

Analysis of Interview Data

To analyse the interview data we had to develop a record for each interviewee by making use of the transcripts. There was a fixed structure of questions (see http://ucy.ac.cy/esf/documents/Analysis_of_Data/Analysis_of_Interviews_with_the_Stakeholders/Structure_of_the_interview.pdf) and each researcher had to complete the following table about the views of the interviewee. First of all we had to put down what his/her position/job was and how many years of experience he/she had and then complete the record sheet (see Table 1) by using the guidelines given by the research team which are presented below.

GUIDELINES FOR ANALYSING THE INTERVIEW DATA

Through the analysis of the interview data, we need to have a record for each interviewee. For each interviewee, we aim to find out what his/her view is in regard to each factor of the dynamic model. Specifically, three different types of information we need to have. First, we like to know what the status of the school policy is (column 2). In regard to the status of the policy we see five different categories that show for each aspect of each factor whether:

- a) there is *no policy* (0),
- b) there is *no clear policy* (1)
- c) the policy is clear but schools are only *encouraged* to implement it (2)
- d) the policy is clear and schools are required to implement it (3)
- e) schools are not only required but there is also a control mechanism that ensures that the policy is implemented (4)

Second, we like to have a score for each dimension of each aspect of the factor (columns 3-6). This type of information is obviously relevant when there is a policy. Below you can see the four dimensions (i.e., stage, focus, quality and differentiation) looking at qualitative characteristics of the factor that we should use to classify the policy for each aspect of the system level factors included in the dynamic model.

- a) **Quality:** We would like to know whether the policy is in line with the assumptions of the dynamic model. For each factor we give below explanations when the policy is in line with the dynamic model and how to code the policy.
- b) **Focus:** We would like to have a measure about the specificity of the policy (i.e., to know if the policy is too specific or too general). None of the two extreme points are seen as helpful so both of them get the code 0. There is also the option that the interviewees' comments show that the policy is neither too specific nor too general (code 1). Thus,

some guidelines are given but the professional autonomy of the school stakeholders is respected and schools are encouraged to identify their own ways to deal with the problem.

- c) **Stage:** In regard to this dimension, we expect you to find out if the system from time to time attempts to redefine the policy and/or take decisions in order to adopt the policy to the special problems the schools are facing (code 1). If the policy was established too many years ago and never reconsidered give a 0 score. For example if the policy has been established five years ago and since then never redefined give a code 0.
- d) **Differentiation:** It examines whether the policy is expected to be implemented in the same way by all the stakeholders that are addressed (code 0) or if the special characteristics of some groups are taken into account and are therefore expected to implement the policy in a different way from others (code 1). When differentiation is observed we expect to see its positive way of functioning. For example, special resources might be provided to schools that need them most (i.e., schools in disadvantaged areas) or special arrangements for training younger teachers are available.

Third, we need to know if there are some aspects of policy associated with each factor that are not covered by the interview but are relevant to the factor. This type of information comes from their answers to specific follow-up questions (see the first follow-up question after question 1d). If the interviewee refers to specific aspects these have to be mentioned in the record that you are expected to produce for each interview (see Table 1).

Beyond these three types of information we will also need to record some background information about the interviewee such as his/her role/position/status in the system (e.g., inspector, civil servant in the ministry etc.) and his/her years of experience in this position.

Finally, we would like to remind you that we are interested on what the policy makers believe that the policy is and not on their views of the appropriateness of the policy. For us it will also be important to compare the data that emerged from the interviews to see if the policy makers agree among themselves about the way their educational system is functioning and use the data in the multilevel analysis.

Below you can find some more specific information on how the analysis of each question is expected to be done. An issue that needs special attention is when the policy for each factor is seen as in line with the dynamic model (quality dimension).

Questions 1a – 1d; Quantity of teaching

These four questions are concerned with the quantity of teaching and we like to know the status of the policy for each aspect of this factor {i.e., teacher absenteeism (1a), student absenteeism (1b), drop out (1c), long and short term planning (1d)} and give a code for each dimension. In the case of quality dimension: policy in regard to each aspect is expected not only to reduce the phenomenon (code 1) but also to help schools find ways to replace the lost teaching time (code 2). You may found out that

in some cases the policy may not refer at all to the importance of reducing lost teaching time or replacing the lost time but may deal with administrative issues (code 0) that may not help schools maximise the use of teaching time.

In regard to his/her responses to the follow-up question, you need to put down the type of aspects that are covered and for each of them (if any) to give information about the status of the policy and a score for each dimension.

Question 2a – 2b: Quality of teaching

In regard to the quality dimension of the quality of teaching factor we simply need to know whether and if so how many teacher factors are covered. If only structuring is referred give 1 as a score for the relevant aspect of quality of teaching. So at the end we will get a number from 0 to 12 indicating how many teaching factors are covered. The list of factors is shown in question 2b.

Question 3a-3f: Opportunity to learn factor

The quality dimension of this factor is concerned with the extent to which each aspect of the factor (e.g., guidelines for extracurricular activities) aims to ensure that opportunities to help students learn are offered and this is done in a way that does not reduce the teaching time offered to the official curriculum (code 1).

Question 4a-4b: Teacher collaboration and networking

In this case, we would like to know that teacher collaboration and school networking aims to help teachers/school stakeholders learn from each other. In this way the teaching practice or the school learning environment may be improved (code 1). If collaboration only aims to build better relations among teachers then you give 0.

Questions 5a – 6e: Partnership and use of resources

If a positive answer to each question is given then put 1 to the quality dimension (if not then put 0). This does not apply to question 6d which aims to find out if other actions not mentioned in the interview are taken by the system.

Question 7a – 7e: Evaluation

In this part you can see that specific questions that refer to each dimension of the factor.

In regard to the status of evaluation a similar approach is used in recording the interview data. A score from 0 to 4 has to be given and the coding is as follows:

- **0** stands in case that there is no attempt to conduct any evaluation in regard to each aspect mentioned by questions 7a to 7c. (no evaluation)

- **1** stands in case that there is no systematic (clear) attempt to evaluate schools/reforms/system (no systematic evaluation)
- **2** is given when evaluation takes place but stakeholders are only encouraged to take into account the findings of the evaluation (encouraged to take them into account)
- **3** is given when evaluation takes place and stakeholders must take into account the findings of the evaluation either for formative or for summative reasons (required to take them into account)
- **4** in case the evaluation takes place and stakeholders are not only expected to take into account the evaluation results but there is also a mechanism to check if the results have been taken into account (hold accountable for using evaluation data)

In regard to the quality dimension we need to have information about the purpose of evaluation. A score from 0 to 1 should be given. Give 1 if the evaluation is done for formative reasons and 0 if it done for summative reasons. For example under question 7b we expect to see if the evaluation data were used to improve the policy. If the system attempts to achieve both formative and summative using the same instruments then give a 0 score since we know from the literature that the two purposes cannot be achieved by using a single system. Next to each aspect of the evaluation put a number to indicate how many sources of data are used. This is an indication of the quantitative dimension so the number has to be put only on the first column.

Table 1. Record-sheet for the analysis of the interview data

Interviewee:Position of the interviewee:

Years of Experience

Aspects of each factor covered	Status	Quality	Focus	Stage	Differentiation
Quantity of Teaching					
Teacher absenteeism (Q1a)					
Student absenteeism (Q1b)					
Dropout (Q1c)					
Long and short term planning (Q1d)					
<i>Other aspects covered (please describe):</i>					
Quality of Teaching					
Pedagogy (Q2a and Q3a aspect c)					
Standards of teaching (Q2b)					
<i>Other aspects covered (please describe):</i>					
Opportunity to learn					
Differentiation of teaching (Q3c)					
Textbooks (Q3d)					
Extracurricular activities (Q3e)					
Students with special needs (Q3f)					
<i>Other aspects covered (please describe):</i>					
Collaboration among teachers					
Teacher collaboration (Q4a)					
Networking (Q4b)					
<i>Other aspects covered (please describe):</i>					
Resources					
Educational resources (Q5a)					
Initial training (Q5c)					
In-service training (Q5d)					
<i>Other aspects covered (please describe):</i>					

Partnership					
Active participation of parents (Q5b)					
Providing information to parents (Q6b)					
Learning opportunities for parents (Q6c)					
Relations with wider community (Q6d)					
Using community resources for teaching (Q6e)					
Evaluation					
School Evaluation (Q7a)					
Evaluation of reforms (Q7b)					
Evaluation of the system (q7c)					

Notes:

1) For *Status* the coding is from 0 to 4.

Specifically the coding is:

- **0** in case there is no policy in regard to a specific aspect of a factor.
- **1** in case there is no clear policy
- **2** in case the policy is clear but schools are only encouraged to implement it
- **3** in case the policy is clear and schools are required to implement it
- **4** in case schools are not only required to implement the policy but also there is a control mechanism that ensures that the policy is implemented.

However, in the case of the factor concerned with “evaluation” the coding is:

- **0** in case there is no attempt to conduct any evaluation in regard to each aspect mentioned. (no evaluation)
- **1** in case there is no systematic (clear) attempt to evaluate schools/reforms/system (no systematic evaluation)
- **2** in case evaluation takes place but stakeholders are only encouraged to take into account the findings of the evaluation (encouraged to take them into account)
- **3** in case evaluation takes place and stakeholders must take into account the findings of the evaluation (required to take them into account)
- **4** in case the evaluation takes place and stakeholders are not only expected to take into account the evaluation results but there is also a mechanism to check if the results have been taken into account (hold accountable for using evaluation data)

2) For *Quality* the coding is from 0 to 1:

- **0** in case the policy is *not* in line with the assumptions of the dynamic model
- **1** in case the policy *is in line* with the assumptions of the dynamic model.

However, in the case of the factor concerned with “quality of teaching” we need a number from 0-12 to indicate how many teacher factors are covered (for the list of teacher factors see question2b).

3) For *Focus* the coding is from **0** to 1

- 0 in case the policy is too specific or too general
- 1 in case the policy is neither too specific nor too general.

4) For **Stage** the coding is from 0 to 1:

- 0 in case the policy was established too many years ago and has never been reconsidered
- 1 in case the policy is redefined and adapted to the special problems the schools are facing.

5) For **Differentiation** the coding is from 0 to 1:

- 0 in case the policy is expected to be implemented in the same way by all the stakeholders that are addressed

- 1 in case the special characteristics of some groups are taken into account and are therefore expected to implement the policy in a different way than others.