# Correlation between instruction time and student's school attitude: Albania vs European Countries

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## Abstract

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between curriculum instruction time and student' school attitude. A mixed research approach was used in the study. The random-cluster samples of students, teachers, principals, and curriculum specialists were selected to be used in the research. The qualitative approach, including a review of official documentation as well as interviewing, was used to support a quantitative approach in the study. The descriptive analysis and a bivariate correlation statistic were used for the processing of data, and the inductive open coding and the typology techniques were used to analyse the qualitative data.  It is found that there are differences in instruction time between European countries and Albania. At the same time, the results showed that there is a relatively non-adequate student's school attitude in lower secondary education. The study demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between curriculum instruction time and the students' school attitude. It is one of a very small number of studies in curriculum instruction time to provide such results.

*Keywords*: curriculum instruction time; student's school attitude; curriculum area; key stage

## 1. Introduction

Curriculum instruction time constitutes a significant factor that supposed to affect academic success, including students' school attitude. The students 'school attitude comprises the degrees of behavioural and recognition engagement towards the school. Students 'school attitude represents the student's positive or negative feelings towards the school. Tyler (1949) pointed out that the curriculum must include: aims and objectives of the school, educational experiences under these aims, experiences, and assessment. Taba (1962) described seven stages in her base model: needs assessment, designing objectives, the choice of content, the organization of content, selection of learning experiences, the organization of educational

activities, evaluation, and assessment tools. Ornstein and Hunkins (2003; 2017) stated that the curriculum means: a plan for action or a written document, a field that addresses students' experiences, linear or nonlinear system, academic and theoretical study, specific courses, a plan for achieving goals- a linear view of curriculum.

The curriculum is an organized set of formal education and training intentions, a development process that: identifies a philosophy, assesses student ability, considers the possible methods of instruction, implements strategies, select assessment devices, and is continually adjusted (Saylor, Alexander, & Lewis, 1981; Wiles & Boundy, 2014). The core curriculum normally includes courses that should be studied by all students [Instituti i Zhvillimit të Arsimit], 2015). Therefore, the study of curriculum matters is important for the academic success of the students. *The aim* of the study is to investigate the relationships between curriculum instruction time and students' school attitude. The quantitative research questions of the study, including: Is *there a–significant correlation between annual instruction days and students' school attitude? Is there a-significant correlation between week instruction days and students' school attitude? Is there a significant correlation between classes' instruction minutes and students' school attitude?* Meanwhile, the qualitative research question is as follows: is instruction time enough to address the aims and objectives of the competency-based curriculum in different curriculum areas?

## 2. Theoretical framework and literature review

### 2.1. Conceptual framework

Tyler (1949), as well as Taba (1962) curriculum theories were used as a basis to conceptualize a research framework for this study. Tyler and Taba curriculum approach is usually based on a plan, sometimes called a blueprint or document. Goals and objectives are specified, content and activities are sequenced to coincide with the objectives, and learning outcomes are evaluated in relation to the goals and objectives. The approach has also been called logical, conceptual- empiricist, experientialist, rational-scientific, and technocratic (Pinar, 1978). The theoretical framework is based on an extensive review of existing evidence about curriculum instruction time in schools. The research is based on relevant empirical research through ERIC, Sage, and EBSCO, using the keywords "curriculum instruction time", and "students' school attitude". Figure 1 summarizes the results from the review and proposes a set of relationships among the two constructs. Curriculum instruction time, divided as annual

instruction days, week instruction days, and classes' instruction time, is considered an independent variable, and students' school attitude is considered a dependent variable.
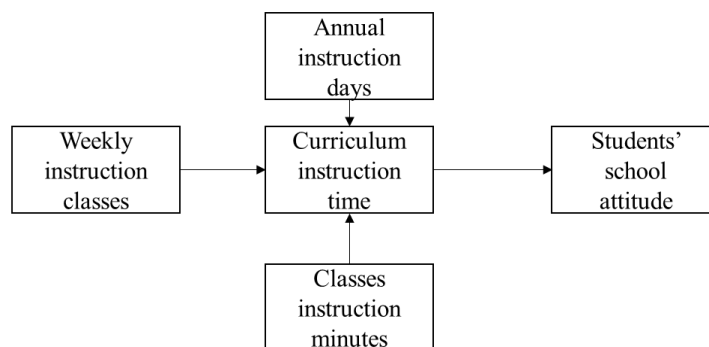


*Fig. 1. Conceptual framework*

## 2.2. *Curriculum instruction time*

An important part of the instruction time management is the logical report correlation between curriculum areas in a key stage as well as between key stages. Target curriculum, its aims, structure, courses and conceptual students' loads are based on guidelines and regulations, as well as on standards set by the authorities. Students at certain levels can make choices among a group of optional-courses of the core curriculum; on the other hand, a flexible core curriculum is included in the compulsory instruction time. In some European countries, curriculum documents include only the national curriculum framework aims and delegates teaching lesson time to local authorities or schools (Eurydice, 2016).

In many European countries, including Albania, official minimum instruction time is shorter for the first and secondary grades (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA[1]2016). In the following grades, the number of classes increases steadily with a significant increase in lower secondary education. In some European countries retain the same allocation of instruction time in primary and in lower secondary education. In many European countries, including Albania classes are held five days a week (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). In France classes are held four days a week, in Italy 6 days a week, in Germany are also held two Saturday per month. In many European countries' classes last from 40- 55 minutes, while in Albania it lasts 45 minutes. In some European countries the class varies even within an education system: (a) from 25 to 35 minutes in primary education, (b) from 35 to 45 minutes in lower secondary education, and (c) of 45- 60 minutes in upper secondary education (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). Therefore,

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it is important to keep the balance between curriculum areas instruction time in different key stages. According to the authors' point of view, variabilities in classes instruction time even with an education system is an indicator of flexibility relating to different group ages of students and may also influence students' academic success.

Foreign languages in primary education in almost all European countries constitute less than 10% of teaching time. In some European countries, foreign languages constitute more than 18% of teaching time, that include 2- 3 languages. In most European countries at lower secondary education mathematics occupies 10 to 15% of teaching time. In some European countries, mathematics constitutes up to 20% of the instruction time (Eurydice, 2016). In many European countries, including Albania, the time spent on the natural sciences and social sciences in primary education vary from 9% to 15% (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). In some European countries, the number of classes available to natural sciences constitutes the highest percentage in comparison to other areas (Eurydice, 2016). Variability between different education systems of foreign languages, mathematics, and science curriculum instruction time seems to be an indicator of different curriculum policies that reflect the priorities of different countries.

In many European countries, including Albania, physical education and arts occupy approximately 20% of total instruction time in primary education. The available time to the art curriculum area in lower secondary education is reduced in relation to the primary, remaining at no more than 10%. Some European countries gave more time to the arts curriculum field compared to other European countries (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). ICT was developed as a course in many countries within a short time, as well to promote learning as cross-curriculum skill. Most of the European countries leave some flexible classes between subjects that schools can distribute between the core curriculum classes or develop cross-curricular activities, or others (Eurydice, 2016). In some European countries' schools are free to decide on the available time of the courses, throughout compulsory education. In most of the countries, students in lower secondary education are free to choose their courses up to a point, as optional core curriculum, giving the opportunity to choose their courses from a predetermined list (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). Therefore, physical education, arts, and ICT curriculum instruction time are an important part of a student's education, although there are differences.

Instruction time distribution seems to be rooted in past and current student experience more than in their predictions for the future (Fernex, Lima, & Vries et al., 2015), on the time

dimension, extended instruction can occur within a school day or outside of it (Midkiff & Cohen-Vogel, 2015). Self-assured teachers view spent the most amount of time teaching, determined teachers view spent the most amount of time observing, and emerging teachers view spent the most amount of time in school (Krysher, Robinson & Edwards, 2015), in mathematics, as well as in English the average student received about 140 hours of instruction (Phelps, Corey, DeMonte, Harrison, & Loewenberg et al., 2012). So, instruction time allocation seems to be related to the student experience as well as to different categories of teachers.

## 2.3. Students 'school attitude

In the literature, the students 'school attitude is measured through the respective degrees of behavioural and recognition engagement. Students' school attitude has also been measured through corresponding degrees of behavioural and cognitive engagement. Although they do not use the term students' attitude towards the school, several studies focus on conceptual terms that relate and affect the student's relationship with the school (Libbey, 2004). The positive orientation toward school assessment was based on two dimensions: how much students like school and evaluated academic achievements (Jessor, Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin et al., 1995), students with a positive orientation toward school think that academic achievement is relevant to their lives (Stern, 2012). There is a significant change in the attitude of secondary school students regarding gender and instruction time (Musheer, Govil, & Gupta, 2016), the female students' attitude is more positive than male students (Ozkan, 2013). Yurdabakan and Uzunkavak (2012) revealed that a significant difference does not exist between students' attitude when grade levels and participation assessment are considered. Therefore, students' school attitude is related to behavioural and cognitive engagement, gender, as well as to grade levels, and participation.

## 2.4. The relationship between curriculum instruction time and students' school attitude

Teacher knowledge did predict teachers' time allocation plans, particularly for teachers with relatively high knowledge (Spear-Swerling & Zibulsky, 2014), limited time, the mathematics teachers readiness and the perception of courses' importance, were found to be the most influential factors that management considers when assigning instruction time (Prendergast & O'Meara, 2016). Wilson, Denise, Gottfredson, & Najaka et al. (2001) established that students readily perceived and confirmed to the low expectations meted out by the teachers. Other

documented methods of studying external, systems-level factors influencing students' school attitude include measures of reportable behaviour such as the number of clubs attended by students (Voekl, 1996), or functional outcomes such as grades (McCoach, 2002). Indeed, the low-grade point average (GPA) has been shown in and of itself to be an excellent predictor of negative students' school attitude (Jessor et al., 1995). Jessor et al. (1995) research supports this finding and speculates that a low GPA indicates a detachment from school as well as an increased sense of helplessness regarding school. Studies show that, in fact, higher levels of commitment to activities that are non-academic such as sports, community service, and extracurricular activities are positively associated with higher school bond (Jenkins, 1997). So, students' school attitude is predicted by several variables, such as time allocation, students' expectations, levels of commitments in different activities, and especially students' grades.

A significant relationship at a low linear level was observed between the academic success of the students and their attitudes towards English language skills (Acar, 2016), students' attitudes toward school are strongly related to class disciplinary problems, teachers' treatment of students, and academic interests (Lai et al., 2015). Norton (2017) found that many students had disengaged from mathematical endeavour as a result of the overemphasis on mundane mathematics resulting in some students lacking the cognitive tools to engage with the concepts and having neither the intrinsic nor instrumental motivation to persist with secondary school esoteric mathematics. Instruction time is an important factor in student achievement (Haniger, 2016; Husted, 2016), and a key educational resource (Gromada & Shewbridge, 2016). But there is no association between the elementary school start time and middle school students' academic achievement (Dupuis, 2015), and working while in high school reduces the number of time students spend doing homework (Kalenkoski & Pabilonia, 2009). Quality of the classroom learning environment and time individual students spent in specific types of instruction interacted to predict students' comprehension (Connor et al., 2014), and teachers who were more aware of student-centred activities spent less time on teacher-centred activities (Kaya, Kablan, Akaydin, & Demir et al., 2015). Therefore, instruction time allocation influences several variables, such as students' school attitudes, student's engagement in learning, students' comprehension, as well as students' academic achievement.

Based on previous research it is evidenced a lack in investigating a specific relationship between curriculum instruction time and students' school attitude, therefore: *the main purpose*

*of the study is to investigate the relationship between curriculum instruction time and student'*
*school attitude*

## 3.  Methodology

### *3.1.  Method*

The quantitative approach was the main methodology used in the study supported by the qualitative approach. The review of official documentation and observation by self-reported instruments were the techniques used in the study. Secondary data for the instruction time variable were generated by Eurydice (2016), as well as by IZHA (2016). The qualitative approach, including a review of official documentation as well as interviewing, was used to support a quantitative approach in the study. Therefore, the explanatory mixed research design was used in the study.

The matrix for review of the official documentation, the structured questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews were the instruments used in the study. The matrix for the review of the official documentation, structured questionnaires as well as semi-structured interviews contains dimensions and statements that focus on instruction time according to curriculum areas and key stages in compulsory education in Albania and in European countries. The instruments are designed, piloted and used in the study by the researcher.

### *3.2.  Sample and data collection*

. The target population of the study is a population of lower secondary education schools selected to pilot competency-based curriculum. From the target population of schools, three samples were selected: (1) sample of students, (2) sample of teachers, and (3) sample of principals. Three selected samples were cluster samples, so the different respondents were selected by the same schools. The aim was to compare the data provided by students and by teachers for quantitative approach, as well as to compare the data provided by teachers and students or quantitative data, and data provided by principals or qualitative data. A random cluster sample of students (N= 398) and a random cluster sample of teachers (N= 105) of lower secondary education were selected to be used in the study to gather quantitative data.  A breakdown of the random cluster sample of students included 222 females (55.8 per cent) and 176 males (44.2 per cent), while the teacher's sample was comprised of 78 females (74.3 per cent) and 27 males (25.7 per cent). A random cluster sample of principals (N=19) of lower

secondary education were selected to be used in the research to gather qualitative data. A breakdown of the random cluster sample of principals included 12 females (63.2%), and seven males (36.8%). Students, teachers, and principals were willing positively to answer the questions of the instruments.

### 3.3.  Analysis

The findings of the instruments were summarized in a synthetic way to use as the basis for the analysis of the findings. A descriptive statistic, as well as a bivariate correlation statistic, were used for the processing of data collected by research instruments. The inductive open coding and the typology techniques were used to analyse the qualitative data. The research questions that investigate the relationship between instruction time and students' school attitude were answered tested using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses and check of validity and reliability threatens performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity as well as to ensure the validity and reliability of qualitative results.

## 4.  Results

### 4.1.  Descriptive statistics

Curriculum instruction time includes the time that students spend in teaching in all courses included in the core curriculum or flexible core curriculum in a school or extra-curricular activity that is part of the official curriculum (Eurydice, 2012; Eurydice, 2013; Eurydice 2016).

### 4.2.  Curriculum instruction time

The following are summary data of curriculum instruction time in compulsory education in Albania vs European countries of known- flexible, partly and flexible curriculum.

Table 1.  Weekly instruction time in Albania vs European countries of non-flexible curriculum

| No | Country | Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 | Key Stage 3 | Key Stage 4 | Total- Teaching Hours per week |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | 1st- 2nd grade | 3rd- 5th grade | 6th- 7th grade | 8th- 9th grade | |
| 1 | Albania | 40.50 | 73.50 | 56.00 | 67.50 | 237.50 |
| 2 | Belgium –French Community | 57.96 | 86.94 | 62.13 | 62.13 | 269.19 |
| 3 | Belgium – German-speaking Community | 57.96 | 86.94 | 62.13 | 66.30 | 273.35 |
| 4 | Belgium – Flemish Community | 56.74 | 85.11 | 60.97 | 65.20 | 268.03 |
| 5 | Bulgaria | 27.62 | 62.52 | 52.24 | 55.62 | 197.97 |
| 6 | Denmark | 44.04 | 79.16 | 57.12 | 63.50 | 243.82 |
| 7 | Germany Grundschule + Gymnasium | 39.46 | 77.97 | 65.48 | 62.57 | 245.50 |
| 8 | Germany Grundschule + Hauptschule | 39.46 | 72.20 | 46.22 | 42.34 | 200.22 |
| 9 | Germany Grundschule + Realschule | 39.46 | 77.97 | 61.62 | 69.31 | 248.36 |
| 10 | Ireland | 43.76 | 84.39 | 56.26 | 56.26 | 240.68 |
| 11 | Greece | 39.46 | 75.30 | 53.80 | 53.80 | 222.38 |
| 12 | Spain | 59.74 | 89.61 | 65.72 | 71.70 | 286.77 |
| 13 | France | 59.00 | 88.50 | 59.71 | 67.70 | 274.89 |
| 14 | Italy | 57.46 | 91.26 | 67.60 | 61.97 | 278.27 |
| 15 | Cyprus | 57.36 | 86.04 | 59.00 | 60.64 | 263.01 |
| 16 | Latvia | 36.49 | 63.81 | 50.39 | 54.14 | 204.84 |
| 17 | Lithuania | 36.15 | 65.95 | 58.54 | 59.47 | 220.13 |
| 18 | Luxembourg | 68.82 | 103.23 | 69.03 | 69.24 | 310.33 |
| 19 | Hungary | 37.08 | 60.26 | 44.04 | 48.68 | 190.05 |
| 20 | Malta Primary + Secondary | 60.22 | 87.61 | 55.52 | 53.54 | 256.86 |
| 21 | Austria Volksschule + Allgemeinbildende Hörere Schule | 45.06 | 75.80 | 61.46 | 64.52 | 246.83 |
| 22 | Austria Volksschule + Hauptschule+ Polytechnische Schule | 45.06 | 76.82 | 60.42 | 65.54 | 247.85 |
| 23 | Portugal | 61.46 | 95.57 | 71.90 | 83.88 | 312.79 |
| 24 | Romania | 39.40 | 70.86 | 57.08 | 58.07 | 225.42 |
| 25 | Slovenia | 43.73 | 75.79 | 57.83 | 59.74 | 237.10 |
| 26 | Slovakia | 43.33 | 75.07 | 55.86 | 55.86 | 230.10 |
| 27 | Finland | 38.86 | 66.78 | 51.14 | 59.23 | 216.00 |
| 28 | United Kingdom – England | 54.48 | 91.47 | 61.63 | 62.28 | 269.84 |
| 29 | United Kingdom-Wales | 54.48 | 91.47 | 62.92 | 64.86 | 273.73 |

| 30 | United Kingdom – Northern Ireland | 38.92 | 68.11 | 58.38 | 58.38 | 223.78 |
|----|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 31 | Liechtenstein Primary + Oberschule | 48.96 | 87.90 | 67.94 | 66.91 | 271.72 |
| 32 | Turkey | 49.16 | 73.74 | 49.16 | 52.23 | 224.30 |
| European Mean | | | | 247.55 | | |

*Source: (Eurydice,2016; IZHA,2016)*

As shown in tables 1, there is a non-flexible curriculum in thirty- two other countries. There are 170 instructional days (35 weeks) per year in Albania compared to 185 days (38 weeks) that is European mean. Therefore, there is a difference of 15 instructional days (3 weeks) between Albania and European mean. In some European countries, there are 200 days (40 weeks) instruction a year; in some others, there are from 155 to 195 instructional days per year. There are 237.50 weekly instruction classes in Albania in grades 1- 9 compared to 247.55 that is European mean. Therefore, there is a difference of 10 weekly classes between Albania and European mean. 68.8% of the countries are between 185.59 weekly classes and 308.89 weekly classes (M=247.24; SD= 30.825). The minimum weekly classes are 190 and regard Hungary, and the maximum weekly classes are 313 and regard Portugal. Therefore, Albania has 47.5 more weekly classes than Hungary, and 75.5 less weekly classes than Portugal.

Table 2.  Weekly instruction time in Albania vs European countries of partly and flexible curriculum

| No | States\Grades | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | Mean |
|----|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| 33 | Czech Republic | | | 3469 | | | | 3578 | | | 240.58 |
| 34 | Estonia | 1785 | | | 2179 | | | 2520 | | | 221.36 |
| 35 | | | | | 7520 | | | | | 1205 | 297.87 |
| 36 | | 7520 | | | | | | | | 945 | 288.99 |
| 37 | Netherlands Primary + *HAVO* | | | | 7520 | | | | | 1455.00 | 306.40 |
| 38 | Netherlands Primary +*VMBO* | 1856 | | | 2453 | | | 2728 | | | 240.24 |
| 39 | | 6665 | | | | | | | | | 227.54 |
| 40 | Netherlands Primary +*VWO* | Flexible | | | | | | | | | |
| 41 | Poland | 3200 | | | | 567 | | | 1974 | | 195.99 |
| 42 | Norway | 1629 | | | | 3537 | | | 1900 | | 241.23 |

*Source: (Eurydice,2016; IZHA,2016)*

Flexible curriculum indicates instruction time allocated by the school and local authorities. As shown in table 2, there is a ½ flexible curriculum in seven countries, and a flexible curriculum in three countries.

The following are data of curriculum instruction time in Albania and in European countries according to the curriculum areas and key stages.

Table 3. Weekly instruction time according to curriculum areas and key stages in Albania vs European countries

| No | Curriculum areas | Key Stage 1 1st- 2nd grade | | Key Stage 2 3rd- 5th grade | | Key Stage 3 6th- 7th grade | | Key Stage 4 8th- 9th grade | | Total Freq. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Freq. | % | Freq. | % | Freq. | % | Freq. | % | Freq. | % |
| 1 | Literacy and foreign languages learning Albania | 16.00 | 39.60 | 25.00 | 34.10 | 16.00 | 28.60 | 16.00 | 25.80 | 73.00 | 30.74 |
| 1.1 | Literacy and foreign languages learning European Mean | 18.40 | 28.09 | 26.12 | 25.13 | 15.33 | 21.16 | 14.18 | 18.92 | 74.05 | 29.91 |
| 2 | Mathematics Albania | 8.00 | 19.80 | 12.00 | 16.30 | 8.00 | 14.30 | 8.00 | 12.90 | 36.00 | 15.16 |
| 2.1 | Mathematics European Mean | 8.90 | 13.59 | 13.43 | 12.92 | 8.19 | 11.30 | 7.61 | 10.15 | 38.14 | 15.41 |
| 3 | Natural sciences Albania | 2.00 | 4.90 | 5.00 | 6.80 | 6.00 | 10.70 | 12.00 | 19.30 | 25.00 | 10.53 |
| 3.1 | Natural sciences European Mean | 3.75 | 4.85 | 7.21 | 6.85 | 6.32 | 8.53 | 9.99 | 11.99 | 27.27 | 11.02 |
| 4 | Social studies Albania | 2.00 | 4.90 | 5.00 | 6.80 | 8.00 | 14.30 | 10.00 | 16.10 | 25.00 | 10.53 |
| 4.1 | Social studies European Mean | 1.96 | 2.99 | 5.37 | 5.17 | 6.11 | 8.43 | 6.97 | 9.30 | 20.41 | 8.24 |
| 5 | Physical education Albania | 6.00 | 14.80 | 9.00 | 12.20 | 6.00 | 10.70 | 9.00 | 9.70 | 30.00 | 12.63 |
| 5.1 | Physical education European Mean | 4.71 | 7.19 | 7.22 | 6.94 | 4.82 | 6.65 | 4.13 | 5.51 | 20.89 | 8.44 |
| 6 | Arts education Albania | 4.50 | 11.10 | 7.50 | 10.20 | 5.00 | 8.90 | 4.00 | 6.50 | 21.00 | 8.84 |
| 6.1 | Arts education European Mean | 5.11 | 7.80 | 8.18 | 7.87 | 5.09 | 7.02 | 4.09 | 5.46 | 22.48 | 9.08 |
| 7 | Technology and ICT Albania | 0.00 | 0.00 | 4.00 | 5.40 | 3.00 | 5.40 | 2.00 | 3.20 | 9.00 | 3.79 |
| 7.1 | Technology and ICT European Mean | 1.09 | 1.66 | 3.21 | 3.09 | 4.06 | 5.60 | 3.48 | 4.64 | 11.83 | 4.78 |
| 8 | Optional curriculum Albania | 2.00 | 4.90 | 6.00 | 8.20 | 4.00 | 7.10 | 6.50 | 6.50 | 18.50 | 7.79 |
| 8.1 | Optional curriculum European Mean | 2.87 | 4.08 | 3.98 | 3.83 | 4.92 | 4.54 | 8.84 | 10.46 | 20.61 | 8.33 |
| 9 | Total Albania | 40.50 | 100.00 | 73.50 | 100.00 | 56.00 | 100.00 | 67.50 | 100.00 | 237.50 | 100.00 |
| 9.1 | Total European Mean | 47.88 | 100.00 | 77.96 | 100.00 | 58.90 | 100.00 | 62.77 | 100.00 | 247.55 | 100.00 |

*Source: (Eurydice,2016; IZHA,2016)*

As shown in table 3, there are small differences between Albania and European mean of different curriculum areas 'weekly instruction time, although there are differences through key stages. 30.74% of the weekly instruction time is allocated for literacy and foreign

languages in grades 1-9 in Albania compared to 29.91% that is European mean. 15.16% is allocated for mathematics in Albania compared to 15.41% that is European mean. There are no differences in natural sciences, social studies, arts, technology and optional curriculum in Albania compared to European mean. Therefore, there is a little difference in weekly instruction time on curriculum areas between Albania and European mean.

## 4.3. Students' school attitude

Table 4. Frequency values of students' school attitude

**Students' school attitude**

|  |  | Students | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Frequency | Per cent | Frequency | Per cent |
|  |  | **Students** | | **Teachers** | |
| N | Valid |  | 398 |  | 105 |
|  | missing |  | 0 |  | 0 |
|  | very dissatisfied | 47 | 11.81 | 8 | 7.62 |
|  | moderately dissatisfied | 69 | 17.34 | 15 | 14.29 |
|  | slightly dissatisfied | 89 | 22.36 | 19 | 18.10 |
|  | slightly satisfied | 88 | 22.11 | 21 | 20.00 |
|  | moderately satisfied | 76 | 19.10 | 26 | 24.76 |
|  | very satisfied | 29 | 7.29 | 16 | 15.24 |
|  | Total | 398 | 100.0 | 105 | 100.0 |

As shown in table 4, there are 4.19% more students than teachers very dissatisfied, 3.05% more students than teachers moderately dissatisfied, 4.26% more students than teachers slightly dissatisfied on students' school attitude. There are 2.11% more students than teachers slightly satisfied, 5.66% more teachers than students moderately satisfied, 7.95% more teachers than students very satisfied with the students' school attitude. Considering three levels indicates that 29.15% of students and 21.91% of teachers claimed low level, 44.47% of students, and 38.1% of teachers claimed medium level, 26.39% of students, and 40% of teachers claimed a high level of students' school attitude. The differences between students

and teachers' perceptions, especially in low and high levels of students' school attitude indicate that there is not a required positive students' school attitude.

### 4.4. Inferential statistics

Research question: Is there a significant correlation between annual instruction days and students' school attitude?

Table 5. Pearson correlation outputs between annual instruction days and students' school attitude

**Correlations**

| | | Students | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Students' school attitude | Annual instruction days | Students' school attitude | Annual instruction days |
| Students' school attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.307 | 1 | -.236 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .002 | | .004 |
| | N | 398 | 398 | 105 | 105 |
| Annual instruction days | Pearson Correlation | -.307 | 1 | -.236 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .002 | | .004 | |
| | N | 398 | 398 | 105 | 105 |

The Likert scale questionnaire was used to measure the students' school attitude by students and teachers. As shown in table 5 there is a low, negative correlation between annual instruction days and students' school attitude, $r = -.307$, $n = 398$, $p < .005$ according to students, as well as according to teachers, $r = -.236$, $n = 105$, $p < .005$, with high levels of annual instruction days associated with lower levels of students' school attitude. The value of correlation means that increasing annual instruction days values would result in decreasing of students' school attitude values, although there are small but not significant differences between students and teachers' perceptions. The result was consistent with previously reported work by (Jessor et al., 1995; Wilson et al., 2001; Voekl, 1996; McCoach, 2002). In conclusion, *there is not a significant correlation between annual instruction days and students' school attitude.*

Research question: Is there a significant correlation between week instruction days and students' school attitude?

Table 6. Pearson correlation outputs between weekly instruction classes and students' school attitude

**Correlations**

|  |  | Students | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Students' school attitude | Weekly instruction classes | Students' school attitude | Weekly instruction classes |
| Students' school attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .231 | 1 | .331 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .000 |  | .001 |
|  | N | 398 | 398 | 105 | 105 |
| Weekly instruction classes | Pearson Correlation | .231 | 1 | .331 | 1 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |  | .001 |  |
|  | N | 398 | 398 | 105 | 105 |

As shown in table 6 there is a low, positive correlation between weekly instruction classes and students' school attitude, r = .231, n = 398, p < .005 according to students, as well as according to teachers, r = .331, n = 105, p < .005, with high levels of weekly instruction classes associated with high levels of students' school attitude. The value of correlation means that increasing week instruction classes' values would result in increasing of student's school attitude values, although there are small but not significant differences between students and teachers' perceptions. The result was consistent with previously reported work by (Gromada & Shewbridge, 2016; Kalenkoski & Pabilonia, 2009). In conclusion, *there is a significant correlation between weekly instruction classes and students' school attitude*.

Research question: Is there a significant correlation between classes' instruction minutes and students' school attitude?

Table 7. Pearson correlation outputs between classes' instruction minutes and students' school attitude

**Correlations**

|  |  | Students | | Teachers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | Students' school attitude | Classes instruction minutes | Students' school attitude | Classes instruction minutes |
| Students' school attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .337 | 1 | .445 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .001 |  | .004 |
|  | N | 398 | 398 | 105 | 105 |
| Classes instruction minutes | Pearson Correlation | .337 | 1 | .445 | 1 |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 |  | .004 |  |
|  | N | 398 | 398 | 105 | 105 |

As shown in table 7 there is a medium, positive correlation between classes instruction minutes and students' school attitude, r = .337, n = 398, p < .005 according to students, as well as according to teachers, r = .445, n = 105, p < .005 with high levels of classes instruction minutes associated with high levels of positive students' school attitude. The value of correlation means that increasing of classes' instruction minute's values would result in increasing of students' school attitude values, although there are small but not significant differences between students and teachers' perceptions. The result was consistent with previously reported works (Jenkins, 1997; Acar, 2016; Haniger, 2016; Husted, 2016). In conclusion, *there is a significant correlation between classes' instruction minutes and students' school attitude*.

## 5.  Results of interviews

Almost all the principals (92.78%) claimed that instruction time is almost enough to address the aims and objectives of the competency-based curriculum, although there are differences to European countries. Meanwhile, nearly all the principals (89.97%) claimed that there is a positive students' school attitude; meanwhile, there are sporadic negative attitudes shown by students. More than two-thirds of principals (76,35%) indicate that the instruction time planned for natural sciences may contain more classes available after the concepts of this field require more work by teachers and students to be learned. One of the principals that teaches science at school pointed out that: "Natural sciences contain more difficult terms or concepts compared to social sciences, humanities, etc. We, as teachers of this field, do not have much time to explain clearly, and in more details these concepts. We need more classes to use, especially for laboratory work, such as experiments, surveys, etc.".

Around two- thirds of respondents claimed that physical education might include fewer hours at their disposal and might support more with sports areas and necessary didactics. One of the principals emphasized that "There is a very little sport area at my school. At the same time, there is an increase in physical education classes. Where can teachers of physical education spend their classes at these conditions? Therefore, the educational institution should think about sports areas as well as about other equipment to support physical education". However, the principals pointed out that there is a negative relationship between annual instruction days and students' school attitude, but there is a positive relationship between week and classes' instruction time and students' school attitude. Therefore, qualitative results support quantitative outputs.

## 6.  Conclusions and implications

One main limitation of the study as part of the conclusions is that the study does not include the influence of teaching or other variables on students' school attitude. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationships between curriculum instruction time and positive student's school attitude. The prior assumption was that the curriculum instruction time influence on students' school attitude.

The results showed that there are differences of annual, weekly, days, and classes instruction time between European countries and Albania. This conclusion is supported by prior research. Therefore, in many European countries, the minimum instruction time is shorter for the first

and secondary grades, meanwhile, in the following grades, the number of classes increases steadily (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). In many countries also, classes are held five days a week, and classes last from 40- 55 minutes (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). Therefore, Albanian education institutions should consider decreasing the difference between annual, weekly, and classes time similarly to the most European education systems. There are little differences in literacy and foreign languages, as well as in mathematics, natural and social sciences, arts, technology, and optional curriculum on annual and weekly instruction time between Albania and European mean. This conclusion is consistent with previous work. Therefore, in some European countries, foreign languages constitute more than 18% of teaching time, mathematics constitutes up to 20%, the natural and social sciences vary from 9% to 15% (Eurydice, 2016; IZHA, 2016). Therefore, the educational institutions should keep the balance between curriculum areas instruction time in different key stages. Thus, Albanian institutions of education should consider decreasing the difference in the distribution of annual and weekly instruction time in these curriculum areas in Albania compared to most European education systems.

The results showed that there is a relatively non-required students' school attitude in lower secondary education. Therefore teacher, principals, as well as educational institutions, should consider addressing students' school attitude to influence students' motivation and self-interest. The study confirmed that annual instruction days influence negatively on students' school attitude. Meanwhile, the study results noted that week instruction days and classes instruction minutes influence positively on students' school attitude. This conclusion is supported by other research. Therefore, there is a significant change in the attitude of school students regarding instruction time (Musheer, Govil, & Gupta, 2016). Instruction time is an important factor in student achievement (Haniger, 2016; Husted, 2016), and a key educational resource (Gromada & Shewbridge, 2016). Quality of the classroom learning environment and time individual students spent in specific types of instruction interacted to predict students' comprehension (Connor et al., 2014). Therefore, Albanian education institutions should consider reducing annual instruction days to influence students' motivation and interest.

The results of this study supported by other researchers about the importance of curriculum instruction time have important implications for future research. Such research should investigate different school variables and their relation to curriculum instruction time and to students' school attitude. The results of the study also have important implications for

practice. Significant interventions in curriculum design, as well as in students' school attitude, should be designed and developed to support students' school attitude.

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