context arises with the birth of colleges in the 17th century. It then became inseparable from the teaching and learning process for the masses started in the 19th century with compulsory schooling. By then, assessment aimed to

create hierarchies of excellence, where students were compared and then classified by virtue accordingly to a standard of excellence, defined in absolute by the public educational system and then reincarnated by the teacher. Papers, written tests, oral tests and individual's performance created small hierarchies of excellence, none of which were decisive, but whose addition and accumulation prefigured a final decision (Perrenoud, 1998). This approach clearly focused on products and outcomes, aiming to define a closure and set grade levels.

Nowadays, hierarchies of excellence in schools are still being created but in a much more formative way, focusing not only on the results but also on the processes, therefore, with a constructive perspective. Assessing learning and teaching processes promote feedback towards better outcomes and better evaluations (Hattie, 2007).

The assessment processes in compulsory schooling in Portugal focuses, in accordance with the implementing order 98-A/92, on the achievement of general objectives for each cycle of studies and specific objectives for each school subject. The assessment of a student should consider the learning process, the context in which it develops and the functions of stimulation and socialization. To do so, the Ministry of Education defines a minimum of curricular objectives at the national level for basic education and for each cycle of studies. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of each school pedagogical council, by proposal of subject groups or curricular departments, to define the minimum objectives for each subject considering the specificities of each educational community. If, on the one hand, minimum objectives define products and goals to achieve, on the other hand, the possibility to adjust them to each context promotes formative assessment.

In this way, the assessment of a student aims to direct the intervention of the teacher towards the students, to help them to formulate or reformulate decisions that can positively influence the promotion and consolidation of their own educational process and to improve the quality of the educational system by introducing curricular changes or procedures that may prove necessary (Implementing order 98-A/92).

It is clear that the core of this law has a formative perspective towards assessment, aiming to continuously assess and adapt a general school system to an internal context of each school and to the needs of each student in particular. This assessment is not an end itself, but a powerful tool to improve teaching and learning quality.

"Assessment is only useful for students when it enables them to see what they do not understand and gives them insight and motivation to improve, to teachers to see where their teaching can be improved, to administrators to see which structures work best for learning. (…) But it can be harmful when it is seen as an end itself, when it makes the goal getting a paper qualification rather than gaining competence, when it distorts the learning process and

encourages learning and teaching for the test, when its contents do not match up with what is important to learn." (Holmes, 2010: xiii).

2.3 – How do educational policies influence school failure?

Evidence shows that systematic practices of formative internal assessment are clearly associated with very significant improvements in the learning process of all students (Fernandes, 2014). They also show that those who benefit the most from these practices are students who are usually considered to have "learning difficulties". Internal formative assessment processes have better results than external evaluation, but it also shows that it has limitations regarding reliability and credibility. Public policies tend to invest in external evaluation processes because they have strong acceptance in society and they are perceived as moments of accuracy, quality, control and accountability of the educational system. Although there is no scientific evidence that increasing the number of external evaluation procedures improves what students learn, public education policies in a number of countries have always used external evaluation procedures based on a variety of reasons: to shape internal assessment, to ensure that teachers teach the curriculum, to monitor students and schools' outcomes, to contribute to equality and a fair assessment. (Fernandes, 2014: 231).

Teachers tend to organize their teaching methods accordingly to the assessment process established by public policies and not the other way around (Cardoso, 2006). If public policies establish several external evaluation moments, teachers tend to prepare their students for the exams. If public policies establish formative internal assessment as a priority, teachers tend to focus on each individual learning process.

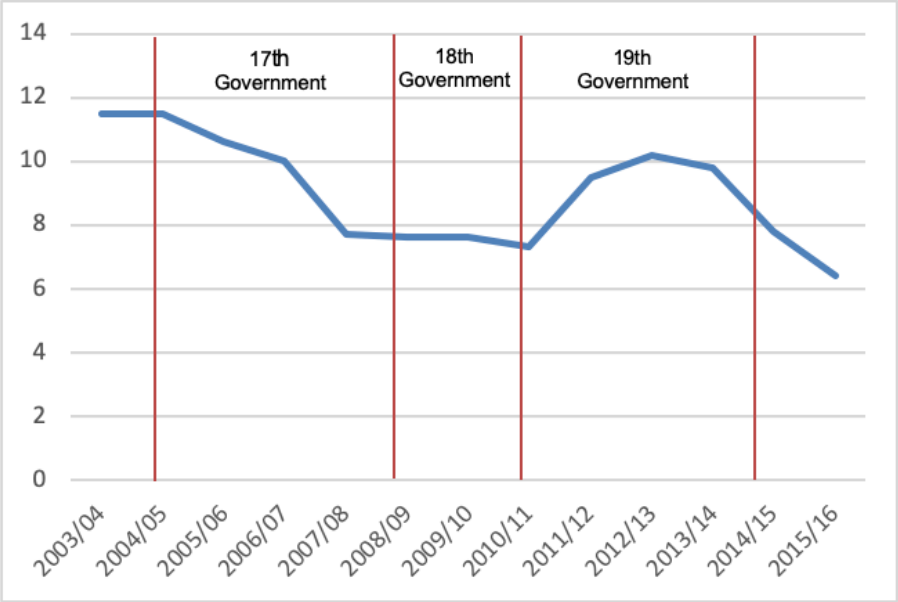
During the 17th and 18th governments in Portugal, the Ministers of Education were Maria de Lurdes Rodrigues (2005-2009) and Isabel Alçada (2009-2011). Their national educational policies approach towards assessment invested clearly in internal processes aiming to make evaluation fit each school context and to reduce grade repetition.

"There is the idea that grade repetition is good for the character of a student. This perception forgets that the alternative to grade repetition is not grade approval without knowledge. The alternative to grade repetition is to provide time for students to learn what they do not know, provide new approaches of teaching and learning, to demand better school outcomes. (…) It is a question of ensuring not only the existence of teaching for everyone, but the quality of teaching and learning for everyone." (Rodrigues, 2012: 182)

With a different approach, Nuno Crato was Minister of Education during the 19th government in Portugal (2011-2015). Nuno Crato invested in a stricter curriculum defined by central government, equal for everyone, with external assessment exams at the end of each cycle of studies (4th grade, 6th grade, 9th grade and at the end of secondary school).

Systematic practices of formative internal assessment are associated with significant improvements in the learning process. Data suggests (as shown in figure 2.1) that this approach is also associated with a tendency for grade repetition rates to drop or stabilize, as happened between 2004 and 2011.

Figure 2.1. Grade repetition rate in Portugal from 2004 until 2016 (in %)



Source: DGEEC

By contrast, while there is no scientific evidence that increasing the number of external evaluation processes improves what students learn, data also shows in figure 2.1 that the approach of National exams at the end of each cycle of studies is associated with greater discrimination and selection of students and a consequent tendency to raise grade repetition rates, as happened between 2011 and 2015.

It becomes clear that different approaches towards internal and external evaluation have an impact not only on how teachers teach, but also on how teachers assess their students, with strong consequences on how and what students learn.

2.4 – How schools produce stereotypes towards evaluation

The origin and background of the Portuguese compulsory educational system influenced the way schools are organized nowadays. According to Mendes (2014), the high levels of grade repetition among all grades in Portugal, regardless of the school track students are attending, are the reflex of an educational system historically based on the French *Lycée.* This type of school aimed to prepare students to go to university instead of preparing them for a job. It was a school system with depreciated and underdeveloped professional tracks (Mendes, 2014: 663). Today the organization and vision of schools are different, but are still influenced by their past and, as a consequence, this is also the case with the organization and vision of teachers.

Marcel Crahay defends that the student assessment process can produce school failure and grade repetition, because teachers have certain general conceptions about teaching and assessment. The diversity of demands, weighting and measuring to assess students varies from teacher to teacher (Crahay, 1996).

To adjust their conceptions to the contextual factors that they are confronted with, teachers appeal to common stereotypes. For example, the assignment of students to different tracks is regarded as an established fact for teachers and school directors. Their assessment of students starts from the stereotype that lower-track students will not be as successful as the others. Teachers believe that certain groups of students will make little improvement at school. Even before they have met their students, they have built a strong image of their academic abilities (Houtte, 2011: 85)

Those conceptions and stereotypes are passed on from generation to generation because, according to younger teachers, it is from the senior colleagues that you 'learn how to act in the institution', i.e. what you are supposed to do, to think and to say about the community and about the classroom with regard to the central educational policy. The activity of older teachers in relation to the youngest ones gets mixed with the institution itself. Moreover, those who have tried to do differently from colleagues, distinguishing themselves from them, have described situations of marginalization and hostility, set by other teachers, for not fitting in with the latter's strategies of working and standardization in school (Caria, 2000: 267-272). In this way, younger teachers reproduce the older teachers' activity believing this is the role that they are supposed to perform in the institution. Thus, school traditions play not only a great part in constructing what teachers believe in, but they are also often confused with what is the national educational policy.

Although these conceptions and stereotypes are widespread with a great resistance to change them inside schools, they can also be shaped by specific school intervention

programmes. Evidence shows that a programme such as *"Programa Mais Sucesso Escolar"*[1] reduced grade repetition and increased achievement in compulsory education by changing internal assessment outcomes (Barata et al. 2015).

2.5 – Teachers' personal beliefs and assessment

With evidence that national policy and the school organizational ethos establish different approaches towards assessment by the teachers, they also define what teachers believe in about assessment. Teachers construct their own personal beliefs about assessment based on their personal experiences, in a first phase as a student and later as a teacher. Those beliefs are formed at an early stage and tend to self-perpetuate with regard to reason, time, schooling or experience (Pajares, 1992).

In a recent study developed by ISCTE-IUL and lead by Maria de Lurdes Rodrigues (Rodrigues et al., 2017), it was pointed out that the majority of the interviewed teachers believe that it is not possible to end grade retention in the first cycle of compulsory school. Even before meeting their students, teachers have already constructed and developed an image of their performance; that some will fail (Houtte, 2011: 85). For those teachers, if grade repetition is the only option they have for lack of an alternative, they also believe that grade repetition is good for their students, regarding it as a second opportunity for them.

2.6 – Research gaps and opportunities

The literature review enables us to conclude that:

a) Portuguese students have a better performance in international tests than the OECD average, but they also have more grade repetition in their educational system than the OECD average.
b) Portuguese educational law establishes that grade repetition should be used in very specific situations, preferably at the end of a cycle of studies. However, grade repetition is a commonly used educational intervention procedure among all grades in compulsory school, despite scientific evidence as to its disadvantages and despite national policy recommendations.
c) Systematic internal assessment procedures can increase the quality of what teachers teach, what students learn and success rates. External assessment does not improve what students learn but it can increase grade repetition rates.

[1] "*Programa Mais Sucesso Escolar" (PMSE) was a Portuguese National Educational Policy using class size, class composition and differentiated instructions to reduce students' grade repetition and increase achievement.*

d) Teachers' beliefs towards assessment and evaluation are a product of national educational policies, a product of schools' internal procedures and a product of their personal experiences as a student and as a teacher.
e) Teachers already have a stereotyped image of their students' capacities even before meeting them and before they have the opportunity to show their real capacities.

Regardless of these conclusions, it is still not clear why Portuguese teachers do not assess their students according to the Portuguese educational law and according to scientific recommendations, with regard to grade repetition guidelines. This happens because they have a personal perspective about assessment and grade repetition that is different from those recommendations. To define new national laws, new school programmes and new classroom educational policies to lower grade repetition rates in Portuguese schools, it is essential to get a better understanding of what Portuguese teachers believe in about assessment and grade repetition.

Chapter 3 – Methodology and data

To find out and to understand Portuguese teachers' beliefs towards assessment and grade repetition, a focus group and survey were designed and applied in order to collect primary data. Research with primary data has the advantage of using an observation instrument specifically created for the particular interests of a given investigation (Lapa, 2009: 3). Secondary databases, such as those produced by the DGEEC or the PISA programme cannot provide such information. Nevertheless, despite the limitations that these secondary databases may have, they have made it possible to make a cross-national comparison, as was done between the PISA test results and the DGEEC database, revealing not only the differences between countries and cultures, but aspects of Portugal and its own culture that would not have been possible to detect with institutional data only (Jowell, 1998: 168). More than testing or justifying concrete theories, these two secondary databases have made it possible to highlight domestic problems and to question empirically rooted theories.

In the course of this third chapter attention will be drawn to all the issues that were considered to develop and conduct a focus group and an online survey to Portuguese teachers, trying to mitigate errors and limitations inherent to any survey: limitations in design, data collection, quality, validity, reliability and data analysis.

3.1 – Focus group

Before the survey's implementation, a focus group was carried out with 10 teachers from different subjects and ages from a school in Lisbon (grade 1-12). A focus group is an interview with several people on a specific topic or subject that aims to promote dialogue and discussion of different teachers with different perspectives on assessment, evaluation and grade repetition (Bryman, 2012: 501).

While a survey provides quantitative information, a focus group provides qualitative information that further deepens the research question. Thus, considering different positions about this topic was essential in order to be able to improve the type of questions in the survey in terms both of quality and depth (Stopher, 2012: 132-133).

It is important to remark that the data collected through the focus group was not compared in quantitative terms because of lack of representativeness (ASA, 1998). This information was only treated in qualitative terms, and this is explored in chapter 4.

3.2 – Survey

Online surveys offer a number of advantages, particularly in terms of implementation costs and time required compared with traditional methods (Fricker et al., 2002; Jamsen et al., 2007). In addition, carrying out this study with an online approach allowed to have a large number of respondents that would not have been possible to have using a traditional approach given the available resources.

Although some studies show that internet users are mostly people with greater income and higher level of qualifications and that this may lead to a bias of the sample over traditional methods (Coomber, 1997), it is necessary to consider that internet access has become more widespread and, in 2016, according to the National Statistics Institute (INE), more than 74% of households in Portugal had Internet access. For this study in particular, it is also necessary to consider that teachers are a highly qualified professional class, all of them being degree-holders. And even if there might be some teachers who do not have access to the internet in their personal lives, all teachers do have access at their work place. Therefore, the bias for carrying out this survey using an online approach instead of a traditional method was reduced.

Beyond economic issues, agenda and ease of reaching the teaching population, an online survey also allows a respondent to monitor the progress of responses and to know how much time it will take to reach the end, lowering in this way the dropout rates. It also facilitates processing the collected information for the creation of a database, since all the information is collected electronically.

The type of question, format and scales limits the statistical analysis that can be made with the collected data. Some statistical tests require certain types of assumptions about the nature of the variables, and therefore, it is important to consider that when designing a survey and the questions to be asked. The definition of questions and possibilities of answer were carefully chosen considering the purposes of this dissertation and the type of statistical tests that were intended to be made, whose analysis and discussion is provided in chapters 4 and 5.

Prior to the implementation of a survey, numerous procedures and question formulations were tested with a pre-test. Despite all the care previously mentioned in the survey design, new questions have arisen, and different interpretations and responses emerged among the pre-test respondents. Therefore, to carry out the pre-test a sample was required. Although the pre-test is very important for the success of a survey, the pre-test is largely neglected from the point of view of academic research, namely in the conditions under which it must occur and the size of the sample for the pre-test. For this study with teachers, the pre-test was carried out with a selected small group of five teachers close to the researcher, in order to obtain relevant information to validate the survey.

After so much precaution and work in the survey design and validation of procedures, the implementation of the survey was an exciting moment, in the hope that everything would work as intended. It was the moment when the answers to my research question were being given and the curiosity to know them was enormous. In this implementation phase of the online survey, given its nature, no trained interviewers were needed, which made the process much faster and cheaper than using a traditional method. To all respondents the opportunity was given to contact the researcher in case they needed to clarify some question or doubt.

Considering the available resources within a Masters' research and dissertation, the choice to conduct an online survey directed at a sample of the entire teaching population was the most logical solution that best served the purposes of this investigation.

3.3 – Ethic

Concerns about ethical issues and protection of respondents' privacy have grown as online survey methods have become more widespread (Eysenbach et al 2001, Walther, 2002). Whenever there is an interaction with the human population, it is necessary to consider ethical issues of what is or is not legitimate to do (Stopher, 2012). For all the teachers that participated in this study, both in the focus group and in the survey, it was ensured that they were correctly informed about who was developing the study and to what purpose. It was also ensured the privacy of all individuals and the confidentiality of all information collected, i.e. any personal information will never be disclosed to third parties and all the information collected was never treated on an individual basis, but on a collectively one. This was essential to have an informed consent of all individuals to participate in this study.

3.4 – Population

To know and characterise the population under analysis is fundamental in order to be able to determine if the conditions of applicability of a survey are guaranteed, i.e. to ensure that the population under analysis is in fact a population that has access to the internet and that online survey methods are suitable for this population. It is also fundamental to be able to define the weighting for data analysis.

The teaching population of compulsory school contains all teachers from the first Cycle of studies up to secondary school. According to table 3.1, the teaching population of compulsory education in 2016/2017 consisted of almost 120 000 teachers of whom about one quarter were men and three-quarters women.

Table 3.1. Characterisation of Portuguese teachers' population in compulsory school in 2016/2017 by gender

	Men	Women	TOTAL
First Cycle of Basic Education (lower ISCED 1)	3 453 (12.7%)	23 829 (87.3%)	27 282 (100%)
Second Cycle of Basic Education (upper ISCED 1)	6 020 (27.4%)	15 972 (72.6%)	21 992 (100%)
Third Cycle of Basic Education / Secondary school (ISCED 2+3)	19 800 (28.1%)	50 691 (71.9%)	70 491 (100%)
TOTAL (Compulsory school)	29 273 (24.4%)	90 492 (75.6%)	119 765 (100%)

Source: DGEEC

It is also possible to observe in table 3.2 that the teaching population is a very old professional class, where less than 1% of teachers in the educational system are under 30 years old, and more than 40% of teachers are 50 or more years old.

Table 3.2. Characterisation of Portuguese teachers' population in compulsory school in 2016/2017 by age

	< 30 years old	30-39 years old	40-49 years old	≥ 50 years old	TOTAL
First Cycle of Basic Education (lower ISCED 1)	305 (1.1%)	7 003 (25.7%)	10 258 (37.6%)	9 716 (35.6%)	27 282 (100%)
Second Cycle of Basic Education (upper ISCED 1)	250 (1.1%)	3 353 (15.2%)	7 471 (34.0%)	10 918 (49.6%)	21 992 (100%)
Third Cycle of Basic Education / Secondary school (ISCED 2+3)	531 (0.8%)	10 997 (15.6%)	27 131 (38.5%)	31 832 (45.2%)	70 491 (100%)
TOTAL (Compulsory school)	1 086 (0.9%)	21 353 (17.8%)	44 860 (37.5%)	52 466 (43.8%)	119 765 (100%)

Source: DGEEC

Table 3.3 shows that, though teachers are a very old professional class, they are at the same time one of the most qualified professional classes in Portugal, being a current requirement for the practice of the job, with some exceptions contemplated in the law, at least the bachelor's degree or equivalent (ISCED 6).

Table 3.3. Characterization of Portuguese teachers' population in compulsory school in 2016/2017 by qualification

	ISCED 5	ISCED 6	ISCED 7 or ISCED 8	TOTAL
First Cycle of Basic Education (lower ISCED 1)	2 600 (9.5%)	22 740 (83.4%)	1 942 (7.1%)	27 282 (100%)
Second Cycle of Basic Education (upper ISCED 1)	1 627 (7.4%)	18 209 (82.8%)	2 156 (9.8%)	21 992 (100%)
Third Cycle of Basic Education / Secondary school (ISCED 2+3)	2 685 (3.8%)	57 707 (81.9%)	10 099 (14.3%)	70 491 (100%)
TOTAL (Compulsory school)	6 912 (5.8%)	98 656 (82.4%)	14 197 (11.9%)	119 765 (100%)

Source: DGEEC

Finally, table 3.4 shows that almost 90% of teachers in Portugal work in the public educational system.

Table 3.4. Characterization of Portuguese teachers' population in compulsory school in 2016/2017 by type of school

	Public	Private	TOTAL
First Cycle of Basic Education (lower ISCED 1)	24 435 (89.6%)	2 847 (10.4%)	27 282 (100%)
Second Cycle of Basic Education (upper ISCED 1)	19 398 (88.2%)	2 594 (11.8%)	21 992 (100%)
Third Cycle of Basic Education / Secondary school (ISCED 2+3)	63 473 (90.0%)	7 018 (10.0%)	70 491 (100%)
TOTAL (Compulsory school)	107 306 (89.6%)	12 459 (10.4%)	119 765 (100%)

Source: DGEEC

3.5 – Sample's representativeness

A sample is statistically representative of a population if the average of any characteristic of that sample is equal to the same mean measured in the population (Stopher, 2012: 68). A good survey seeks to reduce all types of errors, including errors of representativeness, sample, non-response and measurement (Fricker et al., 2002). Determining the size of the sample and how it is selected is crucial. To determine the size of a sample (n_0) for a population of infinite size, the following calculation formula should be used (Israel, 1992):

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2.p.q}{e^2}$$

In this formula, Z is the chosen value of the standard normal distribution with a certain confidence level associated, p is the probability of success of occurrence of a certain characteristic, q is the probability of failure ($q = 1 - p$) and e is the margin of error. For a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, the sample size assuming an infinite population (n_0) is 385.

To determine the size of a sample (n) for a finite population (N), as it is the case, n should be corrected by the following formula (Israel, 1992):

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{(n_0 - 1)}{N}}$$

Considering the finite population of teachers, with a N = 119 765, the corrected n is 383. It should be noted that the size of the two samples is very similar since the teaching population is a very large population.

Regarding the method for choosing a sample, randomness has been the method most studied and recognized as a guarantee of representativeness of the sample. However, there are many definitions of randomness. One of them goes through the concept of justice, where anyone is equally likely to be chosen. A second one is connected with the concept of lack of standard or unpredictability (Stopher, 2012: 69).

In an ideal situation, teachers from any public or private school at the national level would have been randomly selected regardless of where they live or teach. Such a sampling process is logistically complex, and it was not practicable for this particular study because it would imply knowing and to being able to get in touch with each of the randomly selected teachers personally. Therefore, aiming to keep guarantees of randomness on sampling, a mixed method was used in the sample selection:

1) Opportunity: an e-mail was sent to all public and major private schools in Portugal asking to promote this study among their teachers (all teachers had equal opportunity to be contacted through their school).

2) Unpredictability: the survey was disseminated by e-mail through a group of public and private teachers. They were then asked to spread the survey through their personal network of teachers successively (It is impossible to know which teachers the survey was given to and who responded).

The survey stopped being available for response ten days after its publication and once it had been verified that more than 383 teachers had answered it, a necessary condition for a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of 5%.

Chapter 4 – Descriptive analyses

In this fourth chapter, the data collected through the focus group and the survey is presented. The data collected through the focus group was analysed using a qualitative approach and the data collected by the survey was analysed using a quantitative approach.

4.1 – Focus Group

The focus group discussion was carried out in February 2019, with a group of 10 teachers from different subjects, 3 men and 7 women, with ages between 28 and 65 years old. In order to find out these teachers' beliefs towards assessment, evaluation and grade repetition, they were asked why is there such a high grade repetition rate in Portugal compared to other OECD countries. Throughout the discussion, the moderator explored the teachers' perceptions about the educational system, national exams, assessment criteria, grade repetition and school tracks.

The results here presented can be interpreted as conflicts or tensions that teachers identify in the compulsory school system and might be the cause of school failure. These tensions were classified into five different categories depending on where the tension is:

1. In Portuguese society and culture
2. In the educational system
3. In school administration
4. In teachers' practices
5. In students and parenting

The main perceptions and arguments for each of the five different categories are explored in the following subsections.

4.1.1 – Tensions in Portuguese society and Culture

According to teachers that participated in the focus group, school failure is a product of modern society and a product of what people want and demand from school. Other countries do not have school failure because people have a different way of living and a different form of society organization. Hence, the demands from society towards school are different. Other countries have identified grade repetition as a problem and have done something to solve it. In Portugal, grade repetition is not seen as a problem and so, society does not demand a change. There is resistance to change.

4.1.2 – Tensions in the educational system

Although students spend more time at school than ever before, some teachers feel they have little time to teach all the curriculum defined by central government. They say that it is not possible to put into practice the flexibility that the Portuguese educational law establishes to adjust school programmes to students' needs. There are national exams for which students have to know the curriculum and, if they do not, it will be the teacher that is to be held accountable. Consequently, teachers say that they have to teach all the school programmes defined by central government, which are long and not appropriate to promote school success.

"This is a very great contradiction, kids have never spent so much time in school as nowadays and yet, I feel I don't have time to work all the curriculum with my pupils."

They also feel that, despite all the national reforms that come with new governments, changes that reach schools are slight and the system is too attached to a curriculum based on theory with little practice. As a result, there is an excessive value attributed to written test and national exams, not only by the Ministry of Education, but also by schools, teachers, students, parents and society.

Besides that, teachers have stated that many national policies to promote school success demand greater human resources, new and different facilities in the classroom, different equipment and resources, which require greater investment from central government, which does not happen.

4.1.3 – Tensions in school administration

Many teachers stated that schools are not physically prepared to promote different practices towards success. Most classrooms still have the configuration of the nineteenth century and they lack new resources more appealing to children.

There is also a lack of human resources to develop different approaches when a student with difficulties is identified. Students spend too much time inside a classroom with classes based only on theory and teachers should have more time to work with different approaches.

It was also mentioned that schools want to perform well in national exams because society values that. This becomes evident in the assessment criteria defined at the beginning of each year, in which written tests, like the exams, have an excessive weighting compared to other dimensions in the assessment criteria. This creates a great pressure on teachers to teach all the curriculum and to prepare their students for a written test and/or exam.

4.1.4 – Tensions in teachers' practices

Some teachers say that many colleagues have an old vision about school that is not the school that the Ministry of Education wants today. They have stopped in time and do not innovate. They also say that many teachers do not know what the recommendations from the Ministry of Education towards the curriculum and assessment are. They simply keep doing everything as they always did when they started teaching. On the other hand, others believe that many teachers are improving over time as they become more experienced and aware of students' needs.

Teachers feel a pressure to teach all the curriculum and they forget that they are the administrators of their classroom and the curriculum. They confine their own activity even if there is not any external requirement to do so.

They also feel that, when they identify a student with difficulties, they do not have extra resources to intervene, which they cannot do alone. As a consequence, it is not all students are given the opportunities for the success they deserve. The opportunities that are possible are provided and thus, it is inevitable that some students will fail.

"There is always something else that we could do for our students. So, we never provide them with all the opportunities to achieve success. We give the opportunities that we can give."

Several teachers also said that grade repetition is a new opportunity for students to achieve success. Some of them even highlighted their own experience as a student, where they consider that the grade repetition they had was good for their own ego and knowledge about subjects. They believe that it is prejudicial for a student to go to a new grade when certain subjects and competences have not been learned. Thus, grade repetition is the best solution for a low achievement student.

Some also specified that, for those low achievement students that keep failing even after a repetition, there should be earlier professional routes. If they are unable to learn the regular curriculum, they should have a different approach in a different school, as used to occur in the old days.

4.1.5 – Tensions in students and parenting

Students and parents were also pointed out as a cause of school failure. Nowadays, the reality and interests of children are completely different, and school is not something of interest to them. Students do not concentrate, they do not have study habits and their parents are not at home to help them with it. Older low achievement students prefer to have a

precarious job rather than stay at school. Starting to work is more appealing to them than staying in school.

4.2 – Survey

The previous considerations and results from the focus group were taken into account to define the questions that were put in the survey.[2] The survey was online for 10 days in April 2019, a view to quantifying to what extent the considerations made in the focus group were representative of all teachers in Portugal. Among a total of 2012 answers, it was necessary to exclude from the database 7 people who reported not to be a teacher and 161 responses from teachers who did not finished the whole survey. The survey was fully answered by 1844 teachers from all over the country. In the following tables it is possible to observe how the Portuguese teaching population and the selected sample are characterized by cycle, gender, age, qualification and type of school.[3]

Table 4.1. Sample and Population characterization by cycle and gender

	Sample			Population		
	Men	Women	TOTAL	Men	Women	TOTAL
First Cycle of Basic Education (lower ISCED 1)	69 (3.7%)	324 (17.8%)	393 (21.3%)	3 453 (2.9%)	23 829 (19.9%)	27 282 (22.8%)
Second Cycle of Basic Education (upper ISCED 1)	89 (4.8%)	219 (11.9%)	308 (16.7%)	6 020 (5.0%)	15 972 (13.3%)	21 992 (18.4%)
Third Cycle / Secondary school of Basic Education (ISCED 2+3)	355 (19.2%)	788 (42.7%)	1143 (62.0%)	19 800 (16.6%)	50 691 (42.3%)	70 491 (58.9%)
TOTAL (Compulsory school)	513 (27.8%)	1331 (72.2%)	1844 (100%)	29 273 (24.4%)	90 492 (75.6%)	119 765 (100%)

Sources: DGEEC and primary data

Table 4.2. Sample and Population characterization by age

	< 30 years old	30-39 years old	40-49 years old	≥ 50 years old	TOTAL
Sample	8 (0.4%)	158 (8.6%)	658 (35.7%)	1020 (55.3%)	1844 (100%)
Population	1 086 (0.9%)	21 353 (17.8%)	44 860 (37.5%)	52 466 (43.8%)	119 765 (100%)

Sources: DGEEC and primary data

[2] The survey is provided in appendix A.
[3] Details and SPSS outputs are provided in appendix B.

Table 4.3. Sample and Population characterization by qualification

	ISCED 5	ISCED 6	ISCED 7 or ISCED 8	TOTAL
Sample	45 (2.4%)	1410 (76.5%)	389 (21.1%)	1844 (100%)
Population	6 912 (5.8%)	98 656 (82.4%)	14 197 (11.9%)	119 765 (100%)

Sources: DGEEC and primary data

Table 4.4. Sample and Population characterization by type of school

	Public	Private	TOTAL
Sample	1778 (96.4%)	66 (3.6%)	1844 (100%)
Population	107 306 (89.6%)	12 459 (10.4%)	119 765 (100%)

Sources: DGEEC and primary data

The size of each group, considering teaching cycle, gender, age, qualification and type of school, is very similar in percentage in the population and in the sample. Nevertheless, for the statistical tests, weightings were defined for these dimensions so that the sample could be adjusted to the population under study.

With 1844 participants, the sample goes far beyond the minimum number of 383 teachers to have a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of 5%. In actual fact, the statistics presented in the following chapter, with a sample of 1844 individuals, result in a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of 2.3%.

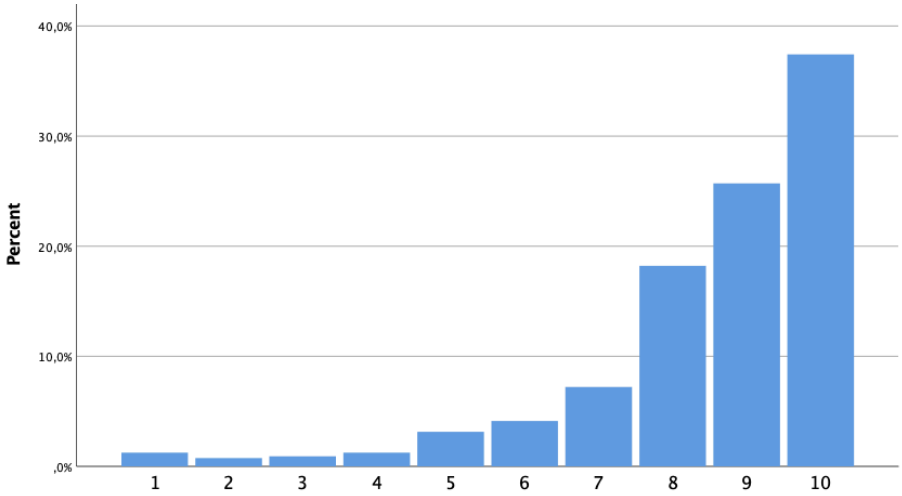
All the opinion questions in the survey have used a Likert scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means “I completely disagree” and 10 is “I completely agree”. The statistics reported for these opinion questions were the mean (M) and the standard deviation (SD).

All the collected data was treated in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the main outputs can be consulted in the appendix area.

Chapter 5 – Data analysis

In the survey carried out for this investigation, Portuguese teachers considered that school is not valued in Portugal (M=4.58, SD=2.63) and that there is not a real concern with what students learn at school (M=4.95, SD=2.145). Teachers with lower qualifications (ISCED 5) have this perception with a stronger and more significant strength (F (2, 1841) = 12.667; p ≤ 0.001) than more qualified teachers with ISCED 6 (dif_M = 1.140, p < 0.001), and ISCED 7+8 (dif_M = 1.014, p = 0.001). However, all teachers considered that there is a great pressure to approve students by the end of a school year regardless what they know (M=8.53, SD=1.820)[4].

Figure 5.1. Teachers who reported that in Portuguese society there are pressures to approve students (From 1-10 where 1 means "I completely disagree" and 10 is "I completely agree" in %).



Source: Primary data

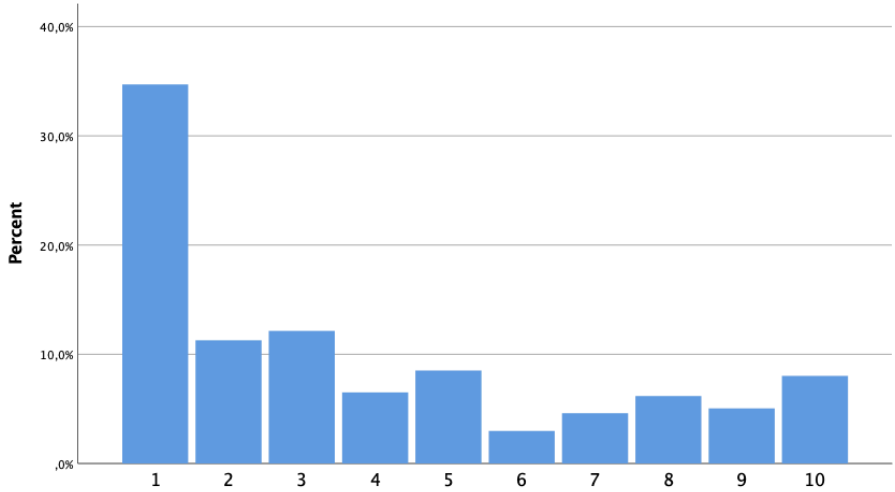
There is also a general perception that school, when those teachers were a student, was better and more demanding (M=6.90, SD=2.600), with better quality of teaching (M=6.00, SD=2.668), where assessment processes were more suitable and fairer (M=5.53, SD=2.671) and the approval of a student was also fairer (M=6.76, SD=2.775). However, they think the quality of teachers in former times was worse than the nowadays teachers (M=4.54, SD=2.470)[5].

Teachers say that the assessment processes defined by the Ministry of Education are not suitable for what is done in schools (M=4.24, SD=2,291). There is a belief among the Portuguese teaching population that grade repetition is beneficial for students (M=5.57, SD=2.513). They also believe that the grade repetition of a student should not occur at the end

[4] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix C.
[5] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix D.

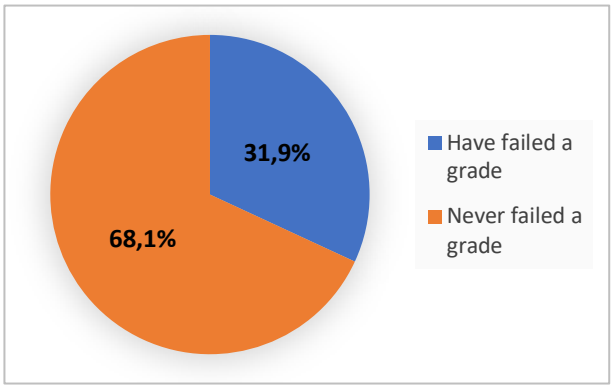
of a cycle of studies, as recommended by the Ministry of Education (M=3.88, SD=3,073) because grade repetition is beneficial to students (M=5.57, SD=2.513) and it is proposed considering the best interests of a student (M=6.66, SD=2.863).

Figure 5.2. Teachers who reported that repetition of a student should occur only at the end of a cycle of studies (From 1-10 where 1 means "I completely disagree" and 10 is "I completely agree" in %).



Source: Primary data

Figure 5.3. Teachers who have failed at least one year at school when they were a student (%).

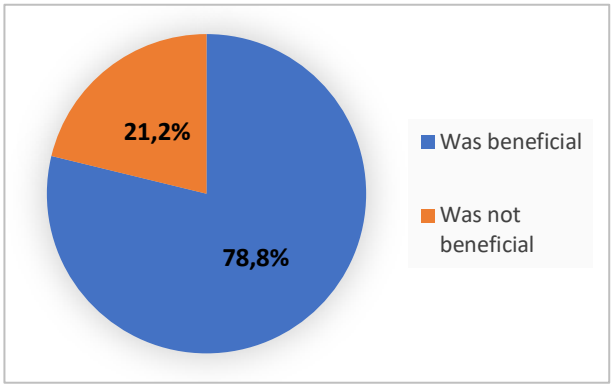


Source: Primary data

When recalling their own experience as a student, 31.9% of teachers said that they failed at least one grade as a student. Of those teachers who had repeated at least one grade as a student, 78.8% consider that the grade repetition they had was beneficial to their school career and personal experience, as against 21.2% who do not.[6]

[6] Details and SPSS outputs on appendix E.

Figure 5.4. Teachers who said that the grade repetition was beneficial on their school track (%).



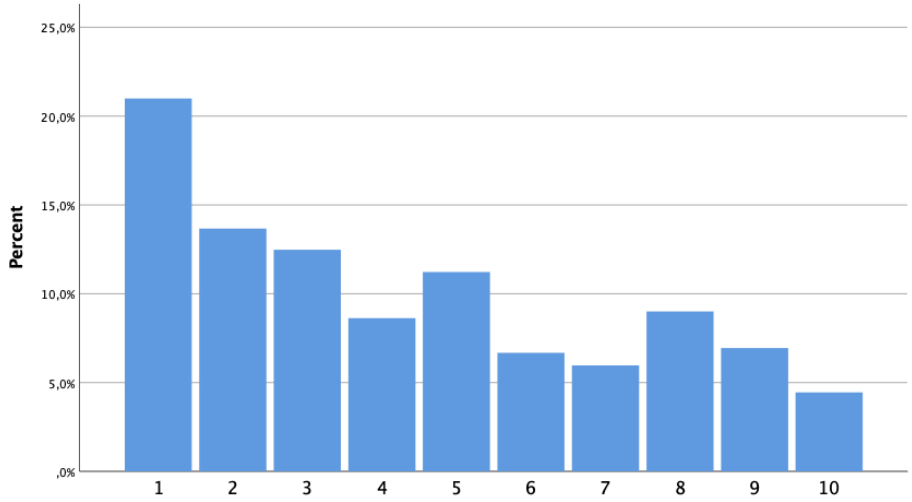
Source: Primary data

When it comes to who is responsible for a student's success, teachers believe that students are principally responsible for their own success (50.3%) followed by the ministry of Education and their educational policy (21.0%). Teachers come next with 11.8% and least important are the parents (8.9%) and school and their internal organization (7.9%).

On a similar question, when it comes to who is responsible for a student grade repetition, teachers still believe that students are principally responsible for their grade repetition (50.4%) followed by the Ministry of Education and their educational policy (31.7%). Next comes school and their internal organization (7.9%) and the least responsible are the teachers (6.5%) and the parents (3.6%).[7]

Teachers in Portugal believe that the syllabus of their subject areas is quite interesting and appropriate for their students (M=5.71, SD=2.441) and that their students like the syllabus (M=6.08, SD=2.210). But they also think that the weekly time allocation is not adequate for the syllabus (M=4.37, SD=2.849) and that the syllabus should be smaller (M=6.63, SD=3.146).

Figure 5.5. Teachers who believe that the weekly time allocation of their subjects is adequate for the syllabus (From 1-10 where 1 means "I completely disagree" and 10 is "I completely agree" in %).



Source: Primary data

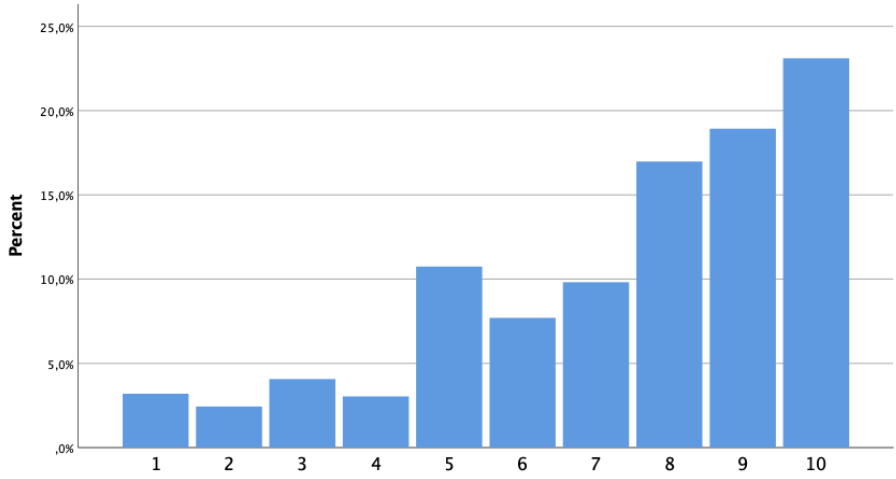
For the misalignment of programmes' size and time allocations, first cycle teachers do not agree on the need for a higher weekly time allocation for their subjects (M=3.53,

[7] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix F.

SD=2.641), while second cycle teachers feel they should have a higher weekly time allocation (M=7.24, SD=2.906) as well as the third cycle and secondary teachers (M=6.74, SD=3.201). However, the possibility of equal variances within each group was rejected, and thus the ANOVA test could not be applied. For this reason, a Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric test was run, rejecting the hypothesis of equal distributions (H (2) = 301.793; $p \leq 0.001$), showing that this misalignment is statistically significant.[8]

When it comes to assessment, teachers believe that the evaluation criteria are appropriate to the syllabus of their subject area and to their students (M=6.79, SD=2.466). They reject the idea that it is not possible to make curricular adjustments because there is a programme to complete (M=4.54, SD=2.994) and that diagnostic testing is not useful because students do not care about it (M=4.68, SD=3.268). In fact, they use diagnostic testing to establish the starting point for their students (M=7.88, SD=2.534) and to define consequent curricular adjustments to the abilities and limitations of their students (M=7.38, SD=2.461).

Figure 5.6. Teachers who make curricular adjustment to the abilities and limitations of their students shown in the diagnostic assessment (From 1-10 where 1 means "I completely disagree" and 10 is "I completely agree" in %).



Source: Primary data

Although the possibility of equal variances within each group of age was rejected and the ANOVA test could not be applied, it is possible to say that the younger teachers and the teachers from the first cycle of studies attach greater value to the diagnostic testing than the older teachers and the teachers from the second, third cycle and secondary school teachers. In both situations, applying a Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric test, it is possible to reject the hypothesis of equal distributions (H (2) = 26.333; $p \leq 0.001$) and (H (2) = 67.972; $p \leq 0.001$), respectively, showing that these differences are statistically significant.[9]

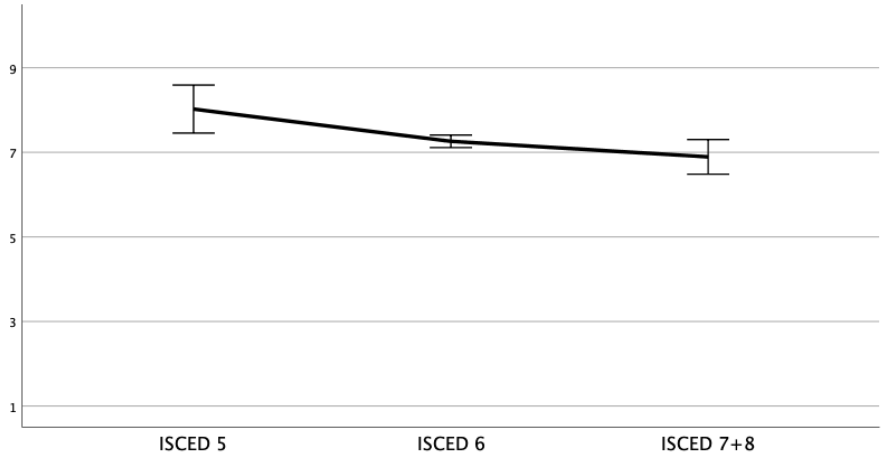
[8] Details and SPSS outputs on appendix G.
[9] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix H.

Teachers put in practice differentiated strategies when they identify a student with difficulties (M=8.33, SD=1.779) and they reject that they no longer have alternatives if these strategies fail (M=3.45, SD=2.662). However, they believe that students with difficulties need differentiated measures that are not possible to provide in the classroom (M=6.19, SD=2.893) and that these students should be attending a different school track appropriated to their abilities and limitations (M=6.14, SD=2.984).[10]

When asked if assessment should attach greater weight to the objectives of the subject area, irrespective of the student's evolution, teachers tend to reject it (M=4.79, SD=2.541). Teachers believe that the assessment of a student should be based primarily on their evolution throughout the year, regardless of whether they have achieved the objectives of the subject (M=6.78, SD=2.425). This belief is more significant and stronger among the less qualified teachers with ISCED 5, (M=7.78, SD=2.423, F (2, 1841) = 8.907; $p \leq 0.001$) than among the more fully qualified teachers with ISCED 6 (dif_M = -1.000, $p < 0.001$), and ISCED 7+8 (dif_M = -1.094, $p = 0.001$).

Teachers also believe that, for some students, grade repetition is inevitable (M=7.20, SD=2.983). Nevertheless, it is important to remark that this belief is statistically significant and stronger among the least qualified teachers with ISCED 5 (M=8.02, SD=2.954, F (2, 1841) = 5.191; $p = 0.006$). As qualification increases, this mean drops: Teachers with ISCED 6 (M=7.26, SD=2.953) and the teachers with ISCED 7+8 (M=6.89, SD=3.072).[11]

Figure 5.7. Means for groups of teachers according their ISCED qualification, who believe that for some students grade repetition is inevitable (From 1-10 where 1 means "I completely disagree" and 10 is "I completely agree", with error bars of 95% confidence interval).

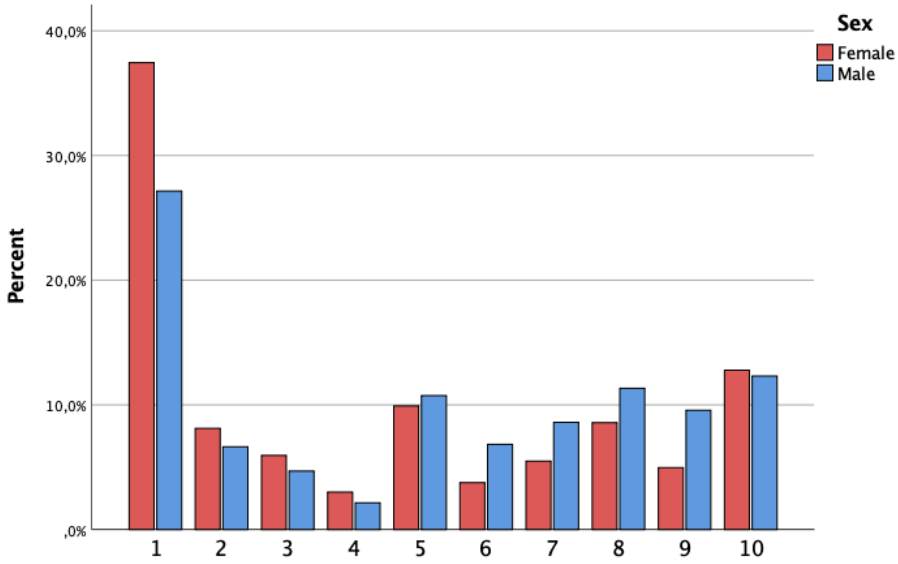


Source: Primary data

[10] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix I.
[11] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix J.

When it comes to external assessment moments, the majority of teachers reject the importance of National Assessment Tests with no impact on students' grades (M=4.58, SD=3.408). However, male teachers consider that the existence of these tests is important (M=5.18, SD=3.344) with a statistically significant gender difference (F=1.282, p < 0.001), while female teachers reject that their existence is important (M=4.35, SD=3.405).

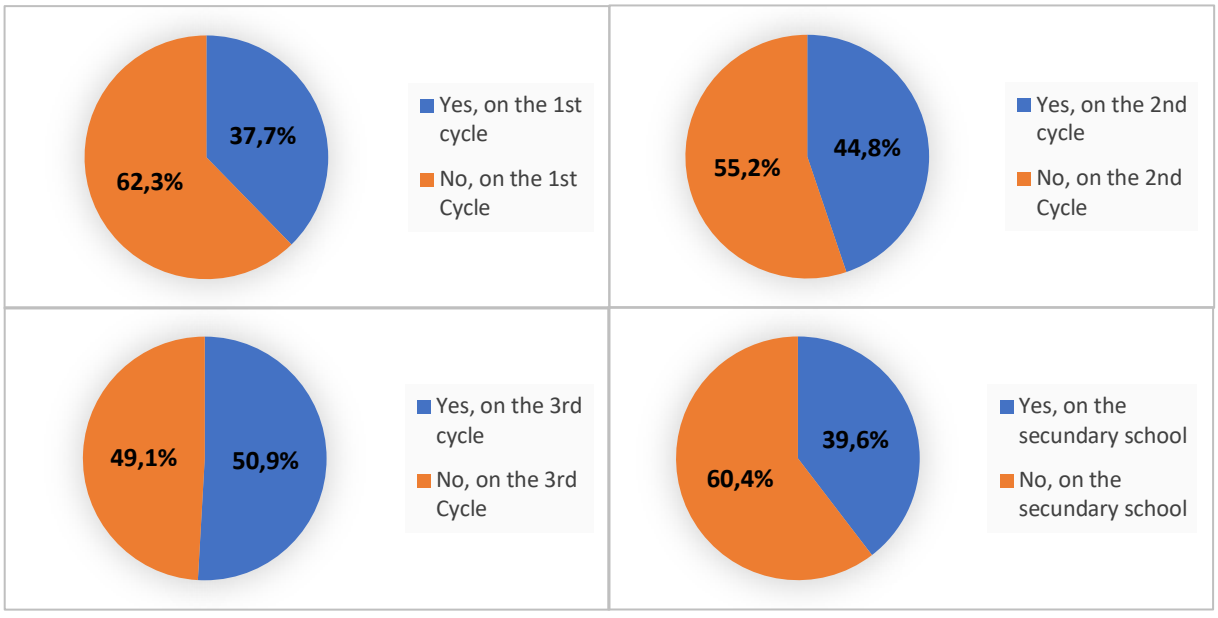
Figure 5.8. Teachers who consider it is important the existence of National Assessment Tests by gender (From 1-10 where 1 means "I completely disagree" and 10 is "I completely agree" in %).



Source: Primary data

With the exception of the third cycle, teachers generally rejected the need for the existence of National Assessment Tests.

Figure 5.9. Teachers who agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests (%).

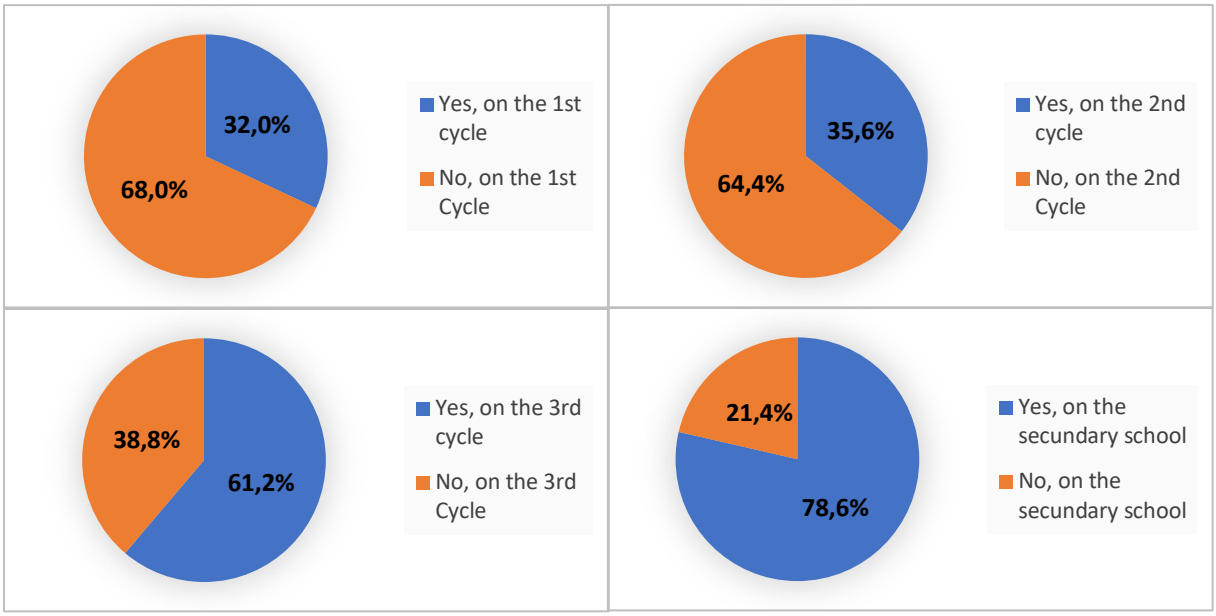


Source: Primary data

Although the possibility of equal variances within each teaching cycle group was rejected and the ANOVA test could not be applied, by applying a Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric test, it is possible to reject the hypothesis of equal distributions and assume this difference is statistically significative (H (2) = 50.841; $p \leq 0.001$). Hence, it is possible to say that first cycle teachers do not attach so much importance to National Assessment Tests compared to other cycles of studies ($dif_{M \text{ from 2nd Cycle}} = -0.997$, $p < 0.001$; $dif_{M \text{ from 3rd cycle and secondary school}} = -1.437$, $p < 0.001$).

With a similar approach but following a different perspective, teachers approve the existence of National Assessment Exams with impact on final students' grade (M=6.53, SD=3.235). However, they consider these National Assessment Exams should exist mainly in upper levels of school.

Figure 5.10. Teachers who agree with the existence of National Assessment Exams (%).



Source: Primary data

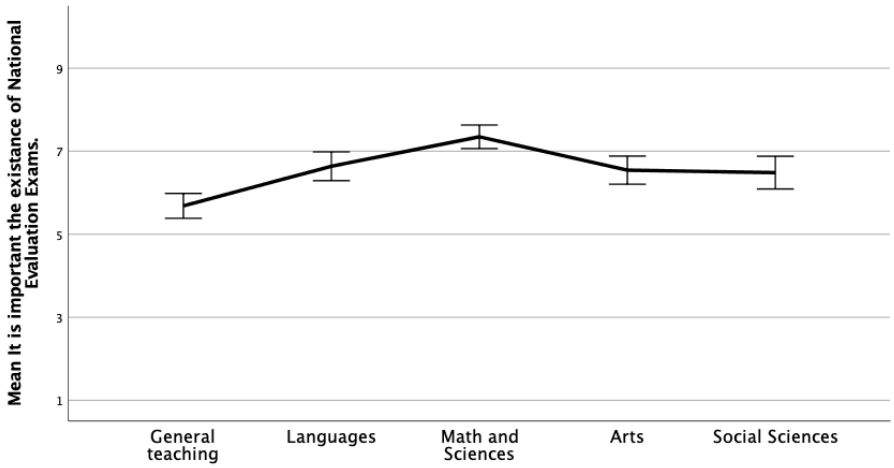
Second cycle and third cycle and secondary teachers consider the existence of National Assessment Exams more important than first cycle teachers with statistical significant differences (F (2, 1836) = 15.458; $p \leq 0.001$; $dif_{M \text{ from 2nd Cycle}} = -1.015$, $p < 0.001$; $dif_{M \text{ from 3rd cycle and secondary school}} = -0.985$, $p < 0.001$).

Teacher not only agree more with the existence of National Assessment Exams, but they also consider that these are more important than National Assessment Tests (M=6.35, SD=3.235). Once again, it is also the second cycle and third cycle and secondary teachers that consider that National Assessment Exams are more important than National Assessment

Tests (F (2, 1833) = 16.489; $p \leq 0.001$; $dif_{M\ from\ 2nd\ Cycle}$ = -0.860, p = 0.002; $dif_{M\ from\ 3rd\ cycle\ and\ secondary\ school}$ = -1.108, $p < 0.001$).[12]

Finally, it is also possible to say that Mathematics and Science teachers value the existence of National Assessment Exams more highly, when compared to other subject teachers, although the possibility of equal variances within each group of teaching subjects was rejected and the ANOVA test could not be applied. Applying a Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric test, it is possible to reject the hypothesis of equal distributions and assume this difference is statistically significant (H (4) = 67.068; $p \leq 0.001$; $dif_{M\ from\ general\ teaching}$ = 1.664, $p <$ 0.001; $dif_{M\ from\ Languages}$ = 0.710, p = 0.053; $dif_{M\ from\ Arts}$ = 0.804, p = 0.015; $dif_{M\ from\ Social\ Sciences}$ = 0.864, p = 0.015).

Figure 5.11. Means for groups of teachers according their subject of teaching, who consider that it is important the existence of National Assessment Exams (From 1-10 where 1 means “I completely disagree” and 10 is “I completely agree”, with error bars of 95% confidence interval).



Source: Primary data

[12] Details and SPSS outputs in appendix K.

Chapter 6 – Conclusions and further research

In the present research, it became clear that Portuguese teachers have personal beliefs with regard to assessment and grade repetition that interfere with the assessment they make of their students. These conceptions have an impact on their practice and may supersede national educational public policies, educational laws and scientific recommendation (Crahay, 1996; Houtte, 2011). In fact, teachers are so sure about their personal beliefs that they blame the Ministry of Education for not knowing what is going on in schools and promoting idyllic policies.

This investigation has enabled us to observe that Portuguese teachers are attached to their past experience as a student and as a teacher, which has an impact on what they believe in today (Caria, 2000, Pajares, 1992). As a consequence, there is a persistent culture of using grade repetition as a form of intervention for low achievement students. It is important to notice that more qualified teachers are more aware that grade repetition may be harmful to their students. Despite the improvement in the quality of teachers nowadays, there is a general perception that school used to be better and more demanding than today. They believe that school is worsening its quality and that assessment used to be fairer when grade repetition rates were even higher.

Teachers feel that there is a pressure to teach everything in the curriculum in order to prepare the students for an External National Test or Exam and schools and teachers want to look good in these (Fernandes, 2014). The existence of this Exam or Test creates this pressure to teach the whole curriculum and prepare the students for it, but, the truth is that teachers also appreciate the existence of National Assessment Exams. In fact, there is a kind of paradox between what teachers believe that assessment should be and the existence of National Assessment Exams (with implication for students' grades) or Assessment Tests (with no implication for students' grades). On the one hand, these teachers say that the assessment of a student should attach greater importance to their evolution throughout the school year, rejecting the importance of National Assessment Tests. Indeed, with the exception of the third cycle, they think they should not even exist. Yet, on the other hand, they reject the idea that student assessment should favour the achievement of the objectives of a subject regardless of the evolution of a student, but, at the same time, they overvalue the existence of National Exams with implications for students' grades.

Although Portuguese teachers practise different approaches to work with low achievement students, in order to lower grade repetition rates, Portuguese teachers defend that school programmes should be smaller and that they should have a higher weekly time allocation to work with their older students. They also believe that low achievement students

should be attending different school tracks and should have different teaching approaches that are not possible to provide in a classroom.

It also becomes evident that Portuguese teachers tend to externalize their own responsibility for the success or poor academic achievement of their students. A majority of teachers say that students are principally responsible for it and teachers are one of the least responsible. The success or failure of a student is explained by greater or lesser capacities, for their intelligence, for their natural gifts and work in the classroom; and not due to teaching methods and assessment criteria.

As a recommendation for Portuguese public policy makers and school directors, it would be important to reconsider school programmes' size as well as school weekly time allocations for each subject. Portuguese teachers feel that they are not currently appropriate to work in the classroom and they are a cause of school failure and grade repetition. Moreover, it would be important to study and reconsider the existence of National Assessment Tests and National Assessment Exams. Although exams are appreciated in the teaching professional class and society, they have a great impact on how and what teachers teach and on the way they assess their students. Also, to lower grade repetition rates, it would be important to invest in training related to assessment and increase teachers' qualifications. Data has shown that more qualified teachers are more aware of the malfunctions of grade repetition.

For further research, it would be important to do a cross-national analysis on these conceptions about assessment and grade repetition to analyse if there is a relation between each country's grade repetition rates and their teachers' beliefs.

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INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística through www.ine.pt

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PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment through www.ocde.org/pisa/publications

Appendix

Appendix A – Survey

Sample characterization:

1. How old are you?
2. Which cycle of studies do you teach?
3. What is your qualification?
4. How many years of teaching do you have?
5. Do you teach in public or private sector?
6. In which district do you teach?

Questions:

1. Considering the Portuguese society, say how much do you agree with the following sentences, from 1-10, where 1 you completely disagree and 10 completely agree.
    a. In the context of Portuguese society, the school is valued.
    b. In Portuguese society there is a concern with what students learn in school.
    c. In Portuguese society there are pressures to approve students.

2. Considering your personal track as a student, say how much do you agree with the following sentences, from 1-10, where 1 you completely disagree and 10 completely agree.
    a. School was better and more demanding.
    b. The quality of teaching was better.
    c. The quality of teachers was better.
    d. The evaluation processes were more adequate and fairer.
    e. The transition of a student was fairer.

3. As a student, did you ever repeat grade?
    a. If yes, do you consider that such grade repetition was beneficial?

4. Say how much do you agree with the following sentences, from 1-10, where 1 you completely disagree and 10 completely agree.
    a. The assessment processes defined by the Ministry of Education are adequate to what is done in schools.
    b. Grade repetition should occur only at the end of a teaching cycle.
    c. Grade repetition is done considering what is best for a student.
    d. I use grade repetition as an educational measure.
    e. Retention is beneficial to students
    f.

5. The success of a student depends mostly on:
(Order by relevance)

a) Ministry of Education and educational policies
b) Schools and its internal organization
c) Teachers
d) Students
e) Parents

6. Grade repetition depends mostly on:
(Order by relevance)

f) Ministry of Education and educational policies
g) Schools and its internal organization
h) Teachers
i) Students
j) Parents

7. When it comes to your teaching activity, say how much do you agree with the following sentences, from 1-10, where 1 you completely disagree and 10 completely agree.
    a. The syllabus of my subject area is appropriate and interesting for my students.
    b. My students like the syllabus of my subject area.
    c. The weekly time allocation of my subject area is adequate for the syllabus.
    d. My subject area should have a higher weekly time allocation.
    e. The syllabus of my subject area should be smaller.
    f. The assessment criteria of my subject area are appropriated to the syllabus and to my students.
    g. I use diagnostic assessment to establish the starting point for my students.
    h. Diagnostic assessment is not useful because students do not care about it.
    i. I make curricular adjustments to the abilities and limitations of my students shown in the diagnostic assessment.
    j. It is not possible to make curricular adjustments because there is a program to fulfill regardless the abilities of limitations of my students.
    k. When I identify a student with difficulties, I develop differentiated strategies for this student.
    l. If the strategies defined have no effect, I no longer have alternatives for that student.
    m. Students with difficulties need differentiated measures that are not possible to provide in the classroom.
    n. A student with difficulties should be attending a different school track appropriated to his/her abilities and limitations.

o. The assessment of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if he/she has achieved the objectives.
p. The assessment of a student should privilege if he/she has reached the objectives of the subject area regardless its evolution.
q. For some students grade repetition is inevitable.

8. Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests with no implication on the student evaluation?
    a. Yes, on the 1st cycle
    b. Yes, on the 2nd cycle
    c. Yes, on the 3rd cycle
    d. Yes, on the secondary school

9. Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Exams with implication on the student evaluation?
    a. Yes, on the 1st cycle
    b. Yes, on the 2nd cycle
    c. Yes, on the 3rd cycle
    d. Yes, on the secondary school

10. Say how much do you agree with the following sentences, from 1-10, where 1 you completely disagree and 10 completely agree.
    a. It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.
    b. It is important the existence of National Assessment Exams.
    c. National Assessment Exams are more important than National Assessment Tests.

Appendix B – SPSS outputs

AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<40	165	8,9	8,9	8,9
	40-49	657	35,6	35,6	44,6
	>50	1022	55,4	55,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	1331	72,2	72,2	72,2
	Male	513	27,8	27,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Teaching Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1st Cycle	393	21,3	21,3	21,3
	2nd Cycle	308	16,7	16,7	38,0
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	1143	62,0	62,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Subject of teaching

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	General teaching	452	24,5	24,5	24,5
	Languages	334	18,1	18,1	42,6
	Math and Sciences	435	23,6	23,6	66,2
	Arts	350	19,0	19,0	85,2
	Social Sciences	273	14,8	14,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

ISCED qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ISCED 5	45	2,4	2,4	2,4
	ISCED 6	1410	76,5	76,5	78,9
	ISCED 7+8	389	21,1	21,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Public or private teaching

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Public	1778	96,4	96,4	96,4
	Private	66	3,6	3,6	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Where do you teach?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Aveiro	63	3,4	3,4	3,4
	Beja	32	1,7	1,7	5,2
	Braga	247	13,4	13,4	18,5
	Bragança	21	1,1	1,1	19,7
	Castelo Branco	31	1,7	1,7	21,4
	Coimbra	92	5,0	5,0	26,4
	Évora	47	2,5	2,5	28,9
	Faro	153	8,3	8,3	37,2
	Guarda	38	2,1	2,1	39,3
	Leiria	93	5,0	5,0	44,3
	Lisboa	378	20,5	20,5	64,8
	Portalegre	13	,7	,7	65,5
	Porto	210	11,4	11,4	76,9
	Santarém	39	2,1	2,1	79,0
	Setúbal	130	7,0	7,0	86,1
	Viana do Castelo	56	3,0	3,0	89,1
	Vila Real	22	1,2	1,2	90,3
	Viseu	178	9,7	9,7	99,9
	Região Autónoma dos Açores	1	,1	,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Frequency Table

In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	192	10,4	10,4	10,4
	2	196	10,6	10,6	21,0
	3	262	14,2	14,2	35,2
	4	218	11,8	11,8	47,1
	5	359	19,5	19,5	66,5
	6	229	12,4	12,4	79,0
	7	170	9,2	9,2	88,2
	8	149	8,1	8,1	96,3
	9	35	1,9	1,9	98,2
	10	34	1,8	1,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

In Portuguese society there is a concern with what students learn in school.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	98	5,3	5,3	5,3
	2	166	9,0	9,0	14,3
	3	255	13,8	13,8	28,1
	4	219	11,9	11,9	40,0
	5	402	21,8	21,8	61,8
	6	248	13,4	13,4	75,3
	7	210	11,4	11,4	86,7
	8	161	8,7	8,7	95,4
	9	53	2,9	2,9	98,3
	10	32	1,7	1,7	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

In Portuguese society there are pressures to aprove students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	23	1,2	1,2	1,2
	2	14	,8	,8	2,0
	3	17	,9	,9	2,9
	4	23	1,2	1,2	4,2
	5	58	3,1	3,1	7,3
	6	76	4,1	4,1	11,4
	7	133	7,2	7,2	18,7
	8	336	18,2	18,2	36,9
	9	474	25,7	25,7	62,6
	10	690	37,4	37,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

School was better and more demanding.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	77	4,2	4,2	4,2
	2	53	2,9	2,9	7,1
	3	97	5,3	5,3	12,4
	4	100	5,4	5,4	17,8
	5	289	15,7	15,7	33,6
	6	100	5,4	5,4	39,0
	7	186	10,1	10,1	49,1
	8	315	17,1	17,2	66,3
	9	254	13,8	13,8	80,1
	10	365	19,8	19,9	100,0
	Total	1836	99,6	100,0	
Missing	System	8	,4		
Total		1844	100,0		

The quality of teaching was better.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	110	6,0	6,0	6,0
	2	100	5,4	5,5	11,5
	3	164	8,9	9,0	20,5
	4	158	8,6	8,6	29,1
	5	322	17,5	17,6	46,7
	6	145	7,9	7,9	54,7
	7	186	10,1	10,2	64,9
	8	255	13,8	14,0	78,8
	9	169	9,2	9,3	88,1
	10	218	11,8	11,9	100,0
	Total	1827	99,1	100,0	
Missing	System	17	,9		
Total		1844	100,0		

The quality of the teachers was better.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	251	13,6	13,7	13,7
	2	188	10,2	10,3	24,0
	3	233	12,6	12,7	36,7
	4	218	11,8	11,9	48,6
	5	402	21,8	21,9	70,5
	6	140	7,6	7,6	78,2
	7	137	7,4	7,5	85,6
	8	123	6,7	6,7	92,4
	9	67	3,6	3,7	96,0
	10	73	4,0	4,0	100,0
	Total	1832	99,3	100,0	
Missing	System	12	,7		
Total		1844	100,0		

The evaluation processes were more adequate and fairer.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	154	8,4	8,4	8,4
	2	123	6,7	6,7	15,1
	3	180	9,8	9,8	24,9
	4	174	9,4	9,5	34,4
	5	386	20,9	21,0	55,4
	6	152	8,2	8,3	63,7
	7	141	7,6	7,7	71,4
	8	220	11,9	12,0	83,3
	9	134	7,3	7,3	90,6
	10	172	9,3	9,4	100,0
	Total	1836	99,6	100,0	
Missing	System	8	,4		
Total		1844	100,0		

The transition or retention of a student was fairer.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	101	5,5	5,5	5,5
	2	71	3,9	3,9	9,4
	3	134	7,3	7,3	16,6
	4	91	4,9	5,0	21,6
	5	255	13,8	13,9	35,5
	6	105	5,7	5,7	41,2
	7	159	8,6	8,7	49,8
	8	274	14,9	14,9	64,7
	9	271	14,7	14,7	79,5
	10	377	20,4	20,5	100,0
	Total	1838	99,7	100,0	
Missing	System	6	,3		
Total		1844	100,0		

As a student, did you ever got retained?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	589	31,9	31,9	31,9
	Não	1255	68,1	68,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Such retention was beneficial?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	464	25,2	78,8	78,8
	Não	125	6,8	21,2	100,0
	Total	589	31,9	100,0	
Missing	System	1255	68,1		
Total		1844	100,0		

The evaluation processes defined by the Ministry of Education are adequated to what is done in schools.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	270	14,6	14,6	14,6
	2	210	11,4	11,4	26,0
	3	291	15,8	15,8	41,8
	4	226	12,3	12,3	54,1
	5	336	18,2	18,2	72,3
	6	179	9,7	9,7	82,0
	7	156	8,5	8,5	90,5
	8	105	5,7	5,7	96,1
	9	43	2,3	2,3	98,5
	10	28	1,5	1,5	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student should occur only at the end of a teaching cycle.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	640	34,7	34,7	34,7
	2	208	11,3	11,3	46,0
	3	224	12,1	12,1	58,1
	4	120	6,5	6,5	64,6
	5	157	8,5	8,5	73,2
	6	55	3,0	3,0	76,1
	7	85	4,6	4,6	80,7
	8	114	6,2	6,2	86,9
	9	93	5,0	5,0	92,0
	10	148	8,0	8,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student is done considering what is best for him.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	127	6,9	6,9	6,9
	2	85	4,6	4,6	11,5
	3	118	6,4	6,4	17,9
	4	90	4,9	4,9	22,8
	5	264	14,3	14,3	37,1
	6	104	5,6	5,6	42,7
	7	149	8,1	8,1	50,8
	8	264	14,3	14,3	65,1
	9	257	13,9	13,9	79,1
	10	386	20,9	20,9	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

I use retention as an educational measure.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	428	23,2	23,2	23,2
	2	173	9,4	9,4	32,6
	3	118	6,4	6,4	39,0
	4	79	4,3	4,3	43,3
	5	281	15,2	15,2	58,5
	6	103	5,6	5,6	64,1
	7	140	7,6	7,6	71,7
	8	170	9,2	9,2	80,9
	9	126	6,8	6,8	87,7
	10	226	12,3	12,3	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Retention is beneficial to students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	149	8,1	8,1	8,1
	2	101	5,5	5,5	13,6
	3	121	6,6	6,6	20,1
	4	129	7,0	7,0	27,1
	5	548	29,7	29,7	56,8
	6	163	8,8	8,8	65,7
	7	172	9,3	9,3	75,0
	8	193	10,5	10,5	85,5
	9	107	5,8	5,8	91,3
	10	161	8,7	8,7	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the Ministry of Education and educational policies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	388	21,0	21,0	21,0
	2	121	6,6	6,6	27,6
	3	153	8,3	8,3	35,9
	4	235	12,7	12,7	48,6
	5	947	51,4	51,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the schools and its internal organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	145	7,9	7,9	7,9
	2	307	16,6	16,6	24,5
	3	354	19,2	19,2	43,7
	4	783	42,5	42,5	86,2
	5	255	13,8	13,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	218	11,8	11,8	11,8
	2	633	34,3	34,3	46,1
	3	622	33,7	33,7	79,9
	4	235	12,7	12,7	92,6
	5	136	7,4	7,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	928	50,3	50,3	50,3
	2	397	21,5	21,5	71,9
	3	220	11,9	11,9	83,8
	4	218	11,8	11,8	95,6
	5	81	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the parents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	165	8,9	8,9	8,9
	2	386	20,9	20,9	29,9
	3	495	26,8	26,8	56,7
	4	373	20,2	20,2	77,0
	5	425	23,0	23,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the Ministry of Education and educational policies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	585	31,7	31,7	31,7
	2	250	13,6	13,6	45,3
	3	290	15,7	15,7	61,0
	4	275	14,9	14,9	75,9
	5	444	24,1	24,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the schools and its internal organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	145	7,9	7,9	7,9
	2	544	29,5	29,5	37,4
	3	434	23,5	23,5	60,9
	4	525	28,5	28,5	89,4
	5	196	10,6	10,6	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	119	6,5	6,5	6,5
	2	359	19,5	19,5	25,9
	3	585	31,7	31,7	57,6
	4	434	23,5	23,5	81,2
	5	347	18,8	18,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	929	50,4	50,4	50,4
	2	250	13,6	13,6	63,9
	3	222	12,0	12,0	76,0
	4	295	16,0	16,0	92,0
	5	148	8,0	8,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the parents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	66	3,6	3,6	3,6
	2	441	23,9	23,9	27,5
	3	313	17,0	17,0	44,5
	4	315	17,1	17,1	61,6
	5	709	38,4	38,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The curriculum of my discipline is appropriate and interesting for my students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	105	5,7	5,7	5,7
	2	115	6,2	6,2	11,9
	3	181	9,8	9,8	21,7
	4	159	8,6	8,6	30,4
	5	308	16,7	16,7	47,1
	6	198	10,7	10,7	57,8
	7	252	13,7	13,7	71,5
	8	293	15,9	15,9	87,4
	9	151	8,2	8,2	95,6
	10	82	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

My students like the curricular program of my discipline.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	59	3,2	3,2	3,2
	2	69	3,7	3,7	6,9
	3	133	7,2	7,2	14,2
	4	149	8,1	8,1	22,2
	5	325	17,6	17,6	39,9
	6	251	13,6	13,6	53,5
	7	295	16,0	16,0	69,5
	8	324	17,6	17,6	87,0
	9	157	8,5	8,5	95,6
	10	82	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The weekly time load of my discipline is adequate for the curricular program.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	387	21,0	21,0	21,0
	2	252	13,7	13,7	34,7
	3	230	12,5	12,5	47,1
	4	159	8,6	8,6	55,7
	5	207	11,2	11,2	67,0
	6	123	6,7	6,7	73,6
	7	110	6,0	6,0	79,6
	8	166	9,0	9,0	88,6
	9	128	6,9	6,9	95,6
	10	82	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	264	14,3	14,3	14,3
	2	144	7,8	7,8	22,1
	3	116	6,3	6,3	28,4
	4	80	4,3	4,3	32,8
	5	218	11,8	11,8	44,6
	6	94	5,1	5,1	49,7
	7	113	6,1	6,1	55,8
	8	168	9,1	9,1	64,9
	9	159	8,6	8,6	73,5
	10	488	26,5	26,5	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The curriculum of my discipline should be smaller.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	210	11,4	11,4	11,4
	2	90	4,9	4,9	16,3
	3	84	4,6	4,6	20,8
	4	69	3,7	3,7	24,6
	5	247	13,4	13,4	38,0
	6	95	5,2	5,2	43,1
	7	130	7,0	7,0	50,2
	8	199	10,8	10,8	61,0
	9	207	11,2	11,2	72,2
	10	513	27,8	27,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The evaluation criteria of my discipline is appropriated to the program and to my students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	68	3,7	3,7	3,7
	2	65	3,5	3,5	7,2
	3	76	4,1	4,1	11,3
	4	89	4,8	4,8	16,2
	5	306	16,6	16,6	32,8
	6	160	8,7	8,7	41,4
	7	201	10,9	10,9	52,3
	8	328	17,8	17,8	70,1
	9	294	15,9	15,9	86,1
	10	257	13,9	13,9	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

I use diagnostic evaluation to establish the starting point for my students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	51	2,8	2,8	2,8
	2	56	3,0	3,0	5,8
	3	58	3,1	3,1	8,9
	4	52	2,8	2,8	11,8
	5	163	8,8	8,8	20,6
	6	81	4,4	4,4	25,0
	7	122	6,6	6,6	31,6
	8	227	12,3	12,3	43,9
	9	329	17,8	17,8	61,8
	10	705	38,2	38,2	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	467	25,3	25,3	25,3
	2	241	13,1	13,1	38,4
	3	146	7,9	7,9	46,3
	4	83	4,5	4,5	50,8
	5	222	12,0	12,0	62,9
	6	91	4,9	4,9	67,8
	7	102	5,5	5,5	73,3
	8	127	6,9	6,9	80,2
	9	133	7,2	7,2	87,4
	10	232	12,6	12,6	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

I make curricular adjustments to the abilities and limitations of my students shown in the diagnostic evaluation.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	59	3,2	3,2	3,2
	2	45	2,4	2,4	5,6
	3	75	4,1	4,1	9,7
	4	56	3,0	3,0	12,7
	5	198	10,7	10,7	23,5
	6	142	7,7	7,7	31,2
	7	181	9,8	9,8	41,0
	8	313	17,0	17,0	58,0
	9	349	18,9	18,9	76,9
	10	426	23,1	23,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

It is not possible to make curriculum adjustments because there is a program to fulfill regardless of the abilities or limitations of my students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	401	21,7	21,7	21,7
	2	243	13,2	13,2	34,9
	3	208	11,3	11,3	46,2
	4	105	5,7	5,7	51,9
	5	233	12,6	12,6	64,5
	6	112	6,1	6,1	70,6
	7	134	7,3	7,3	77,9
	8	156	8,5	8,5	86,3
	9	108	5,9	5,9	92,2
	10	144	7,8	7,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

When I identify a student with difficulties I develop differentiated strategies for this student.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	,3	,3	,3
	2	13	,7	,7	1,0
	3	12	,7	,7	1,6
	4	19	1,0	1,0	2,7
	5	119	6,5	6,5	9,1
	6	121	6,6	6,6	15,7
	7	204	11,1	11,1	26,7
	8	344	18,7	18,7	45,4
	9	359	19,5	19,5	64,9
	10	648	35,1	35,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

If the strategies defined have no effect, I no longer have alternatives for that student.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	589	31,9	31,9	31,9
	2	336	18,2	18,2	50,2
	3	235	12,7	12,7	62,9
	4	137	7,4	7,4	70,3
	5	175	9,5	9,5	79,8
	6	73	4,0	4,0	83,8
	7	73	4,0	4,0	87,7
	8	92	5,0	5,0	92,7
	9	61	3,3	3,3	96,0
	10	73	4,0	4,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Students with difficulties need differentiated measures that are not possible to provide in the classroom.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	160	8,7	8,7	8,7
	2	122	6,6	6,6	15,3
	3	127	6,9	6,9	22,2
	4	97	5,3	5,3	27,4
	5	264	14,3	14,3	41,8
	6	156	8,5	8,5	50,2
	7	162	8,8	8,8	59,0
	8	250	13,6	13,6	72,6
	9	217	11,8	11,8	84,3
	10	289	15,7	15,7	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

A student with difficulties should be attending a different school track appropriated to his/her abilities and limitations.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	157	8,5	8,5	8,5
	2	149	8,1	8,1	16,6
	3	132	7,2	7,2	23,8
	4	95	5,2	5,2	28,9
	5	302	16,4	16,4	45,3
	6	125	6,8	6,8	52,1
	7	129	7,0	7,0	59,1
	8	212	11,5	11,5	70,6
	9	199	10,8	10,8	81,3
	10	344	18,7	18,7	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they have achieved the objectives of the discipline.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	49	2,7	2,7	2,7
	2	63	3,4	3,4	6,1
	3	88	4,8	4,8	10,8
	4	111	6,0	6,0	16,9
	5	285	15,5	15,5	32,3
	6	192	10,4	10,4	42,7
	7	211	11,4	11,4	54,2
	8	324	17,6	17,6	71,7
	9	233	12,6	12,6	84,4
	10	288	15,6	15,6	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The evaluation of a student should privilege if he/she has reached the objectives of the discipline regardless of its evolution.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	212	11,5	11,5	11,5
	2	202	11,0	11,0	22,5
	3	231	12,5	12,5	35,0
	4	195	10,6	10,6	45,6
	5	335	18,2	18,2	63,7
	6	197	10,7	10,7	74,4
	7	153	8,3	8,3	82,7
	8	143	7,8	7,8	90,5
	9	94	5,1	5,1	95,6
	10	82	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

For some students retention is inevitable.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	127	6,9	6,9	6,9
	2	91	4,9	4,9	11,8
	3	87	4,7	4,7	16,5
	4	62	3,4	3,4	19,9
	5	196	10,6	10,6	30,5
	6	77	4,2	4,2	34,7
	7	108	5,9	5,9	40,6
	8	221	12,0	12,0	52,5
	9	255	13,8	13,8	66,4
	10	620	33,6	33,6	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the 1st Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	696	37,7	37,7	37,7
	Não	1148	62,3	62,3	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the 2nd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	826	44,8	44,8	44,8
	Não	1018	55,2	55,2	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the 3rd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	939	50,9	50,9	50,9
	Não	905	49,1	49,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the Upper Secundary School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	730	39,6	39,6	39,6
	Não	1114	60,4	60,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the 1st Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	558	30,3	32,0	32,0
	Não	1185	64,3	68,0	100,0
	Total	1743	94,5	100,0	
Missing	System	101	5,5		
Total		1844	100,0		

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the 2nd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	617	33,5	35,6	35,6
	Não	1116	60,5	64,4	100,0
	Total	1733	94,0	100,0	
Missing	System	111	6,0		
Total		1844	100,0		

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the 3rd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	1101	59,7	61,2	61,2
	Não	699	37,9	38,8	100,0
	Total	1800	97,6	100,0	
Missing	System	44	2,4		
Total		1844	100,0		

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the Upper Secundary School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	1422	77,1	78,6	78,6
	Não	387	21,0	21,4	100,0
	Total	1809	98,1	100,0	
Missing	System	35	1,9		
Total		1844	100,0		

It is important the existance of National Assessment Tests.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	637	34,5	34,6	34,6
	2	142	7,7	7,7	42,3
	3	103	5,6	5,6	47,9
	4	51	2,8	2,8	50,7
	5	187	10,1	10,2	60,8
	6	85	4,6	4,6	65,4
	7	117	6,3	6,4	71,8
	8	172	9,3	9,3	81,1
	9	115	6,2	6,2	87,4
	10	233	12,6	12,6	100,0
	Total	1842	99,9	100,0	
Missing	System	2	,1		
Total		1844	100,0		

It is important the existance of National Evaluation Exams.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	290	15,7	15,8	15,8
	2	74	4,0	4,0	19,8
	3	53	2,9	2,9	22,7
	4	38	2,1	2,1	24,7
	5	204	11,1	11,1	35,8
	6	89	4,8	4,8	40,7
	7	159	8,6	8,6	49,3
	8	261	14,2	14,2	63,5
	9	208	11,3	11,3	74,8
	10	464	25,2	25,2	100,0
	Total	1840	99,8	100,0	
Missing	System	4	,2		
Total		1844	100,0		

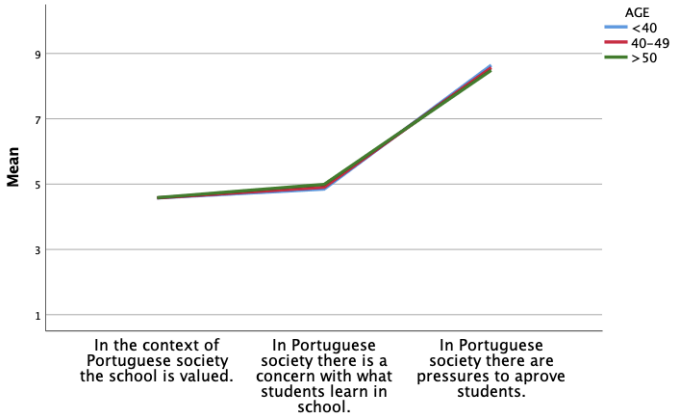
National Evaluation Exams are more important than National Asessment Tests.

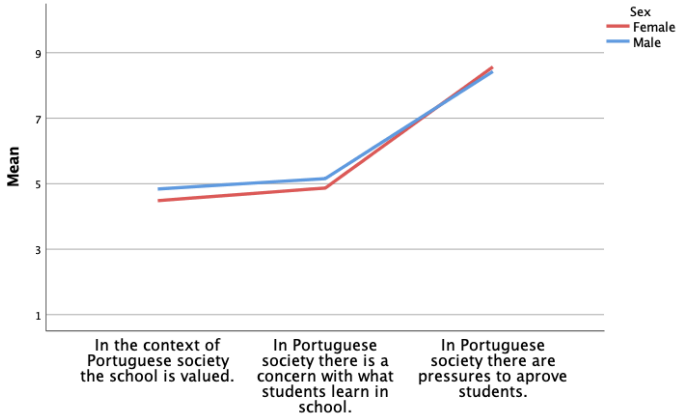
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	313	17,0	17,0	17,0
	2	83	4,5	4,5	21,6
	3	68	3,7	3,7	25,3
	4	51	2,8	2,8	28,0
	5	269	14,6	14,6	42,7
	6	72	3,9	3,9	46,6
	7	97	5,3	5,3	51,9
	8	171	9,3	9,3	61,2
	9	182	9,9	9,9	71,1
	10	531	28,8	28,9	100,0
	Total	1837	99,6	100,0	
Missing	System	7	,4		
Total		1844	100,0		

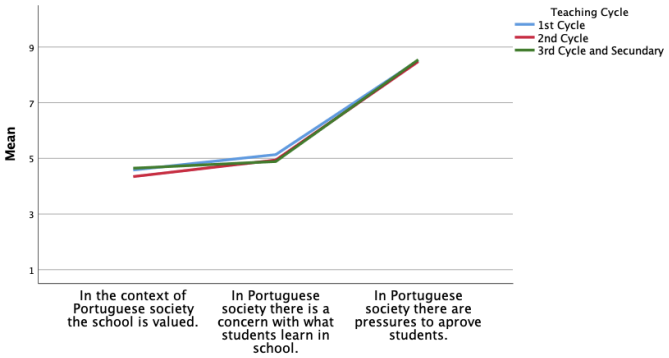
Appendix C – SPSS outputs

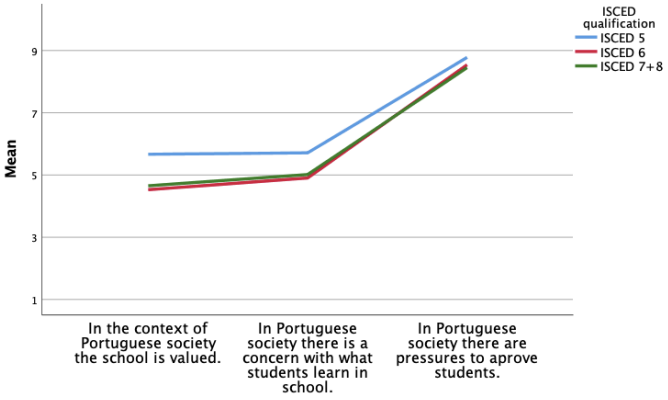
Descriptive Statistics

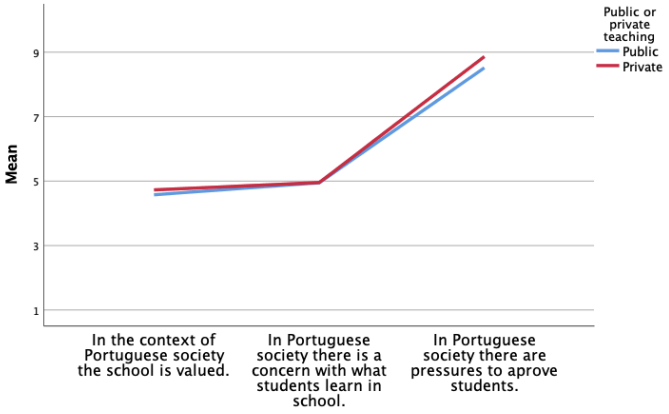
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.	1844	1	10	4,58	2,263
In Portuguese society there is a concern with what students learn in school.	1844	1	10	4,95	2,145
In Portuguese society there are pressures to aprove students.	1844	1	10	8,53	1,820
Valid N (listwise)	1844				

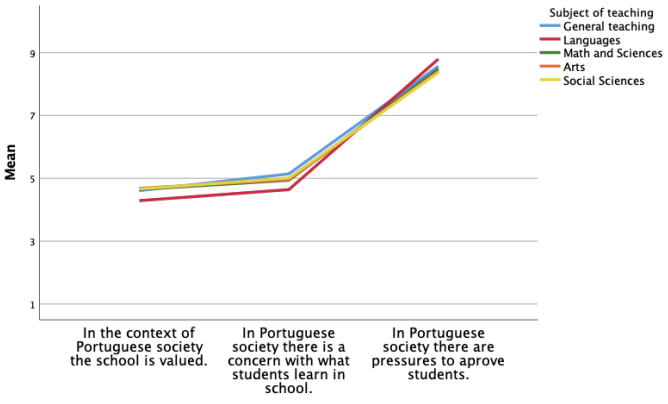












Descriptives

In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
ISCED 5	106	5,67	2,415	,234	5,20	6,13	1	10
ISCED 6	1519	4,53	2,253	,058	4,41	4,64	1	10
ISCED 7+8	219	4,65	2,254	,152	4,35	4,95	1	10
Total	1844	4,61	2,277	,053	4,50	4,71	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.	Based on Mean	,461	2	1841	,630
	Based on Median	,136	2	1841	,873
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,136	2	1823,215	,873
	Based on trimmed mean	,456	2	1841	,634

ANOVA

In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	129,696	2	64,848	12,667	,000
Within Groups	9425,101	1841	5,120		
Total	9554,797	1843			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	11,205	2	219,774	,000
Brown-Forsythe	11,931	2	311,559	,000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: In the context of Portuguese society the school is valued.
Scheffe

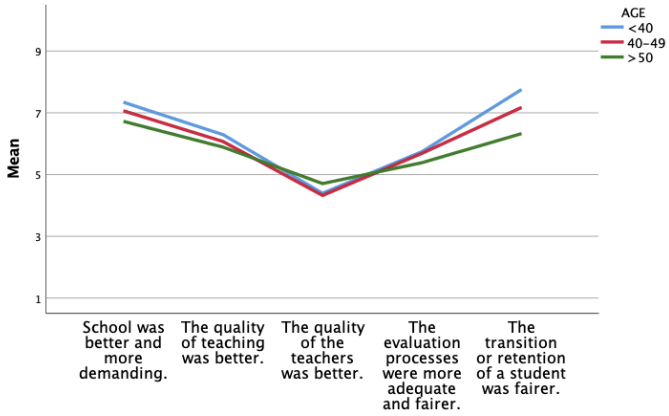
(I) ISCED qualification	(J) ISCED qualification	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ISCED 5	ISCED 6	1,140*	,227	,000	,58	1,70
	ISCED 7+8	1,014*	,267	,001	,36	1,67
ISCED 6	ISCED 5	-1,140*	,227	,000	-1,70	-,58
	ISCED 7+8	-,126	,164	,744	-,53	,27
ISCED 7+8	ISCED 5	-1,014*	,267	,001	-1,67	-,36
	ISCED 6	,126	,164	,744	-,27	,53

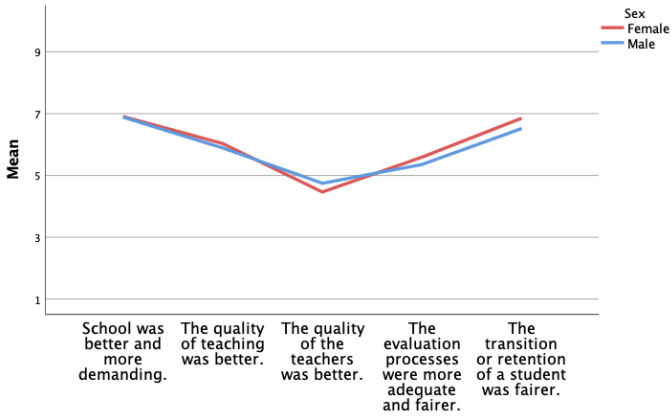
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

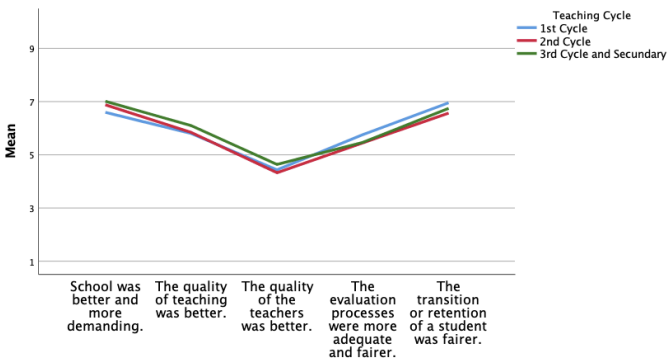
Appendix D – SPSS outputs

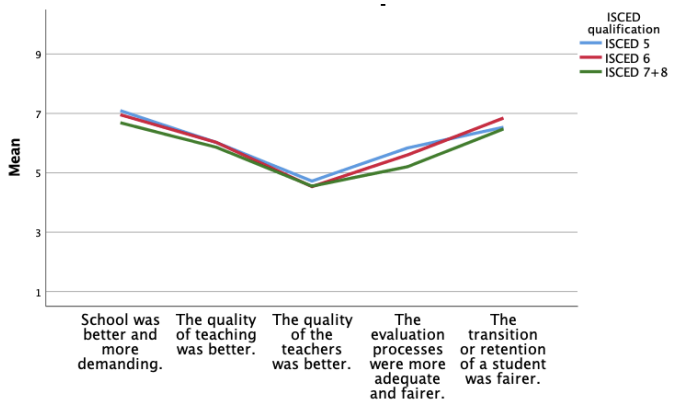
Descriptive Statistics

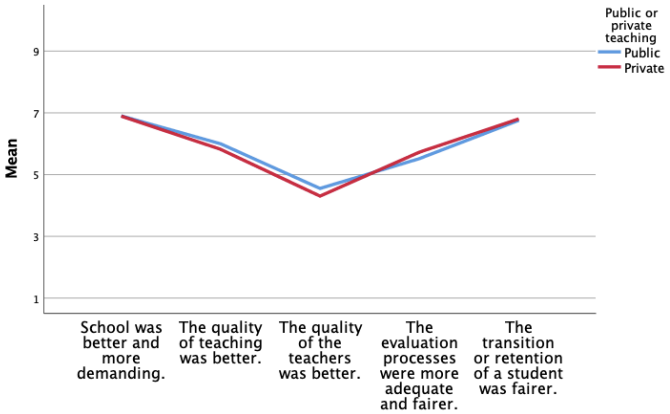
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
School was better and more demanding.	1836	1	10	6,90	2,600
The quality of teaching was better.	1827	1	10	6,00	2,668
The quality of the teachers was better.	1832	1	10	4,54	2,470
The evaluation processes were more adequate and fairer.	1836	1	10	5,53	2,671
The transition or retention of a student was fairer.	1838	1	10	6,76	2,775
Valid N (listwise)	1820				

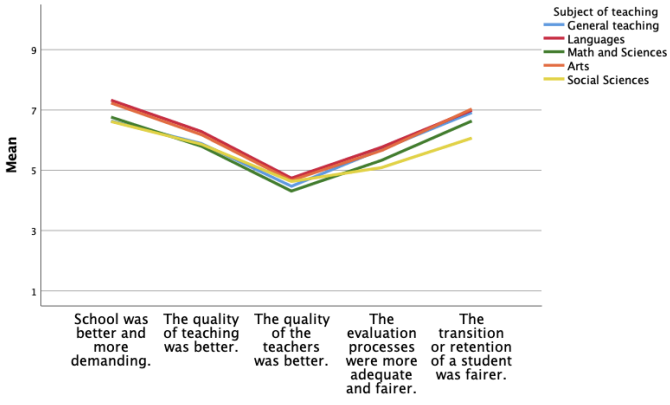








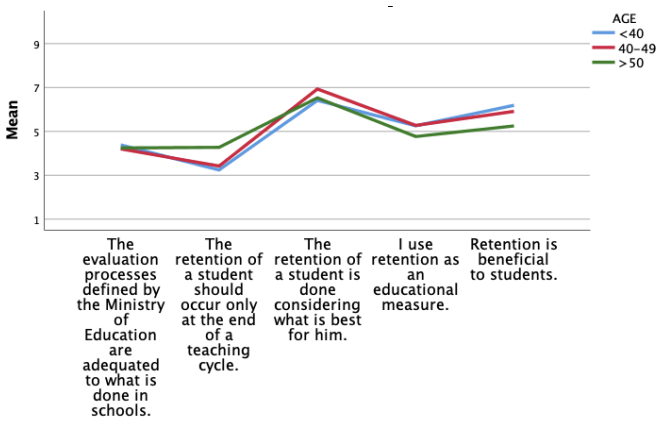


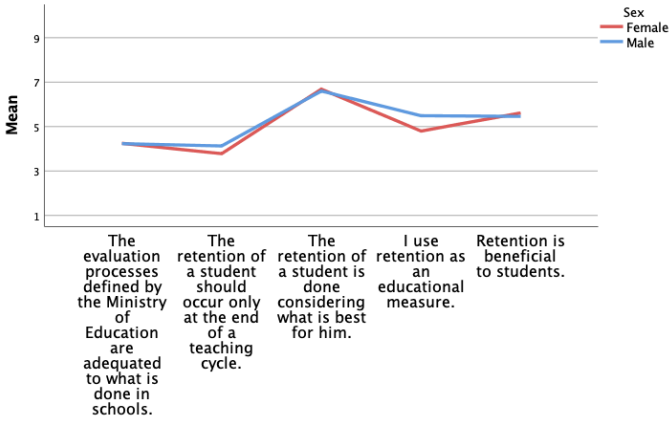


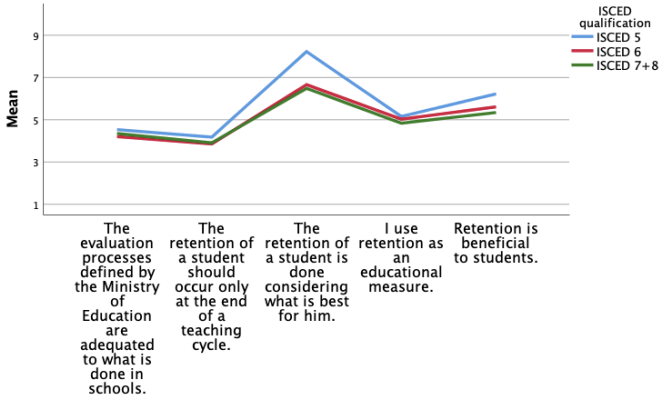
Appendix E – SPSS outputs

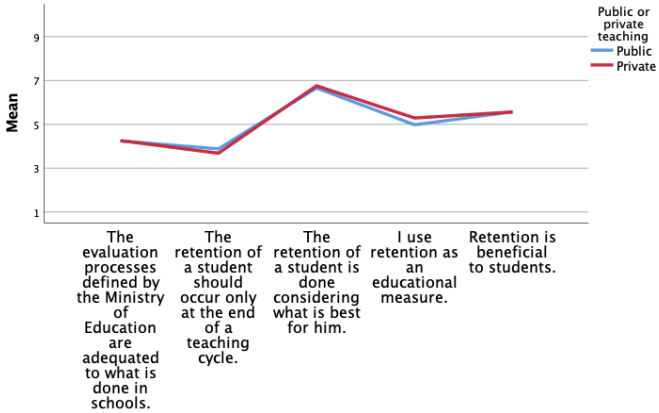
Descriptive Statistics

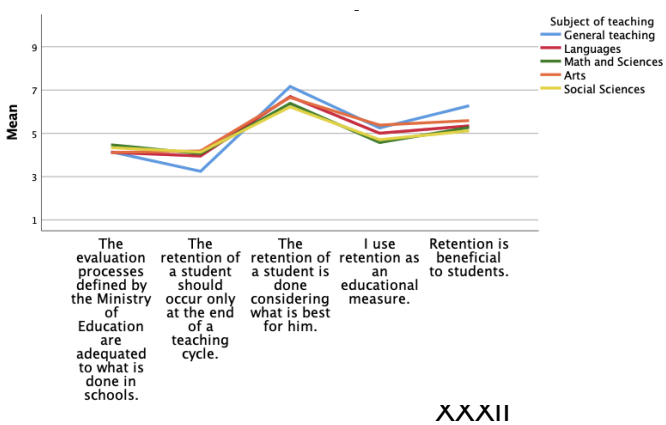
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The evaluation processes defined by the Ministry of Education are adequated to what is done in schools.	1844	1	10	4,24	2,291
The retention of a student should occur only at the end of a teaching cycle.	1844	1	10	3,88	3,073
The retention of a student is done considering what is best for him.	1844	1	10	6,66	2,863
I use retention as an educational measure.	1844	1	10	4,99	3,195
Retention is beneficial to students.	1844	1	10	5,57	2,513
Valid N (listwise)	1844				











As a student, did you ever got retained?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	589	31,9	31,9	31,9
	Não	1255	68,1	68,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Such retention was beneficial?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	464	25,2	78,8	78,8
	Não	125	6,8	21,2	100,0
	Total	589	31,9	100,0	
Missing	System	1255	68,1		
Total		1844	100,0		

Appendix F – SPSS outputs

The success of a student depends on the Ministry of Education and educational policies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	388	21,0	21,0	21,0
	2	121	6,6	6,6	27,6
	3	153	8,3	8,3	35,9
	4	235	12,7	12,7	48,6
	5	947	51,4	51,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the schools and its internal organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	145	7,9	7,9	7,9
	2	307	16,6	16,6	24,5
	3	354	19,2	19,2	43,7
	4	783	42,5	42,5	86,2
	5	255	13,8	13,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	218	11,8	11,8	11,8
	2	633	34,3	34,3	46,1
	3	622	33,7	33,7	79,9
	4	235	12,7	12,7	92,6
	5	136	7,4	7,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	928	50,3	50,3	50,3
	2	397	21,5	21,5	71,9
	3	220	11,9	11,9	83,8
	4	218	11,8	11,8	95,6
	5	81	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The success of a student depends on the parents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	165	8,9	8,9	8,9
	2	386	20,9	20,9	29,9
	3	495	26,8	26,8	56,7
	4	373	20,2	20,2	77,0
	5	425	23,0	23,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the Ministry of Education and educational policies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	585	31,7	31,7	31,7
	2	250	13,6	13,6	45,3
	3	290	15,7	15,7	61,0
	4	275	14,9	14,9	75,9
	5	444	24,1	24,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the schools and its internal organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	145	7,9	7,9	7,9
	2	544	29,5	29,5	37,4
	3	434	23,5	23,5	60,9
	4	525	28,5	28,5	89,4
	5	196	10,6	10,6	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	119	6,5	6,5	6,5
	2	359	19,5	19,5	25,9
	3	585	31,7	31,7	57,6
	4	434	23,5	23,5	81,2
	5	347	18,8	18,8	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

The retention of a student depends on the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	929	50,4	50,4	50,4
	2	250	13,6	13,6	63,9
	3	222	12,0	12,0	76,0
	4	295	16,0	16,0	92,0
	5	148	8,0	8,0	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

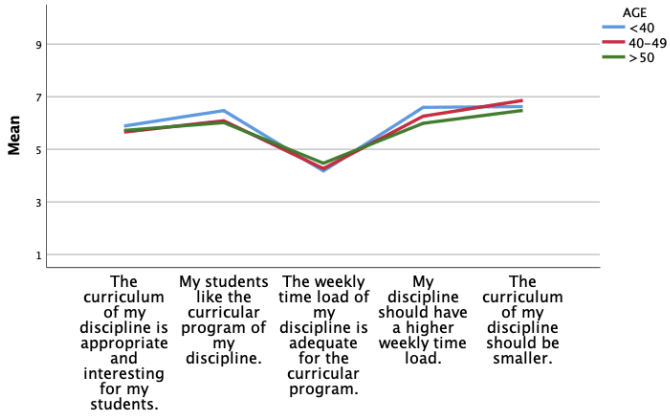
The retention of a student depends on the parents

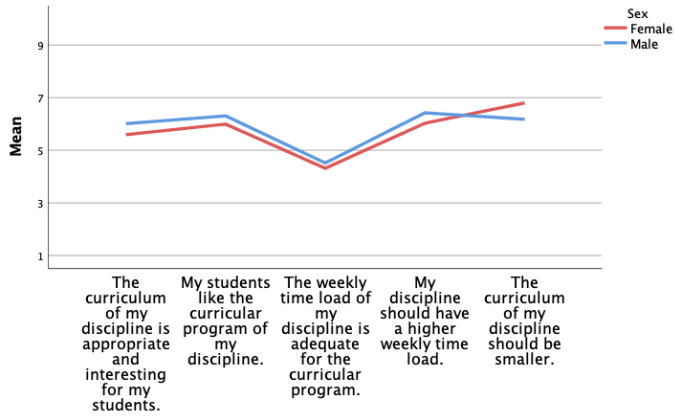
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	66	3,6	3,6	3,6
	2	441	23,9	23,9	27,5
	3	313	17,0	17,0	44,5
	4	315	17,1	17,1	61,6
	5	709	38,4	38,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

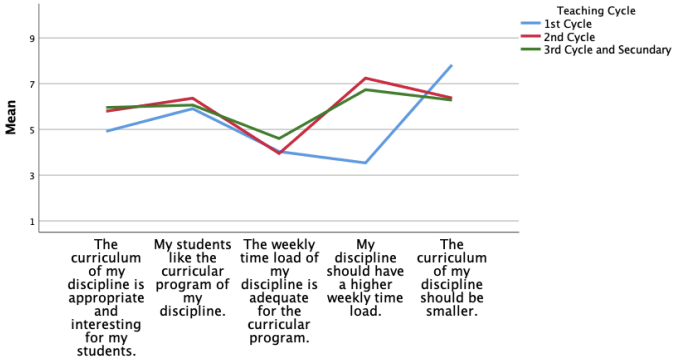
Appendix G – SPSS outputs

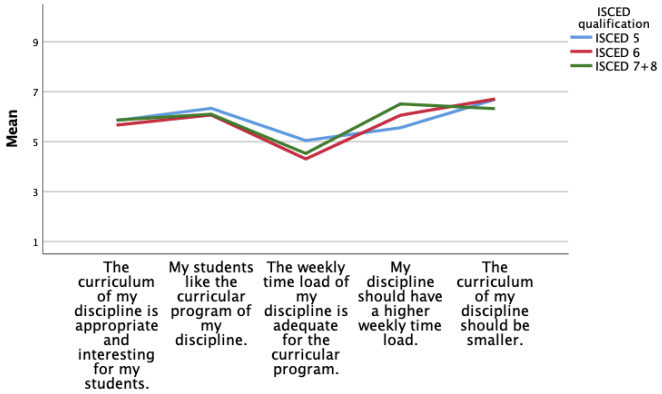
Descriptive Statistics

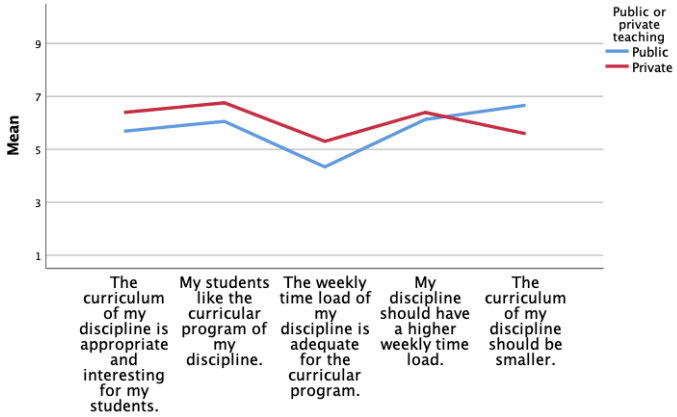
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The curriculum of my discipline is appropriate and interesting for my students.	1844	1	10	5,71	2,441
My students like the curricular program of my discipline.	1844	1	10	6,08	2,210
The weekly time load of my discipline is adequate for the curricular program.	1844	1	10	4,37	2,849
My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.	1844	1	10	6,14	3,333
The curriculum of my discipline should be smaller.	1844	1	10	6,63	3,146
Valid N (listwise)	1844				

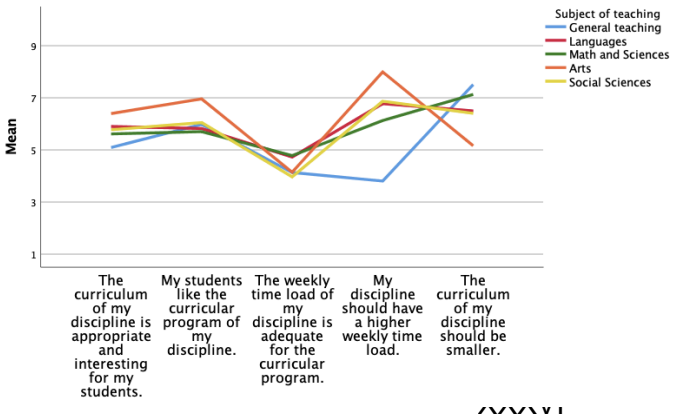












Descriptives

My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1st Cycle	420	3,53	2,641	,129	3,28	3,79	1	10
2nd Cycle	339	7,24	2,906	,158	6,93	7,55	1	10
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1085	6,74	3,201	,097	6,55	6,93	1	10
Total	1844	6,10	3,337	,078	5,95	6,25	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.	Based on Mean	27,814	2	1841	,000
	Based on Median	16,227	2	1841	,000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	16,227	2	1781,968	,000
	Based on trimmed mean	26,803	2	1841	,000

ANOVA

My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3647,729	2	1823,865	198,810	,000
Within Groups	16879,977	1840	9,174		
Total	20527,706	1842			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	241,643	2	799,207	,000
Brown-Forsythe	221,189	2	1201,896	,000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.

Scheffe

(I) Teaching Cycle	(J) Teaching Cycle	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	-3,709*	,221	,000	-4,25	-3,17
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-3,202*	,174	,000	-3,63	-2,78
2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	3,709*	,221	,000	3,17	4,25
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	,507*	,189	,027	,04	,97
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1st Cycle	3,202*	,174	,000	2,78	3,63
	2nd Cycle	-,507*	,189	,027	-,97	-,04

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.	1844	6,14	3,333	1	10
Teaching Cycle	1844	2,4067	,81726	1,00	3,00

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Teaching Cycle	N	Mean Rank
My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.	1st Cycle	393	517,41
	2nd Cycle	308	1092,23
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	1143	1016,04
	Total	1844	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	My discipline should have a higher weekly time load.
Kruskal-Wallis H	301,793
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

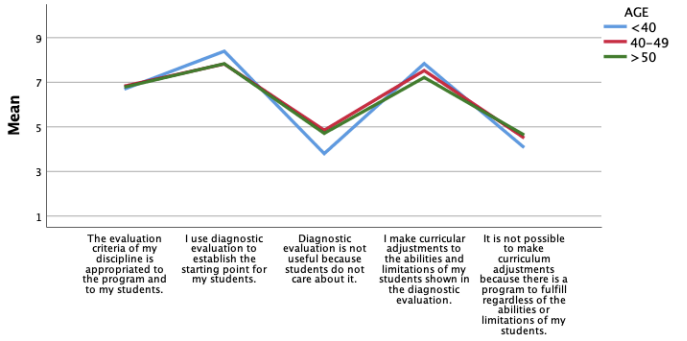
a. Kruskal Wallis Test

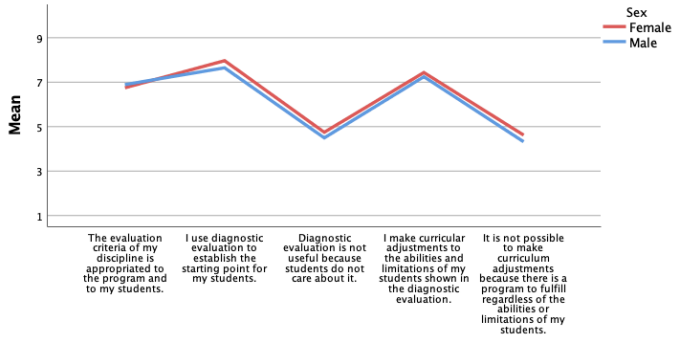
b. Grouping Variable: Teaching Cycle

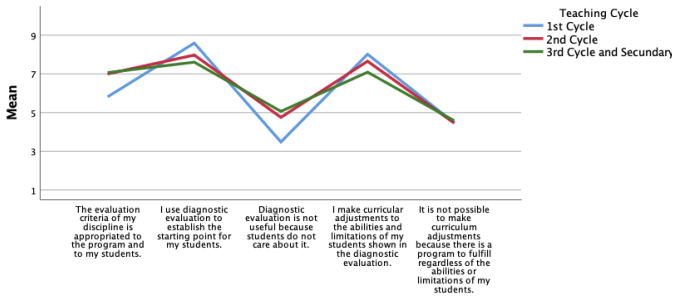
Appendix H – SPSS outputs

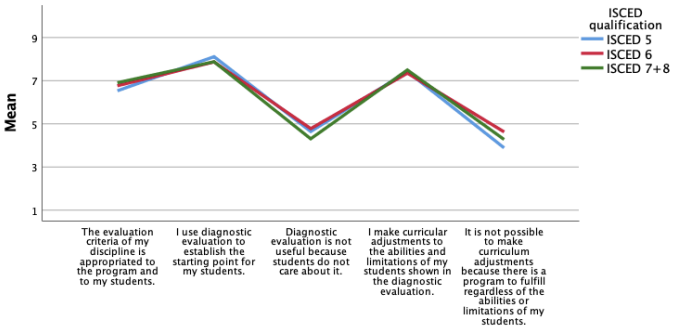
Descriptive Statistics

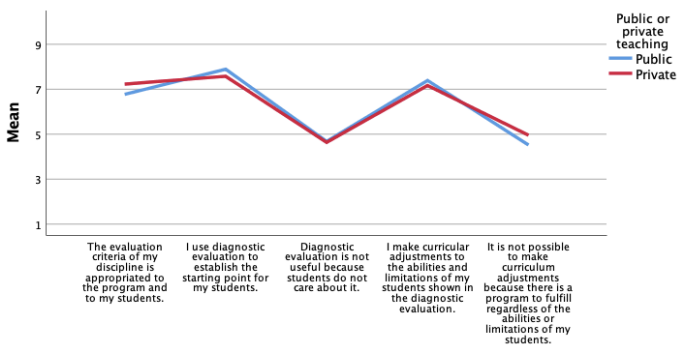
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The evaluation criteria of my discipline is appropriated to the program and to my students.	1844	1	10	6,79	2,466
I use diagnostic evaluation to establish the starting point for my students.	1844	1	10	7,88	2,534
Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.	1844	1	10	4,68	3,268
I make curricular adjustments to the abilities and limitations of my students shown in the diagnostic evaluation.	1844	1	10	7,38	2,461
It is not possible to make curriculum adjustments because there is a program to fulfill regardless of the abilities or limitations of my students.	1844	1	10	4,54	2,994
Valid N (listwise)	1844				

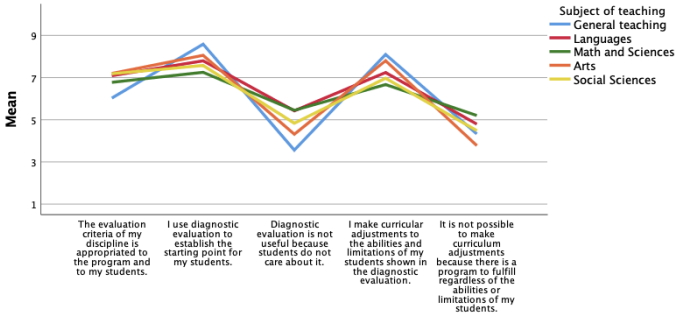












Descriptives

Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
<40	343	3,80	3,032	,164	3,48	4,12	1	10
40-49	690	4,85	3,237	,123	4,61	5,09	1	10
>50	809	4,71	3,305	,116	4,48	4,93	1	10
Total	1842	4,59	3,251	,076	4,44	4,74	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.	Based on Mean	3,994	2	1839	,019
	Based on Median	5,338	2	1839	,005
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	5,338	2	1599,060	,005
	Based on trimmed mean	4,707	2	1839	,009

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about

Scheffe

(I) AGE	(J) AGE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<40	40-49	-1,048*	,213	,000	-1,57	-,53
	>50	-,906*	,208	,000	-1,42	-,40
40-49	<40	1,048*	,213	,000	,53	1,57
	>50	,141	,167	,700	-,27	,55
>50	<40	,906*	,208	,000	,40	1,42
	40-49	-,141	,167	,700	-,55	,27

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	AGE	N	Mean Rank
Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.	<40	330	859,45
	40-49	657	1049,51
	>50	1022	1023,39
	Total	2009	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.
Kruskal-Wallis H	26,333
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: AGE

Descriptives

Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1st Cycle	420	3,48	2,804	,137	3,21	3,75	1	10
2nd Cycle	339	4,75	3,207	,174	4,41	5,10	1	10
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1085	5,06	3,336	,101	4,87	5,26	1	10
Total	1844	4,65	3,261	,076	4,50	4,80	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.	Based on Mean	21,686	2	1841	,000
	Based on Median	26,702	2	1841	,000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	26,702	2	1622,419	,000
	Based on trimmed mean	24,076	2	1841	,000

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.

Scheffe

(I) Teaching Cycle	(J) Teaching Cycle	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	-1,270*	,234	,000	-1,84	-,70
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-1,581*	,184	,000	-2,03	-1,13
2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	1,270*	,234	,000	,70	1,84
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-,311	,199	,295	-,80	,18
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1st Cycle	1,581*	,184	,000	1,13	2,03
	2nd Cycle	,311	,199	,295	-,18	,80

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Teaching Cycle	N	Mean Rank
Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.	1st Cycle	393	731,43
	2nd Cycle	308	935,74
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	1143	984,63
	Total	1844	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Diagnostic evaluation is not useful because students do not care about it.
Kruskal-Wallis H	67,972
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

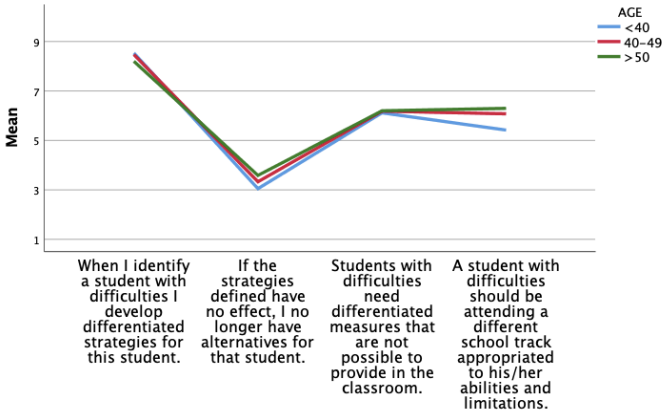
a. Kruskal Wallis Test

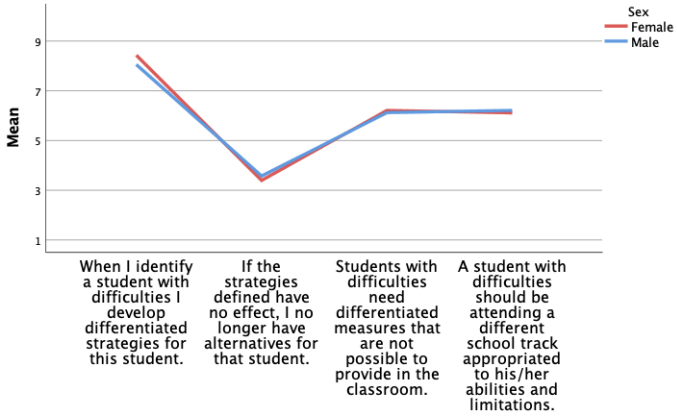
b. Grouping Variable: Teaching Cycle

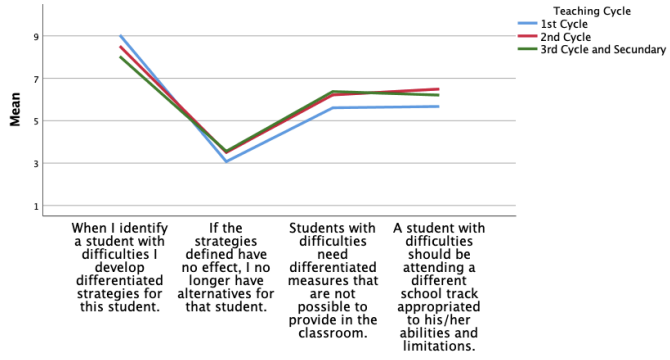
Appendix I – SPSS outputs

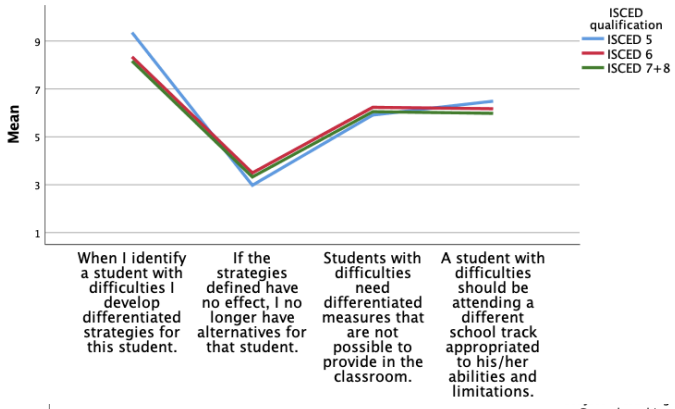
Descriptive Statistics

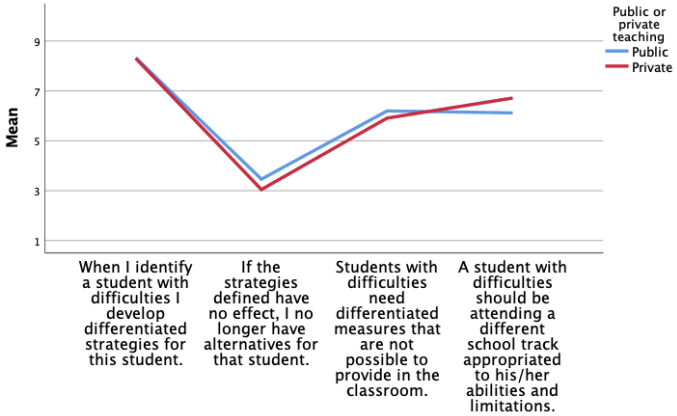
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
When I identify a student with difficulties I develop differentiated strategies for this student.	1844	1	10	8,33	1,779
If the strategies defined have no effect, I no longer have alternatives for that student.	1844	1	10	3,45	2,662
Students with difficulties need differentiated measures that are not possible to provide in the classroom.	1844	1	10	6,19	2,893
A student with difficulties should be attending a different school track appropriated to his/her abilities and limitations.	1844	1	10	6,14	2,984
Valid N (listwise)	1844				

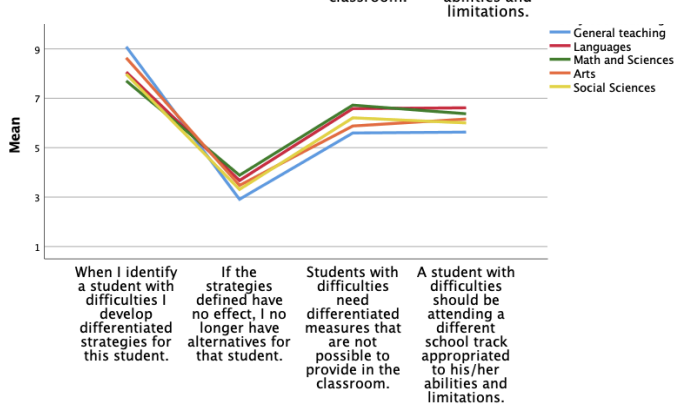








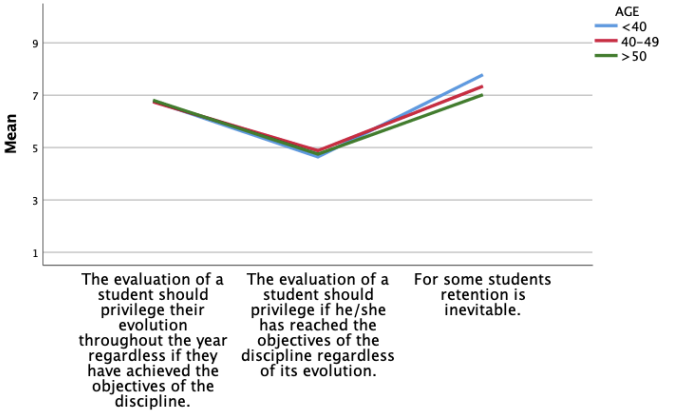


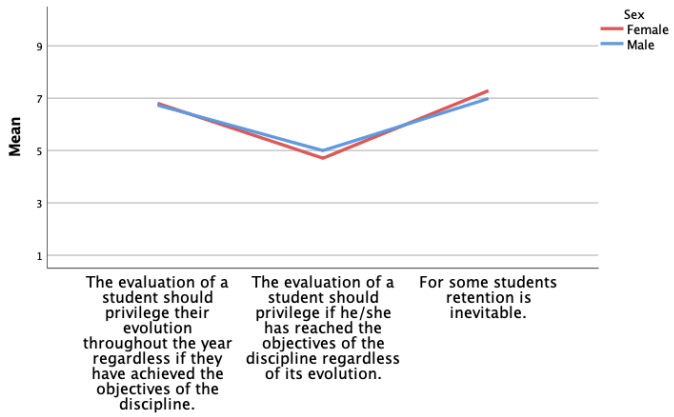


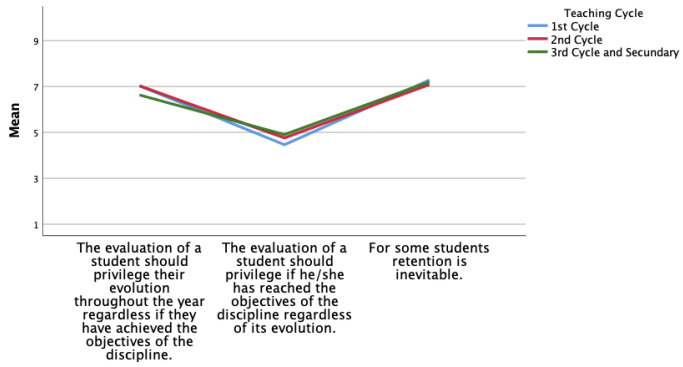
Appendix J – SPSS outputs

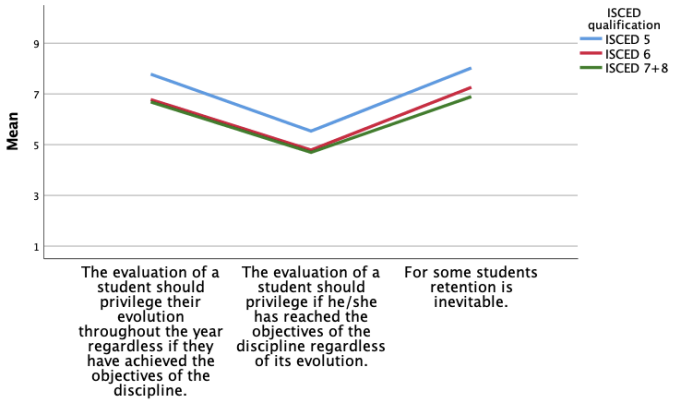
Descriptive Statistics

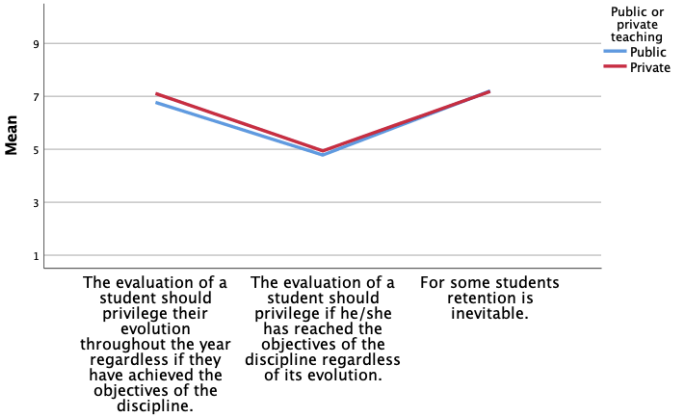
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they have achieved the objectives of the discipline.	1844	1	10	6,78	2,425
The evaluation of a student should privilege if he/she has reached the objectives of the discipline regardless of its evolution.	1844	1	10	4,79	2,541
For some students retention is inevitable.	1844	1	10	7,20	2,983
Valid N (listwise)	1844				

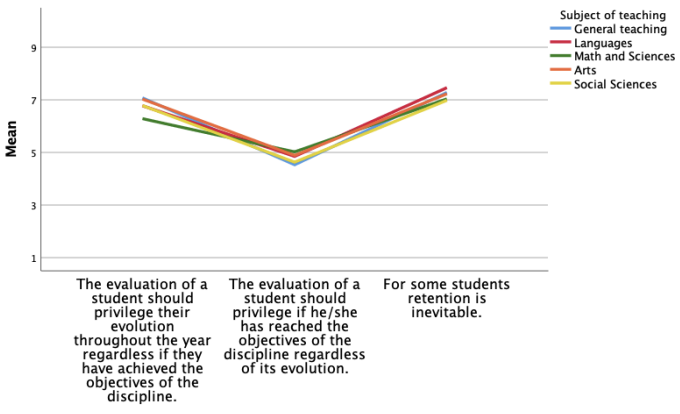












Descriptives

The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they have achieved the objectives of the discipline.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
ISCED 5	106	7,78	2,423	,235	7,31	8,24	1	10
ISCED 6	1519	6,78	2,421	,062	6,66	6,90	1	10
ISCED 7+8	219	6,68	2,421	,164	6,36	7,01	1	10
Total	1844	6,82	2,431	,057	6,71	6,94	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they have achieved the objectives of the discipline.	Based on Mean	,124	2	1841	,883
	Based on Median	,243	2	1841	,784
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,243	2	1837,550	,784
	Based on trimmed mean	,354	2	1841	,702

ANOVA

The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they have achieved the objectives of the discipline.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	104,420	2	52,210	8,907	,000
Within Groups	10791,118	1841	5,862		
Total	10895,538	1843			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they have achieved the objectives of the discipline.

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	8,865	2	221,933	,000
Brown-Forsythe	8,899	2	332,679	,000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: The evaluation of a student should privilege their evolution throughout the year regardless if they ha
Scheffe

(I) ISCED qualification	(J) ISCED qualification	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ISCED 5	ISCED 6	1,000*	,243	,000	,41	1,60
	ISCED 7+8	1,094*	,286	,001	,39	1,80
ISCED 6	ISCED 5	-1,000*	,243	,000	-1,60	-,41
	ISCED 7+8	,094	,175	,867	-,34	,52
ISCED 7+8	ISCED 5	-1,094*	,286	,001	-1,80	-,39
	ISCED 6	-,094	,175	,867	-,52	,34

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Descriptives

For some students retention is inevitable.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
ISCED 5	106	8,02	2,954	,286	7,45	8,59	1	10
ISCED 6	1519	7,26	2,953	,076	7,11	7,41	1	10
ISCED 7+8	219	6,89	3,072	,208	6,48	7,30	1	10
Total	1844	7,26	2,974	,069	7,12	7,40	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
For some students retention is inevitable.	Based on Mean	1,476	2	1841	,229
	Based on Median	3,020	2	1841	,049
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	3,020	2	1685,994	,049
	Based on trimmed mean	1,786	2	1841	,168

ANOVA

For some students retention is inevitable.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	91,426	2	45,713	5,191	,006
Within Groups	16212,299	1841	8,806		
Total	16303,725	1843			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

For some students retention is inevitable.

	Statistic[a]	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	5,094	2	220,972	,007
Brown-Forsythe	5,058	2	340,107	,007

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: For some students retention is inevitable.
Scheffe

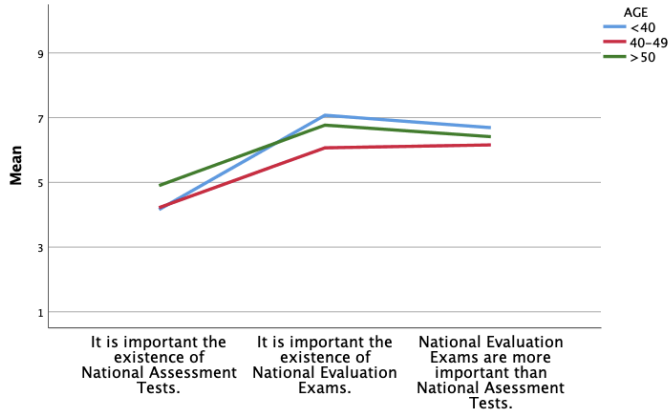
(I) ISCED qualification	(J) ISCED qualification	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ISCED 5	ISCED 6	,762*	,298	,038	,03	1,49
	ISCED 7+8	1,130*	,351	,006	,27	1,99
ISCED 6	ISCED 5	-,762*	,298	,038	-1,49	-,03
	ISCED 7+8	,368	,215	,230	-,16	,89
ISCED 7+8	ISCED 5	-1,130*	,351	,006	-1,99	-,27
	ISCED 6	-,368	,215	,230	-,89	,16

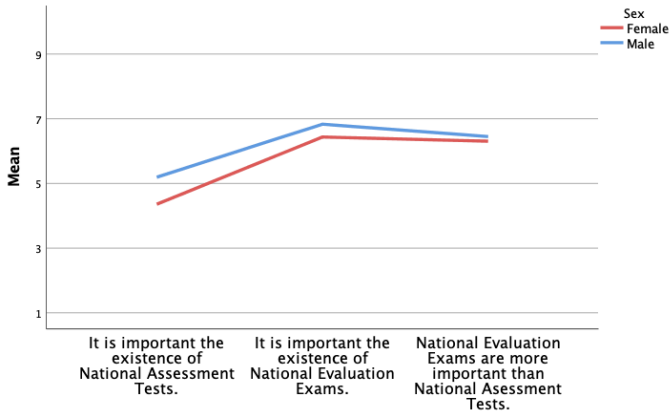
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

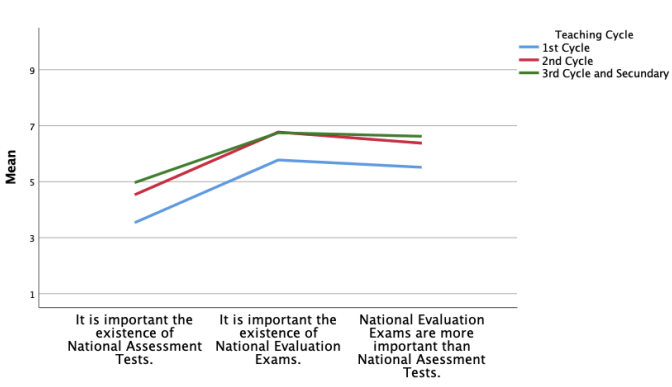
Appendix K – SPSS outputs

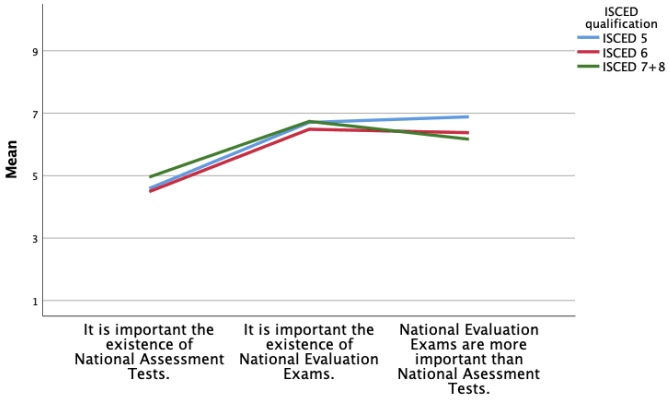
Descriptive Statistics

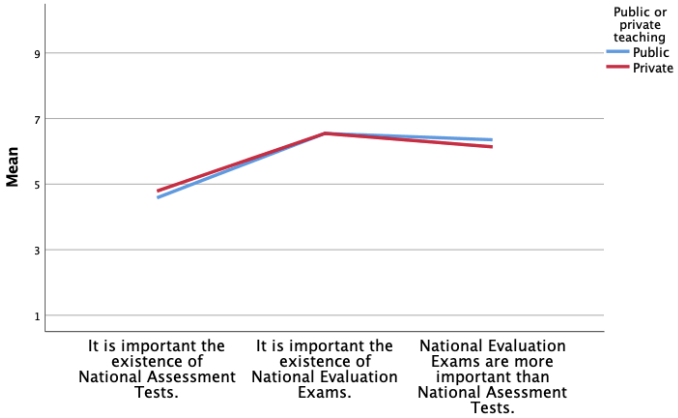
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.	1842	1	10	4,58	3,408
It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.	1840	1	10	6,53	3,235
National Evaluation Exams are more important than National Asessment Tests.	1837	1	10	6,35	3,377
Valid N (listwise)	1834				

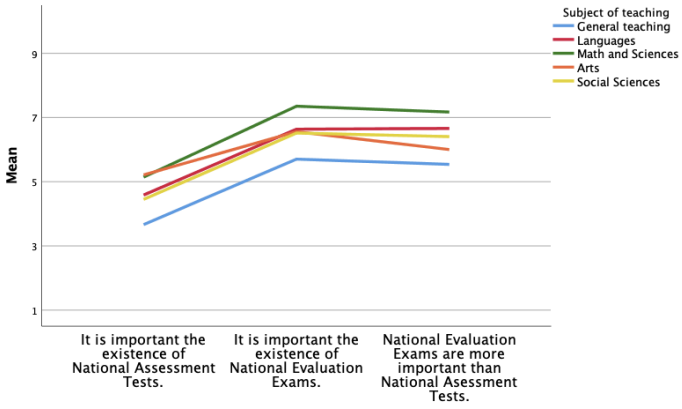












Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the 1st Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	696	37,7	37,7	37,7
	Não	1148	62,3	62,3	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the 2nd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	826	44,8	44,8	44,8
	Não	1018	55,2	55,2	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the 3rd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	939	50,9	50,9	50,9
	Não	905	49,1	49,1	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

Do you agree with the existence of National Assessment Tests within a cycle of studies? - In the Upper Secundary School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	730	39,6	39,6	39,6
	Não	1114	60,4	60,4	100,0
	Total	1844	100,0	100,0	

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the 1st Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	558	30,3	32,0	32,0
	Não	1185	64,3	68,0	100,0
	Total	1743	94,5	100,0	
Missing	System	101	5,5		
Total		1844	100,0		

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the 2nd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	617	33,5	35,6	35,6
	Não	1116	60,5	64,4	100,0
	Total	1733	94,0	100,0	
Missing	System	111	6,0		
Total		1844	100,0		

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the 3rd Cycle

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	1101	59,7	61,2	61,2
	Não	699	37,9	38,8	100,0
	Total	1800	97,6	100,0	
Missing	System	44	2,4		
Total		1844	100,0		

And with the existence of National Evaluation Exams at the end of a cycle of studies? - In the Upper Secundary School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sim	1422	77,1	78,6	78,6
	Não	387	21,0	21,4	100,0
	Total	1809	98,1	100,0	
Missing	System	35	1,9		
Total		1844	100,0		

Group Statistics

	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.	Female	1392	4,35	3,405	,091
	Male	450	5,18	3,344	,158

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.	Equal variances assumed	1,282	,258	-4,491	1840	,000	-,826	,184
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,533	772,005	,000	-,826	,182

Descriptives

It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1st Cycle	420	3,52	3,032	,148	3,23	3,81	1	10
2nd Cycle	338	4,52	3,385	,184	4,16	4,88	1	10
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1084	4,96	3,460	,105	4,76	5,17	1	10
Total	1842	4,55	3,402	,079	4,40	4,71	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.	Based on Mean	12,460	2	1839	,000
	Based on Median	21,264	2	1839	,000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	21,264	2	1563,903	,000
	Based on trimmed mean	15,574	2	1839	,000

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.

Scheffe

(I) Teaching Cycle	(J) Teaching Cycle	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	-,997*	,245	,000	-1,60	-,40
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-1,437*	,193	,000	-1,91	-,97
2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	,997*	,245	,000	,40	1,60
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-,440	,209	,109	-,95	,07
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1st Cycle	1,437*	,193	,000	,97	1,91
	2nd Cycle	,440	,209	,109	-,07	,95

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Teaching Cycle	N	Mean Rank
It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.	1st Cycle	393	761,40
	2nd Cycle	307	916,63
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	1142	977,91
	Total	1842	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	It is important the existence of National Assessment Tests.
Kruskal-Wallis H	50,841
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Teaching Cycle

Oneway

Descriptives

It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1st Cycle	419	5,75	3,198	,156	5,44	6,06	1	10
2nd Cycle	338	6,77	3,224	,175	6,42	7,11	1	10
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1083	6,74	3,212	,098	6,54	6,93	1	10
Total	1840	6,52	3,236	,075	6,37	6,66	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.	Based on Mean	,062	2	1837	,939
	Based on Median	,945	2	1837	,389
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,945	2	1744,539	,389
	Based on trimmed mean	,226	2	1837	,798

ANOVA

It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	318,963	2	159,481	15,458	,000
Within Groups	18942,660	1836	10,317		
Total	19261,623	1838			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.
Scheffe

(I) Teaching Cycle	(J) Teaching Cycle	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	-1,015*	,235	,000	-1,59	-,44
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-,985*	,185	,000	-1,44	-,53
2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	1,015*	,235	,000	,44	1,59
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	,030	,200	,989	-,46	,52
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1st Cycle	,985*	,185	,000	,53	1,44
	2nd Cycle	-,030	,200	,989	-,52	,46

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Oneway

Descriptives

National Evaluation Exams are more important than National Asessment Tests.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1st Cycle	417	5,52	3,313	,162	5,20	5,83	1	10
2nd Cycle	336	6,38	3,443	,188	6,01	6,75	1	10
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1083	6,62	3,336	,101	6,42	6,82	1	10
Total	1837	6,33	3,379	,079	6,17	6,48	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
National Evaluation Exams are more important than National Asessment Tests.	Based on Mean	2,206	2	1834	,110
	Based on Median	1,667	2	1834	,189
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1,667	2	1775,012	,189
	Based on trimmed mean	2,140	2	1834	,118

ANOVA

National Evaluation Exams are more important than National Asessment Tests.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	370,403	2	185,201	16,489	,000
Within Groups	20588,184	1833	11,232		
Total	20958,586	1835			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: National Evaluation Exams are more important than National Asessment Tests.
Scheffe

(I) Teaching Cycle	(J) Teaching Cycle	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1st Cycle	2nd Cycle	-,860*	,246	,002	-1,46	-,26
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-1,108*	,193	,000	-1,58	-,63
2nd Cycle	1st Cycle	,860*	,246	,002	,26	1,46
	3rd Cycle and Secundary	-,247	,209	,497	-,76	,27
3rd Cycle and Secundary	1st Cycle	1,108*	,193	,000	,63	1,58
	2nd Cycle	,247	,209	,497	-,27	,76

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Descriptives

It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
General teaching	451	5,68	3,238	,152	5,38	5,98	1	10
Languages	333	6,64	3,217	,176	6,29	6,98	1	10
Math and Sciences	435	7,35	3,007	,144	7,06	7,63	1	10
Arts	348	6,54	3,208	,172	6,20	6,88	1	10
Social Sciences	273	6,48	3,311	,200	6,09	6,88	1	10
Total	1840	6,53	3,235	,075	6,38	6,68	1	10

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.	Based on Mean	3,971	4	1835	,003
	Based on Median	3,973	4	1835	,003
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	3,973	4	1719,551	,003
	Based on trimmed mean	4,637	4	1835	,001

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.
Scheffe

(I) Subject of teaching	(J) Subject of teaching	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
General teaching	Languages	-,954*	,230	,002	-1,66	-,24
	Math and Sciences	-1,664*	,214	,000	-2,32	-1,00
	Arts	-,860*	,227	,006	-1,56	-,16
	Social Sciences	-,801*	,244	,030	-1,55	-,05
Languages	General teaching	,954*	,230	,002	,24	1,66
	Math and Sciences	-,710	,232	,053	-1,43	,00
	Arts	,094	,244	,997	-,66	,85
	Social Sciences	,153	,260	,987	-,65	,96
Math and Sciences	General teaching	1,664*	,214	,000	1,00	2,32
	Languages	,710	,232	,053	,00	1,43
	Arts	,804*	,229	,015	,10	1,51
	Social Sciences	,864*	,246	,015	,11	1,62
Arts	General teaching	,860*	,227	,006	,16	1,56
	Languages	-,094	,244	,997	-,85	,66
	Math and Sciences	-,804*	,229	,015	-1,51	-,10
	Social Sciences	,060	,258	1,000	-,73	,85
Social Sciences	General teaching	,801*	,244	,030	,05	1,55
	Languages	-,153	,260	,987	-,96	,65
	Math and Sciences	-,864*	,246	,015	-1,62	-,11
	Arts	-,060	,258	1,000	-,85	,73

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Ranks

	Subject of teaching	N	Mean Rank
It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.	General teaching	451	774,43
	Languages	333	941,69
	Math and Sciences	435	1061,51
	Arts	348	916,35
	Social Sciences	273	916,57
	Total	1840	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	It is important the existence of National Evaluation Exams.
Kruskal-Wallis H	67,068
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Subject of teaching