

CRITICAL THINKING AND THE KOSOVAN EDUCATORS' VIEWS AND BELIEFS ABOUT EDUCATION, TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EDA VULA
MERITA SHALA

Abstract – *The purpose of the study has been to analyse the changes in the attitudes and beliefs of Kosovan educators about the aims of schooling, teaching, teachers' roles and their professional development as a result of their participation in the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) programme. The participants in the study were 56 educators (out of a total of 188 who attended the sixth training round of RWTC) from various educational centres in Kosovo. The data was collected by means of an identical questionnaire that was administered to the teachers at the beginning (to reveal their pre-training attitudes and beliefs) and at the end of their training (to reveal their post-training attitudes and beliefs). An analysis of the data shows that prior to training teachers mostly viewed teaching as imparting knowledge, the aim of schooling as educating and teaching the younger generations, the role of the teacher as an idea-generator and a dominant figure, and professional development as completing further education and keeping abreast with professional literature (all of which show attitudes expressed in very general terms). On the other hand, in the second group of responses, the participants' attitudes are now more specific and complete, revealing a view of teaching as a very complex activity. For instance, according to the teachers' post-training views, the aim of the school is to educate and teach the new generations by using contemporary methods, to shape individuals who can think for themselves, who can reason, produce and create in a very productive way. Again, professional development is seen as an on-going movement toward professional perfection by following the contemporary achievements in the field of education, attending various seminars, etc.*

Introduction

Behind every school, every teacher and every student, stands a series of beliefs, a philosophy that affects what the students will learn, what the role of the teacher is and what the aims of education are (Sadker & Sadker, 1988). Some believe that schools must prepare citizens to be able to cope in the present society; others think that the main tenet of a good education is perfectionism in the study of academic subjects.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes are powerful and significant determinants of the way they view their role as educators. These beliefs are guides and determiners for classroom decisions and, quite simply, for attitudes toward schooling, teaching, learning and students (Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992). Because beliefs are a part of identity, and therefore arguably also socially constructed, and because of their role in teaching and learning, we think that it is very important to assess beliefs and changes in beliefs.

After the Kosovo War (1996-1999), the Kosovan education system entered a transition period. All educators know that in order to join developed countries, we need to build a new education system, where the aim of education is to 'transform the classroom into a lively environment, where rather than supplying information, education focuses on cultivating in students the skills of seeking and researching for information, discussing issues from various viewpoints and analysing them, identifying problems and working collaboratively for their solution' (Musai, 2003, p. 9; translated from original Albanian). According to Piaget (1995; cited in Musai, 1998):

'The main aim of education is to create people that are able to do new things, and not simply repeat what other generations have done – people who are creative, inventors, and discoverers. The second aim of education is to form minds that are critical, that can verify, rather than simply accept everything that is offered to them.' (p. 49)

Consequently, schools in Kosovo today aim to develop all aspects of the students' personalities in order to enable them to cope with any obstacles and difficulties they might encounter in their life.

Toward this development, the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) programme, which is supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), is one of the projects that aim to enhance the professional development of educators. The RWCT programme is a joint initiative of the Open Society Institute and the International Reading Organisation. The implementation of this programme in Kosovo began in October 2000 under the auspices of the Kosovo Education Centre, one of the first and the strongest NGOs that are active in the field of education.

The RWCT programme aims to promote the development of critical thinking in the classroom and to create students that are able to learn throughout their lives. Toward this end, it equips teachers with instructional methods that will encourage the following activities in classrooms: active inquiry, student-initiated learning, problem solving, critical thinking, cooperative learning, writing and reading processes, and alternative assessments. These interactive methods of teaching aim to prepare students for active citizenship.

RWCT training, which is not limited to specific subject areas, focuses on the learning process rather than the educational content. It is designed as an in-service programme that applies to educators at each grade level from primary school to post-secondary education.

The RWCT programme aims to transform schools into centres of intellectual encouragement and thinking, into places that promote new thinking, broad-based participation, and cultivate *critical thinking*. It is based on the idea that democratic practices in schools play an important role in the transition toward more open societies

In the last decade, in many countries in which the RWCT programme is present, it has been shown to exert a great impact not only on the teaching and learning process, but also on teachers' lives. One of the conclusions reached Pupovci & Taylor's (2003) study, which evaluated the RWCT programme in Kosovo, was that the participation of teachers in the programme has had a significant impact on classroom teaching in particular and the school environment in general. Again, it has been shown that RWCT is a case model of transformative professional development programmes. For it has a great impact in transforming practices and practitioners, enhancing and enriching the lives of teachers, their colleagues and their students (Musai & Wile, 2004).

An overview of the educational context in Kosovo

The rapid rates of change and the enormous development of the information technology are creating a new world for teachers. In Kosovo, this rate of change has given rise to a renewed interest in the whole education system.

In the post-war period (i.e., after 1999), the UN became an important part of life in Kosovo. Through the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, the Department of Education and Science (DES) – which is a joint governing institution manned by international and local staff – was put in charge of managing all education-related issues in Kosovo. Initially, the DES was involved in the supervision of work that aimed to ensure the facilities necessary for a normal teaching and learning process. But later it laid the foundation for reform and reconstruction of the education system in conformity with European standards.

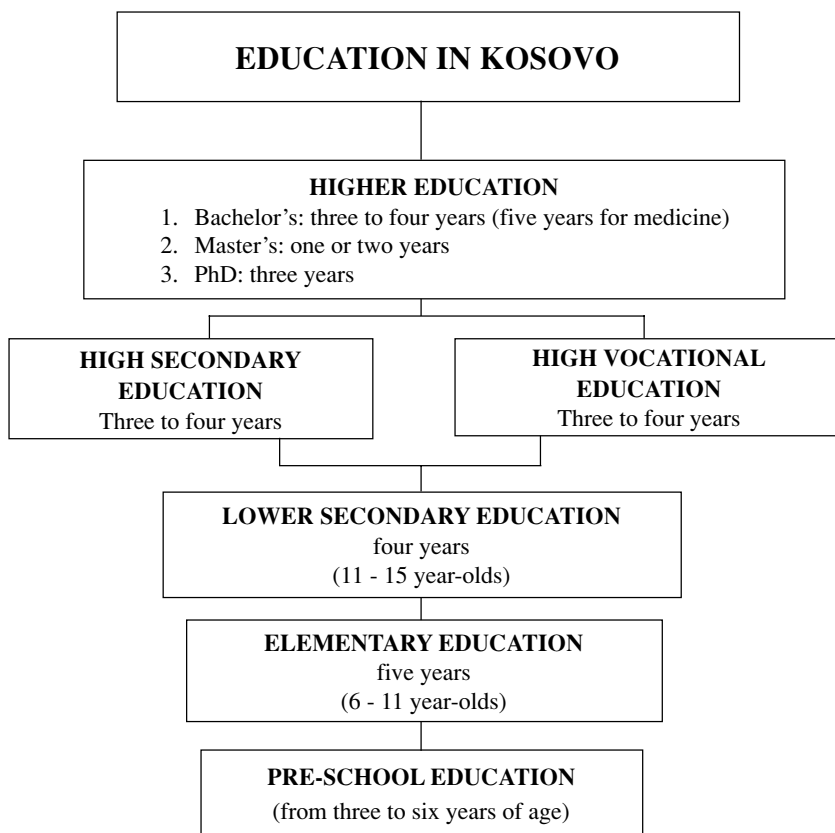
The period 2000-2001 was focused on the preparation of the necessary legal and professional infrastructure for the establishment of a new system of general, vocational and higher education. It was decided to have a new education scheme (see Figure 1), establish standards in education, develop the general education curricula for levels 1, 2 and 3, and adopt the Provisional Status of the University of Prishtina. These initiatives constituted a new structure of administrative and

professional organisation (the initial phase of the implementation of the Bologna agreement).

Parallel to these changes, some aspects of educational development – such as, teacher training, special education, curriculum development, evaluation and standards, vocational education and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of school buildings – were placed under the care of local and international agencies.

The process to establishment the educational system reached a zenith in March 2002 with the foundation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST). The Ministry is in charge of the development of the new educational system which aims to integrate the new Kosovo society into all the regional and European developments and mechanisms.

FIGURE 1: The structure of the educational system in Kosovo



What characterises this period of Kosovo education in general is that the push for change has come from the within the teacher ranks. It is precisely this ‘critical mass’ of teachers which still continues to serve as a community of change agents in schools and other educational institutions in Kosovo.

The purpose of the study

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) programme has entered its sixth year of implementation in Kosovo, During this period, over 2000 educators, representing all levels of the education system, have participated in its seminars and other related events. Apart from the benefits imparted on the participants and their schools (see Pupovci & Taylor, 2003), some of the teaching techniques proposed by this programme are now widely applied by many other teachers who have not been direct participants of the seminars that were organised within the framework of the project.

However, we were here interested to find out what effect, if at all, this programme has had on the lives of the participating teachers themselves. It is known that on-going efforts to be innovative and to improve the quality of education are closely linked with the teachers’ efforts to change their beliefs and views about school, teaching and their own professional development in general. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify and analyse the impact of the RWCT programme on teachers’ beliefs and attitudes. In particular, the study was intended to seek answers to the following two questions:

- What were the pre-RWCT attitudes (beliefs) of the Kosovo teachers with regard to the aim of education, the teachers’ role, teaching and professional development?
- Have these pre-RWCT attitudes (beliefs) changed as a direct consequence of the said programme?

Also due to the fact that this is the sixth year of the implementation of the RWCT programme in our country, our hypothesis is that this programme has a positive impact, albeit not necessarily evident, on teachers’ beliefs and attitudes toward the aim of education, teachers’ role, teaching and professional development.

The participants

The participants in the study are primary and secondary school teachers in Kosovo who were trained by the sixth RWCT programme. Out of a total of 188 participating teachers in this specific programme, coming from all the RWCT

centres in Kosovo, we selected a sample of 56 teachers for our study. All the 188 participants in the programme completed the questionnaire at the beginning of their training. In order to select a comprehensive and representative sample of study participants we took into account the first part of this questionnaire which included the following information: gender, age, experience, qualifications and class level taught. At this stage we did not conduct an analysis of the second part of the questionnaire. Similarly, although all the 188 programme participants again completed the second round of this questionnaire, we only eventually analysed the responses given by the previously selected sample of teachers.

We familiarised all the 188 participants of the sixth RWCT programme with the purpose of the study without however revealing that only part of them would actually be selected for it. Both at the beginning of the first RWCT training session and at the end of the last training session, they completed the questionnaire of their own free will and individually. Our purpose was to create an environment that is reliable and equal for all, thus obtaining the most realistic data possible.

In the selected sample, 25 participants are male and 31 are female. They come moreover from various levels of the education system: 23 teach in primary education, 18 in junior high education, and 15 in high schools. The selected teachers also come from the various RWCT centres in Kosovo: Peja (from the 32 programme participants in this centre, we selected 8 for the study), Prizren (30, 8), Podujeva (30, 10), Bec (32, 11), Vushtri (33, 7) and Lipjan (31, 12). While 23 of the study participants work in urban schools, the remaining 33 work in rural schools.

The teachers in the study varied in their academic qualifications: 32 graduated from Higher Pedagogical Schools, 19 completed their university studies in respective faculties, and 4 had finished the Normal School¹. Their ages range from 24 years (the youngest participant in the programme) to 55 years (the oldest participant in the study). The average age of the male participants is 41.8 years, while the average age of the female participants is 39.5 years. With regard to teaching experience, the range is from 8 months (the least experienced) to 34 years old (the most experienced), with a mean of 15 years experience.

The research method

The study was carried out over a period of time during which the teachers were trained within the framework of the RWCT programme. The purpose of the RWCT training is to integrate two important components: the philosophy of critical thinking and the practical implementation of this philosophy in the teaching and learning process. The underlying notion is that this combination has

a positive effect on teachers' attitudes (beliefs) toward teaching, schools, teachers' roles and their professional development.

The study data was collected by means of an identical questionnaire that was completed by the teachers at two specific instances during the programme. The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

- The first part was designed to provide information about the individual profile of each participant. They were asked in fact to indicate gender, age, academic qualifications, level of education, where they teach, and years of teaching experience. The aim of collecting this information was to develop a body of quantitative data on the basis of which to select the sample.
- The second part consisted of four open-ended questions (see the 'results section') which concern teachers' beliefs and attitudes about teaching, the aim of education, teachers' roles and their professional development. The aim of this part was to provide qualitative data, the analysis of which would address the main purpose of this study.

As with all research, our study is conditioned by a number of limitations. From among these limitations, we would like to highlight the following four:

- (i) Given the nature of our qualitative study, the results reported below cannot be generalised to the larger teacher population in Kosovo.
- (ii) The fact that the participants have not had any kind of training before could have contributed to create in them a disposition for changes in their beliefs.
- (iii) Both researchers are very closely related with the WRCT programme. This may have unduly influenced the participants. To limit researcher bias, we used colleagues to provide feedback from other WRCT centres in Kosovo.
- (iv) The participants had been familiarised at the beginning of their training with the purpose of the study.

The data analysis

Having hypothesised that changes in teachers were to be expected as a result of their participation in the programme, we decided to consider the data collected from the 'pre-RWCT training questionnaire' as an indication of teachers' pre-

training attitudes and beliefs, and the data collected from the ‘post-RWCT training questionnaire’ as an indication of their attitudes and beliefs following the training programme. The differences, if any, between phase one and phase two of the data collection were thus taken to evidence changes in teachers as a result of their participation in the training programme.

Inductive analysis was used (see Patton, 1990). This consists of exploring the significance of sentences, parts of sentences or propositions that express an attitude (belief) in order to identify the meanings of teachers’ responses. The analysis followed this procedure:

- (i) All the responses were read carefully. Each significant statement that was in any way related to schooling, teaching, teachers and their professional development was singled out, collected and categorised (in a hierarchical system by category and sub-category according to content and relevance). This categorisation led to what we are calling ‘primary attitudes’ and ‘secondary attitudes’;
- (ii) The responses were then grouped by question and the data collection phase in which they were obtained (e.g., first question – first phase, etc.);
- (iii) For each group of responses, a definition of the primary and secondary attitudes (beliefs) was given, and a record of the frequency of the responses was kept;
- (iv) The expected changes in primary and secondary attitudes between pre-training and post-training were identified by comparing the content and frequency of the responses given during the two data collection phases. Thus, for each of the four questions, there were two sets of data (e.g., first question: first data collection phase and second data collection phase).

The results

Question one: what does teaching mean to you?

The results obtained from the analysis of the pre-training data collected describe teaching as a process of offering new knowledge, of transmitting knowledge from the teacher to the students. Teaching is seen in fact as closely related to the broadening of students’ knowledge, the development of their skill and awareness, and interpretation of knowledge. The overriding idea is that the

teaching process, which is perceived as not being overtaxing, is clear and its ultimate goal is the internalisation of the curriculum by the students. This was a typical comment:

For me teaching is giving my knowledge to my students so that they will broaden and improve their knowledge.

One characteristic here is a series of secondary attitudes (beliefs) with a wide distribution of low frequency responses. These attitudes relate mainly to teaching in terms of lecturing, satisfaction and privilege, and present teaching as a great social and national responsibility, a challenge and a necessity.

The data collected from the post-training group of responses reveals the new attitudes (beliefs) held by the teachers. Interestingly enough, the post-training responses present the process of teaching as an 'educational value', a complex activity and an important social process. Another belief that constantly emerged in the second set of responses is that teaching is the process of enabling students by developing their knowledge, skills and abilities. Likewise, post-training responses present learning as a lifelong process and teaching as the means to help students create independent views and find their own way in life. The following comment captures this significant shift in teachers' attitudes with regard to the first question:

Teaching is a very complex activity of special importance; it is a process by means of which students are helped to find their own way in life.

An attitude (belief) that emerged from the second data collection phase is that teaching means 'to give and receive knowledge'. This idea equates teaching to learning, and as such teachers appear unable to conceive one without the other. It is worth noting that the pre-training secondary attitudes (beliefs) see a considerable drop in frequency, and some of them even totally disappear, in the second set of data. The results of question one are summarised in Table 1.

Question two: what is the purpose of education?

The analysis of the data obtained from the pre-training responses reveals the overwhelming notion that the main purpose of schooling is 'to educate and teach students'. Closely linked to it is the idea that school serves to 'prepare students for life', which is in turn closely connected to 'helping students learn how to learn' and 'providing students with the necessary skills to work independently'. Again, responses like 'preparing the new generations for the future' are closely linked to

TABLE 1: Teachers' views on teaching

Hierarchy of Attitudes	Attitudes with regard to the Meaning of Teaching	Data Collection	
		Phase 1 <i>f</i>	Phase 2 <i>f</i>
Primary Attitudes	• Offering new knowledge	22	6
	• Carrier of knowledge	12	0
	• Interpreter	16	2
	• Educational value	0	18
	• Complex activity	0	12
	• Process of enabling students in the areas of skills, abilities and knowledge; a process of lifelong learning	9	37
	• Teaching = learning	0	7
Secondary Attitudes	• Lecturing	32	0
	• Pleasure	23	8
	• Privilege	19	11
	• Acting	6	0

the ideas of 'providing vocational training to students', 'creation of positive skills' and 'obtaining new knowledge and skills and applying them in practice'. This is how one of the participants expressed such ideas:

The aim of education is to educate and prepare new generations, so that they receive the best knowledge possible and become capable, both for their own benefit and the benefit of the society.

The less frequently mentioned purposes of schooling included 'offering new knowledge', 'development of intelligence', 'ensuring the future', 'awareness raising', 'shaping the student's personality', 'instilling love for the family', 'eradication of illiteracy' and 'reviving national consciousness'. These purposes were however consistent enough to be ranked as secondary attitudes (beliefs). The post-training responses reveal a more comprehensive attitude (belief) with respect

to the aim of education. In fact, a frequently mentioned purpose of schooling was now ‘to educate and teach the young generation in the contemporary spirit’, and this in close connection with ‘individual awareness raising’, ‘creating active citizens’, ‘development of the human society’ and ‘creation of a democratic society’. This more comprehensive attitude is apparent from the following statement:

The aim of the school is to educate and train the generations in the contemporary spirit, to prepare individuals for various professions, to create individuals who are able to think for themselves, to reason, produce and create in the most productive way.

A rather interesting addition in the second round of data collecting is the belief (attitude) which looks at school as an institution that ‘develops creativeness in the presentation of ideas and critical thinking’. This denotes a school culture that cultivates interaction, listening skills and willingness to work. With regard to secondary attitudes, although there is a general drop in their frequency, some (i.e., ‘eradication of illiteracy’ and ‘reviving the spirit of national consciousness’) still remain rather evident. Table 2 lists the responses obtained on question two.

TABLE 2: Teachers’ views on the purpose of education

Hierarchy of Attitudes	Attitudes with regard to the Purpose of Education	Data Collection	
		Phase 1 <i>f</i>	Phase 2 <i>f</i>
Primary Attitudes	• Education and teaching of students	47	0
	• Preparing students for life	28	0
	• Preparing future generations	14	0
	• Education and teaching in the contemporary spirit	0	24
	• Development of creativity	0	12
	• Development of critical thinking	0	27
Secondary Attitudes	• Providing knowledge	7	0
	• Development of intelligence	5	0
	• Eradication of illiteracy	13	9
	• Reviving the spirit of national consciousness	11	6

Question 3: what is the role of the teacher?

As far as the third question is concerned, the data analysis has identified considerable variation in teachers' attitudes (beliefs) with regard to their own role. In the pre-training responses, the picture that emerges is that of the teacher being 'an idea-generator and dominant figure', 'a provider of new knowledge' and 'a guide, promoter and developer of student skills'. These ideas are highlighted in the two excerpts below:

In my work as a teacher, I always keep in mind the words of a well-known scholar: 'I do not teach anyone, I just try to create an environment where the pupils can learn' ...

The teacher should be an initiator of ideas and a good organiser of work at school; he/she should have a dominant role in the classroom and lessons; he/she must give advice and be always willing and ready to help the students.

There is also a wide range of responses pertaining to secondary attitudes (beliefs). These look at teachers as 'interpreters-presenters', a view which on the one hand emphasises the accuracy of interpretation, concretisation and creativity, and at the same time presents teachers as 'torchbearers of civilisation' and more specifically as 'guardians and promoters of positive traditions and national culture'. This positions teachers – who are at times described as 'tolerant and humane communicators' – as a 'crucial element' in the parent-student-teacher triangle.

An interesting feature that emerges from the post-training data is the existence of two mutually complementing attitudes, both of which registered a high response frequency rate. The first views the teacher as 'a motivator of students', someone who guides students' learning and encourages them to express themselves freely and think critically. This is how one participant referred to this dimension:

The teacher's role is to motivate the students to be as active as possible in the process of understanding new knowledge. He or she also has to check their understanding and to stimulate critical thinking ... this works against reproducing knowledge through rote learning. The teacher moreover helps students create a broad base of knowledge in conformity with their individual interests.

The second new attitude (belief) attributes to the teacher the multi-faceted role of being a close collaborator to all students, a co-ordinator of class work, a manager of the lesson, a driving force in the teaching and learning process, as well as being a monitor and advisor. This positions the teacher in the role of someone

who orientates, organises, observes, supervises and checks the students' work, and all this while disseminating knowledge and evaluating the curricula. Here is how one of the participating teachers put it:

A teacher's role is to organise the lesson, to offer new information and new sources of information, to guide the students, to monitor their learning and give them advice, to demonstrate and give examples of the new information.

Post-training data shows that secondary attitudes (beliefs) regarding the role of the teacher suffered a slight decrease in their frequency in relation to what they were prior to the RWCT programme. But as can be seen from Table 3, which summarises the findings on question three, there is still a considerable number of teachers who view their role as 'presenter' and 'carrier of knowledge'. Basically, a good communicator and a tolerant person who helps cultivate the feelings of tolerance and mutual respect.

TABLE 3: Teachers' views on the role of the teacher

Hierarchy of Attitudes	Attitudes with regard of the Role of the Teacher	Data Collection	
		Phase 1 <i>f</i>	Phase 2 <i>f</i>
Primary Attitudes	• Idea-generator and dominant figure	26	0
	• Provider of new knowledge	33	0
	• Guides, encourages and develops students' skills	13	0
	• Motivator of students	0	39
	• Co-ordinator, manager, guide and adviser	0	31
Secondary Attitudes	• Interpreter, presenter and carrier of knowledge	37	19
	• Communicative, tolerant and humane	27	25

Question 4: what does professional development mean to you?

Prior to the training programme, the main attitude demonstrated by the teachers – which was backed by a very high frequency rate – links professional development to ‘finishing higher education studies’ and ‘reading the literature’. In other words, professional development is understood as ‘professional enhancement’. These two excerpts present this position:

To me, this means that the teachers should not remain at the level he or she is at, but must seek further personal professional development during the whole of his/her life by furthering their studies and by reading professional literature.

A person should never rest on the laurels of his/her professional achievements; teachers, in particular, should always keep abreast of new developments in a systematic way.

The secondary attitudes (beliefs), on the other hand, project professional development as the ‘development of professional skills to help students’ through ‘participation in seminars and a variety of professional training courses’. The idea is to ‘keep abreast of and interpret scientific and technological developments’ in order also to ‘widen one’s knowledge’.

In the post-training data, the main attitudes (beliefs) on professional development view it as a ‘fundamental criterion of an advanced society’, an ‘investigative and collaborative process’ and as ‘lifelong learning’. The following two comments sustain these notions:

Professional development is a constant move toward professional perfection; I would call it a dialectical movement.

Professional development means to follow contemporary achievements, to be creative in one’s everyday work and to have the courage to say that things can be done differently.

A new attitude that emerges from the second data collection phase is the notion that professional development is the process of professional self-evaluation by teachers.

A characteristic feature of the responses to question four is the consistency among the secondary beliefs, both practically remaining at the same frequency level at the two data collection points. In particular, the notion of ‘participation in seminars and various trainings’ proves extremely popular at both points. Teachers’ response on question four are given in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Teachers' views on professional development

Hierarchy of Attitudes	Attitudes with regard to Professional Development	Data Collection	
		Phase 1 <i>f</i>	Phase 2 <i>f</i>
Primary Attitudes	• Finishing higher education and reading literature	26	0
	• A fundamental criterion of an advanced society	0	13
	• Moving toward perfection	0	6
	• Self-evaluation of professional work	0	8
	• Investigative process	0	3
Secondary Attitudes	• Participation in seminars and training	27	26
	• Following and interpreting scientific and technological developments	12	13

Discussion

As discussed in the introduction to this paper, the RWCT programme has been the focus of many studies (e.g., Pupovci & Taylor, 2003; Musai & Wile, 2004). These studies report that the programme, apart from having an impact on teachers' beliefs and attitudes, contributes toward improved classroom practices and school environment. The results of our study, which corroborate previous evidence revealing the potential of the programme to change teachers' attitudes, continue along these lines. As collaborators of this programme we were expecting change in teachers – this was in fact our hypothesis – but, admittedly, the actual change in our participants did not meet our expectations.

Looking at the responses to all four questions, one notices the way in which teachers' attitudes become more complete, more multi-faceted, following their participation in the RWCT programme. In addition, there is the emergence of

some new beliefs (attitudes) which appear only at the end of the training period. These new beliefs are particularly more obvious and stable when it comes to the third question, that is, the one that explored the role of the teacher. The responses evolved in fact from viewing the teacher as an idea-generator and provider of knowledge to being a manager, organiser, encourager and guide.

In general, secondary attitudes (beliefs) almost invariably suffered a drop in frequency. While the pre-training responses contain many secondary attitudes with a wide distribution and a low frequency rate, the post-training data evidences a smaller number of secondary attitudes which however still have a low frequency.

In conclusion, it can be said that the RWCT programme has left its indelible 'marks' on the way our teachers think, particularly with respect to their beliefs about schooling, teaching, teachers' roles and their professional advancement. It has to be said that since this was already the sixth year of the implementation of the RWCT programme in our country, the programme and its contents could not have been totally unfamiliar to the participants. We say this in the knowledge that a large number of previously trained teachers, not only acknowledge its success, but also actively seek to implement the lessons learnt from the programme inside their classes.

Note

1. This was a teacher training institution which prepared teachers for elementary schools. As from 1977, this training was taken over by the Higher Pedagogical School.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Kosovo Education Centre for supporting this research.

Eda Vula *has a master's degree in Mathematical Sciences. She has attended numerous seminars and training courses within the framework of training for educational reform. She has been certified by the RWCT programme and currently works as a lecturer of mathematics at the Faculty of Education, University of Prishtina, Kosovo. Her e-mail address is: edavula@yahoo.com*

Merita Shala *holds a master's degree in Physical Education Science. She has participated in many seminars and training courses within the framework of training for educational reform. Apart from being an instructor of the RWCT programme, she is a co-ordinator and a lecturer at Faculty of Education, University of Prishtina, Kosovo. Her e-mail address is: merishala@yahoo.com*

References

- Kagan, D. M. (1992) Implication of research on teacher belief, *Educational Psychologist*, Vol. 27(1), pp. 65-90.
- Musai, B. (ed.) (1998) *Studio Gjithçka, Arsyet Vendin e Pare*. Tirana: AEDP.
- Musai, B. (2003) *Metodologji e Mësimdhënies*. Tirana: Pegi.
- Musai, B., & Wile, J. M. (2004) Lessons from Albania: professional development that transforms educators, schools and communities, *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 9(1), pp. 1-20.
- Pajares, M. F. (1992) Teachers' beliefs and educational research: cleaning up a messy construct, *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 62(3), pp. 307-332.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Method* (2nd edition). Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Pupovci, D., & Taylor, A. (2003) Critical thinking in Kosovo – a framework for change, *Metodika*, Vol. 5(8), pp. 7-22.
- Sadker, P. M., & Sadker, M. D. (1988) *Teachers, Schools and Society*. New York: Random House.